

Effective Goal Setting

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Goal setting is an easy to use technique that can help you greatly improve your health and fitness. For goal setting to be most effective, it needs to have a good system. A good system includes writing a SMART goal and working on it regularly.

A SMART goal is one that is Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, and Time-bound.

- **Specific:** If you want to lose weight, how much do you want to lose? Remember the 5 W's when writing down the specifics; who, what, when, where, and why.
- **Measurable:** Can the goal be measured? Losing fat, gaining muscle, and exercising daily can all be measured. Unfortunately, something like being happy cannot be.
- **Attainable:** Take an honest look at what is possible so you don't immediately set yourself up for failure. Is the goal within reach? Do you have the ability, skills, and resources to meet your goal? A good attainable goal should have a 50% chance of success.
- **Relevant:** If your goals are related to your needs, interests, and abilities, and aren't off topic, then the goal is relevant. Relevant goals can be more motivating to work on than irrelevant ones.
- **Time-bound:** Make a date and stick to it. Having a schedule for not only when the goal is met, but for each step along the way will help you avoid procrastination.

By creating a goal that is SMART, you greatly increase your chance of reaching whatever it is you desire. This strategy will help you avoid setting an impossible goal and feeling terrible when you don't reach it. With this said, setting a SMART goal doesn't make things easy. You still have to work very hard for whatever it is you want.

More information on goal setting

- Ultimate goals need to be broken down into micro goals.
- Don't overwhelm yourself with too many goals. Be especially weary of this if you're highly motivated.
- Your goals should be prioritized.
- Have a formal plan of action. It's only a dream until you write it down.
- Internalize your goal. Envision success. Work on the goal daily.
- Be sure your goal has all of the SMART goal criteria.
- Tell your friends and family about your goal. You won't want to let them down. They may also encourage you and help motivate you more.
- Work with a trainer or mentor. This especially helps with accountability.
- Track your progress.