

Monthly Goal Check-in #4 - @ 5/1/2016

Here we are another month behind us.

The bad news is that April didn't go by any slower than March. The good news is that with 4 months down we still have twice as much runway with 8 months ahead of us.

Last month I spent a bit of time trying to put into perspective just how important time is to us all. I also mentioned my [Momento Mori chart](#), which is where I got the idea of the goal tracking system that I created this year and use in this monthly update. It's a grid of 52 columns in width (represents weeks in a year) and 100 rows tall (represents years).

Population of US Centenarians Over Time

Year	Number of Centenarians	Percentage of Population
<1940	rare	n/a
1950	2,300	0.0015%
1990	37,306	0.0150%
2010	53,364	0.0173%

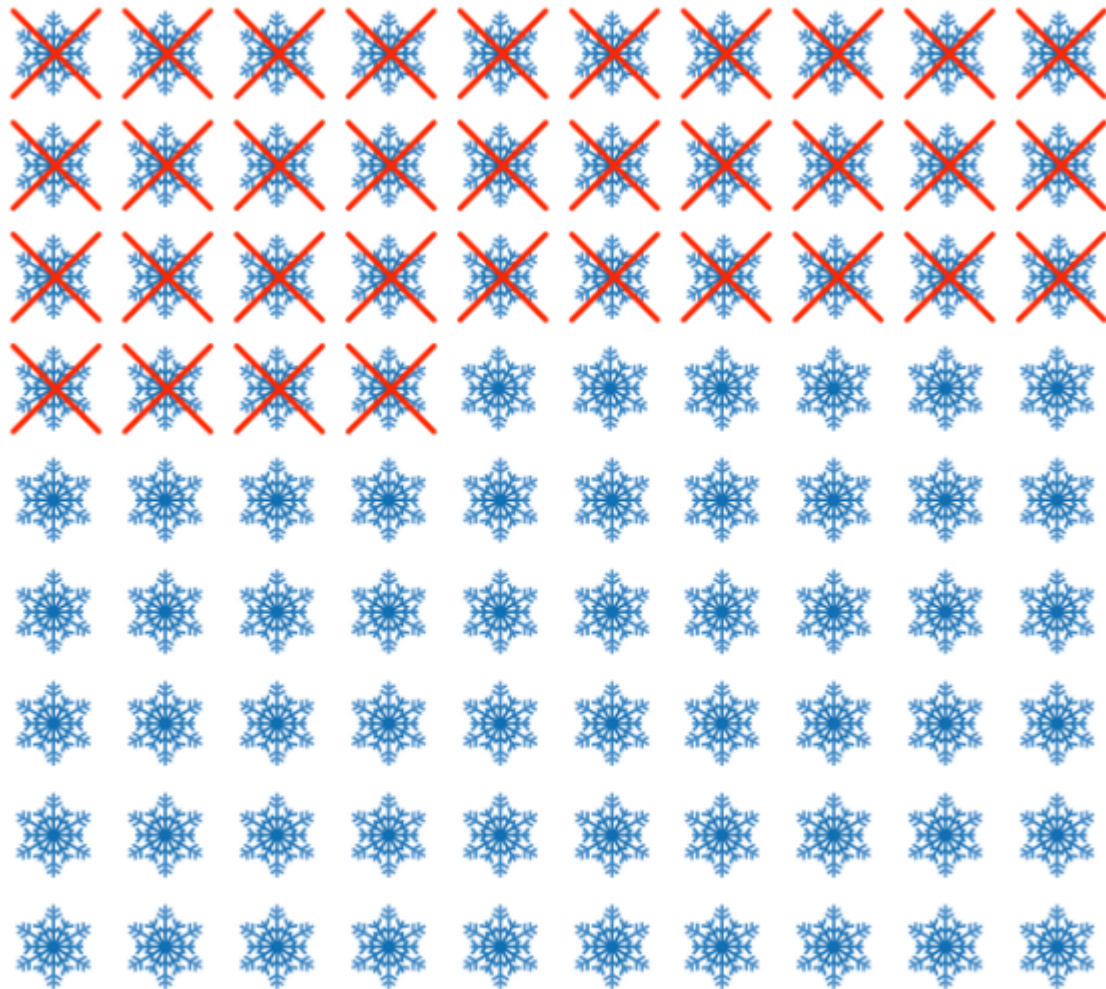
I personally have a goal to live to 100, which by 2010 statistics says I only have a 0.0176% chance of making my goal. Right or wrong this is my goal and my belief that it is possible is due to the advancements in technology that are on the horizon that will blow the current stats to smithereens.

The crazy part is that even at 100 years old all 5,200 weeks of my long life can fit on a single piece of paper (or excel spreadsheet).

Last month I read a post from a new blog that a friend turned me onto called [Wait But Why](#), and through this post it expanded my mind by adding additional context to my Momento Mori chart by bringing up the idea of The Tail End.

After Tim Urban, the writer, had done a similar exercise of visualizing his life in units of time (days, weeks, and months), he decided to take it a step further and start measuring his life in terms of activities and events (this blew my mind). Let me pull two examples from that post, for more I recommend you carve out the time to read the insightful post in full, it won't let you down.

Tim is 34 years old and wanted to figure out how many winters he had left if he lived to 90 years old and realized he only had 56 winters left:



waitbutwhy.com

However, Tim realized there are other things we experience in life that aren't nearly as evenly spread out in time like the seasons we will experience every year. In particular Tim honed in on the measuring his life in terms of time he had left to enjoy with important relationships in his life.

Here is what Tim had to say about the amount of time he had spent and had left to spend with his parents:

I've been thinking about my parents, who are in their mid-60s. During my first 18 years, I spent some time with my parents during at least 90% of my days. But since heading off to college and then later moving out of Boston, I've probably seen them an average of only five times a year each, for an average of maybe two days each time. 10 days a year. About 3% of the days I spent with them each year of my childhood.

Being in their mid-60s, let's continue to be super optimistic and say I'm one of the incredibly lucky people to have both parents alive into my 60s. That would give us about 30 more years of coexistence. If the ten days a year thing holds, that's 300 days left to hang with mom and dad. Less time than I spent with them in any one of my 18 childhood years.

When you look at that reality, you realize that despite not being at the end of your life, you may very well be nearing the end of your time with some of the most important people in your life. If I lay out the total days I'll ever spend with each of my parents—assuming I'm as lucky as can be—this becomes starkly clear:

graduated from high school, I had already used up 93% of my in-person parent time. I'm now enjoying the last 5% of that time. We're in the tail end.

That last sentence that Tim wrote just blew my freakin mind to pieces. If you had 5% of the visits with your parents left, would you treat those visits differently? Maybe you would move closer to your parents to see them more frequently than 10 days a year. Maybe it wouldn't seem like such a chore to schlep out to see them.

Where in your own life might you be at the tail end?

- If you're a reader, how many more books will you read over the remainder of your life if you keep your current pace? Remember there are millions of books.
- If you love to travel, how many more trips do you have left to take? The average person is lucky to take one trip per year.
- If you're married, how many days do you have left to enjoy your spouse?
- If you compete in a sport, how many competitions do you have left?
- If you're a blogger, how many posts do you have left to write?
- If you love sports, how many superbows, world series, etc. do you have left?
- How many more times will you get to enjoy your favorite pizza place?

To be honest I really want to spend some time going through a huge list of activities, events, and relationships in my life to put everything in perspective. It's easy to feel like we have an endless number of experiences, but the reality is, **we don't!**

These last two intros and commentary are not meant to get dark on you. Instead I include them to hopefully push you in taking a step back to make sure you are chasing the write things. To make sure you are spending your time knowing full well the tradeoffs.

Simply put...**LIFE IS TOO SHORT!**

Where are we?

As I write this monthly goal check-in we are officially 121 days into 2016 (or ~33% complete). Most people started the year off strong with their New Year's resolutions for 2016. Well, at least [the 45% of people](#) who actually set New Year's resolutions (US based statistics). The low participation rate isn't even the worst news, of those 45%, [1 in 3 have already given up](#) by the end of January. This means that 70% of Americans have already failed either by default or giving up.

I don't want you or I to be a part of that 70% group. If you're reading this, then you're probably still on track and fired up to reach your goals, I know I am!

If you've hit a bit of a speed bump from coming out of the gate too hard, use this post as a reminder that there are still 8 months left in the year. **Don't give up!** Remember that **when the going gets tough, the tough keep going.**

This is also the perfect time for me to encourage you to check-in on the progress you have already made in your own goals this year. If you set **measurable** goals, this should be rather easy. And if you set up the right tracking system, it shouldn't take long to evaluate where you are.

We tend to overestimate what we can accomplish in a day or a week, but you would be surprised at what is possible over the course of a month and a single year.

We have 366 days in 2016. That is 366 opportunities to make forward progress on our goals. **Some days are going to be better than others, it's the nature of the game.** The key is to keep it fun and remember life is just one big game. With 121 days behind us, that is 33% complete, which leaves us with 67% of runway left to make our goals a reality.

When you have a bad day, don't give up, get up and shake it off as you continue moving forward. Remember tomorrow is another day and another opportunity.

Lastly, it is also a perfect opportunity to review the goals on your list to ensure they're still important to you. Sometimes we put goals on our list that seemed really important at the time, but lose that importance over time. I am not saying you

should quit on a goal just because you're not seeing the progress you wanted to see by now, but to make sure you're going after things that matter to you. It's okay to realize that you put down the wrong goals.

Is it time for a pivot? A tweak? Or maybe it's time to strike one of those goals off your list.

My Personal Accountability & Check-in

Below is where I stand with the [12 goals I set for 2016](#). You can see that I have added some additional color formatting to visually see the progress made in each passing month.

My initial assessment when looking at this, is that I have made some really solid progress, but am behind pace in a few goals.

Let's briefly take a look at each one:

Goal #1 [250 CrossFit/Hot Yoga Workouts or More, 22.4%] - I mentioned in my March update that I had hurt my back in crossfit doing a technical lift. I ended up being down for the count for most of April. My back is much better now. I have decided to go back to doing [P90X](#) starting in June, and will be doing a public challenge with [Mr. 1500 of 1500 days](#). We will be sharing our results on each of our respective blogs. The readers will have to decide who ends the 90 day challenge with the best results.

At this point I am behind pace to reach 250 workouts. I should be at 33% complete. I need average 4.8 workouts per week, but have averaged about 3 per week. [P90X](#) is a 6-day a week program, which will help me catch up some lost ground.

Goal #2 [250 Days Eating Primal of nutritional consciousness or More, 21.6%] - I brought this goal back alive by making a pivot that made sense to me. This sounds and is kind of a fluffy goal, as it can be a bit discretionary. It's really about being sure that my decisions on what I put in my body are pre-meditated and conscious. I have to make the decision on whether I eat the pizza or choose the salad. If I am still hungry to I serve myself the extra serving of pasta or do I load up on extra veggies. I need to measure out my servings (as I tend to under estimate how many calories I consume).

Goal #3 [Earn \$270K in Gross Income or More, 48.1%] - I am convinced that we will blow this goal out of the water, even without a promotion to VP. Mrs GYFG keeps killing it every month with her income. We are currently on track to now bring in \$301K. I was looking at our stats on a trailing 12 month period and realized that over the last 12 months (May-15 to April-16) ***we have earned a record \$312K.***

Goal #4 [Publish 52 new Blog Posts or More, 48.1%] - This goal is ahead of schedule. As tempted as I am to raise the bar here, I don't want the pressure to put out additional content just for the sake of a goal. My hope is that I put out content that motivates, inspires, informs, and moves you to action. Or at the very least gets the ideas flowing.

Goal #5 [Pay Down Mortgage Principle by \$25,000 or More, 100%] - As

expected our recent refinance had us blow past our goal of \$25,000. According to our accelerated plan we don't need to make another additional payment until April of 2017 to stay on track for the [7 year and 3 month payoff of our mortgage](#). We are currently on hold with making new payments until then.

Goal #6 [Contribute \$24,650 to Pre-Tax Accounts, 40%] - This one is pretty much on auto pilot. Not much to think about here.

Goal #7 [Vacation 21 days or More with My Wife, Friends, and Family, 28.6%] - The Mrs and I played hooky on a Friday together to just spend the day with each other. It was an awesome day and was nice to have an unplanned 3-day weekend.

We take off for Costa Rica at the end of May for a 10 day trip that we are very much looking forward too.

In 2017, Mrs. GYFG and I, are going to attempt to take 1 week off per quarter. Regardless of whether we have any sort of vacation planned.

Goal #8 [Save 50% or More of After Tax Income, 100%] - This will be something that moves around each month. I just finished putting together my April 2016 financial report and that still has us forecasted to hit our 50% goal, but the reading for April itself is 13%.

Goal #9 [Write 12 Posts on Other Blogs, 25%] - Three guest posts have been submitted and published. Here they are if you would like to take a read:

- 1 - [The AC Interview Series with Gen Y Finance Guy](#)
- 2 - [Financially Alert Friends - Interview #3 with Dominic @ Gen Y Finance Guy](#)
- 3 - [10 Guidelines to Financial Independence with Gen Y Finance Guy](#)

Goal #10 [250 Entries or More in Wife Gratitude Journal, 12%] - Behind pace. I should really be at 33% with this one. But I have tried to keep it very organic and writing things as they naturally come to me.

Goal #11 [Increase Net Worth by \$112,000 to \$430,000 by 12/31/16 or More, 47.3%] - We have increased our net worth by \$53,000 so far in 2016. We should pick up another \$40K over the next 3 months.

Goal #12 [Earn \$12,000 in the Blog, 16.7%] - This is a lifetime income goal. We have officially hit over \$2,000. Now working to get that 3rd X.

Goal 13 - Earn VP Title [Bonus Goal] - I was recently informed of leadership training that I will be going through over the next 6 months to ready me for this promotion. Essentially, the VP of HR will let management know when he thinks I am ready as we move through the training.

That is where I am at so far in 2016. I am very pleased with the progress I have made and am very much looking forward to updating everyone in another month. In the meantime keep charging forward with your own goals. **Don't give in or surrender.** Take it one day at a time. Measure your progress and I promise you will surprise yourself with what you can accomplish in month, quarter, and year.

Sometimes the progress we make doesn't seem visible or worth the effort. But over time it really starts to add up and compound. Think about it this way...imagine you are trying to improve just 0.3% per day. That is not a visible amount of improvement, but it adds up to almost 1% improvement every 3 days, and by the end of the year you will have improved over 100%.

Onward & Upward!

- Gen Y Finance Guy

Oh, you're still reading.

Do you want to help keep our lights on? You're under no obligation, but if you were already thinking about it or were a little bit curious, why not help us out?

Here are a few ways you can help us out:

1. **Personal Capital** - You know how big I am on tracking my finances, that's why I totally recommend Personal Capital's FREE software that helps you see all your financial accounts in one secure and convenient place (checking,

savings, investments, and retirement accounts). Without a tool like Personal Capital, these reports would take 2-3 times as long to complete. You want to track your income? Your expenses? How about your Net Worth (who doesn't like watching that bad boy climb). Just sign up and link your accounts today. **Absolutely FREE to you!**

2. **Prosper or Lending Club** - Lending to consumers is a great industry that's produced profits year after year for a handful of banks. Now with Prosper, you as the investor get unprecedented access to this market. My personal P2P portfolio is earning over 5%. **Open a FREE investment account today!**
3. **TD Ameritrade** - They are hands down the best broker for the retail investor. TD Ameritrade provides a number of investing platforms that are more robust than any other platform I have ever used. My particular favorite is the "Think or Swim" platform. **Oh, and did I mention that they have over 100 ETFs that you can trade commission FREE?**
4. **Blue Host** - Have we inspired you to create your own blog? Well let me save you some money. This is the hosting company that I use for this blog. It is stupid cheap and the customer service is amazing. The normal price is \$5.99/month, but if you use this link you will get a 34% discount (only \$3.99/month). It took me less than 5 minutes to buy my domain, install wordpress, and get the first version of this site up and running.

OR you can check out our [Recommended Products and Resources page](#).



Gen Y Finance Guy

Hey, I'm Dom - the man behind the cartoon. You'll notice that I sign off as "Gen Y Finance Guy" on all my posts, due to the fact that I write this blog anonymously (at least for now). I like to think of myself as the *Chief Freedom Officer* here of my little corner of the internet. In the real world, I'm a 30-something former C-Suite executive turned entrepreneur turned capital allocator. I am trying to humanize finance by sharing my own journey to Financial Freedom. I believe in total *honesty* and *transparency*. That is why before I ever started blogging, I

decided that I would share all of my own [financial stats](#). I do this not to brag, but instead to inspire motivate, and also to hold myself accountable. My goal is to be a beacon of hope, motivation, and inspiration for *you*, the reader, by living life by example and sharing it **all** here on the blog. My sincere hope is that you will be able to learn from me - both from my successes and my failures! [Read More](#)