

# You Don't Have to Know the Way

WRITER  
JESSICA  
MCGREGOR  
JOHNSON

Imagine yourself driving from Land's End to John O'Groats at night (the length of the UK, 603 miles). In the headlights all you can see is 200 yards ahead of you. And yet you know your destination, and in the headlights road signs show up pointing to your next turn off. You feel confident that you will eventually get there even if you have never driven the road before. Why would you doubt it?

I love this analogy because it shows that you do not have to know the way to reach a destination; you simply have to know where you want to go.

Many people I work with stifle dreams and ambitions because they cannot answer the "How?" question. They have a dream or an idea of what they think they'd like to do or have in their life but it never gets past the idea stage. I always feel that this is such a shame. So many great ideas and dreams never make it off the screen in our imaginations just for lack of confidence. We mistakenly think we have to know the way.

Trouble is, just like the car journey above, it is rare we will know the whole road when we set out. And in fact if we think we have worked it all out then it might actually be to our detriment because we will be so tunnel-visioned as to how it should all be working out. When that happens the most amazing opportunities might be in neon lights to our right but we, in our tunnel vision, will not see them.

The most important thing about going for a new idea, direction, dream, whatever it is, is clarity about the end goal. It is not like you set off from Land's End and say that you are heading off, but you're not sure where exactly. If you did that none of the road signs would help you. It would be a total guessing game and you would probably end up going in circles. Sound familiar?



You need a clear destination, that's the first point.

You also need a clear and strong motivation. If you do not have that then you will never make it. Your motivation needs to be a "towards" motivation. By that I mean that you are really wanting what you are moving towards rather than running away from what you do not want. An "away from" motivation will work at first. So for example, if you hated Land's End getting away from Land's End would be a big enough motivation to set off and look for the signs north. Problem is that once you're away from Land's End, say in the Cotswolds, it would be easy to get seduced by the lovely thatched cottages and pretty villages and you may just stop and never continue.

However if you were in Land's End and simply loved the idea of being in John O'Groats, and it was the only place you could ever imagine yourself being happy, then the motivation would be so strong. All those nights driving in the dark looking for signs, following this seemingly neverending road would all be worthwhile and you would continue until you got there. The "towards" motivation would keep you going all the way.

If you have a dream or ambition or idea that is stuck on the screen of your imagination I encourage you to spend some time with it. It costs you nothing to explore an idea and might cost you an amazing experience if you don't. I always say to my clients, if you have an idea explore it right up to the moment you have to press the "go" button. Get as much information as you can as to the details of how you might think it will look and feel. Imagine yourself in that new situation, how does it feel, what is happening, what are you living, how does your life feel? You literally want to make this a visceral experience.

Then if you like it, if it feels good you can start looking for the first step on the path. And you may also come up with the second and third but know that you do not have to know the whole route. The next steps will arise as a result of what you have just done. Look back through your life, I am sure you will find evidence of this: people you met along the way, situations that just "turned up" when you started moving forward.

So with that in mind, once you have got this visceral feeling the important question is this – am I running towards this or away from something else? If it is a "towards" motivation – bingo, you've hit the jackpot! It might be half and half which is also good but you will need to watch for keeping the towards motivation strong. If it is totally an "away from" motivation divorce the two things in your mind. Don't make one dependant on the other. Imagine yourself in a situation where you are fine where you are but this other opportunity is there too. Then see how that feels. This is a much better way of seeing if it is truly right for you.

You do not have to know the way – but you do need to be very clear on the What and the Why. The How will then take care of itself. Happy travels!

## about the author



Jessica is an international Coach, Author and Speaker. She works with people who are at a crossroads in their life and helps them discover their true passions and live them, whether it be in their work or personal life. She coaches people individually as well as running workshops and retreats in the UK and Spain. You can read the first two chapters of her book of *The Right T-Shirt, Write Your Own Rules and Live the Life You Want* just visit [www.jessicamcgregorjohnson.com/signup.html](http://www.jessicamcgregorjohnson.com/signup.html).

