

"Get away from the window!"

"Ok, I'm just checking . . ."

"I know, but you checked 10 minutes ago"

"Yes, but isn't it beautiful!"

Hi

So goes a typical evening conversation in the Laight household, with me peering from behind the curtains to make sure that my beloved new car is still there and the local hoodies haven't taken the alloy wheels or run a key down the side . . . You see, I've just bought my dream car . . .

Now for someone who only learnt to drive 5 years ago and never really professed any interest in cars this is a big turnaround. But with my near obsession with goal setting, a fancy car had to be one of the most obvious and measurable milestones, along with the dream house, country house, exotic holiday blah blah blah

Indulge me for a moment. We traded in our tired BMW for a Mercedes CLS 350 in obsidian black. Now this isn't your normal Mercedes but a sleek 4-door coupe that looks a little like the Batmobile and goes like the clappers! It will do 0 - 60 mph in 7 seconds and has a restricted top speed of 153 mph (although I average exactly 14 mph around central London!). And yes, I am doing my but for the environment by choosing the diesel version with low emissions, so I can put my foot down with a relatively clear conscience!

If you like cars, then check out Jeremy Clarkson's review of it here:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8sgpHdg1Fr0>

Ok, so he is test-driving the top of the range 6-litre V8 beast, but it gives you an idea.

Look, I'm not writing about this to gloat and I promise that you will never see a promotion with me looking smug stood next to it. That's far too 'nouveau riche' even for a Birmingham lad like me!

I have a serious point to make about goal setting. You see, it really doesn't have to be a luxury car. It could be a beehive or a digital camera, a fish pond or new kitchen.

The important thing is your goal has to be something you have a burning desire to attain that is currently beyond your reach. This object has to be imbued with positive emotions and it must allow you to project yourself into the future and see yourself enjoying the benefits. I am almost embarrassed to tell you the number of times I caught myself daydreaming about roaring up the M40 to my parents' house and to see the look on their faces when I pulled up on the driveway in the new car.

I've had a picture of the car on my noticeboard at work for the last year. I put it there as a physical reminder of the goals I had set. Sad I know, but there is something magical that happens when you obsess (in a good way) over your goals. The longer it stays there, the more it nags at you that it is still a piece of paper and NOT the real thing. It spurs you to question what you are doing now that can bring you closer to attaining it.

But what happens when you achieve it?

You know, as much I am excited by the car and enjoy the feeling of driving it, the emotional attachment I had to the idea of buying it has started to fade. With each passing day, I am getting used to it. It no longer has quite the same emotional charge it had before I owned it.

I guess it's the thrill of the chase! And that's half the fun.

So I need to reinvigorate my goal setting by moving on to the next one.

I know there is a lot written about goal setting and it can sound a bit airy-fairy, but take it from me it definitely works. I find it most effective when it's something material as opposed to saying "I want to make £100,000 by this time next year." I mean how can you visualise money sat in a bank account!

So make a list of your material goal, get those scissors out and start clipping!

Maker money in your dressing gown

