**Setting SMART Goals**

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You may have heard of S.M.A.R.T goals. If not, here is what setting SMART goals really mean.

**S**pecific

**M**easurable

**A**chievable

**R**elevant

**T**imed

Here is an explanation of each part of S.M.A.R.T goals.

Specific

A goal needs to be specific otherwise it has no chance of succeeding. Examples of goals which are vague and not specific are:

Lose weight

Save money

Go on holiday

Get fit

The reason why they are vague goals is that there is no way of knowing when you have achieved your goal. If your goal is to lose weight then how much weight do you want to lose? If you want to save money then what are you saving money for and how much money do you want to save?

Measurable

A measurable goal is a goal that you specify what you want top achieve. If you want to get fit and you have never done any running previously then you might set a goal such as “I want to jog one mile without stopping for a rest.” This is measurable. You know whether you have achieved your goal or not.

Achievable

The goal must be achievable through your own efforts. A goal such as “To win the lottery” is not achievable through your own efforts because you cannot do anything to influence the outcome. A goal such as “To eliminate one bad food from my diet every week” is achievable through your own efforts because your choices will influence the outcome.

Relevant

A relevant goal is one which is relevant to your own personal circumstances and skill set. A relevant goal is not one that is imposed on you by well meaning friends and associates who say, “You should do this and you should do that.” Think for yourself and make your own choices. It is a good idea to keep your goals to yourself unless of course they affect your family.

Timed

A timed goal has a deadline attached to it. For example you may have set a goal, “To jog a mile without stopping for a rest.” This goal is not timed, but if it is December 31 then you may set a goal, “To jog a mile without stopping for a rest by February 1.”

Your next task is deciding how you are going to achieve your goal. On day one you may decide that you will jog for 400 metres, walk 400 metres, jog 400 metres, and walk 400 metres.

On the second week you could increase the distances you jog without stopping and reduce the walking distance.

By breaking down your goal into simple steps you can achieve your S.M.A.R.T goal.

All the best and a happy new year.

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