

Summer is a great time to daydream.

One of the issues that we have when we become adults is that we get so caught up in the minutiae of our everyday existence, we forget to dream about the extraordinary things we still want to do in our lives. It's good, every once in awhile, to take some time to think about what you still yearn for. Don't worry about how you can make it happen right now. Just think about what you want. Think big!

Fear is the biggest obstacle to thinking big. Most people are afraid because they don't see the "how" to reach their dream. Other people are afraid because they have disappointed themselves before with other dreams that haven't come to fruition.

The thing about dreams is, the "how" and the path that takes you to your dream might look very different from what you originally imagined. The key to making your dreams come true is, in fact, having the dreams in the first place.

Here are two true stories (names changed, of course) about people who had some big dreams that came true, all because they were open to the possibility and were clear about what they wanted. I hope you find them as inspirational as I do.

Sarah came to me because she had always dreamed of owning a beach cabin but was afraid it would be out of her reach. When we created her financial plan, I asked her what the dream cabin would look like and we made a detailed list of everything she imagined. When we were done, Sarah had a very specific idea of what kind of place her cabin would be, what it would look like, and especially, how she would spend her time there. Next, we created a plan for her to get that cabin.

Sometimes, having such a specific and detailed vision can be intimidating. After we created her plan, Sarah momentarily panicked, and told me that she'd changed her mind and she didn't really think she could get a cabin after all. Sarah was feeling the pressure to perform for her dream, which is never a fun place to be. I was disappointed, but also encouraged Sarah to not give up, and to be open to alternative ways to achieve her dream.

A few months later, Sarah called, totally excited, to say, "I

found the perfect cabin and I'm going to buy it!" Sarah loves dogs and knows lots of dog-owners who would love to take their dogs to the beach. She realized she could rent the cabin to dog-owners. When she described it to me, it sounded just like her list of what she wanted in a cabin.

I love this story because it shows the power in deciding what you want. Although we created a way for her to get the cabin (which helped her to see that she really could do it), the "how" actually came to her once she saw the cabin and realized she could rent it out. I think it's common to sort of give up on a goal when it feels too hard but your psyche doesn't forget! It keeps working toward the goal. When you're determined and very clear about what you want, you will find a way.

Another story I love is about Carolyn, who wanted to sail around the world. She and her husband started telling their friends, "In 5 years, we're going to sail around the world." Six months later they were still saying, "in 5 years..." and they realized, we better nail this down or it will always be 5 years away! So they got out 3 pieces of paper and labeled them Year 1, Years 3-4 and Year 5. At the bottom of Year 5, they wrote "Sail around the world." On the top of Year 1, they wrote "Learn to sail." Then they listed everything they would need to do to depart on a date 5 years in the future. After writing that all down, they filed it away and didn't look at it again. 5 years later, they set off in their boat and spent the next 12 years having wonderful adventures sailing around the world.

Carolyn's and Sarah's stories show that fulfilling a dream doesn't have to be hard work. It helps to be clear about what it takes to reach the goal, and open to alternative ways to reach it. By far, the biggest step is simply having the dream in the first place.

"Until one is committed, there is hesitancy, the chance to draw back, always ineffectiveness, concerning all acts of initiative and creation. There is one elementary truth the ignorance of which kills countless ideas and splendid plans: that the moment one definitely commits one-self, then providence moves, too. All sorts of things occur to help one that would never otherwise have occurred. A whole stream of events issues from the decision, raising in one's favor all manner of unforeseen incidents and meetings and material assistance which no man could have dreamed would have come his way. Whatever you can do or dream you can, begin it. Boldness has genius, power and magic in it. Begin it now." –Johann Wolfgang von Goethe