

'Entrepreneurs, business owners, CEO's – anyone who has dreamt of starting or running a business will benefit from Pat's inspiring story. It is incredibly refreshing with lots of great advice on running a business while creating a healthy balance between work and life.'

— Ciaran Quilty, Regional Director for Europe, Middle East and Africa,
Small Business at Facebook

PAT DIVILLY
UPGRADE
YOUR
LIFE

**HOW TO TAKE BACK CONTROL
AND ACHIEVE YOUR GOALS**



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UPGRADE YOUR LIFE

UPGRADE YOUR LIFE

**How to take back control
and achieve your goals**

PAT DIVILLY



CAPSTONE

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Dedicated to my parents who taught me the value of working hard, living simply and the importance of being kind to anyone who crosses my path. For this and so much more, I am thankful and grateful I get to be your son.

CONTENTS

<i>It's Time for an Upgrade!</i>	1
1 The Recipe for Success	7
2 The Upgrade	17
3 Setting the Goal	45
4 The Five Pillars of a Happy, Fulfilling Life	75
5 What Successful People Do	131
6 The Success Journal	153
<i>About the Author</i>	199
<i>Acknowledgements</i>	201
<i>Index</i>	203



SET YOUR INTENTION

‘Success is reserved for the people who never give up.’

Pat Divilly

You have picked up this book for a reason, and I have no doubt you’ll get a lot from it and the exercises within it, but as you’ll find out later in the book, you’re much more likely to get what you want when you are specific on your goals. So, before you read any further, I would like you to set your intention on what exactly it is you want to achieve by reading *Upgrade Your Life*. Rather than looking at this book as just another big bulk of information or another form of entertainment, I want you to look at it as the spark that will fuel your new way of living. Before going even a page further, ask yourself the following questions: What kind of person do you want to become? What kind of life do you want to live? What career do you want? What adventures do you want to have and enjoy?

Whatever it is, decide on it now and write it below. Once you have employed the rituals outlined in this book for the timeframe I recommend, you will one day be able to look back on these goals and realize you have achieved them!

Your Name Here: _____

Set Your Intention for the Book:

IT'S TIME FOR AN UPGRADE!

Before you can change the marketplace or people's attitudes, you must first change what's going on between your ears. When I wrote *Upgrade Your Life*, I did so with some very strong intentions in mind. I want to provide you with a structured plan that will enable you to achieve your goals in life and business, but more importantly, I want to change your perspective.

This isn't a book filled with positive affirmations, nor is it a book that will dole out the same ol' information you've read in many a self-improvement book before. I regularly give motivational seminars, and each one has been a massive success with every seat selling out in no time. My seminars were so successful because the information I provided to those in attendance actually worked. It was an equal blend of theory with action. I have now taken my formula for success and put it into this book for you to use. The exercises and ideas in this book helped me go from working in a pizza restaurant to having my own fitness business with 10,000 clients all over the world. It helped my 50-year-old client Tommy Palmer go from being unhappy and overweight to qualifying as a personal trainer; it has helped 34-year-old Gill go from being unhappy with her life to taking charge and opening two now hugely successful restaurants. You will read more about Tommy's and Gill's stories later on in the book.

We upgrade our cars, our computers, and our phones, but what about our rituals, our mind-sets, and our ways of thinking? Trust me, when you start to dream creatively and take action, you discover a whole new perspective of how great things could be. There's any amount of self-help books out there – it's an industry in itself – but what I want to introduce in this book is a practical approach to this. It's a combination of my own experience and lessons learned from my own mentors.

Of all the lessons and rituals outlined in this book, improving the way in which you speak to yourself is ultimately the most important one of all in this process. Willpower with the success journal will only get you so far. To enjoy sustainable change over time, you will need to improve your internal dialogue as this will become the most pivotal factor. I'm sure this is something you have read before, especially if you're a reader of self-development books. Now is the time you need to apply this advice.

My Story

'Pat, the European Director of Facebook phoned, and he wants you to call him back.' That was the message waiting for me when I arrived in the gym one morning back in 2014. I thought it was a joke. Turns out it wasn't! Ciarán Quilty, the European Director for Facebook, really did want to speak with me, and the shock didn't end there either. Ciarán told me that the Facebook team had been sharing the 'Pat Divilly Fitness' story at conferences around the world and now they wanted me to join a small group of fellow entrepreneurs at the Facebook HQ in Dublin for a special event. This wasn't a usual 'get together', something I realized when Ciarán told me that the company's Chief Operational Officer, Sheryl Sandberg, was going to be in attendance. The event was to be the first Facebook Small Business Council, so they wanted to bring together a small handful of business owners who were using the platform effectively.

We were all from very different industries, but with Facebook as our primary means of publicity.

On the morning of the event, I headed up to Dublin, not so much with butterflies in my stomach, more like hyperactive bats! Sheryl Sandberg is an icon and meeting her in person was just too surreal to comprehend.

The event itself was exclusive in size but massively significant in terms of impact. The world's press were also in attendance. As Sheryl walked into the room, she looked at the crowd, smiled, and asked, 'Is Pat here?' She spotted me in the front row where I was sitting, and to my shock added, 'Does everyone know Pat's story? Would you like to tell your story, Pat, or will I?'

I let her do the honours.

To this day, I still find it hard to believe!

I mean, Sheryl Sandberg . . . standing in front of a room full of people . . . telling them the story of how I, a boy from Barna, had used Facebook to grow my fitness brand from five clients to 5,000. I honestly thought it couldn't get any better than that!

I was wrong!

Fast forward two years and I was on Necker Island hanging out with Richard Branson. A photo of me with Branson appeared in the local newspapers in my home city. In it, I'm dressed as Bowie – face paint and all – while Branson himself is dressed in a similarly garish costume. I should point out here that he had thrown a fancy dress party, hence the dress code! A week later I was flying out to Nepal, where I had been invited to give a talk on entrepreneurship.

Not half-bad for a guy who failed in his first foray into the fitness business. Experiences such as meeting Sheryl Sandberg and Richard Branson only furthered my belief that if I had the courage to dream and the willingness to do the work consistently, anything was possible.

I was absorbed in the whole self-improvement genre as a teenager but I didn't apply the information I was reading, which was why I wasn't enjoying results back then. That's a big problem with these types of books. Application is crucial but it's the one thing most people fail to do.

I'm a student of self-development and as nerdy as it might seem, I spend a lot of my free time attending seminars all over the world. Often I will leave a full-day seminar after just an hour because I will have acquired the one piece of information I need to take action on an idea. I believe if we took action on 10% of what we already know, we could be incredibly successful. Most of us have the information we need to do things like lose weight, make money, enjoy better relationships, etc. Where we fall is in the application of this information.

Self-development books will either raise your self-esteem or your shelf-esteem. So are you buying them to have a more impressive book shelf or are you buying them because you actually want to improve your life in ways you never thought possible? Unlike other books, *Upgrade Your Life* will force you to apply everything you learn within these pages. The success journal at the end of the book will further help you turn my advice into life-changing habits. While I often reference business owners and entrepreneurs throughout the book, it is certainly not limited to those who are self-employed. In fact, the *Upgrade Your Life* rituals can be implemented right across the board.

Most books get read and left on the shelf. I want you to scribble all over this one. I have created exercises I want you to fill out, and left spaces for notes I want you to make. It's important that you do these. Don't skim over them. They are there for a reason. As kids in school, we drew, we wrote, our imaginations ran free. We spent as much time dreaming with our eyes open as we did with them closed. Let's get back to that creative process. If you don't want to write on the book itself, then get yourself a notebook and complete the exercises in that, so that you can repeat this routine for future goals in different areas of your life.

Remember, everything comes down to thoughts, words, and actions, especially success. When you write something on paper, it becomes a little more real, when you verbalize it, the idea starts to grow because you talk it into existence. When you take action, however, that's when you start to see the biggest change. The success journal will help you with those three crucial elements.

The success rituals, guidelines, and principles I share with you in this book are to be carried out for six weeks straight. If you heed my advice and implement them for those 42 days, then there is no doubt about it – your life will change. You might be wondering why six weeks? I chose six weeks because I know from my own experience that you will witness tangible results in that timeframe.

None of these rituals will work in isolation, however. It's not enough to carry out just one guideline, you must implement them all over the six-week period. Don't worry, the success journal at the end will help keep you on track.

As you make your way through *Upgrade Your Life*, you will understand that the key to accomplishment is through a combination of consistency and the compound effect (i.e. small steps carried out on a daily basis over a consistent period of time). Once you make these rituals a non-negotiable part of your daily routine, you will see one result: success. Everything becomes a lot easier. You become more productive, your relationships are

better, your health improves, you are more focused, more grounded, not to mention less stressed. And those are just some of the side effects!

People are not taking time to think about what they want. If you don't think about what you want, then you just fall into receiving whatever is left. *Upgrade Your Life* will not only help you establish what you want from your life, it will radically change and improve your mind-set so you are best placed to achieve your goal.

By the time you have finished this book, you will be a different person. In the meantime, start preparing yourself for a big change and above all, don't be afraid to think big! Your ideas are free, your thoughts are free, you have nothing to lose and an amazing life to gain.

CHAPTER 1

THE RECIPE FOR SUCCESS

'The mind is a powerful force. It can enslave us or empower us. It can plunge us into the depths of misery or take you to heights of ecstasy. Learn to use it wisely.'

– David Cuschieri, author

The one thing I always try to help people understand is that there's a recipe for everything. Wealth, weight loss, success, a cake . . . everything! If you think the great success stories and entrepreneurial billionaires of our age were all heirs and rich kids who were given lucky breaks by the dozen, then think again. Some of them had very little; some of them had absolutely nothing at all, but here's the thing. None of them waited until they had everything or until 'the time was right'. They simply made the best of what they had, and now as a result they have the best of everything. The secrets of their success lie in their attitude and self-belief, not money or circumstances. They set their sights on what they wanted, followed the recipe, and simply didn't give up.

There's a misconception out there that you need to have a full plan in place before you can take action, but in my experience all you really have to do is take one step forward. Just one.

When I talk about this at my personal development seminars, I always liken the journey to walking a spiral staircase. It's only as you progress

further that the steps start to unfold. Clichéd? Perhaps, but it's true. You are never going to see 10 steps ahead but you will always see the next one, so take it regardless of how small it may be. I genuinely believe this is what deters people from taking the big leap into entrepreneurship. It is human nature to want to assume full control and protect yourself from oncoming dangers, so naturally some people are going to feel uncomfortable with only being able to see one step ahead at any given time. Don't let this discomfort deter you.

In 2014, I was running a gym in the west of Ireland, and even though we were considered small fish in the fitness industry, myself and a number of others still managed to bring the world's biggest team to an adventure race in Dublin and raise €165,000 in the process. It all started off as an idea, a crazy idea in fact, and one I put out there with no clue as to how we would go about achieving it. We just set the intention and made it public. After we took that first step, things started to happen and take shape. If we had worried about the end result before we had even begun, it would never have happened. If we had allowed ourselves to be deterred by the natural discomfort that comes with embarking on such a big ambition, we would still be sitting around making plans in an attempt to cover every conceivable thing that could go wrong. Instead we decided on a goal, put it out there, and took the first step to get us started.

Similarly, on a recent trip to Nepal I met with a man who wanted to build a hospital for children with cancer. His own son had battled the disease, and to access the necessary treatment, they'd had to travel back and forth to India. He wanted to build a hospital in Nepal so other people wouldn't have to travel, but felt completely overwhelmed. He kept looking at the massive scale of the project rather than the first step, and consequently felt unsure of where to begin. I told him his first step would be to phone the hospital in India and speak to a doctor or a consultant there about his plans. Doing this would then lead him to his next step. I genuinely have no doubt he will get there in the end, but it all has to start with that first step, otherwise it will never happen at all.

I firmly stand by the motto I introduced you to in the introduction, 'when you dream more creatively, and more importantly when you act on it, you start to discover a whole new perspective of how great life could be'.

Some people never even get as far as the 'dream big' stage. Those that do very often don't take the necessary steps forward. Then there are those that have convinced themselves they *can't* move forward because of circumstances. If you fall into this category, then here's what you need to realize. It doesn't matter how down-on-your-luck you are right now, you're in a position to transform your life if you are willing to follow those who have done so before you.

The highest achievers in every industry have at some point taken their biggest adversity or their lowest low point and used it as fuel to turn their lives around. No one succeeds without hitting the proverbial wall, and I guarantee you that almost everyone on the Sunday Times rich list has seen rock bottom at least once. The one thing that differentiated them from the majority, however, was their reaction to the situation. You cannot discount the impact of that factor in their subsequent success.

My own key low point – the one that subsequently led to me starting a fitness business – occurred on Christmas Eve, 2011. After being let go from a commercial gym, I launched a business as a personal trainer offering one-to-one sessions, but I really struggled to make ends meet. I borrowed money for the rent, and even took on a second job of working in a clothes shops to try to keep myself financially afloat. Meanwhile on social media, I was portraying an image that in no way reflected the real situation. I was just too proud and too stubborn to admit that things weren't going that well for me.

Eventually, however, I had to admit defeat and move home. I was so strapped for cash, I had to borrow the bus fare from my dad. What hurt me most of all was the fact that I couldn't afford to even buy my mum a gift for her birthday. Instead all I could do was give her a card with the promise

that I would take her to dinner once things picked up for me. That was my rock bottom, undoubtedly.

In the months that followed, my sense of worthlessness caused me to sink into a depression. I had banked on Dublin being a success, and when that didn't happen, I was at a complete loss over what to do next. I felt like I was back at square one. I got myself a part-time job in Fat Freddy's Pizza Restaurant in Galway City. On my days off, I would walk up and down Silver Strand Beach for hours on end just trying to come up with some break-through business idea or revelation. At the time, I was playing the blame game, pointing the finger at everyone and everything apart from myself. I blamed the cheap rates offered by commercial gyms, the impact of the recession, and everything in between.

During one of my beach walks, back in March/April of 2012, it occurred to me that there were plenty of trainers out there making a perfectly good living from the fitness industry in spite of the recession and the rates offered by the fitness chains. Yes, the country was in a bad recession at the time and money was certainly tight for everyone, but I figured if other guys were making money from the fitness business then there must be a way. Following this realization, I decided to contact a few personal trainers in the UK. These were guys I had been following on social media and who looked like they were doing really well in business, so I asked them if they could give me some advice on how I could get started. My way clearly wasn't working so it made sense to speak to those who were doing well.

I received a reply from a trainer in Cardiff called Mark Tregilgas who at the time was enjoying great success with his fitness camp. In his response, he gave me the encouragement I needed to start again in the form of a few tips to help me on my way. I took on board everything he said and sat down to create a plan. For a long time I told myself that I would start the fitness class on my local beach in Barna *but only when* 20 people signed up. Eventually I just decided to set a date and regardless of whether two people signed up or 200, I would train them as best as I possibly could.

Once the date was set, I had to get the word out there and advertise. As I didn't have a budget – shoestring or otherwise – both newspaper and radio ads were out of the question, so I figured the next best thing would be flyers. I went into Galway City and ordered a print run of 5,000. They were still hot off the printing press when I dropped them all over the city, leaving them anywhere I thought my target audience would see them.

Five people turned up at my very first session on that day in May 2012. Most trainers would have packed it in after that but for me it was a starting point. By the second month, I was training 20 people, and by the third, I was up to 100. I felt completely renewed; my sense of ambition and purpose were both back in full force. In hindsight, I can honestly say that my low point made me a better trainer. Having experienced such a hard time on a personal level made me realize that everyone was struggling with something. It made me more determined to make my fitness class a place where people could escape their daily stresses and forget about whatever was bothering them. Overall, my strategy was simple – I would try to make my class the best part of their day.

Those early days of the business were far from easy. I didn't have a car so instead I would cycle 30 minutes from my workplace in the city to the beach in Barna where I would hold my class. On a fine day, cycling that coast road out to Barna is idyllic, but in the pouring rain, it's probably the fastest route to pneumonia! Sometimes I would make this journey three or four times a day. Later, as the demand for classes grew, I would end up cycling all around the city to four different locations where the classes were taking place. Yes, it was difficult, but it wasn't about comfort or convenience, it was about progress, and I was willing to do whatever it took to make my business even just 1% better each day.

When I wasn't teaching the classes, I was writing articles, recording podcasts, and trying to grow my social media pages.

This only happened after I realized that the way to become successful in business was to add value to what I was offering, something I will cover

later in the book. This is the only way anyone can become outrageously successful in business. During the very early days, however, I was doing the opposite. I was trying to make the money *before* I gave the value. I was asking people to buy my products and pay for my services before I had proved my worth. I had the attitude that if someone wasn't paying me then I wouldn't give away my knowledge or skills. I see now that it should have been the other way around. I should have been giving away the good quality content for free in order to show people what I was capable of. I have shared my own story so many times that my friends and family could probably do a good job reciting it word for word themselves, but I don't tell it for me. It's not about me anymore. I have already lived that part of my life. My hope is that the story will help inspire others.

The thing you need to know about me is that I grew up on a diet of personal development books. My dad's book shelves were filled with the teachings of the great self-improvement gurus and masters of popular psychology. Napoleon Hill's *Think and Grow Rich* was one of the first books I ever read, followed by Dale Carnegie's *How to Win Friends & Influence People*. Those two books had such a profound impact on me. I used to rave about them at school until one day a friend of mine said to me, 'Well if they're that good, why read so many of them? Should you not read just one and be able to see results from that?'

He was right. The reason I never saw results was because I was reading the material but not applying it. After I hit my low point I returned to my dad's book shelf and started reading again, only this time, I applied action. Within the 12 months that followed my first fitness class on the beach, I had opened a fitness studio in Barna and signed my first book deal. Television work was plentiful, and my online following was over 100,000. My business was thriving and going from strength to strength; I was constantly on the go. The demand for my services was phenomenal, which is why it probably came as a big surprise to many when, in 2015, I made the decision to sell the gym. Don't get me wrong, I'm still very much in the fitness business, I just don't run the gym any more. I will explain in the next chapter what influenced my decision to sell but I can say with my