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## **Goal Setting 2012 -Think, Choose and Do It**

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### Think

To create a clear, positive mental destination for your goals in 2012, ask yourself these questions:

- What is my goal? If I know what I don't want (or what I want to stop doing or lose or let go of), what is the opposite of that?
- What do I want to change about what I'm doing or experiencing?
- How will my life be better when I change this?
- What makes this the time to change?
- What do I think and feel about the prospect of making this change now? What are my hopes and fears?
- How will I know when I've accomplished this goal?
- What will my life look and feel like when I've accomplished this goal?
- What do I want to be able to say is true about how I'm being and living at the end of 2012?

Take your time reflecting on these questions, and write down your answers. You'll find that they begin to describe an empowering statement of intent and a big-picture vision. If you don't feel called to writing, find or create an image or a piece of music that helps articulate your vision. Or make a vision-board collage. With a clear, positive vision emblazoned on your brain, your path ahead will become more inviting. Disempowering choices will become much less tempting.

### **Choose**

One way to build confidence is to get more information about the change you're hoping to make. This helps demystify the process and bring it into the realm of the doable. Read articles and books, take classes, ask people who have made this change about their experience and what the change required. Gather any necessary equipment or supplies you will need to be successful.

Using a mantra is another great way to build confidence. Repeat to yourself one of the following several times a day: "I choose to change" or "I get to change" or "I can do this." The next step is assessing where you're at right now as it relates to your goal. Simply notice and pay attention to your daily behaviors and ask yourself these questions:

- What choices or behaviors in my daily life do I currently engage in that support my goal or get me closer to my goal? Even if it's a single, tiny thing, take note of it.
- What behaviors in my daily life do I currently engage in that detract from my goal? Again, which situations or experiences trigger me to engage in self-sabotaging behavior, or to make a disempowering choice?
- How well do the choices I currently make in my daily life serve me?
- What information do I still need to learn about the change I want to make? What information do I already have?

The answers to these questions will give you a clear picture of where you're starting from. This information is critical for accomplishing the next two steps in this stage: creating an action plan and setting appropriate benchmarks for measuring your progress.

An action plan is what turns your good intentions into something concrete and executable. Benchmarks are what allow you to see the progress you're making or where you're getting stuck. To create an action plan with benchmarks, ask yourself the following questions. Make your answers as specific as possible:

- Who/what can be a resource as I prepare to make this change?
- Where else will I find support?
- When will I begin to make this change?
- What will my first step be?
- What will my next step be?
- Who will support me as I make this change?
- Who might (intentionally or unintentionally) sabotage me?
- What boundaries will I have to set with people?
- What will I have to give up to make this change?
- How can I change my environment to support my new goal?
- What other preparations or shifts can I make to support my new goal?
- How will I measure my progress?
- What small wins in my daily life will signify that I'm making progress?
- How often will I measure my progress? How will I measure it?
- How will I reward myself when I've accomplished this goal? How will I notice and acknowledge meaningful progress?

The answers to these questions are the building blocks for your action plan. When you've answered them, you will be ready to move into action with gusto!

## Do It

- What is my goal?
- How will this change improve my life?
- What makes this the time to change?
- How will I know when I've accomplished this goal?
- What will my life look and feel like when I've accomplished this goal?



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Three powerful additional questions can also help in the moment of decision:

- In an hour, what will I be more happy/pleased/proud that I did?
- What choice would lead to the least amount of regret?
- What would the person I aspire to be choose right now?

## Win

It's critically important to notice and acknowledge your successes. Whenever you have a win — even if it's a small one — you get important information about what's working and what isn't. You get the feedback you need to keep on creating more successes. So, at the end of each day, ask yourself the following questions:

- Did I accomplish one or more of my goals today? If so, how did I do that? If not, what smaller successes did I create or experience over the past 24 hours?
- If I didn't accomplish something I'd hoped to today, was my goal too ambitious? Was there an obstacle I underestimated?
- What choices or decisions, no matter how small, did I make today that served my larger goal?
- If I didn't take forward action toward my goal today, did I stop myself from slipping backward? Did I manage to avoid making a negative, actively destructive or disempowering choice?

Once you've identified your wins for that day, analyze them a little more deeply for important information about the nature of your patterns and progress. Ask yourself these questions:

- If I had some big or small wins today, what went right? What worked to help me achieve them?
- What obstacles did I find blocking my way or impeding my progress?
- What did I learn about myself in the process?

Finally, celebrate both the wins and the things you learn from working through this process. Consciously celebrating your wins will give your brain a hit of dopamine, resulting in a supercharged, confident, upbeat feeling. Our brains are hardwired to minimize danger and maximize reward. So if your brain learns that a "win" will result in a reward, it will strive to create that win again and again!

Think...Choose and Do it! Create a "Win-Win" plan for 2012. Good luck!!!