

GETTING STARTED

“I’ve been considering changing this part of myself.”

“I have this problem and I really think I should work on it.”

Goal setting is the first part of therapy. The goal provides the direction and focus for our work together. It is important to establish and stick to the goals. There may be other issues that arise and goals can be changed but there must be a goal or two.

First, go ahead and list some of the goals that you have for yourself. Most of us want to make *changes in one or more* of the following four clusters:

Bad Habits—spending too much, eating too much are two examples. They are behavioral excesses—too much of a good thing.

Learning something new or improving upon something already known is a second cluster. Playing the guitar, learning to knit are examples—too little of what you seek.

Changing relationships is the third cluster. Being more social, getting along better with your spouse or co-workers are examples.

Enhancing your overall life satisfaction is the final cluster. Examples of this would be “to be a better spouse/person” or be “kinder”.

It can be helpful to work on more than one goal at a time, especially if they are related. Exercise and weight loss for instance.

So, select one or two goals, especially if they are related. **Make any goals that seriously affect your health and wellness a priority.**

Concentrate on those goals that you have the most energy and desire to change now. *A goal should be where you want to end up after you expend the energy and time; in other words, your destination.*

Be Specific—Tell me exactly where you will be in 90 days using **positive** terms. Use observable characteristics of behavior that are phrased in positive language. For example, “I will be exercising at least five days a week for at least 30 minutes each time” or “I will be enjoying conversation with my children at dinner every night.

Be Measurable—it is important to define your goals in ways that can be measured; you’ll need to log, record, or track the frequency and triggers of the behavior to be changed.

Attainable—Make a reasonable and reachable goal, otherwise it is an impossible dream.

Relevant-- Is it important to you and does it fit with your life priorities. Does your immediate goal serve the pursuit of becoming the person you want to become?

Time-Specific—Specify the time frame to reach your goal. Minimum of 90 days.

MY GOAL IS _____
