



## Values & Goals

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In Value of Values I discussed values, and how I am beginning to work on mine. In this article I want to discuss with you an important relationship. The relationship between values and goals.

Goals are important. They focus us, and really do bring out the very best in us as we strive, overcome obstacles, look for ways to achieve. They switch the mind into a very positive state. However, and this is a big however, we can't live our lives purely through goals. It's kind of like living our lives too just acquire stuff (a lot of people do this, and it brings no joy). "Right, I've achieved that goal what's next?"

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If we did this our lives would become sad and miserable as we enjoy the brief euphoria of completing the goal – getting the new car, sales target, house, holiday, material possession ... Excitement over. Then, what's next? What's our new goal? A constant treadmill of goal seeking and achievement, or not! We are not defined by our goals (what we achieve). What is more important is how we live our lives.

If we have goals that are aligned with the values we live by, this is different. I love trekking. Normally Marcus and I will wander off and have a goal to climb a local mountain. We enjoy the banter, the rugged terrain and nature. Enjoying the outdoors, exertion, trees, bird life and views. Just getting out. We also love getting to the top – our goal. I know that I'll never scale Everest. I'd love to. However, I get enough enjoyment from living with the bits of adventure and travel I do get to do.

I know what it is like to not achieve my goals. How terrible that feels. Whether I've strived for something for a while or it is a simple short term goal. It sucks. I can understand why people don't set goals – the fear of failure, visualising the feeling of despair if they fail. Why bother? A lame excuse for not setting a goal, but also a good reason to not live your life through your goals. The constant up and down of celebration and stress.

As they say values are your inner compass. They guide you on your journey. Goals are the destination. By living by my values my decision-making is becoming so much easier for me, and I'm enjoying life much more.

I now think of it like this. If I truly understand my core values, and live true to them then whether I achieve my goals will not matter. If I am enjoying the journey, sometimes it doesn't matter that the destination changes – and as in travels, every time I reach a destination there is another new destination to get to – so enjoy the journey, because that continues. The destination does not. Values guide my journey. Goals are my destination. I plan the destination, but ensure I am enjoying the journey without focusing too much on that destination.

When I watch sport, which I truly love, I watch it for the enjoyment of the game (the journey) – not the result (the outcome or goal).



## Values & Goals continued...

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And you know what – now that I’m getting better at that, I feel I’m achieving more of my goals. Funny that. I’ve changed the emphasis of my thinking to focus on the journey rather than the goal, and am achieving more goals (Did I mention my half marathon success?!).

Values, like everything about you, are uniquely yours. They grow and change with you. Nothing is permanent.

I went through a very unstructured process of understanding some of my values, and have found an exercise I think will be good for me, so will revisit with more rigour. This is quite new for me. Another work in progress. I’ve sort of done a values exercise some time in the past, however I never really did understand why. At an intellectual level I did, however as with all things you can understand something intellectually, but not really feel it. I’m feeling it more now. And I understand how important it is. I was living in a world of working hard (one of my values) to support the family, and aiming for goals to achieve this. I didn’t understand the other dimensions of life very well at all – Relationships, Giving, Wellness, Lifestyle, Personal Development. I never appreciated how important these other dimensions were, the inherent values I had in these but that I couldn’t express, and how everything is connected. My values with relationships were integral to my working hard. I see the world differently now. I choose to. I am not defined by what I achieve, but how I live my life.

Nothing is permanent. Values change. My value of industry and hard work will dwindle. I’m already feeling that other things are becoming more important to me. It matters not whether you have a lot of money, or little. Success and happiness is defined by this. We’ve all heard of miserable rich people, and miserable poor people, and the opposite. Each brings its own pressures. It is those that live true to their values that find peace, happiness and success.

Yes – values are the inner belief you hold to be true about what is of value you to your inner self. If you live by what you believe is true, how can you possibly go wrong?

Let me know your thoughts and jump over to this story on the blog so you can leave me a comment.

All the best,

Mike