

Do Your Life Goals Include Marriage and Family?

Life and everything in it revolves around balanced equations. The numbers are critical. Just the slightest imbalance, and big issues arise.

Keeping this in mind, when setting personal goals we should first take stock of where we already are. Perhaps you have done quite well financially but your personal relationships are severely lacking. Maybe your marriage is secure and amicable but in the area of romance, the fire has long dimmed.

We need to take an honest assessment of where we have succeeded and where we have failed. Then we can determine how to proceed forward.

With this in mind, here are 10 primary areas of life to focus on for the next 10 years of your life plan.

1. Marriage and family harmony. Maintaining and expanding, as well as restoring and healing, in this area should absolutely be a top priority in your personal goals. Pinpoint the relationships in the direst condition. It could be that your marriage is in severe trouble. Possibly your relationship with your ex-wife creates great pain in your entire family. Perhaps you have effective communication issues with your children. Wherever the danger points are, the goal is to determine them and devise a plan on resolving the issues. Be sure to highlight where you have succeeded, as well, and how you might grow those seeds elsewhere. The goal is a family living in peace and harmony.

2. Proper mind-set and balance. What is your attitude like? Are you overly aggressive and abrasive? Timid and self-defeating? Your mind-set needs to be in proper balance. Too much or too little of any one particular ingredient can send

you in the wrong direction. Personal growth occurs as we begin to learn exactly who we are—our strengths and our weaknesses. Smart goals are ones we set that evolve us in a positive fashion. Carefully consider the man you truly want to be, and set your sights on how to achieve it.

3. Commitment to improved physical health. A good place to start when talking about life goals is to make sure you actually have a life 10 years from now. That certainly starts with good physical health. There are no guarantees on living a long life, but it is possible to greatly increase your odds. Listen to your doctor when he tells you to lose those 25 extra pounds. Create an exercise plan that you enjoy and relish. Make sure that 10 years from now, you are as vibrant and capable as you are right now.

4. Career passion and personal satisfaction. When people set goals, they almost always look toward their careers first. That is a mistake, but that's not to say your career isn't important—because it certainly is. Are you a workaholic? On the flip side, are you lazy and uninspired? Once again, balance is required to fully reach your career potential, no matter what it is you do. Employers respond very positively to employees they can trust. A healthy attitude, strong aptitude and good people skills are essential to “get ahead.” The 10-year goal here should be to passionately enjoy your chosen profession while maintaining excellent balance between home and work.

5. Discover your softer side. *Balance*—it's obviously the operative word in this entire piece. As men, we tend to chug along, aspiring to be what men should be: strong, protective and determined providers. But what about the other side, the softer side of life? Compassion, gentleness and tenderness when required, and the ability to tell the people who mean the most to us that we love them. You can change your life instantly for the better by taking off your armor from time to time. Ten years from now, strive to become fully complete

emotionally. Strive to be Superman.

6. Financial stability. At every turn, you hear talk about financial discipline or the lack thereof. In Washington, D.C., in the states, in local government and in your own home, financial matters are of top concern. Getting your “financial house” in order is an essential priority in your 10-year planning. Strive to dramatically lower or eliminate your debt. Increase your savings and build on your family security. Check out All Pro Dad friend Dave Ramsey for great advice in this area.

7. Service and social responsibility. Despite our severe issues, America is still the wealthiest nation on earth. We have a duty and responsibility to do good works with our blessings. For instance, Coach Tony Dungy places a high priority on mentoring. Do some research, and discover an area of need that ignites your passions. Create a 10-year plan to become permanently active in the needs of your community, and include your entire family.

8. Stress-busting leisure time. We have talked about healing family relationships, moving ahead in your career, straightening out your finances and serving others, but how about a little “you” time? Stress is a cold thug killer. It is of utmost importance that time is set aside to relax and just enjoy life. However you see fit to do so is up to you. Just make sure that in your 10-year planning, leisure is included.

9. Continuing education. Every day lived is another piece of your education. What are you doing with the knowledge you have absorbed? Ten years from now, you will not be the same man and have the same thoughts. That process needs to be focused and nurtured. Do not fear change, because it’s going to come anyway. Embrace it and shape it instead. Set your goals so that 10 years from now, you are wiser, more adaptable and more complete.

10. Expanding and growing faith. With all due respect to the readers who consider faith a silly notion, it is the most important item on this list. Without faith, a deep belief in meaning and purpose greater than you, this whole list is pretty much pointless. If there is nothing greater and nothing beyond, then who really cares about any of this? Start and finish your 10-year planning based on growing your faith and becoming the man God created you to be. Ultimately, it's not 10 years from now you should be worried about. Eternal salvation is the end goal.

"If we all did the things we are capable of, we would astound ourselves." –Thomas Edison.

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