

Let's make your
dreams come true

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ISBN: 9789403662138
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Preface

Do you know what I do not understand about today's society? It is never enough. We want more and more. Every single time. We need to realize more, we need to earn and possess more money, we need to own more stuff. More, more, more. In particular, how well we perform at work and how we look to the outside world is important. Or so it seems. And society is responding enthusiastically to this. Long live the consumer society! Let us celebrate the generations filled with burnouts and stress. Crooked backs and shrugged shoulders as we suffer from the consumer and performance society.

There are so many productivity or self-help books related to work. How do you ensure that you work as effectively as possible? How do you ensure that you communicate well with everyone? How do you ensure that you spend as little time as possible on the things you do not want to waste time on? One course after another is set up so that everyone can get the most out of their work. Think of LEAN, SCRUM, AGILE, Getting things done, Covey and so on. We live from project to project and feel worried that we are taking a holiday. In fact, sometimes you do not matter if you do not work overtime or go home before 5:30 pm after a nine-hour workday. Anything to perform better at work. Because that's important, right?

If we all continue in this way and focus on the work in this way, we forget the most important thing:

"Ourselves"

We put time and energy into various things that actually ensure that we perform as well as possible outside of our home. At the end of the day we come home as a quenched plant or wrung-out dishcloth. We do not really feel like doing anything anymore. Day in, day out. We scroll through our timeline on social media and see the most fantastic locations, the most beautiful places and see others doing the coolest things. We watch videos, enjoy photos in our chat conversations and search the internet for all kinds of cool and beautiful things. Or cat videos. And all that as a spectator. How nice would it be if you create your own experiences and make dreams come true?

Live your dream!

A goal without a plan is a dream. Does that mean that a dream with a plan is a goal? And is not having a plan exactly the bottleneck because you can really start working on your dream when you have a plan? It is much safer to say what you want to do than actually do it. You might even go crazy and fail to realize your dream. And that is exactly what I think is a major reason why adults stop making dreams come true. We are satisfied with a role as a spectator in the lives of others.

Because let's be honest. Nothing is better than putting your feet up on the couch at the end of the working day, having a cup of coffee or tea (or something stronger) and losing yourself in some useless television program for two hours and then starting the evening ritual (if that is not already your evening ritual). You get into bed, close your eyes and the next morning you are you bright-eyed and bushy-tailed (or not) to start the working day. And after work you get home

like that wrung-out dishcloth. The feet are lifted and the evening ritual can begin.

I know it. I experienced it and I was satisfied with it for a while. Not the feeling of the dishcloth, but the life of an evening zombie who spends the evenings staring at a screen. Until I got to the point where I wondered what the fuck I was doing. I'm not a track runner who wants to run the same lap every time. I want to take that walk with a loved one from Edinburgh city center towards Arthur's Seat at sunrise to experience some unique moments. I want to wake up on a tropical bounty island to immerse myself in the azure blue sea after breakfast while looking out on a beach with a hammock between the palm trees. But I was that person who only knew all those sketched images from pictures. That could never change if I keep staring at that screen as a zombie, could it?

Until I realized what I was doing I made the (unconscious) choice to keep everything as it was. And that was fine until the moment that is was not. I stayed safe in the cocoon of my own comfort zone. If that's the choice you're happy with then that's fine. You live your dream! Teach me how you can live your dream that way. Explain to me how you have realized this dream and are able to maintain it. But probably, if this is your dream, then you would not have bought or received this book. You also would not go to read it at all. You probably want something different.

Earlier in this preface I wrote a statement: a goal without a plan is a dream. But I think a dream with a plan is a goal that can be realized. The challenge lies in a number of simple changes and insights. There are obstacles that can delay the realization of your dream. Achieving your dream is something that can be a huge challenge and multi-year plan.

However, once you have made your dream specific and you know how to realize it, you can make this dream come true. And you can do that by doing what you need to do every day to get one step closer to the dream. Because nothing is worse than looking back on your life in the end and come to the conclusion that you wanted to do more than you did.

With this book I hope to help you realize your dreams. For that reason, the book also contains quotes from guests from the Dutch podcast "Achieving your dreams as an adult" (in Dutch: "Dromen is voor Volwassenen") within the chapters. These quotes are an inspiration for you as a reader so that you too can realize your dreams. I have tried to add multiple quotes within a chapter to give the story more body. Sometimes it can seem like an overkill of quotes, but this has been done consciously so that the theory comes to life even more. The quotes are rewritten and sometimes partly adjusted to convert the spoken language into a good written language without losing the essence of the quote.

Furthermore, the book has several blank pages. Use them to scribble down your thoughts about your dreams or the most important message. Use a marker to highlight the most important phrases in the book in case you want to re-read them. But most of all, start making your dreams come true today!

Welcome to the first day of the rest of your life.

1 Where do you start?

It's time to get started yourself. This book has a number of themes to realize your dreams. Before you get started with your dream, it is good to create the framework within which this book is written. In this theme you will gain insight into various considerations behind your dream. What is a dream and what is the origin of the dream?

In addition, you can read what ensures that you do not (yet) get started with your dream and you can read how to get started with your dream.

1.1 What is a dream?

Everyone knows it from primary school. You are entering a class for the first time and the first month you are busy filling out all kinds of lists in books from your friends. There are questions about who you are, how old you are and how you know the person from the friend's book. There are also questions about your hobbies and your favorite food, drinks and maybe another question about your favorite movie. And of course also the question of what you want to become when you grow up.

Let us fast forward to the here and now with that last question. What do you want to be when you grow up? Or even better: what do you want to realize? Dare to dream. For me, a dream is nothing more and nothing less than something I want to realize in the future. For me this is also the definition of a dream that is used in this book.

A dream is something you want to realize later that stems from your own standards and values. A dream enriches your life in a way and you are willing to make sacrifices to realize this dream.

Nothing more and nothing less. So be honest, what would you like to realize? And did you know that many dreams can also be realized? The advantage of dreaming as an adult is that you can dream more realistically. Every child will have written down professions as a professional football player, pilot or firefighter in the books from your friends. But when we are adults, this will probably not be on the dream list anymore. Or, who knows what is possible? There are plenty of examples of people who, after quite a few years, radically change course and start chasing dreams.

By establishing a dream as an attainable goal, a dream becomes tangible and achievable. In this book, the basis for any dream is to gain insight into the present situation. From this basis you work towards your dream. And where better to start than writing down your dreams? Call it a dream book, a goal book or a bucket list. None of that matters. But the bucket list is recognizable to many of us.

Assignment: Bucket list

Write down eight dreams that you want to realize. A list has been made at the back of the book. Eight things you want to realize. These can be short, medium or long term dreams. Dreams that are simple to realize or dreams that require a lot of time, energy, attention and possibly financial choices and questions. These are your eight dreams and they are the foundation of your story in the rest of this book.

Throughout the book, we pick up these bucket list items. Per chapter you can sometimes answer questions that may be relevant to achieving your dream.

Many people have dreams but keep them to themselves. If you want to realize something, it is great to keep it to yourself. Few people talk about the things they want to realize. Especially not to fail to someone else. In the end there is only 1 person who can disappoint you if you keep everything to yourself and that is you. And you can always think of a reason (or excuse?) why it is not the worst thing that you did not realize your dream. You can fool yourself easily with “good” arguments why you have not done anything today, the past week, the past month or the past year to get closer to achieving your dream. It is often easy to disappoint yourself and you can come up with enough reasons why you have not succeeded in achieving a dream. Or even start with it. Nobody else would mind. Not even you.

But the funny thing is that sharing dreams actually makes you realize them. By sharing your dreams with people you make yourself vulnerable on one side. On the other side, you plant the seed of your dream in both the soil of yourself and the person you share your dream with. As scary as it may be, you have started making your dream come true. If you have made someone part of your dream, it can motivate you to prove to the other that you can make your dream come true. And that you can demonstrate that you are working on your dream and making progress. Every time your dream comes one step closer. By talking about your dreams with others you can dream together and visualize how your dream will be realized. That gives energy! Your dream comes to life.

Dare to take a buddy (or accountability partner) in achieving your dream. Not that this person ensures you that you realize your dream, but as a motivation to work on your dream. Whether it's your brother, your sister, your dad, your mom, your boyfriend, your girlfriend or whoever, share your dreams. Talk about your dreams! When you talk to people, ask what people's dreams are. And dare to keep asking. Why it is a dream and what prevents this dream from being realized? And what does anyone think they should do to realize this dream? And what does achieving the dream mean and what does it bring them?

What a dream is to you can also be exactly the same dream to someone else. The underlying reasons why it is a dream can be fundamentally different from each other. That does not make achieving one dream any better or worse than another. There are several roads that lead to Rome. And if getting to Rome is a dream, then there are many roads and means of transport that you can use to realize your dream. Each road requires different sacrifices. You must be willing to make

these sacrifices in order to eventually realize your dream. This is discussed in more detail later in this book.

Take home message

- *You can realize your dreams*
- *Share your dreams with others*
- *Every dream has a different path*

1.2 The influence of norms, values, behavior and environment

Everyone can be influenced. And everyone is affected. Maybe consciously, maybe unconsciously, but you too have been affected. And probably more than you think. Not only as a person you were in the past, but also as a person you are now and will and can become in the future. And that's fine. Just think of the buddy mentioned in the previous chapter. If you decide to get a buddy, this will likely be someone who is a good sparring partner to you, but also likely to share your values and values. Who else will you entrust your dreams to?

Norms and values are simply the basis of who we are as a person and how we behave. From our first moments on this earth, we are influenced by our environment and the norms and values of the people around us.

Just: "If you quit, you give up. When it is not necessary to stop, you can just let things be what they are in order to be able to look at them from a distance."

Saskia van Garderen: "I come from a family with people who work within the healthcare industry. It soon became clear to me that I also wanted to do something for people and work in healthcare."

Ultimately, you will receive a piece from all the people you have gathered around you and this can be translated to the person you are. This ultimately also manifests itself in your behavior, which can change over the years. This may mean that you do not take over certain norms and values from someone else one on one, in part or at all. Or maybe you do not want to take over, but you have unconsciously taken over

more than you think. But it is also important to be honest with yourself.

Marco Martens: "I did not follow a traditional school route because at that time there was no one who could guide me in the right direction with regard to education. People in hip hop who took me in tow and were a kind of mentor to me. They ensured that I started doing workshops and developed myself. I also wanted to be the one for those students. Students who come in with a dream but do not know how to reach it. I like to show them what is possible and, above all, to make them believe in what they can do themselves. A lot of people unlearned a lot of positive things in high school. I really enjoyed being that mentor who showed them that the things they naturally want to do are fine but that they have to believe in themselves."

Example

You have probably just read the previous paragraph and have certain thoughts or opinions about it. I cannot describe exactly what that is, because that is the sum of all the norms and values, experiences and interpretations that you as a person have with the piece that I have written. And what I have written is black and white. There is no emotion in it, but by interpreting a text (regardless of which) emotions can be added. This is purely due to the fact that as a person you have experiences and you project them from a moral compass (your own norms and values). And there is nothing wrong with that.

Just think back to high school. The subject Dutch or English. And in particular the compulsory or non-compulsory book list you had to read. One of the frequently asked questions was: "what does the writer mean by this?" You can interpret this question as you see fit. Yet some answers were more correct than others. While it does not even have to be, because the

answer in the answer model is already an interpretation of the author's intention by the person who wrote down the answer example. So only if your interpretation (based on your norms and values) is equal to the interpretation of the author of the answer model, then you will receive the full marks. Otherwise, your answer will simply be less correct, while you have answered the question in good conscience.

However, you will also be able to translate this difference of interpretation to your dreams. What you find important from your moral compass is often reflected in the dreams you have as a person. If you are committed to making a lot of money, then a dream like an expensive sports car or a house with a pool might just be a dream that suits you. If you are concerned with nature, it may be that your own bee colony or a life that is as sustainable as possible is your dream.

Again, dreams are not necessarily more correct than others. Your standards and values are not and therefore also your dream is not. Dreams differ per person, partly because of your moral compass. However, if you delete the content of the dreams, you will see that the subjects of norms and values, behavior and environment remain within every dream. With everyone.

Why something is a dream for someone has its origin in your standards and values. What this dream is exactly and how it is realized is different. As a person you are influenced by the trinity of norms and values, behavior and environment. Where norms and values mainly have an internal influence, which primarily originated externally, behavior and environment are of a different order.

Environment is always external. Behavior is the connection between norms and values and the environment. We are

affected by our environment and depending on how badly this influence affects us, we behave in a certain way. However, who is in your environment varies. This could be your family and friends, colleagues, teammates, but perhaps also the writer of a book, an actor who supports the same organization as you support or a person who follows you on social media. Or maybe it is someone you do not know at all but who you notice in everyday life or who you see on television. The possibilities are endless and do not necessarily have to be human. Your favorite pet is also part of the environment, just like that beautiful park.

Engel: "I think it is important to treat the people I work with with respect and not just call someone when you need someone."

Gerben van Driel: "He told me how he wanted to become the news anchor for years and eventually ended up at the NOS. But he never reached the core team he wanted to join. In addition to his work as a presenter, he went to work in the final editorial office and then it started flowing. That got me thinking. In retrospect, it would be a shame if you would go through your working life much better with a subtle change of course."

Just: "I think it has more to do with my upbringing. I think the family I come from has played a big role in the beliefs that I have been given."

Ankie Seiger: "I had quit my job at the university and wanted to develop myself further in yoga teaching training and continue meditation. I met a man in Thailand who is training underprivileged children to become a nurse. I met him on a trip and told him that I would like to set up a medical prevention

center. He then invited me to come there and start collaboration.”

William van den Brink: “To be honest, I would have quit my job, borrowed \$20,000 and would have gone farming if I did not have my wife. She has a different view of the world, which complements my character very well.”

Marco Martens: “The way in which teaching material is offered is important. I was reading to my daughter (4 years old) from a picture book. She is starting to take an interest in letters. She wanted to write her name because she sees children in her class write their name and she finds that interesting. My daughter became sad because she could not read some of the words in the picture book. She knows the book so she knows some words literally, but not all. But she does not know other words very well yet and she just got frustrated with this. She wants to read so much and is so interested in language. But the average student at the intermediate vocational education does not want to read. We all think reading is an important skill. How could that go wrong along on the way? I think it goes wrong because the fun gets knocked out and it has to be all about “usefulness”.”

But the most interesting part is that connecting link of behavior. How come you are able to respond in your environment from your moral compass? Or even better. What makes that your behavior can ensure that you make your dreams come true? The answer may be easier than you think.

Achieving your dream is important enough.

I'll say it again.