

GOAL SETTING: PUTTING YOUR INTENTIONS INTO ACTION



People living with a chronic illness often need to make changes to their everyday lives. The examples in this brochure are meant as a guide only. We hope that you find some of these useful.

Some days you may find it hard to get out the door. To get what you want, it is important to set reasonable and achievable goals. Setting goals lets you achieve things in small steps. Achieving your goals in life will build up your self-confidence and your motivation. Your goals are your own.

Your needs are important. Setting goals is a way of stating what you are going to do to take care of your needs. Setting goals can help you direct your energies in a positive direction - what you expect of life. Goals are a statement that you are in control of your life, making life work for you. Tell your family and friends about your goals - what you have set out to achieve. Ask them for their support to help you meet your goals.

SET REALISTIC GOALS

Lower your expectations; avoid disappointment and failure by setting modest, realistic goals that you can reasonably achieve. By setting small goals for yourself, you will gain a sense of renewed hope and energy.

Try to identify a few problem areas that you can plan to change. Do you skip meals? Do you worry that your meals are high in fat? Do you think, 'I'm too tired, and I don't want to do something?' Aim to make no more than three changes a week. Work on these three behaviours until you achieve them and then add others. Stay within your limitations, do not overdo things. Match your daily goals to your energy levels and others needs.

Write your goals down. Work out what the obstacles to making a change are (what's stopping you) and then think of some things that you can do to overcome those obstacles. Include your self-motivation; write your reasons down (the things that are meaningful to you, not someone else).

Plan for disruptions to your plan (like family demands in the middle of your planned activity). Have some alternatives planned, like exercising indoors if the weather restricts your outdoor exercise.

USE A PLANNER

Record your plans and goals. A plan will help you to reach your goals. Write your goals down (e.g. keep a food diary or an exercise log). Focus on your goals. Put your written goals in a few places where you can see them (e.g. on the fridge, on your computer at work). Keep a log or diary.

- The goals I want to achieve are...
- Steps I will take to achieve this...
- Dates I want to do this...
- Long term goals (6-12 months)
- Medium term goals (4-12 weeks)
- Short term goals (1-4 weeks)
- Daily goals and a daily plan (a detailed and realistic work schedule).
- A daily plan will help you manage time.

SAMPLE GOALS

Here are some sample goals for nutrition, relaxation and exercise. You might decide to work towards one or more of these.

My goal is to:

- Eat foods steamed, baked or grilled.
- Not skip breakfast, lunch or dinner, and will try to eat an afternoon snack as well.
- Try to eat more whole grain foods instead of processed grains.
- Drink water, not soft drinks, coffee or tea.
- Walk with a friend/family member weekly.
- Walk 20 minutes, 3 times weekly to help gain strength and improve quality of life.
- Do a relaxing stretching routine at night.
- Do a brief routine of asana (yoga postures or poses) each day to help relaxation.
- Practice deep breathing at regular intervals each day to help relieve fatigue.
- Enrol in a yoga course to improve energy and vitality, and allow stress and tension to be released.

TIME OUT

When planning your goals, it is important to include rest or recovery time in your routine. This can be a goal in itself!

- Rest time allows your body to rebuild.
- To stay motivated, try new things.

REVIEW YOUR GOALS

Take a few minutes each day to review your goals and short term plans to achieve those goals. In your diary, write about how you feel each day, what you have achieved. Writing will help you sort out how you feel and will let you see patterns in your day, week, month and year (this can be a helpful communication tool between you, your doctor and others). Take a look at your goals every so often. As you achieve each goal, add more.

PLAN REWARDS

Reward yourself, your family and friends who support you. Remember to reward yourself daily for the little goals achieved, as well as the major ones.