

A COACHING MASTERCLASS ON

# MOTIVATION & GOAL ACHIEVEMENT

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WORKBOOK



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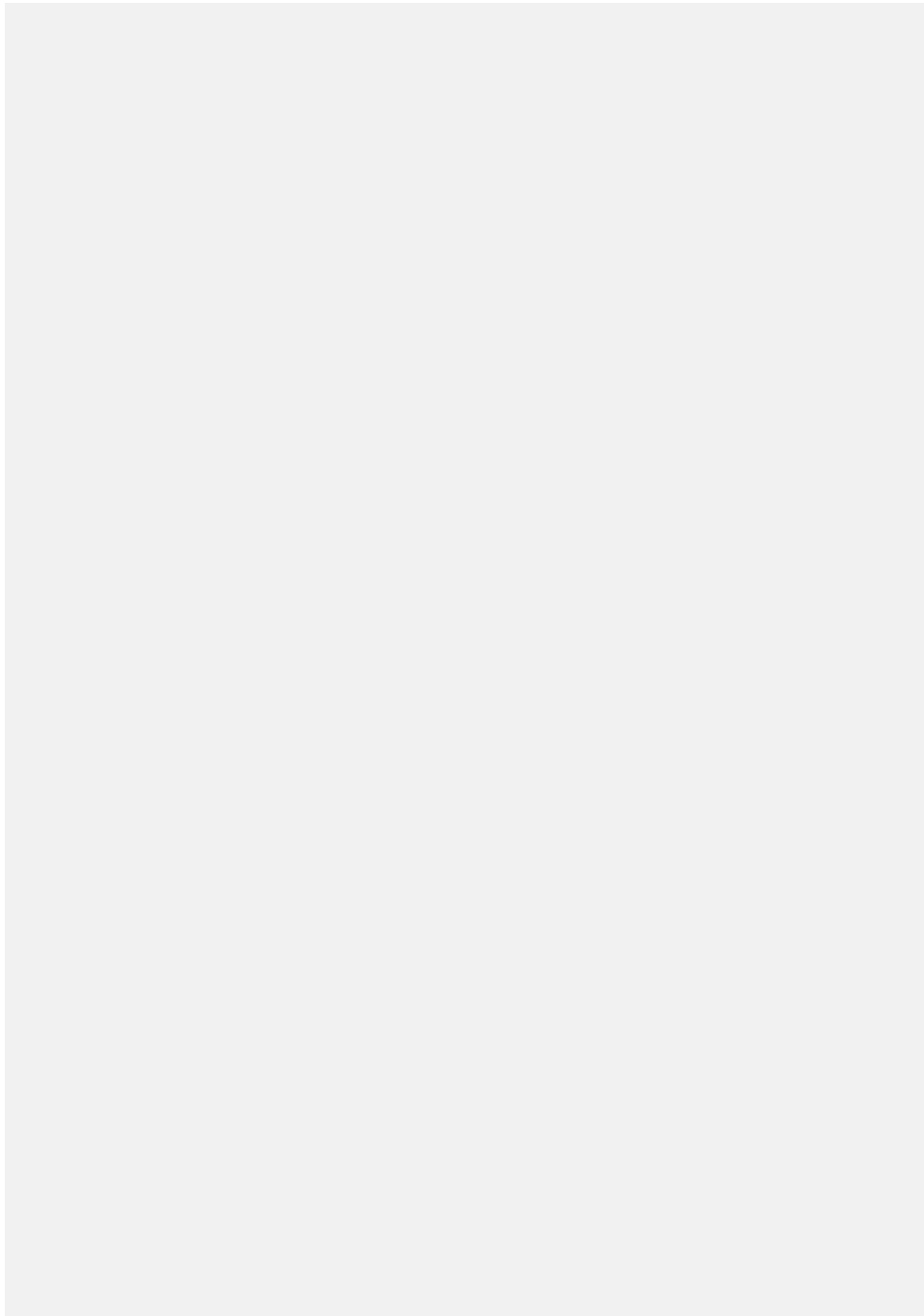


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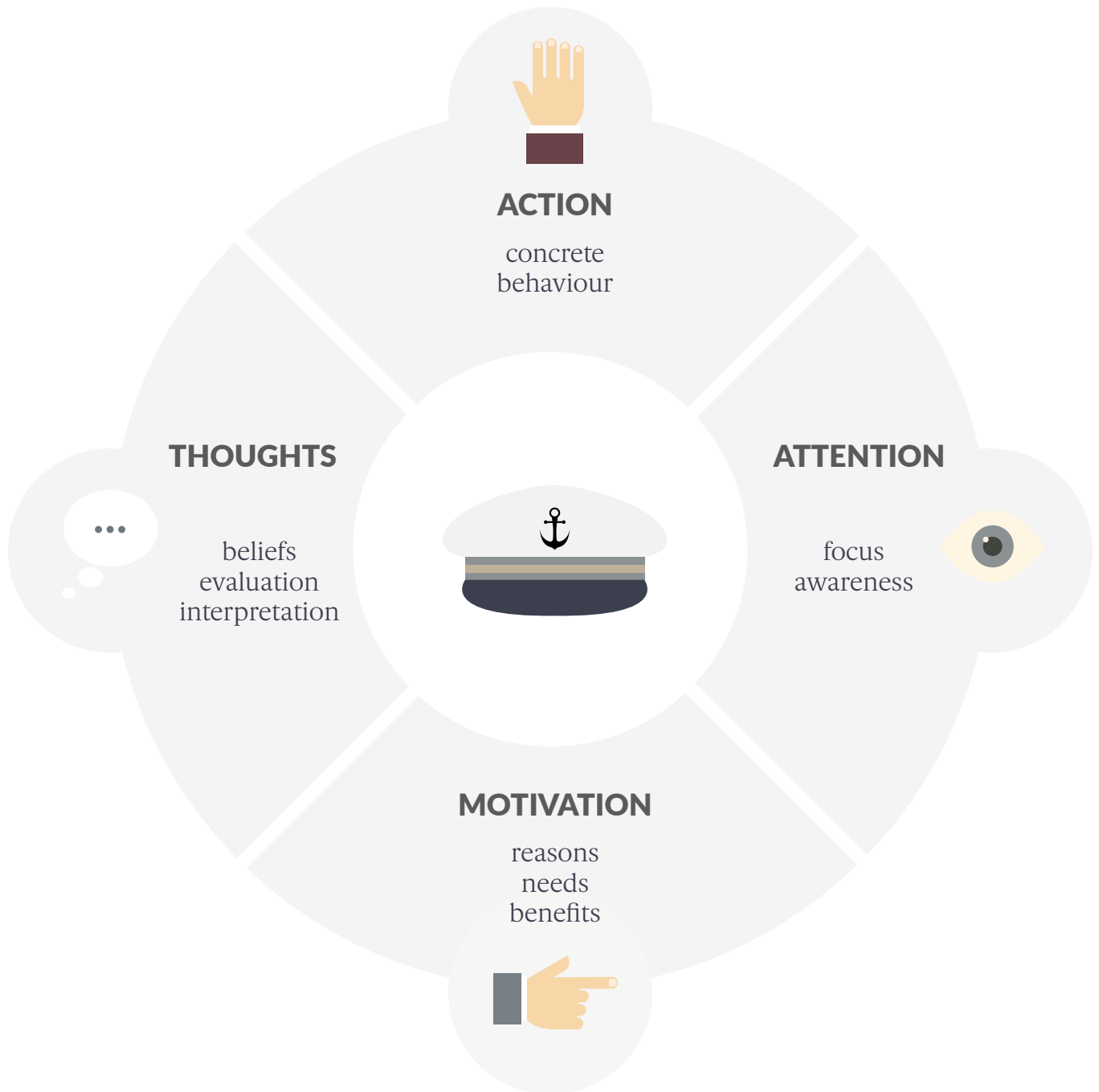
## ■ YOUR PERSONAL GOALS

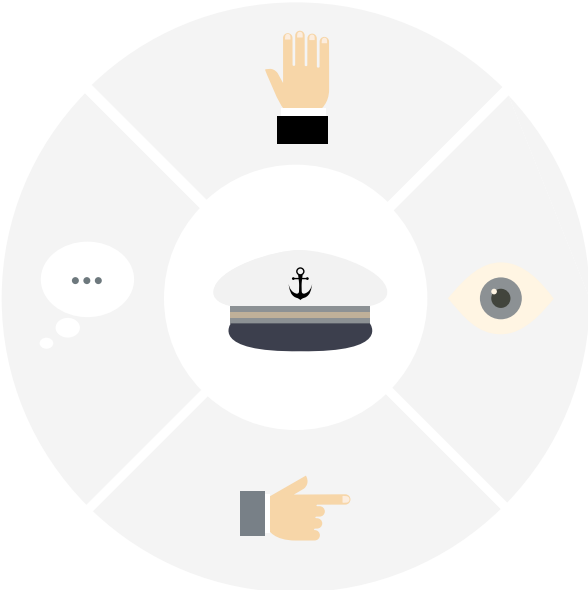
What would you like to learn in this masterclass?



■ THE SAILBOAT METAPHOR





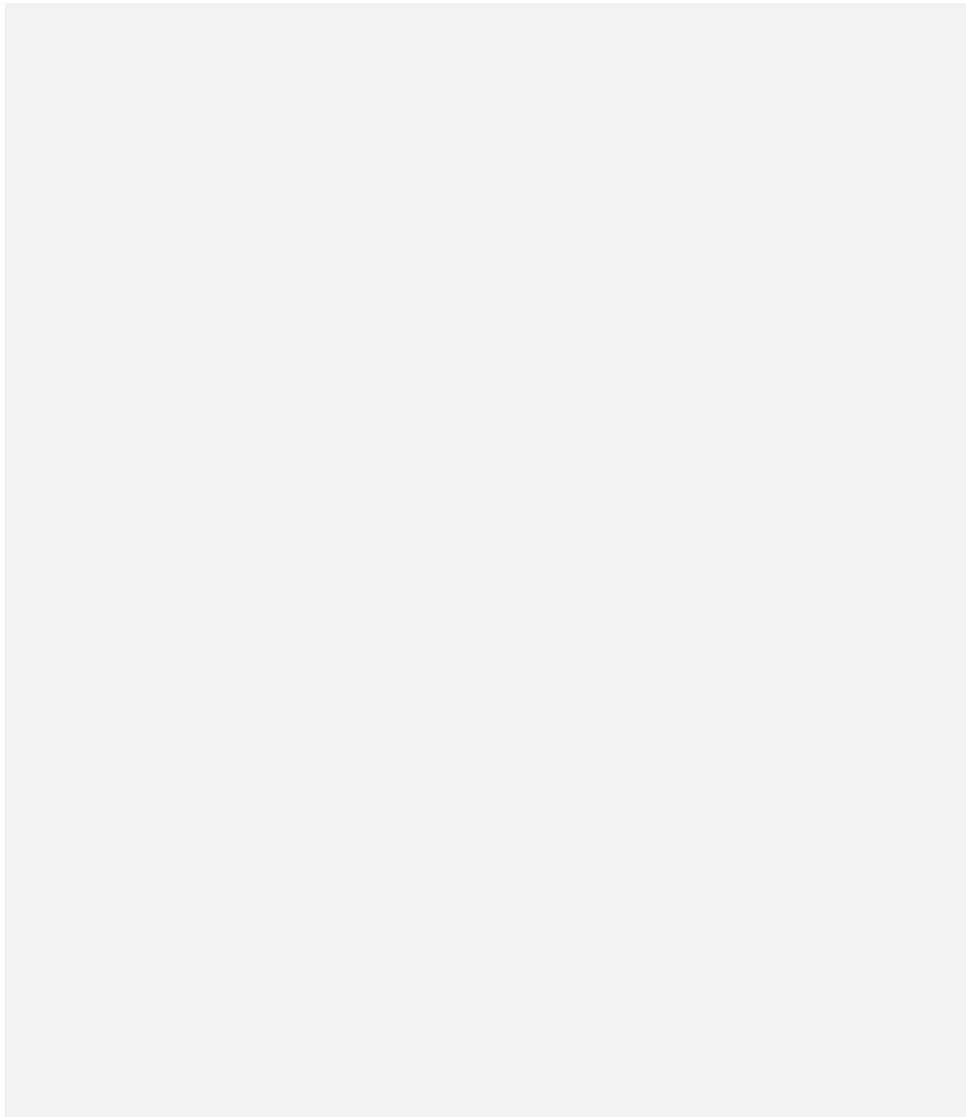


## ■ THE STATUS OF YOUR SAILBOAT

Ask the other person to use the sailboat metaphor to describe how he or she is currently doing. You may ask the following questions:

- What is the current status of your sailboat?
- How would you describe your current journey?

Invite the other person to speak as much as possible in terms of the different elements of the sailboat and their interaction.



## ■ THE MIRACLE QUESTION

Solution-focused therapy (de Shazer, 1985) emphasizes people's strengths and their application to the change process. Solution-focused counselors assume that clients have the resources to resolve their issues (Sklare, 1997). Clients know themselves and their strengths better than anyone else. Recognizing clients' expertise is an essential process during interventions. An exercise that is often used in solution-focused therapy is the so-called miracle question. In this exercise, clients rely on their strengths to solve a problem they are encountering. This enables clients to connect with their strengths to cope with a problem they are facing.

The miracle question was tested in a study by Sklare, Sabella, and Petrosko (2003). Data from participant self-ratings showed that relative to the beginning of the activity, participants moved significantly closer to a solution by the middle and then again by the end of the intervention. Although the findings can best be considered preliminary, they are consistent with earlier findings on the effects of solution-focused counseling reported by Littrell et al. (1995) and DeJong and Berg (1998).

### ► GOAL

The goal of this exercise is for clients to connect with their strengths to cope with a problem they are facing. The exercise can be an effective tool because it can help clients set goals even when they are in crisis and feel stuck.

### ► ADVICE

- This exercise can be particularly valuable useful when a client does not know what a preferred future would look like.
- This exercise can be used with individuals to set the course for an intervention. It can help clients to formulate specific goals and action steps.
- Clients should close their eyes during the imagery to experience the images more clearly.
- For some clients, visualization is difficult. The following advice may help these clients:
  - Clearly define what you mean by imagery.
  - Find out with your client why he/she finds it difficult to visualize. Some clients are reluctant to engage with imagery because of fears about what the image represents. In this case, the practitioner may start with positive and neutral images to find out whether your client has access to visual imagery.

- Some clients may want to practice imagery at home. It is advisable for clients to:
  - Choose a time and place where they are least likely to be interrupted.
  - Turn off phones and other distractions.
  - Not drive while listening to or practicing guided imagery.
  - Let any thoughts or emotions that may arise during imagery pass through them without engaging or analyzing them.

### ► REFERENCES

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### ► INSTRUCTIONS

In the following exercise, you will be asked to close your eyes and vividly imagine yourself thinking, feeling, and behaving in ways that would demonstrate that you were resolving your problems.

This exercise will consist of several steps. On completing each step, you will be asked to write what you had imagined. When asked to identify specific things or actions that you would be doing, I would like you to describe concrete, observable, and detailed behaviors. That is, rather than saying, “I will be friendly,” describe the behaviors you will be demonstrating to be friendly such as: “I will be smiling, saying hello, and shaking hands.” Moreover, always construct an image/picture of a behavioral action on your part. Do not describe things that you would not be doing (e.g., “I will not frown or grimace”).

**Step 1: Identifying a recurring problem**

Identify a recent recurring problem that you would like to overcome:

- a. something you would like to do
- b. something you want to stop doing or
- c. something you want to avoid doing

Write down a recent recurring problem that you would like to overcome:

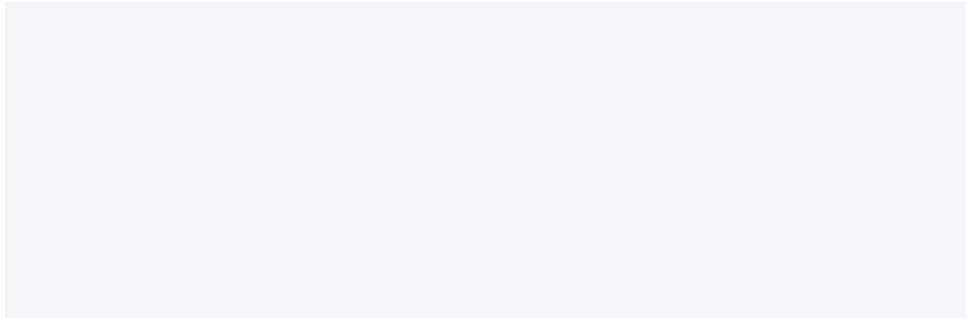
Rate the severity of this problem from 0 (non-existent) to 10 (extremely high):

Scaled Score

**Step 2: Describing the problem**

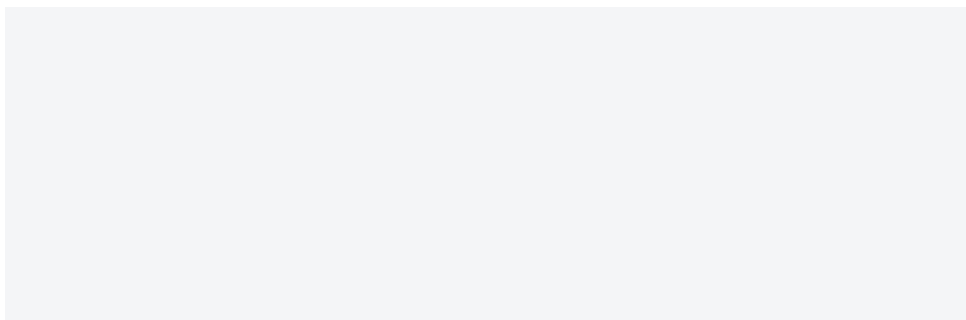
- a. If your problem is something you would like to do, describe it below as if it were a video of what you would observe yourself doing behaviorally. (Do not describe what you would not be doing.)
- b. If your problem is something you want to stop doing, describe it below as if it were a video of what you would observe yourself start doing behaviorally instead. (Do not describe what you would not be doing.)

- c. If your problem is something you don't want to do, describe it below as if it were a video of what you would observe yourself doing behaviorally instead. (Do not describe what you would not be doing.)



### Step 3

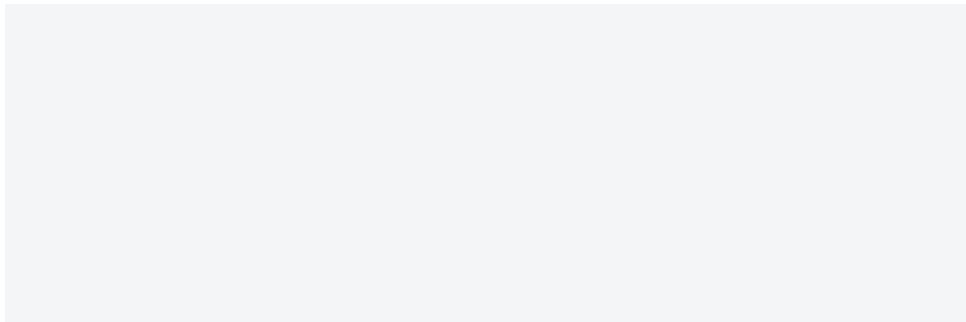
Suppose a miracle happened tonight while you were sleeping, and this miracle solved your problem. Since you were sleeping, you didn't know this miracle had occurred, and when you woke up, you realized that you no longer had this problem. What would be the first small sign (specific observable behavior) that would show you were doing something different the next day? Construct an image/picture of a behavioral action on your part. Do not describe something you would not be doing.



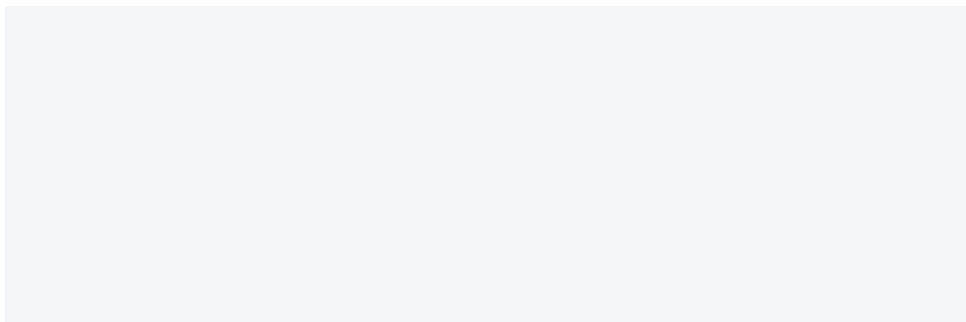
### Step 4

Identify who would notice this different thing you would be doing and describe how you imagine they would act when they notice this different behavior. Construct an image/picture of a behavioral action on their part. Do not describe something they would not be doing.

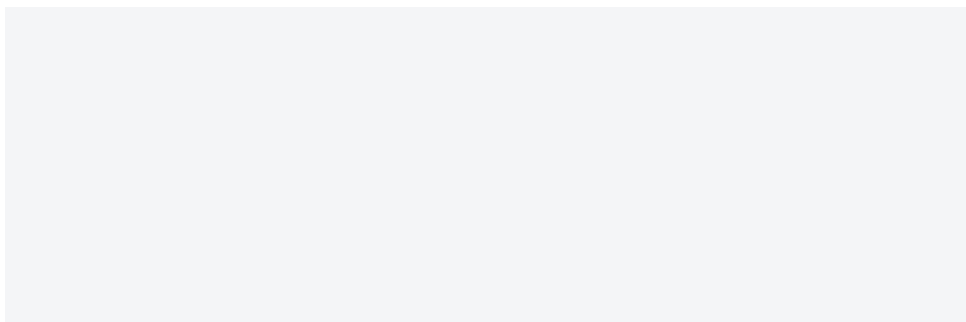
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**Step 5**

Indicate what you would do (specific observable behavior) in reply to the person's response described above.

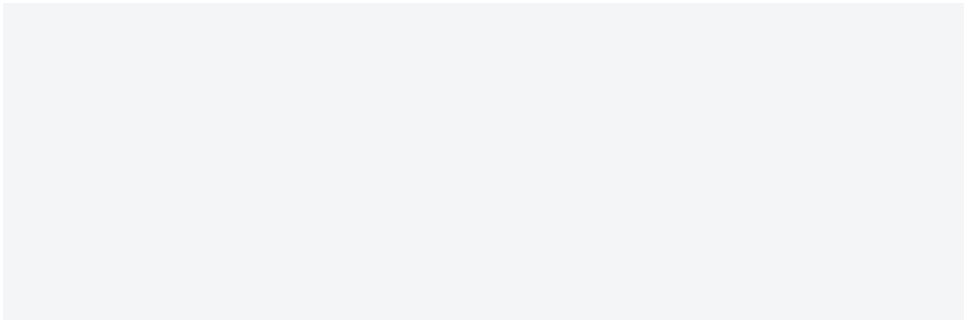
**Step 6**

What else would you notice that you would be doing (specific observable behavior) differently after this miracle occurred? Construct an image/picture of a behavioral action on your part. Do not describe something you would not be doing.

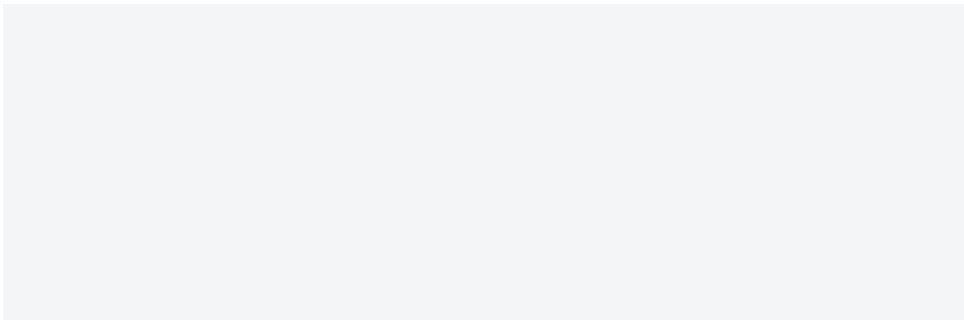


**Step 7**

Identify who else would notice this different thing you would be doing and describe how you imagine they would act when they notice this different behavior. Construct an image/picture of a behavioral action on their part. Do not describe something they would not be doing.

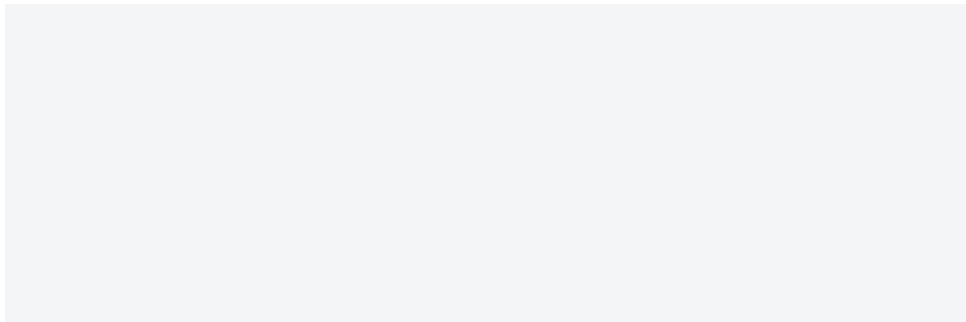
**Step 8**

Indicate what you would do in reply to the person's response described above. Construct an image of a behavioral action on your part. Do not describe something you would not be doing.

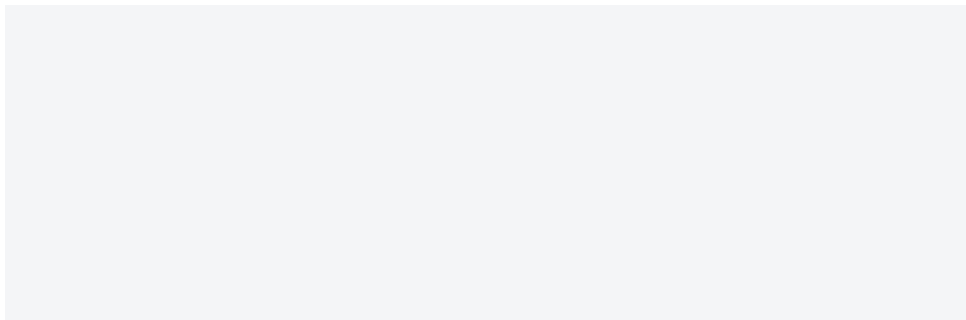
**Step 9**

Describe a time when some of this miracle has already happened, even if only a little bit, during problematic times.

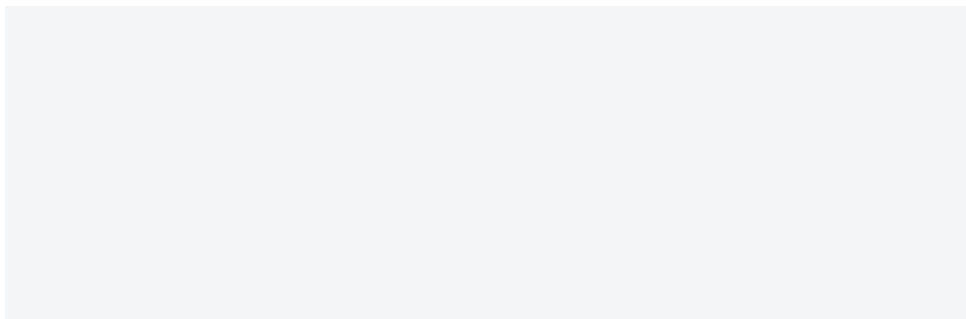
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**Step 10**

How did you make this part of your miracle happen during this problematic time? Things you thought or did differently, the commitments you made, new behavior you tried, etc.

**Step 11**

Recall your thoughts about how pleased you were with your efforts at the time.



**Step 12**

On a scale from 0 to 10, with 0 representing the non-existence of this problem and 10 being the worst this problem has ever been and, where do you think you are right now on the scale?

Scaled Score

**Step 13**

Describe how you have gotten yourself to that number. Construct an image of a behavioral action on your part. Do not describe something you would not be doing.

**Step 14**

When you are one number lower, what will you and others see you doing (specific observable behavior) differently that you're not doing now? Do not describe something you would not be doing.

**Step 15**

Write yourself a short note describing what you discovered or rediscovered about yourself and your situation. You can use the back of this sheet if needed. Rate the severity of this problem from 0 (non-existent) - 10 (extremely high):

Scaled Score

Short note:

## ■ ADVANCED GOAL ANALYSIS

The formulation of a goal is an important first step in the process of its achievement. Research has shown that goals can be classified along several dimensions and that these dimensions can help explain why some goal formulations contribute to well-being and performance and others do not (or to a lesser degree). The first dimension along which goals can be classified is proximity. While short-term goals can be accomplished within a relatively short time, long-term goals require long term investment and commitment (Stock & Cervone, 1990). The second dimension is the goal specificity. While specific goals have a clearly defined end-state (e.g., losing five pounds), nonspecific goals are ambiguous or diffuse in the exact level of performance that is required to achieve them (e.g., losing some weight) (Hollenbeck & Klein 1987; Wright & Kacmar 1994). The third dimension that can be used to classify goals is action orientation. Approach goals are focused on moving towards a positive outcome (e.g., passing the exam) whereas avoidance goals are expressed as a movement away from an undesirable state (e.g., not failing for the exam) (Elliot and et al. 1997; Elliot & McGregor, 2001). The fourth dimension involves the purpose of goals. A distinction can be made between learning goals, the purpose of which is to develop or acquire an attribute, such as a specific task skill or knowledge, and performance goals, the purpose of which is to validate personal attributes, such as ability, and seek positive evaluations of those attributes from others (Dweck, 1999). The final dimension is the duration of involvement that is needed to achieve the goal. End-state goals are goals that, once achieved, do not require additional action (e.g., publishing an article). Process goals, on the other hand, are goals that require continuous action (e.g., staying healthy). In this tool, clients use these five dimensions to a) analyze their goal formulations and, b) when needed, transform unhelpful goal formulations into more helpful ones.

### ► GOAL

The goal of this tool is for clients to examine their goal formulations and replace unhelpful or ineffective goal formulations with better alternatives.

### ► ADVICE

- This tool can be used not only with clients who have already set goals but also with clients who struggle with setting goals. For the latter group of clients, the advice about goal formulations (Appendix D) can serve as a useful starting guide helping them set effective goals.
- Clients need to realize that not all goals can always be classified along the five dimensions. For example, the goal “booking a vacation for next summer” is neither a learning goal nor a performance goal. The purpose of this tool is not

to force clients into making arbitrary categorizations but rather to make them aware of how goal formulations can be analyzed and improved.

- This tool may also serve as a guide for practitioners, helping them assist clients in the formulation of their goals during therapy or coaching.

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- Hollenbeck, J. R., & Klein, H. J. (1987). Goal commitment and the goal-setting process: Problems, prospects, and proposals for future research. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 72, 212-220.
- Stock, J., & Cervone, D. (1990). Proximal goal-setting and self-regulatory processes. *Cognitive Therapy and Research*, 14, 483-498.
- Wright, P. M., & Kacmar, K. M. (1994). Goal specificity as a determinant of goal commitment and goal change. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, 59, 242-260.

### ► INSTRUCTIONS

#### Step 1: List your goals

List up to 7 goals that you are currently pursuing. This can be small goals or large goals, anything that you are aiming to accomplish. Use the form in Appendix A to list your goals. An example of a completed form is shown in Appendix F.

#### Step 2: Understanding the different types of goals

Goals can be categorized along different dimensions. Take, for instance, specificity. Goals differ in how specific they are. While some goals are very specific (e.g., “I want to lose 5 pounds”), others are rather vague (“e.g., I want to lose some weight”). The table displayed in Appendix B provides an overview of the most important dimensions along which we can categorize goals. Take some time to study the table.

### Step 3: Goal analysis

Now that you have learned about the different types of goals, let us take a look at the list of goals that you made in step 1.

Consider the five goal dimensions explained in step 2. Using these five dimensions, indicate which type of goal best matches each of your personal goals. Is it short-term or long-term? Approach or avoidance? Learning or performance? Use the scoring form shown in Appendix C. For each goal, put an X in the column that corresponds with the type of the goal. If you find it difficult or impossible to categorize a goal along a certain dimension, you can decide to leave this dimension open. An example of a completed form is shown in Appendix G.

### Step 4: Goal evaluation

Each type of goal has benefits and drawbacks. While some types of goals should be avoided (such as vague goals), other types of goals work best in particular situations or particular combinations. By understanding the pros and cons of the different types of goals, you can formulate goals in a way that is most likely for them to become realized.

In this step, you are going to examine step 3 of your goal analysis and determine how effective and helpful each goal is. Look at the table displayed in Appendix D. This table provides an overview of all the benefits and drawbacks of each type of goal, including advice.

Use this table to evaluate each of your personal goals. Now that you have analyzed and evaluated them, are there goals that could be improved? You may think of reframing these goals, combining them with other goals, or maybe even abandoning them. Use the form in Appendix E to list each goal that can be improved below and briefly describe how you might improve them.

► **APPENDIX A: YOUR PERSONAL GOALS**

Goal #1

Goal #2

Goal #3

Goal #4

Goal #5

Goal #6

Goal #7

► APPENDIX B: DIFFERENT TYPES OF GOALS

Dimension		Type of goal	Description	Example
proximity	short-term		This goal can be achieved in the near future	"Tomorrow, I will write chapter X."
	long-term		This is a goal one envisions for the distant future.	"At the end of this year, I have written two books."
specificity	Clear		These goals have a clearly defined end-state.	"I will write 1 chapter."
	vague		These goals are ambiguous or diffuse in the exact level of performance that is required to achieve them.	"I will do some writing."
action-orientation	approach		These goals are defined as being focused on moving towards a positive outcome.	"I will finish writing chapter 4."
	avoidance		These goals are defined as being focused on moving away from a negative outcome.	"I will try to avoid not finishing chapter 4."
purpose	learning		These goals have the purpose of developing or acquiring an attribute, such as knowledge or skills.	"I will complete this course so that I can improve my writing skills."
	performance		These goals have the purpose of validating personal attributes, such as ability, and seeking positive evaluations of those attributes from others.	"I will complete this course cum laude so that others will praise me."
duration of involvement	process		These goals require continuous action.	"I will write three pages every day."
	end-state		These goals, once achieved, do not require additional action.	"I will finish writing this book."

► APPENDIX C: GOAL ANALYSIS FORM

	Proximity			Specificity		action-orientation			purpose			duration of involvement	
	short-term	long-term	clear	Vague	approach	avoidance	learning	performance	process	end-state			
Goal 1													
Goal 2													
Goal 3													
Goal 4													
Goal 5													
Goal 6													
Goal 7													

► APPENDIX D: ADVICE PER TYPE OF GOAL

Dimension		Type of goal	Pro's	Con's	Advice
proximity	short-term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ allow for detailed planning</li> <li>+ increase persistence</li> <li>+ build self-confidence</li> <li>+ manageable</li> <li>+ easy to monitor</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- less motivating than long-term goals</li> <li>- achievement can result in the sense of premature self-congratulation and encourage relaxation rather than continued effort</li> </ul>	<p><b>Combine both short-term and long-term goals.</b> Short-term goals will help you stay on track and build confidence. The magnitude of long-term goals will inspire you to keep striving for them.</p>	
	long-term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ allow for flexibility in planning</li> <li>+ more motivating than short-term goals</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- hard to monitor progress</li> <li>- lack of "small success" experiences</li> </ul>		
specificity	clear	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ more commitment</li> <li>+ more consistent performance</li> <li>+ easy to accurately evaluate the performance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- perceived as more difficult</li> <li>- perceived as less attainable</li> </ul>	<p>Although there are benefits attached to vague goals, it is recommended to <b>make goals as clear as possible</b>, as this makes monitoring progress, a key component of effective goal accomplishment, easier.</p>	
	vague	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ perceived as less difficult and more attainable</li> <li>+ less likely to generate feelings of failure</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- less commitment</li> <li>- greater variability in performance</li> <li>- difficult to accurately evaluate the performance</li> </ul>		
action-orientation	approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ more motivating</li> <li>+ higher levels of performance</li> <li>+ desirable outcomes elicit excitement</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- may feel unnatural to people who are afraid of failure and rejection</li> </ul>	<p>Some researchers suggest that action-orientation is a personal matter: Pursuing approach goals may be more feasible for approach-oriented individuals, whereas pursuing avoidance goals may be more feasible for avoidance-oriented individuals. However, in general, pursuing more approaches than avoidance goals is associated with higher levels of well-being. Moreover, the benefits of approach goals seem to outweigh the benefits of avoidance goals. Therefore, it can be regarded as more helpful to <b>formulate approach goals</b>.</p>	
	avoidance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ desirable outcomes elicit calmness and relief</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- negative outcomes</li> <li>- poor well-being</li> <li>- harder to monitor</li> <li>- result in more negative thoughts</li> </ul>		

Dimension		Type of goal	Pro's	Con's	Advice
purpose	learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ attribute failure to insufficient effort or an ineffective strategy</li> <li>+ Setbacks are perceived as challenges to be mastered</li> <li>+ higher levels of intrinsic motivation</li> <li>+ optimal performance</li> <li>+ greater absorption</li> <li>+ enhanced memory</li> <li>+ Enhanced well-being</li> </ul>			<p>The large number of positive outcomes associated with learning goals and a large number of negative effects of performance goals suggest that it is better to <b>formulate learning goals</b>.</p>
	performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ can be very motivating</li> <li>+ seeking opportunities to demonstrate competence</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Attribution of failure to a lack of ability</li> <li>- Setbacks are perceived as threats</li> <li>- Poor response to obstacles and setbacks</li> <li>- cheating behavior</li> <li>- reluctance to cooperate</li> </ul>		
duration of involvement	process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ Helps forming habits</li> <li>+ Likely to result in long-lasting, structural changes</li> <li>+ More control over the outcome</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Never a feeling of "definite completion."</li> <li>- Requires continuous dedication</li> </ul>	<p>When it comes to the duration of involvement, there is no "right or wrong" type of goal. <b>Whether you should choose a process goal or an end-state goal is determined by the goal you aim to achieve.</b> If the goal involves some kind of standard that should be maintained, such as maintaining certain bodyweight, process goals are better than end-state goals. If, however, your goal does not require additional action once completed, end-state goals are generally more helpful.</p>	
	end-state	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ Generates a feeling of "definite achievement" once completed</li> <li>+ The anticipation of completion can be motivation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Less control over the outcome</li> </ul>		

► **APPENDIX E: GOAL EVALUATION**

Goal number:

Brief description:

Could be improved by:

Goal number:

Brief description:

Could be improved by:

Goal number:

Brief description:

Could be improved by:

Goal number:

Brief description:

Could be improved by:

Goal number:

Brief description:

Could be improved by:

Goal number:

Brief description:

Could be improved by:

**► APPENDIX F: EXAMPLES OF PERSONAL GOALS**

*Goal #1*

Finishing my report about strategic collaboration at work

*Goal #2*

Learning to speak Spanish

*Goal #3*

Booking a vacation for next summer

*Goal #4*

Not getting negative feedback during my next presentation at work

*Goal #5*

Staying healthy

*Goal #6*

Getting a 10K USD bonus at the end of the year

*Goal #7*

Preventing my oldest son from to repeat the class

► APPENDIX G: EXAMPLE OF COMPLETED GOAL ANALYSIS FORM

	Proximity			Specificity				action-orientation			purpose			duration of involvement	
	short-term	long-term	clear	vague	approach	avoidance	learning	performance	process	end-state					
Goal 1	X		X		X			X				X			X
Goal 2		X		X	X		X		X					X	
Goal 3	X			X	X										X
Goal 4	X			X						X			X		X
Goal 5		X		X	X		X					X			
Goal 6		X	X		X			X					X		X
Goal 7		X		X						X			X		X

## ■ PERSONAL GOAL PROGRESS REVIEW

Past research findings suggest that a focus on the future is essential for well-being and positive functioning (Kahana & Kahana, 1983; Wills et al., 2001; Zaleski et al., 2001). Moreover, goals can serve as a fundamental ingredient necessary for effective task performance by enhancing detailed planning, motivation, confidence, and well-being (Manderlink & Harackiewicz, 1984; McGregor & Little, 1998). These findings support the idea that it is important to set goals and to focus on the future.

According to Locke and Latham (1990), “Goal setting is ... usually only effective when feedback allows performance to be tracked in relation to one’s goals” (p. 241). Indeed, whether goals are achieved successfully is greatly dependent on the individual’s ability to monitor progress toward goal attainment. Regularly, the individual must ask him/herself: “Am I still acting in line with my goal?” Monitoring progress toward goal attainment results in concentration on goal-relevant activities. The process of monitoring keeps resources mobilized toward achieving the goal and reduces distraction by non-goal-related activities (Locke & Latham, 2002; Schunk, 2000). Indeed, research has shown that providing feedback on progress increases persistence and improves performance (Bandura & Schunk, 1981; Kulik & Kulik, 1988).

It is thus important for people to be able to monitor the progress of their goals accurately. In practice, however, people often fail to monitor progress toward goal attainment sufficiently. This exercise was developed to assist clients in monitoring progress towards their goals.

### ► GOAL

The goal of this exercise is to assist clients in monitoring progress towards their goals by running a monthly review of their personal goals and the progress that they have made.

### ► ADVICE

- Although an inability to reach goals can be a matter of ineffective goal monitoring, it can also be the result of the type of goals that are created. For instance, when goals are too vague, it is not only difficult to identify goal attainment, but it is also difficult to monitor the progress. For example, a goal like “becoming healthy” is a vague goal. The same applies to prevention and avoidance goals. In addition, when progress towards the goal is slow, it is generally more difficult to monitor. Goals like “losing weight” are not

accomplished overnight, and progress typically occurs over weeks or months. Therefore, it is not only important to help the client monitor the progress towards his/her goals, but also to set specific and measurable goals.

- In this exercise, clients are invited to complete the review monthly, which can best be regarded as a general guideline. Together with the client, the practitioner may adjust this guideline to create an optimal reviewing frequency.
- Paradoxically, clients who find it difficult to monitor goal progress and who are thus likely to benefit the most from this exercise are also the ones who often forget to do it. The practitioner may help the client to do this exercise regularly by sending reminders or by sending the exercise personally by email.
- To improve client success rates, the practitioner may ask the client to share his/her completed review each month.
- Note that this exercise may not be helpful for clients who excessively monitor their goals. An excessive future orientation has been found to have a negative effect on well-being, including workaholism, neglect of friends and family, not taking time for occasional self-indulgence, and not having time for hobbies (Boniwell & Zimbardo, 2004). Focusing too much on goals and the future often means that the individual is unable to enjoy the present moment. The constant focus on the future causes the client to see the present moment only in service of his/her goals. Clients who suffer from excessive goal monitoring may benefit more from mindfulness practice to create a healthy balance between the present moment and their goals.
- In the light of hedonic adaptation, clients need to understand that reaching goals is not likely to increase well-being in the long term. Goals are helpful only when they help clients follow a valued pathway in life. Thus, clients should perceive goals in the service of personal values rather than as a means to an end. In other words, goals can be perceived as a “tool” to make values come to life.

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## ► INSTRUCTIONS

### Step 1: Explain goal monitoring

Explain to the client the principle of goal monitoring:

“Goal monitoring means regularly checking whether we are moving closer to the goals we have set.”

In addition, explain the importance of goal monitoring. Goal monitoring helps to:

- stay focused on goals
- stay away from goal-distracting activities
- create insight in what is needed to move closer to goals
- create realistic expectations

Finally, inform the client that the goal of this exercise is to create a personal goal progress review: A self-reflection tool that helps the client to increase his/her awareness of the progress he/she has made towards his/her goals.

### Step 2: Create review questions

Goal reviews are very personal and are strongly dependent on the type of goals the client has set for him/herself. Together with the client, think of questions that will help the client track his/her progress.

Tip: It is advisable to start with only a few essential questions because otherwise, it may take too much time and effort to complete the review every month. Some examples of questions are listed below.

- What did I complete last month that I am proud of?
- What one habit did I focus on during the last month? How did that go?
- What experiments did I try?
- What progress did I make on the goals that I set last month?
- What are my goals for next month?
- What are thoughts or ideas regarding long-term goals and personal changes towards which I am working?

An example of a completed review is shown below.

### Step 3: Plan a monthly meeting

Invite the client to schedule a 15-minute meeting with him/herself in one month. During this meeting, the client will answer the questions that he/she generated in Step 2. Make the meeting non-negotiable, and if for some reason it must be rescheduled, inform the client to reschedule it but not to cancel it. After the first month's meeting, invite the client to schedule reoccurring monthly meetings to continue to check on his/her progress.

#### **Example of a personal goal progress review:**

*Monthly review: February 2017*

What did I complete that I am proud of in February?

- Tried cooking some new recipes
- Started exercising again
- Read a book on time management
- Finished the photo album of my son

What progress did I make on the goals that I set last month?

- Finished writing the first chapter of my new book
- Started exercising (running) once a week

What experiments did I try?

- Writing on paper more. Finding it less efficient, but I enjoy the feeling of getting away from my computer. It also allows me to express my ideas more freely.
- Tried running with music. Helped a bit, but I felt “disconnected” from the direct experience of running.
- Canceled two projects that were not of my top priority. Difficult to do but helped me focus more on writing. Will make sure to become better at “saying no.”

What are my goals for the following month? I want to:

- Complete writing chapter 2 of my new book
- Increase running time to 25 minutes
- Read more about prioritizing and time management

## ■ A MINDFUL GOAL FOCUS

Past research has shown that focusing on future goals is an important predictor of wellbeing and positive functioning (Kahana & Kahana, 1983; Kakazina, 1999; Wills et al., 2001; Zaleski et al., 2001). Furthermore, goals have been shown to improve task performance by enhancing people's planning, motivation, and self-efficacy (McGregor & Little, 1998; Sheldon & Krieger, 2007). These research findings suggest that it is important to pay attention to goals. However, it is possible to spend too much time on one's goals. Research has shown that an excessive future orientation can negatively influence one's well-being, leading to workaholism, neglecting friends and family, not taking time for occasional self-indulgence, and not having time for hobbies, among others (Boniwell & Zimbardo, 2004). Moreover, an excessive goal focus interferes with one's ability to enjoy the present moment. Constantly focusing on the future can lead an individual to perceive the present moment as a means to an end, hindering his or her capacity to derive enjoyment from his or her current experiences. Additionally, researchers have found that striving for goals can also be counterproductive (Hrabluik, Latham, & McCarthy, 2012); focusing too much on achieving a goal can paradoxically lead to a decreased likelihood of achieving the desired goal, a phenomenon known as the ironic process of control (Wegner, 1994). In a well-replicated classic study by Wegner, Schneider, Carter, and White (1987), the participants were told that the goal of a task was not to think of a white bear. The participants were instructed to ring a bell every time they thought of a white bear. The participants who attempted to reach the goal of not thinking of a white bear rang the bell significantly more often compared to the participants who were not instructed to reach this goal.

Similarly, spending too little time and energy on one's goals can reduce wellbeing. According to Locke and Latham (2002), successful goal achievement is greatly dependent on the individuals' abilities to monitor their progress toward goal attainment. The individuals must ask themselves regularly: "Am I still acting in line with my goal?" Monitoring progress toward goal attainment results in concentration on goal-relevant activities. The process of monitoring mobilizes the resources to achieve the goal and reduces distraction by non-goal-related activities (Locke & Latham, 2002). Indeed, research has shown that providing feedback on progress increases persistence and improves performance (Bandura & Schunk, 1981). For various reasons, people often struggle to monitor their progress toward goal attainment; for example, goals can be too vague, difficult to measure, unrealistic, and forgotten due to the goal not having been integrated into their lives.

Optimal goal pursuit seems to be a matter of mindful attention. Mindfulness allows people to redirect their attention toward activities that are needed to accomplish their goals. In other words, mindfulness allows people to choose where their attention is, rather than allowing the mind to run on automatic pilot

and possibly attend to irrelevant, goal-inconsistent activities. Mindfulness also allows one to stay connected to the present moment. While it is important to set goals and remind oneself of these goals, even the most complex goals do not require continuous conscious monitoring of progress (Bargh & Chartrand, 1999). Optimal goal achievement can be achieved by paying mindful attention to an activity without forgetting the goal that is served by the activity. In other words, mindfulness facilitates the balance between the destination and the journey.

#### ► GOAL

This tool aims to help clients identify their goal focus type (that is, how much time and energy they typically spend on future goals) and, if necessary, to help them move toward an optimal goal focus type (that is, a mindful goal focus).

#### ► ADVICE

- It is important to remember that mindfulness is not only about living in the present moment; mindfulness is about the awareness that makes it possible to deliberately switch between past, present, and future. Mindfulness is the opposite of being on automatic pilot. This tool was not designed to tell clients *not* to focus on goals; instead, it was created to teach them how to use mindfulness to identify the moment in which their focus is most effective.
- Note that clients who identified as having a healthy, mindful focus on goals in step 2 can finish the exercise without moving on to the next step. Clients who lack goal focus (scenario 1) or report an excessive goal focus (scenario 2) continue through to step 3.
- It might be helpful to discuss the costs associated with the client's goal focus type (step 3) in detail to foster a deeper understanding of the extent to which paying too little/too much attention to their goals disadvantages them personally.
- Although it is possible to identify the client's most common goal focus, it is important to realize that the type of goal focus can also vary across life domains. A client may have an excessive goal focus at work and a more mindful focus with friends. Therefore, this tool may also be used in the context of one specific life domain.
- In step 4, the practitioner may offer suggestions to help the client adopt a more mindful goal focus.

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## ► INSTRUCTIONS

This exercise is designed to help clients identify their goal focus type (that is, how much time and energy they typically spend on future goals), and if necessary, to encourage them to move toward a more mindful goal focus.

### Step 1: Understand the different types of goal focus

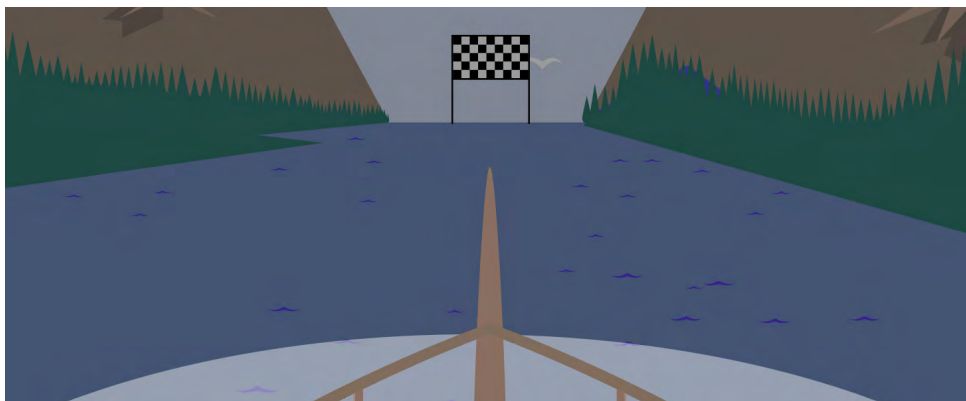
Read through the description of each of the three types of goal focus. Scenario 1 describes a lack of goal focus, scenario 2 describes an excessive goal focus, and scenario 3 describes a healthy, adaptive focus.

#### Scenario 1: Insufficient goal focus

This scenario represents people who do not tend to think about or focus on their goals. People with an insufficient goal focus tend to think mostly about where they are at now in their lives, and not so much about where they are going. If you are someone with an insufficient goal focus, you might experience some or all of the following:

- Act impulsively without much consideration of the consequences of your actions
- Find it difficult or annoying to plan ahead
- Prefer a quick, immediate reward over a bigger reward in the future
- Have an overly busy mind that can be difficult to focus
- Procrastinate on tasks that you do not like doing
- Avoid things that involve much effort, work, planning, or unpleasantness
- Prioritize living 'the good life'

The image below illustrates an insufficient goal focus.

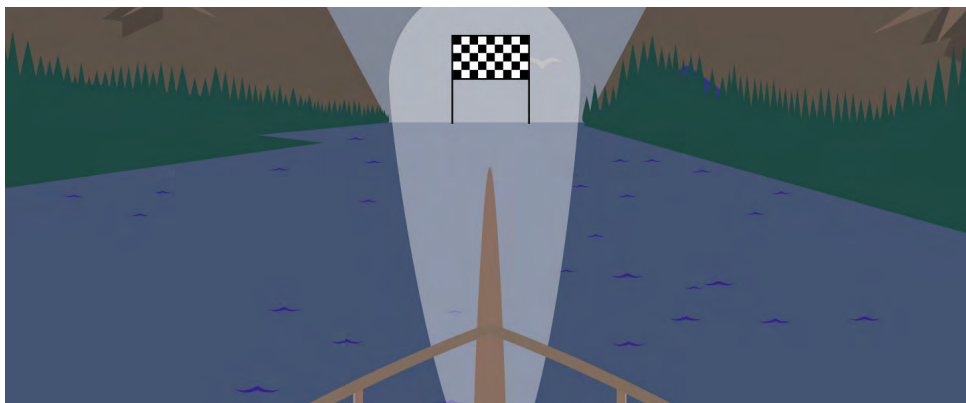


**Scenario 2: Excessive goal focus**

This scenario represents people who spend too much of their time and energy thinking about and focusing on their goals. People with an excessive goal focus tend to concentrate constantly on how they are progressing toward their goals, and as a consequence, they have difficulty engaging in and enjoying the present moment. If you are someone with an excessive goal focus, you might experience some or all of the following:

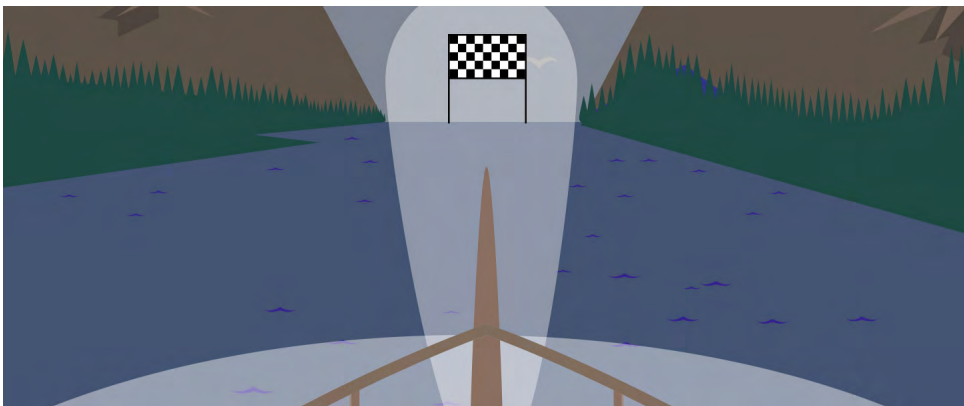
- Spend a lot of time thinking about what needs to be done
- Find it difficult to be fully present and engaged at this moment
- Constantly work to accomplish your goals
- Find it difficult to enjoy things that are not necessarily bringing you closer to your personal goal
- Find it difficult to relax and not be productive
- Tend not to savor your accomplishments for long because you are already onto the next goal
- Tend to view the present moment as nothing more than a way to get to some future goal
- Tend to label daily non-goal activities as a waste of time

The image below illustrates an excessive goal focus:

**Scenario 3: A mindful goal focus**

This scenario represents people with a balanced, mindful goal focus. People with a mindful goal focus are aware of their goals, and although they regularly check in with themselves on how they are progressing toward their goals, they are also still in touch with the present moment, that is, the journey toward the goal. If you are someone with a mindful goal focus, you may experience some or all of the following:

- Able to consider the future when it is helpful to do so and let go of future-oriented thinking when it is no longer helpful
- Able to enjoy the present moment fully even if what you are doing will not bring you closer to any of your goals
- Able to take time to stand still and savor your accomplishments
- Able to focus on one thing at a time and complete tasks effectively because your attention is not lost in the past or future
- Able to move closer to your goals and at the same time enjoy the beauty of the present moment



## Step 2: Identify your goal focus

Which of the three types of goal focus best describes your focus?

*Note: If you have a mindful focus on goals (scenario 3), you can finish the exercise here. If you have an insufficient goal focus (scenario 1) or an excessive goal focus (scenario 2) you can continue.*

**Step 3: Consider the costs**

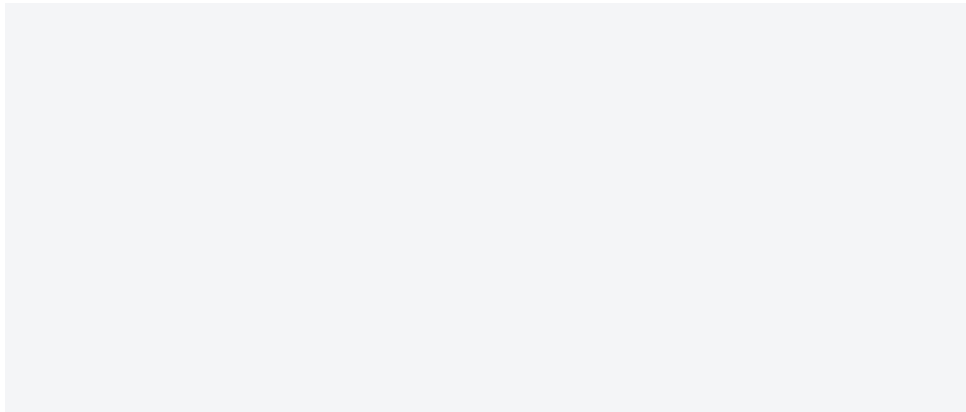
Consider the disadvantages of focusing on your goals the way you do, whether focusing too little (scenario 1) or too much (scenario 2). What does this type of goal focus cost you? For example, a person who pays too much attention to his goals might feel constantly pressured or stressed, have difficulty relaxing, miss out on everyday joyful moments with his family, and be vulnerable to burnout. In the space below, come up with as many disadvantages as possible.

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**Step 4: Move toward a mindful goal focus**

Now, consider what you could do to move closer to a mindful goal focus. A mindful goal focus involves working towards your goals while staying in contact with your present moment. In other words, it is about being connected to and engaged in the journey towards the destination. In the space below, come up with several feasible things you could do or change to help you achieve your goals more mindfully. For example, people who pay too little attention to their goals might schedule time in their diary for simply 'being' as opposed to 'doing,' practicing mindfulness meditation, making a point to spend more time doing activities that are not in the service of some future goal, or taking up a new hobby. Considering

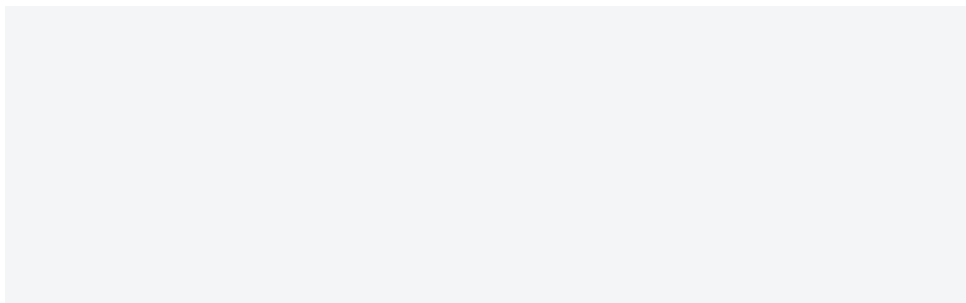
the disadvantages (or cons) of how you deal with goals in your life (Step 3), what could you do to bring yourself closer to having a mindful goal focus?



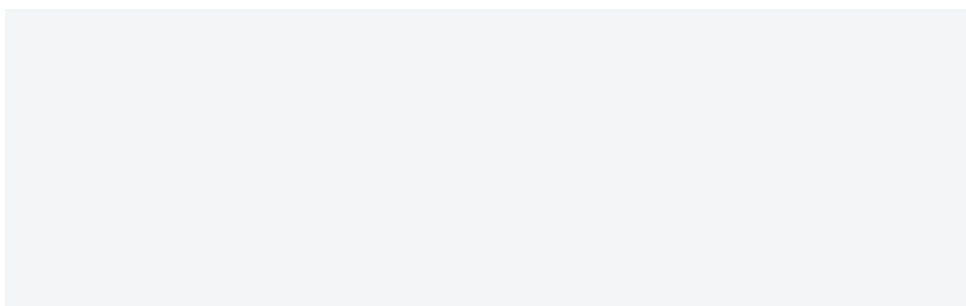
#### Step 5: Reflection

Discuss the following:

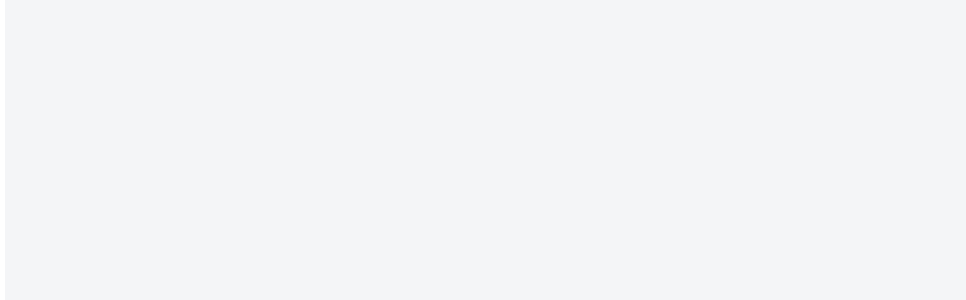
What did you learn from this exercise?



How likely are you to follow through with the actionable steps that you identified in Step 3?



What could be different for you if you do? What could you gain?



## ■ SELF-EFFICACY BELIEFS

Please rate how certain you are that you can reach each of the goals you listed in the exercise “Advanced Goal Analysis”. Rate your degree of confidence by recording a number from 0 to 10 using the scale given below:

- 0            cannot do at all  
5            could possibly do  
10           can most certainly do

Goal #1      1      2      3      4      5      6      7      8      9      10

Goal #2      1      2      3      4      5      6      7      8      9      10

Goal #3      1      2      3      4      5      6      7      8      9      10

Goal #4      1      2      3      4      5      6      7      8      9      10

Goal #5      1      2      3      4      5      6      7      8      9      10

Goal #6      1      2      3      4      5      6      7      8      9      10

Goal #7      1      2      3      4      5      6      7      8      9      10

## ■ HOPE MAP

The science of hope explains that how we think about the future is a key determinant of our success in work, school, and life. For example, with all other conditions being equal, high hope improves workplace outcomes (Reichard, Avey, Lopez, Dollwet, & Marques, 2013), academic performance (Lopez, Reichard, Dollwet, & Marques, 2014) and happiness (Alarcon, Bowling, & Khazon, 2013).

Why is this? When we see a direct connection between the future we want and our behaviors and attitudes today, effort and commitment soar. Traditional goal setting relies on clarity in the specifics that we are trying to achieve (think SMART goals) and the willpower to achieve. While we can rely solely on willpower to achieve our goals, these efforts at self-control can become exhausting and ignore the psychological force that we activate when we tap into the motivating energy of hope.

Hope theory encompasses not only the willpower (agency) but also the waypower (pathways) to achieve our goals (Snyder, 2000). Lyubomirsky's (2007) proposition is that working towards a goal is as important to wellbeing as the attainment of the goal itself. Committed goal pursuit provides us with a sense of purpose and feeling of control over our lives, assisting us in feeling efficacious and, importantly, reinforces our sense of autonomy. This activity is designed to teach clients the power of pathway thinking while tapping into the motivation to fuel their persistence towards their goals.

### ► GOAL

Many clients may struggle with the process of goal striving, particularly with maintaining motivation in the face of obstacles. This exercise is designed to teach 'pathway thinking' to clients to help unlock their motivating energy of hope. Hope works because it broadens our thinking and fuels our persistence. This activity helps clients articulate their high expectations for the future and develop a clear-eyed view of the obstacles they will need to overcome to get there.

### ► ADVICE

- This activity was originally designed for implementation with students, but it can be modified to suit the age of any client.
- Clients who like working with a computer may consider using mind map tools (e.g., [www.imindmap.com](http://www.imindmap.com)). Mind map tools allow them to create a graphical representation of their Hope Map digitally.

- Clients may use the preformatted version of the Hope Map, as shown on page 48, but may also decide to start from scratch. The latter option allows more freedom but maybe a bit more challenging for clients.
- Exposure to the Hope Map can serve as a prime or reminder. Therefore, your client can put the vision board where it can be seen every day (e.g., on the refrigerator or office desk). Note that some clients may consider their map a private source of inspiration. If this is the case, they should think of a place that limits who can view their work.

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### ► INSTRUCTIONS

To complete the following procedure, please use the Hope Map on page 48.

#### Step 1: Goal setting

Determine a clear and exciting vision of a Goal that you would like to achieve. Write your goal in the big box displayed in the last column of the Hope Map.

#### Step 2: Action planning

In the Pathways section (first column of the Hope Map), write down several actions, pathways, or steps you will take to pursue the goal. Use one action per box.

### Step 3: Identifying obstacles

In the Obstacles section (second column of the Hope Map), identify at least one obstacle that might block each of the paths you have described. You may list several obstacles per box.

### Step 4: Overcoming obstacles

Moving back to the Pathways section, review your existing pathways, including strategies to overcome the obstacle identified. This may include developing new pathways altogether or building additional steps to your existing pathways (you can use the boxes in the third column of the Hope Map to identify additional pathways). For any new pathways identified, repeat Steps 3 and 4 to overcome any obstacles that will block your progress.

### Step 5: Ideas for maintaining motivation

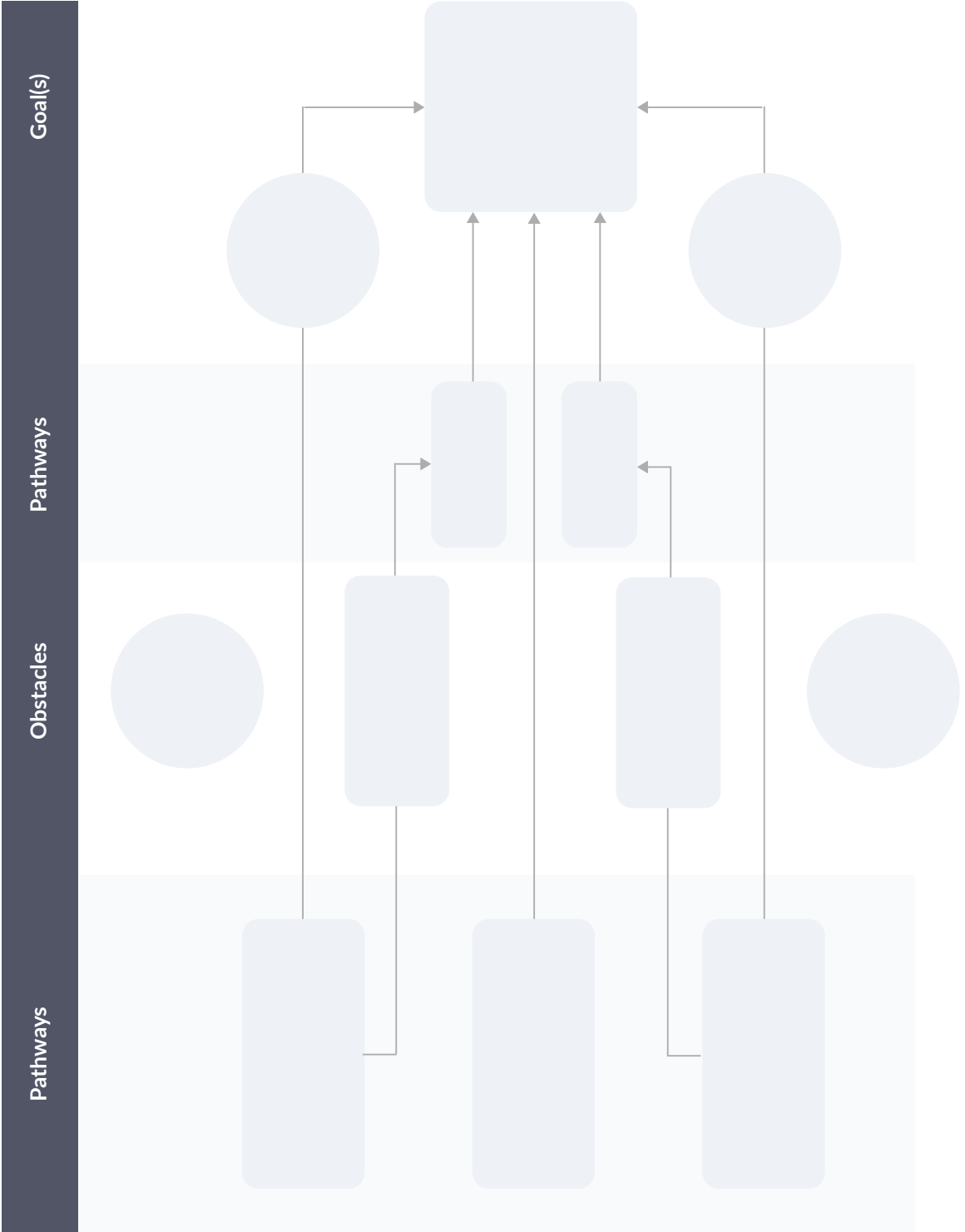
In the circles around the edges of the page, write down ideas for maintaining your energy and motivation while you move toward the Goal Box along the selected pathways. Be particularly mindful of the situations and obstacles that are likely to sap your willpower and be sure to come up with ideas for countering those challenges.

#### ► REFLECTION

Now that the Hope Map is almost complete, review it several times over. Determine which pathway you will commence first, understanding that you have to pursue various strategies to achieve your identified goal.

Finally, take a few minutes to imagine what it would look like to pursue and reach your goal. Once you have a vivid image of reaching the Goal Box in your mind, mentally rehearse all the steps you need to take to get there in real life, creating a sense of energy and excitement to commence the first step on your journey to your goal.

Figure 1. Hope Map



## ■ USING INTRINSIC VALUES TO PROMOTE GOAL COMMITMENT

When pursuing life goals, especially “big” or significant goals, obstacles are inevitable. One way to overcome such obstacles is to get in touch with our values, and particularly our *intrinsic* values, given intrinsic goal pursuit (pursuing an internally rewarding goal) results in increased performance and persistence over time (Vansteenkiste et al., 2004).

According to the self-determination theory, well-being is strongly influenced by the type of values by which the individual lives (Kasser, 2002; Sheldon & McGregor, 2000). In this view, the so-called “intrinsic” values are more healthful than extrinsic values. Intrinsic values reflect the inherent human desire to grow and develop. Intrinsic values are freely chosen; the individual chooses to act in line with the value rather than to act this way because another person or group expects him/her to do so. While an individual may hold the same values that are dominant in his culture, he retains a sense of willing ownership over these values; he does not simply comply to avoid negative evaluation or other social punishment (Hayes, Strosahl, & Wilson, 1999). Examples of intrinsic values include self-acceptance, affiliation, and creativity.

Extrinsic values, on the other hand, can best be described as a means to an end. An extrinsic value may reflect a desire to be appreciated, approved, or accepted by others to avoid negative emotions or punishment or to meet certain standards. Whereas intrinsic values originate from the innate tendency to grow and develop (‘inside-out’ orientation), extrinsic values represent external indicators of worth (‘outside-in’ orientation). Extrinsic values have been found to foster excessive ego involvement and social comparison (Kasser, 2002). Examples of extrinsic values include financial success, social popularity, and physical attractiveness.

The negative consequences associated with the pursuit of extrinsic values highlight the importance of examining the motives behind a client’s values and not just the values themselves. This tool helps clients clarify their reasons for pursuing a life goal to identify the values (intrinsic or extrinsic) underlying this goal. The client may then use the identified underlying intrinsic values as motivation to persist when obstacles arise.

### ► GOAL

The goal of this tool is to help clients identify intrinsic values inherent in their current pursuit of a significant life goal.

### ► ADVICE

- A helpful next step after completing this exercise would be to problem-solve around some (or all) of the obstacles the client raised in Step 2. When doing this, help the client choose value-congruent actions (with the values discussed in Steps 4 and 5) to overcome these obstacles.
- It is a good idea to emphasize the importance of the client's journey towards achieving the goal as well as goal achievement itself. In this way, the client is not encouraged to strive for the end goal but rather to focus on taking valued steps towards achieving the goal. Mindfulness may be helpful to bring the client's attention into the here-and-now at times instead of holding a purely future-oriented mindset.
- Exposure to the vision board can serve as a prime or reminder. Therefore, your client can put the vision board where it can be seen every day (e.g., on the refrigerator or office desk). Note that some clients may consider their board a private source of inspiration. If this is the case, they should think of a place that limits who can view their work. The point is that your client's vision board should be accessible to him/her and should not be placed where he/she will fall out of the habit of looking at it.

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### ► INSTRUCTIONS

This exercise is about getting in touch with your values to motivate you to persist with a challenging life goal. When working toward life goals, such as quitting smoking, buying a house, or getting a promotion at work, challenges or obstacles will inevitably crop up. When faced with such obstacles, we have a choice; we can either persist or give up.

Persisting is usually harder work, which can make giving up very appealing. Because personal values--things that are important and meaningful to you--are a valuable source of motivation, connecting with your values can be helpful when faced with difficulty.

In this exercise, we are going to create a values vision board for a life goal towards which you are currently working. This vision board will serve first to clarify why pursuing this life goal is important to you and second to remind you of this when you encounter difficulty or feel like quitting.

### Step 1: Describe a current life goal

In the space below, describe a significant goal towards which you are currently working in your life. For example, perhaps you would like to buy a house, quit smoking, or get that promotion at work.

Life goal =

### Step 2: Explore potential obstacles

Let's take a moment to think about the potential challenges that you could face while pursuing this life goal. In the space below, write down as many possible obstacles as you can think of.

- 
- 
- 
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- 
- 
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### Step 3: Explore reasons for pursuing a goal

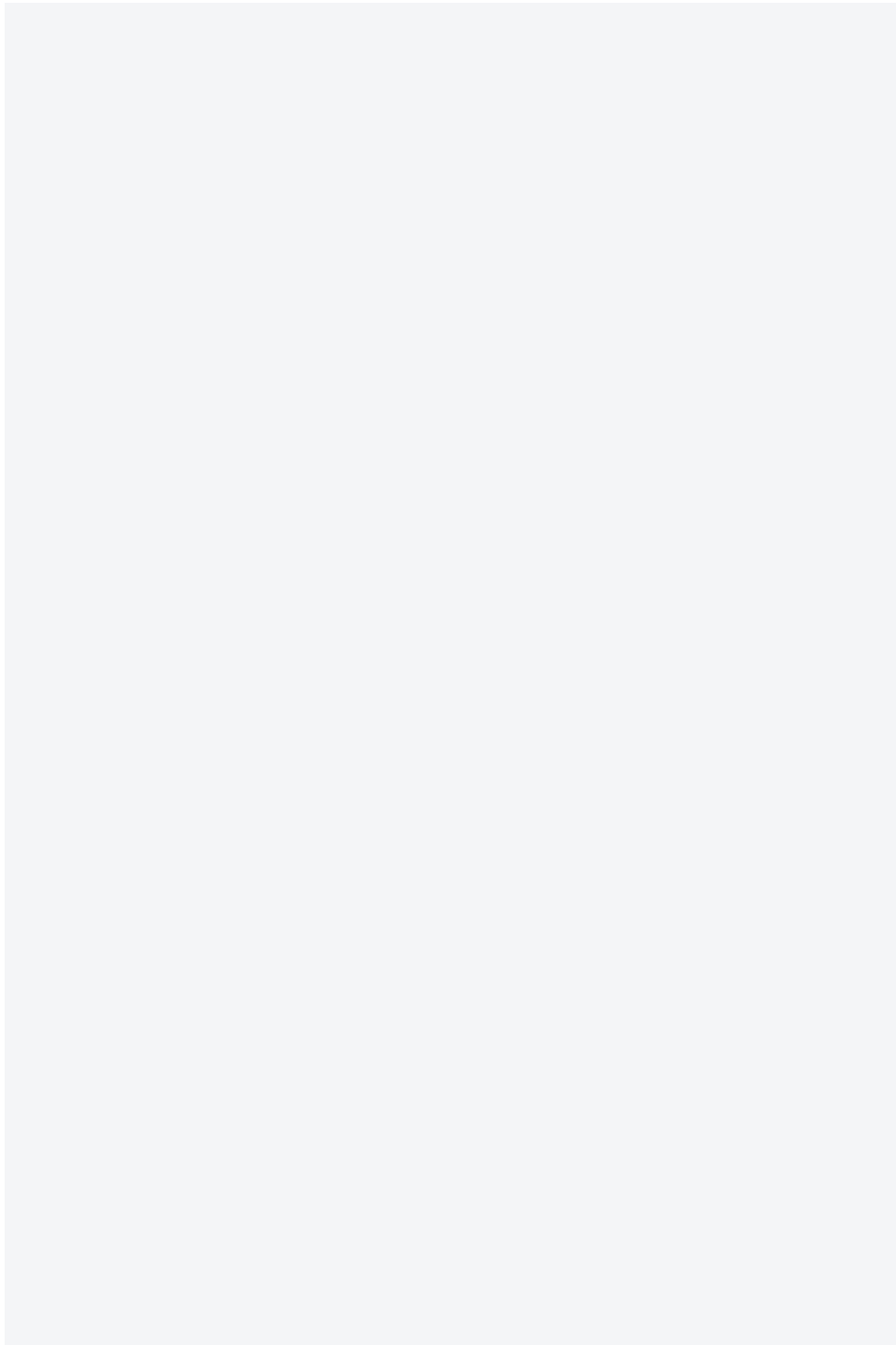
Now that your goal is clear and you understand the potential obstacles involved, take a moment to reflect on why you are working toward this goal at this time in your life. What is important to you about achieving this goal? How or why will your life change/be better after you achieve this goal?

When considering your reasons for pursuing this goal, indulge in those reasons that are deeply and personally meaningful to you--reasons that come from your desire to grow and develop. You could refer to these reasons as “inside-out”—they come from within you. For example, an inside-out reason for pursuing your goal of buying a house might be to provide you and your family with a sense of stability and security because stability and security are both important to *you*. Alternatively, you aim to finish a course on programming because *you* enjoy the process of programming, and *you* want to make a living from it. Simply put, it is about what makes the goal worth pursuing for you.

Sometimes, we strive for goals for reasons that we could call “outside-in.” When this is the case, we feel that we have to reach such a goal because others believe it is an important goal to have or because we are afraid that we may get rejected when we fail to reach this goal. For example, an outside-in reason for pursuing your goal of buying a house might be to demonstrate your wealth to *others*. Alternatively, you aim to finish a course on programming because you are afraid that *others* will disapprove of you if you would not be able to do this.

In the space below, explore your “inside-out” reasons for pursuing this goal freely. Start by asking yourself, what do I find so important about achieving this goal? How does achieving this goal help me to be the person I want to be?

Take five or so minutes here and write openly and honestly about what achieving this goal means to you.





### Step 5: Capture values on a vision board

We are now going to bring these values of yours to the front and center in your life, not only so that you are clear about the underlying meaning that achieving this particular goal has for you but also so that you can refer to these values when things get tough while pursuing this goal. On a piece of paper (plain, poster, butchers, anything!), write down your goal in the middle of the page. Alternatively, use an image or illustration to represent this goal, for instance, a photo of your dream home. Now, surrounding your goal, write down every intrinsic value that you came up with in the previous step. Be as creative as you like here. Express yourself. For instance, some values might resonate more strongly with you, and so you might write these values in larger text or bold or strong colors. Other values might be less significant but still important, and so you might write these in a softer color and place them further toward the edges of the page. Feel free to include images, photos, and illustrations as well. Remember, this is your values vision board for this particular goal. You can have different values for different life goals. Make this vision board specific to this goal.

► **APPENDIX: LIST OF VALUES**

Acceptance	Efficiency	Inner Harmony	Privacy
Achievement	Elegance	Inspiration	Purity
Advancement & Promotion	Entertainment	Integrity	Quality
Adventure	Enlightenment	Intellect	Radiance
Affection	Equality	Involvement	Recognition
Altruism	Ethics	Knowledge	Relationships
Arts	Excellence	Leadership	Religion
Awareness	Excitement	Learning	Reputation
Beauty	Experiment	Loyalty	Responsibility
Challenge	Expertise	Magnificence	Risk Safety & Security
Change	Exhilaration	Making a Difference	Self-Respect
Community	Fairness	Mastery	Sensibility
Compassion	Fame	Meaningful Work	Sensuality
Competence	Family	Ministering	Serenity
Competition	Fast Pace	Money	Service
Completion	Freedom	Morality	Sexuality
Connectedness	Friendship	Mystery	Sophistication
Cooperation	Fun	Nature	Spark
Collaboration	Grace	Openness	Speculation
Country	Growth	Originality	Spirituality
Creativity	Happiness	Order	Stability
Decisiveness	Harmony	Passion	Status
Democracy	Health	Peace	Success
Design	Helping Others	Personal Development	Teaching
Discovery	Helping Society	Personal Expression	Tenderness
Diversity	Honesty	Planning	Thrill
Environmental Awareness	Humor	Play	Unity
Economic Security	Imagination	Pleasure	Variety
Education	Improvement	Power	Wealth
Effectiveness	Independence		Winning
	Influencing Others		Wisdom

## ■ EXPLORING FLOW EXPERIENCES

Flow can be defined as a psychological experience when one is performing an activity in which he or she is fully immersed with an energized focus. In some professions, such as in the case of athletes and musicians, flow is also known as “being in the zone,” characterized by full absorption in what one does.

According to flow theory, flow contributes to people’s well-being and personal fulfillment (Nakamura & Csikszentmihalyi, 2009). In line with this, research on adolescents has shown that increased flow experiences are associated with increased intrinsic motivation, self-esteem, and time spent doing schoolwork (Hektner & Csikszentmihalyi, 1996). This tool can help clients gain more insights into personal flow experiences and provide a useful starting point for experiencing an increasing amount of flow in daily life.

### ▶ GOAL

The goal of this exercise is to bring awareness to the moments of experiencing a flow-state.

### ▶ ADVICE

- It is possible to use a daily variation of this exercise. In this daily version, the client recalls activities that caused him/her to experience flow at the end of the day. Preferably, the client keeps track of these experiences (either digitally or using pen and paper) so that they can be discussed during the subsequent therapy or coaching session. Together with the client, the practitioner can then look for characteristics that are shared by the activities and explore potential ways to increase flow experiences.

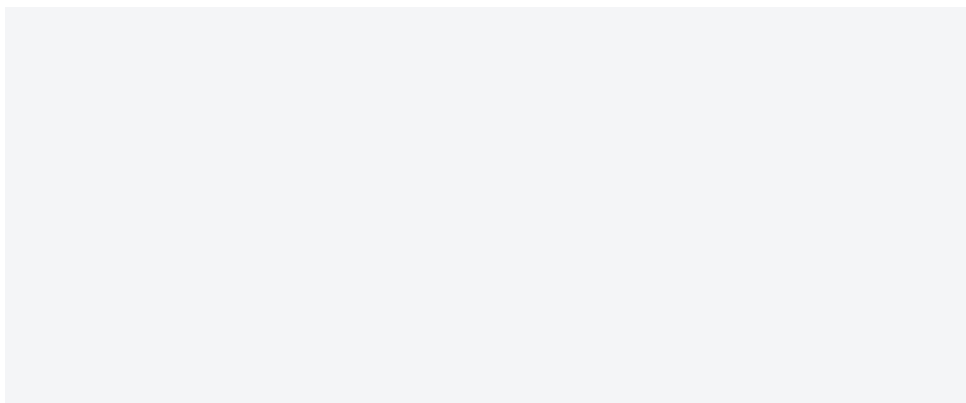
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**► INSTRUCTIONS**

1. Explain the concept of flow to your client. For this purpose, you can mention the characteristics of flow according to Nakamura and Csikszentmihalyi (2009), which include:
  - An intensely focused concentration on the present moment and a loss of relative self-consciousness.
  - A sense of deep focus and effortless involvement that makes other needs negligible.
  - The experience that action and awareness are merged.
  - Intrinsically rewarding activity.
  - Immediate feedback on the progress as the participant engages in the activity and the belief in potential success.
  - Clear goals.
  - No concern about the judgment of others.
  - A sense of personal control or agency in the activity.
  - A sense of distortion of time (e.g., time seems to slow down or pass quickly).
2. Invite the client to think of a time where he/she was completely absorbed and focused on what he/she was doing, a time when your client felt positive and secure about his/her abilities, and was not worried about failing. Allow your client some time to recall this event.
3. Have the client write about the experience on a piece of paper. Ask him/her to write down their thoughts, feelings, and impressions of the experience. Alternatively, discuss the experience with the client. Guide the participants with the following questions.

What was going on? When did you have this experience? Where were you?



Who were you with?

What was happening?

How or what did you feel?

How did the experience start?

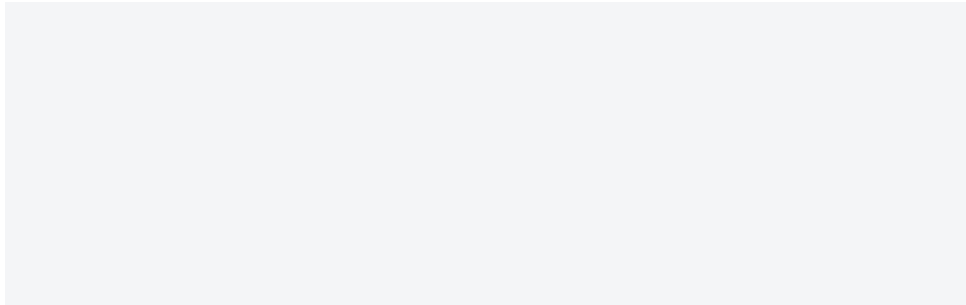
How did you feel after the experience was over?

4. Evaluate the exercise. You may address the following questions:

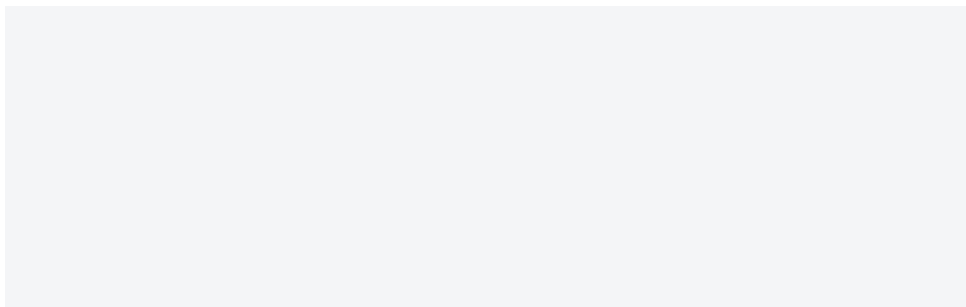
How did the exercise of recalling your flow-state feel?

Are there more examples of activities that you recognize as flow states in your life?  
If so, what are these activities?

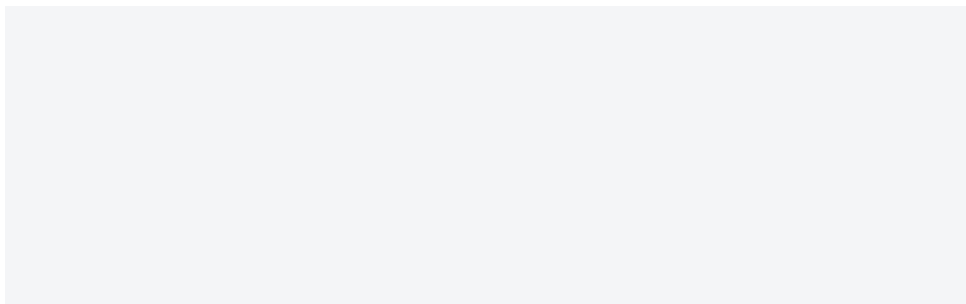
Do the examples that you mention share a specific characteristic? For instance, creativity may be involved in all or most of the examples. Or the activities are always carried out alone/with others.



Would it be possible to do these activities more often?



If so, what could be the first step to do these activities more often?



## ■ SELF-CONCORDANT GOAL ANALYSIS

Besides researchers, therapists are increasingly advocating for a motivational analysis of goals. For example, quality-of-life therapy (Frisch, 1998) advocates for the importance of revising goals and priorities as a strategy to increase well-being. People can have many different reasons for setting certain goals. According to the self-concordance model of goal setting, it is of vital importance to consider the extent to which goals align with enduring interests and values (Sheldon & Elliot, 1999; see also Ryan & Deci, 2000). The self-determination model states that goals can be pursued because of four different types of motivation.

First, goals can be guided by external motivation. These goals are pursued because somebody else wants the individual to pursue them or because the situation seems to compel it. Externally guided goals are heavily guided by external circumstances and represent a very low level of autonomy. The individual probably would not have this goal if he/she did not receive a reward, praise, or approval for it or if he/she did not avoid something negative by pursuing it. For example, an individual work until five o'clock only because his/her attendance is registered and leaving early would result in punishment.

Second, goals can be guided by introjected motivation. A need for self-approval guides introjected goal pursuit through the attainment of ego-rewards like pride and/or the avoidance of negative emotions like guilt, anxiety, or disapproval from others. For instance, an employee may want to become successful at work so he/she can demonstrate his/her ability and accomplishments to others.

Third, goals that are guided by identified motivation are perceived as personally meaningful. Although others may have once endorsed these goals, now the individual internalized it freely and thus values it wholeheartedly. For example, an individual might try to “exercise more regularly” because he/she genuinely feels this is the right thing to do.

Finally, goals can reflect intrinsic motivation. When this is the case, the individual strives for his/her goal because of the enjoyment and/or stimulation that the goal provides him/her. While one may have many good reasons to achieve the stated goal, the primary “reason” is simply the interest in the experience itself. In other words, the focus is on the process towards achieving the goal, rather than on the goal accomplishment itself. Goal-directed behavior is initiated and sustained by one’s integrated or true self. During goal pursuit, little to no struggle or effortful control is required. An example includes an individual who wants to be able to play a certain piece of music on the piano. The primary reason for setting this goal is that the individual enjoys the process of playing the piano and of improving his/her skills.

These four motivational types differ in the degree to which they represent an individual's authentic interests and values (Sheldon & Elliot, 1998). In other words, these motivational types differ in their level of self-concordance. Self-concordant goals express enduring interests and values, and they are highly autonomous. A summary of the four different motivational types underlying goal-directed behavior is presented in Table 1.

**Table 1. Four different motivational types underlying goal-directed behavior**

	External	Introjected	Identified	Intrinsic
<i>Type of motivation</i>	Controlled	Controlled	Autonomous	Autonomous
<i>What regulates the motivation?</i>	Compliance External rewards Punishment External Pressures	Self-control Ego-involvement Shoulds Oughts Standards Rules	Personal Importance Values	Interests Enjoyment Inherent Satisfaction
<i>Self-concordance level</i>	Low	Low	High	High

Research suggests that the motivational orientation underlying a goal influences how goal pursuit is regulated and whether it is successful (Ryan, Sheldon, Kasser, & Deci, 1996). Goals that are not self-concordant are likely to generate intrapersonal conflict, whereas self-concordant goals allow individuals to draw on volitional resources, such as the capacity to exert sustained effort (Sheldon & Elliot, 1999; Sheldon & Houser-Marko, 2001). Moreover, several studies have shown that goal self-concordance is significantly positively related to goal progress (Koestner et al., 2006). Therefore, it is important to address the extent to which the client's goals are self-concordant.

### ► GOAL

The main goal of this assessment is to analyze the clients' goals in terms of their level of self-concordance.

► **ADVICE**

- After completing this assessment, the practitioner may notice that some of the client's goals reflect a low level of self-concordance. Given the importance of self-concordant goal setting, the practitioner is advised to reconsider these goals with the client and revise them if possible.
- It is important to note that self-concordant goals do not necessarily feel "good," nor are they necessarily self-gratifying. Although this is generally true for goals guided by intrinsic motivation, this may not be the case for goals guided by identified motivation. The fact that the goal is perceived as personally meaningful does not mean that the actions necessary for goal attainment are always pleasurable or easy. For example, the goal of "taking good care of my ill mother" may not be pleasant; nevertheless, it may be undertaken willingly because the individual deeply cares about the health of his/her mother. Thus, the most important distinction to make is whether the client feels ownership of his/her goal, not whether the goal is pleasurable to him/her.
- Clients may notice that for some goals, different types of motivation apply at the same time. Indeed goals can often not be categorized in only one type of motivation. The key here is to identify the relative level of self-concordance for each goal.
- This exercise can also be used to teach about motivation and goal setting because it allows participants to apply the principles of self-determination theory to themselves.
- Although high self-concordance ratings are associated with positive outcomes, the way this rating is calculated is not fully in line with research findings on the relationship between autonomous and controlled motivation (Judge et al., 2005). Research by Judge and colleagues (2015) showed that autonomous motivation and controlled motivation are not significantly negatively related, as one might expect from calculating the difference score between them. Instead, these two types of motivation are non-significantly positively related. Second, the relations of autonomous and controlled motivation with various goal outcomes are not mirror-image opposites. In two studies, autonomous motivation was associated with positive outcomes, whereas controlled motivation was unrelated to outcomes (rather than being negatively related to positive outcomes). Sheldon and Elliot's (1998) original three studies revealed a negative but non-significant correlation between autonomous and controlled motivation. Furthermore, Sheldon and Elliot (1998) found that controlled motivation was not associated with goal progress. In sum, these findings showed that it is important to not treat the self-concordance score as a definite measure of autonomy but rather as a general indication of autonomy. Moreover, these findings suggest that to gain an accurate insight into the client's level of self-concordance, it is advisable to examine also the four different individual reasons for striving to attain a goal, rather than to rely solely on the self-concordance score.

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## ► INSTRUCTIONS

### Step 1: Listing long-term goals

Below, please write 8 personal goals. These may be goals that you are currently pursuing or goals that you are routinely trying to attain in your life.

For example:

- Exercising more often
- Cleaning the basement
- Spend more time with kids
- Trying to seek new and exciting experiences

Spend a few minutes thinking about your goals. As you think about your goals, write them down in the space below.

Personal Strivings or Goals:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.

### Step 2: Analyzing reasons for striving

What are your main reasons for striving for these goals? Consider each of the following possible reasons for striving.

Per each goal, indicate the extent to which each of the reasons below applies to you, where 1 = not at all for this reason and 10 = very much because of this reason. Use Table 2 to list your answers (see Fig. 1 for an example).

- Reason 1 (*external*): You strive for this goal because somebody else wants you to or because the situation seems to compel it. Stated differently, you probably wouldn't have this goal if you weren't getting a reward, praise, or approval for it or if you weren't avoiding something negative by pursuing it.
- Reason 2 (*introjected*): You strive for this goal because you would feel ashamed, guilty, or anxious if you did not. Rather than having this goal because someone else thinks you ought to, you feel that you "ought" to strive for it.

- Reason 3 (*identified*): You pursue this goal because you believe that it is an important goal to have. Although this goal may have been suggested or taught to you by others at one point in the past, you endorse it freely now and value it wholeheartedly. For example, you might try to “exercise more regularly” because you genuinely feel that this is the right thing to do.
- Reason 4 (*intrinsic*): You strive for this goal because of the enjoyment or the stimulation the goal offers. While there may be many good reasons for the goal, the primary “reason” is simply your interest in the experience itself.

**Fig. 1. Example of completed self-concordance ratings**

Goal no.	Reason 1 (external) (0-10)	Reason 2 (introjected) (0-10)	Reason 3 (identified) (0-10)	Reason 4 (intrinsic) (0-10)
1	1	3	9	9

### Step 3: Calculating self-concordance score

Finally, for each goal, calculate a self-concordance score by first summing the identified and intrinsic scores (Sum A). Next, sum the external and introjected scores (Sum B). Then, subtract Sum A from Sum B.

Self-concordance score = (identified + intrinsic) - (external + introjected)

In Fig. 2, the self-concordance score of 14 is calculated as follows:  $(9 + 9) - (1 + 3)$ . Scores can range from -20 to 20, where -20 represents a very low and 20 a very high level of self-concordance.

**Fig. 2. Example of calculated self-concordance score**

A Sum(Reason 1 + Reason 2)=	B Sum(Reason 3+ Reason 4)=	B-A= Self-concordance score
4	18	18-4 = 14

**Table 2. Self-concordance ratings**

Per each goal, indicate the extent to which each of the reasons applies to you:  
1 = not at all for this reason and 10 = very much because of this reason.

Goal no.	Reason 1 (external) (0-10)	Reason 2 (introjected) (0-10)	Reason 3 (identified) (0-10)	Reason 4 (intrinsic) (0-10)
1				
2				
3				
4				
5				
6				
7				
8				

Next, calculate your self-concordance score.

A	B	B-A=
Sum(Reason 1 + Reason 2)=	Sum(Reason 3+ Reason 4)=	Self-concordance score

**Step 4: Evaluation**

Which goals are highly self-concordant?

What can you do to keep these goals self-concordant?

Which goals are not very self-concordant?

Would it be possible to increase the level of self-concordance of these goals? If so, what could increase the experienced level of self-concordance of these goals?

What stood out most for you from this exercise?

What did you learn about yourself?

What might you do with what you have learned?

How can you use this exercise in the future?

## ■ FACILITATING SELF-CONCORDANT ACTION

The self-concordance model of goal setting describes the extent to which an individual's stated goals align with that individual's enduring interests and values (Sheldon & Elliot, 1999; see also Ryan & Deci, 2000). Goals are pursued for "identified reasons" or "intrinsic reasons." When a goal is pursued, for identified reasons, the individual believes it is an important goal to have, although he/she may not enjoy the actions that are necessary to achieve it. When a goal is pursued for an intrinsic reason, the actions that are required to reach the goal provide fun and enjoyment.

In general, clients do not need much help with achieving intrinsic goals because the actions needed to accomplish these goals are rewarding by themselves. It is more common that clients fail to put identified goals into practice. Clients are often aware that these goals are important, but they fail to achieve them because the process is not (always) enjoyable. In other words, although the client values the goal, he/she fails to reach it.

This exercise was designed to assist clients in performing actions that allow them to reach self-concordant goals by helping them consciously (re)connect with the values that underlie the behavior necessary to complete these goals.

### ► GOAL

Behavior change is difficult, but there are decisions that clients can make in their efforts to create behavioral change that may make the process a little easier. One of the critical components of habituating behavioral change is to ensure that clients' actions are in line with their values. When a client participates in this exercise, he/she is allowed to not only identify the values that feed his/her desire to want to change his/her behaviors, but he/she is also invited to focus his/her attention on how those values are reflected in the behavioral change. Therefore, it is hypothesized that when a client completes this exercise, his/her attention will center on how he/she can act in improved alignment with his/her values.

### ► ADVICE

- Practitioners should be aware that the process described in this exercise should be slow and gradual. The longer the list of reasons that the client can come up with to change his/her behavior, the better!
- As the client moves through the exercise incrementally and purposefully, listing increasingly more reasons for why he/she wants to change will convince the client about the immediate need for that change.

- This exercise can be valuable for clients who suffer from procrastination or other motivational challenges. Allowing clients to reconnect to the values that underlie their actions can help them experience less internal conflict when pursuing or not pursuing specific goals.

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### ► INSTRUCTIONS

The client may use the focus list on next page to complete the following steps:

#### Step 1: Choosing an activity

Ask your client to think of something that he/she does not really want to do in his/her life but desires to want to do. In other words, ask your client to think of an activity he/she does not enjoy doing but finds it important to do because of the consequence(s) of the activity.

For example, your client may not want to run daily because it is hard, but he/she might wish to want to run daily to become healthier (the consequence of the activity).

#### Step 2: Assessing motivation

Ask your client to rate on a scale of 0 to 10 how much he/she wants to carry out the activity, with a rating of “1” meaning “I really don’t want to run.”

#### Step 3: Connect to personal values

Next, ask your client what he/she would need to focus on to increase the perceived importance of the activity. To which of the client’s values does the activity contribute? (i.e., the client may answer, “I would need to focus on my desire to

be more active with my kids for more extended periods. This would require that I improve my fitness.”) Start a list for your client and write that reason down as Focus #1.

Reiterating that focus, ask your client about what else he/she can focus on to increase the perceived importance of the activity (i.e., Running will help reduce my blood pressure, so I can live longer and be around for my kids). Write that reason down as Focus #2.

Continue this line of questioning until your client gets as close as possible to ten focus points and an increased new motivation level.

#### Step 4: Offer the list to the client

At the end of the exercise, give the “Focus List” to your client. Tell the client that he/she can refer to it when his/her motivation to follow-through with behavior change is low.

**Table 1. Focus list**

#### The activity that I do not really enjoy, but find important to do:

Activity:

Motivation (rate how much you want to complete the activity on a 10-point scale, 0 = not at all, 10 = very much):

Carrying out the activity will allow me to..:

Focus #1:

New Motivation Level (0-10):

Focus #2:

New Motivation Level (0-10):

Focus #3:

New Motivation Level (0-10):

Focus #4:

New Motivation Level (0-10):

Focus #5:

New Motivation Level (0-10):

Focus #6:

New Motivation Level (0-10):

Focus #7:

New Motivation Level (0-10):

Focus #8:

New Motivation Level (0-10):

Focus #9:

New Motivation Level (0-10):

Focus #10:

New Motivation Level (0-10):

## ■ GOAL VISUALIZATION

Mental imagery of future events (also known as mental simulation, goal visualization, and imagined future) is a technique that helps people “envision possibilities and develop plans for bringing those possibilities about” (Taylor et al., 1998, p. 429). Such an exercise has been shown to promote goal-directed behavior by increasing one’s expectation for success, enhancing motivation and emotional involvement, and initiating planning and problem-solving actions. Mental imagery can be outcome-focused, where images of the outcomes or goals are generated, or process-focused, where images of the steps leading to outcomes and goals are generated. Outcome-focused imagery can help one envision the desired outcome and identify specific and concrete plans. Process-focused imagery guides one to visualize the process through which a goal will be attained and, in turn, form action plans for goal pursuit.

Research has examined the beneficial effects of imagining future events. For instance, mental imagery of possible selves (i.e., where one generates images of what he or she could become) has been shown to enhance motivation by helping people identify goals and develop goal-directed behavior (Oyserman, Bybee, & Terry, 2006) and improve performance through imagining one’s future success (Ruvolo & Markus, 1992). Furthermore, social cognition research has found that mental imagery of future events increases the likelihood that those events will occur (Johnson & Sherman, 1990). Furthermore, mental imagery has been shown to enhance athletic performance, improve impulsivity, reduce relapse rates among alcoholics, and reduce premature termination of therapy (Johnson & Sherman, 1990).

### ► GOAL

The goal of this tool is to promote goal-directed behavior by increasing the client’s expectation for success, enhancing motivation and emotional involvement, and initiating planning and problem-solving actions.

### ► ADVICE

- It is important to remember that not every wish or desire that the client has for him or herself will have motivational benefits. People who tend to be pessimistic may become less motivated when visualizing their future success.
- Encourage the client to focus on positive mental images that include precisely how he or she will attain the desired outcome, rather than exclusively on the outcome itself.

- Encourage the client to cultivate a mental image that is based on positive expectation (i.e., the belief that the imagined future event is attainable) rather than positive fantasy (i.e., idealized images of desired events that are experienced regardless of their likelihood of occurrence), as the positive expectation is more motivating.

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#### ► INSTRUCTIONS

##### Step 1: Guide the client through the exercise using the following script

To begin, take a moment to get comfortable in your seat and gently close your eyes. Take a few deep, slow breaths, and allow yourself to relax. I am going to speak to you for the next little while, and all you need to do is listen and imagine. Do your best to avoid falling to sleep. Simply relax and imagine.

OK, I would like you to think about a goal that you want to accomplish in the next year of your life. This might be a relationship goal, an educational goal, a personal goal, or a work-related goal. Take a moment to bring this goal forward and visualize it in your mind's eye.

(30 secs)

Now, with this personal goal in mind, I would like you to imagine yourself going forward in time into the future... going forward one week... two weeks... three weeks....

And four weeks... it's now one month into the future, and you have started working towards achieving your goal - you are on the road to success. What decisions have you made? What actions have you taken? How does it feel to be on this road to success?

(30 secs)

Now, using your imagination, continue going forward in time... until you are 6 months into the future. You are significantly closer to achieving your goal. You are starting to feel the benefits of all your efforts. What does it feel like? How does it feel to be this much closer to your goal? Allow yourself to notice any feelings or emotions tied to this moment.

(30 secs)

Now, I would like you to continue going forward in time until you reach one year from now. Here, you have fully accomplished your goal. You have achieved success! Visualize yourself in your mind. Where are you, and what are you doing? Who are you with, if anyone? What are people saying to you? What are you saying to them?

(15 secs)

How does reaching your goal feel? What emotions are tied to this achievement? Perhaps there are feelings of pride, joy, contentment, or satisfaction.

(30 secs)

Now, I would like you to look back on your journey. Look back on the process of achieving this goal. Look back on all your hard work and effort, and consider how you reached your goal, step-by-step. What were the little things you did, day-by-day, to achieve success? What did you do at work? What did you do in your relationships?

(15 secs)

What did you do internally to achieve success? How did you manage difficult thoughts and emotional obstacles? What coping strategies did you use? Take a moment to consider all the things that helped you manage the personal challenges that appeared along the way.

(30 secs)

Good.

Now, as the exercise comes to an end, take a deep, slow breath. When you are ready, gently open your eyes.

**Step 2: Evaluate the exercise**

How was it to do this visualization?

Is there anything you learned from this exercise?

Are there any insights that you can use to move closer to your goals? If so, list them below:

## ■ IMPLEMENTATION INTENTIONS

People often fail to act on their good intentions. Despite their best intentions to eat more healthily, to be more physically active, or to declutter the house, people often fail to do so. The 'gap' between intention and action is common. This intention-action gap is observed even when intentions are strong and urgent action is required (such as the need to lose weight for medical reasons). This suggests that motivation alone is not sufficient. If motivation is not the critical element, how do you bridge the intention-action gap?

Implementation Intentions ('if-then' planning) are an effective strategy for turning goals into action. Whereas goal intentions are more general and abstract, implementation intentions are more concrete and procedural. A generic goal intention may be phrased in the following way: "I want to reach X!" Implementation intentions, on the other hand, seek to connect a specific future situation (an opportunity for goal attainment) with specific goal-directed behavior.

In doing so, this situation then becomes mentally represented (activated), leading to better perception, attention, and memory concerning the described situation (4). Consequently, the chosen goal-directed action (the then-part of the plan) will be performed automatically and efficiently without conscious effort or deliberation on the part of the decision-maker. This action also frees cognitive resources for other mental processing tasks, avoiding competing goals or distractions (1). Thus, simply specifying the when, where, and how of goal-directed behavior makes goal attainment more likely (2).

### ► GOAL

The goal of this tool is to increase the probability of successful goal attainment (by predetermining a specific and desired goal-directed behavior in response to a particular future event or cue).

### ► ADVICE

- Clients often wonder how such a simple strategy can have such a strong effect. The suggested working mechanisms of implementation intentions are related to cognitive resources, e.g., the automatization of the behavior in response to the future situation or cue. Establishing rituals and routines capitalizes on our brains' ability to direct our behavior on autopilot. They allow us to reach our goals even when we are distracted or preoccupied with other things and to have rock-solid strategies in place for when life's little emergencies or speed bumps get in our way (1). The key assumption is that by deciding in advance the specifics of each action to take, 'if-then' planning removes the need to rely on motivation or willpower (which waxes and wanes in most people).

- Implementation Intentions are particularly effective in habit and behavior modification, where there may be perceived as significant immediate costs versus long-term rewards:
  - Attending cancer screening programs (3)
  - A nutritious diet (5)
  - Exercising more (5)
  - Drinking less alcohol (6)
  - Giving up smoking (6)
- Note that the strength of commitment related to both the plan set and the goal itself is vitally important. Without sufficient commitment, an implementation intention will have little effect on goal-directed behavior (2) Hence, motivation is important to the extent that the client must want to achieve the goal (over and above competing goals).
- It is important to note too that implementation intentions seem to have a negative effect on the performance of people who score high on socially prescribed perfectionism (7).
- Past research has revealed that implementation intentions can also be used to effectively cope with emotions. In a study by Gallo and colleagues (9), participants who formed an implementation intention not to get disgusted or frightened succeeded in reducing their disgust and fear reactions as compared to control participants who formed simple goal intentions. Clients who struggle to regulate certain emotions, like stress, for instance, may benefit from forming implementation intentions before entering a potentially stressful situation (e.g., as soon as I notice that the other person upsets me, I will take a deep breath and stay calm).

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## ► INSTRUCTIONS

### Step 1: Explain the purpose and the structure of an Implementation Intention

Implementation Intentions are “if-then” plans. Research has found that they are an effective strategy to turn goals into action. In other words, forming an implementation intention will help you carry out the behavior you intend.

### Step 2: State the intention

Steer the client towards explicitly stating their intention

The intention of my client is:

**Step 3: Plan when, where, and how**

Ask the client to write down or say out loud a statement of how they will act towards a goal in the form of: “If X happens, then I will do Y.”

X can be a time, place, or event. Y is the specific action they will take whenever X occurs.

Examples of ‘if-then’ plans:

- During the next week, I will partake in at least 30 minutes of vigorous exercise on [day] at [time of day] at/in [place].
- If I eat chocolate for an afternoon snack, then I’ll stop at the supermarket on the way home and buy some vegetables for dinner.
- If I haven’t slept well two nights in a row, then I will have a quiet evening in (with laptop off by 8 pm) and will go to bed early at 10 pm.
- If I have to work late today and I don’t have time to go to the gym, then I’ll wake up 30 min earlier tomorrow and go for a run before breakfast.

If:

happens, then I will do:

## ■ BUILDING HABITS BY SETTING PROCESS GOALS

Goals differ in the duration of involvement that is needed for achievement. In general, a distinction can be made between end-state goals and process goals (Frese & Zapf, 1994). End-state goals are goals that, once achieved, do not require additional action. An example of an end-state goal is publishing an article. Once the goal of publishing an article is accomplished, the author does not need to spend any more time on this goal and can pursue another goal. End-state goals thus represent a one-off or momentary change. Process goals, on the other hand, are goals that require continuous action. An example of a process goal is staying healthy. To reach this goal, an individual is required to continue performing certain actions, such as eating healthily every day and going to the gym twice a week. Thus, process goals involve long-lasting change. In most cases, process goals can be conceptualized as standards that should be maintained, such as working hard, maintaining certain body weight, being kind to others, and many others.

Many clients set end-state goals when their desired change actually requires setting a process goal. Consider a client who wants to lose weight. When asked to translate this wish into a goal, the client answers, “My goal is to lose 15 pounds.” The problem with this goal is that the desired outcome is framed as a momentary change, while the true desired outcome is, in fact, a long-lasting change. After all, the client’s intention is probably not to lose 15 pounds and then start gaining weight again. Rather, the goal is to maintain weight loss. Therefore, it would be more helpful for the client to reframe this goal into a process goal, such as “My goal is to keep healthy body weight.” The consequence of setting this process goal is that the attention automatically shifts to the “keep” part of the goal. Which form of repeated action is needed to stay at a healthy body weight? Instead of setting a goal to lose 15 pounds, the client may now decide to set a goal to exercise for 10 minutes every morning. The ongoing process goal is more likely to lead to the formation of a habit that will enable the client not only to lose 15 pounds but also to stay at this intended body weight. This tool was designed to aid clients in the formation and pursuit of process goals.

### ► GOAL

The purpose of this tool is to help clients build habits that will result in long-lasting change using the formulation of process-goals.

### ► ADVICE

- A powerful way to remind clients of their process goals is by using visual cues as a reminder. For example, a client who decides to write daily to finish his book can be reminded of this habit by a postcard of a book that is placed where it

can be seen every day (e.g., on the refrigerator or office desk). Exposure to this card serves as a prime or reminder for engaging in the habit of writing daily.

- Clients are often aware of temptations that prevent them from reaching their goals. In many cases, clients visit a practitioner because their past attempts at reaching a certain goal were unsuccessful. Together with the client, the practitioner is advised to analyze these past failed attempts and carefully examine those temptations that contributed to unsuccessful goal pursuit. Using this information, the practitioner can help clients build routines that minimize or eliminate exposure to these temptations. For example, a client who indicates that his past attempts to increase productivity at work often failed because he/she was interrupted often may now decide to turn off his phone and email for fixed hours during the day.
- Clients often tend to underestimate the value of making small improvements daily. They falsely believe that to reach their goals, they have to take rather drastic forms of action. Consequently, they often experience a fear of failure or notice that it is simply impossible to keep performing these drastic actions. The practitioner is advised to assist clients in adopting a mindset that is focused on making incremental changes by making them aware of the influence that these changes can have over time. For instance, the practitioner may track the client's progress towards the goal and devote ample time to discuss the total amount of progress made so far. In this way, the client's sense of self-efficacy is strengthened, and the motivation to continue is boosted.
- When one habit has been realized through small, incremental steps, another habit can be developed on top of the existing one that is supporting the same process goal. For example, if the client has formed a habit of exercising daily, the elimination of soda out of his or her diet can be added to the existing habit. This method of gradual improvement prevents a client from quitting due to feeling overwhelmed and increases chances of lasting behavioral change.
- Keep in mind that the formation of new habits takes time. Research findings suggest that the time it takes to build a habit can vary from 18 to 254 days (Lally, van Jaarsveld, Potts, & Wardle, 2010).

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## ► INSTRUCTIONS

In this exercise, we are going to explore a powerful way to help you to realize your goals, namely by building habits. Please use Appendix “My Habit Creation Plan” to register your answers.

### Step 1: Choose a goal

Consider something you would like to change for good; some goal that would involve a long-lasting change. Perhaps you would like to feel more energized during the day or become and stay healthier. Formulate this goal in Appendix under “My goal.”

### Step 2: Choose an action

Now let’s focus on what is needed to realize this change. Think of the following question, Which action, if carried out repeatedly, would help you reach this goal? Try to think of things you could do rather than things you should no longer do. List this action in Appendix under “Action.”

### Step 3: Choose an approach

The secret to long-lasting change is the creation of habits. We create habits when we do the same thing repeatedly. New habits can be built in different ways. Consider the following three approaches.

#### *Drastic change*

The most rigorous way to build habits is to drastically change your behavior from the start. For example, if you wish to improve your health, you may decide to start exercising for 1 hour daily. Or, if you aim to write a book, you may decide to write 2,000 words daily. This “all-or-nothing” approach to habits is often used when we want to get rid of undesirable habits, such as smoking or drug abuse, when we try to quit these habits ‘cold turkey.’ Rather than gradually reducing the habit, you aim to create the habit of not engaging in the problematic behavior any more at all. A common problem with this approach is that it is often difficult to maintain such a drastic behavior change.

*Gradual change*

A less rigorous approach to habit building is using gradual change. This means that you start with a low dose of the desired behavior and gradually increase the frequency or duration of the behavior. For example, if you set the goal of meditating for 40 minutes a day, you may start with 2 minutes per day for the first week, then for 5 minutes the second week, and so on, until the desired 40 minutes of daily meditation is achieved. Likewise, if you aim to build a new habit of non-smoking, you may start with one cigarette less each day for the first week and then gradually reduce the number of cigarettes each week until no cigarettes are smoked anymore.

*Chunking*

Finally, habits can be built using a “chunking” approach. Here, you move closer to your goal by carrying out the desired behavior in smaller chunks for a longer period. For example, to reach the goal of writing a book, you may decide to write for 20 minutes every day. Or, if you aim to become an expert on a given topic, you may decide to spend 15 minutes per day reading on this topic. The different approaches to habits are summarized in Table 1.

**Table 1. Different habit-formation approaches**

Approach	Description
Drastic change	drastically changing your behavior in an 'all-or-nothing' fashion
Incremental change	starting with a low dose of the desired action and gradually increasing the frequency or duration of the action
Chunked change	steadily engaging in smaller doses of the same desired action for a longer period

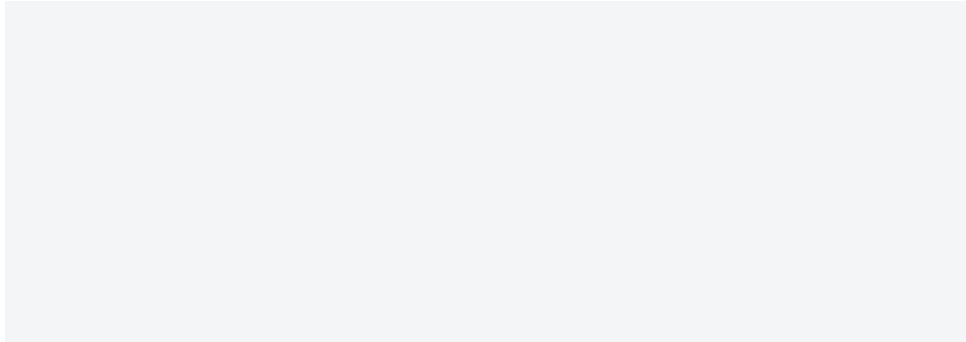
Which of the aforementioned habit-building approaches seems most attractive and workable for you? Consider the action you listed in step 2. Think of how you could use this particular approach to make this action a part of your daily or weekly routine. How, specifically, could you carry out this behavior? How often? How long? On which days? Try to be as specific as possible.

#### Step 4: Start taking action

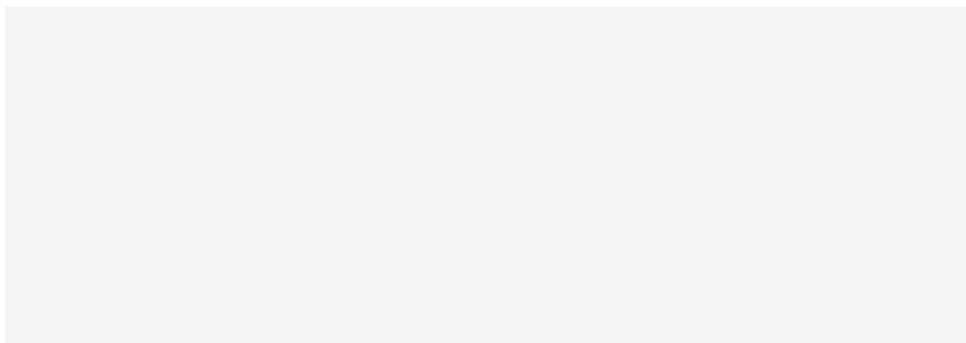
Start by carrying out the plan you described in step 3. Remember, no matter how small your action may seem, the most important thing to remember is that you are taking action. Building habits requires patience. It takes time for your new habit to evolve. Give it time. Try not to be discouraged if you fail to stick to your original plan. You can always pick up where you left off. The trick is to focus on the fact that you are moving closer to your goal, not on how far you are removed from your goal. Keep moving.

**► APPENDIX: MY HABIT CREATION PLAN****My goal**

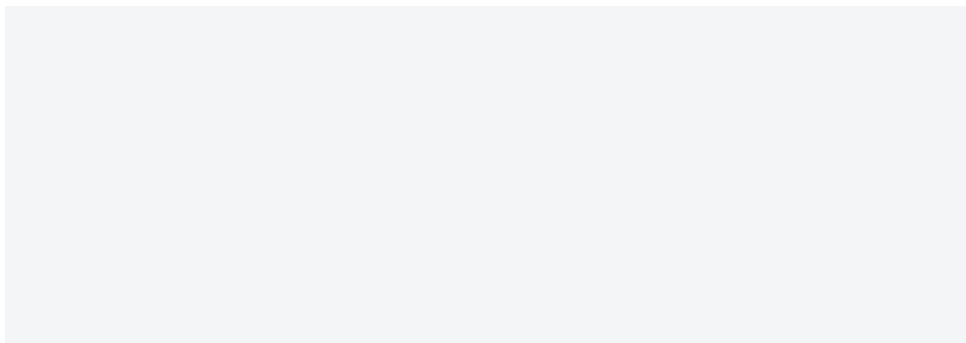
This is what I want to change for good:

**Action**

This action, if performed regularly, will help me realize this goal:

**My plan**

This is how I am going to create this new habit and realize my goal:



## ■ HABIT TRACKER

Habits are learned context-behavior associations that develop through the repetition of a given behavior in a given context (Mazar & Wood, 2018). As proverbial creatures of habit, approximately 45% of our everyday behaviors are repeated in the same context and location (Neal, Wood, & Quinn, 2006). Cued by specific circumstances and trigger events, habits are formed through regular repetition, happen primarily outside of conscious awareness, and play a key role in supporting long-lasting changes in behavior (Stawarz, Cox, & Blandford, 2014).

While the number of repetitions required to reach automaticity varies depending on the complexity of specific behaviors, the actions we repeat most often become etched into our neural pathways (Chen et al., 2020). When a behavior becomes automatic and performed with minimum conscious awareness or intent, a new habit is established. Habit formation promotes both cognitive economy and performance efficiency, which, in turn, allow for the conservation of self-regulatory strength (Duhigg, 2012).

Self-tracking plays an important role in the development of habits. A habit tracker is a tool used to record desired behaviors and provides a visual reminder that supports the repetition and maintenance of new behaviors (Stawarz, Cox, & Blandford, 2014). In other words, it is an effective way to measure whether a habit has been completed. According to Clear (2018), habit tracking is intrinsically motivating, satisfying, and provides clear evidence of one's progress and growth. As writer and philosopher, Will Durant, stated, "We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, then, is not an act but a habit."

### ► GOAL

The goal of this exercise is to help clients monitor and record the daily use of desired behaviors through the practice of habit tracking.

### ► ADVICE

- Clients should not attempt to change too many behaviors at the same time. An over-ambitious habit tracker can feel like a burden because it may introduce too many habits. Initially, tracking should be limited to five important habits: it is better to track one habit consistently than to track ten sporadically. Simplicity is the key. If necessary, clients can select just one simple habit to track and do it well before moving on to another.
- It is beneficial to pair an existing and reliable 'anchor' habit with a new one. For instance, clients might pair flossing their teeth (new habit) with brushing their

teeth (existing anchor habit). In this example, brushing one's teeth becomes a trigger to perform the new action of flossing. It is also easier to maintain the behavior because it is repeated in a specific context.

- Clients should try to use the habit tracker immediately after the habit occurs: the completion of the habit should be the cue to record it.
- Patience and consistency are integral to successful habit tracking. While small changes might appear to make little to no effect on the bigger picture, habits are the foundation blocks of change. Forming a habit will inevitably take longer for some clients and less for others; there is no set rule to how long it takes to acquire positive habits and promote change. While it is more common to select daily habits, clients may also track habits that occur a few times a week, such as housework or exercise.
- Advise clients to place the habit tracker somewhere it can be viewed and completed with ease every day, for instance, on the fridge, bedside table, in a workspace. The important thing is that they can complete the tracker as easily as possible; any location that is obvious and significant will make this easier to remember.
- New habits should be simplified until each action takes less than five minutes to complete. A client who wishes to run a marathon knows that to do so, one must be fit and healthy. To be fit and healthy, one must first exercise, and before one can exercise, one must be wearing suitable workout clothes. In this case, the five-minute habit could simply be changing into gym gear and running for five minutes. Think standardization before optimization - a habit must first exist before it is improved.
- Habits and their cues are often connected to our physical and social environment. The sight of the television when you get home from work, for instance, might be a cue to sit down on the sofa and do nothing for the rest of the evening. As such, it may be beneficial for clients to change their surroundings or routines to accommodate the formation of a new habit. Rather than sitting down upon returning home, one might instead change into workout clothes and exercise immediately after work, thereby delaying the cue to sit down and relax.
- The process of habit tracking will inevitably falter at some point, and, on such occasions, clients must return to practicing and tracking habits as quickly as possible. If, for any reason, one day is missed, there should be a clear focus on completing it the following day. It is not the end of the world to miss out on one workout, but it is important not to miss two in a row.
- Clients should record each habit immediately after each behavior has occurred, as the cue to track and record it is the completion of the habit itself.
- A habit tracker does not have to be static. Rather, it should be viewed as a flexible entity that can be reviewed and adjusted when needed.

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## ► INSTRUCTIONS

### Step 1: Understanding habits and habit tracking

Habits are routines or behaviors that are performed regularly and, in many cases, automatically. Almost every habit - both good and bad - is the result of many small choices that have been made over a lifetime.

A habit tracker is a simple way to record when you have completed a habit, and it is an effective way to build new habits, continue to practice existing good habits, and break bad habits. Small changes in our actions can be seen as unimportant because it might not be immediately obvious how they contribute to the bigger picture or end goal. For example, studying a new language for an hour does not mean that you are bilingual, yet you are choosing to build a new and positive habit that will bring you closer to reaching that goal. Habit tracking is about noticing the daily processes you follow and recording your actions at the moment rather than focusing solely on the result.

### Step 2: Identify habits to track

Identifying the habits that you wish to include in your tracker is an entirely personal choice. However, it is better to track a small number of habits than to become overwhelmed by tracking too many. In this step, you will select up to five habits

you wish to track. A list of commonly tracked habits can be found in Appendix C, which may be a source of inspiration as you consider the habits you wish to track.

First, take some time to think about the habits you would like to track. Start small, be specific, and initially aim to track habits that take less than five minutes to complete. In doing so, you can introduce a new routine without creating too much disorder to your current day-to-day activities. Most habits can be scaled down to five-minutes. For instance, “Read before bed every night” can be scaled down to “Read one page before bed every night” - most people can meditate for five minutes or read one page of a book.

As you identify the habits you wish to track, ask yourself the following questions:

1. Can it be done regularly (every day, if possible)?
2. Does it push your abilities but is still manageable?
3. Will it improve your physical health, mental health, finances, or relationships?
4. Does it encourage play and creativity?

Take a look at the habit tracker template provided in Appendix A. Put a circle around the month you would like to start building your habit. Next, write up to five habits in the first column of the habit tracker. Formulate your habits in such a way that they represent clear actions, such as reading, weightlifting, and writing in my journal. Preferably, frame them as actions to take, rather than actions to avoid. Thus, rather than saying “not forgetting to floss my teeth,” frame your habit as “flossing my teeth.”

You may wish to increase the number of habits you track as you become more familiar with the process.

### Step 3: Start tracking

Now that you have identified the habits you wish to track, it is time to start tracking. The more often you complete each habit, the stronger and more automatic it will become. Habit tracking aims to check on the progress by completing the habit and filling in the tracker every day.

The simplest way to complete the habit tracker is to place an X next to each day when a habit has been completed. Leave the space blank if you did not complete the activity.

Each time you use your habit tracker, you are getting immediate feedback that you are making progress and are on the right track. As time passes, your tracker will provide an accurate record of your habits, and seeing the progress you make each day will encourage you to keep going so that the chain of crosses is not broken.





**► APPENDIX C: COMMON HABITS TO TRACK**

- journal two sentences
- sketch in my notebook for five minutes
- take supplements
- have some 'me time'
- walk dog two blocks
- get to work on time
- do the recycling
- eat breakfast
- drink a glass of water first thing in the morning
- no biting nails
- do the dishes
- wash face before bed
- listen to a podcast
- practice yoga for 2 minutes
- write three positive things about today
- drink 8 glasses of water
- watch a TED Talk
- read one page of a book
- save money
- meditate for one minute
- do one push up
- no screens after 9 pm
- stretch for five minutes
- be creative
- write one thing I'm grateful for today
- make your bed as soon as you wake up
- wake up by [TIME]
- go to bed by [TIME]
- floss teeth
- eat five pieces of fruit
- play [INSTRUMENT]
- prioritize to-do list
- say "I love you" at least once
- do the dishes
- take a walk outside
- get in touch with a loved one
- walk the dog

## ■ A GOAL-BUDDY

A goal-buddy is a form of social support. In a goal-buddy system, two people (buddies) operate together as a unit to monitor and help each other reach a goal. Buddies are responsible for each other. A buddy can be anyone, a friend, co-worker, or family member. The idea behind a buddy system is that achieving a goal is easier when another person can keep you motivated and accountable. Moreover, having someone with whom you can share your struggles and successes can make the work easier and the mission less intimidating.

Past studies have addressed the effects of having a buddy in different contexts. For instance, in the context of quitting smoking, research has shown that having a buddy is positively related to success in smoking cessation (Murray et al., 1995; Pirie et al., 1997). Related research has shown the importance of having continued support following a weight loss program. Hall, Bass, and Monroe (1978) found that the participants who had more frequent post-program contact with other participants were more successful at maintaining their weight loss than were those having only minimal contact. In sum, these findings suggest that a buddy system can be an effective strategy to facilitate behavioral change.

### ▶ GOAL

The goal of this tool is to assist clients in achieving their goals by teaming up with goal-buddies who would help clients stay committed to their goals by keeping them accountable and motivated.

### ▶ ADVICE

- Note that a buddy system does not necessarily mean that face-to-face contact is always required. For instance, in a study by Rotheram-Borus et al. (2012), a mobile buddy system was used. Likewise, a client may choose a “virtual” buddy or combine face-to-face contact with virtual.
- A buddy system may be beneficial not only to clients who aim to reach a certain goal but also to clients who aim to maintain behavioral change, like weight loss (see DePue et al., 1995).
- It is important to stress that a buddy-system is most effective when both buddies are equally committed.

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## ► INSTRUCTIONS

### Step 1: Considering a goal-buddy

A goal-buddy is a person who helps you stay committed to your goal by keeping you accountable. Your buddy will check your progress, provide feedback, motivate, and encourage you.

A goal-buddy can be anyone, a close friend or a member of your family, a colleague or former co-worker, or somebody you only meet online. A goal-buddy system is a two-way journey. The other person should agree to be your goal-buddy just as you should agree to be his/her buddy, helping him/her reach his/her goal.

Why should you consider involving a buddy? Below are some important benefits of finding a person who can be your goal-buddy.

- *Motivation*  
When the going gets tough, a buddy can remind you what you are working so hard for and offer confidence-boosting words to help you revitalize your motivation.
- *Accountability*  
Knowing that someone is there to witness your intentions and progress increases your sense of accountability. Your buddy can keep you accountable by ensuring that you are following through with the action steps you promised yourself to take.
- *Balanced perspective*  
Because your buddy is not emotionally attached to your goals as you are, he or she may serve as an objective observer to your challenges and concerns.

## Step 2: Understanding the buddy's tasks

If you have not worked with a goal-buddy before, it is helpful to understand the role your buddy should play in your activities (and the role you would play). A goal-buddy provides:

- *Support*  
Your buddy supports you as you pursue your goals. This may involve reminding you of your strength and determination, boosting your confidence, and providing a listening ear as you work through challenges, among others.
- *Encouragement*  
In difficult times, your buddy provides encouraging words and positive reinforcement. He may remind you of the importance of your goal, your strengths, and the reasons you wanted to achieve your goal in the first place.
- *Honesty*  
Your buddy is honest with you. In case you are sabotaging your efforts or losing commitment, he informs you about his observations.
- *Commitment*  
Your buddy is committed to helping you realize your goals. Taking your partnership seriously, he ensures that you stay focused and committed as you progress toward your goals.

- *Accountability*  
Your buddy keeps you accountable. If you don't follow through with your action steps or otherwise begin to move away from your goal, your buddy will inform you about this.

### Step 3: Finding a buddy

When you start looking for a suitable goal-buddy, it can be helpful to make a short list of people who may be well suited to perform the tasks listed in Step 2.

In short, a good goal-buddy is someone who:

- you can trust
- is also aiming to achieve a goal
- is committed to becoming a goal-buddy
- has the time to discuss goal progress regularly

Chose a person on the list you created and talk to him about your idea to become goal buddies. Ask the person if he or she wants to be your goal-buddy but do not try to force the other person. You can always decide to start a trial period and evaluate its success. If it does not work out, you can always look for another person.

### Step 4: Preparing the buddy collaboration

Now that you've chosen a suitable goal-buddy, you will want to contact each other regularly to review each other's progress. However, before deciding on the plan to follow, you will need to ensure that your partnership will be mutually beneficial. Here are 5 guidelines for creating a successful goal-buddy system.

- *Work out a schedule*  
For the best results, you will need to meet your buddy regularly to check your progress and to ensure you are still on track. The frequency of your meetings depends on several factors, like, for instance, your schedules, the types of goals, time zones, and other factors. Make sure to meet often enough to stay focused and motivated, but not so often that the meetings will become a burden. For most goals, a weekly meeting should be enough. Note that you can both have "formal" and "informal" meetings with your buddy. Formal contact would involve pre-planned meetings, whereas informal contact would involve brief chat, email, or phone contact in case extra support is needed. You should work out a schedule that best fits your buddy's and your lifestyles and responsibilities.

- *Determine a start and end date*

It is advisable to set up your partnership for a limited time. Create a deadline or an end date on which your goal should be reached. Monitoring progress towards a goal is easier when there is a fixed endpoint in the future. If you have never worked with a goal-buddy (or with this particular buddy) before, it is advisable to set a shorter deadline to avoid losing motivation over time.
- *Create common rules*

Before you start working with your buddy, it should be clear what both of you expect from each other. Make sure to agree on things such as:

  - Extra support: What will happen when someone needs extra support between meetings?
  - Questions: What kinds of questions will be asked during the meetings?
  - Penalties: What measures will be taken when one of the buddies misses a meeting?
  - Etc.

### Step 5: Working with your buddy

During meetings with your buddy, reserve enough time to discuss:

#### *Goal progress*

- To what extent are you following your action plan?
- To what extent are you happy with your progress?
- What progress have you made toward your goal since the last meeting?
- How did you reward yourself for your progress since the last meeting?

#### *Obstacles*

- What obstacles (inner and external) did you encounter?
- Did you notice self-sabotage tendencies since your last meeting? If yes, what can you do to help your buddy deal with it?
- What is your plan to overcome them?

#### *Goal reflection*

- Is this goal easier or harder than you expected? Why?
- To what extent do you still want to accomplish this specific goal?
- Do you need to revise your goal? If so, what adjustments are needed?

*Action planning*

- What do you plan to accomplish by the next meeting?
- Is there anything in your action plan that needs improvement? If so, what?
- What information do you need to help you move closer to your goal?

*The collaboration*

- To what extent is our partnership still useful and motivational for you?
- What can you do to celebrate the progress that you both have made and your successful goal-buddy system?

## ■ BOOSTING MOTIVATION BY CELEBRATING MICRO-SUCCESSSES

At the heart of the celebration is the deliberate acknowledgment and appreciation of something positive. The expression of this appreciation can be private or shared with others. In the context of goal pursuit, the celebration involves appreciating one's progress towards a goal or the completion of a goal. For example, after a day during which substantial goal progress was made, a person may celebrate this "win" by sharing it with a friend and making a toast. Alternatively, this person may give a high-five to a colleague who helped finish an important report in time.

In terms of processes, celebrating small wins is conceptually similar to savoring, which is defined as the capacity "to attend to, appreciate, and enhance the positive experiences in [people's] lives" (Bryant & Veroff, 2017, p. 2). The reinforcing effect of savoring becomes apparent in studies showing that the consistent practice of savoring experiences leads to happiness (Jose, Lim & Bryant, 2012), optimism, life satisfaction, and reduced depressive symptoms (Bryant, 2003).

Celebrating small wins can also have a positive effect on group settings. The celebration of success, no matter how small, is typically associated with feelings of pride and happiness. Research on team performance has shown that affective states transfer among team members. In other words, when a team member expresses his pride through a celebration with other team members, other team members may experience this feeling of pride as well. This emotional contagion has been found to influence group dynamics, with the contagion of positive emotions leading to improved cooperation, decreased conflict, and increased perceptions of task performance in teams (Barsade, 2002).

### ► GOAL

The goal of this tool is to help clients recognize the value of micro-successes, understand how even small achievements can contribute to goal realization, and increase motivation through the celebration of small wins.

### ► ADVICE

- The celebration of micro-successes should be proportionate to the achievement, that is, the celebration is not because of some huge achievement; rather, it is meant to reinforce the positive feelings that go hand in hand with progress. As such, celebrations should be enjoyable and meaningful, not over the top, dramatic, or expensive affairs.

- Reflecting on micro-successes that pave the way to goal accomplishment serves to strengthen the internal scripts that direct and motivate effective action. Further, discussion and mental reenactments of the small wins experienced on the journey to achieving an end goal are both empowering and sources of intrinsic motivation to continue the journey towards further success.
- This exercise is beneficial for both individual clients and groups. Within the workplace, a diary or noticeboard can be used to record team achievements and successes daily. These small wins can then be acknowledged and celebrated in team meetings with a simple recognition, a heartfelt “thank you,” or another celebration that is appropriate for the organizational setting.

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### ► INSTRUCTIONS

#### Step 1: Understand the importance of celebrating micro-successes

In this exercise, we are going to focus on your micro-successes: small wins that prove that you made progress. While we tend to focus primarily on life’s big achievements, even the smallest wins have transformational power that can lead to great things and significant changes. This is why it is important to recognize and celebrate our small wins. The celebration of micro-successes redefines success in terms of progress rather than a specific outcome. Whether it is doing five push-ups, preparing a meal from scratch, organizing your workspace, or even drinking enough water each day, the celebration of these micro-successes is about honoring incremental progress and accomplishments. By celebrating micro-successes, moments are created each day that allow us to reflect on our achievements and, importantly, to feel good about them.

The more micro-successes you recognize and celebrate, the more optimistic, motivated, confident, and resilient you become. While micro-successes may seem insignificant in the grand scheme of things, acknowledging even the smallest

accomplishment helps improve how you feel about yourself and your abilities. The more often we experience that sense of progress, the more likely we are to be motivated and creatively productive in the long run. In terms of goal pursuit, even if you do not reach your end goal, celebrating each micro-success serves as a reminder that you have already done what some never do - you took the first step and started the journey.

### Step 2: Reflect on micro-successes

It is important to make time to reflect on your micro-successes regularly; it is all too easy to forget those small victories, particularly when you might be focused on a specific end goal. Micro-successes can be so small that we do not recognize their value, and we do not realize how each small achievement contributes to the bigger picture. Even if your micro-successes have little to no effect on larger goals, the simple act of recording, reflecting, and then celebrating incremental progress is a powerful way to improve your motivation and replicate that same state of focus and purpose in future.

In this step, you will write down the micro-successes you experience each day, no matter how small or insignificant they may seem, in a celebration journal. At the end of each day, take some time to record and reflect upon that day's achievements. You may use the scoring form provided in Appendix A to record your daily micro-successes and celebrations. A list of questions is provided (Appendix B), and it can be used as a guide while recording and reflecting on your daily micro-successes. Remember, this is not a 'to-do' list; the focus here should be on what you have *already* accomplished.

### Step 3: Celebrate your micro-successes

How you choose to celebrate your micro-successes is a matter of personal preference. No matter how you choose to celebrate, it is important to remember that it does not have to be a major undertaking, and it should be proportionate to the achievement. You are, after all, not celebrating because you have achieved something huge; rather, you are celebrating because you have made progress. It could be as simple as a high-five with a colleague or treating yourself to a delicious cup of coffee. The important thing is to celebrate in ways that are enjoyable and meaningful to you.

A selection of celebration activities can be found in Appendix C. While this list is by no means exhaustive, it may serve as a source of inspiration as you begin the practice of celebrating your micro-successes.

▶ **APPENDIX A: MICRO-SUCCESS SCORING FORM**

Date	Description of Micro-Success	Description of Celebration

**► APPENDIX B: REFLECTION QUESTIONS**

What have you achieved today, no matter how small?

What did you achieve today that signified a potential breakthrough?

What did you achieve today that has motivated you to do more?

What small steps did you take today that can be celebrated?

Did this micro-success bring you closer to a larger end goal? If so, how does reaching this milestone make you feel?

What positive emotions do you experience when thinking about your micro-successes?

What small victories did you achieve this week that will make things better next week?

What achievements do you feel good about today?

Do you feel motivated to achieve more?

What did you do well this week?

What small wins did you experience that were not anticipated?

What can you do tomorrow to lay the foundation for future micro-successes?

What led you to achieve this micro-success?

**► APPENDIX C: WAYS TO CELEBRATE MICRO-SUCCESSSES**

- Think about something small that you achieved and allow yourself to bask in the feeling of pride, accomplishment, and satisfaction that comes with making progress.
- Repeat a celebratory mantra such as, 'You have already achieved more than you had ten minutes ago.' Alternatively, you can create your positive affirmation and say it each time you achieve a micro-success.
- Prepare a 'well done' email template that you can alter to include each day's micro-successes and send it to yourself. This will provide an ever-growing list of your progress and achievements, all conveniently stored in your inbox.
- Adopt your own 'power move.' Think of a tennis match, when a player wins a point, he/she might celebrate his/her micro-success with a fist-pump. Each time you achieve a micro-success, you can give yourself a pat on the back or a celebratory self-high five.
- Celebrate the micro-successes of others. Make their small win more memorable and motivating by leaving a handwritten note on their desk to congratulate them.
- Acknowledge your progress, find a way to verbalize your small win, and share the micro-success with others who support you.
- Avoid moving on to the next task right away and take a five-minute break.
- Think about the activities you enjoy most and take part in one each time you achieve a micro-success. This can be anything from playing computer games to watching a movie. The important part is that you experience enjoyment from it.
- Notice the moment. Allow time to be excited about the micro-successes and milestones you are reaching and the overall progress that you are making.
- Listen to your favorite album or watch your favorite movie.
- Celebrate small wins with a reward, for instance, a small gift, or treat yourself to dinner at your favorite restaurant.
- Schedule a massage so that you can relax and recharge.
- Look in the mirror, think about your progress, and say, 'Good job!'
- Reread the daily reflections documented in step 2 of the exercise. This will remind you of all the progress you have made and provide a feedback loop of positive emotions.
- If your micro-success is related to a larger end goal, acknowledging these smaller milestones serves to celebrate your persistence, resilience, and ability to follow through regardless of whether you succeed at the ultimate goal.
- Take a gratitude pause to celebrate the small wins: pause, reflect, and appreciate your efforts.