

GOAL SETTING: READY, SET, GOAL!

Goals or intentions are defined as something you are consciously trying to accomplish. They are driven by our core values, morals, and desires and help direct your attention and your actions to achieve a desired result. Challenging goals ignite energy levels and increase effort, so the key is to set goals that feel like a challenge but are still within reach. And accomplishing goals can increase overall life satisfaction and motivation to keep moving forward in your efforts. To help create effective goals you can stick to try using the **SMART** technique. **SMART** stands for: **S**pecific, **M**easurable, **A**ttainable, **R**elevant/**R**ealistic and **T**ime-bound.

SPECIFIC

Define goals by identifying the 6 W's. The more of these questions you can answer, the more SPECIFIC your goal will be.

- Who is involved?
- What do I want to accomplish?
- Where? Identify a location.
- When? Establish a timeframe.
- Which? Identify requirements and constraints.
- Why? Identify specific reasons, purpose, or benefits.

Examples:

- Non-specific: I plan to exercise more.
- Specific: I plan to exercise for 45 minutes three days per week at the health club near my home.

MEASURABLE

Establish concrete criteria for measuring progress toward the attainment of each goal you set. When you measure your progress, you stay on track, reach your target dates, and decrease effort required to reach your goal. Ask questions such as how much? How many? How will I know when it is accomplished?

Examples:

- Non-measurable: I am going to eat more vegetables.
- Measurable: I am going to aim to eat 3 vegetables a day and will track my progress by making a checkmark on my calendar each time I eat a vegetable.

ATTAINABLE / ACTIONABLE

Ask yourself if the goal you have created is possible. HOW will you achieve your goal- what is the plan of action? Are you prepared to make the commitment? Are you willing to alter aspects of your life? Do you have the necessary skills, knowledge, time, and resources to accomplish the goal? See yourself as worthy of these goals and develop the habits and lifestyle that allow you to attain them.

Examples:

- Non-attainable: I want to run a marathon on Saturday.
- Attainable: I want to complete a 6-month training program so that I can run a marathon in 7 months.

RELEVANT / REALISTIC

Make the goal relevant to your life's reality. For instance, if a weight-loss buddy thinks your goal should be to compete in a ballroom dancing competition, but you hate ballroom dancing and have stage fright, choose a different goal.

Examples:

- Non-relevant: I hate running, but I'm going to train for a half marathon.
- Relevant: I love volleyball, so I want to join an adult volleyball league.

TIME-BOUND

A goal should be grounded within a time frame. With no time frame tied to your goals, there's no sense of urgency.

Examples:

- Non-time-bound: I want to eventually lose 10 pounds.
- Time-bound: I want to lose 10 pounds by December 31st.

GREAT PLANS START WITH A MEANINGFUL GOAL!

SHORT-TERM GOALS will assist you in achieving your long-term goals. Remember, each weekly goal you implement may seem small, but they all add up to ultimately helping you meet your long-term goal(s)! Losing one pound per week gets you to your 50-pound weight loss goal.

State your short- and long-term goals:

Long-term goals:

Short-term goals:

REWARDS

Make your goals even more motivating by setting rewards for hitting your short-term and eventual long-term goal. Remember to make it a non-food reward!

I plan to reward myself by:

DON'T WORRY, BE APPY

If you use your phone or tablet more than you find yourself using a pen and paper, you may want to consider some of the fun options below:

- Strides
- Way of Life
- Lifetick
- Coach.me
- ATracker
- Toodledo
- Habitica
- Fabulous