



Making My Goals Matter: Looking Forward to the Year Ahead Handout

Why Do Goals Matter?

- They provide a clear target for your goals. “If you aim at nothing you are going to hit nothing.”
- They help to concentrate your time and energy.
- They provide a focus for what you desire and help you persist with your plan.
- They set priorities and help you to know what matters to you.
- They are a roadmap taking you from where you are, to where you want to go.
- They increase self-worth.

What goal do you want to pursue in the coming year? Define your goals and put them in writing. Consider sharing your goals with someone to help you stay on target.

Describe what will happen when you achieve the goal. Why does it matter to you? How do you imagine it will feel to achieve the goal? What will be the outcome?

What steps are needed to reach this goal? What can you do? Brainstorm the ideas or steps you may take to get you closer to success.

Define your steps. There are many small measurable steps you may take to achieve success. If for example your goal is to lose 10 pounds in 6 weeks, you might write down the following steps:

- **Be specific** - walk briskly
- **Make it measurable** - I will walk 15 min each day
- **Action oriented** - I will walk
- **Be practical** - I can do this each day
- **Identify a time frame** - 15 minutes per day for 6 weeks



Name Your Barriers and Challenges. You can expect every goal will need some of your energy. There may be some challenges along the way. The trick is to work with or around the barrier to overcome the challenge. For example, challenges using the weight loss goal:

- **Feelings:** Lack of confidence, Negative self-talk, and fear of change
- **Life Factors:** Time, funds, and ability
- **Conflicting Goals:** I want to lose weight, but I find comfort in eating

Work with your challenges: What else can I use to work around the roadblocks?

- **Change Your Feelings:** I will notice my negative talk. I will replace it with positives about me.
- **Life Factors:** I will walk in the morning when I have the time.
- **Conflict Challenge:** I will take a warm bath for my comfort. This will help me not to overeat.

Focus on the here and now progress while visualizing the goal achieved.

- Review your goals daily. Review your struggles and your progress. Keep your progress the focus of your daily attention. Pay close attention to what and who supports you through your journey.
- Visualize your goal as achieved. Create a clear mental picture of the result. Use calm deep breathing and a clear picture of achieving your goal. Visualization can help you be focused and calm. Believe in your ability to reach your goal. Visualizations can be positive and help you stay on track. It helps provide you a place of calm when you may struggle in working toward your goals.

Don't give up. We are rooting for you!