

When Are We Going to Get There?

-By Jeff Keller

When I was a young boy, our family used to take car trips. Sometimes, we'd travel from New York to some of the southern states. Occasionally, we went to Canada.

My father always did the driving, my mom sat in the front passenger seat, and my brother and I sat in the back. We'd be about 30 miles into our 500 mile journey when I'd start to squirm and ask my father, "When are we going to get there?"

My dad would say that we'd just gotten started and had plenty left to go. And 40 or 50 miles later, (maybe even less!) I'd ask the same question. Of course, we always got there eventually, and I survived each trip. I guess I was just a little impatient.

I got to thinking about some of my goals recently and once again, I heard myself asking, "When am I going to get there?" Do you ask yourself that same question when it comes to your goals? Maybe you've been working so hard to get a particular result ... and it just hasn't happened yet.

If you ever find yourself in that position, here's a little encouragement and some points to reflect upon. Please understand, however, that nobody else has the answers to your challenges. These are some issues to consider, but it is you who ultimately must make your own decisions.

1. Re assess your PQ (Passion Quotient). Are you still excited about attaining this goal? If so, keep forging ahead. However, if you've lost your enthusiasm for the goal, maybe it's time to re-evaluate the road you're on.

You can fool yourself with rational arguments about why you're doing what you're doing. But I've learned that gut feelings don't lie. If every day is a struggle and brings little satisfaction, you're going to drain yourself physically, emotionally and spiritually.

Careful here. I'm not saying that every task along the way will be fun. That's rarely the case. But, if at the end of each day, you find yourself saying, "I really hate doing this," you should think long and hard about making some changes.

2. Enjoy the sights along the way. During my childhood car trips, I was so focused on the signs posting the number of miles to our destination that I neglected to see – and appreciate - the beautiful scenery along the way. And so it is with our lives. If we become too preoccupied with the end result, we miss many of the precious moments that make up our days, months and years. We don't appreciate our family and we don't see all of the beauty and

miracles that surround us. So, don't let the pursuit of your goal cause you to lose your balance and to shut out everything else in your world.

3. Give yourself credit for the distance you've already traveled. We often focus all of our energy on the things we feel are missing ... the goals we haven't yet attained. And we forget about the many things we have accomplished.

If you have some ambitious goals, I'll bet that you've already had some extraordinary accomplishments along the way. Think of where you were five or ten years ago ... or even two years ago. Give yourself a pat on the back for the skills you developed, the commitment you've demonstrated, the lives you've impacted and the results you've achieved.

4. Have lots of patience. Years ago, I heard an audio tape by Wayne Dyer in which he said, "Great things have no fear of time." What a marvelous approach!

If you believe in yourself at the deepest level, you're going to continue until you accomplish what you set out to do. Sometimes, it will take much longer than you thought. As David Geffen once said, "There's God's plan and your plan. And your plan doesn't matter."

Take the example of actor William H. Macy, who earned an Oscar nomination in 1997 for his performance in the movie, Fargo. Macy's breakthrough came at the age of 47, after he had been acting for more than 25 years, mostly in plays. There were times he thought about giving up on his acting career. Now, he's in demand as one of the top actors in the business. So, hang in there and be patient.

5. Realize that getting "there" won't make you happy. It's easy to fall into this trap. You get so obsessed with achieving something in your business that you begin to get the crazy idea that reaching the goal will bring you instant happiness.

Yet, the very moment of reaching your goal is seldom the euphoria you think it will be. Tennis star Martina Navratilova offered this insight: "The moment of victory is much too short to live for that and nothing else."

You experience real joy and build character from the entire journey toward your goal. Besides, let's not forget that when you do get "there," you still must choose another "there" to pursue!

6. Make some progress every day. It's so easy to get down and discouraged when things aren't going as we had planned. And it's okay to get down ... for a few minutes. Then, pick yourself up and make sure, each day, to do at least three things that will move you toward your objective.

They don't have to be monumental tasks - even a phone call or a letter counts.

This will keep your momentum rolling, and you'll discover the rewards that come from being disciplined and taking constructive actions day in and day out. The worst thing you can do is sit back, do nothing and feel sorry for yourself.

7. Be flexible and ready to take a detour. In the 1980s, self help writers often advocated setting 10 or 20 year goals.

My, how the world has changed! Now, we know how difficult it is to predict the business climate and technological advances that will occur within the next few months. With this rapid change, however, comes incredible new opportunities, and we must be prepared to seize them.

That's why it's so important to be flexible about how you achieve your goals ... and perhaps even about your goals themselves. You must have the courage to change highways when the timing seems right. Often the path you planned to take is not the same one you'll wind up on. Be open to new possibilities!

8. Look for positive signs, however small. We all have days where the phone doesn't ring and nothing seems to go right. If this is happening to you for weeks and months, it's probably time to re assess your strategy. But if you're making progress, even slowly, life will give you some signs, usually in the form of "minor" victories.

You may close a significant sale ... meet an important contact ... or receive some gratifying feedback. Use these positive signs to inspire you to go even further!

I wish I could tell you how much longer it will be until you get to wherever it is you want to go. But I can't. From time to time, you're still going to get frustrated and ask this question. That's okay. Use these guidelines to keep you on track and help you to see things in the right perspective.

Remember, the journey is what really counts. Be sure to cherish every step along the way.