



Principles of Goal Setting

A Self-Help Reference

Most of us experience getting bogged down in life, lacking the motivation to do things and really shape and direct our lives. This isn't so unusual, but there are ways of breaking these unproductive habits. Goal setting is a way to get things done, to change, to develop self-motivation and self-determination.

The size and nature of the goals you set is up to you. At first, however, it is wise to start out with a small, short-term goal of importance to you. Very often self-motivation is much more possible when you try to do something you want to do (e. g., write a letter to a friend, read a book for pleasure, lose five pounds, complete your application to graduate schools, etc.). But remember: goal setting must be converted into "action." You may be surprised how much more you can do once you decide to do it. Here's how it works:

1. You select a goal you want to reach.
2. You act—carry out this goal.
3. You experience the satisfaction of completing your goal.
4. This encourages you to set another.
5. You act—carry out this goal.

So the cycle goes on, to a greater sense of satisfaction and achievement.

Here are some guidelines for setting goals. Goals should be:

- **CONCEIVABLE:** capable of being put into words
- **BELIEVABLE:** acceptable as appropriate to your value
- **ACHIEVABLE:** can be accomplished with your present strengths
- **CONTROLLABLE:** does not depend upon a specific response from another person in order to achieve it
- **MEASURABLE:** you can observe it and count it
- **DESIRABLE:** something you really want to do
- **STATED WITH NO ALTERNATIVES:** not optional and one at a time
- **GROWTH FACILITATING:** not injurious to self, others or society

If you would like some personal assistance with goal setting, motivation, etc., please get in touch with the Learning Commons, Pelletier Library, Main floor, 332-2898.

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