

Learning how to set goals and achieve them will bring abundance to your life. There is huge amount written on goal setting and the perception is often that it is complicated. This is not the case and it can be a very pleasurable experience. Quite simply, goal setting is about setting a defined goal, having the motivation to work towards it, achieving it and then celebrating in the success. We can only achieve our goals if we truly know what it is we want and what it looks like. When the goal setting process is correct it ignites your creative power and passion and this properly attunes the subconscious magnet to draw the resources, ideas and circumstances that align with your life purpose and vision. Visualisation can be a very powerful tool to help identify your life goals.

Caroline Bottrill has put together some coaching tools that she has used with many clients in her coaching sessions to successfully bring about positive change in their lives with a combination of goal setting and visualisation. Put some quiet time aside to have a go for yourself with the following exercises:

### Goal setting Visualisation exercise:

Close your eyes and relax. Take a steady breath in for 5 seconds, hold it, and then breath out for five seconds, whilst saying mentally the word 'relax' on the outward breath. Continue this breathing cycle.

Imagine it is now April 09, what would need to have happened in your life in order for you to feel really proud and to have made progress?

What can you see, feel and hear going on? What evidence do you have to indicate you have made progress? What values have been honoured to help you achieve your goal?

After the visualisation process put pen to paper and brainstorm all the thoughts, words, metaphors, values and beliefs, feelings and emotions that you noted during the process.

### Goal setting exercise:

Below are seven areas of your life. In each area write down what you want to become, accomplish, have or do in life.

Imagine you had a magic wand and could do anything what would you write down? Include the outrageous ones too!

1. Professional/career
2. Financial
3. Health (physical & mental)
4. Family
5. Friends/social
6. Personal/Spiritual growth
7. Fun & recreation

- Use the list you brainstormed from your visualisation to help you start putting your goals together with 'true meaning' to you.

- Think about the values you need to honour daily in order to achieve what you want in each area of your life. For example, love, respect for oneself and others, fun, loyalty.

- 1 Now identify the top 3 goals you would like to work on created from the seven areas of life above.
- 2 Break each goal down into small steps. Imagine this as a bite-sized chunk of the overall goal (mini-goals). For example, weight loss programme – to lose three stone. Think and focus on the first one stone weight loss as your first mini-goal.
- 3 What resources will you call upon to help you achieve these 3 goals? For example, time, money, support from friends/work colleagues, web based research, skills, life learnings, any transferable skills.
- 4 Make these goals SMART (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic and Time framed/sensitive)
- 5 Set deadlines for achieving these 3 goals. Set deadlines for your mini-goals too. Start working on your goals today.
- 6 List 10 reasons why you want to

achieve each of these 3 goals so badly?

- 7 List 10 results of not achieving these 3 goals? (This helps ensure you are motivated to achieve your goals)
- 8 Develop a sense of urgency to get things done! Get rid of procrastination!
- 9 Put your goals into positively stated affirmations which you can affirm by repeating them to yourself five times daily. This will in bed the positive changes into your subconscious mind. Tip: use sticky pads in your diary, car, desk, bedroom to remind you of the goals you have committed to.
- 10 Finally write a letter to yourself a 'Letter from the future'. This is essentially your vision of your own future that you have created. Undertake this exercise in a calm and peaceful environment and allow yourself time to think and reflect. Tip: Playing relaxing or classical music will help inspire you creatively during this exercise.



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## What is stress?

Without going into great detail, stress can be classed as "the non-specific response of the body to any demands made upon it." When we talk of "demands" made upon us this can mean several things, a threat or challenge that requires us to change in some way. The response is usually automatic, immediate. Stress is not always a bad thing, it can be helpful to us (eustress) this is when we use it to perform better, but when it is destructive (distress) it can make us ill.

### Causes of stress

Due to a variety of socio-economic reasons Stress has become more and more widely recognized by both individuals and employers. Companies are now paying stress managers to help their staff to deal with stress more efficiently.

If you look around, you will notice that the causes of stress fall into two categories, let's call them triggers, internal and external.

### External could be:

Major life events like death, losing your job or even being promoted. Daily life hassles like traffic, time constraints or technology. Then there's the stress from the physical environment, like noise, bright lights, and confined spaces. Let's not forget the social stressors - other people, rudeness, parking your car, bullying.

### Internal could be:

Lifestyle choices: too much work, not getting enough sleep or drinking too much caffeine and no exercise. Some people over analyze and become self critical and have negative internal dialogue. Having unrealistic expectations, not being flexible.

### How Hypnotherapy can help deal with stress

Stress management takes in various therapeutic models and tailors a programme to include not just dealing with the presenting stress but to avoid reaching high stress levels in the first place.

Hypnotherapy looks at the whole person not just the stress. Firstly, teaching relaxation techniques so the person can produce this state when ever they wish, then looking at changing various areas of the person's life.

### Lifestyle Habits

- Caffeine, alcohol
- Food intake, types of food
- Exercise
- Sleep
- Leisure time
- Relaxation exercises

### Reducing Stressful Situations

- Time management
- Relationship issues
- Assertiveness
- Goal setting

### How you think

- Positive thinking
- Humour
- See problems as opportunities



Anil Arora

I am 25 years old and I am still single, this is not because I cannot find someone to go out with me, on the contrary, I have had many relationships in the last five years. Unfortunately the reason I think I am still single is because as soon as someone gets too close to me I start to back away for some reason. This is puzzling me as it has caused the breakdown of all my relationships. I try to explain to them that I cannot commit, but they don't understand, I don't understand. How can I help myself and stop this from happening again?

Arora says: I have had this situation many times in my therapy rooms. Generally speaking, it causes much heartache. Firstly, you should ask yourself a serious question, do you really want a long-term relationship. If the answer is 'yes', then ask yourself are these people that you have been going out with providing you with what you really need? If they have not, then this may be the reason why you have backed away. There is another avenue to look at, could the reason why you distance yourself be because you don't want to get hurt? Perhaps in previous relationships this has happened and you want to avoid it happening again as it is too painful, however, this is not always straight forward. Sometimes, people find it easier to avoid painful situations, a big part of my job as a therapist is to challenge and support clients in making positive life changing decisions, similar to this one. I would suggest that you reflect on both of these points.

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