

BEAR GRYLLS



AUTHOR OF THE #1
INTERNATIONAL BESTSELLER

MUD, SWEAT, AND TEARS

A SURVIVAL GUIDE FOR LIFE

HOW TO ACHIEVE
YOUR GOALS, THRIVE
IN ADVERSITY, AND
GROW IN CHARACTER

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**How to achieve your
goals, thrive in adversity,
and grow in character**

BEAR GRYLLS



WILLIAM MORROW *An Imprint of HarperCollinsPublishers*

DEDICATION

This book is written for our three boys: Jesse, Marmaduke and Huckleberry.

Sometimes life can be tough, but I hope this can serve as a good route map to guide you through the challenges and on towards your dreams. Life is short and precious – live it boldly, my special ones.

**We love you so much and are so proud of you.
For ever.**

&

Thank you, my beautiful Shara, for being my rock, my friend and my encouragement. I like to think that together we make a pretty solid team. . .

I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.

JOHN 10:10

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1.

**HAVE A
DREAM**

This isn't a get-rich-quick book – this is an insider's guide on how to follow your heart, and live an empowered, effective, fun-filled life. And in a contest between the two, there is only ever one real winner.

The place to start this life journey is with finding your dream.

Dreams are powerful. They are among those precious few intangibles that have inspired men and women to get up, go to hell and back, and change the world.

And I'm not talking about the sort of fantasy dreams that can't physically happen – I am talking about the sort of dream that will inspire you, one that you are really prepared to sweat for, in order to make it become your reality.

This quote from T. E. Lawrence means a lot to me:

All men dream; but not equally. Those who dream by night in the dusty recesses of their minds wake in the day to find that it was vanity: but the dreamers of the day are dangerous men, for they may act their dreams with open eyes, to make possible.

Our job is to be the dangerous type. The one who dreams by day and acts to make those dreams come alive and actually happen.

So take some time to get this right. Go for a long walk. Think big. Think about what really makes you smile.

Ask yourself what you would do if you didn't need the money. Ask yourself what really excites you. Ask what would inspire you to keep going long after most people would quit.

Find those answers and therein lies your dream. We all have our own personal Everest, and if we follow its calling, that is when life truly becomes an adventure.

Now, obviously your dream needs to be realistic and achievable, so use your common sense and exercise good judgement – but don't confuse realism with pessimism! Think big, make sure it's physically possible, and as long as the key ingredients to achieving it are vision and hard work, then go for it.

Write it down. Pin it on your wall – somewhere you will see it every day.

Words and pictures have power.

Got it?

OK, we have begun. . .

2.

**DON'T
LISTEN
TO THE
DREAM-
STEALERS**

The very next thing that will happen, once you write your goals down and start to talk to people about them, is that you will meet those all-too-common cynics who will look at you and smirk.

I call them the dream-stealers.

Beware: they are more dangerous to mankind than you might ever imagine.

In life, we will never be short of people who want to knock our confidence or mock our ambitions.

There are lots of reasons why people might want to rain on your parade: perhaps they're a little jealous that you want more out of life than they might hope for, or they're worried your success will make them feel inferior. It might be that their motives come from a better place and they just want to spare you the failure, heartache and tears.

Either way, the results are the same: you get dissuaded from achieving your dreams and from fulfilling your potential.

The key is not to listen to them too hard. Hear them, if you must – out of respect – but then smile and push on.

Remember, the key to your future success is going to be embracing the very same things those dream-stealers are warning you about: the failure, the heartache and the tears.

All those things will be key stepping stones on the road to success, and are actually good solid markers that you are doing something right.

3. _____

**JUST
BEGIN...**

The greatest journeys all start with a single step.

When you stand at the bottom of a mountain, you can rarely see a clear route to the top. It is too far away and the path too twisty and hidden behind obstacles. **The only way to climb the sucker is to start – and then keep putting one foot in front of the other, one step at a time.**

There's a quote from Martin Luther King that I love:

Take the first step in faith. You don't have to see the whole staircase. Just take the first step.

It is good advice.

When you are setting out on a long and difficult journey towards your goal, you will not be able to foresee every obstacle or anticipate every lucky break. But what you will find is that with every step you gain experience, perspective, skill and confidence. It is these elements that will ultimately help you reach your goal.

But you only gain experience, perspective, skill and confidence when you start moving.

See how it works now?

Sometimes the journey ahead can feel so daunting and so implausible that we lack the courage to take the first step. And there is never a shortage of good excuses: it's not the right time; the odds are too stacked against me; or no one like me has ever done it before.

I'm also willing to bet that Neil Armstrong, the first man on the moon, Sir Edmund Hillary, the first man to climb Everest, or even Thomas Edison, trying thousands and thousands of times to make the light bulb work, had a good list of excuses that they could have used, too.

And I can promise you they all felt inadequate at many times along their path.

You know what the sad thing is? It's that most people never find out what they are truly capable of because the mountain looks frightening from the bottom, before you begin. It is easier to look down than up.

There's a poignant poem by Christopher Logue that I'm often reminded of when people tell me the 'reasons' for not embarking on a great adventure.

Come to the edge.

We might fall,
Come to the edge.

It's too high!

COME TO THE EDGE!

And they came,

And we pushed,

And they flew.

I have a sneaking suspicion that if you can just take that first step off the edge, you might find that you, too, can fly.

If you can just take that first step towards your own dreams – take that enormous leap of faith towards beginning whatever it is – then new possibilities open up before you.

It is the magic of beginning. Things start to happen.

Then it is all about hanging on for the ride – keeping cheerful, not quitting, trusting the right people, listening to that inner voice, doing what others won't or can't, and never losing sight of the goal.

But more of all that good stuff to come. . .

4.

**CHASE
THE
GOAL,
NOT
THE
MONEY**

We live in a society where people love to equate success with money. This is always a mistake.

I have met enough unhappy millionaires to know that money alone does not make you happy. I've seen people work so hard they do not have any time for their families (or even time to enjoy the money).

They doubt their friends' motives, or become paranoid about people trying to steal from them.

Wealthy people can all too easily end up feeling guilty and unworthy, and it can be a heavy load to carry – especially if you don't treat that fickle impostor right.

You see, money, for its own sake, like success or failure, is a thing of little lasting significance. It's what we 'do' with it and how we treat it that makes the life-changing difference.

Money, success and failure can drastically improve or ruin people's lives. So you have got to treat it for what it is. And you have got to stay the master of it.

Wealthy people so often find that the summit of their mountains – the success that they sought – isn't enough. And they are right. It isn't enough to satisfy our deep hunger for meaning and purpose. (And we will talk about that later on.)

In essence, you have got to build your house on good foundations – on rock, not sand – and money as a goal in itself will never satisfy you.

So choose wisely. And be careful what you wish for. When you start putting the correct steps into place, good things will start to happen. So you have got to be prepared for the success when it comes.

Money can make the path more comfortable, but it will never remove the potholes.

The billionaire John Paul Getty famously said: 'I would give everything I own for one happy marriage.' That is pretty telling. Money doesn't solve all your ills. **In fact, money, like success tends, instead, to magnify your life – and if you are living with the wrong values, money will make things much worse.**

Conversely, if you get it right, money can be an incredible blessing.

So always keep referring back to page 15 at the start of this book. Look at your dream. Never lose sight of it, because if you attain it, you will be rich beyond measure. . .and I'm not talking dollars and cents.

A final note on this, one little secret: when you truly commit yourself to your dream, when you ooze enthusiasm and let your talents shine (however small or fledgling they might be at the start), you will often find that the money comes to you by default. But if you just chase the money, like a butterfly,

will often fly away.

Follow the dream and let your talent thrive, better people's lives, stick to it through thick and thin, and I bet you find out that money will be close beside you.

So try not to worry about money, ever – instead focus on the journey. And certainly don't waste time and energy accumulating just wealth.

Follow your goals wholeheartedly and there will be enough to satisfy you.

Just wait and see where your dreams can take you.

5. _____
**BE
THE
MOST
ENTHUSIASTIC
PERSON
YOU
KNOW**

My mum and dad gave me a few bits of great advice as a young boy (along with a fair amount of scolding for being an idiot, but that's another story!), but there is one thing my late father told me that has affected my outlook and approach to life more than almost anything else, and it was this:

If you can be the most enthusiastic person you know, then you won't go far wrong

It was always said to me with a wry smile, as if I was being told something of infinite power. And he was right.

Enthusiasm so often makes the critical difference: it sustains you when times are tough, encourages those around you, it is totally infectious and it rapidly becomes a habit!

In turn, that enthusiasm adds the extra 5 per cent sparkle to everything we do – and life is so often won or lost in that little extra bit that carries us home over the finish line.

In fact, I believe enthusiasm can make such a massive and positive difference to people's lives that it should be taught as part of a school's curriculum. After all, it's one of the key attributes that smart employers look for. (It's certainly something I place huge value on when I'm choosing expedition members.)

Imagine interviewing a candidate who says they love getting up early and being the first into work and they love warming up people's days with a smile and getting their colleagues a cup of tea to cheer them up. That all they want is the chance to show you how hard they can work and how they will always go the extra mile.

Wow! You'd be like, right, when are you free? I'd give that person a shot over the candidate with the better A-level results any day.

So how do you teach it?

Well, you reward it and lead by example, for a start.

Encouraging enthusiasm is one of the most important things I do in my work with the Scouts. If I can get the message across to kids who might not be doing all that well at school that they can distinguish themselves and get A+ in the game of life by being enthusiastic in all they do – especially when times are tough and others are moaning – I know I can make a critical difference to their future.

Success almost always follows great attitude. The two attract each other.

You may not be the fastest, the fittest, the cleverest or the strongest, but there's nothing to stop you

from being the most enthusiastic person you know. Nothing at all, except your willingness to step u
and be a little different from the crowd.

So make enthusiasm a daily decision, even when you don't feel like it. We can all choose our attitude
and one of the best reasons for choosing positive attributes is the alternative – which means if yo
don't pick a good attitude, then you've got a bad one, or, even worse, a lukewarm, insipid, neutral on

If you have to have any type of attitude to tackle each day, you might as well choose to make it a gre
one and make enthusiasm a driving force for good in your life.

People will love you for it, and remember you for it.

After all, who doesn't like to work with enthusiastic people?

I know I do.

6. _____

**SAY
YES**

A big part of getting ahead in life is a willingness to say ‘Why not?’ when others just say ‘Why?’

In my experience, many people cross their arms, sit back and say ‘Why should I?’, and then let great possibilities slip by them.

A champion in life always goes against the grain and takes the path less trodden. And that means learning to say ‘Why not?’ instead of ‘Why?’

This is especially important in the early days of building a career or following a dream. You have to get out there and get busy opening up lots of oysters in search of that pearl. **You have got to try different things, meet loads of people, take people up on crazy offers and generally get busy living!**

It’s almost always better, especially in the early stages, to say yes and to try something, rather than saying no because you fear where a yes will take you.

More often than not, saying no means that nothing will change in your life. A yes, however, has the power to create change. **And change is where we create room for success.**

And, by the way, the only person who likes change is a baby with a wet nappy! Change is scary and often uncomfortable, but life begins outside our comfort zone, so learn to embrace it and get used to it. Champions have to do that every single day.

A few years ago, I led an expedition to return to Mount Everest, the mountain I had climbed aged 23, the mountain where I had risked everything and survived – just. I had always held a secret dream to return and attempt to fly over the mountain in a small one-man paramotor – like a paraglider, only with a backpack engine strapped to your body.

At the time, the highest altitude that one had been flown was around 17,000 feet (5,180 metres). Being an enthusiast (and an optimist!), I reckoned we shouldn’t just aim to break the record by a few feet, I thought we should go as high as it was possible to go, and in my mind that meant flying over the height of Mount Everest. This in turn meant we needed to build a machine capable of flying over 29,000 feet (8,840 metres).

Most of the people we spoke to about this thought a) we were crazy, and b) it was technically impossible. What those naysayers hadn’t factored in was the power of yes, and specifically the ability to build a team capable of such a mission. This meant harnessing the brilliance of my good friend Gil Cardozo, a paramotor engineer, a born enthusiast, and a man who loves to break the rules – and to say yes.

Gilo was – and is – an absolute genius aviation engineer who spends all his time in his factory designing and testing crazy bits of machinery.

When people told us that our oxygen would freeze up in minus 70°, or that at extreme altitudes we would need such a heavy engine to power the machine that it would be impossible to take off, or that even if we managed to do it, we would break our legs landing at such speed, Gilo's response was: 'Of course it'll be great. Leave it with me.'

No matter what the obstacle, no matter what the 'problem', Gilo always said, 'We can do this.' And after months in his workshop, he did eventually build the machine that took us above the height of Everest. He beat the naysayers, he built the impossible and by the Grace of God we pulled it off – on time and in the process we raised over \$2.5 million for children's charities around the world.

You see, dreams can come true if you stick to them and think big.

So say yes – you never know where it will lead. And there are few limits to how high you just might soar.

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