

Will goal-setting help me get through the year?

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Over the holiday season you probably had a conversation at least once about the year that's been and your hopes for this New Year. It's the traditional time for some introspection and goalsetting, but maybe you haven't had time to get your goals completely squared away (or in some cases, not even started). If so, you'd be in good company with over 90% of the population.

So why is that so few actually get around to recording their goals in some form, do you know? Could it be that the good intentions weren't translated into more specific goals? And were they written down?

You might like to think about these issues:

About 30% say things like:

- "I don't have time"
- "I don't know how"
- "I've got a pretty good idea of what I want but it's just in my head"
- "My work goals are set by the boss."
- Not sure what I want in my personal life."
- "I might fail to reach it"
- "What if I succeed? Can I cope with the changes that will bring?"

And more than 60% will say: "I don't really know what I want to set goals on."

Their conversation often includes comments like:

- Taking time to write down goals seems like too big a project
- It feels as though it will take too long
- I want to be sure I'm recording what I really want and I've been too busy to give it a lot of thought
- ...and more of the same.

And if this applies to adults, how much more it applies to young people? If our parents and teachers aren't confident or knowledgeable about how to set goals, where are the youngsters to learn?

I've specialised in time management for 23 years. Never at any time has my opinion changed as to the *most important* factor in the topic – a clear set of comprehensive written (or pictured) goals. If we don't have that starting point, how on earth can we make the best time choices when options (often masquerading as interruptions or other people) present themselves?

The most powerful time management tool we have is the ability to say *NO*, not in a career limiting or relationship limiting way, I hasten to add. (See <http://www.educationtoday.com.au/>



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article/No-853 for more on that topic)

However, if we either don't know what's really important to us, or we're not putting any focused energy into things we give lip-service to, time will slip away. We'll find ourselves majoring in minor things. Those dreams are pushed back – yet again.

Here are a few tips to help you set – and achieve – your Big Picture goals

- 1 Find a quiet spot.
- 2 Don't attempt goalsetting with other people making noise around you – you must have 'alone' thinking time.
- 3 Think as far into your future as you can – at least a year out and ideally much further ahead.
- 4 If something comes into your mind, don't dismiss it with thoughts of: "I can't do that", or "It's not practical". Instead, listen to your intuition.
- 5 Initially do goals for yourself, not the significant others in your life. It's not selfish – it's just easier. If other people will be involved with some of them, negotiate later. Some things may have to be shifted out a bit but you need to be clear on your own thoughts before you can have a useful conversation with someone else.
- 6 Nothing is too small or too large.

A small thing can sometimes be the trigger that leads to the fulfilment of a much bigger goal.

- 7 Don't limit yourself – forget 'realistic' for now. Dream big. It isn't your imminent tasks or relatively easy projects we're interested in at this stage. They come later. 'Realistic' is entirely too limiting for long-term dream goals. Who wants to be realistic? Or only choose goals that are easily achievable? How boring!
 - 8 Write your goals down. Many people will say, "Oh, I know what's important to me. Why do I need to record it?" Have you noticed that the exercise of putting your thoughts down on paper forces clarity?
 - 9 Be very specific. Don't say "I want more money", "I want a new house", or "I want to travel". Instead specify how much. Describe what the house will look like. What atmosphere? How many rooms? Do you want a garden? Where will you travel? For how long? What specific activities do you wish to do when you're there?
 - 10 Find or make pictures to represent your words and thoughts. Make a collage, a poster, a vision board, a scrapbook or some kind of visual reminder. Pictures are incredibly powerful. Get them wherever you'll see them constantly – it might be your fridge, your office wall or maybe your bathroom. After a while they'll become wallpaper and you'll hardly notice them most of the time. However, the message continues to impact your sub-conscious. It might take some years, but you'll be amazed at the result.
- Suggestion: As well as doing it for yourself, get the children in your classes to do the exercise each year. They love creating collages and you'll be giving them a life-long gift.

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Robyn Pearce helps people around the world discover new angles on time. Check the resources on her website <http://www.gettingagrip.com> including a free report

for you: How to Master Time in Only 90 Seconds. She travels regularly to Australia to work with schools on Professional Development days and also conferences.