

S.M.A.R.T.

Goals Guide

Setting goals helps you move in a positive direction and enables you to accomplish things that build your self-esteem and confidence. Goals provide a sense of purpose and accomplishment. The following questions will help you get started.

- *What do I want to achieve? What is important to me?*
- *What steps must I take to help me achieve this?*
- *Long term, how do I want to change?*
- *What steps can I take now that will start me moving toward making this change?*

Using the "SMART" acronym below will help you develop goals to achieve the changes you desire. A "SMART" goal is:

Specific: Write each goal as specifically as possible. Answer the six "W" questions: "Why? What? Where? When? Which? (Requirements and constraints) Why?" (Example: "Get in shape." Vs. "Join a health club and workout 3 days a week.")

Measurable: Focus on specific, measurable actions that can be tracked. Ask yourself "How much? How many? How will I know when it is accomplished?"

Achievable: Ask yourself if each goal is possible to achieve. You can achieve most any goal you set when you plan your steps wisely and establish a time frame that allows you to carry out those steps. Break down large, long-term goals into steps that can be accomplished today, while keeping an eye on the "big picture." Your goal is probably realistic if you truly *believe* that it can be accomplished.

Relevant: Ask yourself if each goal is relevant to your life. Making a goal relevant to your larger goals and life roles is key to long-term success. For example if you're motivated to be able to play with your grandchildren but limited by energy, making a connection between healthy eating choices, your energy, and time with your grandkids may help you follow through more consistently.

Timely: Decide on a date for starting and completing your goal. A goal should be grounded within a time frame. With no time frame tied to it there's no sense of urgency. If you want to lose 10 lbs., when do you want to lose it by? "Someday" won't work, but if you anchor it within a timeframe ("by May 1st") then you've set your unconscious mind into motion to begin working on the goal.

Bad Example:

I'm going to be more active.

S.M.A.R.T. Example:

I'm going to take the dog out for a walk every evening after dinner for 15 minutes starting Monday.