**Why Saying You Want Change is Not Enough**

Written *by* joshua becker ·



Every Sunday morning, I drive by a park. It’s on the left-hand side of the street with a basketball court, play structure, and large soccer field clearly visible.

During the week, in afternoons and evenings, the park is full of excitement. Parents sit and talk, children play, teenagers ride skateboards, grown men show up to play basketball.

But early on a Sunday morning, the park tells a different story. It is quiet and completely empty—except for one person who, without fail, works out in the field every weekend.

For as long as I can remember, every Sunday when I drive by that park, I see a young man (high school age) exercising in that park, running sprints and working on his football skills with a private coach. Some weeks, I find him running 40-yard sprints while his trainer tracks his time with a stop watch. Other weeks, I find him high-stepping through tires, weaving through cones, or back-peddling quickly to improve his foot speed.

By the time I drive by, he is clearly exhausted. Often times I have seen him complete a drill and walk slowly back to the starting line. He will put his hands on his knees and take a deep breath—the physical pain obvious even from my vantage point. And then, with a heavy sigh, he will put his fingers on the ground, arch his back, wait for the whistle, and push himself again.

I know nothing of this young man. I don’t know his name, his exact age, or where he lives. I only know that he inspires me.

He reminds me that a goal without action is not really a goal at all.

He reminds there is a big difference between saying you want something, and actually working to make it happen.

My son is in 7th grade and loves playing sports. Many of his friends do as well. In fact, they love sports so much that when I ask them what they want to be when they grow up, most will say, “I want to be a professional athlete.” Their response doesn’t surprise me. When I was younger, I said the same thing.

It is a common dream that is tough to outgrow. No doubt, even in high schools all over this country, the dream of becoming a professional athlete remains.

In my mind, I imagine this young man from the park plays on a football team at one of our local high schools. His team is full of other high school students. Many of which would tell you they have a goal: to one day become a professional football player.

There are countless boys who claim they want to play in the NFL… but there is only one I see up early on Sunday morning running sprints until his legs hurt. There is only one working his tail off to make it a reality. And I am inspired because that is the dedication required to become a professional football player. I won’t be surprised if he makes one day.

“Saying you want something is one thing, but actually doing something about it is very different.” We prove what we desire most by our actions, not by our words.

So let me ask you: *What is it you want most? What life change do you desire?*

Then, ask yourself this follow-up question: *Are you taking the steps necessary to accomplish that goal? Or, are you settling for something else instead?*

After all, a goal without a plan is just wishful thinking.