

# The Psychology of Ambition

**A goal is an intention you set to achieve a particular outcome**—an outcome that wouldn't come to pass without your intentional effort.

- As opposed to a desire, a wish or a longing
- A real-world outcome—not a mental product

**An ambitious goal** is a long-range goal that will require you to develop your capabilities to achieve it. ***This means that it will need to be a highly selfish, personally meaningful goal, often a goal unique to you.***

- You can expect unforeseen setbacks and difficulties.
- The commitment includes committing to develop the means to achieve it—including likely your own knowledge, values, and skills.
- The more ambitious & unique, the less likely there is a blueprint for achieving it.

**Two key ingredients of success on ambitious goals:**

- A rational goal-setting methodology for guiding action
  - A methodology for activating rationally selfish motivation to sustain effort toward the goal over the long haul
- ***You need to know how to access and strengthen your own selfish motivation.***

**A new perspective on “Old Baggage”**

- “Old Baggage” is defensive motivation, which manifests as lack of integration of your value hierarchy.
  - Your strong values have been shaped in part by your trials and tribulations.
  - Your deep knowledge and unique skills were developed in overcoming the specific past obstacles you've faced.
- ***Your old baggage shaped what is important to you, and can add urgency to your ambitious goal.***

**What to do about old baggage**

- Don't go on a mission to fix yourself.
  - Untangle it only as it blocks pursuit of real-world, selfish goals.
- ***This is possible using a rationally selfish methodology for goal-setting and activating motivation.***

**Only you can figure out the way forward to an ambitious goal**

- Only you can determine your contribution to any problem.
  - Only you can evaluate whether a solution meets all of your needs.
- ***The fundamental: Maintain a value orientation in the face of self-criticism.***