

## Reaching Your Goals

In order to create the kind of life you want, it helps to have a clear picture of where you're headed — your personal mission. It's equally important to make a plan on how to get there — how to make your dreams come true, one day at a time.

To help you do that, it is a good idea to learn how to set goals and objectives for yourself. Your goals are the things you want to do over the next several years. Your objectives are the smaller steps you're going to take — tomorrow, next week, next month — to get there.

By writing down goals and objectives for yourself, you are taking a big step toward making them happen. The next step will be to actually do these things — and keep a record. This is something you and your Academic Coach can work on together over time.

### Writing Goals

Here are some of the kinds of goals you might be interested in setting:

*Intellectual:* Where do I want to be in several years in terms of my education? In what direction do I want to go in terms of my future career?

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*Social:* Three years from now, what do I want my relationships to look like? Do I want more friends? More time with family? A better relationship with my mom or dad? To be married? To be single?

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*Spiritual:* What kind of spiritual growth do I see for myself over the next few years?

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*Physical:* What will my health and fitness level look like several years down the road?

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### Writing Objectives

Objectives are the steps you take to make progress toward your goal. To be useful, objectives need to answer the question: “What will change, by how much, and by when?” Usually, objectives work best when they are designed to be completed in the next few months to a year. It’s hard to know what will change beyond that time frame, so it’s hard to set realistic objectives for several years from now.

*Example:* Let’s say you’re a sophomore in college with a goal of obtaining a good job after graduation. Some good objectives might include the following:

- Begin weekly job search by \_\_\_\_\_ (date).
- Talk with a career counselor by \_\_\_\_\_ (date) about writing resumes and what I need to do in my search process.
- Raise my cumulative GPA to \_\_\_\_\_ (GPA) by \_\_\_\_\_ (date).
- Get involved in at least \_\_\_\_\_ (number) of job-related volunteer or part-time work by \_\_\_\_\_ (date).

Take some time to write the goals you just developed on the next page, and then write several objectives for each goal.

Here’s a tip on how to test if your objectives are solid: Ask yourself if they are S.M.A.R.T.

**Specific:** Do I know precisely what I need to do?

**Measurable:** How will I know if I’ve achieved this objective?

**Attainable:** Is it realistic or doable?

**Result-oriented:** Will it really move me toward my goal?

**Time-limited:** Does it have a due date?

If your goals are SMART, they’re solid. Now go start doing them!

Goal: \_\_\_\_\_

Objectives:

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

Goal: \_\_\_\_\_

Objectives:

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

Goal: \_\_\_\_\_

Objectives:

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

Goal: \_\_\_\_\_

Objectives:

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

Goal: \_\_\_\_\_

Objectives:

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

Note: "Writing Goals and Objectives" is taken from the *Learn to Mentor Toolkit* located at [Mentoring.org](http://Mentoring.org).

*Make two copies: one for the Mentee and one for the Academic Coach.*