

Dad, Start 2019 Off Right With This Powerful Exercise

Back in my '20s I was radical about goal setting, so much so that twice a year, I would join my friend Lynn as we'd head to places like Timberline Lodge on Mt. Hood or to a cottage along the Washington Coast where we'd set individual six-month goals. Then we'd reconvene bi-annually to revisit and update those goals. It was a tradition for many years, and I loved it.

Now before you're too impressed with my resolve back in those days, I have to admit that I can't remember the last time I've done anything similar. Maybe it's because I don't have an accountability partner now, or maybe it's because I'm a bit too lazy. Truthfully, it's probably a combination of the two.

But what if you and I joined forces, and we each did some self-reflection right now while clarifying our intentions for 2019?

One of the best things about starting a new year is that we have an opportunity to say goodbye to the last 365 and look forward to what's ahead. There really is something powerful about having a built-in marker for reflection so that we don't end up living out the truth of Zig Ziglar's infamous words, "if you aim at nothing, you will hit it every time."

Let's be honest. The whole process of looking inward and casting a vision for the future takes discipline and courage. And though it's never easy to slow down and re-evaluate, it's vital if we want to make sure that our priorities (e.g., the things that take up our time) line up with our values.

All of this talk about goal-setting and strategizing has me thinking that sometimes we spend more time taking care of our cars than we do our relationships. And for many of us, we

think that it's vitally important to stay on track with regular vehicle inspections and maintenance to ensure that our cars are running their best, but when it comes to "looking under the hood" of our relationships, the same kind of precision doesn't happen as easily ... or at all.

In view of that reality, Dad, I want to offer a way for you to evaluate yourself where you will be lifting the hood of your "car" to check the wiring in order ensure optimum workability and performance.

Think of this self-assessment tool as your 50,000-mile vehicle inspection report as you begin this new year. It will help you gauge where you are right now while providing a roadmap to guide you in reaching your fathering goals.

And though many dads have told me they're not big into writing down their objectives as a father, I've discovered that those ideals are actually tucked deep within and clearer than many of them have realized. That's where I believe this self-assessment tool will serve as a proactive resource to support your personal growth, because it will help you clarify your vision.

Let me add that I've absolutely loved hearing from dads in The Abba Project (the group I lead for dads of daughters ages 13 to 30) who tell me they made a copy of this Dialed-In Dad Checklist and put it in a prominent place to remind them of what they need to focus on.

Let's get practical now.

After you take the Dialed-In Dad Self-Test and see items that are not a part of your daily or weekly interactions with your daughter, write two or three specific things on a notecard or set them as a reminder on your phone so you're clear about what you are going to do starting today that will launch you on your journey toward being increasingly tuned-in to your daughter.

There's no need to go down a path of guilt or shame for things you've done wrong in the past, and there's no better time than the present to begin changing the past. You have today and every day from here on out to make up for lost time.

Here's the bottom line: Being intentional makes a big difference.

Start the year strong by committing to go the distance as you proactively pursue your daughter's heart daily. That said, Dads, it's time to start your engines!

[Click here for the Dialed-in Dad Checklist {eoa}](#)

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