

WELLNESS VISION AND GOAL SETTING

Steps to Create a Wellness Vision:

Describe a Vision

A vision is a compelling statement of who you are and what health promoting, life-giving behaviors you want to do consistently.

First Picture

Tell me what your vision looks like. What would you look and feel like at your ideal level of wellness? What kind of person do you want to be when it comes to your health, fitness, or wellness?

Key Elements

What are the most important elements in your vision? If you keep these in mind, will they power you forward and help you stay on track?

Best Experiences

What have been your best experiences to date with the key elements of your vision, times when you felt alive and fully engaged?

Core Values

Without being modest, what do you value most about your life? What values does your wellness vision support?

Motivators

What makes this vision really important to you? Why do you really want to reach this vision? What good will come from your doing so?

Gap

How large is the gap between where you are today and your wellness vision? Example: Point A is your starting point and B is your dream goal for vision.

Confidence

On a scale of 0-10, with 10 being really confident and 0 being no confidence, how confident are you that you can close this gap and realize your vision?

Challenges

What significant events do you anticipate having to deal with on the way to reaching your vision? What concerns you most?

Strengths

What strengths can you draw on to help you realize your vision and meet your challenges? How can the lessons from your successes in life carry over to your current challenges?

Supports

What people, resources, systems, and environments can you draw on to help you realize your vision and meet your challenges?

Strategies

What strategies may be effective to help you realize your vision and meet your challenges?

Summarize & Confirm

Summarize values, outcomes, motivators, strengths, supports, and strategies). Is that correct?

Ready, Confident, & Committed

How ready, confident, and committed are you to take the first steps toward your vision?

Examples:

- My health vision in the next year is to improve my health, in particular I have lower total cholesterol and a lower risk of heart disease.
- My fitness vision in the next six months is that I exercise regularly so that I am delaying aging and preserving my ability to function well in my older years.
- My fitness vision is that I have plenty of strength and stamina so that I play energetically with my grandchildren.
- My wellness vision is that I am in charge of my health and feel greater wellbeing and contentment.
- (Example of a 'complete' wellness vision) I am strong, lean, and 20 pounds lighter, shopping for cute, attractive new clothes for my attractive body. I am happy, with lots of energy to do whatever I feel like doing. My health is better and I am open, more patient, and social. My motivators are feeling and looking great with bountiful energy. I also want to be around a long time for my parents, nieces, and nephews. When I face challenges, such as getting too busy, discouraged, overwhelmed, or stressed out, I pause, collect myself, and take doable steps to get back on track. Healthy eating, exercise, and handling stress well are important to me and within my grasp. Through ongoing, intentional, realistic planning I achieve my goals and realize my wellness vision.

Setting Goals

When you set goals, think of behaviors that will eventually lead you to complete your outcome. Think of how you are going to get there by setting small behavioral steps/goals. Brainstorm the possibilities before settling on the goals you want to work on. Explore each one and determine which are the most inspirational and feasible.

Identify the motivational factors, importance, confidence and strategies for each goal. Questions you can ask yourself when setting goals:

- Why do you want to accomplish this goal? What is important to you about this goal? What results are you looking for?
- What have been your best experiences in accomplishing goals like this in the past?
- What values would be represented by your accomplishing this goal?
- For whom do you want to make this change?
- What structures and supports could assist you to be successful with this goal?
- Do you think this goal is scaled appropriately, with just the right amount of challenge?

Three Month Behavioral Goals

What would you want to be doing consistently three months from now in each of the physical or mental wellness areas you included in your vision? The goals need to be specific, manageable, behavioral goals linked directly to your vision. For example, if you want to lose weight (outcome goal), what behaviors would you want to be doing consistently that will enable you to achieve the outcome of weight loss?

****I would like to check your progress towards your three month goals on a monthly basis through email. This is NOT mandatory. We may consider modifying the three-month goals*

*and/or renegotiate the start date if the goals are not challenging enough, are too difficult at this stage or if a major disruption has emerged. ******

Examples:

1. Behavioral Goal: I will do 30-minute sessions of walking each week at 60 to 70% of my maximal heart rate with my friend Jane.
Desired Outcome: increase cardiovascular health so that I don't die prematurely
2. Behavioral Goal: I will purchase fresh fruits and vegetable at least weekly and I will eat at least 3 vegetable and 2 fruits everyday.
Desired Outcome: lose weight so that I have more energy and feel more youthful.
3. Behavioral Goal: I will do two 20-minute strength-training sessions per week at the YMCA.
Desired Outcome: increase bone density so that I reduce my risk of osteoporosis.
4. Behavioral Goal: I will write in my journal each evening three things that happened that day for which I am grateful and share them with my partner.
Desired Outcome: increase my peace of mind so that I reduce my blood pressure.

Weekly Behavioral Goals

Weekly goals enable you to take small, manageable steps toward your three- month goals. Achieving these stepping stones is often a breakthrough in building your confidence.

It is valuable to set between three or more goals per week. It is also effective to have goals in 2-3 areas (including fitness, nutrition, weight, stress / mental game, life, and health risks) so that they are working on several new behaviors that complement each other and support your vision. Think of what you will confidently do, frame your goals in the present tense as if you were already fully there.

Behavioral Smart Goals

Specific

Measurable

Action-based (behaviors)

Realistic

Time-bound

Be specific about the actions and behaviors you will engage to reach your vision. The details of *how and when* will give you a timeline in which to accomplish your goals. Creating measurable goals identifies if you have succeeded or not.

Break down the vision into actions and behaviors that you want to be doing on a consistent basis in 3 months. Each week, construct new incremental steps that will assist you to move close and closer to your 3-month goals. *Gradual change leads to permanent change.*

Realistic goal setting is essential to your success. If the goal is realistic, success will follow. Being successful at achieving one goal will help you move forward with other goals. Success builds self-efficacy and self-esteem.

Examples of SMART Weekly Goals:

- I will substitute applesauce for butter on my toast or bagel for breakfast 5 times a week

- I will eat dessert one time this week on Saturday night and savor it slowly. Comments: I want to reduce the number of desserts I eat
- I will lose one pound this week by meeting my exercise and nutrition goals above (Outcome goals - like losing weight - can be included as long as they are clearly tied to enabling SMART exercise and nutrition goals.)

SMART goals can also be cognitive (thinking) affective (feeling)

- I will define and list 3 of my top motivators for my priority goals for next week
- I will make a list of the pros and cons for losing weight on Tuesday night before I go to bed
- I will log my thoughts and emotions when I eat 2 days (Tuesday and Thursday) this week

Examples of SMART three-month goals with a first week goal

- Three month goal: I will walk 3 times a week for 30 minutes
First week: I will walk 15 minutes on Monday and Friday this week.
- Three month goal: I will eat 5 serving of fruits and vegetables 5 days a week.
Comment: I am eating an average of one serving now.
First week: I will eat an apple with my lunch 3 days (M/W/F) this week.

Weekly goals that are “too-broadly” written can be turned into “well-written” SMART goals.

Weekly Goals Written “Too Broadly”	“Well Written” Weekly SMART Goals
Do more cardiovascular exercise at the gym.	Walk on the treadmill for 20 minutes at a minimum heart rate of 70%, 3 days this week.
Susan will walk 4 times per week, lift 2 times per week, and have her shake once per day. Susan and I will keep in contact with one another to make sure she stays on track with her goals.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I will walk 4 times per week for 30 minutes at 6:30 pm. 2. I will strength train on Monday and Wednesday, after work, for 40 minutes. 3. I will email my coach on Friday to provide an update on my progress.
Food shopping to prepare healthier snacks.	Make a grocery list and shop on Saturday morning for two healthy snack per work day. Comments: Healthy snacks will be fruit, yogurt or handful of almonds.
Cut back on diet sodas.	I will drink 8 glasses of water each day. Comments: This will help me reduce my intake of soda from 8 per day to 1 per day.
Be more aware of how much sugar I eat.	One day this week, I will write down and track each dessert or sweet I eat.

Follow a good diet so that I'll feel better.	Eat 2 fruits and 3 vegetables, 5 days per week.
Eat fast food less often	Bring lunch to work 5 days a week.
Continue to notice when I am getting stressed.	Reduce my overall level of stress 9/10 to a 6/10 by doing 15 minutes of relaxation, 5 days a week. Comments: Listen to music or stretch.
Lose 20 pounds.	Lose half a pound to 2 pounds by exercising four days per week by following my nutrition and exercise goals above (Note: Here the outcome goals - weight loss- is tied to behavioral goals that have reasonable potential to enable the outcome.)
I will be less stressed.	Each workday at 3:00 pm, I will take an afternoon tea break.
Eat more protein.	I will note in my journal the servings of protein I eat two days this week. Comment: Our nutritionist will send us an article on portion sizes.
Get to the gym whether I feel like it or not.	I will go to the gym on Monday at 6:30 pm. Comments: If I feel resistant, I will say my Wellness Vision out loud 3 times.

References:

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