

Goal Setting Transcript

Have you ever thought about changes you would like to make to improve your health but weren't sure where to start? Have you tried to make those changes but felt like you weren't getting anywhere? Have you been trying to make the same change over and over again but never reach your goal? Try setting a SMART goal!

A SMART goal is a tool you can use to plan and reach your goals. SMART stands for:

- **Specific**
- **Measurable**
- **Achievable**
- **Relevant**
- **Timely**

Let's look at each part of this tool in more detail, starting with Specific.

First, make sure the goal you want to reach is clear and well-defined so you can figure out if you're on track as you start to make changes. For example, saying you want to quit smoking is not a specific goal. A more specific goal could be cutting down cigarettes slowly to eventually quit smoking completely.

Next, come up with a goal that can be easily measured and that sets you up for success. For example, if you are hoping to incorporate more movement into your day, a measurable goal could be going outside for a walk two times a week for one month.

Sometimes the goals we set for ourselves can be really difficult to achieve. Goals shouldn't be so challenging that they are hard to reach, but they also shouldn't be so simple that we lose interest. Starting small, like cooking one meal a week at home, could be a great way to move toward a long-term goal of eating more fresh food.

Your goal should be important and make sense to you. A goal is always going to be easier to reach if you are the one in control. If quitting alcohol is important to you, focus on the small steps you can take to reach this goal. A small step could be drinking three days a week instead of four.

Finally, set a timeline to help you stay on track to meet your goal. For example, if you're trying to sleep more during the week, give yourself one month to get there.

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Now that we've looked at the SMART goal tool, let's help Paula come up with some SMART goals for herself. Paula would like to make changes to her smoking, alcohol use, physical activity, and stress. Here are the goals she has set for herself:

1. I will slowly cut down my smoking by one cigarette a day for the next month so I can quit completely.
2. I'm not going to drink as much alcohol when I'm with my friends.
3. I will go for a walk around my neighbourhood for 30 minutes on Sunday mornings.
4. I will start meditating twice a week for the next month to help with my stress.

Can you spot the goals that are SMART?

Which goal would you change?

How could we make Paula's second goal of changing her alcohol use a SMART goal?

2. I will only have one drink with alcohol whenever I am out with my friends. The rest of the drinks will not have any alcohol in them.

Thanks for supporting Paula in setting some SMART goals. If you're thinking about making changes, consider using the SMART goal tool. It's a helpful way to set you up for success in reaching your goals.