

THE QUEST TO BE YOUR BEST

THE ROAD TO HAPPINESS

How To Get What
You *Really* Want

DAVID GOLDMAN

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CONTENTS

Introduction	xv
1 Your Kids Don't Even Know Who You Are.	1
2 There Is No Such Thing As <i>Balance</i>	9
3 What Could A Twenty-Eight-Year-Old Guy Possibly Tell You That Would Make A Difference?	17
4 Seriously, Why Am I Coaching <i>You</i> ?	25
5 Do You Want To Win The Battle Or Triumph In The End?	31
6 I'm Very Skeptical About This; Will It Still Work?	43
7 There Was Trouble In Paradise	49
8 Her Self-Talk Undermined Her At Every Turn	57
9 You Are Responsible (Response-Able)	65
10 Conclusion	73

Appendix A: The Goldman Enrollment Process 83
 Step 1: The Background Of Relationship 84
 Step 2: The Conversation For Possibility. . . . 85
 Step 3: The Conversation For Value. 86
 Step 4: The Conversation For Opportunity. . . 88
 Step 5: The Conversation For Action 89

Appendix B: G.O.L.D. Attitudes 91

Appendix C: Acknowledgments. 105

Appendix D: About The Author 109

Appendix E: Works Cited 111

1

YOUR KIDS DON'T EVEN KNOW WHO YOU ARE

By most accounts, you would say Joe was very successful. He had been a financial advisor for well over fifteen years and had a thriving practice. He was making good money, had a great house in the suburbs, a wife, two kids, and a couple of cars. All in all, he was living The American Dream.

When we had our initial interview, Joe told me that there were two main issues he wanted help with: time management and behavioral adjustment. Joe is a fun-loving guy who, frankly, sometimes goes too far and gets himself into trouble. Nothing too

serious, but he had been written up at work a few times and had been told to modify his behavior on many occasions.

Equally as important, Joe spent a lot of time at the office and rarely saw his kids. In fact, his wife remarked that his daughter (ninth grade) and son (sixth grade), were going to be out of the house in a few years and they didn't even know him very well.

So, Joe was hiring me for two reasons: (1) He wanted to change or at least modify his behavior, and (2) Without reducing his income, he wanted to spend more time with his children and establish a good relationship with them before they were gone and on their own.

As often happens, the journey we began became much more impactful than we thought it would. What started as behavior modification became a quest for self-acceptance. For various reasons, Joe was not happy with who he was and therefore acted out when confronted with feelings of

inadequacy. Joe had come from a blue-collar background and never went to college. This turned out to be a very big deal. Joe was ashamed of himself and never felt comfortable dealing with other professionals.

Quite simply, he felt *less than* and unworthy. So, he would do things in excess.

We embarked on a journey toward Joe liking himself for who he was and actually being okay with being Joe.

Within weeks, Joe was making better choices and behaving in a way that was consistent with who he wanted to be as a man. He envisioned the person he wanted to be, and slowly but surely, he became that guy.

I'm not saying that going to college isn't important. I think it's a great opportunity for most people. You can learn a trade or profession that leads to future work. More

importantly, you can receive an education that prepares you for living life in a certain way. Most importantly, it provides an early example of completion for a young person. It's something you can say you accomplished.

Joe realized that he could never go back and experience college as a teenager/young adult. He also realized that having a degree might be important if you are currently looking for a job. However, he finally came to realize that being a successful financial advisor for many years was worth something.

In fact, it was worth *a lot more*. He had actually built something from scratch, on his own, and was thriving. He was, after all, successful *in spite of* not having attended or graduated college. Maybe even *because* he never went to college.

No matter how he had felt in the past about what he had or hadn't accomplished, he could feel good about what he had achieved in his business and in

his life. More importantly, he could now begin to appreciate who he was and what he does for his clients and for his family. *Joe is a good man.*

The time management issue was a different challenge. First, we adjusted Joe's mindset that to be a successful financial advisor, one must put in a lot of hours: Leave home early to get to the office, stay all day, get home late. You know the drill. It's a work ethic that was born in the United States Rust Belt, of a labor-intensive heritage that says you have to work long and hard to survive.

I'm not suggesting that hard work isn't important. Neither am I saying "Work smart; not hard." I hate that cliché. Hard work is important, and there is no substitute for it.

It's how you define it, however, that really counts. Work hard on the things that count the most toward your ultimate goal. Determine your highest-value activities and work hard at doing those. That's what Joe and I worked to achieve with his day.

One part of my coaching program that has an impact on most people is the concept of an Ideal Day and an Ideal Week. When I first learned this in the late 1980s, it changed my life, and it has improved many others' lives as well. There are twenty-four hours in a day and seven days in a week. That's not news. It's the arithmetic that is powerful. $24 \times 7 = 168$. There are 168 hours in each week. How you use them determines the quality of your life. Decide what time you will wake up in the morning and then determine the best use of every hour you are awake during the day. That will depend on your goals and priorities. Include everything that is important to you. This is the key to designing the life you want to live. You must structure it—day by day, hour by hour, step by step.

Joe finally understood the notion that it's not the hours you put in that count; it's what you *put into the hours*. With my guidance, he designed and

constructed what an ideal day and an ideal week would look like. This included spending afternoons, some evenings, and weekends with his family, and especially his kids. We established (with their input) what one-on-one time with each would entail.

All that was left was to implement the plan. I'm proud and happy to report that within one year, Joe had not only established relationships with his children but improved overall relationships with his family as a whole.

In addition, he became more efficient and more effective with his hours at work and doubled his income in the process. Needless to say, Joe and his family were ecstatic about the results he produced. He was making twice the revenue in half the time.

Today, fifteen years later, Joe is still happily married, both children are married with children of their own, and Joe is a proud father and grandfather and husband loved by family, friends, clients, and associates. His income has doubled again, and he's

earning in excess of five times where he was when I met him.

So, how about you? What thinking is holding you back from being happy with yourself and achieving what you really want? Where are you spending (wasting) time that could be put to greater use? Design your ideal week and live into the dream.