

Goal-Setting



Jim Rohn's
Second Pillar of Success:
Part Three



Week Seven

Welcome to Week Seven of the *Jim Rohn One-Year Success Plan*. We hope you are having a great week and are ready for this week's journey.

The feedback is in, and after last week's lesson on dreams and goals, most of you fall into one of three categories.

- 1.** Exhilarated! You're chomping at the proverbial "bit" to receive Week Seven's SMART exercises.
- 2.** Still on the "treadmill." You worked really hard to get your dream list done, but felt a time crunch and are still finishing it.
- 3.** "Week Six's lesson? I'm still working on Week Four's or Week Five's!"

Trust me, we understand. If you're in the second or third group, don't worry, we've got a plan. This week, you'll receive Week Seven's lesson, *Goal-Setting Part Three—SMART Goals*, as scheduled. Then, next week, we've scheduled a little breathing room for you and left the lesson open so that you can continue to work on your SMART goals or play a little catch-up. If the latter, take a deep breath, all is well. If you need it, we have no problem pushing you back a month. You can simply respond to this e-mail with your request.

Vic covers many great points about goal-setting on the call. In particular, he says that many of the most successful people around have goals other people cannot "see"; that they tend to think and plan beyond the scope others currently see. He shares the story about the opening of Epcot, when someone said to Walt Disney's widow, "It's a shame that Walt never got to see this," to which she replied, "Oh, he saw it all right, long before it was ever started."

I hope you have enjoyed working through the goal-setting process. Although others might not totally "see" your goals, understand your feelings and what you're starting to believe, it is exciting when we can peer into the future and vividly see our new reality.

Have a great week!

Kyle



Goal-Setting

JIM ROHN'S SECOND PILLAR OF SUCCESS: GOAL-SETTING, PART THREE—SMART GOALS

Hi, Jim Rohn here. Our focus is the Second Pillar of Success: Goal-Setting.

We have four main components of Goal-Setting:

- 1. Evaluation and Reflection.** The only way we can reasonably decide what we want in the future and how we will get there is to first know where we are right now and what our level of satisfaction is for where we are in life. As we focus on goal-setting, our first order of business this month was evaluation and reflection.
- 2. Dreams and Goals.** What are your dreams and goals? Not related to the past or what you think you can get, but what you want. Have you ever sat down and really thought through your life values and decided what you really want? This isn't something someone else says you should have or what our culture tells us successful people do or have. These are the dreams and goals borne out of your own heart and mind, they are unique to you and come from who you were created to be and gifted to become. Last week, we showed you exactly how to figure out what you want from life.
- 3. SMART Goals. SMART means Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic and Time-sensitive.**
 - Specific:** Don't be vague. Exactly what do you want?
 - Measurable:** Quantify your goal. How will you know if you've achieved it or not?
 - Attainable:** Be honest with yourself about what you can reasonably accomplish at this point in your life, taking into consideration your current responsibilities.
 - Realistic:** It's got to be doable, real and practical.
 - Time:** Associate a time frame with each goal. When should you complete the goal?This week, we look at how to apply the SMART test to your goals and ensure they are powerful!
- 4. Accountability.** Think of the word *accountable*. It means to "give an account." When someone knows what your goals are, they help hold you accountable. Whether it is someone else going through this program with you (have you thought about inviting a friend to join you on this one-year journey?) or just someone you can give the basic idea to, having a person who can hold you accountable will give you another added boost to reaching your goals! Next week, we will show you how to set up an accountability partner.

This week, we will discuss the third point, SMART Goals.

SMART means Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic and Time-sensitive.

I really like the acronym SMART because we want to be smart when we set our goals. We want to intelligently decide what our goals will be so that we can actually accomplish them. We want to set the goals that our heart conceives, that our mind believes and that our bodies will carry out. Let's take a closer look at each of the components of SMART goals:

Specific: Goals are no place to waffle. They are no place to be vague. Ambiguous goals produce ambiguous results. Incomplete goals produce incomplete futures.

When we are specific, we harness the power of our dreams and set forces into action that empower us to achieve our goals. We then know exactly what it is we are shooting for—there is no question. As we establish our priorities and manage our time, we do it for a specific goal to achieve the results we expect. There is no wondering or guessing. The future is locked into our minds, and we see it—specifically—and that is powerful! Never underestimate just how important it is to have very specific, concrete goals. They act as magnets that draw you toward them! A SMART goal is specific.

Measurable: Always set goals that are measurable. I would say “specifically measurable” to take into account our principle of being specific as well. Our goals should be such that we know when we are advancing and by how much. Whether it is by hours, pounds, dollars or some other scale, we should be able to see exactly how we are measuring up as we journey through life using our goals. Imagine if you didn’t measure your goals! You would never know which way you were going, or even if you were going anywhere! A SMART goal is measurable.

Attainable: One of the detrimental things many people do—and they do it with good intentions—is to set goals that are unattainable. While it’s very important to set big goals that cause your heart to soar with excitement, it is also imperative to make sure they are attainable. In the next section, we will talk about being realistic. So what does it mean to be attainable? An attainable goal is one that is both realistic and doable in a shorter period of time than what you have to work with. Now, when I say “attainable,” I don’t mean easy. Our goals should be set so that they are just out of our reach, so that they challenge us to grow as we reach forward to achieve them. In a minute, I will give you an example of a goal that’s both attainable and realistic. A SMART goal is attainable.

Realistic: The root word of *realistic* is *real*. A goal has to be something that we can reasonably make “real” or a “reality” in our lives. There are some goals that are simply not realistic. You have to be able to say, even if it is a tremendously stretching goal, that it is entirely realistic—that you could make it. You may have to say that it will take X, Y and Z to do it, but if those happen, then it can be done. I’m in no way saying it shouldn’t be a big goal, but it must be realistic. This is, to a great degree, up to the individual. For one person, a goal may be realistic, but for another, unrealistic. I would encourage you to be very honest with yourself as you do your planning and evaluation. It might be good to get a friend to help you, as long as that friend is by nature an optimist and not a pessimist. This can go a long way toward helping you know what is realistic. A SMART goal is realistic.

Example of attainable and realistic: Knowing that perhaps you could use a bit of help differentiating attainable and realistic, here is an example: Let’s say you are overweight and need to loose 150 pounds to get to your ideal weight. Is that goal attainable? Yes, considering you also make it realistic. For example, it isn’t realistic to think you can do it in five months. Eighteen to 24 months would be realistic (with hard work). Thus, losing 150 pounds in two years is both attainable and realistic, while losing 150 pounds in five months is neither attainable nor realistic.

Time: Every goal should have a time frame attached to it. Life is much more productive for us as humans because there is a time frame connected to it. Could you imagine how much more procrastination would happen if people never died? We’d just never get “around to it.” We could always put it off. One of the powerful aspects of a great goal is that it has an end, a time in which you are shooting to accomplish it. You start working because you know there is an end, and as time goes by, you work because you don’t want to get behind. As the deadline approaches, you work diligently because you want to meet that deadline. It’s a good idea to break a big goal down into measured time frames. Set smaller goals and work them out in their own time. A SMART goal has a timeline.

Be sure to spend some reflection time this week making sure your goals fit the SMART parameters. Go through the reflection questions and the action points associated with them. Doing so will power-charge them and help you accomplish your dreams.

Until next week, let’s do something remarkable!

Jim Rohn

“A dream is just a dream. A goal is a dream with a plan and a deadline.”

—Harvey Mackay

Week Seven

Hi there, Chris Widener here. I hope you have taken the time to go through the material and reflect upon what you have learned and how you can apply it to your life, with specific action to improve yourself.

HERE IS A RECAP OF THE MATERIAL ON CD FIVE FROM *THE JIM ROHN WEEKEND EVENT—EXCELLING IN THE NEW MILLENNIUM*:

Personal Development in the Marketplace:

Jim reminded us that, in the marketplace, we should be conservative, especially in three areas:

Language: We need to make sure the words we use are conservative.

Habits: Our habits should reflect balance and moderation.

Attire: The kind of clothes we wear, styles and colors should be tasteful and appropriate.

In life, we are to hide our need and plant our seed.

Code of conduct questions:

Q. What is your code of conduct?

Q. What will and won't you do?

Q. What do you want to be known for?

Five abilities to develop:

- 1.** The ability to absorb.
- 2.** The ability to respond. It's okay to let sad things make you sad. Be touched and moved.
- 3.** The ability to reflect. At the end of a period of time, reflect. Gather the past and invest in the future.
- 4.** The ability to act.
- 5.** The ability to share it all. Every time you share, you get it back again. Sharing makes room for more.

Personal development makes you unique.

Goals will help make you the kind of person who can attain your goals!

“An average person with average talents and ambition and average education, can outstrip the most brilliant genius in our society, if that person has clear focused goals.”

—Brian Tracy

Additional Thoughts from Chris: Here are a couple of areas that really made an impact on me this week as I listened to the material from CD Five.

First, to be more conservative in my speech and language. I make my living as a speaker. That means one of my strengths is talking. But there is an old saying that your greatest weakness is your greatest strength carried to the extreme! So my greatest weakness is I am a good talker! I am making a commitment to be more conservative in this area—to be ready to speak less, but when I do speak, to speak with more power.

Secondly, I was impacted by the challenge to grow in our ability to respond. Showing emotion is looked down upon in many areas of life nowadays, but Jim reminded us that we are designed to show emotion. This doesn't mean we have to carry a Kleenex box around with us and cry at the drop of a hat, but it does mean we need to cultivate our ability to feel and respond appropriately.

Lastly, I thought long and hard about what I want to be known for. What do I want my legacy to be? What words do I want to come to mind when people think of me? All of this will drive us to live our lives in such a way as to attain it.

Those were the thoughts that struck me. What messages of Jim's hit you right in the heart and caused you to think deeply about your life? Take some time and give us some feedback! We would enjoy hearing how your journey is going so far!

Chris Widener

“Make every goal clear, specific, measurable and time-bounded.”

—Brian Tracy



Questions for Reflection

Q. Would you describe yourself as conservative in the marketplace? How about in language, habits and dress?

Q. Have you ever asked yourself the powerful question of what you will or won't do? Write comments here.

Q. Which of the following areas do you need to work on, and which are strong points for you:

The ability to absorb _____

The ability to respond _____

The ability to reflect _____

The ability to act _____

The ability to share it all _____

Action Steps This Week

1. Go through your goals list and make them SMART. Be sure to apply the following to each goal you have: It is specific, measurable, attainable, realistic and has a time frame.
2. Take one specific action to become more conservative in your language, your habits and your dress.
3. Pick two of the following areas, and take one specific action to make it more of a reality in your life: the ability to absorb, the ability to respond, the ability to reflect, the ability to act, the ability to share it all.

A Look Forward

HERE IS WHAT IS COMING UP ON CD SIX FROM *THE JIM ROHN NEW MILLENNIUM SERIES*:

- ◆ Introduction to Communication
- ◆ Four Steps to Achieve Good Communication
- ◆ Affecting People with Words
- ◆ The Four "Ifs" That Make Life Worthwhile

And more!

Notes for CD Six from the *Jim Rohn New Millennium series*:

Fine-Tuning Your Goals & Taking Action

DREAMS VS. GOALS

This workbook and this course started out by helping you to rediscover your dreams for your life—and even to visualize them so clearly that you could see them in your mind’s eye. Dreaming is critical to goal-setting because dreams are the foundation that goals are built on. In other words, dreams are what keep you going when the going gets tough—and it will. Dreams give you hope. Dreams give you a peek into the future you can create for yourself.

But dreams are not goals. Dreams are essentially passive. It doesn’t take much to dream. Anyone can do it, and you don’t have to move a muscle to do it. You can dream while lying in a hammock in the sun drinking coconut juice.

Goals, on the other hand, are active. They require action, and they require effort. Goals require you to take initiative and *do something*.

If your dreams are “heaven,” then goals are the “stairway to heaven.” Goals are the steps that can take you to the realization of your dreams.

What Goals Aren’t

Before we go too much further, let’s examine what else goals are and aren’t. Goals aren’t wishes. They aren’t something you say and then walk away from, waiting for someone else to do the work. Goals will require your active involvement, and they will require some work.

Goals aren’t vague. They aren’t unattainable. They aren’t impossible. They aren’t throwing a dart at a board from 10 feet away and just agreeing to go with whatever you hit. They aren’t pulling a number (or a rabbit) out of a hat. They aren’t random or magic or mysterious.

Plain and simple, a goal is something very specific that you can identify, you desire to achieve, you plan to achieve and you put forth effort to achieve.

Not New Year’s Resolutions

Some people also confuse New Year’s resolutions with goals. New Year’s resolutions are seldom goals—they’re more apt to be wishes. Typically, people set New Year’s resolutions because it is the popular thing to do at a particular time of year. They don’t spend a lot of time thinking about what they really want to achieve in life, and most resolutions focus merely on eradicating some aspect of their life they don’t like all that much, not on building a positive result. Furthermore, resolutions are flimsily worded, too generic or vague, and they don’t involve a wholehearted commitment on the part of the people making them.

It’s not surprising, then, that most New Year’s resolutions are broken before the month of January is through.

Goals, on the other hand, require concentrated thought, have a specific objective, should be worded positively and require a commitment. Goals are the steppingstones that lead you to the life of your dreams.

“When you do the common things in life in an uncommon way, you will command the attention of the world.”

—George Washington Carver

Creating SMART Goals

T rue goals, unlike wishes or resolutions, should be SMART: Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic and Time-sensitive.

S—SPECIFIC

Don't be vague. Exactly what do you want or need to do?

M—MEASURABLE

Quantify your goal. How will you know if you've achieved it or not?

T—TIME-SENSITIVE

Associate a time frame with each goal. When should you have the goal completed?



A—ATTAINABLE

Be honest with yourself about what you can reasonably accomplish at this point in your life—along with your other responsibilities.

R—REALISTIC

It's got to be doable, real and practical.

BE SPECIFIC

When formulating a goal, it should be as specific as possible. *Exactly* what are you trying to do or accomplish? Use clear, exact terms to define your goal.

Make It Measurable!

Every goal should be measurable. Whenever possible, quantify your goal with numbers that define how much, how long, how high, etc. A quantifiable measurement takes the goal out of the fuzzy abstract and brings it into clear, sharp focus. When a goal is measurable, you can clearly see whether you met, exceeded or fell short of the goal—and by exactly how much. Goals that suggest you want to become “good,” “better,” “successful” or “the best” at something are not measurable.

Aim for What's Attainable

Goals must be attainable. Setting a goal too high only ensures failure. Be honest with yourself—upfront—about how much time and energy you can devote to achieving your goal. Then set a goal that you have a reasonable probability of reaching. Stretch yourself a bit, but don't stretch yourself so far that you lose hope of attaining it.

At the same time, don't limit yourself by setting your goals too low. Remember that your level of desire and your willingness to work toward your goals are directly proportionate to your ability to achieve them. Set goals that you *really* want to achieve to realize dreams that are *really* important to *you*! Your motivation level will be higher, you'll be willing to spend more time to achieve those goals, and you'll be more persistent.

Note: You *can* create attainable goals for even those "impossible" dreams. Keep reading.

Be Realistic

Goals must be realistic. Goals are something you work to achieve. They aren't miracles or magic. Set goals that you can reasonably achieve based on your background, skills and talents as they currently exist. As you grow and develop, you can adjust your goals higher accordingly.

Some of your goals may even be to acquire more background information, improve your skills and exercise more of your talents to move you further along toward the achievement of your goals. Don't be afraid to call on outside resources to help you achieve your goals, too. There's no rule that says you have to do it all on your own! What may be "unrealistic" for you to achieve may be easy for someone else to do.

Think outside the box. Do you have to incorporate your new business yourself? Do you need a law degree to incorporate your business? No! Instead, your goal could be to locate a qualified attorney to incorporate your business *for* you. Hire help if you need to. Draw on local and community resources. Look on the Internet. Ask your family and friends. Leave no stone unturned.

You can often achieve the "unrealistic" with the help of others!

Set a Time Frame

Goals must be assigned a particular time frame. How long do you have to complete the goal? If you don't set an expectation of how much time it should take you to accomplish it or when it should be finished, you will never feel a sense of urgency to complete the goal. It could hang out there forever. Setting a time frame also provides a built-in checkpoint so you can reassess your goals and make sure you are progressing toward your dreams.

A SMART Exercise

Take a look at some common “goals” people aspire to. Then contrast them with the SMART goal alternative. Why are the SMART goals better? What’s “wrong” with the common “goals” most people set for themselves?

Common “goal”: To lose 10 pounds in two weeks.

SMART goal: To walk one mile every Monday, Wednesday and Friday, beginning today through Nov. 30.

Common “goal”: To make more money.

SMART goal: To increase my income from \$35,000 per year to \$40,000 per year within 12 months (by June 1).

Common “goal”: To get published in *Redbook* magazine.

SMART goal: To send four targeted query letters pitching article ideas to *Redbook* magazine every week for the next four weeks.

Common “goal”: To buy a new home.

SMART goal: To save \$20,000 toward the purchase of a new home, to make a list of what I desire in a new home, and to contact three Realtors to let them know what kind of a house I am looking for, all by Sept. 1.

Common “goal”: To have a happier marriage.

SMART goal: To go out with my husband on a “date” (no children allowed) on the first and third Saturday nights of each month between now and the end of the year.

SETTING SMART GOALS FOR ‘IMPOSSIBLE’ DREAMS

Even “impossible” dreams can be broken down into SMART goals—those that are specific, measurable, attainable, realistic and associated with a time frame.

Suppose your “impossible” dream is to find the cure for multiple sclerosis. You can still set SMART goals to bring you further along the road to success.

Here are some examples:

To complete my preadmission tests and enroll in medical school by May 31.

To apply for an internship with four recognized experts in the field of multiple sclerosis research by Aug. 28.

To prepare a written proposal to study the effects of [insert name of some specific new drug here] on myelin regeneration by Nov. 30.

To submit that written proposal to 10 specific university hospitals and research centers by Dec. 31.

To conduct a one-year study of the effect of [insert name of another new drug here] on a control group of 10 rats to be completed no later than Dec. 31.

You get the idea. Even though the dream seems impossible, you can create specific goals that require specific action steps to take you closer to the achievement of that dream. Thomas Edison is famous for saying he never failed—he just found 10,000 ways that didn’t work.

“To will is to select a goal, determine a course of action that will bring one to that goal, and then hold to that action till the goal is reached. The key is action.”

—Michael Hanson

TAKE IT A STEP FURTHER—MAKE SURE YOUR GOALS ARE 'SMART FOR ME'

Achieving your goals is going to be hard work. Make sure any goal that will require a commitment of your time and energy is worthy of that investment. In addition to ensuring your goals are SMART, ask yourself the question: "Are these goals SMART FOR ME?"

F = Focused

O = Optimistic

R = Ready

M = Meaningful

E = Exciting

Focus!

Setting and achieving goals requires a lot of work—and an investment of resources—like your time, energy and money, just to name a few. When you undertake a new goal, it's important that you focus your efforts toward the completion of the goal to use those resources wisely. If you can't focus your resources toward a particular goal at this time, it's better to wait to pursue that goal until you can.

Select a goal that brings you closer to a dream you are passionate about. Fall in love with your dreams and your goals. Get obsessed about them. Don't just work toward goals that you can live with, work toward goals that will help you achieve the dreams you can't live without!

When you stay awake at night thinking about the achievement of your goal, dreaming about how you will achieve it and what it will feel like, brainstorming ideas and jotting them on paper on your nightstand—when it consumes most of your waking thoughts—when you are so focused on your goal and your dreams that you cannot get your mind off the subject, you can't help but achieve those goals!

In the next section of this workbook—in conjunction with Group Session Four—you'll read about some great props and tools you can use to maintain your focus. Use any or all of them that work for you.

Be Optimistic

Maintaining a positive attitude and an optimistic outlook is critical to the successful achievement of your goals. A "can-do" attitude will take you a lot further than focusing on the negative. Be sure your goals are always worded positively, and reach for your dreams!

Select a goal that will bring you great pleasure, satisfaction and joy. Working toward a positive outcome with a positive outlook is a pleasure, not a chore. Keep yourself motivated and keep visualizing the successful realization of your dreams. Imagine yourself achieving your goals.

Ready or Not?

Many of us aspire to achieve certain things in our life, but we may not be ready to devote our time, energy and other resources to the achievement of those goals at this point in our life. There's nothing wrong with that—after all, there is a time and a season for every purpose—but it is important to recognize your readiness level before committing yourself to a large goal. Working to achieve a goal will require a tradeoff from you. You cannot have everything at once or be in two places at the same time. Carefully consider the tradeoffs you will make, and embark on a goal when *you're* ready for it.

Make It Meaningful

The achievement of each of your goals should advance you at least a little bit closer to the life of your dreams. Your goals should also be in harmony with your purpose and mission in life. If you're going to invest your time and energy into realizing a goal, make sure it's a meaningful goal that will serve you well.

Week Seven

Get Excited!

Excitement and enthusiasm are powerful forces. They can help keep you going when you run into obstacles or things don't go as smoothly as you hoped. Motivational speaker Bob Proctor encourages the people in his seminars to set goals that are "so big that it excites and scares you at the same time." Considering the fact that you are trading your most valuable commodity—your time—to reach for your goals, the excitement factor cannot be overstated!

Again, your level of *desire* to achieve a particular goal—to realize the fulfillment of a particular dream—is directly proportionate to your ability to achieve it. When you're excited about something, super-charged just thinking about it and you want that something in a powerful way, you're going to figure out what to do to get it!

EFFECTIVE GOAL-SETTING

Put It in Writing!

Goals committed to paper are more effective than goals held only in your mind. The process of writing your goals down requires you to think them through thoroughly and to articulate them clearly. It also provides a record of the goal, when it was made and when you want to achieve it. And putting it in writing is a commitment to complete it.

Post your goals where you can see them. Make them "real" and a real part of your everyday life. Don't just jot them down and tuck them away in a drawer or between the pages of a book.

Write your goals in positive language that expresses a firm commitment to achieving them. Include a statement about why the achievement of this goal or set of goals is important to you.

Use Positive Language

It's more fun and enticing to achieve a goal that's worded positively than the same goal worded in a negative fashion. Whenever possible, use positive language to phrase your goals and action steps. For example, "To fit into my size 8 jeans by Dec. 1" is a much more appealing goal than "To lose 35 pounds so that I don't feel so fat," wouldn't you agree?

Enlist the Help of Other People

No one exists in a vacuum, and while there are some goals you can complete on your own, it's infinitely easier to have the advice and support of others who have already completed similar goals or who can simply encourage you when you get discouraged.

Don't be afraid to ask other like-minded people to help you with your goals or just become a part of your support system.

An interesting thing happens when you enlist the help of other people. Often, they will know someone who can directly help you achieve one or more of your goals in some small or even more significant way. Having planted the seed of your idea in their subconscious minds, those people will also unconsciously begin looking for ways to help you. They may come up with ideas, stumble upon resources or help you look at things in a different light—all of which can directly or indirectly help you achieve your goals.

Why work toward your goals solo when you can have an entire team on your side?

Talk to Someone Who's Done What You Want to Do

If you can, talk with someone who's already attained the goal or dream you aspire to. Find out what it's really like when the goal is completed and the dream comes true. How did it feel? Was it everything they thought it would be? Ask them how they did it. Was it worth all the hard work? Would they do it all over again? Why or why not? Learn from their mistakes.

Do you know anyone who has already accomplished or achieved some of the same goals and dreams you aspire to? If so, identify them here.

Identify the Personal Benefits of Completing Your Goals

What’s in it for you? There has to be some kind of a payback for completing your goals, or you will give up as soon as the going gets tough. Identify the tangible and intangible benefits you will realize when you complete your goals. This could be a simple feeling of self-satisfaction, less stress or status in the community. There are no right or wrong answers—only the achievement of some tangible or intangible reward that has meaning for you personally.

In reviewing some of the dreams you’ve identified, what do you think your primary motivations for completing your goals will be? What makes you tick? What provides your greatest motivation?



Week Seven

Incorporate Rewards into Your Goal Plan

Working toward your goals is hard work. To keep your motivation high, build in little rewards at critical points in your plan. Self-motivation is the key to success, and there's nothing like positive reinforcement to keep self-motivation high. The rewards need not be elaborate—tickets to go see a movie, lunch with a friend or buying a new book you've wanted may be more than adequate—but recognizing your progress and accomplishment is vital.

Identify 20 different mini-rewards you can choose from to build into your goal plans. (These should be mini-rewards that are meaningful and motivational for you.)

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____
11. _____
12. _____
13. _____
14. _____
15. _____
16. _____
17. _____
18. _____
19. _____
20. _____

Prioritize! Focus on One or Two Dreams or Goals at a Time.

You obviously cannot do everything all at once. Some things need to take precedence over others. Similarly, you cannot focus on all of your dreams and all of your goals at the same time. In order to give each one the time and attention it deserves, you will need to determine which dreams are the most important to *you* and should, therefore, be your top priority.

Focus on just one or two dreams or goals at a time—starting with something relatively easy to achieve or something very, very important to you that you can get really enthusiastic about to begin. Don't bite off too much at once, and don't spread yourself too thin. Start small and build on your successes. Increase your confidence in your ability to accomplish bigger, more complex goals.

Which one or two dreams that you've written about in the previous exercises are the most important to you at this point in your life?

Do Your Research

Whatever you want to achieve, find out as much as possible about it! Before committing to a goal, make sure you know what is involved. Get all the information you need to make informed choices. What will achieving this goal require? Will you need to learn new skills? Get a degree? Invest money? How much time will it take?

Keep It Simple

If there's a simple (and legal) way to achieve your goals, don't complicate matters unnecessarily. Again, talk with people who have achieved the goals you're striving for. Look for the simplest, most straightforward means of achieving the goal. Learn from other people's mistakes when you can.

Identify Obstacles to Your Goals in Advance

Obstacles to your goals can come in one or more of several forms. We identified some of those potential obstacles in earlier exercises when you identified the negative comments you've heard from the people around you, the negative people in your life and your negative self-talk—and took action steps to reprogram those negative influences in your life.

Other obstacles may be external or internal. External obstacles might include a shortage of time or money or someone who won't cooperate with what you're trying to achieve. Some of your external obstacles come disguised as friends and family who are trying to "help you avoid being disappointed" or "just don't want to see you get your hopes up." In reality, though, they may be jealous, insecure or fearful that if you improve your own life, you will no longer need them.

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Though you tend to think of external obstacles first, it is often the internal obstacles that are the most difficult to battle—obstacles called “indifference,” “indecision,” “doubt,” “worry,” “over-caution,” “pessimism” and “complaining.” Another internal obstacle is our tendency as humans to compare ourselves unfavorably with others.

Which of these internal obstacles do you recognize as having power in your own life?

How will you combat these internal obstacles in your own life?

Whenever possible, identify potential obstacles in advance and create a plan of action to overcome these obstacles. Addressing them in advance is easier and more effective than waiting until the obstacle confronts you.

Know Your Limits

Your time is limited. Your funds are limited. Your energy level is limited. All resources have some kind of limit to them. Before you set your goals, identify your resources in all these areas objectively. Look back at the time assessment you did in an earlier exercise, and determine how much time you really have available to devote to the attainment of new goals—while still maintaining your other life responsibilities. Recognize your limits and then set your goals within those limits to keep them achievable.

Remember, though, that *your* limits may be very different from someone else's limits. Don't set your goals according to someone else's life. If you have a deep desire to see your dream come true, a high energy level to work toward your goals, and are committed to doing whatever it takes to achieve your goals and realize your dreams, stretch your limits and achieve all that you can!

Set Goals That Will Stretch You... but Not Too Far

The best goals require you to stretch and grow—to become a little bit of a better person or accomplish a little more than you have to date. At the same time, goals must be attainable—not so far out of reach that failure is assured. Set your goals just a little outside your comfort zone to see what it will make of you to stretch and achieve that goal. As you set new goals, continually up the ante just a bit to continue to challenge yourself.

Only you can determine just how important your dreams are to you and just how much you are willing to stretch to get them. But if you are determined to realize them, you'll be amazed at how you can stretch to meet your goals. What are you willing to do to achieve your goals and realize your dreams? If you have a high level of expectation, you will deliver to that expectation, even if it is a stretch, *if* your dream is important enough to you.

Identify Factors Within Your Control

Whenever possible, create goals that are within your control. For example, having an article accepted in a national magazine is beyond your control. You could write the best article ever, but if the editor doesn't accept it, for whatever reason (she just ran a piece on a similar topic or you just caught her on a bad day), you have no control over that. So if you set a goal to have an article published in a national magazine, your goal could fail—yet through no fault of your own.

It's better to set goals over which you *do* have control. For example, set a goal to send out five articles this month *to* national magazines. You may end up published in a national magazine—or you may not—but the achievement of your goal won't be contingent on someone else. Writing and sending out the five articles is within your control and can be achieved.

Remember, even "impossible" dreams contain the seeds of goals you can set for yourself that are well-within your control. Ask yourself what you can *do* to take a step closer to achieving that impossible dream, and then set yourself a goal to do it.

Take the Tangible Test

When you've achieved your goal, will you be able to see it? Hold it in your hands? How will you know it's real? How will you know you've achieved it? Don't make the mistake of setting intangible goals—they're impossible to define and even more difficult to achieve. If your goal is to complete an activity or do something you can't "see" or "hold," *make it tangible* by creating evidence of the accomplishment. For example, keep track of your weight or the days you exercise on a calendar. That way, at any given time, you can clearly see tangible evidence of your progress.

Week Seven

Take Ownership of Your Goals

It's your dream. You set the goals. Take full ownership of and responsibility for your goals. Set out to achieve them because *you* believe in them and this is what you want in your life. At the same time, remember that you own your goals—they don't own you. When a goal no longer serves its purpose—*your purpose*—it's time to change the goal.

Break It Down and Take Action

Goals require action. Every goal is composed of specific action steps that will lead to the achievement of that goal. Some goals require a few action steps and others require many. In some cases, a goal can have so many action steps that you should set smaller goals within a goal.

Schedule Regular Reviews/Assessments

Schedule regular reviews or assessments to measure how you're progressing toward your goals. Determine whether you met, exceeded or fell short of your goals. If you've met your goals, are you getting measurably closer to achieving your dream? (You should be!) Set new goals and identify new action steps to continue drawing you even closer.

If you fell short of your goals, try to determine what went wrong. Did you set your initial goals too high? Did you run into unforeseen obstacles? Have you resolved those obstacles? Can you pick up where you left off and reset your target dates? Do you need to set new goals or implement a Plan B?

Create new goals and action steps as needed, mark them on your calendar and schedule another follow-up/review date to check your progress again.

Continue checking and rechecking your progress toward your goals regularly. Mark target dates and checkpoints on your calendar, and faithfully keep these "appointments" with yourself to do a thorough assessment of your progress.

When you achieve one goal—and after you're finished celebrating or rewarding yourself—promptly review your dreams for the future and select a new goal. Then start right in again, identifying the benefits of achieving it, creating action steps, marking target dates and checkpoints on your calendar, etc.

Annually, you should review your entire goal plan and adjust it as necessary to mesh with any changes in your life or your dreams for the future.

“Vitality shows in not only the ability to persist but the ability to start over.”

—F. Scott Fitzgerald

Making a Dream into Reality

Look back at the dreams you detailed in earlier exercises, and select one that is particularly important to you. Ideally, you should start with a dream you can reasonably hope to realize in one year or less. Seeing results quickly will encourage you to keep going and setting goals to make your bigger dreams into reality, too!

Write out your dream here:

Why is this dream important to you?

Week Seven

Visualize yourself living this dream. Identify the pros and cons of realizing this dream.

PROS	CONS

Can you tweak any of the cons/negatives to make this dream more attractive? Can you modify it in any way to be more ideally suited to you?

How *bad* do you want to see this dream become reality in your life?

On a scale of one to 10, how *hard* are you willing to *work* to achieve this dream? (one being "Just forget about it. I guess I don't really want it if I have to work for it." And 10 being "I'll do absolutely whatever it takes to achieve this!") _____

How can you realize this dream? Identify the goals that, when accomplished, will lead you to the realization of this dream. (You may wish to refer to the earlier exercises you completed relating to this dream or the goals brainstorming exercise.) Put each of these goals in writing. List your goals on the numbered lines below. (Use additional paper if you identify more than 10 goals.) Use positive language and make sure they meet SMART FOR ME criteria.

GOALS TO HELP BRING ME CLOSER TO THIS DREAM

1. _____

- Action Steps:** 1a. _____
1b. _____
1c. _____
1d. _____
1e. _____
1f. _____
1g. _____
1h. _____
1i. _____

2. _____

- Action Steps:** 2a. _____
2b. _____
2c. _____
2d. _____
2e. _____
2f. _____
2g. _____
2h. _____
2i. _____

Week Seven

3. _____

- Action Steps:** 3a. _____
3b. _____
3c. _____
3d. _____
3e. _____
3f. _____
3g. _____
3h. _____
3i. _____

4. _____

- Action Steps:** 4a. _____
4b. _____
4c. _____
4d. _____
4e. _____
4f. _____
4g. _____
4h. _____
4i. _____

5. _____

- Action Steps:** 5a. _____
5b. _____
5c. _____
5d. _____
5e. _____
5f. _____
5g. _____
5h. _____
5i. _____

6. _____

- Action Steps:** 6a. _____
6b. _____
6c. _____
6d. _____
6e. _____
6f. _____
6g. _____
6h. _____
6i. _____

Week Seven

7. _____

- Action Steps:** 7a. _____
7b. _____
7c. _____
7d. _____
7e. _____
7f. _____
7g. _____
7h. _____
7i. _____

8. _____

- Action Steps:** 8a. _____
8b. _____
8c. _____
8d. _____
8e. _____
8f. _____
8g. _____
8h. _____
8i. _____

9. _____

- Action Steps:** 9a. _____
9b. _____
9c. _____
9d. _____
9e. _____
9f. _____
9g. _____
9h. _____
9i. _____

10. _____

- Action Steps:** 10a. _____
10b. _____
10c. _____
10d. _____
10e. _____
10f. _____
10g. _____
10h. _____
10i. _____

What action steps will you need to complete to achieve each goal? (List all the steps you can think of—large and small—under each goal.)

Can any of the goals/action steps be completed simultaneously, or must they be completed in a particular sequence?

Week Seven

Do you have the skills, talents, resources and-or knowledge to complete the goals identified? If not, be sure that developing the skills, finding the resources or obtaining that knowledge is included in your action steps.

How will you personally benefit from accomplishing these goals?

What strengths do you possess that will contribute to your ability to achieve these goals and realize this dream?

What weaknesses will you need to compensate for to achieve these goals?

Who can help you achieve these goals? (And how?)

Identify any known or potential obstacles (internal or external) that could interfere with your achieving these goals.

How will you deal with them? (Identify possible solutions now so that detours on your journey don't totally throw you off course. Sooner or later, you will encounter obstacles.)

Reevaluate the target dates for each of your goals. Working backward from the date you want to complete the goal, pencil in checkpoint dates, dates by which you will need to complete each action step in order to meet the target date for the goal, in the right-hand margin next to each step. Build in a little flexibility in case one of your action steps takes longer than you anticipated to complete, but don't allow too much flexibility, or you won't have the sense of urgency required to complete the task.

What will be your reward for achieving each goal? (Schedule interim rewards for each goal accomplished—don't make yourself wait until they're all completed for reinforcement!)

Week Seven

Will there be any negative consequences (either natural or self-imposed) if you do not reach these goals? Elaborate.

How will you motivate yourself to take the action steps necessary when your enthusiasm wanes?

How will you hold yourself accountable for completing your goals?

How will the achievement of these particular goals contribute to fulfilling your life purpose/your mission statement?

Do these goals correspond to your values and priorities (as identified in an earlier exercise)? Why or why not?

Identify the first date you will review your progress toward these goals:

_____ (Don't forget to mark it on your calendar!)

The process of visualizing your dreams, setting goals and identifying the action steps required to complete those goals, and evaluating your goals is essentially the same for every dream you seek to realize in your life.

An additional "Making a Dream into Reality" Worksheet is included in this workbook following the Appendices. Feel free to photocopy the worksheet as often as needed and complete one for each dream you want to turn into reality in your life.