

A fresh approach to living a life with no regrets!

Edward M. Kopko

PROJECT BOLD LIFE

THE PROVEN FORMULA TO TAKE ON CHALLENGES
AND ACHIEVE HAPPINESS AND SUCCESS

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SUCCESS**

Edward M. Kopko

BOLD
BUSINESS
2020

Advance Praise for Project Bold Life and Author Ed Kopko:

"Ed Kopko's book **Project Bold Life** is beyond motivational; it's transformative. Faith is a precursor to boldness, and often times people have faith, but lack the boldness to go beyond self-imposed limitations. **Project Bold Life** gives ample examples of people that have shattered any notions of limits, on their potential towards pushing past any obstacles in their way. Living a Bold Life annihilates doubt, and frees the spirit towards greatness. I'm Living a Bold Life. Come join me." - *Bruce George, Founder of the Genius is Common Movement, Co-Founder of Def Poetry Jam on HBO*

"There are very few self-help books that are page turners. Ed Kopko's Project Bold Life is one of them. The insights keep coming like lightning flashes in a thunderstorm on steroids. It is not only a guide to success it is a guide to life. Read this book, it will improve your life. It has improved mine." - *Anthony Stimac, President, Musical Theatre Works International, Author of Upcoming Book, "The Journey"*

"As a parent and a professional, managing work-life challenges can sometimes be daunting. Ed's book gives thoughtful advice on how to successfully manage work-life challenges and live a life of no regrets. Every parent should read this book! And then tell their children to read it as well!" - *Dr. Marion Brody, Radiologist and Parent*

"Ed has a gift for making things simple, with wonderful stories, and actionable steps to enable you to lead a bold

life.” – *Neddy Perez, Chief Diversity Officer, McCormick & Company*

“Bold is a gift, a weapon and a lesson. If you don’t learn the lesson, you won’t be able to use the weapon against adversity and bring the gift back to your organization, your community and to benefit your own development. Ed Kopko offers us access to the timeless importance of being Bold...learn, fight, give: the numbers don’t lie!” - *Bruce Craven, Author of “Win or Die: Leadership Secrets from Game of Thrones”, Professor at Columbia University*

“Ed’s message of achievable bold goal setting should resonate with every talent-based organization. Anyone interested in advancing within their career, or any company interested in fostering a culture of pipeline development and internal mobility, will find these principles to be vital. Every talent management office should encourage their team to read this book - Project Bold Life inspires enthusiasm and action regardless of where you sit within your company.” - *James E. Taylor, Ph.D., Chief Diversity, Inclusion, and Talent Management Officer, UPMC*

“This book has many deeply insightful and practical ways of creating and acting upon transformational life goals. Freeing oneself from the fear of stretching to achieve bold life goals is a gift this book delivers.” – *Michael J Critelli, CEO MoveFlux Corporation, Retired Chairman and CEO, Pitney Bowes*

“Ed has worked extensively to bring diversity and inclusion to the global business arena, imparting a

message of hope and positivity for all. This book is an extension of that message, and it outlines the path individuals can take to attain fulfilling, bold lives!" - *Pamela McElvane, Publisher of Diversity MBA Magazine*

"Crave personal and professional success? Desire to live a life without regret? There is no better way to achieve it than embracing the system Ed Kopko so thoroughly provides in *Project Bold Life*. I wish I had Ed's goal-setting tools, advice and stories when I was launching my career. This book is solid gold." –*William A. Lederer, Chairman and CEO, iSOCRATES LLC, Adjunct Professor, Graduate Media Management Program at The New School*

"I recommend **Project Bold Life** by Ed Kopko as an ideal addition to those freshman college courses designed to introduce students to college life and a consideration of life's purpose. At the university, I would urge parents to encourage their students to study that for which they have a passion because this is a sure way to success. By success I meant the optimal balance of talent, time, and treasure – the talents we develop and deploy for the betterment of self and society; the use of time so that the personal and professional dimensions of life are in balance; and the treasure we start with, accumulate, and give away, recognizing that luck plays a part and we should always say, 'Thank you.' *Project Bold Life* is a terrific guide to help students become the author of their own lives instead of merely an actor in someone else's script. Buttressed by scientific research as well as personal stories, **Project Bold Life** does all this and more." - *Dr. Robert A. Scott, President Emeritus and University Professor Emeritus, Adelphi University*

More to come!



This book is dedicated to my family
Past, Present and Future

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Disclaimer: This book provides advice but does not guarantee any specific outcomes or results.

Acknowledgments

Writing this book has been a heady effort. It has made me a better person and has taught me much. The old adage that the best way to learn a topic is to teach is amplified when writing a book. I have learned a great deal attempting to put this topic to paper. I hope you will find the content valuable and apply some of the concepts.

The genesis of this book has been within me for years. How to live a full happy life with no regrets is something that I have wrestled with since I was young. Many people I have encountered have wrestled with similar thoughts. The fantastic people that I have interviewed and worked with throughout my career helped me develop and reinforce the framework of ideas that have guided me during this journey.

This book is about you, not me. It is not a memoir or lessons from Ed. It is a conglomeration of learning from the many people I have been lucky to know. I hope you will see me as the scribe and developer of the framework and lessons.

There are many great people to acknowledge for their important roles in this book. It was a multiyear effort. All the research, interviews, graphics, websites, databases and illustrations involved many talented people.

First off, Jim Genia worked with me closely on this manuscript as editor and researcher and deserves the first and biggest shout out. We worked endless hours on all elements of the book and he was a constant smart source for me to bounce ideas and help make my ideas come to life. More importantly, he was a positive force, particularly when I would hit the inevitable blocks.

Dawna Stone, an accomplished author and businesswoman, deserves the next shout out for inspiring me to write this book and being a confidant, advisor, intellectual contributor and coach.

Brittany Birsner played a key role in the formation of the book and its messaging. She helped develop my thinking regarding the importance of speaking to youth and using more elements to do so. She was the “go-to” for first ideas on all types of elements and messages. Her keen eye helped me improve the messaging.

The additional team behind this book was vast and amazing.

I would like to acknowledge the programming team that built the Bold Life Assessment, which became an important foundation for the book. This includes Joy Clarin, Cherry Arimado, Michael Robles, Marlon Aromin, Dwight Navarro, Eustaquio “King” Manzano, and Lorelie Perez. They developed a custom program that enabled us to gather information on how people viewed their lives and goals. It was almost a year-long effort and the survey and reports people received were amazing. Dawna and Ellen Madden deserve major kudos for developing the questions and designing the report that participants receive.

I would also like to acknowledge the video team from Bold Business that assisted me in creating great content and helping develop the stories of some of the interviewees for the publication. The footage became an important part of the research for the stories. This includes Doug Rifenburg, Will Linthicum, Lou-Jico Jarlego, Anj Perez, Viktor Toledo, Gaius Merza, Jeremy Fera, and Camille Holgado.

The illustrations and creation of Boldy was a huge effort. Brittany, Dawna and Ellen helped in his initial concept.

A major shout out to the talented Cris Hipolito, an amazing creative illustrator. Also, kudos to Enrico Alonzo Rosli Ali.

My author website had many great contributors. Thanks go to Brittany, Manual “Wacks” Siocon, Ron Rivero, Christine Sese, Cristina DeLima, and Joan Kadibhai.

Photography for the site and back cover were taken by the talented Cecelia Lagerman of Lagerman Studio LLC.

I would also like to thank my sons, Michael and Matthew, who were early readers. The framework for the book was shared with them from an early age and I parented them through the principles. I learned some important lessons as a result!

Of course, my mom, Martha Kopko, is the best mom and cheerleader a son could ever have.

Finally, I would like to acknowledge my wife, Lenore, who encouraged me to share a little more about some of my personal side. She also put up with me isolating myself to write and create. She particularly influenced me to more fully develop my thinking and writing about challenges and setbacks. Chapters 2 and 3 are better because of her.

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SECTION 1: LIVING A BOLD LIFE

Introduction

“The greatest danger for most of us is not that our aim is too high and we miss it, but that it is too low and we reach it.” - Michelangelo Buonarroti

I started writing this book before the COVID-19 pandemic struck, and entered the home stretch with the world under lockdown. The underlying message was always one of boldness—during the course of my life, I have met numerous people who have done great, inspiring things, and I wanted to both share their bold accomplishments and explain how they did it all. Despite the lockdowns, the unrest and the economic chaos, that message remains unchanged.

Why? Because being bold is still possible. In fact, it's actually more important.

Boldness is what separates the average from awe-inspiring. I want to be more of the latter than the former. We only get one life to live, so why not seize all the opportunity and glory the world has to offer? Should COVID-19 change that?

In picking up this book, chances are the notion of creating a Bold Life for yourself is a lot more appealing than having a life where average and ordinary is the status quo. That's great! I want to thank you for seeking out boldness!

How is a Bold Life achieved? A big component of the equation is goals.

Having goals is important, and at some point, everyone sets goals for themselves. When we are children we learn about goals.

From waking up earlier to get ready before the bus comes to take you to school, to studying a little bit harder for a better grade on a test, to going the extra

mile to earn a spot on the starting lineup of the varsity basketball team, we learn early on that setting goals is a key ingredient in the “secret sauce” that makes success taste so delicious.

Most kids have Bold Goals. They want to be athletes, famous actresses, doctors, teachers, social media influencers and more. It is this naturally unchecked optimistic spirit that is so wondrous in children. Kids have beautiful dreams for their future.

As adults, that penchant for setting goals continues. Yet for some, those big, inspiring dreams can sometimes be put on the shelf. In a recent study conducted by Zety, only 33% of people achieve their childhood dream job.¹ There are important practical to-do's that must be done, and the big dreams can be put aside. Yet some of the important stuff is actually important stuff.

Getting into a good college and earning a degree? That's a noble cause that entails a lot of self-improvement, and it requires goal setting.

Securing a job and career that both fulfills us and pays the bills? This is another fantastic thing to strive for, and it requires more goal setting.

Starting a family and raising kids? Lots of goals are required to make this one work, especially if you want your spouse and kids to be happy.

Realizing your dreams of becoming a doctor, karate black belt, CEO, or marathon runner? Overcoming a disability or illness or learning to walk again? These are all clearly examples of bold lives, and as such, need more than just ordinary goals.

¹ Survey conducted by One Poll for Zety with a sample of 2000 Americans from Nov 8, 2019- Nov 11, 2019.
<https://www.swnsdigital.com/2019/12/these-are-the-most-popular-jobs-kids-dream-of-doing-when-they-grow-up/?fbclid=IwAR0b84Ut3X9nHy2QpYAjxGaqtS3Lqg-1sfgotfXW0Kx-IkOa9D38VNIqI5c>

They need Bold Goals!

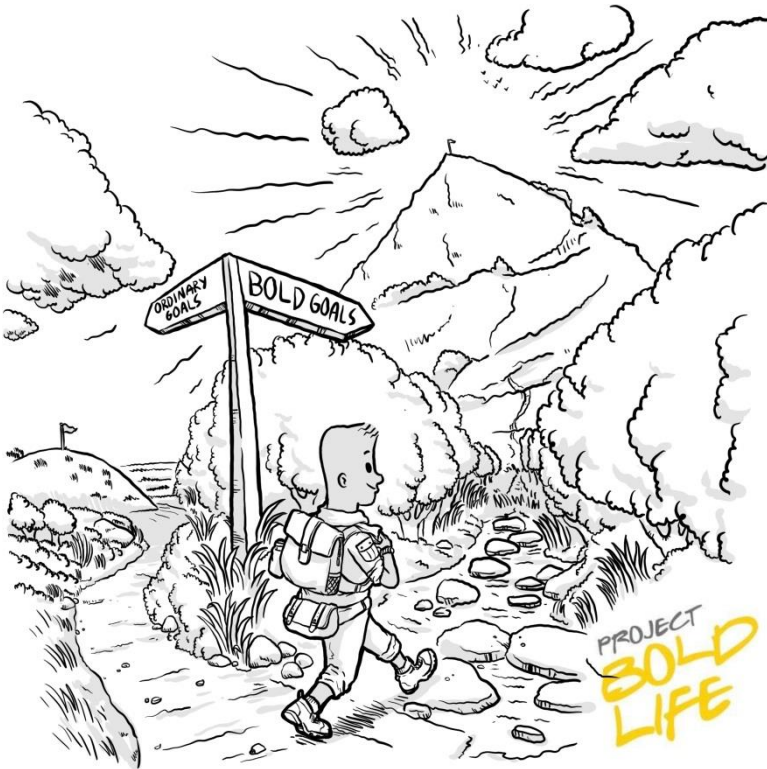
*MOST PEOPLE KNOW A BOLD GOAL
WHEN THEY HEAR IT.*

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LIFE*

In fact, anything truly worth accomplishing--anything that points toward a life lived boldly--requires more than just deciding to set your alarm clock an hour earlier, spending an extra 30 minutes going over your notes from class or staying after basketball practice and shooting a hundred extra baskets. It requires things like inspiration, an Action Plan, and perseverance.

Remember when I said that having goals is important? Well, it is, but for the true success and happiness that comes with living a Bold Life, it's those Bold Goals--and especially the sense of accomplishment from realizing them--that make it all worthwhile.

The notion of a Bold Goal isn't a new one. Whenever someone told you to "reach for the stars" or "aim high," they were really telling you to set Bold Goals so you could create your very own Bold Life.



This is not your typical motivational book (although I do hope to give you some motivation!). Instead, it is intended to help you set and accomplish the Bold Goals that will enable you to build the big Bold Life you choose to live. Let's emphasize the important part of that sentence: the Bold Life **you choose to live**.

Everyone's Bold Life is deeply personal, and as a result, this is not a one-size-fits-all method. After all, yours is not a one-size-fits-all life! You've got your very own set of aspirations and desires, and—perhaps more importantly—you've got your very own set of setbacks and challenges you have faced.

The choppy waters created by setbacks and challenges are a part of life, but that doesn't mean they're easy to navigate. You've probably faced tough times and loss, so you know this. I know I've faced tough times and loss—I woke up one morning to find that my

beloved 46-year-old wife had unexpectedly passed away. But from this tragedy, I learned that only by getting past these setbacks and challenges can we truly achieve great, bold things.

Throughout the chapters, I have included over a dozen real-life success stories to help you see how a Bold Life is possible for everyone, regardless of social or economic challenges.

The stories come from people of all walks of life, people who have created Bold Lives regardless of their circumstances. I hope these stories help you realize that you can have a Bold Life -- a Bold Life you can be proud of and that inspires. It is up to you to live it. No one can live your Bold Life for you, and no one owes a Bold life to you. It is yours and yours alone to make.

There are many reasons to set and work to achieve your Bold Life. Research shows that people who have big dreams are happier, more motivated, rebound from setbacks better and live more purposeful lives.

- Bold Goals give you the energy to get going in the morning and keep at it later in the day.
- Bold Goals provide hope and inspiration to act, even in the face of adversity and challenges.
- Bold Goals are even an essential leadership tool. They serve to inspire others.
- Finally, Bold Goals help provide focus and direction in your life.

For those of you who need more convincing that seeking a Bold Life offers many benefits, I have created the “33 Reasons to Live Bold” list for you.

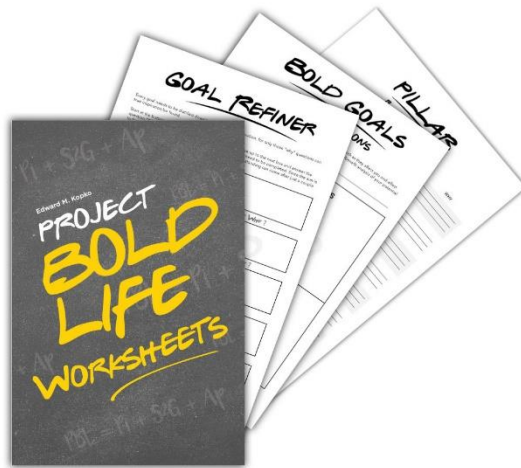
33 REASONS TO LIVE BOLD

1. Living boldly makes you happier
2. You will wake up in the morning with enthusiasm to achieve
3. You will be inspired to go the extra mile
4. You will be resilient when facing adversity
5. You only have one life to live, so why not?
6. Fortune favors the bold
7. Mediocrity is not fun!
8. You will inspire others
9. A Bold Life requires Bold Goals, and people with Bold Goals have more energy for life!
10. People are drawn to those who are striving to reach their Bold Goals or have accomplished them - the world comes to you because of your goals
11. Bold living crushes drudgery
12. Problems find solutions
13. Is there a better choice?
14. Bold Goals help develop new strengths
15. Bold Goals drive you to be all you can be
16. You will manage your time more efficiently
17. Your life will have a sense of purpose
18. Accomplishing Bold Goals teaches you to deal with obstacles easier and with less stress
19. You will feel better about yourself
20. Studies show that if you have a rich, productive life--a Bold Life--you tend to live longer and healthier
21. Bold lives set the best examples for our kids
22. A Bold Life is something to be proud of
23. A Bold Life gives you a stronger sense of satisfaction over what you've accomplished
24. People who live Bold Lives tend to have fewer regrets
25. A Bold Life is a courageous life
26. People who live Bold Lives stare fear in the eye... and make it run!
27. People with Bold Lives make more friends
28. A Bold Life with Bold Goals achieved makes you feel accomplished and content
29. Attaining Bold Goals teaches you to give it your all
30. Striving for a Bold Life lets you create your future
31. Striving for a Bold Life lets you learn from the past
32. "Even God lends a hand to honest boldness." - Menander, Ancient Greek playwright
33. Living a Bold Life is a great life!

$$PBL = P + S + G + A + P$$

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Project Bold Life is divided into three sections encompassing several chapters to help you not only appreciate the process of realizing a Bold Life but also apply it to your unique situation and goals. But **what will truly help jumpstart the process that puts you on your path are the worksheets**, which makes up the resource material in Chapter 16 and is also available for download at EdKopko.com/PBLWorksheets.



What tools are contained within these worksheets?

- You will find a worksheet called the Pillar Ranker that will help you determine which aspects of your life are most important to you
- A Pillar Planner to enable you to iron out a time frame on when you want to accomplish your goals
- A worksheet called the Goal Refiner will help refine your meaningful goals until they're nice and bold
- A Bold Life Formula worksheet that lays out your Action Plan, which you will sign and give to someone who will hold you accountable and encourage you to stay on track
- And many more!

This book is also based upon compelling science² that increases the chances of making

² In particular, I point the reader to “Changeology: 5 Steps to Realizing Your Goals and Resolutions” by John C. Norcross as a great

successful bold changes. Research over the last 30 years has dramatically increased our knowledge of change, and some systems of change now have long histories of scientific study. The methods we apply here were developed from these studies.

These studies have helped tens of thousands of research participants live happier and healthier lives. The Formula is built upon these proven methods and science.

The worksheets are designed to help you easily follow the proven steps. The Formula and worksheets will help make your Bold Goal journey sharper and more defined. Together, they will increase your chances of success. We apply these principles to a dimension of change that is not typically the first one considered. Most people think about changing a negative dimension. We are focusing on positive dimensions - the appealing and inspiring idea of change. In particular, not how to fix a bad life but how to live a Bold Life.

In addition to the worksheets, **the book will go into greater detail about the *Project Bold Life Seven Pillars* and break down the various aspects of life into discernible areas.** Inspiration for a Bold Life always comes from the Pillars. Choosing a path can be challenging for many and the Pillars are an important framework.

Within each of these chapters, I will cover the specific yet simple steps to living that aspect of your life to its fullest, and at the same time, provide you the opportunity to be inspired and motivated in determining which Bold Goals are right for you.

starting point. In Chapter 2, I will share more about the science when describing the formula.

PEOPLE MAKE AN AVERAGE OF 3.67 BOLD GOALS, BUT ONLY 39% BELIEVE THEY ARE MAKING GOOD PROGRESS ON THEM



Throughout the chapters, I have added over a dozen real-life success stories to help you see how a Bold Life is possible for everyone, regardless of social or economic challenges. In tandem with each story, many have completed worksheets to illustrate how that particular person took a requisite step in finding their own brand of success within the Seven Pillars.

Ultimately, the stories—and the completed worksheets accompanying them—will show how the Bold Life Formula was applied to each person’s unique circumstances and enable you to visualize how those formula components can be applied to your life.

The stories are meant to inspire, and they include:

- The couple who decided that they wanted to retire in their thirties, and stuck to a plan that made it happen.
- A woman born with a debilitating disease and through perseverance was able to freely walk again and inspire others. She is “The Little Engine that Tried.”
- The man who managed to complete an MIT undergraduate education in just a year... for free.
- The entrepreneur whose laser-like focus and determination to succeed has brought his Bold Goal within reach.
- The ex-convict who, after her incarceration, wanted her family back—and took the steps needed to accomplish that.
- The troubled youth who took stock of his life, made the commitment to turn himself around, and eventually became a pro wrestling superstar.

- The grandmother who got her doctorate degree just before her 70th birthday.
- The man who wanted to better himself, and with a new job, altered the course of his family's arc for generations to come.
- The Catholic priest who worked to educate the clergy on the notion that helping others doesn't preclude personal success.

This book is built upon the thousands of interviews and interactions I have had with many successful people from all walks of life, including CEOs, company founders, political leaders, teachers, athletes, actors, and the unsung who have accomplished amazing personal and professional Bold Goals. It is from these people that the Bold Life Formula was born. Most importantly, their stories help provide real-life examples that a Bold Life can be had by anyone!

Since the summer of 2019, over 1,800 people have participated in the Bold Life Assessment online, which consists of 49 questions that develop a detailed look at how people are practicing living bold through the Seven Pillars. Many of the statistics and findings from the assessment are included throughout the book.

But perhaps more importantly, the data collected from the Assessment participants has shown us that a shockingly high percentage of people need help with goal setting – 84% in fact!

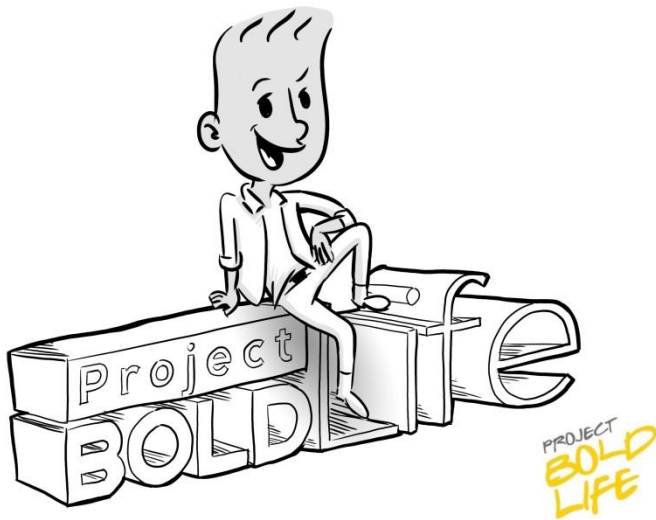
Seeing that so many respondents were unable to clearly articulate a specific goal showed me that there was most certainly a need for the lessons contained within *Project Bold Life* – and it shaped much of this book's content and message.

You can also take the assessment for yourself at www.boldlifefscore.com. It's fun and free and will provide you with an in-depth analysis of how boldly you're living your life and share tips for moving toward the life you desire.

Complementing the worksheets, research and stories are cartoons featuring “Boldy,” who—like you—wants to live a Bold Life. You can follow along with his journey and share in his experiences.

If you’re reading this book, then building a Bold Life is important to you. No matter where you are, or how far you may be from your desired life, *Project Bold Life* here to help you on your journey. With your personal commitment and the guidance provided throughout this book, your Bold Life is attainable.

Thanks for opening this book. I hope you will find it to be a long-term friend in your journey to living a fabulous Bold Life. To live bold is to live to your full potential. Let’s start your journey today!



Say “hello” to Boldy! He’s going to be taking this Bold Life journey with you!

About the Author

Bold Business CEO and publisher Ed Kopko, previously the CEO of Butler International and Chief Executive Magazine, racked up an extensive list of media appearances and publishing credits over the years--from *CNBC* to *Forbes*, the *Wall Street Journal*, and other outlets. Ed has seen success take many forms for many different people – from entrepreneurs to celebrities to people just trying to improve themselves and the world at large. The PROJECT BOLD LIFE book was born from his observations and interactions with countless people who overcame hardship and achieved success.

Ed's work in the diversity and inclusion movement garnered him the prestigious 2019 Impact Award from Diversity MBA Magazine.

He splits his time between New York City and St. Petersburg, FL, and finds time to meditate daily.

PROJECT BOLD LIFE

An Essential Guide to Achieving Your Bold Goals and Living a Bold Life

Everyone faces challenges, and everyone wants to live a fulfilling life. Unfortunately, sometimes those challenges make that fulfilling life seem out of reach. But it isn't - it's within your grasp. It only requires some **Bold Goals**. That's the premise of **PROJECT BOLD LIFE**, which blends inspiring stories and insightful research with invaluable tools like worksheets and the **Project Bold Life Formula**.

From the woman who overcame a debilitating medical condition to walk again, to the immigrant who forged for himself a prosperous life in a new world, **PROJECT BOLD LIFE** is packed with case studies in how people turned challenges into success stories.

Add to that the research data gathered from an assessment of over 1,800 people and the step-by-step goal-setting process laid out in the worksheets, and you will have all you need to turn the blank sheet of paper that is the future into a masterpiece!

People make an average of 3.67 bold goals, but only 39% believe they are making good progress on them.

You don't have to be part of the 61% not making good progress! PROJECT BOLD LIFE can help you overcome, achieve and succeed!



Edward Kopko has seen success take many forms for many different people - from entrepreneurs to celebrities to men and women just trying to improve themselves and the world at large. Whether it was at the helm of Butler International or Chief Executive Magazine, Ed met with people from all walks of life - it is from these real-life lessons that Ed has drawn his inspiration for **PROJECT BOLD LIFE**.