

New York Times Bestselling Author of
Love Does and *Everybody, Always*

DREAM BIG

Know What You Want, Why You Want It,
and What You're Going to Do About It

BOB GOFF

A PDF COMPANION TO THE AUDIOBOOK

THE DREAM BIG FRAMEWORK

Reflection Questions and Action Ideas

Welcome! This is the section I mentioned at the beginning of the book where I've gathered some questions and actions that you can use to discover your most worthwhile ambition and make some moves toward it. Think of this section as your dream hub. You can use it as you go through each chapter or wait until you're done with the book. It's completely up to you. I think it will help you gain the clarity, confidence, and momentum you need to turn your ambitions into realities.

A lot of what you'll find here are the same kinds of prompts and exercises I use with groups in my live Dream Big workshops. Thousands of people just like you have wrestled with these very things and have made great progress. I know you will too.

I recommend that you have a dedicated space where you can



capture all your thoughts. You'll be making lists, writing letters to yourself, answering some hard questions, and jotting down steps you can take to move toward your dream. Think about getting a journal or a legal pad or a Google doc—whatever works best for you. Just be sure to capture your thoughts and responses. These answers, in a way, are *you*. This is the good and hard work of understanding who you are and how God made you so you can unearth the ambitions that may have been sitting dormant in your heart. We're going to move them from staying inside of you to impacting the world around you. Are you ready?

Part 1: Getting Ready to Dream Big

Chapter 3: Get Under the Ice Cap

We talked about “getting under the ice cap.” Down there is where you start your journey toward the three big questions: *Who are you? Where are you? What do you want?* Here are some questions you can think about to start the process of discovery.

Chapter 4: Who Are You?

- Are there some recurring themes in your behavior and choices? For instance, do you tend to act out of fear or a sense there will never be enough?
- Do you think *you* will never be enough?
- Do you live life out of a fake bravado or think you have to always please others?
- Take some time to explore *why* you do what you do. It's okay if this takes more than a few minutes, especially if you're asking yourself these questions for the first time. Take as much time as you need to express what is real, honest, and true about you.

Chapter 5: Where Are You?

- Remember, think *biography*, not *geography*. Are you confused about which major to choose? Do you feel stuck in your career choice but don't know how to change it? Are you up to your eyeballs in debt? Are you happy in your marriage or other important relationships?
- Obviously, there are a million and one questions we could ask. But I bet you already have a sense of where you are right now in your life. Take some time to describe exactly where you are *right now*. Be brutally honest. It's okay if you're not completely jazzed by your answer. Just about everyone wants something to change in their lives, including me.
- Think of a close friend who you can get honest with, then complete this statement: "I'm meeting X at Starbucks to tell them exactly where I am right now." Then send the text or make the call to set up the time.

Chapter 6: What Do You Want?

- So much of this book is about finding the right answers to this very question. In this part of the framework, we're going to make a first attempt at creating a list of what you want. Do you want a bigger house? Do you want to make working the soup line a Christmas tradition? Do you want to hike the Pacific Crest Trail or finally get to Paris? Do you want to lose weight or reconcile with your dad? It can be all this and more.

Your list will be totally unique to you, and it will probably get you pretty excited. That's the point! Don't worry about "editing" the list to make it look more noble or holy. Just be honest. Think about every single thing you're dreaming about right now and get it on a list. Go buy a legal pad with at least fifty blank pages. It's okay if you fill one of them or all of them. Just make sure to capture *everything*. Later on we'll work toward curating the



list and arranging your dreams so they make a constellation of possibilities you can actually work toward. For now, just write it all down. Have fun!

- What if “future you” could write a letter to “current you” about all you’ve accomplished and experienced on this journey? What would that future you say to help and encourage the current you? Take fifteen to twenty minutes to write that letter. Stuff it in an envelope, address it to yourself, and put a date on it that’s a few months into the future. Six months is a pretty good stretch. That’s the day you’re going to open and read the letter.

Chapter 7: Chase the Jeep

- Have you given Jesus the whole room, or are you trying to cram Him in a corner? What do you need to get rid of in your life to make space for Jesus? How would your faith transform if you gave Him the space He wants to be the center of your life?
- Imagine taking everything you pursue—good grades, a better job, a house in a different neighborhood, a boyfriend, whatever—and laying them out on the table. How are these things flowing into your life of faith? Now imagine taking those things one by one and deciding whether you should add them back to your faith and your life. Should you move something from the table to the garbage bin? What would you add back?

Chapter 8: Getting to the “New” Part

- One of the hardest things to believe about God is that He loves you completely and unconditionally. Do you have trouble with this? Is there anything lurking in your heart that says you have to change, be better, or do something different to earn God’s love? How would a complete and enduring belief in God’s love change your life and fuel your dream?

- What we do with our days will eventually become how we're known and remembered. If you looked at everything on an average Tuesday, what would it say about your faith?
- Fear is a part of all our lives. Even the most fearless among us have to stare it down and decide to act anyway. On a scale of one to ten—with one being “very little” and ten being “all the time”—how much does fear have a hold of your life?
- Knowing your talents is a great starting point for thinking about your dream. Write down ten things about yourself that feel like your innate talents. Maybe you're naturally friendly or optimistic. Maybe you are great at geometry or have a heart for homeless people. Things like this may not seem like “talents” as our culture defines them. They're so innate to who you are that they just feel like second nature. But they *are* your talents. Make a list and give yourself a high five. Oh, and if you're having trouble coming up with ten things, just ask a few people in your life what they think your talents are to give you some hints. My bet is that you'll have a list a lot longer than ten things.
- Some people think their talents are the only thing making up their identity. They lean heavily on them for success or approval. Do you think you've given your talents and gifts too much weight in your sense of self-worth? How could overreliance on your talents give you a “false positive” that you're moving in the direction of your dream?

Chapter 9: Sleepwalking

- Do you live life half awake? Maybe you like routine so much that somewhere along the way you forgot the power of shaking things up a bit. Do you need to become more fully alive?
- If you're a Bible reader, what stands out to you when you think about the miracles in the Bible? What if you believed that God



had a miracle waiting for you too? What would life look like if we peered around every corner, dug in every couch cushion, and looked under the bed to see how God has already been doing miracles for us? Write down a few things that have happened in your life that feel like God's miracles for you.

- Anyone can fall into the trap of thinking that work equals progress. In some sense, I guess that's true if you're doing the right things. Maybe you're so laser-focused on what you want to accomplish that you're grinding yourself into a fine powder with all your hustle. Do you have rhythms in your life that allow you to get adequate rest? Do you sleep enough? Do you work compulsively and realize too late that you're burned out? How can you pursue rest today and this week? How can you build rest into the rhythms of your life?

Chapter 10: One Hundred Calls a Day

- People are essential on the journey to our ambitions. Without others to help, encourage, and support you, it'll be difficult (and probably impossible) to achieve your dream. This can be hard for some people to accept. Are you the kind of person who thinks they need to go it alone? Does help from someone else feel uncomfortable to accept? If so, why?
- List three people in your life to whom you could become more available. What will you do today and this week to make yourself more available in their lives?
- A lot of people are constantly looking at others silently asking the question *What can this person do for me?* It happens in business all the time, and I guess that's okay in some respects. But what about you and your daily life? Are you scanning the room to size up what you can get from the people around you? How would your life change if you flipped the script and instead asked, *What can I give to everyone here?*

Chapter 11: Sea Otters, and

Chapter 12: Finale, and

Chapter 13: Comparison Is a Punk

- Take a moment and list five people in your life who are your friends. Now, as you look at each name, can you remember the last time you asked them a probing question that got past the surface? Now, think about yourself with each of these people. Can you remember the last time you shared something that felt vulnerable and real? In general, would you say you're a person who is willing to go deep with others?
- Does it seem strange or possibly even counterproductive to your dream to think how you can find opportunities for others? Are you afraid that if you give too much there won't be anything left over for yourself?
- Have you ever been in a position to open a path of possibility for someone else? How did it feel to play the role of giver instead of receiver?
- In chapter 13, we talked about the sinister power of comparison. What role does it play in your life? Are you the kind of person who thinks everyone else has it better than you or has it more together than you? List some ways that you struggle to "keep your eyes on your own paper" in your own life.

Part 2: Set Absurd Expectations

Chapter 14: Gather Your Leaves, and

Chapter 15: Sizing Up, and

Chapter 16: Get the Sticks Before the Drums

- Look back to the list of ambitions you started in the last part of this framework. Does your list feel like you, or are there some



impostors hanging out in there? Before you move forward in the Dream Big framework, make sure your list is honest and genuine. Your list should feel like an autobiography of who you are and what you *really* want. Revisit your list and revise as needed. Is there anything you need to add or take off? Remember, there are not right or wrong moves here. The only thing that matters is that your list is honest and truly reflects *you*.

- Are there some items on your list that are too vague? If they're not specific enough, you'll never know if you actually achieved them. Go through your list and drill down to get really concrete and specific about your ambitions.
- I'm the kind of guy who has an idea every five seconds. My trouble is not having dreams, but having too many. You might be the same, or you might be the exact opposite. It's all good. If you're going to get some movement on your dreams, you'll have to create some priorities. You can't chase them all at the same time—nor should you. Take the list you have and create three different categories: small, medium, and large. Or if you like coffee, go with Tall, Grande, and Venti. Place everything on your list in one of these categories. Don't worry about doing this exactly right. The exercise is more about clarifying what you can pursue quickly or what might take some time.
- For each of your Venti dreams, answer these three questions:
 - Is it meaningful? (Does this dream reflect my most beautiful values and hopes?)
 - Will it last? (Will this dream stand the test of time? Will it last my lifetime or even past my lifetime?)
 - Will it help others? (Is this dream just another feather in my cap, or will it impact the people around me? Remember, scale doesn't matter—there just needs to be a blast radius of goodness to your dream.)

- Take your list, divided into three categories, and put each item on a single line so they create rows across each category. Now, looking at the “small” dreams, draw a line if one of those dreams seems connected or could lead to a “medium” or “large” dream.
- This is a hard question, but I have to ask. Are you looking to get a pat on your back for some items on your list? Do you want your teacher or pastor to see it so you can feel affirmed? Do you want your spouse or best friend to think you’ve made the right choices? Be honest. If something on your list feels like someone else’s fulfilled expectation of you—but not necessarily a genuine dream of your own—take some time to think about why you added it, then consider if you should take it off your list. The last thing we want is you chasing a dream you think you’re supposed to have but don’t *actually* have.

Part 3: Explore Opportunities

Chapter 17: Keep the Moon in the Window, and

Chapter 18: The Number for the White House Is (202) 456-1414

- The dreams you wrote down and vetted in the last chapter made it on your list because you haven’t accomplished them yet. Why? Are you the kind of person who needs a fully reliable master plan before you take the first step? Are you stopped before you begin because of fear or what others might think? Maybe you have a family or a full-time job and can’t carve out the time to make some moves toward your dreams. Take a moment and ask yourself, “What’s kept me from pursuing my dreams?” We’re not creating solutions for these obstacles just yet. Identifying them, though, is an important step. (We’ll get to the solution part later.)



- Think about the body of knowledge you might need to accomplish your dream. Chances are you don't know all that stuff yet. What steps can you take to start learning what you'll need to know when your dream is fully realized?
- Name three people you know right now who could help you make some progress on your dream. Are you willing to approach them and ask for help? If so, how and when will you do that?
- Name three people you *want* to know who can help you toward your dream. Is there a way you can get to them? Can you find their phone number and give them a call? What about their email address? How far are you willing to go to get an audience with someone who could be key for you to accomplish your dream?
- When you look at your list of dreams, take the ones that light you up the most and write down the next action you need to take to get some forward movement. Write only one! It's tempting to write down a sequence of events like lining up dominoes. But I find that it's really empowering to have *one thing* that you can do to move your dream forward. (Of course, once that's done you can write down the next thing. Eventually you'll have a daisy chain of completed steps!)
- Working toward your dreams comes with some opportunity costs. Choosing one dream to chase means you might have to wait on another. So remember to be incredibly picky about how you spend your time, energy, and resources. When you look at your list, is anything sticking out that may not be worth it? Are there one or two large dreams that lead the pack and get you most excited? That's a good sign. Follow the breadcrumb trails to the one or two dreams that get you most excited.

Part 4: Clear the Path

Chapter 19: Hostage Negotiation, and

Chapter 20: Give It a Quarter Twist, and

Chapter 21: Be a Quitter

- This section started with a story about a bank robbery that led to something we now call Stockholm syndrome. Why do you think we cling to our captors, the things holding us hostage in our lives? As you scan the current dynamics in your life—both internal and external—do you have anything you would say is holding you hostage? If so, how strong is its hold in your life? Take a few minutes to write down some thoughts if you feel you need to name your captors and call them out for the role they play in keeping you hostage.
- Were you raised with any limiting beliefs from your parents? Were you continuously told year after year by a teacher, pastor, coach, or friend what it takes to be accepted? Have you come to believe certain narratives in your life as “universal truths” about who you are? If so, what are those, and where did they come from?
- Now, having identified any limiting beliefs, how might they be standing in the way of some audacious dreams you have or want to have but are too hesitant to chase?
- Have you ever heard the phrase “do it scared”? I heard once that courage isn’t the absence of fear but the willingness to act in the face of fear. When you think about the role of fear in your life, what are you willing to do to overcome this emotion when it comes to your big dreams?
- Are there any launching beliefs (the opposite of limiting beliefs) that you can be grateful for and focus on as you make moves



toward your dreams? Think of three positive things people have consistently said about you during your life. Maybe you're a natural optimist or selfless or a hard worker. Maybe you have some natural skills and abilities that have consistently caught other people's attention. Create some reminders on sticky notes (or your phone lock screen or written on your bathroom mirror, or wherever you look often) to help you remember what is inherently good and true about you.

- When I've spoken to people about their dreams, one of the most common reasons people tell me their dreams can't happen is all the commitments they currently have and can't let go of. I get it. I've made commitments that seemed good at the time but ended up shackling me to a particular spot. What commitments have you made that take up time, space, and energy on a daily or weekly basis? What would happen if you picked one thing—really, just one—and decided to stop doing it? Maybe it's something as big as a letter of resignation or something as simple as paying for school lunch one day a week instead of packing it. My hunch is you can let go of more than you believe you can. Pick one thing and just see what happens.
- Imagine how much extra time, space, and energy you would have for your dreams if you decided you were in charge of your commitments. I'm not suggesting you ditch everyone and become unreliable. It's important to keep your word. But you also have permission to change and shift, to adapt and be nimble. Describe a day in the near future when you've dropped some of the burdens you're currently carrying and replaced them with activities that move you closer to a fulfilled dream.
- Thursday is coming. It happens every week, so you know you can rely on it. Name one thing you're going to quit this Thursday. It could be a chore or a job or a daily routine. It could be a volunteer position or a habit or negative attitude. It could be anything,

really, just something you decide isn't helping you anymore. Go ahead—write down your own thing, then mark your calendar for this Thursday. It's quitting time!

- Saying no is not a pleasant experience for most people. But it's a critical skill if you're going to save space for your dreams. Often, we just need a little practice saying no. Go practice saying no one hundred times in the bathroom mirror. Get a few close friends together and have a "no" party where you practice with each other. Step out on your front porch and yell it at the top of your lungs. Think of a few common occurrences in your life where you just can't seem to say no. Now, make a plan to decline the next time. The truth is, people respect it when you tell them no in the right way, like we discussed in the chapter. It really is a liberating and powerful tool on your journey toward your dream.

Part 5: Take Action

Chapter 22: Living on the Edge of Yikes, and

Chapter 23: 10:34–10:35, and

Chapter 24: One Thousand Words a Day

- It's natural to seek comfort and familiarity in life. A life filled with uncertainty can feel too chaotic and stressful. Just the right amount of stress, however, can awaken our senses and bring out some of our best traits. This tension is almost always part of chasing a dream. How about you? Are you afraid of living on the edge of yikes? Does it get you completely amped and ready to take on the world? How would you describe your default reaction as you start to take some steps toward your dreams?



- You might be able to divide the world between people who procrastinate and those who don't. It's the late-night crammers before the big test versus the people who studied for weeks. Be honest with yourself—are you a procrastinator? Do you think of a dozen reasons why not to get started? Decide now how you're going to respond as you take your first steps toward a dream.
- Sometimes the resistance we feel toward action comes from inside us. Other times it comes from the people around us. Can you name one or two people who you think will try to tamp down your dream? How will you respond when they start to douse your attempts?
- I shared a few ideas to help you get some concrete plans to move toward your dream: make a date with yourself, make one phone call a day, set incremental milestones, and so on. Go back through the list and focus on a few that resonate with you. (Or, if you have a few tricks and tactics you already use, think about those.) Make a list of some things you want to do and decide in advance when and how you're going to do them. Put them on your calendar. Have a friend call you to check that you actually did it. Whatever it takes, decide now that you're going to act.
- Perfectionism can be a major roadblock to our dreams. We think, *If I can't do it exactly how I want, I won't do it at all.* Don't fall prey to this. Are you a perfectionist who does less because it won't be exactly right the first time?
- Fear of failure is another big reason I hear from people struggling to realize their dreams. What if you failed on purpose just to get it out of your system? The truth is, failure is a reality for all of us. You might as well join the club and realize that not every attempt toward your dream will be successful. The real challenge is this: how will you respond to failure? Take a few minutes and write a paragraph or two about how you'll respond when things don't go as planned.

Part 6: Expect Setbacks

Chapter 25: Pick the Vespa over the Harley, and

Chapter 26: Three Epic Fails

- The place where faith and failure meet can be tricky. You've probably heard people say "God opened the door" or "God closed the door." Maybe you're one of them. It's tempting to interpret our setbacks as heavenly signals we're headed in the wrong direction. I don't think this is true, because the dreams we have, I believe, are God-given gifts. How about you? Do you tend to think any blip along the way is God speaking to you in code? If so, why?
- I told a story about Sweet Maria after our Lodge burned down. I learned something powerful and precious about her in the wake of that loss. It made the catastrophe worth every singed beam and piece of timber. Have you experienced some setbacks and simply tried to power through or get past the pain as quickly as possible? Take a moment and sit in the heap. What can you learn about yourself that only setbacks can help reveal?
- Sometimes our setbacks make us more qualified, not less. Think about your life and some attempts that didn't go as planned. Maybe you faceplanted or lost some money or hurt someone you cared about. But with a little distance from the setback, you also gained some authority to help others avoid the same. Can you recall a time in your life when a difficult experience equipped you to help someone else avoid the same mistake? Can you recall a time when a past setback helped *you* avoid the same mistake?
- How would you describe your relationship with failure? Do you avoid it at all costs? If so, why? What do you fear about failing?
- Faith and friendship are essential tools to keep us motivated



when we face a major setback toward our dreams. Have an emergency kit of these ready when it happens to you. Do you have some favorite Bible verses God has used in your life to keep your head up? Is there a close friend or two who has a knack for encouraging you when times get tough? Put those verses and those names in a special place. When you've hit a roadblock on your Dream Big journey, get those out. Read. Make the call. Don't be afraid to reach for some encouragement and truth exactly when you need it.

Part 7: Sustain Belief and Land the Plane

Chapter 27: Check Your Ropes, and

Chapter 28: Ground Effect, and

Chapter 29: Matters of the Heart

- Are you securely tied into your faith and relationships? Think hard about this. Can you really rely on them when you're dangling from a cliff face? If you need to tighten some knots or click into some carabiners in your relationship with God, do it. If you need to reconnect more firmly with the people you depend on most, don't wait another second. List three ways you can get more secure and do these things.
- When you are chasing an ambition, it can take you into uncharted territory. You might not know anyone who's attempted the thing you're trying to accomplish. If that's the case, you should take it as a signal that you're on the right track. Take a few minutes and reconnect with your vision. Write down in exquisite detail what will happen when you've made it a reality. Who will it help? What would an average Tuesday look and feel like when you're living out your dream?

- When you face a setback, it's normal and natural to get into a funk. The problem comes when we stay there too long. What's your tendency? Are you able to acknowledge a difficult spot you're in and find a way forward? Or does it become your new return address? One of my favorite ways to overcome a setback is to preplan what I'll do when it happens. Do the same. Think of three things you'll do when you face a setback. It may not completely change your situation, but it will change you. And that's the starting point for moving forward.
- I'm an impatient guy. All my friends and family know this. As I've chased some of my dreams, though, I've experienced how patience is a powerful tool for the journey. What about you? Do you know your sweet spot between abdication and expectant waiting? Sometimes it's hard to recognize, but think about it. What does purposeful waiting look like in your own life?
- If you've been fully engaged in this process of discovery and self-reflection, my hunch is that you've covered quite a bit of distance so far. Take a moment to reflect on where you started and where you are now. Do you have more clarity? More energy? I know it's hard work sometimes, which is why you should stop right now and congratulate yourself for everything you've poured into this. Remember, you're worth it. Take five minutes and write down what you're proud of in this process.
- One of the head-fakes we get as we pursue our most beautiful ambitions is thinking we have to go from step one to step twenty-three in one major leap. Don't fall for it. Revisit your lists from earlier in the book—your list of dreams and the opportunities you're going to explore—and star the ones that feel like small things that can lead to big things.
- As you've gone through this book and the prompts in this section, maybe you've tried a few new things along the way. How has it gone? Have you gotten a bit of lift-off, or are you still on the



culmination of making some moves? This is a critical moment. Go back and reread the “Pitch, pick, and point” section of chapter 28. How can you do the same in your journey?

- Something is better than nothing, right? I think this is almost always true. When it comes to your dreams, I *know* it’s always true. As you move toward your dream, remember to celebrate even the small wins and half-steps forward. What are some midway points you can celebrate? Go buy yourself a few medals or write yourself some notes of congratulations to open when you’ve made some progress.
- Remember learning that thing in school where an object in motion tends to stay in motion and an object at rest tends to stay at rest? Much of the Dream Big framework is to help you move from rest to motion. As you land the plane on this process, don’t overlook the feeling of excitement and momentum you get from making some moves forward. As you end this book and look out to the life in front of you, stop and take a deep breath. Tell yourself, “I am going to do this.” Hopefully you’ve identified a few dreams you’re going to take some action on. Write down this phrase for each one of them “I will [fill in the blank with your dream(s)].”