

my
Dad's
got
Mojo

He's the best
dad ever!



GARY
BERTWISTLE

Best-selling author of
Who Stole My Mojo? and The Vibe

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Also by Gary Bertwistle

What Made You Think of That?
Thinking differently in business

Who Stole My Mojo?
How to get it back and live,
work and play better

The Keys to Creativity:
How to unlock your imagination and
creative potential

The Vibe:
The marketing handbook for every
product, service and industry

*To the dads...
the good, the bad and the ugly*

About the author

Gary Bertwistle is a dad. He's also one of Australia's leaders in thinking. He is a keynote speaker whose topics include the thinking behind creativity, innovation, marketing, brand and performance. In 2002 he opened Australia's first creative thinking venue at the Entertainment Quarter in Sydney, called the Ideas Vault, which is used by some of the country's biggest corporations for creative thinking, meetings, seminars and training sessions. He is the author of four books: *The Keys to Creativity*, *Who Stole My Mojo?*, *What Made You Think of That?* and *The Vibe*.

Gary is the co-founder of one of Australia's leading cycling foundations, the Tour de Cure, which raises money in an effort to cure cancer. The Tour de Cure has raised millions of dollars since its inception in 2007. Gary also founded the Day of Inspiration, an annual corporate fundraising event.

Winner of the TEC Speaker of the Year Award in 2007 and 2008, Gary is renowned for his simple and easygoing style, passion and drive in helping people to think differently about their life, family, business and mojo. Visit Gary at <www.garybertwistle.com>.

Introduction

I was a little hesitant about writing a book about being a great dad. I'm not a doctor, I don't have a PhD in child psychology and I haven't published research papers, run focus groups or worked with government agencies involved with children, schools or parents. However, the sheer number of dads (and mums) who approach me after my speeches on creativity, imagination and performance through mojo about raising children with mojo finally convinced me to put my thoughts down on paper.

When someone asks me what I do, I say I'm a dad. The next thing I tell people is that I absolutely love it! I started as a dad later in life (I was in my forties) and I'm pretty glad I did. If my little girl, Charley (who is now four years old), had arrived much earlier, I don't think I would have been able to really enjoy fatherhood and undertake the mental and physical gymnastics involved, and at the same time hold myself to the standards I value personally and in my business. I feel very fortunate to be a dad and I'm thankful for every day with my daughter. I'm a regular guy who is just trying to be the best dad I can be to raise a happy, healthy, creative child — someone with mojo and the ability to make her own decisions about her life.

I consider myself to be a keen observer of people and their behaviour, something that has been reinforced by my interests and my work; I constantly walk around with my eyes and ears open. In my life I have observed many happy, well-balanced, intelligent children — both prior to and after becoming a dad — and I have spent many hours watching and listening as kids engage with their parents. I've sat in cafes, restaurants, airports, kindergartens and on public transport, and I have seen some truly outstanding dads in action. I've also read some fascinating books about children and child behaviour, and about how you can bring up children to be their best.

My Dad's Got Mojo is a practical, easy-to-read guide to parental greatness for every dad — taking you from being a good dad to a great (or even an outstanding) one.

Introduction

I hope that you enjoy it and that you will come back to it if and when you need to.

Some of what I say you may agree with. I also expect you may vehemently disagree with other things I say. All of which I'm okay with as long as it gets you thinking. If all you do as a result of reading this book is take the time to consider whether there's more you can do to create an environment for your child in which he can be the best he can be, then it's been a worthwhile investment of your time and money.

I live by the philosophy of Leonardo da Vinci, which is 'Simplicity is the ultimate sophistication', so I've tried to illustrate everything I say with real-life examples and stories to keep things relevant and simple.

Life is complicated and it would be unrealistic to expect that any of us should or will be able to do all the things in this book all of the time. Stuff happens, stuff that is often completely out of our control. As such, I've written this book with one goal in mind—to help you think differently about being a dad and create your own image of how you would like to be perceived in the eyes of your child or children. Remember, being the best dad ever centres on one person—you. It's about your behaviour and your attitudes, not your child's.

At the end of each chapter you'll find a checklist that you can go back to whenever you feel like you've lost your mojo or if you just need a reminder of what you can be doing to be a truly outstanding dad. In addition, as you

go through the book you may want to jot down your own thoughts or notes—you'll find some blank pages at the back of the book that are there for this purpose.

Each of us has a unique set of circumstances and values, which is why I hope you will apply the tips, tools and ideas explored in this book to your own world, in your own time and in the way that you see fit. An executive running a multimillion-dollar company is different from a small business owner, who in turn is different from someone working for a delivery business, an office worker, a baker or a stay-at-home dad. Yet all have it in them to be the best dad ever in the eyes of their children.

Cupcakes in the cubbyhouse

One afternoon I was in our backyard cubbyhouse enjoying some freshly baked cupcakes with my then three-year-old daughter. She was serving me imaginary tea, and had been doing so for about forty-five minutes. The cupcakes were delicious, but the imaginary cups of tea were wearing a bit thin. I reached for my mobile phone with the intention of checking my email and at that moment I stopped myself and thought, 'What example am I setting? Is there anything more important than being here in the moment enjoying cupcakes with my daughter?'

I asked myself if I would ever look back and regret spending time with Charley instead of checking

emails, sending text messages or making phone calls. The answer was a resounding NO! Right there in that moment, having cupcakes in the cubbyhouse was the most important thing in the world, not just for my little girl, but also for me.

The following day I presented to a group of corporate executives and by the time I finished it was mid afternoon. When one of the attendees asked me where I was headed next I told him I was going home to have cupcakes in the cubbyhouse. This man, who also happened to be a dad, thought that was fantastic and I was fortunate to be able to do it, and that he wished he could. Well, I thought at the time, if he truly wished it, he could make it happen.

We all create ceilings and barriers (either consciously or unconsciously) that prevent us from being a great dad. It is my hope that this book removes some of these barriers and allows more fathers to have the relationship with their kids that they desire and be the dad they want to be.

Their greatest inspiration

Every year I host a corporate event at the Four Seasons Hotel in Sydney for about 300 to 400 businesspeople. The Day of Inspiration is a full-day event where some of Australia's best keynote speakers and entertainers hit the stage to inspire a corporate audience with their secrets of achievement. In 2007, its first year, I invited the audience