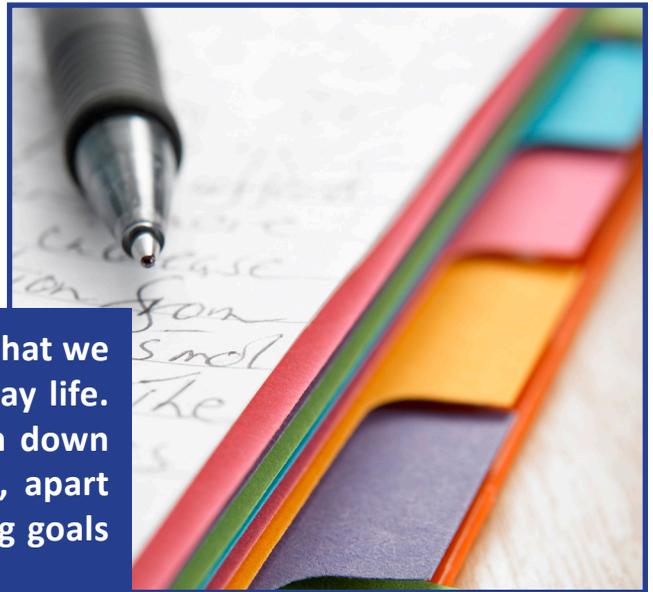


Set a goal; achieve a goal



Goals help to give us direction in life so that we can be better motivated in our day-to-day life. Coming up with goals and writing them down may seem like a pointless exercise but, apart from gaining a sense of direction, setting goals has many other benefits.

The benefits of setting goals

Some of these benefits include identifying strengths and weaknesses; having a sense of victory or accomplishment of past goals, thereby making us feel confident and competent (even when dealing with unexpected or difficult situations); improving our self-esteem by measuring and monitoring our progress; helping us grow by challenging our comfort zones and motivating us to develop our personal skills; and helping us prioritise so that we focus on the things we want to achieve and avoid getting distracted by less important things.

Aren't goals just for your career?

Setting goals is not just important for your career. Having goals in more than one area of your life will help you move towards a more fulfilling life in general. So when you sit down to come up with your goals, consider categories such as: family, friends, community, financial, career, household, education, health, spiritual and/or religious, and recreation.

Start by looking at the big picture. In all these categories, consider what it is that you want to achieve in your lifetime (keep in mind that these should be your goals, not those of your parents, partner, or boss).

Experts place a lot of emphasis on having SMART goals to ensure success. SMART goals are specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, and time-bound.

Staying on track

Where to from here? Here are some suggestions that can help you to maintain your goals:

- Break big pieces of the goal down into small steps.
- Be sure you've listed all the relevant obstacles and the tasks needed to overcome them.
- Assign dates realistically and adjust them as necessary.
- Set reminders using your mobile phone or your email to keep you on track. Make use of the e|Care tracker service on the e|Care online wellbeing portal to set and track goals.
- Make use of the encouragement of supportive family members and friends.

Goal setting and achievement are lifelong processes. Remember that your goals will change as you mature and as your needs change. Also, no one achieves all their goals, so don't lose heart or feel like a failure if you don't achieve all of them.

Most importantly, take the time to enjoy and celebrate the goals that you do achieve.