



# CHASING DREAMS

Opus 29 values and guiding principles

What are they? What do they mean?

December 2023





## Introduction

Welcome to Opus 29! The purpose of this document is to:

1. Tell you about the Opus 29 'why?'
2. Share the guiding principles behind the Opus 29 way
3. Help you understand what you can expect when you work with Opus 29

## Why?



These are the two very simple drivers for everything that I, and Opus 29, does. For every decision I make, every client I choose to work alongside and every piece of work that is developed. My 'why?' is clear. My 'why?' is embedded. My 'why?' is critically important across all aspects of the business.

I absolutely and fundamentally believe that great people make amazing things happen and that amazing people are ready, willing and able, to put themselves 'out there' to chase their dreams. It won't be easy and will require boldness, bravery, courage, resilience and support, but with the right dream and the right people alongside, anything is possible.

My 'why?' provides a solid reference point and framework for all our decisions. It is at the heart of everything I do – personally and professionally. This strong and fundamental belief will help to drive forward the Opus 29 vision, and keep me motivated along the way, even if, or when, times feel more than a little tough.





## Guiding principles

The Opus 29 guiding principles, my principles, have become clear as I spent time working out the things that matter, then took time to understand why they matter. I also needed to appreciate why these principles (values) have meaning and have shaped who I am and how I see the world.

Equally, it has been important to recognise that how I see the world has in turn shaped my values; and that how I see the world is unique to me. It is my perspective and has been influenced by the accumulation and intersection of all my life experiences, both good and bad, across every aspect of my existence.

So, what are my guiding principles?

There are eight of them, all identified with care, reason and thought and influenced by quotes or research or experiences that have resonated and stuck with me over the years. Each principle guides and directs everything I do within the professional and personal elements of my life and are brought to life through my thoughts and words and deeds. From an Opus 29 perspective, they provide a fundamental guide and reference point (a map if you like) to help me navigate my way through each adventure and exciting piece of work that I undertake.

In the section below I will explain the origin of each principle and highlight the key factors influencing why each particular principle is important and meaningful to me. I will also outline how you will see this value being brought to life in my work and my actions. And remember, everything I do links back to the underpinning beliefs as to why I do what I do...that is that great people make amazing things happen.

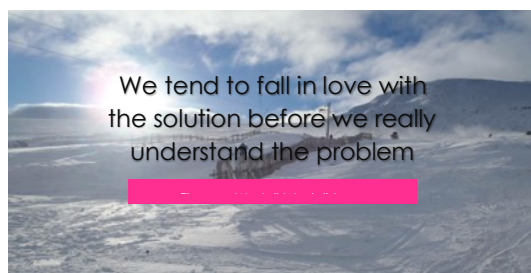
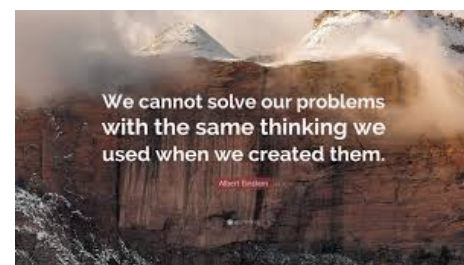


## Creativity

This means...

*"I will take time to understand the root of the problem and then apply diverse thinking to unearth potential solutions. I will seek freedom to explore and imagine how the future could be and will make connections between existing theories and ideas to produce new and inventive paths. I know that we live in a constantly shifting environment and that in order to thrive amongst change we need to appreciate, recognise and embrace different perspectives in order to push boundaries and find new ways of working and being. I believe in being authentic and that being 'me', which can often be daunting, is necessary if we are really to find innovative and effective ways of chasing our dreams."*

Influenced by...



Brought to life through...

- Hearing what is said, or left unsaid, and being genuinely interested
- Being willing to share my own story and experiences when they are relevant
- Going exploring (metaphorically and in reality) to find new paths between places and ideas
- Listening to the ideas of others and encouraging them to share
- Not being constrained by current culture or expectations and being willing to always ask 'why?'
- Nurturing my creative side and allowing myself time and space to write that poem, draw that picture, play that song or try that new thing

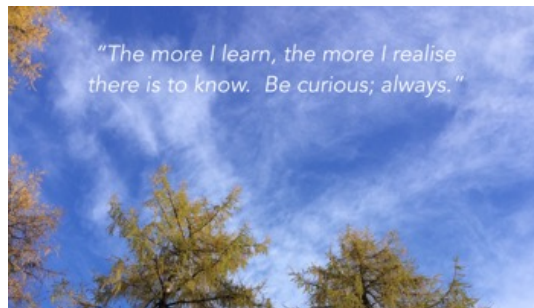


## Curiosity

This means...

*"I am genuinely interested in understanding more about why things work or happen and what motivates others to do what they do. I am driven to discover more about people, places, plans and processes and love to learn new things, or to think about things in different ways. I am hungry to explore new territories and theories and am always curious to know what sits behind an idea or particular choice. I will seek out, and listen to, the stories that other people have to tell and enjoy spending time helping them to understand why those stories are important. I will always ask 'why?', even when the answer may at first seem obvious, and I have a thirst for trying to understand why and how things work, or don't work."*

Influenced by...



Brought to life through...

- Asking why, how, what, where, who? A lot.
- Being interested in the stories people have to tell and wanting them to feel safe enough to share those stories
- Not settling for the first solution that appears
- Never disregarding an idea completely, even if it does sound a little crazy
- Recognising when things are working and looking for the elements that create success
- A burning desire to learn and challenge myself continually
- Believing that the moment I stop learning is the moment I stop growing

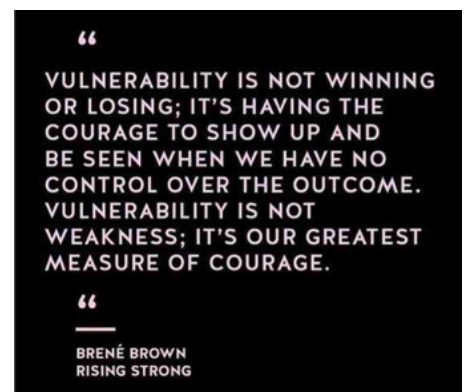


## Courage

This means...

*"I have courage in my convictions and if I believe in something will follow that dream as far as I am able. I am willing to make brave decisions in an uncertain climate and use my values to guide my choices and options. I know that courage is not about being fearless, it is about recognising the times you are afraid and still choosing to follow that path. I believe that dreams are always taller than you, which is why you have to reach high to make them come true. I am not afraid to recognise when there is something I don't know and will find the courage to explore the possibilities that arise as a result. I know that having courage and being brave are not always about being visible and obvious, sometimes great courage is needed to do the tiniest of things. I am willing to be vulnerable and will bring my best self to the fore, even when I am uncertain of the outcome."*

Influenced by...



Brought to life through...

- Making good choices and decisions based on what I believe – even when those choices are not easy
- Accepting when there is something that I cannot change or influence
- Being willing to 'show up' and be myself, however I am feeling
- Not being afraid to say 'I don't know' or 'this is not right for me'
- Not forgetting my dreams and what is important to me, even when the going gets tough
- Recognising when I need to take a step back and allow others to lead and explore
- Sometimes saying 'no, not yet...'

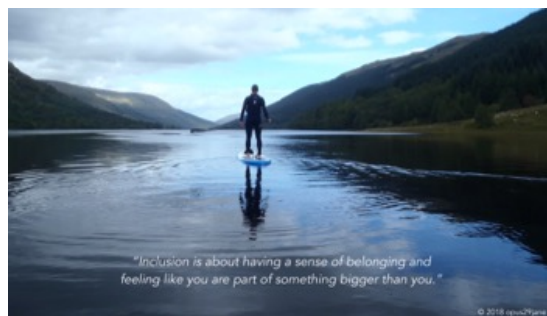
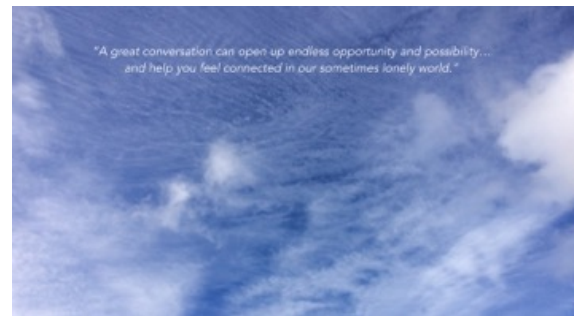
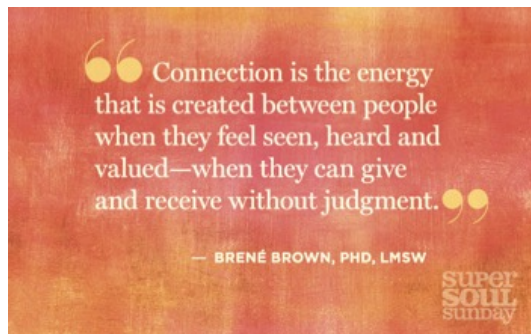


## Connectedness

This means...

*"I believe that connecting with other people is a fundamental part of being human and that we all need some form of social connection to thrive, be that personally, professionally or organisationally. I also believe that meaningful connections inspire action, and can give us all a feeling of motivation and sense of purpose. Meeting with, and talking with, other people opens our minds to different perspectives and possibilities that we may never have dreamed up on our own. These open, honest and sometimes brave conversation can really inspire us to dream bigger dreams and help us to believe that they are possible. I also know that having a sense of belonging, and feeling like you are part of something bigger than you is important for a sense of wellbeing and positivity. Being with other people can help us get through even the roughest of seas and perhaps even stop us drowning when we feel like we have lost touch with the shore."*

Influenced by...



The most important things in life are the connections you make with others.

**Tom Ford**

Brought to life through...

- Being proactive in making connections between myself and others
- Bringing people together to connect, share and learn in engaging and motivating environments
- Making time to meet with, and talk to people and really listening to what each other has to say
- Creating inclusive environments where everyone feels like they have a voice
- Helping people to find their voice and be willing to use it without fear of judgment
- Being me. Being open. Being honest. Being vulnerable. Dreaming big.



## Making a difference

This means...

*“I believe that every interaction I have with someone, however small, has the potential to influence their life or thinking in a positive way. I consciously ensure that every contact with others reflects this belief and I always enter into a conversation or connection with positive intent and the desire to make a difference. I want people to feel great about themselves and develop a strong sense of self-esteem and pride in what they do. I am caring and compassionate and genuinely interested in others, the stories that they have to tell, ideas they want to share and dreams they would love to dream. I will make time and space to listen with kindness and ensure that the impact I leave upon an individual, group, team or organisation is a positive one. I am emotionally intelligent and fully aware of my potential to influence and I will use that knowledge with care, consideration and consistency.”*

Influenced by...

**Newton's Laws of Life**

**Law 1**  
Life will remain constant, or continue along the same path, until something comes along to nudge that life in a new direction. This could be a major life event, a learning experience, a conversation or even a simple everyday interaction that influences choice or decision.

**Law 2**  
Force = mass x acceleration  
The impact of a life event will depend on the size and speed at which it hits. A major life event (e.g. children, marriage, death, divorce, illness) will have a greater impact than every day interactions (e.g. a stranger saying hello); and the speed at which they occur will also influence impact. Unexpected events may have a greater influence on the direction of your life path.

**Law 3**  
For every action there is an equal and opposite reaction. When something blocks our path, particularly a negative experience, a natural response is to fight back with equal and opposite energy. However, we do have a choice. We can continue to use the equal and opposite force to try to repel that event or experience, or we can recognise the impact of the force on our thinking and behaviour and choose to react in a different way. We could simply step aside and allow the force to continue on its own path, or we can try and gently nudge it along another path. Either way, we do not have to let this force define us and steal our energy.

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Brought to life through...

- Acting with kindness, care and compassion. Always.
- Taking an interest in what people have to say, the stories they want to share and the dreams they would love to dream
- Being supportive and gently challenging in order to help people become great
- Understanding the influence that I have and using it wisely and considerately
- Behaving consistently and in line with my values
- Believing in the power of a dream and equipping people with the tools they might need to chase their dreams



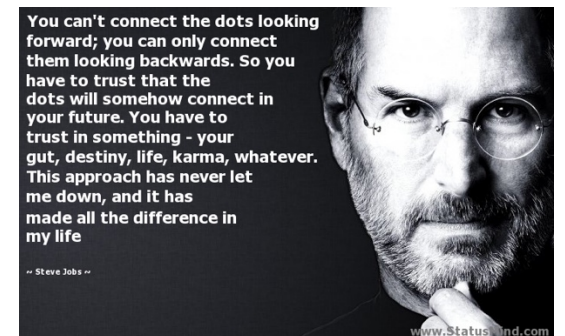
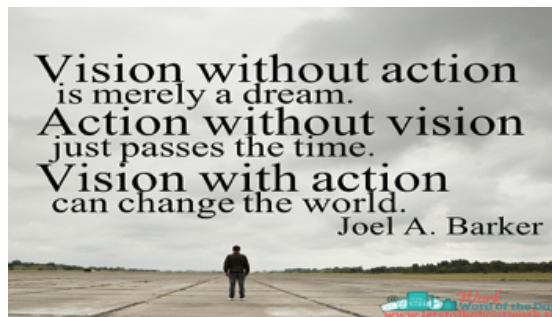


## Leadership

This means...

*"I believe that every leadership journey is unique and that individual leadership philosophies matter. I also believe that everyone has the potential to lead, whatever their perceived position, and we all have the ability to influence others just by what we do and how we act on a daily basis. I see that leadership values and beliefs are shaped by their own experiences and that understanding how your experiences shape your leadership style is critical to future success. I know that positive and inclusive cultures and environments nurture success and that how we inspire others is important. Great leaders create a vision and align people to that vision by inspiring them to follow and chase with purpose, passion and positive intent. Great leaders engage and encourage motivated followers, and then support them in pursuing their own dreams. Great leaders know what they do and why they do it and never stop being curious about why things work and how they could be better."*

Influenced by...



Brought to life through...

- Leading with care, compassion and an appreciation for the values of others
- Taking time to understand my leadership journey and the experiences that have shaped my approach and behaviours
- Helping others to recognise what leadership means to them
- Supporting individuals to reflect on, and develop, their own leadership journeys
- Ensuring that the environments within which I work are inclusive, welcoming and appropriate for the individuals with whom I work
- Being an authentic leader who acts with integrity and always in line with my values and beliefs
- Having the courage to challenge myself and others if things don't feel right



## Integrity

This means...

*"I will always endeavour to behave in line with my values, with my values acting as a moral compass to help me make good choices and decisions through every step of my journey. I know that sometimes these choices and decisions will not be easy, but I will take courage from the strength of my beliefs and will not be afraid to say 'no' to opportunities or things that are not aligned with what I believe. I guarantee you that 'what you see is what you get' and I promise to always 'walk my own talk' when it comes to working with you or connecting with you. I will commit to being authentic, and sometimes vulnerable, and although I may not always reveal everything about myself, I will not behave in a way that compromises my core values. I promise that I will always be me."*

Influenced by...

**INTEGRITY IS**  
*choosing*  
**COURAGE OVER COMFORT;**  
**CHOOSING WHAT IS RIGHT**  
*over what is*  
**FUN, FAST, OR EASY;**  
**AND CHOOSING TO**  
**PRACTICE OUR VALUES**  
*rather than simply*  
**PROFESSING THEM.**



Brought to life through...

- Always acting and behaving in line with my values and what I believe
- Having the courage of my convictions and making good choices and decisions based on what I believe
- Using my values and beliefs as a moral compass to help me navigate my path
- Being me. Being authentic. Being prepared to be appropriately vulnerable.
- Saying 'no' to opportunities and things that don't feel right
- Walking my talk and ensuring that what I say I do and what I actually do are aligned

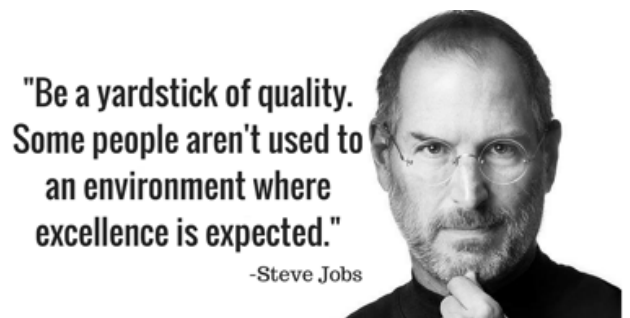


## Quality

This means...

*"I want to be able to look myself in the mirror at the end of each day and know that I have acted in line with all of my values in everything I did and said. I will not be satisfied unless I know that I have always given of my best, and I believe in the importance of having a growth mind set that embraces effort and failure and the power of learning. Individually, organisationally and culturally, it's about the best effort; always. I guarantee that my work and thinking will be of the highest quality; I want to be known for delivering exceptional work in exceptional ways. I also believe that the quality of my interaction and communication matter as much as the quality of my work. I will always treat you with respect and demonstrate empathy, although I do expect the same in return. I will lead by example and I will actively seek to show you just what is really possible when you apply yourself with total commitment, maximum effort and absolute belief."*

Influenced by...



Brought to life through...

- Leading by example and always giving my best effort
- Embracing opportunity, failure and success with the same enthusiasm and willingness to learn
- Setting the benchmark high and not being satisfied with anything but the best in terms of commitment and effort
- Asking myself if I really have given everything within my power and resource, and not willingly giving up until I have reached that point
- Adopting quality as a fundamental way of being and ensuring that all my work meets my own expectations
- Being 'good enough' and not striving for perfect. I will deliver the best I can within the resources I have and know and believe that I am good enough

