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nineteen

GOAL SETTING
WORKSHEET



Goal Setting Worksheet

"Show me a woman whose dreams have come true and I'll show you a woman who had a plan."

—Marie Bostwick

Are you serious about taking control of your life by making and actually fulfilling important goals for 2019? I'm not talking about making resolutions. If you're old enough to be reading a blog focused on life beyond 50, you're old enough to know that resolutions don't work! But goals *can and do work!* Especially if you take goal setting seriously. That starts with one simple but incredibly effective trick...

WRITE.

I know, I know. It sounds too simple. But, it works. Studies have shown people who write down their goals are 42 percent more likely to achieve those goals. 42 percent! Just by writing down your goals! And if you *really* want to tilt the odds in your favor, go a step farther. Write down SMART goals.

Last year, by creating **SMART** goals, I was able to write a novel, successfully launch a blog, lose twenty pounds, finish my first sprint triathlon, create a beautifully organized closet and garage, make new friends in my new town, and strengthen my family relationships. Not bad, right? I didn't succeed in reaching all of my goals in 2018 but I made at least some progress on every single goal I set for myself last year. Believe me, SMART goals work!

By now, you're probably wondering what constitutes a SMART goal. Glad you asked. SMART goals are...

S Specific
Clear and specific opposed to general. For example, eliminating sugar from your diet as opposed to eating healthier.

M Measureable
Has clear measures that will help you track your progress and know you've succeeded.

A Achievable
Not necessarily an easy goal (if it's easy it probably shouldn't be among your goals) but something you can achieve with hard work and focus. For example, if I train hard I could run a 10K this year but, at this point, my Olympic dream is behind me.

R Relevant
A goal that you truly care about, something that will improve your life in ways that you find exciting and motivating.

T Time-bound
A goal or progress toward a goal that can be met within a specific period of time. A time bound goal answers questions such as when and how often.



What SMART goals are *not* is resolutions.

Resolutions generally amount to little more than wishful thinking. They don't involve a framework for success or a plan for achievement. That's why most resolutions fail and, in turn, make us feel like failures! We begin to think that the problem lies with our personal lack of discipline, motivation, or character. But really, the problem lies in how we structured, or failed to structure our goals.

A goal without a plan is just a dream. That's what most resolutions are – goals without plans, dreams that will probably never come true. SMART goals are goals that can help you create a plan to assess, attain, achieve the things you care most about and, in the process, make your dreams come true.

Let me show you the difference between resolutions and SMART goals.

Instead of saying you're to get into better shape this year, a SMART goal might be...

■ "In the month of January, on Monday and Friday, I will attend the 7am cardio class at the community center. On Wednesday I will bike to and from work. On Saturday afternoons, I will take a three mile walk with my spouse."

Instead of saying you want to grow closer to God this year, a SMART goal might be...

■ "At 6:45am, 5 days week, I will spend 20 to 30 minutes in prayer and reading the Bible."

Instead of saying you want to improve your financial situation, a SMART goal might be..."

■ "By the end of 2019, I will pay off the debt on my VISA card by paying at least \$100 over the minimum payment each month and paying only cash for my purchases"

See that difference?

This worksheet, based on the SMART goal system I use, will help you think out and prioritize your goals, then come up with a plan to make them happen.

Set aside some time when you won't be interrupted to fill out this worksheet. You'll need at least an hour, more likely two, but it's important that you give this task some serious thought.

The first question in each section will ask you to list all the goals you might want to accomplish in a given area, both large and small. I've included a few suggestions in each section, just to get you thinking, but your list should include whatever is important to you.

This is something of a private brainstorming session, so don't worry if some of your goals seem silly – no one has to see this but you. Have fun with this!



And don't be afraid to include big goals, things you can't quite bring yourself to believe could really come true. It never hurts to dream. But don't just dream, dream SMART.

Here's to a great new year, filled with big, fierce dreams that really will come true!
Cheers!

Marie



Professional/Vocational Goals

What career or vocational goals would you like to accomplish in the coming year? (This can include volunteer work). Would you like to get a promotion? Find a new job? Finish a project? Attend a conference or workshop? Add to your skill set or professional certifications?

Write down all your possible **PROFESSIONAL/VOCATIONAL** goals for the year (Add extra pages if you need more room).

From those listed above, which are your **TOP THREE** goals for the year?

Considering those three goals, what **ONE** goal would you most like to achieve in the coming year?

List **THREE** things you can do in the coming month to move yourself nearer to achieving your **ONE** most important goal in this area. (Make sure they are SMART - Specific, Measureable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound.)



Relationship/Family Goals

In the coming year, what are your goals in the realm of relationships and family? Would you like to take a family trip? Plan a reunion? Find a better caregiving situation for an elderly parent? Start dating? Ask forgiveness from someone you've hurt? Go on a girlfriend's getaway?

Write down all your possible **RELATIONAL/FAMILIAL** goals for the year (Add extra pages if you need more room).

From those listed above, which are your **TOP THREE** goals for the year?

Considering those three goals, what **ONE** goal would you most like to achieve in the coming year?

List **THREE** things you can do in the coming month to move yourself nearer to achieving your **ONE** most important goal in this area. (Make sure they are SMART - Specific, Measureable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound.)



Intellectual/Creative Goals

What intellectual or creative goals would you like to accomplish in the coming year? Would you like to go back to school? Read a certain number of books? Start a book club or discussion group? Take a painting, crafting class, or computer class? Learn a foreign language?

Write down all your possible **INTELLECTUAL/CREATIVE** goals for the year (Add extra pages if you need more room).

From those listed above, which are your **TOP THREE** goals for the year?

Considering those three goals, what **ONE** goal would you most like to achieve in the coming year?

List **THREE** things you can do in the coming month to move yourself nearer to achieving your **ONE** most important goal in this area. (Make sure they are SMART - Specific, Measureable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound.)



Spiritual Goals

What would you like to accomplish or achieve in regards to your spiritual life in the coming year? Would you like to establish a regular practice of prayer or meditation? Read a particular book? Join a Bible Study? Attend a retreat? Find a church, synagogue, or other spiritual community?

Write down all your possible **SPIRITUAL** goals for the year (Add extra pages if you need more room).

From those listed above, which are your **TOP THREE** goals for the year?

Considering those three goals, what **ONE** goal would you most like to achieve in the coming year?

List **THREE** things you can do in the coming month to move yourself nearer to achieving your **ONE** most important goal in this area. (Make sure they are SMART - Specific, Measureable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound)



Financial Goals

What are your financial goals for the coming year? Would you like to increase your income? Save a particular amount of money? Find a financial advisor? Create a retirement plan? Pay off credit card debt? Donate to charity? Write a will? Open a 401K? Start a college fund for your grandkids?

Write down all your possible **FINANCIAL** goals for the year (Add extra pages if you need more room).

From those listed above, which are your **TOP THREE** goals for the year?

Considering those three goals, what **ONE** goal would you most like to achieve in the coming year?

List **THREE** things you can do in the coming month to move yourself nearer to achieving your **ONE** most important goal in this area. (Make sure they are SMART - Specific, Measureable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound.)



Physical Goals

What are your health and fitness goals for the coming year? Would you like to lose ten pounds? Run a mile? Compete in a 10K? Get a new bike? Find a yoga class or personal trainer? Learn a new sport? Reduce or eliminate a particular medication? Lower your blood pressure?

Write down all your possible **PHYSICAL** goals for the year (Add extra pages if you need more room).

From those listed above, which are your **TOP THREE** goals for the year?

Considering those three goals, what **ONE** goal would you most like to achieve in the coming year?

List **THREE** things you can do in the coming month to move yourself nearer to achieving your **ONE** most important goal in this area. (Make sure they are SMART - Specific, Measureable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound.)



Recreational Goals

What would you like to accomplish in your leisure time in the coming year?
Would you like to go on a cruise? Or a camping trip? Take a dance class?
Attend a quilt retreat? Visit a national park?

Write down all your possible **RECREATIONAL** goals for the year (Add extra pages if you need more room).

From those listed above, which are your **TOP THREE** goals for the year?

Considering those three goals, what **ONE** goal would you most like to achieve in the coming year?

List **THREE** things you can do in the coming month to move yourself nearer to achieving your **ONE** most important goal in this area. (Make sure they are SMART - Specific, Measureable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound.)



Personal Goals

Consider any other goals you might have that did not fit into the categories above. Write them down in the space below. (Add extra pages if you need more room).

From those listed above, which are your **TOP THREE** goals for the year?

Considering those three goals, what **ONE** goal would you most like to achieve in the coming year?

List **THREE** things you can do in the coming month to move yourself nearer to achieving your **ONE** most important goal in this area. (Make sure they are SMART - Specific, Measureable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound.)



Did you finish the worksheet? You did? **CONGRATULATIONS!**

You not only have a list of important, exciting goals, you're much closer to making those goals a reality than you were when you began!

Now, if you're really serious about making these goals a reality in the next year, I encourage you to take the next step.

Get yourself a really good planner or calendar (I'm a huge fan of Ruth Soukup's **Living Well Planner**) and transfer some of the specific, measureable, achievable, relevant, time-bound steps you developed in each section of the worksheet into your calendar for the coming month.

Don't worry if you're not able to accomplish all three steps in all the areas within the month (honestly, I'd be shocked if you could). Just choose a couple of areas you want to focus on in the coming month and commit to actually completing that step by the date you've chosen in your planner.

Especially for those goals that are focused on a specific project you want to complete versus a habit you'd like to establish, it makes sense to space them out over the course of the year. For example, I have two big writing projects I'd like to tackle in 2019. I'll focus on the largest project during the first quarter of the year and the smaller project during the third quarter of the year.

On the last day of the old month, put aside an hour or two to refer to your worksheet and decide what you'd like to focus on in that month. Block out specific days or times in your planner to work on completing the steps in your SMARTER goals. Repeat the process at the end of every month throughout the year.

A word of caution...no matter how committed or organized we are, sometimes, our plan may not be the same as life's plan. Don't give up or beat yourself up if you aren't able to accomplish all the things you hoped in a given year or month. Just do your best and keep trying. Even if you're only able to accomplish one step in your plan, you'll be one step closer to reaching your goal than you'd have been without a plan.

Another very important part of making goals happen is celebrating your successes along the road achieving them. Each month, think about how you'll reward yourself for accomplishing the steps in your plan (not just the big overall goals but the smaller steps you've completed to achieve them). Celebrating success will help keep you encouraged and energized along the way.

As the old proverb says, "A journey of one thousand miles begins with the first step." By taking the time to think through and write down your goals, you've already taken the first step. And do know what that means?

You're already on the road to an amazing year!

Fiercely Yours,

Marie Bostwick

