

# How to Set Realistic and Effective Goals (Part One)

By Craig Lock

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Oh no, not another article on goalsetting!

It's past half-way through the year already and have you put all your January 1 2003 goals (business and personal) into ACTION, or were they just New Years resolutions - merely WISHES? Or perhaps just distant, long-forgotten memories in the deep recesses of your mind! No matter, now is a good time of year to reflect on life, our family's lives, our journey - where we've come from and where we are headed. Who knows!

'There is one quality which one must possess to win, and that is definiteness of purpose, the knowledge of what one wants and a burning desire to possess it.'  
- Napoleon Hill (author of the classic book, 'Think and Grow Rich')

'Nothing happens, no forward steps are taken until a goal is established.'  
- David J. Schwarz (author of 'The Magic of Thinking Big' - an excellent book by the way!)

' Your life is controlled by your thoughts. Your thoughts are controlled by your goals.'  
- Earl Nightingale

'When we have no personal goal which we are interested in, and which means something to us, we are apt to go round in circles.'

- psychologist Maxwell Maltz

'The key to peak performance is not potential or skill, but motivation and dedication....having clear performance goals and putting in the training effort to achieve them.'

- Dr Sven Hansen '

I would like to repeat the critical importance of committing your plan to writing. It cannot be over-emphasised!

- Paul J. Meyer of Success Motivation Institute

'Learn how to set your goals:

a. Write down your goals

b. Give yourself a deadline

c. Set your standards high.'

- Napoleon Hill and W. Clement Stone (co-authors)

## UNDERSTANDING GOALS

Setting goals is the first step towards ACTION. They get you into motion. The energy of motivation should be harnessed by being transformed into clear goals and a clear PLAN to achieve them. Goals are dreams which come true ....and they are far easier to achieve once they are focussed.

Goals therefore help to fulfil one's PURPOSE in life by giving

expression to your core inner values, the 'real YOU'.

Psychologists have found that helping people to develop personal goals has proved to be the most effective way to help them cope with personal problems by:

1. Crystallising one's purpose in life - through adding meaning .
2. Helping make difficult decisions.
3. Giving direction to your life and keeping you on track by concentration.
4. Resolving conflict
5. Building confidence and
6. Adding to your self respect (or sense of value = self worth)

The power of imagination in goal setting comes from having BIG HOPES AND DREAMS. I believe too often we underestimate our capabilities. Use the amazing power of your CREATIVE IMAGINATION to think what you REALLY WANT OUT OF LIFE..

Then visualise your dreams actually coming to pass.

Albert Einstein once said, "Imagination is more powerful than knowledge".

Very true, as I believe the human imagination is our greatest asset. Thoreau once wrote these beautiful words:

'If one advances confidently in the direction of his dreams and endeavours to live the life which he\* has imagined, he will meet with a success unexpected.'

(Sorry ladies!) \*

\* Only joking - you can have dreams too and achieve them even better than us "mere males"

(and please don't beat up " Mr un- PC" Thoreau for neglecting you).

'Be true to your ideals, no matter what may happen now. Then things will take a turn and the very things you wanted to happen will happen.'

- anon

That one has just inspired me as I write this.

\*

Summary:

Set realistic, yet achievable goals. Ones that stretch you...

because we are all different, what is achievable for one person might not be so easy for another. Also, because we are all unique creations with different hopes, desires, aspirations and dreams, what goal is important to you may be totally inappropriate for another individual's life direction.

I believe setting goals is vitally important in achieving what

we want out of life

....and setting even small daily goals are a great help in a daily action plan to move your life forward. I find it very satisfying ticking off even small routine tasks, like paying bills (well that is a big goal for a "starving" writer!).

These small immediate goals are stepping stones to our bigger goals " down the track".

WRITE THEM DOWN, because putting them down on paper makes for more COMMITMENT.

It focuses your thinking on what you want to achieve, like a magnifying-glass (that's called a simile, by the way!). Doing this

crystallises (nice big word) our hopes, aspirations and dreams. They keep us on track towards our medium-term and long-term goals - the "grand plan or vision" for our lives. This is most important...

Re-evaluate your progress from time to time. Doing this keeps you on track to see how you are progressing towards the "big picture". I find it extremely satisfying looking back and ticking off the goals I have achieved. (Of course, I don't achieve all of them, but am working hard on that.)

It can be very encouraging seeing how far you have come, when you look back at your first "teeny-weeny" goals and doing this is a great motivator to me.

Goals are the first step in a positive plan of action.

And always remember,

every great journey down the "river of life" starts with one small first step.

**YOU CAN ACHIEVE ALL YOUR PERSONAL GOALS.**

So

**WHAT'S STOPPING YOU FROM TAKING THAT FIRST STEP RIGHT NOW?**

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As the ancient Chinese philosopher said so well,

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"A wish is just a wish,

A New Years Resolution is just a resolution.

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End of Part One

Authors Note:

Craig Lock has studied and written extensively in the field

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This extract is from Craig's first published book HANDBOOK TO SURVIVE - a collection of writings on various subjects to help every man or woman survive in a rapidly changing, uncertain world. To order HANDBOOK today, click on:

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"We share what we know, so that others may grow."

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