



Making My Goals Matter: Looking Forward to the Year Ahead

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 motivation, persistence and desire
- They establish priorities and help you identify what matters to you
- They provide a roadmap taking you from where you are, to where you want to go
- They increase your confidence and support your self-esteem

What goal do you want to pursue in the coming year? Be specific, put it in writing and consider sharing it with someone to help you remain on target.

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

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

Define your steps. Whatever your goal, there are most likely 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 identify 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 actually do this each day
- **Identify time frame** - 15 minutes per day for 6 weeks

Identify possible barriers and obstacles. You can expect every goal will require an investment of energy, and will be met with some resistance. The trick is to work with or



around the barrier to overcome the potential internal, external, or conflicting obstacles. For example, obstacles using the weight loss goal:

- **Internal:** lack of confidence, negative self-talk, fearful of change
- **External:** time, income, support, environment, physical limitations
- **Conflicting Goals:** I want to lose weight, but I find comfort in eating

Work with your obstacles: What alternatives can I use to work around the roadblocks?

- **Internal Alternatives:** I will notice negative talk and replace it with encouragement.
- **External Alternatives:** I will walk in the early morning when I have the time.
- **Conflicting Alternatives:** I will take a bath when I need comfort instead of overeating.

Focus on the here and now progress while also 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 being achieved. Create a clear mental picture of the end result. Use calm deep breathing and a clear picture of achieving your goal. Visualization can help you remain focused, calm and believing in your ability to reach your goal. Visualizations can be a positive motivator to help you stay on track and to help provide you a place of calm when you may struggle in working toward your goals.

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