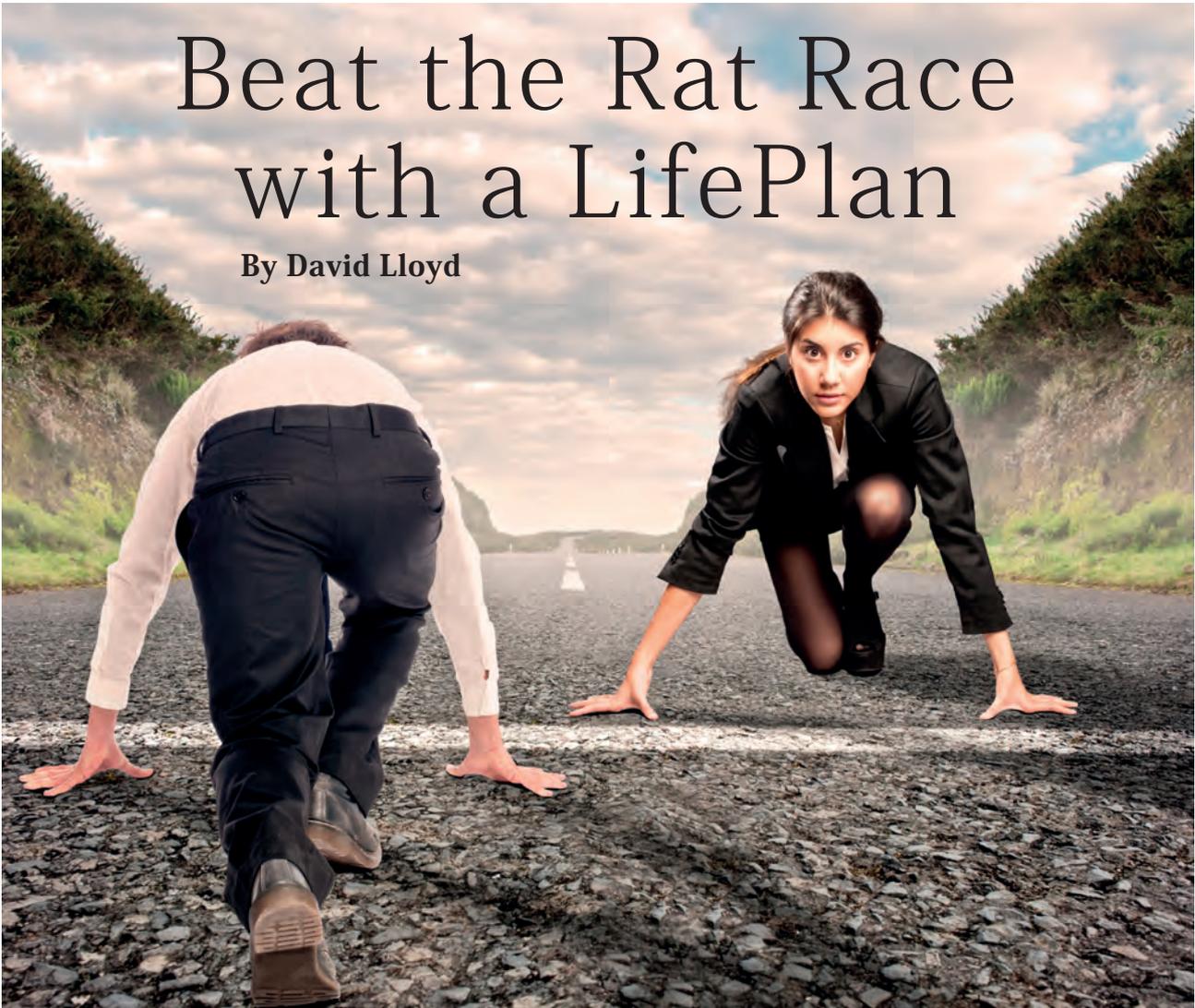


“Insanity – Doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results.”
Albert Einstein

Beat the Rat Race with a LifePlan

By David Lloyd



“FAIL TO PLAN, PLAN TO FAIL.

*We are all running, sadly it's often just in the
direction we are facing.”*

My first recollection of the race was being told at about the age of 6 that I must try really hard a school. I can't just play anymore. Even at that age I remember thinking that was a bit of a shame because I liked playing. It was fun. This work idea didn't seem to be in my nature. It felt alien. Surely this can't be what life is about? Life was easy before the great weight of expectation was placed on my shoulders.

As children we live in the moment enjoying the small things. I used to take great enjoyment from just running, for no reason, could have walked but just ran, because it was fun. If I was upset at something like the time my brother accidentally stamped on my pet stick insect, I would just go outside to play and then everything would be ok again.

The rat race that is life tends to suck the enjoyment out of the everyday existence. Life is serious, fall in line, strive to be your best and enter the race.

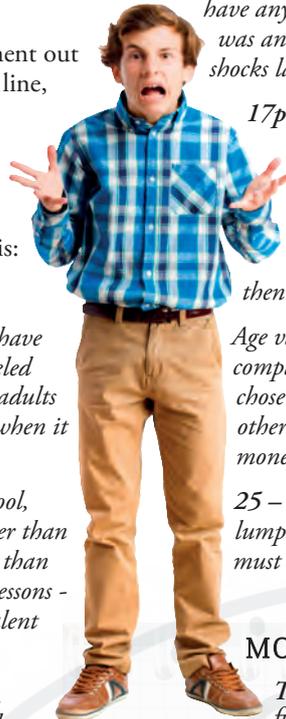
We sleep, eat, work and holiday with the weight of responsibility on our shoulders. It is instilled at a young age and never goes away. Our Lifecycle normally looks something like this:

0 – 3 years – Easiest part of life by far, shame we have no recollection of this stage. Basically, get fed, wheeled about in your own mini chariot and spoken to by adults using silly baby voices. The only stage in early life when it is fine to be incontinent.

3 – 11 years - Junior school, do well at junior school, work hard. Make your parents proud and do better than spotty Johnny over the road. You must be brighter than him. Your elder brother is in the top set in all his lessons - Comparison and competition, which will be prevalent throughout life too.

11-17 years - Senior school, you are a small adult. Mummy or Daddy are not holding your hand and walking you to school anymore. Now you can't hide behind the fact that you are a child. Now you become responsible for your actions. If I had wet my pants in assembly in junior school, nobody would have batted an eyelid. They would have even had a spare pair of pants in order to combat such an event. It happened to me, as a result of nerves in my first big assembly in senior school. I was ridiculed for the next 5 years and picked up a few nicknames that took many years to shake. And, no big school has spare pants. Life has no spare pants, we don't get a practice shot, we must get it right first time. By the time we leave big school we should, apparently, have great grades and know what we want to do with the rest of our lives? Fun and playing have largely been replaced by moodiness and moping.

17ish years - Crossroads, first major decision we must make. Left school, is it to be College, Uni, YTS, a straight forward job or the dole. Take your pick, get on the road and head in your chosen direction. At that age I had absolutely no idea what I wanted to do? How could I? I was 16 years of age with zero life



experience. As a child I remembered being told that I could do anything I wanted, the world was mine and if I tried really hard I could achieve my dreams. At age 16 the school Careers Officer sat me down and told me I could do 5 things? The Careers Officers office is the place where dreams go to get narrowed down!

That was fine by me as I didn't really have any dreams and he told me that one thing I could be was an apprentice electrician. Two weeks and two electric shocks later I decided it wasn't for me.

17plus - Slowly falling in line with society, the above first major decision is often made on the back of affordability. Continued financial support from family or time to start paying your way. I got a job and started paying my way and paying my taxes. Still no real Life-Plan, just working, getting paid, then spending my earnings.

Age varies, probably about 25 - Competition and comparison at fever pitch as you try to progress in your chosen or fallen into career path. Get a job above the other interviewees, then aim for promotion. Earn more money spend more money. Save a bit if you can.

25 – 30 years - Marriage/Partner – here is a further lump of responsibility for you. Not just you anymore, must continue to progress on the career path.

MORTGAGE – OUCH.

Twenties - First child – A blessing for sure. For the first time you feel your mortality. Now it's serious. Can't leave a job just because the boss is irritating. Three mouths to feed and many other associated costs. Work for that promotion.

30 or 40 something - 2.4 Children, a dog and a bigger house, equating to a bigger mortgage and increased pressure and responsibility. Climbing career ladder to balance it out. Can't remember the last time I played, certainly don't have the inclination or energy to run just for the fun of it anymore. Much more important to conserve energy.

At this stage life moves at 100mph. Hopefully you have got something called a Pension by now. No idea what that is for, how much the charges are or if it is any good. Got some life cover too because you are a bit scared you might die at some point. Don't want to leave the partner and kids high and dry. It's years since you stopped feeling immortal. Still no real long term Life-Plan. Still just going in the direction you are facing.

50 – 60 Earnings at their peak. Got some significant life experience and know where you are at. Big career move or promotion. Maybe even your own business. Possible minor health issues and grey hair. Children not children anymore,

university is expensive. Better have a plan for the future at this stage because you won't want to work full time forever will you.

60 -70 Would be nice to slow things down a little if affordable. Retire completely or certainly reduce the number of days in a working week. Is it affordable, that is the question?

70 and beyond – Hopefully retired, will you have enough money to support your chosen lifestyle. Good news, life expectancy is increasing so you should have more time to enjoy the little things in life, like when you were a child. Grandchildren keep you young and you have more time to enjoy them than you did your children. Life can be fabulous in retirement, if you have planned for it.



decide what they want out of life and set goals. Together, we get a Life-Plan in place so you know where you are going, then review, review, review on a regular basis to make sure you get there.

In our society money is central to life. It literally is the currency for life. You might need a small amount of money to afford the lifestyle you desire, you may need a lot? You might have no idea exactly how much you need to live the lifestyle you would dream of when you decide to stop working or work less. We can help.

We spend a great deal of time on the getting to know you stage. You are individual and so is our service to you. It is important to establish what is dear to you, how you have got to where you are in life and where you want to be in the future. Your finances are intrinsically linked to your lifestyle. We can partner with you to help you get the most out of life whatever stage of your lifecycle you are at.

For an absolutely no obligation free chat and a tea/coffee (tea/coffee also free) please contact Lloyd & Co Financial Planning on 01704 443 107 or David Lloyd directly on 07799 863 064. If you are computer literate why not e-mail info@lloydfp.co.uk

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THE POINT OF ALL THAT

The point of my preamble is that life largely happens around us. We are individual but competing in the same race. Before we know it we are off and running, all too often without a real destination in mind. So much more can be achieved with a structured Life-Plan, if we stop and think, decide what we want out of life and how we are going to get it.

We are Lloyd & Co Financial Planners. You might think Financial Advisers are there to explain what an ISA is or where your pension is invested and that is part of the job description. However, Lloyd & Co was established, because we believe our role is far more important than just financial products. We partner with our clients throughout their lives. We help them to

Financial Independence – The amount of capital required to achieve your dreams and live your chosen lifestyle without the need to get go to work every day.

