**Goal Setting**

Why Set Goals?\*

Numerous research studies have shown links between goals and achievement or

improved performance in many areas such as education, athletics, and business. Reasons

for setting goals include the following:

**Goals help target our desires.** We all have a desire to succeed at or with something.

This desire to succeed helps us to reach our goals and overcome obstacles that get in

the way. We feel better and work harder when we are striving to reach clear goals that

we have personally selected and that have an identifiable purpose.

**Goals help us to stay focused and avoid distractions.** People who set goals will

achieve results because they have learned how to focus their time, energy, and

resources on a specific objective. Staying focused on our goals helps us to bypass many

of the challenges and obstacles that stand in the way of achieving the desired results.

By setting clear and attainable goals and consciously working toward them, we can

avoid many of the pitfalls and distractions of daily living.

**Goals help us to maintain motivation.** Motivation is a significant driving force in

helping us to accomplish the things we really want in life. Achieving and maintaining

a healthy active lifestyle will at times be a struggle. Having goals and staying

motivated will help us to recover from the setbacks or periodic letdowns that are

commonplace experiences when trying to change a habit or making attempts to start a

new one. Our motivation will come from the reasons why we chose particular goals in

the first place.

**Goals help us to set values-driven priorities.** As we move toward any goal, we will

be faced with having to make decisions. By keeping our eyes on the goal and staying

true to our values and beliefs, we will make the “right” choices. Our choices will be

based on what is most important to us. We need to remember that our goals were self selected

and based on important reasons for reaching them.

**Goals provide a plan for change.** A well-designed action plan that outlines a series of

short-term goals provides a necessary process to reach bigger and long-term

objectives. Breaking a long-term goal into achievable smaller steps makes the road to

the ultimate goal much easier. Short-term goals provide a way of measuring whether

we are making the intended progress or whether we are getting sidetracked.

Evaluating our plan allows us to learn from mistakes and overcome barriers. It also

provides opportunities to change our plan based on our experiences.

Why Do So Few People Set Goals?\*

Some experts estimate that only five to ten percent of people think about their goals

regularly, and only one to three percent of people have clear written goals. Most experts

agree that goal setting is a powerful tool. If this is the case, why do so few people set

goals?

Reasons why people don’t set goals include the following:

They don’t know what they want. (No goals)

They don’t know how to set goals or don’t plan how to achieve them. (Action)

They don’t have goals, they have wishes.

They are afraid of change.

They make excuses that form personal barriers.

They get frustrated, discouraged, or overwhelmed. (Too many goals, too big, too slow)

Having clear and precise goals will help us stay motivated and focused, particularly when

facing adversity. Setting goals is a way of regulating behaviour to attain a self-determined

and desired target. The goals could be financial, educational, or health- and fitnessoriented.

**Assignment**

1. Identify one goal (big) towards physical fitness and health such as increase strength, improve cardiovascular endurance, losing weight, etc…
2. Next identify a goal (big) for what you would like to do next year such as go to University, Red River, get a job somewhere specific.

For each one of your big goals identify smaller targets that will help you reach that goal; for example the **criteria** needed to attend the postsecondary program or place you intend to work. For your physical fitness goal look to your **FITT principles** **or nutritional guidelines** to set goals and then identify milestones (for example if your goal was to lose 40lbs by grad you should break it down into smaller milestones, monthly and weekly goals like two pounds a week as grad is 20 weeks away). Milestones our smaller targets are ways to keep us on track and monitor realistic progress.

Last identify daily goals that will help you reach your targets and then ultimately your big goal. See the teacher if you are unclear.