

## **SUCCESSFUL GOAL SETTING NOW**

Setting Goals, Setting the Stage and Standing Ovarations

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Goal setting is far more than stating ideas of grandeur and wishes. If asked, most of us would love to be fit and healthy. Yet the data collected by Statistics Canada shows that the majority of Canadians aged 18 and over, are neither fit nor healthy. 36.1% are overweight, and 23.1% are obese.<sup>1</sup> If we want to be fit and healthy, why aren't we?

When it comes to health and fitness we are bombarded with a variety of choices and alternatives. We all want to be fit and we all want to be healthy. We can join a gym, join a team, join a club, attend a seminar, attend a class, or attend a session. The list to choose from seems almost infinite: Personal Trainers, Bootcamp Instructors, Aerobic Instructors, Pilates Instructors, Yoga Instructors, Physiotherapists, Chiropractors, Massage Therapists, Naturopaths, Homeopaths, Doctors of Chinese Medicine, Body Workers and General Practitioners are just some of the many health care professionals ready and willing to offer advice and prescription. For some people, choice means freedom, for others, it means fear.

When faced with so many options, the fear of making the wrong choice can be so powerful that we find ourselves moving away from, instead of towards, our goals. What we must remember is that a step in the right direction is progress. So the question shouldn't be about who is right or who is wrong in their philosophy of health and fitness, but rather, "What are my goals?" If you take the time to ask yourself this question, and really be honest with yourself, you will be taking that first step in the right direction. You will also be taking responsibility for where you are right now and where you are headed. Let's get started!

### **Goal setting is a powerful tool that when effectively utilized can help us:**

- Decide what is important for us to achieve in our life.
- Separate what is important from what is irrelevant, or what is a distraction.
- Stay motivated.
- Build our self-confidence, and self-esteem.

In order for goals to be achieved, they need to follow some clear and very objective criteria. Many have heard of the SMART approach to goal setting. The SMART approach has been discussed, practiced and preached by authors, coaches, managers and CEO's the world over in one form or another. Essentially broken down it provides the criteria for success in goal achievement. Many variations exist but the fundamentals are all present.

### **Goals need to be:**

**S** - specific, significant, stretching

**M** - measurable, meaningful, motivational

**A** - attainable, agreed upon, achievable, acceptable, action-oriented

**R** - realistic, relevant, reasonable, rewarding, results-oriented

**T** - timely, tangible

SMART goals can be smarter when we take the time to clearly see the benefits of achieving our goals, and align our goals with our values. If our goals serve our values, we add integrity to our actions. This brings meaning to our goals, and can be the difference between success and failure.

## **Ensuring Success**

Once we have set our goals, we need to take measures to ensure our success:

1. **Setting the Stage** (antecedent: that which precedes an event, or causes an event to occur)
2. **Standing Ovation** (positive reinforcement: a pleasant consequence which increases the frequency of particular behavior)

**Setting the Stage for success** to occur is extremely important and plays a key role as the antecedent, in achievement of desired behavior. *Setting the Stage* is a four part process of clearing, aligning, preparing and applying.

1. *Setting the Stage* involves **CLEARING** away any items, events and/or people that will potentially sabotage your success, and replacing them with tools and people who will enable your success.
2. *Setting the Stage* to achieve your goals is also about **ALIGNING** your goals with the right tools and the right resources in order to build the environment and the team to assist in scoring the goal.
3. Once you have aligned yourself with the right tools and team, it's time to **PREPARE** yourself for action with an action plan. A detailed plan of what you are going to do and when you are going to do it, along with a detailed plan of what others will be doing to contribute towards your goals.
4. With a plan in place, it's time to **APPLY** your self and bring the plan to life.

Bringing it to life is the beauty of the journey. A destination cannot be reached without a journey. Having set a beautiful stage, you are about to embark on something bigger and far more powerful than you may have anticipated. This is Life itself. Life cannot be controlled or held back, we can try in every possible way to keep life under our control, but just as a blade of grass finds its way through the dense, grey cement of the sidewalk, Life always finds a way. This is where flexibility and adaptation come into play. As much as your goals have been laid out to perfection before you, it's important to remember that change is inevitable, and as such, our goals may change too. As new opportunities and new horizons begin to appear before us, we may find ourselves reviewing our action plans and taking new directions in our goals, achievements and successes. What is most important is that you enjoy your journey, act out every moment of your scene, and humbly take in every sight, sound, and feeling in your *Standing Ovation*.

**A Standing Ovation is the reward**, the act of celebrating and giving approval for a job well done. Celebrating the achievement of milestones, both big and small, are the consequences that cause behaviors to occur more frequently. When we are learning new skills, changing old behaviors or applying our knowledge in new ways, we must reward ourselves for our accomplishments. We must celebrate our work, our creativity, our contributions, and our steps along the way. We must celebrate the achievements of ourselves and others, knowing that self-confidence and self-esteem is built on accomplishment, recognition, challenge, purpose and passion. It is not about arrogance or conceit, rather it is about the celebration of Life.

## **Get Started Now**

I want you to start looking around you, and inside of you, and begin your journey towards your success in health, fitness and life. There are a lot of resources available to us in health and fitness. What resources are you currently using to achieve your goals? Have you shared your goals with your Personal Trainer? Are you involved in your program design? What would you love to do with a fit and healthy body? Are you working towards a goal, a measurable, objective goal, right now? Are you taking Group Fitness classes without setting goals? Have you been *Setting the Stage*, or have your goals fallen at the feet of self-sabotage. It's up to you to ask the questions, review what's working, and admit what isn't working. Next, start building your team and *Setting the Stage* for your success. All of us at Endorphin Junkies are committed to enabling you to achieve success. We want to be a part of your team as you set your stage, and take the steps along your journey. Your goals matter, your creativity matters, your work matters, and your contributions matter. It's time for you to take the Stage.

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<sup>i</sup> 2004 Canadian Community Health Survey, Statistics Canada