



## Gary Ryan Blair

### The Goals Guy



---

CHRIS ATTWOOD: Welcome, everyone. This is Chris Attwood. I'm the features editor for Healthy Wealthy nWise magazine and coauthor of *The Passion Test: The Effortless Path to Discovering Your Destiny*. This is the Healthy Wealthy nWise Passions of Real Life Legends series. Twice a month we interview individuals who have been incredibly successful at following their own passions and creating an extraordinary life.

It's our hope and intention that these interviews will help you get aligned with your passions so you can give the world your own unique gifts. This interview will appear in the December issue of Healthy Wealthy nWise magazine at [www.HealthyWealthynWise.com](http://www.HealthyWealthynWise.com). The theme of tonight's interview was expressed by Oprah Winfrey when she said, "Do the one thing you think you can not do. Fail at it. Try again. Do better the second time. The only people who never tumble are those who never mount the high wire. This is your moment."

Our guest tonight is in the business of helping people do what it takes to achieve the goals they set in their lives. With the philosophy 'Everything Counts', Gary Ryan Blair is one of the leading authorities on strategic planning and goalsetting initiatives in the world today. Gary's dedicated to helping his clients win by creating focused, goaldirected lives and businesses.

He is president of The GoalsGuy, a highly focused training organization based in Tampa, Florida, and he initiated the program 'Got Goals?', which is now used by companies and organizations worldwide. Gary's philosophy is that life will not go according to plan if you do not have a plan. He has shared this belief and his unique strategies with professional sports teams, such as the New York Giants and the New York Yankees, with bluechip firms like Apple, Federal Express and General Electric, and with many of the top media companies like DreamWorks and Disney.

His eight bestselling books, along with his training programs and coaching services, are now used by more than 80,000 organizations and five million employees worldwide. Gary, thank you so much for joining us this evening. It's such a pleasure to be with you.

GARY RYAN BLAIR: It's a pure delight. I'm looking forward to it.

CHRIS ATTWOOD: Let's plunge right in. Gary, tell us what role your own passions, the things that you care most about, played in your life and in your success?

GARY RYAN BLAIR: I'm so delighted to be on the call because this is a subject that's near and dear to my heart. My belief system as it relates to passion and as it relates to my own success is this. No virtue in life is safe that is not passionate. What I mean by that is this. If you think about it, whatever the virtue you espouse—whether it's love, commitment, discipline, integrity, perseverance, honor, you name it—unless it is



fueled by passion, belief, intensity and continuous enthusiasm, it's going to die on the vine somewhere. For me, it is such a fundamental core value, not just some fluff word that you would put out there, that really fuels all outcomes and all activities.

CHRIS ATTWOOD: Give us some practical examples. Will you go back and tell us the story of how you got your start, how you came to be known as The Goals Guy? What a great name—The Goals Guy! I love that.

GARY RYAN BLAIR: I'll be happy to. I'll make it as short as possible, but I think it's worthwhile to listen to. My first real dream and passion was to play professional football, so I went to school at Syracuse University with that intent in mind. At the end of my sophomore year, a lineman from Boston College decided he had a different vision for my future and took my knees out, so I couldn't play anymore.

As luck would have it, this happened in the early '80s. At that time AT&T had split up, so there was a big divestiture. I wrote a paper for school and it wound up being about the need for some kind of long distance service for college students. My teacher actually thought it was a pretty good paper; I got an 'A' on it. I started to work for a company. Long story short, I spent about a year working for this company on and off doing a bunch of odd jobs, but understanding the sales and marketing side of it.

I realized there really was an opportunity here, so I created the first long distance telephone business in the country for college students: Collegiate Telephony Services. I did that at just shy of 21 years old, and by the way, Chris, this wasn't terribly sophisticated. I was handing out flyers underneath fraternity doors, posting them on telephone poles, and all that type of stuff. I went from upstate New York downstate to the city, and I started to work out toward the eastern coast—Boston, New Hampshire and all the schools there.

Over the course of the next five years I actually had a army of guys—many of them were friends from high school and college—who went with me and actually built this long distance phone business that we sold six years later to MCI, so that was the first hit. Then I spent a little bit of time actually traveling through Europe and just drinking wine and playing around for a bit.

CHRIS ATTWOOD: Enjoying your success.

GARY RYAN BLAIR: It was great time. Then I came across an article for Business Week. It was a fantastic article, because it talked about this train of technology called facsimile equipment. I didn't know anything about it; but what piqued my curiosity was the growth curve and the error that was on this chart from this so-called expert, and I said, "I'm going to

## Gary Ryan Blair

### The Goals Guy



look into this.”

I was getting bored doing nothing, for the most part, for a while, and I wound up actually buying a dealer. I bought it with a very unique stipulation. I realized that the key to success in selling those products, even before it had started, was the sell to a niche, to focus on a specific market rather than to take a geographic approach, which is the way most people marketed it.

I went to the associations. I went to financial institutions. I went to oil companies, and I just focused in on different areas. I grew that pretty significantly over about another four or five-year period of time and sold it to a company in Atlanta by the name of Ikon. They're a huge player in the office equipment industry. During this time I was actually dating a gal whose father was a VP of Dale Carnegie, and this is kind of my 'Rich Dad, Poor Dad' type story.

This gentleman was fantastic. He gave me a lot of books from NightingaleConant. He let me take the Dale Carnegie course, and I became certified. I got to know the players. I became certified in the Dale course, the sales course, the management course and a lot of other things. Mary and I broke up; but this set me on a course that I felt was something I wanted, really enjoyed doing, and was passionate about.

It came down to, where's my spot going to be? What am I going to do? How am I going to create an ownership position in the marketplace? That brings us to The Goals Guy. I spent a lot of time sitting back and thinking, "What do I truly excel at?" I knew that strategy was something that came easily to me. I was always somebody who was able to get from A to B pretty quickly and usually could figure out the most efficient plan possible. Everyone I spoke with told me that those truly were my strengths.

Then it was, "Does anyone own this?" Everyone talked about goal setting, but no one really owned that category. At the time—here's the funny part about the story—Tim the Tool Man was on TV. I thought it was corny, but you remember it. I knew I needed something that was memorable. If it was corny, I was cool with that. I played with it, played with it, played with it.

There was the Gadget Guru and all these different things. I thought, "The Goals Guy does it. People may not remember me, but they will always remember The Goals Guy." That was the genesis. It was kind of a self proclaimed title, if you will.

CHRIS ATTWOOD: Yes, it's great.

GARY RYAN BLAIR: Yes. I know we're going to talk about focus, but let me share this with everybody. I have a very pragmatic approach when it comes to building a business, and I use the word 'FOCUS', which is an acronym that I own. It stands for 'Follow One Course



---

Until Successful'. What I decided I wanted was to be the Kentucky Fried Chicken of my industry.

I didn't want to go out and do time-management workshops, negotiations workshops and be the jack-of-all-trades. I wanted people to know that when they picked up the phone and called this one company they were going to get the expert, the best possible information on the planet as it related to goal setting and strategic planning for their companies or for their lives.

The net result of that, quite frankly, is that I've either doubled or tripled in size six out of 10 years. This year, even in a down economy, it looks like we may actually wind up doubling, so it's really been a great, great run. However, it's been a very conscious and deliberate plan that's been fueled by a lot of passion.

CHRIS ATTWOOD: You have clearly tapped into something that is important to people. You're right; once you've heard The Goals Guy, whether or not you remember Gary Ryan Blair, you do remember The Goals Guy. "Who was that Goals Guy?" It's really very smart. Clearly your success has been built on an approach to goal setting and planning that works for people. Would you begin by telling us why goals are so important? Why did you choose that as the focus of your training and coaching activities?

GARY RYAN BLAIR: Why are they so important? I could probably ask you another question. How important is your heartbeat?

CHRIS ATTWOOD: Pretty important, at least if I want to live.

GARY RYAN BLAIR: Exactly. Without it, essentially you're road kill, toast, history, or whatever metaphor you want to use; the game is over. If you really take the time to think about it fundamentally, a plane can't take off unless it has a destination. If you're going to go on a trip you need to know your outcome is what you're moving toward. Every day a business is responsible for driving sales, profits, productivity or decreasing costs; they're all goal related.

They have some type of a central component that everything revolves around. Whether it's in school with kids who want to get their A's or B's, increase their SAT scores or what have you, our entire society revolves around the acquisition of a desirable outcome. It's all about goals, and that just plays into what I want to do. My whole focus in life is conversion. It's funny; we talk on the Internet about conversions.

You and I probably look at our conversion rates on our websites. I believe that I'm in the conversion business; but what I do is I help people to convert their dreams and their goals



---

into outcomes, into the result they look for, and I do it in the quickest, most efficient manner possible.

CHRIS ATTWOOD: Wonderful. You know that my partner, Janet, and I talk a lot about passion. What is the difference between goals and one's passions? Are they related? Are they the same? Are they different?

GARY RYAN BLAIR: Yes, they're very much related, because they need one another. They thrive off one another, but they're very different. The goals are the outcomes, the pragmatic end result that you are looking for. Let's just call a spade a spade, what it is. Passion, essentially, is the fuel, it is the carrier, and it is the delivery vehicle in order to achieve that outcome. They're definitely connected to one another.

CHRIS ATTWOOD: This leads me to the question: Can one have success without goals if you have lots of passion? The other way around is this: Can you have success without passion even if you have really great goals?

GARY RYAN BLAIR: It's a loaded question, but it's a great one. When we talk about goals and if you can be successful without them, I think it's an impossibility. If you're raising kids, you have to have some type of an outcome. You want to raise healthy, happy, self confident kids, for instance. If you don't go into it with that mindset, by default you're going to have some type of a different outcome.

I do believe that no matter who you are, where you are, or what it is you do that we all need to give purpose, meaning and direction to our lives. The most stressful events in your life, the times when you are the most concerned and stressed out, are really when you have no meaning, when you have no purpose and you have no direction. Chris, I get thousands of emails on a weekly basis from people all over the world, from the ages of 15 to 40 to 50, but I've been noticing something really interesting the last two or three years.

I've been asked to create products for people who are seniors, over 50. "Why don't you have products for this marketplace?" The fact that I'm 44 years old is the primary answer for it, and the other is this. A lot of the questions that come in are "I'm 50 years old. I have no idea. I feel like I've wasted so many years of my life." I always tell people, and this is interesting from a numerical standpoint, that from an actuarial standpoint the insurance companies make a decision, and then they get a pretty good estimation as to how long you and I are going to live.

Most people think they're going to live a good long time, but the fact of the matter is that the lifespan of an average American male is 72 years old, and the average lifespan for an average American woman is 74. That's the way the insurance companies work, and those

## Gary Ryan Blair

### The Goals Guy



---

are the numbers. That's the reason term life insurance policies run a certain way. Here's what it means, though, the bottom line to you and I.

Middle-aged is 36 years old. Now there are a lot of people who are asleep at the switch and who think they have all the time in the world to achieve their goals, dreams and ambitions. However, the fact of the matter is that time is such an unrecoverable asset, and unless you're on fire for what it is you want to achieve, quite frankly, you're wasting your life. That's a strong statement, but I think once you have strong opinions and you know something to be true, you should feel confident in stating those, and I do.

CHRIS ATTWOOD: Yes, absolutely. The other question is what if you have lots of passion but you don't have clear goals?

GARY RYAN BLAIR: Yes. It's like running through a dynamite factory with a match. You could be awfully enthusiastic, but get yourself in a lot of trouble. Some people are doing that. There are a lot of people who are zealous. They get excited about something, whether it's a new business, a new idea, a new concept. All that stuff is great, but you really need to think through it for these reasons.

Every decision that you make and every goal that you decide to go after—and this is an undesirable reality that people don't want to embrace—involves risk, involves sacrifice, and involves some type of cost that is associated with it. For you to go off halfcocked and enthusiastic without thinking through all the steps or things that are involved with it, again, is not only wasting your time; it's not really a smart move in my opinion.

CHRIS ATTWOOD: Absolutely. That makes complete sense; but what about those people you mentioned who are 50, 60, or even 65 or 70 years old on one end of the spectrum, and then the people who are 20 to 30 who are also saying, "I just don't have a clue as to what it is that I really want to achieve in my life. I don't know." The older ones will often say, "I've gone down this one path for a long time because I was told that's what I should do, but it's not fulfilling for me. It's not getting me where I want to go."

The younger ones are saying, "There are so many opportunities out there. I don't know which direction I should go." How do people get clear about what goals are appropriate for them?

GARY RYAN BLAIR: That's another great question. Let me take a couple of stabs at it. Number one, I teach a process. It's really kind of funny because I try to shock people to stretch the paradigm and see things from a different perspective, so let's do that now. If you think about Parkinson's, Alzheimer's or something like that, those are considered, in layman's terms, to be a long, slow goodbye to your muscle control system. Let's just call it what it is; that's where people die slowly.



On the other side of the coin I look at success this way. There are a few ways with which people find their passion and calling in life. Number one, it's a Freudian term called SEE and it stands for Significant Emotional Experience. This could be the death of a loved one, it could be the birth of child, it could be winning the lottery, or it could be going bankrupt. Whatever it is, it is a significant sudden emotional experience that comes, in some cases, right out of left field.

It's one of life's massive wakeup calls, and it's kind of what Christopher Reeve had. He was a successful actor, quite wealthy, with a happy family. After his significant emotional experience, his purpose in life had nothing to do with making movies; it was all about finding a cure for spinal cord injuries and being able to walk again. Then we have some people, the small minority of people, who just know what they want.

These are the kids who, at five or six years old, just know they want to be a doctor, a physicist or a performer. They're freaks of nature, and it's delightful when you see it, because they truly are talented. Now we get to the majority of life.

CHRIS ATTWOOD: All the rest of us, right?

GARY RYAN BLAIR: Exactly, but do you know what it is? It's just the opposite; it's a long, slow hello. That's the great way to look at it. That's the way most people find their purposes, their passions and their meanings in life. It's a long, slow hello. Some people get it at 20, some at 25, some at 35, some at 85, and some never get it. The reality is that the vast majority of us have to make a bunch of decisions, we have to learn good judgment from bad judgment, we sometimes have to learn right from wrong, what we like, what we don't like, what our boundaries should be, sacrifices.

Eventually, we come to a certain point in time when we have our own philosophical puberty and wake up and say, "This is what I'm supposed to do with my life." That's one way. The other is this. My kids take Suzuki violin and piano. They're young. I have a four, six, and seven year old. One thing I love about Suzuki is he teaches what are called small consistent wins.

The first lesson that the kids learn is just to learn how to hold the case. The second lesson is they learn the name of the instrument. Then they learn how to hold the instrument. These are individual lessons, and the beautiful part about it is that the child masters each lesson at each lesson, so they're considered an expert by the time they move on to the next lesson.

When I teach people who are really unsure, I teach a process of small incremental wins. Very often, what happens to people, especially when they're lost or confused, is they sometimes get intimidated by even the smallest of goals, and the large ones are overwhelming. My advice is always to pick something that you can break down into a two or



three hour increment so you can see the relationship between cause and effect, between start to victory, and work toward it.

When you achieve something, those endorphins flow. You feel good about yourself. You then take that small activity and you go on to the next one. You can layer them so they get bigger, bolder, grander, and more ambitious. That's the approach you need to take.

CHRIS ATTWOOD: That makes a lot of sense. You've written a book called The Ten Commandments of Goal Setting. Would you share with us some of those commandments and why they're so important?

GARY RYAN BLAIR: Absolutely. By the way, this is kind of a funny Zig Ziglar type thing. He always talked about how the 10 Commandments aren't called the 10 Suggestions! The reason I like that is because I actually wrote the book with the same exact mindset. These are commandments; these are must dos. You will not be able to achieve success and the outcomes you're looking for unless you follow this specific approach.

As silly as this is, the first one is 'Thou Shall Be Decisive'. The reason I put that first, Chris, is because you can't do anything until you make a decision. You can't watch a movie, you can't have a bowl of cereal, you can't drive down the block, and you can't go left or right until you make a decision. Put aside integrity and everything else. From a pragmatic standpoint, that is the number one leadership skill. Leaders are very decisive.

We've got to do that; we've got to understand the importance of decisiveness. People might say this old saying, "You've got to play the hand that life deals you." I don't know where that silly stuff comes from. It's a bunch of boloney. The reality people need to understand—anyone listening right now—is that the hand that you are holding right now is the hand you've dealt yourself through all the choices and all the decisions you've made up until this point in your life.

You are exactly where you are right now because it's where you planned to be. You are a summation right now of all of your choices and all the decisions that you've made. You can not argue that; that's it. What people have to understand is that if they want to get better outcomes, they need to make better decisions. Fundamentally, that's the first commandment in the 10 Commandments.

CHRIS ATTWOOD: I have a quick question on that. One of the biggest challenges that people who have not been doing that will often say have is, "What do I do when I don't know what the right decision is?"

GARY RYAN BLAIR: Again, there is only one simple answer. You just have to make a



decision, and here's why. If you take two things into consideration—one is decisiveness and one is being right—you have to ask yourself, "Which one, from a pragmatic standpoint, makes more sense?" I know emotionally we want to be right. We want a guarantee. We want the outcome that we're looking for.

However, the fact remains that you will never know if it's right until you make a decision and support it by action. Once you take action on a decision, you will receive feedback: yes or no, good or bad, right or wrong, left or right. Based on the feedback, you make your next decision. Fundamentally, decisiveness is more important than being right, because you'll never know if you're right until you make a decision. That's just the way it works.

CHRIS ATTWOOD: That's so powerful, Gary, because what you're basically telling us is that even when you don't know what the right decision is, make a decision. You'll get feedback and, if necessary, you can then correct your course. Is that right?

GARY RYAN BLAIR: That's exactly it. Life is a constant feedback loop. Look at it this way. Trying to live your life without failure is like, I suppose, driving an automobile without a steering wheel. It's not going to happen.

CHRIS ATTWOOD: What's another commandment for goal setting?

GARY RYAN BLAIR: We talked about focus, and that's the second one. The best way to look at focus is this. We used the acronym before of Follow One Course Until Successful, but let's go a little bit further. Let's say you have a decision to achieve a goal. It might be to lose 15 or 20 pounds or maybe even to pay off \$20,000 in debt. It's irrelevant what the goal is. The decision to achieve that type of a weight loss goal is never made once.

It is made every time the dessert tray comes, every time the stairs versus the elevator comes, every time you feel a temptation or an urge late in the night. Focus is a reinforcement of a decision. That's what focus is all about. Focus is the glue that holds the decision in place.

CHRIS ATTWOOD: Wonderful. That's very powerful. These are great. Will you share another one with us?

GARY RYAN BLAIR: Sure. You need to write them down. You need to put them down on paper. This next one is a funny one for people, and here's another ridiculous lie we say to ourselves; and they are lies because they're convenient. Many people move toward convenience rather than the things that are hard, necessary and inconvenient. Fundamentally, your mind is blessed with permanent memory but it's cursed with lousy recall, and I'll prove that point.

## Gary Ryan Blair

### The Goals Guy



You go to the supermarket tonight with a mental list in your head of about 15 to 20 items you want to get, and I promise you that somewhere between the green peas and the apples your brain is going to take a vacation. You're going to be scratching your head thinking, "My gosh! What was I supposed to get?" Here is the funny part. As you get home and you unpack the bag in the kitchen, all of a sudden, that's when memory strikes, "Oh! I forgot this. I forgot that. I forgot the milk."

The perfect solution to going to the store is just to make a list, follow it and check it off. It's really simple, and it provides you with a navigational tool. Your mind is a thinking instrument. You think best on paper because you can get the emotions away, and it allows you to put on paper all the individual steps you need to take. The reason people don't do it is because they're lazy and they come up with the convenient alibi, "It's no big deal."

I promise you that there's never been a builder who's built a house without blueprints. I've never given a speech without having an outline, an introduction and a wrap up. I've never done a product launch without having a day-by-day, step-by-step activity plan of what I was going to do. I don't know anyone who has achieved a level of success who has not taken the time to put pen to paper.

By the way, if you want to go through the process, here's the way it goes. It's kind of like a genesis process, but you give birth to a goal a few times. Number one, you give birth to it visually; you see it in your mind. Everything is almost like the speed of light or sound. You see the outcome in advance, which sometimes comes in an instant. That's number one. The second place you give birth or bring it to life is on paper.

When you take that visual in your mind and you start writing it out, you give it shape, you give it depth, you give it dimension. Then, the third place it finally gets to the outcome is when you take action. It always goes from a vision to a sketch to action in real time. That's the way you make it work.

CHRIS ATTWOOD: That makes a lot of sense. It's like building a house, it sounds like. If you're going to build a building, you go through that same process in one way or another. Some people have set goals in the past, but for one reason or another they were disappointed. They didn't achieve the goal that they thought they wanted, and now they have a fear of goal setting. They don't want to have to experience that disappointment again. What would you tell people in that situation?

GARY RYAN BLAIR: That's all right. First, I would tell them—and hear what I'm about to say really closely—about a term called 'informed consent' in law. If you go to a lawyer, you tell him your situation, and the lawyer gives you some professional advice; but you choose not to use it or implement that advice, you can't come back to the lawyer and say, "You were retarded, you were defunct, you were incompetent."



## Gary Ryan Blair

### The Goals Guy



---

It was informed consent. I am a performance improvement expert. I help people get results. Right now I want you to listen to this as though this were informed consent, as information from your attorney. There is a right way and there is wrong way. There is a good way and there's an absolute best way of going about getting results. Here's the best way, and it's probably the simplest metaphor you'll ever get in your life.

If you do not do what I'm about to share with you—in my opinion it's worth millions— you're making a big mistake. When you get done with this call, even now if you're listening to it, go into your kitchen and grab a cookbook. There are five things I want you to concentrate on, and this is exactly the way success is manifested in the way that you achieve your goals.

The first thing you'll notice when you open up that cookbook is a beautiful four color picture. That picture, Chris, represents what? The final end result, correct? That's your outcome. It is beautiful. It is perfect. It is in complete detail. Step number one, that's exactly how you approach goal setting. You need to take the time to sit down and visualize in advance the outcome that you're looking for in complete detail.

I'll tell you that this is exactly what an interior designer does when they walk into a house. They can see the outcome. This is what an architect can do when they walk out and see a lousy piece of land; they can actually see a temple, a chapel, a gorgeous condominium, or something along those lines. This is what a chef can do when they sit down and they look at all these different ingredients and realize they can create, whip up, a masterpiece.

They see the outcome in advance. We're all visual performance artists, and we need to accept that fact. Number two, you have to understand that there's a sequence to all activity. If you look at a cookbook you'll notice that there are steps one, two, three, four and five. You don't just, let's say, put all the ingredients on it, throw it in the oven, and three days later come back and turn the oven on.

There is a sequence you have to respect. If you learn a merengue or a dance of any type, if you open up a combination lock, there's a sequence to making it work. That's the key for a lot of people, and very often people forget the sequence. They want to get the outcome and enjoy success without having gone through the process. Steps three, four and five, to me, are the most important.

The ingredients in a cookbook are specific, they're absolutely precise. They will tell you that you need sugar, you need salt, you need vinegar, you need flour, you need this and you need that. It's absolutely precise in the ingredients. The next thing, point number four, is they're measurable. Every single thing in that cookbook is going to tell you a teaspoon, a tablespoon, an ounce, a pinch of salt, or whatever the case might be.



Last, and this is the kicker, there is a deadline. There is time and temperature. My question to you, Chris, is this. On a scale of zero to 100, if you follow that recipe, if you respect it, if you looked at the visual, if you knew what you were looking for, if you respected the sequence and did it exactly the way it was put there on paper, if you used the exact same ingredients, if you followed the measurement systems to a tee and cooked it to the exact specifications, what is the likelihood from zero to 100 you'd get the outcome you were looking for?

CHRIS ATTWOOD: About 100.

GARY RYAN BLAIR: You got it. This is exactly what franchises are. People talk about success systems. That's what a cookbook is. When people pay \$1 million to \$2 million for a McDonald's it's the same thing you're getting from Martha Stewart for \$24.95. You're getting a proven success system. We've all heard that success leaves clues, but in my opinion a cookbook is the best success manual you'll ever have or ever find in your life because it provides you with connections between cause and effect.

It shows you the outcome that you can anticipate in advance, and it gives you a complete roadmap, so all you need to do is plug and play, and you're home. For some reason, that is a missing element. Most people never get a good education as to the right way to go about doing it.

CHRIS ATTWOOD: I think this strikes the thing that is such a big issue for most people. They may set a great goal, but the 'how' is what mystifies them. In the analogy of the cookbook, when I buy the cookbook I'm buying the experience of someone who's gone through, perhaps, hundreds of trials and errors, getting the wrong outcome, getting different outcomes, and getting all sorts of funny outcomes until they figured out how to get that particular outcome. They were then able to make it available to me. Is that true?

GARY RYAN BLAIR: Yes. It's another very good question. Life, without a doubt, is an experiment; but here's the beautiful part about it, and this is the thing that's missing for a lot of people. There are three parts to every goal. There is what you want, why you want it, and how you're going to get there. Let's be perfectly clear; the 'how' has already been documented. If you want to run a marathon, somebody did it and wrote a book about it.

Do you want to cook a soufflé? Somebody figured it out and already wrote the recipe. Do you want to build a house or a deck? Do you want to buy a boat? Whatever it is that you want to do, trust me, there is really nothing new on this planet in terms of types of goals or outcomes. Grow a business? Grow profits? Double your income? Unplug a toilet? You name it; it's been done!

The 'how' has already been figured out, and that's the beautiful part about it. That's where



---

most people get so mixed up and confused. This is why it's important for you to continue to read books. Focus. Ask people questions. "How did you do this?" Why? For this simple reason: the smartest people in life leverage other people's successes, other people's failures, and other people's mistakes. What they do is take those lessons and they leapfrog over a whole bunch of hurdles. Again, that's another missing thing in a lot of people's repertoires

CHRIS ATTWOOD: Absolutely. I raised one of the obstacles, but from your experience what are some of the biggest obstacles or challenges that people face in creating effective goals and achieving those goals? You've touched on it, but would you speak to it directly?

GARY RYAN BLAIR: Yes, let's go to the end first, the achievement aspect of it. This is ultimately what the conversion process is all about. Let's pick a couple sports: tennis, baseball, and golf. The most important part of your golf or tennis swing, of your punch in karate, or of anything you're doing, quite frankly, is not where you start. Velocity always comes from where you finish. It's your follow through.

That's where most people are weak. People start with good intentions. I really question people's intentions, and I think many of them start off with good intentions, with honorable intentions, but they run out of gas somewhere along the line; they don't follow through. What happens is they run into obstacles. They run into setbacks. They run into difficulties.

They expect everything to be a whole bunch of green lights, so they suck their thumbs, focus on the problem, and wind up becoming a victim. People have to understand that you have to subject your goals to failure, to rejection, to difficulty, to sacrifice for the same reason that you subject the forest to rain, sleet and snow. That's what allows you to grow, sustain yourself, and grow big, strong and tall.

That's another thing that's missing for a lot of people, that mindset. Another thing is a Vegas term called the 'over under'. What a lot of people do is overestimate what they can achieve, but they underestimate the cost associated with achieving it. They get so excited about what it is they want that they never really take the time to consider what it's going to take in order to get there.

Chris, we're going to connect the dots even tighter. Here is an old saying, another one you need to stick a fork in. People say that the first step is always the hardest. I don't know whose crazy grandmother came up with this stuff, but there is not a shred of truth to that at all. The first step is the easiest, and that's what most people do. They say to themselves this ridiculous mantra they repeat, "The first step is the hardest. You have to jump in. Let's go."

The problem they don't understand is that the second step is the hardest. The second step

## Gary Ryan Blair

### The Goals Guy



is what reveals the cost. On the first step you're blind to cost, risk, investment and sacrifice because the only thing you are is deluded by the opportunity, by the excitement of the goal. Then you get to step number two. You realize when you buy that exercise equipment that it's not going to be easy. It's not going to be overnight. You're not going to rub this stuff on your thighs and look like a prom queen tomorrow.

Ultimately, what happens is that people realize, "My gosh! It's going to take more time. It's going to cost more money. It's going to do this and that," and they quit. They walk away, and that's a big thing. This is why goal setting and planning are so important. If you think about it, planning is the only—and I emphasize 'only'—tool that you have in your arsenal that allows you to make a very good hypothetical guess about what it's going to take in advance.

It's the one tool that allows you to sit back and say, "How much time? What are the risks? What's the true money? What is the real cost associated with the achievement of this goal? Fundamentally, is it worth it?" It's a rare person who takes the time to understand that whole conversation.

CHRIS ATTWOOD: That makes a lot of sense. I want to take this from a slightly different angle, because most of us by now know that different people have different learning styles. Some people find it easier to learn by hearing, some more by seeing, some have to actually experience it, to go through it. Do these different learning styles, these different ways of absorbing and processing information, affect the way in which one goes about the planning that you're talking about?

GARY RYAN BLAIR: You're absolutely right when you make that comment. For us, who basically provide people with useful information, it's smart for us to make it available in multiple formats. I do acknowledge the fact that some people are much more visual. Some people do like to write it out, and some just want to get busy and jump into it. Ultimately, though, let's just put everything aside. It doesn't matter what the goal is. Eventually, you've got to roll up your sleeves and get to work; you've got to get busy.

There is no substitute for purposeful action, absolutely no substitute. I tell people all the time, "You may be smarter than me. You may be more creative in different ways. You may be taller than me, and I don't really care. I'll tell you right now you will never out hustle me. I will outwork you because I want it that much more, fundamentally." This is the key thing that people have to realize, that when all is said and done, the most committed and most passionate person wins.

That really is true. The most committed and the most passionate person wins. I have to tell you, Chris, something funny. I know we talked about this beforehand; but what excites me

## Gary Ryan Blair

### The Goals Guy



---

about life in general is that my heroes over the years have changed a lot. When I was in my 20s, I was interested in money. I was interested in acquisitions. I was interested in all those things, but there has been a strong value shift in my life all for the better.

The people who truly are my heroes are the people who I look up to and who I'm really attracted to. You talk about the Law of Attraction, I'm attracted to people who are passionate. I love a guy like Steve Irwin, who was taken from us way too early. I love a Dick Vitale. I love a Bette Midler. I love an Emeril Lagasse. This is someone who is excited about food. This is somebody who's turned on about bloody alligators in the Outback.

Just look at him; the guy has a perfect face for radio and silly little shorts, but you can't take your eyes off him because he's so enthusiastic and passionate about the subject. I find myself so drawn to those types of people. The reality is that those are the ones who get things done in this world.

CHRIS ATTWOOD: It's true. Yet, it is interesting, just going back to earlier in our conversation, that passion itself is not enough. It is having passion focused to an outcome that seems to achieve those results. One of the big issues that comes up, frankly, in the world that Janet and I inhabit a lot of the time is this difference between people who are what I would call left brained analytical thinkers—what I typically think of as the planners of the world.

It's easy for them to think out steps. Listening to you, Gary, your mind, it appears, just naturally falls in and is able to take the pieces of something and put them in a logical order, put them in a structure. I can see you creating a step-by-step plan. Then there are other people who find that kind of thinking almost impossible: the artists, the musicians, and those we typically call the right brained thinkers.

They tend to absorb information or even experience their lives by synthesizing information, taking everything in all at once and then somehow creating an outcome. I wonder if you have any advice or suggestions for those right brainers? The left brained people, the analytical thinkers who have that kind of strategic and analytical thinking, once they're trained to do it, my sense is that it comes fairly naturally to them.

What about those people who don't think in that way, whose brains don't seem to function that way? Is there a way they can also take advantage of this power of planning and goal-setting?

GARY RYAN BLAIR: There are. I'm fortunate that I actually am kind of ambidextrous. I bounce between both parts of the brain, and I don't think you find that in all that many people.



---

CHRIS ATTWOOD: No, I don't think you will. Most people seem to go one side or the other.

GARY RYAN BLAIR: Agreed. I absolutely agree. I do run into it a lot, quite frankly. I don't do all that much coaching anymore because my schedule is tight, but I love working with creative people just for the ideas. What I realize, though, is that more than anything else, as much as that was a strength it was also a weakness because they couldn't focus their minds. They couldn't take the time to methodically think this out.

The smart ones, at least the ones I've worked with, who built some galleries or have done a number of things, have surrounded themselves and realized that they need people who are strong where they're weak. My advice to people is always not to change who you are. There are always areas in which we could all be more disciplined, we could all be more focused, we could all be more consistent, but fundamentally, if that's the type of personality you are, acknowledge it, accept it.

Don't use it as an excuse. Realize it and fall in love with that aspect of your personality. However, you have to realize you still have to get results. You still have to deliver the goods. You still have to get outcomes. The smartest thing you could do is to surround yourself with people who can support those areas where you are perhaps not as strong or sustainable.

CHRIS ATTWOOD: That makes complete sense. It also takes us out of the thought, "Somehow I have to become good at something that I have no inclination whatsoever to be good at." That's a great thing. Gary, how long have you been teaching this information now?

GARY RYAN BLAIR: I'm approaching 10 years on it right now.

CHRIS ATTWOOD: Ten years. Would you just share with our listeners a few of the stories? When people apply the principles and practices that you teach, what is really possible for them? Would you mind sharing with us just a few of the stories?

GARY RYAN BLAIR: Sure. Do you want to go to the most extreme, or do you want to go the calm, progressive approach?

CHRIS ATTWOOD: I'd like to hear a little bit of both.

GARY RYAN BLAIR: Years ago there was an acronym that came out, and I think a rather clumsy one, BHAG. I'm sure you've heard of it and that most of the people listening have.

CHRIS ATTWOOD: What is it again?

## Gary Ryan Blair

### The Goals Guy



---

GARY RYAN BLAIR: BHAG, a Big, Hairy, Audacious Goals. Jim Collins came up with it. I love Jim, but quite frankly, I've never been enamored with that concept. I've been teaching something for an even longer period of time than since he came out with that. I actually call it the Big BANG. The BANG for me is what I call Bold, Ambitious, Noble Goals. One of the things I do with each one of my clients is I want everyone throughout the year to have one big BANG.

Here, I want to start with one big BANG. Let me give you a definition of what this is all about. I talk about Bold, and let's just talk about Amazon for a minute as an example. What Jeff Bezos did, in my opinion, was extraordinary. Not only is he of physically small and demure nature, this is a guy who had unproven technology and no track record whatsoever. He had nothing, not even a business plan. He was writing in the car as he was driving across the country.

At the very beginning, he was very undercapitalized. He was putting the money in himself, and he was attacking an industry that was so entrenched for well over 100 years, in terms of the way the distribution model was set up. He had the audacity and the boldness to approach it and say, "Amazon: The World's Largest Bookstore." He took that posture from the beginning. That's bold!

We need to be bold, and I tell this to everyone who is listening. When do you think your finest hour is going to come? Do you think it's going to come when you're home making an excuse, focusing on a problem, sucking your thumb, or whatever the case may be? The bottom line is your greatest hour is when you step up to the plate and you demonstrate boldness.

In my opinion, that is such an underutilized success skill that very few people even talk about, but it's such an important thing that you need in your portfolio of skills. Next is Ambition. We know the word 'ambition'. I know Starbucks is having some difficulty right now, but let's use it for just a moment. Howard Schultz comes into the equation. He made a decision. His ambitious vision, if you will, was to be the third place people visited: home first, work second, and ultimately it would be at Starbucks.

That would be the third place people would come to visit. What a great vision. It's really easy to conceptualize. What he said was, "We are going to be the world's most recognized consumer brand in the world by 2012." That was the ambitious objective for that company. Right now, the number one is Coca Cola; they've been that way for a number of years. Starbucks, even though they're having trouble, are progressively moving up.

Right now they're the number four most recognized consumer brand in the world. That's extraordinary for a company that has not been around for all that long. Then we have Noble.

## Gary Ryan Blair

### The Goals Guy



If you take the work of someone like Jimmy Carter—and forget about his politics, which are absolutely irrelevant to this equation—what this man has done out of office is far more important than what he did in, from the example that he set to the contribution he’s made.

At this point in life, with the 25 years he’s put into it, he and he wife have put more than 2.5 million people back into a home. They have changed the entire conversation about subsidized housing. What you will find if you wrap those three things together— boldness, ambition and nobility—is that rather than what a lot of our business leaders are doing around selfishness and ‘What’s in it for me?’ put all that stuff aside and use that as the driver. You’ll create a big BANG.

I’ll tell you right now that I just created a big BANG with this 100Day Challenge. I went after it and I have another huge one that I’m working on right now. My challenge for myself is to create two this year. The first one is done and gone, and the second one’s wheels are in motion right now. I’m excited about it. I think everybody at the beginning of the year should do that. The question is, who has created big BANGS?

Quite frankly, a number of clients I’ve worked with have done some pretty extraordinary things, from charitable organizations to starting businesses. For some it’s to go from bankrupt to millionaire in less than a year. I’ve been involved in that. For others it involved taking projects that many people left for dead, turning them around, and making them enormously profitable. There’s a lot of great stuff.

CHRIS ATTWOOD: Wonderful. I know you’ve created a specific structure to help people go through this process of creating their own personal strategic plan. Can you tell us a little bit about what that is, how it works, and how people might be able to take advantage of it?

GARY RYAN BLAIR: Absolutely. Let me start there, because this is a great website to go to: [www.PersonalStrategicPlan.com](http://www.PersonalStrategicPlan.com). It’s really simple and straightforward. Here’s the what, why, how, and all the good stuff about it. Companies have to do this every year. It’s pretty smart for an executive to go off and figure out what the strategic mission is for the company, identify the company vision, the value, what you want to leave behind for a legacy, and most importantly, what strategic goals they’re going to achieve, and the deadlines associated with that.

If we know that principle works in business, which we do, then we have to sit back, look at it, and just ask the next logical question: Why can’t I create my own personal strategic plan? That’s the fundamental thought process I went through. I help individuals and companies. I go in and actually create the strategic plan for the company or division, and then I work with the staff in order to create their personal plans in order to execute them.

## Gary Ryan Blair

### The Goals Guy



Then I took it online, asking, “How can I help the masses? How can I show people the right way to go about connecting all the different parts of their lives?” That’s what a personal strategic plan is all about, identifying your vision, your mission, your values, your goals, your measurement system. You put together your deadlines. You put together all the necessary components, and you get out there and make it happen.

CHRIS ATTWOOD: That’s fabulous. As we come to the end of our interview, will you, Gary, share with us some practical things that people can do in the coming week to begin putting into practice some of the principles you’ve been talking about?

GARY RYAN BLAIR: Yes, without a doubt. Let’s focus on the word ‘deadlines’ for just a minute, because I think this is probably one of the best things I could give to everybody. First, for most people the word ‘deadline’ has a negative association. They get a rash, they get hives, and there’s a negative association. The first thing you need to do is to change the association and realize that deadlines are a not a tool of punishment.

They are a tool of accountability. I also want you to think about your credit card bills, about your mortgage payment, about your college loans, or any type of bill you have. Each one of them has a deadline associated with it as well as a consequence. The reason you pay is because you have made a commitment to that deadline, and secondly, you’re afraid of the consequence.

In life, the funny thing about it is we forget this principle when it comes to our own lives. Many people think, “I work best at the last minute,” but this is another ridiculous thing, like the Tooth Fairy. Here’s the thing; no one works best at the last minute. You work sloppiest at the last minute. The only reason you’re working is because you have procrastinated, waited until there is no time left on the clock, and you’re forced to perform.

If you take the initiative and put deadlines on everything—you have to accept this fact, and I think this is absolutely vital—projects will take as much time as you allow for them. I’ll repeat that. Projects, goals, outcomes—whatever it is you’re working on—take as much time as you allow for them. If you only allow 10 minutes in order to get the outcome you’re looking for, that’s it.

If you allow 10 days, 10 years, or whatever the case may be, that’s how long it’s going to take. Until and unless you start setting deadlines throughout the day, holding yourself accountable and enforcing consequences, what will happen is you’re not going to make a tremendous amount of progress in life at all. You’ll find that all high achievers are driven by strong internal deadlines and commitments to which they hold themselves accountable.

CHRIS ATTWOOD: I have a question about this before you go on to the next one.

## Gary Ryan Blair

### The Goals Guy



Does that mean that if there isn't a clear consequence, you create the consequence for yourself? Or, are you simply stating what the consequence will be if you don't miss the deadline?

GARY RYAN BLAIR: That's another good observation on your part. There are two ways to go about it. By the way, the word 'consequence' is not just bad. There are positive consequences, positive results, of your activities. There are also negative consequences. Let's make sure we realize that consequences are both good and bad. Here is the beautiful part about it. I go work out with a personal trainer in the morning.

I'm in great shape; my body fat is down to 12%, and I feel as strong as I did when I was 20; but I'll tell you this much. When I slack off, the trainer I'm working with is an absolute SOB. He piles on more weight and he just forces me. He does negatives. I have to tell you that as much as I want to cuss him out right then, I'm appreciative when it's over, because I did slack off. I appreciate that sense of consequence and accountability.

I do it in my own life. I tell my wife and kids, "These are some of the goals that I have for the month financially. These are the time commitments I have and how long I'm going to be," and so on and so forth. "As a result, here are some of the things that we're going to do. Here's where we're going to go. These are things we're going to plan for." I try to get mutual buyin from everybody in my family. There are goals in my office. I want them actively engaged, but I also want them to realize that if this goal is not met, we're not going to enjoy this.

They know to give Papa his time. They know to allow him to do a little bit of planning. They know, whether it's a 10:00 in the evening call or anything like that, to be respectful of that, because they're going to enjoy the fruits of it. They also realize that I'm going to enforce the consequence that we're not going to enjoy these things. I think many people are afraid to do that.

CHRIS ATTWOOD: What do you mean when you say that they're afraid to do that? Why would someone be afraid to do that?

GARY RYAN BLAIR: I think many people, flat out, will say they're going to achieve a goal. They'll say, "If I don't, I don't," or whatever the case might be. They're afraid or uncomfortable with the idea of enforcing pain or inflicting discomfort amongst themselves. That's the point I'm getting at. Here's the thing, and let me see if I can be absolutely, perfectly clear on this.

High achievers are driven by the desire for pleasing results, but the vast majority of people are driven by the desire for pleasing methods. That is a huge distinction. High achievers are

## Gary Ryan Blair

### The Goals Guy



driven by the desire for pleasing results, but the vast majority of people are interested and driven by the desire for pleasing methods and methodology. Once you get past that you understand that results are everything. Ultimately we've got to produce, put food on the table, deliver an outcome, add value to our clients, or whatever it comes down to, and many people get so mixed up because they think everything needs to be, again, green lights, fun and easy, convenient at all times. Life just doesn't work that way.

CHRIS ATTWOOD: You shared with us the importance of setting deadlines and enforcing consequences. What's another thing that our listeners and readers can do to begin putting into practice what you've been talking about today?

GARY RYAN BLAIR: You got it. This is really part of this challenge that I have in place right now, this 100Day Challenge. The process that I teach everybody, and I'll reinforce to everyone right now, is the importance of starting the day fast, starting with a win. A win, very simply, is this. You need to begin the day with a plan. You need to prioritize it so you can achieve two to three outcomes as quickly as possible. This is not just drinking your coffee.

What I'm talking about is this. What you want to do is be able to build momentum and build excitement as early in the day as possible. Forget about the idea, "I'm not a morning person," or "I'm an afternoon person." The best thing that you could ever do is to start the day fast. Identify something where you can connect the dots between cause and effect. Get an outcome. Get that winning feeling. Build momentum to be a nonstop locomotive throughout the day. That's a great way to start your day.

CHRIS ATTWOOD: That's fabulous. Deadlines and enforcing consequences, starting with a win, getting that momentum going, and what's one more?

GARY RYAN BLAIR: Another one? I'll give you this; this is a beauty. My definition of rewards, when I look at rewards and I tie them to goals, is this. This is my definition, so you'll never see it in a textbook. A goal is a glorious celebration of all that is good and virtuous. I'll repeat that. A goal, once achieved—and that's the emphasis—is a glorious celebration of all that is good and virtuous. If you take that and dissect it, and you truly do an anatomy test on it, what you'll realize is that once a goal is achieved with honor, it is a symbol.

It's a symbol of decisiveness, of focus, of commitment, of passion, of perseverance, of follow through, of all that is good and virtuous about humanity. In my opinion, that's the reason we give green jackets at the Masters. That's the reason we give gold medals at the Olympics. It's the reason we give ribbons to a kid in a three legged race. It is a symbol and it is a celebration of all that is good and virtuous about humanity.

That's why you want to set and achieve your goals. It's not just the outcome, but it's who



---

you become in the enforcement of those intrinsic values, which is the greatest celebration you'll ever experience.

CHRIS ATTWOOD: That's wonderful. Am I getting from within your description that there's a value to being clear about the rewards that you will receive as a result of setting and achieving your goals?

GARY RYAN BLAIR: Yes. That's another great observation. What you need to do—and this is something many people have never really been educated on, so I'll give you a quick and right way to do it—is to tie your rewards to things that have what I call functional value. No one needs to know that that Cross pen or Bic pen in your pocket is a reward for losing five pounds. No one has to know about those red shoes you just bought, that new blouse or that tie.

What I want you to think is this. Rather than go to the store and buy something at the Gap because it's 50% off, I want you to forget about that whole conversation. I want you to go to the store and buy something at the Gap because you set a goal, you achieved it, and that's the reward. Celebrate it. The next time you wear those pants, that blouse, use that pen or watch, you're going to remind yourself of exactly the price you paid. You're going to know the exact intrinsic association to that reward, and that's a great way to go about living your life.

CHRIS ATTWOOD: Number one, set deadlines and clarify the consequences. Set the consequences for achieving them or failing to achieve them. Number two, begin with a win to start the momentum. Number three, be clear on the rewards for achieving your goals. Is that right? Thank you, Gary. At Healthy Wealthy nWise we believe there's a great power of intention to manifest outcomes. We would appreciate it if you would share with us your current, most important project and what intention we and our listeners can hold for your success.

GARY RYAN BLAIR: I absolutely love the question. I am staring eyeball to eyeball at something called [www.TenMillionResolutions.com](http://www.TenMillionResolutions.com). What I want to do is this. Jobs, when he first came out with the computer at Apple, wanted to change the world one person at a time. What I want to do here is this. Right now, to me, there's a perfect storm. We have economic challenges. We have some educational challenges in our country and, quite honestly, globally.

We have a whole host of different things that people are running into, whether it's downsizing, losing their jobs, or people just looking to make changes in the new year. To me, I call it the perfect storm from the standpoint of finding your purpose and your meaning in life. What I'm doing with this 10 Million Resolutions is I want to create the world's largest



## Gary Ryan Blair

### The Goals Guy



---

change initiative. I want people to identify what their resolutions are. I want them to be able to create a map.

I want to give them a roadmap in order to do that at the beginning of the year, not just with a dud goal they run after, work at for two or three days, and then laugh that they forgot about their resolution. I want people to realize that we talk about the sanctity of life, but I want them to think about the sanctity of their goals, the sanctity of their passions, the sanctity of their dreams, and realize that this is what life is made of.

It's important. I want to be able to create the world's largest change initiative by helping 10 million people set and achieve their resolutions within the year. That's what I'm working on.

CHRIS ATTWOOD: We'll join you in seeing the successful completion of that. Ten million resolutions set and achieved. What single idea would you leave us with tonight?

GARY RYAN BLAIR: There is a lot we can go through, but here's a thought more than anything else. This is my own personal philosophy. I believe that everything you do counts. I teach a process called 'Weapons of Mass Production'. Essentially, there are three things that you have complete control over: what you think, what you say, and what you do. These are the tools; these are the weapons you have in order to get results.

We talk about belief systems, attracting a reality, and all that type of stuff. All of that is great, and we need to use that appropriately: what you say, the words that come out of your mouth and the actions you engage in. What we have to realize is that everything counts. Everything you think, everything you say, and everything you do leads you one step closer to your goals or one step further away.

There are no insignificant decisions. There are no insignificant conversations. There are no insignificant actions. Everything is either an advance or a retreat in a pursuit of what is good, noble and passionate in the outcome you're looking for. I will leave you with that.

CHRIS ATTWOOD: Wonderful. Gary, thank you so much. This has been quite a remarkable interview. Listening to you, I am struck by your clarity. One of the things that we say in The Passion Test is when you're clear, what you choose to have show up in your life will and only to the extent you're clear. If there is one thing I take away from listening to you it's your absolute clarity in this area of life that you have taken as your mission to help and support people in being able to achieve and realize results that they wish to have in their lives.

I know for all of us listening, that clarity gives us a great confidence in our own ability; following your guidance and using the tools that you've made available, to actually achieve those results. Thank you for sharing your clarity with us tonight.

Mi Hamba



**Gary Ryan Blair**  
**The Goals Guy**



---

GARY RYAN BLAIR: You're a good man, and thank you for having me on. I applaud what you are doing and the value that you are bringing into this world. Thank you.

CHRIS ATTWOOD: Thank you, Gary. For our listeners, you can learn how to create your own personal strategic plan using Gary's principles by going to [www.HealthyWealthynWise.com/GoalsGuy](http://www.HealthyWealthynWise.com/GoalsGuy). Please join us again in the next couple of weeks. We have another incredible interview for you, and you can register for each of our upcoming interviews by going to [www.HealthyWealthynWise.com/interview](http://www.HealthyWealthynWise.com/interview). Until then, thank you for your commitment to discovering your passions and giving your unique gifts to the world. Good night, everyone.

