

6 Steps To

Plan Your Escape and Unlock Your Dream Life Now



It's Not Just The Travel
It's The Personal Journey

6 Steps to Plan Your Escape and Unlock Your Dream Life Now

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It's not just about the travel, it's the personal journey

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**Do you feel stuck, like you are missing out?
Are you craving life changing experiences?**

**We hope to inspire you to take the first steps to discover,
plan and challenge yourself to find and unlock your dream.**

Introduction

Who Are We?

We are an ordinary married couple who once led conservative, safe, and predictable lives. We went to work every day, earned regular paychecks, and anxiously awaited the weekend to escape. Two years, five years, then 10 years went by. All of a sudden, we were in our early 40's, feeling trapped and missing out on life.

So we made a choice. We started managing our lives and set out on a concrete path to get to where we wanted, which enabled us to act on our dreams. We slowly gained confidence as we started making small, incremental changes.

After 10 years of dreaming, it took two months of discussion and one year of action to make it happen. We quit our careers, sold our home (and everything we owned), and left Canada to travel full-time, live location-independent, and build new careers — all on our own terms. We've been living this new life since January 2015 with no regrets.

Since then, we've had enough people ask, "How did you get to the point of making a decision to change your life?"

We know this is the hardest part, and we would love nothing more than to help others get there.



We're here to let you know it's never too late, nor will there be a more ideal time than now to change the course of your life. Your age, your situation, your family life doesn't have to stop you.

We know you have different dreams, circumstances, and challenges.

Maybe you don't want to do something as radical as we did. Whether your dream is to travel more often, change your career, or have a different outlook on life, the tips and strategies in this eBook can help anyone make significant, positive change.

We will share the steps we followed to change our mindset, which eventually helped us make small adjustments that changed our life in a big way. Following these steps will accelerate your desire to see your dreams happen. Some can be tough, but they'll be worth the effort. Each step has a desired outcome that we strongly recommend you say to yourself out loud. Saying actions out loud and visualizing the result is a great way to make something feel real.

**We hope you enjoy our book.
Troy and Dorene**



6 Steps To

Plan Your Escape and Unlock Your Dream Life Now





1) Get in touch with your mortality

As the adage goes, when you're on your deathbed, you certainly won't say you regretted spending too much time at the office.

This is the first step because nothing else can happen if you don't have motivation to change.

As morbid as it sounds, remind yourself that life could end tomorrow. If you don't, you won't get off your butt and take the plunge. We know it's not a pleasant topic to think about over your morning bowl of cereal so here's a process to help:

A) Write down a list of all the people in your life — friends, family, acquaintances — who are or have been sick or in bad health. Think hard about the list for several minutes. Take another look at it. Pretty long list? **Unfortunately, the older you get, the longer it grows.** You're going to use these people as inspiration to act now rather than later.


B) Ask yourself a question: What makes me any different from the people on this list? Think about the people who were relatively healthy before their ailment or accident. Check them off and spend 15 more minutes to let this list really sink in. The top person on my list was my younger cousin. He is a healthy, fit, and an incredibly positive person. However, without warning or hereditary signs, he had cancer three times. His experience was a huge motivation for me to change my view on my life and mortality. I stopped wasting my years in the same job and the same routine, and challenged myself to grow and act on my dreams. (Note: I'm happy to write that my cousin is alive and healthy today.)



- C) Look at your list again.** How old are these people? Are they young or middle-aged? Sadly, it can happen at *any* age.
- D) Take the time to internalize this idea.** Nothing will change unless you experience a shift that changes your perception towards the reality — life is too short. The best way to do this is to take the time during this exercise and *feel* the pain of others close to you who have felt they missed out on their dreams.
- E) Keep this list** somewhere where you are forced to see it often, or make a habit of looking at it once a day. This will help instill a sense of urgency.

The Outcome: By doing and living this exercise, you want to be able to say:

I CAN'T WAIT. I HAVE TO DO THIS



2) Be honest with yourself about your goals and dreams

In the past, Troy and I got into the habit of thinking about our goals, writing them down, and reflecting on them every New Year's Day. However, we would later review our lists, frustrated that we didn't accomplish even 10% of our goals.

Even though we had conquered some, they were usually simple, task-oriented projects (and mostly job-related). Sure, there were always great vacations, a promotion, or a new purchase of some kind, **but there was no meaningful shift to positive life change.**

So we stopped writing our goals and dreams down. We stopped talking about them. **We felt stagnant, and stuck in our unfulfilling lives, knowing there was more out in the world for us.**

But we had missed an important step. **We needed to commit to *action* to make our dreams happen.** We were solely responsible for their realization — no one else.

Try this exercise. Open your mind and explore your dreams without self-judgment or limitation. These are your thoughts. Don't worry what anyone else thinks.

A) Brainstorm, free flow, and write everything that comes to mind. Don't hold back. You can always update it later.

B) Answer these questions: What do you want to learn?
What hobbies do you want to enjoy?



What excites you and interests you?

What do you want to see and experience?

What would you be missing out on if life ended tomorrow?

Get excited about the possibilities! Think big. Think life-changing dreams when you answer these questions. But also think about smaller changes that can build your confidence to accomplish the larger ones. Don't limit your ideas to time, money, or obligations. Spend 30 minutes at it. If you could imagine these dreams *actually* happening, how amazing would you feel?

C) Rank and mark your list. Which ones are your Top 10? Which ones are short-term? Which ones are long-term? Identify these with an "S" or "L".

D) Visualize. A powerful way to make these dreams real is to visualize them. The more you internalize them, the more you'll believe you can make them happen, and **the more you will work to make them come true.** A great way to do this is to create a vision board, which is a visual document of your dreams and goals. There are many ways to build one, such as, cutting and pasting pictures from magazines onto a foam board or use Google images to find more specific pictures for our dreams, and add them to a Word document or PowerPoint slide. Find the images that best represent your dreams. **Details on how to create your own vision board [click here.](#)**

E) Add a timeframe for your vision board. Try one, three, or six months. The date and the dream



should feel like a stretch. That's why it's called a dream! Write down what you would need to do to achieve that goal in the time frame you set. This is hard work, but when you do it, you will feel a sense of direction.

F) Take risks. Does your list have items that feel risky and frightening to you? That's a good thing! Making a change and following your dream is incredibly hard and scary. **Any change should feel uncomfortable.**

G) Ask yourself seriously if the rewards of making these changes and new choices outweigh those risks? If your answer is "Yes", great work. That means you have motivation to start. It doesn't mean the fear will go away any time soon, but it will be countered by a more important benefit. If your answer is "No", were your dreams big enough? Were they important enough to you?

We know this exercise can be difficult, and we have been there. We both created our lists many times throughout the years, but didn't take them seriously. I ignored mine and put it off, thinking I would "get to it" once I finished this project at work, or that chore at home, and so on. **These excuses compounded and years went by.**

My vision board would stare me down in my home office. My dreams included travel for a year, learning Spanish, and starting my own business. However, I didn't realize how critical Step **E)** was in this exercise. It's important to establish a deadline, to hold you accountable. Now is the time to act.



The Outcome: By doing and living this exercise, the goal is to say out loud:

I KNOW WHAT I WANT



3) Get on the same page as your significant other

First of all, if you don't have a significant other, tell your best friend. You don't need to have the same goals and dreams as your partner, spouse, or friend, but it means you need to have an honest discussion about what you want for the rest of your life.

The person you tell needs to support you. **Without support, you won't be able to fulfill your dreams.** We all need help and encouragement. And let's face it, your dreams will impact his/her life too. Ask your friend to unconditionally support your dream, to encourage you to keep this a priority.

Troy and I had similar dreams, but very different views on how and when we would implement them. Ten years ago, our dream was to take a year off and travel. Over the years, and after plenty of experiences, discussions, and debates, our plans evolved to leaving our home, selling our house, changing careers, and pursuing a life of travel.

We were both 20 years into our careers, but the desire to do something different and exciting was too overpowering to ignore. We didn't know what steps to take so we began to explore ideas and options.



We decided to do an online course, which helped us create a business idea and a path to implement it. Troy was excited to do this course, and reluctantly, I agreed. I questioned it: What would our business be? Why spend all this money? Can we reinvent ourselves?

The beauty of this step was action. It allowed us to dream, and come up with ideas that we didn't make the time to do before. It got us working together to create a road map for traveling long-term. It was this new knowledge and confidence that got Troy and I moving in the same direction. We also talked a lot about our values in life. With similar values — or at least **respecting and supporting each other's values** — we both aligned to *our* plan for life.

Try taking a course, reading an inspiring book, or having discussions that excite you about living your dream — something to make the change *feel real*. Make sure you have those scary and transparent conversations with your partner in order to fully support each other's dreams.

The Outcome: By doing and living this exercise, the goal is to say out loud:

I HAVE THE SUPPORT TO MAKE THIS DREAM HAPPEN



4) Share your dreams with as many people possible

Letting people hear your dream is going to be tough and will feel vulnerable. But by doing this, it makes *all* the difference. The more people you tell about your goals, the better. Share them with your kids, your family, and your friends.

Why?

It will ensure that you are 100% accountable to make it happen. As humans, we have an innate fear of failure. **We care what people think.** You might wonder, “If I don’t achieve it, people will think I’m a failure.” If you feel this way, that’s all the more reason to make sure you do everything you can to make your dream come true. The more people you tell, the more you’re going to want to succeed.

When you tell your friends and family, it’s important to remember:

- A) You can’t control how your family or friends will react,** but it doesn’t matter. It’s your dream.
- B) Some will criticize and challenge you,** but many will encourage, appreciate, and respect you for your courage to do it. So keep talking!
- C) Don’t use any negative reactions as a reason to stop pursuing your dream.** Not everyone will see it your way and that’s okay. Take their opinions into account and think about why they have



them. They may be helpful suggestions, but it shouldn't outweigh your reasons for doing it. Stay on track and keep sharing with as many people as you can. (Yes, it's that important!) Remember not everyone's values will align with yours.

D) The more people you tell, the more you'll hold yourself responsible to make it happen.

E) A funny thing will happen. People will want to help you. Opportunities, resources, and ideas will come your way to inspire you, or boost your confidence. Then, whammo! Momentum will start building around your idea.

When we told our family we were leaving our careers, selling our house, and everything we own, you can imagine what kind of reactions we got. Well, we didn't care. We knew the more people we told, the more accountable we would be, making it real. Loved ones asked, "Are you still going through with this?" or "How are you planning for this?"

Their questions kept us sharing and working through the phases of our plans. Even though our point here is to not worry about the response, those responses may surprise you. In our case, our friends and family were worried and had lots of questions but, in the end, were more supportive than we ever imagined!

The Outcome: By doing and living this exercise, the goal is you want to *believe* and say out loud:

I HAVE TO MAKE THIS DREAM HAPPEN

A silhouette of a group of people standing on a beach at sunset. The sun is a bright, glowing orb in the center of the sky, casting a warm orange glow. The people are dark shapes against the bright background, some standing and some in conversation. The overall mood is contemplative and hopeful.

5) Find new people to talk to about your dreams

Jim Rohn once said, “You are the average of the five people you spend the most time with.” I’m sure you’ve heard this quote many times, but it 100% applies here. As humans, we need to be around people who inspire us — people who are passionate, supportive, and successful. It only encourages us to work harder, try harder, and make a dream happen for ourselves too.

There are so many groups of people out there willing to provide meaningful conversation — people who want to change their own careers, change their lives, or talk to others about similar hobbies and interests. Join groups, take courses, and attend free networking events.

As with many things, start with Google. Search a topic of interest. **You’ll be pleasantly surprised to find people who want to talk about anything!** Join a Meet Up. There’s no risk in going to a new event, listening, and evaluating it. After all, **doesn’t the desire to change outweigh the fear of going to an event?** Better yet, bring a friend to support you.

We would have never changed our lives if we didn’t meet new people who inspired us. They encouraged us and helped us realize our potential. These people don’t have to be in the same town, same industry, or the same age group as you. They don’t even have to have the same dreams.



For us, they were new friends that gave us new perspectives, new ideas, and most of all — inspiration! They never judged our ideas, but challenged us to think through the steps. It's amazing how a new way of thinking inspired us to *believe* we could make our dream a reality!

The Outcome: By meeting new people who inspire you, you want to say:

I AM INSPIRED. I HAVE THE HELP AND THE CONFIDENCE TO MAKE THIS DREAM HAPPEN



6) The Wallet — Find the money to do it

If something *really* matters to you, you'll find the money to fund it. It's a simple idea that we knew so well as kids, but need to remember as adults.

Suggestions on where to start building your dream budget:

A) Monthly budget: Create a spreadsheet of your monthly income and expenses. Everything from coffee to haircuts to utilities should be included. Estimates are better than nothing. Be honest with yourself and mark everything down. This is meant to show you where you are currently spending and where you need to make adjustments. This is not to be critical of where you spend, this is find out how you want to spend your money in the future.

B) Review your budget: Look at the way you are spending your money. We know, it may not be a pretty, but it's an important step to take. What are the things you would like to have and can't do without? Where can you redirect your money for your dream budget? These could include: coffees, snacks, dining out, clothing, and gadgets.

We reduced and eliminated those things and saved hundreds of dollars each month. Choose inexpensive destinations when planning vacations and think about what you spend during that vacation. Do you really need to splurge or pick up another knick-knack to clutter your home? Pictures are better memories.



C) Sell your stuff: This is a much more comprehensive topic for a future eBook, but here are a few key steps we took to selling 20-years worth of stuff:

1. We took a year to sell everything. We built a plan that included online sales, yard sales, and donations. We reduced the clutter drawer by drawer, one room at a time. Doing it bit by bit avoided feeling overwhelmed, and instead, motivated us to purge more.
2. **We detached our emotions from our goods.** The more rationale you use for this project, the better. Notice how little you actually use things and which things you're keeping around for the "one day" you'll need them. Do the hard work and get rid of it!
3. Feel the freedom of less stuff weighing you down. Once we got started clearing out our stuff, we felt *freer*, like we achieved a major accomplishment we had been putting off for so many years. It felt amazing!

We did an honest, self-evaluation of our finances and started spending very differently. Having money to travel full-time meant spending money on things that only supported our dream. And that meant spending less on eating out, clothes, groceries, and things for the home. We built a completely new budget.



We sold everything that we didn't need to travel or to run an online business. We leveraged points programs and managed our investments differently. Our financial advisor — who we conveniently met through one of our new networking groups — helped us work through scenarios and timeframes to determine how we could afford our dream.

The Outcome: The goal of this step is to say:

I KNOW HOW TO FUND MY DREAM

In Summary

There is nothing more powerful than feeling something deep within you. When that feeling stirs, there is no option but to *act* on it. As silly as it sounds, saying this to yourself several times makes you believe it and it makes it real!

So repeat to yourself again:

I CAN'T WAIT. I HAVE TO DO THIS

I KNOW WHAT I WANT

I HAVE THE SUPPORT TO MAKE THIS DREAM HAPPEN

I HAVE TO MAKE THIS DREAM HAPPEN NO MATTER WHAT

**I AM INSPIRED. I HAVE THE HELP AND THE CONFIDENCE
TO MAKE THIS DREAM HAPPEN**

I KNOW HOW TO FUND MY DREAM

Thank You

These top six steps are the major actions we took to change our lives from conservative, unfulfilled urban-dwellers to finding the courage and action to live our dream.

We feel confident that making these initial steps can help you think differently about your life, whatever your dream may be. If you take action now and make these steps part of your important MUST DO list, you'll take the biggest step of all to change your life.

Thank you for letting us share this journey with you. We look forward to hearing how these steps helped you to live a life on your own terms.

About Dorene



Dorene Wharton I'm from Calgary, Alberta Canada. In my previous life, I worked in sales and marketing, leading branding teams in food/drink and entertainment for 20 years in Toronto, Ontario. Climbing the corporate ladder was important to me and I used to completely define myself by my career. When career and family life changed, it forced me to find the courage to seek a happier existence where experiences defined me, not a job or a company. Now when I meet anybody, I ask them, "What do you love to do?" or "What are you creating?" I love hearing the responses! I'm crazy about travel because I learn something new about the world and

myself every single day. I stay healthy and fit with hiking, biking, white-water rafting, cross-fit, and exercises I can do from anywhere. I love connecting with the people we meet on our travels and talking about virtually any topic along the way.

About **TROY**



Troy Young I'm from Miramichi, New Brunswick, Canada. I spent 20 years in Toronto, Ontario in the television broadcasting industry as an editor and producer. I loved my work, but was tired of working on other people's projects and wanted to do something I'm passionate about — travel! Creating videos about our travel experiences and telling our story the way we want is important to us. Travel for me is all about getting away from the life I was supposed to have and doing something that brings me to life. Exploring something new, whether it's breathtaking landscapes or experiencing a new culture for the first time, and having the opportunity to learn something new every day is what makes this so exciting.

About **Travel Life Experiences**

We are married, friends, and now business partners. We met 14 years ago in Toronto, Canada while pursuing our respective careers and have now been married for 10 years.

Each year, we maximized our bleak number of vacation days and took month-long adventures to new countries. Each year, our travel experiences changed us. We'd come back to the western world more aware, grounded, patient, and present to transform into our best selves. But it was never enough. We wanted it more often.

So we sold everything we owned, quit our careers, paid our debts, and hit the road for a life of local, cultural, slow and meaningful travel. Meaningful travel to us, means experiencing the local people, the culture, the everyday life to truly understand different cultures. It is getting out of our comfort zones to try new things and reconnecting to life skills, such as, patience, humility, openmindedness, cultural sensitivity, and living with a conscience. This kind of travel requires us to stay present, taking in all we can of what the world can offer us and what we can offer it.

We are not retired, but enjoy location-independent living. We work on our website and various video, photography and written projects. We want to help people who feel stuck, like they're missing out on life.

We want to inspire and show you if we can do it, you can too! We share how meaningful travel can transform you life and the lives of others. With that goal, Travel Life Experiences was born.



TRAVEL LIFE EXPERIENCES

Best of luck building — and living — your dream life!

Dorene and Troy
Travel Life Experiences

**Questions or comments on this eBook?
We would love to hear from you!
Please reach out to us anytime. Best of luck!**

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