



GOAL SETTING

Must at times we find ourselves daydreaming about things we would like to accomplish but as life goes on, we seem unable to make the dreams realities and accomplish goals that are most meaningful to us.

A goal is an idea of the future or desired result that a person or a group of people envision, plan, and commit to achieving it. Goal setting involves the development of an action plan designed to motivate and guide an individual or group towards achieving a particular goal. It is a major component of personal development and are directional signs for everything we do.

Goal setting is a method of setting priorities and turning dreams into achievements. It enables us make sufficient use of our available resources; our time, talents, money and energy. Goal setting makes us feel confident about future opportunities rather than anxious about future threats. It gives us continuous sense of direction.

GETTING STARTED

- WRITING down one's goals is very important in goal setting. It gives you a sense of direction and enthusiasm towards achieving the goals and enables you to be able to read, absorb and plan towards achieving the stated goals.
- Set SMART goals. Be specific and have a clear picture of what you want, be Measurable as to knowing how much you want and the period of achieving them, let your goals be ATTAINABLE however; avoid limiting yourself to setting smaller goals,

be realistic and know what it will take you to achieve a particular goal, let the goal be time-based.

- Learn to align long-term goals with short-term goals to help you keep track. Long-term goals should be derived from your core values and purpose. Let your one year goal align with your five-year goals and your lifetime goals. Understand the purpose of a goal and not derive purpose from goals.
- If you're meeting all your goals, you probably aren't aiming high enough; you also don't want to aim too high and feel like you aren't accomplishing anything. All goals are attainable.
- Practice creative visualization-picture your results, the moment, and the feeling you'll get when you cross the finish line. This will boost your energy and desire to attain them.
- Analyze goals for potential problems so you can start finding measures to solve them or avoid them as the case maybe. Some of these potential problems may include: self-doubt, low self-esteem, fear, the society, pessimism, family, friends etc.
- Take action immediately to avoid potential problems, stay committed and motivated about what you want.
- Regularly review your written goals to know your progress and be sure you're still on the right track.

Believe you can and you're half-way there.

TIME MANAGEMENT

Many will say time is money. Critically examining this assertion, one may find out it is not completely true. Time becomes money when you can carefully maximize and manage it carefully and decide on what to do with it that will yield productivity.

Time management is the process of planning organizing and exercising conscious control of time spent on particular activities to increase effectiveness, efficiency in productivity. Effective time management enables an individual or group to be able to choose what activity to do and what time to do it. Time management is a necessity in personal development, work, social life, family and hobbies. Time management is an essential factor. When we manage our time, we manage our lives, we work more effectively and efficiently leading to greater accomplishments. Proper time management keeps away from unnecessary stress and frustrations, making you prioritize important areas of life and prevent procrastination. It also makes us more disciplined.

Nowadays, time seems to be a bit more difficult to manage due to development of devices which have caused a majority of people to deviate their attention to social media which is the biggest source of distraction. In managing time,

- Prepare your mind and body for the busy day; you could relax, eat, sing or just do whatever you love.
- Make a list of important things you have to do as the day goes by (on a scale of preference) assigning deadlines to each task in order of importance, urgent and/or urgent and important.
- Always find a reason to work.

- Always have some relaxation time irrespective of the fact that you are occupied/or busy. For instance trying doing some stretch during work hours (break period), get a snack or cup of coffee. This will help boost your lost energy.
- Assign task to other people.
- Having fun is not wasting time, in fact it is a part of good time management, thus the say; "learning without playing makes Sala a dull girl". You won't accomplish big projects if you pressure yourself too much. Fun helps refresh the mind and spirit.
- Finally, the most important part of time management is sleep. It helps you think clearly, keeps you energetic and works at your best.

Procrastination

The word conjures different images for each of us. The dictionary definition of the verb procrastinate means to postpone, put off, prolong or defer. The word comes from two Latin words; "Pro" meaning "forward" and "Crastinus" meaning "belong to tomorrow". That is forward it to tomorrow, I will do it later. Procrastination is an act of delaying stressful tasks in favour of doing pleasurable activities first due to habitual laziness and carelessness. Procrastinators often have a wishful thinking ability especially to time. Procrastination is like a dandelion (a dandelion is a plant with lots of tangled roots and difficult to eradicate). In untangling these roots, we need to look those psychological roots that are relevant for our unique stories. Untangling these roots is not enough, you still have to keep it from dominating your life, pull out the dandelions one at a time. So your garden doesn't get completely empty and there is space for other enjoyable plants. Some characteristics of procrastinators include;

- The intention-action gap: failure to act upon ones intentions, means procrastinators are good planners but difficult to implement.
- Low conscientiousness; not doing ones duty, having difficulty with purposeful planning, patience with little or no motivation for achievement unless work is intrinsically engaging.
- Poor self-discipline; lack of self-control in planning and organizing.

There is no typical profile of a procrastinator as the network of the psychological variables seems complex. It plagues people of all occupations. It is ok simply putting things off because you want to relax or do something else. But it becomes abnormal when it impedes normal daily activities because of serious yet invalid reasons. People who procrastinate suffer internal effects such as feelings of irritation, regret, self-condemnation and depression, anxiety, low-self-esteem, unnecessary stress external effects such as setbacks and lose of valuables, guilt and social disapproval. Some procrastinators even find difficulty seeking for help due to procrastination itself (chronic procrastinators).

In overcoming procrastination;

- Recognize the habit and deal with its temptation. Understand what leads you to put things and find some ways to take action. Don't try to get good on what you are bad at, get better on what you are good at; recognize the reality of your limits and don't try to be what you are not.

- Face your fears; do not fear to start, do not fear failure, do not success either, do not fear the unforeseen, do not fear making mistakes. When you can defeat these fears, you defeat your procrastination habit.
- Create your to-do list and maximize your time well.
- Let the world around you vanish; avoid unnecessary distractions when you set to do a particular task.
- Love the mornings; waking up early remains a good habit as it allows for fresh ideas to come and makes you more motivated to do work but you can't make the mornings if you can't use your evenings or nights; go to bed early.
- Avoid multitasking, if you can't; learn to deal with one task at a time.
- Set realistic goals; not limiting yourself to setting smaller goals either.
- Motivate yourself; treat yourself with socialization and constructive hobbies. This boosts your energy.
- Find partners whose strengths complement your weaknesses, so they can help out with the things that are hard for you and vice versa. Recognize your strength and follow them. Fill your life with people and activities that make you happy, give you a sense of meaning, purpose and connection to the larger world around you.
- Seek help for self-defeating problems such as anxiety, poor time management, and difficulty in concentrating, indecisiveness and perfectionism.

Habits

A habit is a ritual or routine of behaviour repeated regularly that turns to occur subconsciously. Examples are waking up from bed at a particular time daily, morning

shower, eating fatty food, procrastination, workout, etc. when we think about habits, we think about a routine, a ritual and can now think of it as a habitual act. Every habit starts with a psychological pattern called "habit loop" which is three folded. First, there is a **trigger (cue)** which tells the brain to go into automatic mode and then behaviour unfolds – **routine**. The behaviour (habitual act) takes us to a **reward**. The brain recognizes this reward and wants to do it again. Habit makes it easy for us to do things without spending exorbitant mental efforts. Habits free our brains to do exiting creative thinking. They sway great influence on how we think, act and feel. I never felt good about myself until I started working out. Fitness is one of the best health habits to develop. What we do is determined by our habits which are seen in every aspect of our lives and work procrastination is a bad habit. Lasting change is a product of daily habits; the little things we do day-in-day-out, week-in-week-out, extending to the months and years goes into affecting how we think, feel and act. In other words our lives are the sum and results of our habits. When we develop good habits, we increase our level of self-awareness. And are put in a good place to plan better.

Breaking Old Habits

This can be a difficult and quite challenging task but once we can identify them, know when, how and where we perform them; it will be easy to work. In identifying these habits, we need to be mindful of them. Mindfulness is all about increasing your conscious awareness of what you are doing right now – living the moment, meditating and paying attention. Being mindful gets us to practice getting into a particular type of self-observant mental state now, we can use social media mindfully, clean the kitchen mindfully, walk to school or work mindfully and managing all of these gets you to start noticing habits of thoughts and behaviours, some

good and others bad. What you want to change and why, will become more obvious. For strong habits like smoking, procrastination, vigilant monitoring is the most effective strategy followed by distractions. The tragedy is that the more you want you want to break a habit by distracting yourself and not thinking about it, the more it pops up. Now choose a new habit to replace the old habit though making a new habit does not generally destroy the old habit; old habits really do die hard it only makes them dormant. Let your will power on breaking this habit be high and determination instigated.

Building New Habits

- Why do you want to make a new habit? There has to be an ultimate goal that is really worth achieving or the habit will be almost impossible to ingrain.
- Keep yourself motivated by using visualization and avoid fantasizing; face reality and be determined if you must make it.
- Use WOOP (Wish, Outcome, Obstacle and Plan). Write down your wish (habit), its best outcome, and the potential obstacle you are likely to face and make an implementation-intention plan. For instance, if you want to get fitter, you will tell yourself, "I intent to get fitter by the end of this year". This is a just a spontaneous plan and lack the exact behaviour and situation. The implementation – intention plan will let you say "*if* am about to get into a car for a short trip, *then* I will walk". This implementation-intention plan helps keep you on track when dissatisfaction arises.
- Building a new habit means repeating the thoughts and behaviour in a stable context. Repeating any habit increases habit automaticity. The number of repetitions will depend on the kind of habit you are building.

- When tired, keep yourself motivated – try accompanying your workout with music or anything that motivates and keeps you going.
- Monitor your daily progress and know how your new habit is developing. Find potential problems and ways to avoid them.
- Finally, find intrinsic motivation to get the reward. You don't want to get a habit conditioned on some external reward.

The beauty of habits is that as they develop, they become more effortless, they are so ingrained such that your mood or state does not restrict you.