TRANSCRIPT DOWNLOAD

# HOW EMOTIONALLY INTELLIGENT LEADERS ACHIEVE GOALS

*Welcome to The Highly Valued Leader podcast where I make it simple for leaders at all levels to amplify their value. My name is Mel Savage and I went from working in the mailroom at a small ad agency to making multiple six figures in senior management at McDonald's, to running my own multiple six-figure executive coaching business. I've had huge successes in my career and epic failures. All of it taught me the world-class leadership, mind and skill sets that I simplify for my clients and share with you on this podcast. I'll help you reset your leadership style, demystify the politics, and help you become the highly valued leader everyone wants on their team. Get ready for the most honest, direct and revolutionary leadership coaching you've ever heard. Let's simplify leadership together.*

Hey leaders, welcome back to the podcast, and I really want to wish everyone a very happy New Year. I hope you had a great break. I hope you got some time off, and I hope you were able to celebrate the holiday season with the people that you love and care about. I hope you're ready to achieve amazing things in 2025. Like so many others, I really wanted to start off the new year with a quick chat about goals.

Because this is the time of year when everyone is thinking about goals, it makes sense to talk about them. But I want to talk about them in the context of actually achieving them because, just like you, I have spent a lifetime setting goals and then abandoning them early in the new year because I don't have a process, a plan, or a way of doing it that works.

Today, I really want to talk about how emotionally intelligent leaders achieve goals. The way I'm framing it that way is because goal achievement requires emotional intelligence. It grows your emotional intelligence. It requires you to be aware of, manage, and feel your emotions.

Reset your emotions throughout this process. Daniel Goleman, the guru of EQ (emotional intelligence), has written several books about it. If you Google him and what he says are signs of emotional intelligence, goal achievement is one of them. It's a habit that emotionally intelligent people can achieve.

They've been able to achieve it. So we're going to talk about it today through that lens—through the lens of how we can use our emotional intelligence to achieve goals. The reason this is really top of mind for me is that 2024 has been the year for me in my life where I have really cracked the code on how to achieve goals.

Because I really tapped into my emotions to do it, I have achieved financial goals. I've overachieved my financial goals for my business. I achieved everything that I wanted to do for my business this year. Not in the timeline that I wanted to do it, but I achieved it anyway, which was amazing.


© SAVAGE LIFE

Amazing, and I'm patting myself on the back for that. I reached my 50-pound weight loss goal. I have had 56 consecutive weeks of exercise. I hit 13 and a half thousand activity minutes on the Peloton, mostly running, but also doing weight training and a bunch of other things. And there's more. There's so much more that I've been able to achieve this year because I've set my focus on them and followed a process that I put together for myself, which I share with my clients, that works.

If you're in the mood to set some goals at the beginning of this year, whether they're career goals, business goals, specific job goals that you have that you want to attain, or personal goals, I really want to offer you some proven strategies to achieve those goals and how to overcome and/or anticipate some of the emotional hurdles you'll need to move through to execute those goals and see them through all the way.

My intention is if you are someone who is setting really big goals for yourself, I want you to be able to achieve them because, most of the time, what happens is I'm talking to a group of overachievers here on this podcast, and you all go all in and work hard on your goals. More often than not, you burn out fast.

It's overwhelming. It becomes too hard to balance what you're trying to do with the goal with everything else going on in your life. The reason for that is because, as a high achiever, as an overachiever, yes, of course, there are a lot of things you can achieve. Let's just say on the job, even in your home, but on the job, because you know how to do those things.

You've done them over and over again, so you know what it's going to take to fit more in, let's say, than the average person. Fine. That's great. But, in this case, you're about to do something that you haven't been able to achieve before, or you don't have a lot of experience with. So you need to change your strategy to achieve it because if you use the same strategy you're using as an overachiever on the things you already know how to do with goals that you haven't actually achieved yet, you will burn out fast. You'll get a few failures in a row, and you will give up, and then you'll get distracted by life.

There are a ton of good excuses, very valid excuses, out there in your life that you can use, like your kids, something happening at the house, or a big project coming down at work, which always happens. That's not going to be new news. It always happens, etc., etc. And it's going to suck up your time.

It's going to be a good reason for you to give up on your goal. Then you're going to be back to where you started or worse. You're going to be further back from where you started, depending on what your goal is and what process you took to get to wherever you ended up giving up on the goal.

So I'm going to give you six different guiding principles, if you will, for goal achievement. When I give them to you, my goal is to help you be in a position where you actually never give up on the goal. You just keep going until you achieve it. I want you to be able to achieve these goals with ease, where it feels not easy—because it will be hard sometimes to do these goals, depending on what they are—but you're doing it with ease.

You're doing it not through gritted teeth, but, I don't know, just in a more relaxed way. To the point where you're enjoying the process. I want you to enjoy the process of achieving this goal. It will not be smooth sailing. I promise you that it will not be smooth sailing. There will be moments where, I don't know, you want to throw something, bang your head against the wall, throw your hands up in the air, or whatever it is.

I promise you, but that's going to be kind of a fun part of the process because I know you. You are a leader who loves to solve problems. Problems are just a puzzle, and goals are just a puzzle. The challenge with the goal is not the process. The challenge with the goal is showing up for the process, which is where emotional intelligence comes in.


© SAVAGE LIFE

When you start exercising your emotional intelligence—not just like most people, who say, "Oh, here's my plan. I'm going to execute the plan," but they don't plan for the emotional part of what's going to happen—I want you to plan for the emotional part of what's going to happen. When you exercise your emotional intelligence in concert with your plan, you will be able to achieve your goal.

I promise you it's going to be so much easier, but done with ease. I'm really excited to share these principles with you, so let's get started.

And as I go through each of these six things, I'm going to explain what it is, talk about the emotion, what it looks like to actually execute this guiding principle in action, if you will, and then also what to watch for.

All right. So the very first one is you need to decide on your goal. And I know that sounds really obvious, but a lot of people don't; they don't decide. They say, "Well, I'm going to try and, dot, dot, dot, get promoted. Be less of a micromanager, have more presence, be calmer, not overwork, I'm going to try..."

And yes, we all know the little Yoda saying, "Try not. Do or do not." But really, what does that mean? It means you need to commit 100 percent. You need to commit to the goal as if there was no out. Meaning like being a parent, for instance, for the vast majority of people, when you decide you're going to be a parent or you know you're going to be a parent, you know you're in it for life, good, bad, and ugly.

Relationships are that way for a large part. I know that a lot of people break up or get divorced. But before you get there, there are a lot of ups and downs that you don't just bail at the first fight. You don't bail after the tenth fight. You work through all the things. Same with buying a house—lots of stuff goes wrong and you commit to the house. So you need to commit to the goal as if you are committing to those big things in your life.

And I think that's what a lot of people don't do. You need to make the decision: I am doing this. The word "try" needs to be out of your vocabulary. When we say things like "try," it means that you're not really committed and you have an out. "I tried, but I tried." No, we don't try, we just decide we're going to do it.

It might mean we fall down a lot, we don't do it "right," quote unquote, for a while until we figure out what the right process is for us. Yes, all those things are true, but that's just part of the process. That's not you trying, that's you doing. So you need to decide to do, don't try. And in order to do that, the emotions that you need to practice feeling first and foremost are self-trust.

You're not going to know how. You're just going to decide: I am going to learn to have more executive presence. I don't know how I'm going to do that. Not even sure what that means yet. And that's okay. You don't need to know how. You just first need to say, "Okay, this is what I'm going to do."

And I'm going to figure it out. I'm going to figure out what I want it to look like. I'm going to figure out what my first steps are. I'm going to figure out how to get the help I need. I'm going to get the feedback, whatever it is, I'm going to figure it out. I'm going to keep going until I achieve what I feel is the right vision for what I want to do.

Like what executive presence means to me. You just have to have the self-trust that you will figure it out. And you have a lot of credibility in that aspect because you figured out a lot of stuff to get to where you are right now. So just allow yourself the space to figure it out. And the other emotions that come with that, I would say, are creativity, meaning access to your creativity.


© SAVAGE LIFE

Because problem-solving is required. That creativity is required for problem-solving. So you need to have access to it. You need to sort of say to yourself, "Okay, what's going on here? Why isn't this working? What's the big problem that I need to solve today for this goal?" And then figure it out.

It's that whole "just figure it out" mentality that needs to come—emotions that need to come when you decide to do something. There's also a sense of determination, but I want to sort of, in parentheses, put it like a soft determination, not like a hardcore determination. But this sort of soft, consistent sense of determination that you will get there.

And an openness to the idea that, you know what, I'm not going to know exactly how to do this. I have some ideas of what my next steps are, and I'm just going to figure it out as I go. Obviously, you're going to put a North Star in place. This is what success looks like in the end, how I get there, I'm going to figure out as I go.

So what that looks like in action is what I always say to myself: Don't ask what your goal is going to give you. Always think about and decide what you are going to give your goal today, this week, this month. What are you giving to it? And the idea that when you decide to do something, you're making it a priority over and above your existing deliverables.

This isn't "if space allows." If my schedule allows me to do this, then I will. It's like, no. I need to work my life around this goal. And I think that you need to consider that when you decide how many goals you're going to set for yourself and what the goal looks like and how long you're giving yourself to achieve it.

If you're trying and like, I just lost 50 pounds. It took me two years of trial and failure. And I still have 10 pounds to go. So, you're going to get a lot wrong. You're going to get more wrong than you're going to get right. So you need to be able to make this a priority.

It's going to take time. And so you need to give it the time it takes. You need to prioritize this over and above your existing deliverables. What to watch out for: You're going to want to quit. You're going to want to quit a lot. Every time something goes wrong, particularly for high achievers, we don't like it.

We don't like it when things don't go right off the bat, because we know we're used to doing things well. So when things start going sideways, which they will, you're going to want to quit. And you're going to find excuses to give up indefinitely. Now, there's nothing wrong with, along the way, because you're not exactly sure how much you can achieve, to say, "I can adjust my timeline."

"I need to adjust my tactic. I need to adjust yada, yada, yada," but that's not giving up. You're just sort of going, "Well, I'm tired. I can't do it today. And when I don't, I'm not going to do it today either." And then the next day you don't do it. The next day you don't do it. That's you giving up indefinitely. So watch out for that.

And when you're doing that, that's when you need to sit down and go, "That's the next problem you have to solve. Why do I keep giving up indefinitely? Why do I keep putting it off? What's happening here?" Because it'll happen. You just need to recognize the problem. And sometimes the problem is that you just don't show up for your goal.

And then figure out what you need to do. Sometimes you need to make the goal smaller. Sometimes you need to make the next step easier. So that you can actually move forward, even if it's a much smaller move forward than you thought it was going to be. You need to problem-solve. Don't just stop.

So that's number one. You need to decide: I am doing this, and I'm committing to this. Like I was committing to being a parent or I'm committing to this house or this marriage or this person. Number two, I want you to think about how to


© SAVAGE LIFE

execute with ease. Whatever you're trying to do, because it's new for you, because it's something that you're getting your mind used to, your mind is going to want to fight back, which means it will be hard.

It will be hard creating this new habit, creating this new skill for yourself. But you don't have to. Just because it's hard as a skill doesn't mean that you have to make it hard on yourself. There's a difference between something being hard and making it hard on yourself. And making it hard on yourself is when you're pushing, you're creating force.

You're like doing it through gritted teeth. I don't want you to do that. I want you to think about the question I always ask myself: How do I do this with ease? All right. I need to get on this treadmill. How do I do it with ease? I need to figure out how to raise my price. How do I do it with ease?

I need to launch this group. How do I do it with ease? I need to fill up my one-on-one business. How do I do it with ease? I need to figure out how to hire someone. How do I do it with ease? I'm not saying it's easy. Easy is different than with ease. With ease means how do I take the pressure off myself?

How do I do this in a way that—with the emotions? Ease is an emotion, by the way, that's relaxed, that's empathetic to what I need. That's patient. Those are emotions you're going to need to feel: ease, relaxation, empathy, patience. And the other emotion that you're going to have to practice feeling here is discomfort and anxiety.

Not because you want to, but because your brain is going to give it to you. So you need to be able to notice the anxiety and then not freak out when you feel it. Yes. This is going to be uncomfortable. You have to sort of see the discomfort and go, "Okay, it's totally normal that this is uncomfortable and that I feel anxious right now."

Normalizing your anxiety and discomfort is feeling those emotions with ease. When you start to think, "Oh my God, I'm so anxious. Why am I so anxious?" Then you're making it a problem. I don't want you to make it a problem. I want you to start to execute even the negative emotions with ease.

And what that looks like in action is really just trying your best in the moment. Knowing that your best is different every day. I think a problem that a lot of us have, and I've done it myself, is that we're always comparing ourselves to our best on our best day. And if we don't hit that, we think something's gone wrong.

But our best is different all the time, depending on what you're doing, how many times you've done it, how much sleep you had. Did you have a fight with your partner in the morning? How many things do you have on your plate? Your best is different all the time. And so what it looks like when you do it with ease is just allowing that space to go, "Look, this is what I can achieve today."

When you're working out, for instance, coaches will always say to you, "You need to listen to your body." Sometimes your body needs more recovery, and you can only do so much. You can't run as hard. That's what you do. It's not about always being the best of the best, like the best you've ever been.

It's allowing yourself the space to just be your best in that moment. And then on top of that, telling yourself you did well, you did it right. It's not like, "Well, you know what? You did it, but you could have done it better or it took you too long or you didn't do this part of it." No.

You're like, "Oh, you know what? I showed up." That's how I've been working out every week. That's how I've been achieving my weight loss goals and my running goals. I just pat myself on the back constantly, which is going to be one of the guiding principles. But in this case, it's like, whatever I achieve, I do. I feel like I did it well. And you'll find solutions to improve your baseline over time, but your baseline is enough. Just be okay with whatever your baseline is.


© SAVAGE LIFE

Let it be not easy, but let it be done with ease. And it's kind of like what I would say. What it also looks like is being committed to a timeframe but being relaxed with the timing.

So what I mean by that is I'm running a program right now where I've just enrolled nine people to come in and work on getting promoted in the next six months or achieving a specific career goal in the next six months. My coaching to them is going to be setting up a cadence where they are committed to doing it in six months.

Like they're showing up with the kind of cadence it would take to do this in six months, but they're relaxed enough at the same time that if it takes them seven months or eight months or nine months, it's okay. At the end of the day, I'm still going to show up as if I'm going to achieve this in six months, but I'm going to be okay if it takes me six or seven months.

So it's that sense of ease with the timing while still being committed to the timeframe. All right. What to watch for: force. If you're doing it with force, clenched fists, gritted teeth, extended periods of pushing yourself. Sometimes you have to push yourself like that. A little nudge. I always say the hardest part of my workout every day is just walking towards my treadmill, taking that—my treadmill's in the basement—so taking that first step down the stairs to get to my treadmill is the hardest part of the workout. It takes a little push from me, but I'm not pushing myself for the whole hour. I'm just pushing myself to get to the workout. And then I'm trying to do it with ease.

If you're seeing yourself with perfectionist tendencies, like it's not enough, it's not enough, it's not enough. That sucks. If you're talking to yourself like you're some sort of marine sergeant from a movie like "Go, soldier! Push, push, push! Go, go, go!" All that kind of crap. No. That is not ease.

That's the opposite of ease. Nobody wants to be that person. You will quit. You will give up if you keep pushing yourself like that. So we want to be able to execute with ease. That's number two. Number three: I want you to do less and go slow. Do less and go slow. As high achievers, you want to do the most as quickly as you can.

And like I said, when you're doing something new, doing the most as quickly as you can will lead to burnout and failure. You will quit faster. That's the only thing you're going to do quickly if you take that strategy is you're going to quit the fastest. Like I said, the difference between getting a lot done with something you know how to do and starting to do something new is very different.

You need different strategies. Your brain is going to reject the new stuff. You're going to have more emotional backlash with the new stuff. You need the emotional strategy. So what we want to be able to do is put yourself in a scenario where you are constantly achieving. In order to do that, you need to lower the bar—like way down.

You need to make the bars really easy to overcome. So make it easy to be constantly achieving. That's what we want to do. The old saying, *slow and steady wins the race*, isn't just a saying because it sounds good—it actually works. I have been working out for 56 weeks straight, or 57 weeks. I can't remember what it is now because I am constantly making sure that I am not pushing myself past my best—my best, whatever that is that week.

So you want to make it easy to be constantly achieving. The emotions for that are going to be patience. The biggest challenge here is your ego—your ego that tells you, *I'm a little bit better. I can do a little bit more than the average person.* By the way, I have a huge ego too. I know what that's like.

It's even on the treadmill. Any running coach will tell you. You need more easy runs than hard runs to be able to increase your pace and be a great runner.


© SAVAGE LIFE

Even on the treadmill, any running coach will tell you: you need more easy runs than hard runs to be able to increase your pace and be a great runner. But you're sitting there running easy, thinking, *I could actually run faster than this.* And if you run faster than that, then you will not be able to achieve your running goals if you don't give yourself easy days—days where the run is easy to achieve. Because then you keep showing up for the running since there are days when it's easy.

Today I had a hard day, and I'm like, *Holy shit, I don't want to experience that again for another week.* Right? So we can't keep pushing ourselves hard, hard, hard. We need to do less. You need to set yourself up for winning, winning, winning—constantly.

There will be an impatient desire or urge for you to push more, and you need to normalize that as a normal part of who you are, but you need to not act on that. You need to give yourself the patience and self-trust—also an emotion—where you're like, *I'm going to do this. I'm going to trust the process. I'm going to trust myself that I will achieve more by doing less and going slower and accumulating wins,* which is my next point, by the way. We'll get there in a second.

What that looks like is doing less in the short term. Normally, what people do is they overestimate what they can achieve in the short term and underestimate what they can achieve in the long term. I want you to go the opposite way. I want you to underplan what you're going to do in the short term, and I want you to pick way bigger goals for the long term.

If you think you can run 5k this year, I want you to make it 10k. If you think you can get promoted to Director, I want a director with the biggest raise possible. If you think your career will top out at VP, I want you to go for the C-suite. I want you to pick the big, hairy, audacious goal. But the goal is just your North Star.

It's not the goal that's important. The goal is just guiding you on your strategy. What's important are all the little wins along the way. So I want you to do less in the short term and set bigger goals in the long term.

And then it's all about pacing yourself. What to watch for is wanting to go faster, wanting to do more, thinking that you're better than the average person. When those thoughts come into your head, I want you to park them and say, *I'm going to stick with whatever I planned to do today, and I will come back to this thought later and see if it's still relevant to me.*

So far, we've had three points—I know I need to talk faster because this is taking a long time.

So, Decide is number one. Execute with ease—do less, go slow—is number two. Number three—like I said—or rather, number four is Accumulate Wins.

I want you to accumulate wins. I want you to think of this: big goals, achieving big goals, are just the accumulation of a lot of little goals. The big goal is not the important thing. Getting to the C-suite? Not the important thing. Having the executive presence? Not the important thing.

If your goal is, for instance, to stop micromanaging your people, getting there is not the important thing. It's not the end-all, be-all. It's all the little goals along the way that are going to make you stronger, better, more determined, and more emotionally intelligent.


© SAVAGE LIFE

You're not going to get to the end without all the little goals along the way. A lot of the time, people are really attached to the end goal. Like, let's take the micromanaging one: *I want to stop micromanaging my people.* But then today you went into a meeting and micromanaged them. You think that's a fail because you're so attached to the goal.

There's only black and white: either *I micromanaged people* or *I didn't micromanage people.* Those are the two options.

Once you define what *not micromanaging your people* actually looks like and what success looks like there, that's the end state—that is your last indicator of success. What we need to be looking for are the leading indicators of success.

The leading indicators of success are:

- Me sitting down and grounding myself before I give someone feedback.
- Me actually giving myself a goal every day around not micromanaging someone and trying to achieve it.
- And even if I don't achieve it, noticing that I didn't achieve it can be a win.

Noticing I didn't achieve the goal can be the win. Talking to myself about what I'll do differently next time could be the win. Wins aren't always ticking the box. Sometimes wins are noticing the box wasn't ticked and then figuring out how to tick it.

So you have to really focus on accumulating all the wins. It's all those little wins that will help you find the ease to keep going. They'll give you all those dopamine hits in your brain, which will make you addicted to winning—and that's amazing—and will make you want to create more wins.

The emotions you need to feel here are appreciation—appreciation for the wins—and confidence in yourself that you can achieve little wins. Little wins are great. That's all that's necessary.

I want you to detach from the long-term outcome. It's still there for a reason, but you're not attached to it. You're more focused on the little wins and accumulating lots and lots of little wins. Everything is a win.

So what does it look like? Like I said, you're focused on the small wins, and you're acknowledging them and noticing them. As high achievers, what ends up happening is we run, run, run, and we're like, *What did I accomplish this week?* I don't know. *What did I do this week?* You don't even know. You just take everything for granted—all the amazing things that you do in a week, you take for granted.

In this case, what I really want for you is to focus not only on the small wins but also to acknowledge them and notice what you've accomplished—whether that's daily, weekly, or as it happens. That's going to be amazing.

What to watch for is focusing on what's not working—what you didn't get done—in a negative way. Like, *Oh, but then I didn't do this, and I didn't do that, and I missed this goal, and I did it, but not good enough.* That's focusing on what's missing versus focusing on what's working.

Another thing to watch for is belittling your wins. Like I just said, *Yeah, I did it, but...* Any of those *yeah, buts*—we don't want any *yeah, buts.* So that's Accumulating Wins.


© SAVAGE LIFE

Number five: I want you to Expect Failure.

I want you to expect failure. You will fail more than you will win. It is going to happen. The way I look at failure is that it's part of the success process. A lot of the time, we think about failure as the opposite of success, but I want you to think of failure as an element of success. Failure is one of the strategies of success.

If you think about putting together some sort of overall strategy with pillars—strategic pillars underneath it—one of those pillars is failure. We think success is a straight line. We know it isn't logical, but we forget about it emotionally.

Sometimes we'll say things like, *Well, two steps forward, one step back,* like failure is a step back. I want to offer you this: failure is not a step back. It is a step forward—if you are looking at it like, *Okay, I'm learning something here. I failed—I didn't accomplish something—but I personally am not a failure.*

You're separating those two things. Then it is a step forward.

I always say, you're not going two steps forward and one step back. Those are three steps forward. They're all steps forward. In order to expect and accept failure, you need to feel acceptance. You need to be able to feel self-trust—that you will overcome and figure this out. And you need to be able to allow yourself to feel disappointed.

I know it kind of goes against the grain, but when you fail, it's okay to feel disappointed. There's nothing bad that's going to happen. Feel it. Swim in it.

Disappointment is just like a big lump in my belly, and I can breathe through that. It's just tension, and I can breathe through tension. I can allow the tension to be there. It's not a bad thing to feel disappointed. What you don't want to do is wallow in it and act from it. Feel it. Go through the disappointment. And then get back up, sister—or brother—or whatever. Get the hell back up.

What it looks like is letting yourself pause and feel disappointed, assessing what you'll do differently next time, finding what worked in every scenario, and considering failure as a win—one of the wins. It's one of the wins.

Running is a big part of my life right now, so all my examples are about running. But I started a new pace target today because I want to increase my pace for 10K. I did the training today, and I could not do all of the routes. It was HIIT training today—high-intensity interval training—and I couldn't hit the speeds in some of the intervals. But I was like, *Okay, I will get there. I just couldn't do it today—mentally, physically, whatever. I'm sure it was just mentally.*

I just couldn't get there. But I will get there. It's fine. It's a win, though. I finished it. I didn't stop. I figured it out. I did something a little bit slower, but I did it. Right? I did it, and I love that I did it. That's the best thing—I did it.That' what you want it to look like.

What to watch for:

- Powering through and not feeling your failure—pretending it didn't happen.
- Pretending you're not disappointed in yourself or disappointed in general. Pretending it's okay and just pushing down the emotion.


© SAVAGE LIFE

You don't want to do that. Because when you push something down, it will pop back up. You're not getting rid of it—you're just deferring it. And it festers. It doesn't go away. So just feel disappointed. It's not the end of the world. Feel disappointed and then get back up.

Another thing to watch for is quitting ahead of time. I always say it's like failing ahead of time. It's like saying, *I'm not going to do that,* because you don't even know what to do. Do the thing—even if you're afraid of failing. Do it. Just go for it. Something good will come of it. Trust that. Trust yourself.

Another thing to watch for is telling yourself, *It's too hard.* And I do that all the time. *I don't want to get on the treadmill. It's too hard. It's too hard.* I say that all the time. It's not too hard. I get up on the treadmill, and if it actually gets too hard, then I pull back a little bit. But I don't stop, and I don't quit ahead of time. That's expecting failure.

Now, the last point I want to cover is believing in the inevitability of your goal. This is so important because there are going to be days when you think you can't make it. What I want to offer you is that you just need to believe with total certainty that you will achieve your goal. You need to connect total certainty as a feeling when you think of your goal. This doesn't mean you'll be certain 100% of the time. There will be moments of self-doubt when you're thinking, "Oh, am I going to make it? I don't know if I can do this." That self-doubt will come up, but it's not a problem. It's just your brain, and that's totally fine. What you need to do is create more and more moments of total certainty that you will achieve your goal.

The emotion you want to practice is certainty. I actually practiced certainty until I could conjure it up on demand. I would do this by looking at my hand and saying, "I'm certain this is my hand." Then, I would take that feeling—the sense of certainty—and connect it to my goal. I also did a lot of journaling. I would write about why it's 100% true that I will reach my goal, why it's going to be fun, and why I am capable of doing it. I filled pages with positive thoughts, rationale, and evidence to support the belief that achieving my goal was inevitable.

Eventually, I didn't need to do that anymore. I just believed in my goal. Different goals required different journaling, but for my key goals, I became so certain that I could conjure that certainty at will. Even on days when I doubted myself, I would think, "I'm just having a down day, but I am still certain I'll reach it." I didn't let those moments of doubt mean the sky was falling or that I would never reach my goal.

To have this sense of certainty, you need to develop self-trust. You must trust that you will reach your goal. In addition to journaling and practicing certainty, and normalizing moments of self-doubt, this process involves constant strategizing and recommitting.

One thing I didn't mention earlier about deciding on your goal is that you don't just decide once. You decide every day. You decide multiple times a day to commit to your goal. You must keep deciding over and over again. That's what belief in the inevitability of your goal looks like. You're constantly strategizing. When something doesn't work, you think, "What's next?" You recommit, problem-solve, and decide to show up for your goal.

Be mindful of certain behaviors that can hold you back. Watch out for catastrophizing thoughts like, "Oh my God, I'm never going to make it. This is too hard. I'm doubting myself, so I must not be good enough." No, doubt is normal. Also, beware of finding reasons why your goal won't happen or focusing on evidence that supports failure instead of success.


© SAVAGE LIFE

This may have been a long discussion, but let me summarize the six guiding principles of goal achievement. First, just decide. Decide you're going to do it and commit as if you're committing to a marriage. Second, do it with ease. Take the pressure off. Don't be that Marine sergeant yelling at yourself. Let yourself approach it with ease. Third, do less and go slow. Make it easy to be constantly achieving. Fourth, accumulate your wins. Just keep winning and get addicted to achieving small wins. Fifth, expect failure. Failure is not the opposite of success—it is a core strategy of success. Sixth, believe in the inevitability of your goal. Keep showing up, keep strategizing, keep solving problems, and you will reach your goal. It's not more complicated than that.

Some core emotions you'll need throughout this process include self-trust, determination, confidence, patience, and empathy. But you also need to be willing to feel negative emotions like disappointment, anxiety, discomfort, and even shame when you fail. You need to normalize those feelings. Say to yourself, "Of course, I'm feeling disappointed I didn't achieve X," or "Of course, I feel ashamed that I haven't achieved this by now," or "Of course, I feel anxious because I'm about to do something that's totally freaking me out."

Normalize those feelings and breathe through them. Don't resist them—they are part of the journey. This isn't all positive. You have to be willing to feel the negative emotions too. That's part of emotional intelligence—being able to notice and accept those feelings.

I know this was a lot of information, but I hope it helps you. If you have any questions, email me. Get on my mailing list, email me back, and let me know what questions you have. And, of course, if you need help achieving your career goals this year, reach out. I'd love to work with you.

Okay, my friends, have a great week, and I will talk to you soon. Bye for now.

*Hey, if you want to simplify leadership while amplifying your value, then you need to get your hands on my free training. Head over to melsavage.com/simple for instant access to the training and get a taste of how I help my clients lead with ease and make more money in the process. I'll see you there.*


© SAVAGE LIFE