



EMPOWERMENT PARTNERSHIP

GOAL SETTING REPORT



Everything You'll Ever Need to Know to Achieve Your Goals

BY DR. MATT JAMES

I was at a gathering a while back and overheard someone say, "Oh, I never set New Year's resolutions anymore. I usually don't hit them so what's the point?" Ouch! That's a little bit like saying, "I stopped trying to be healthy because I got sick a few times."

A study by Statistic Brain in January 2017 reports that about 41% of all Americans usually set goals around the first of the year and another 17% do so infrequently. But of all of the goal-setters, only 9.2% actually achieve their goals and 42.4% never achieve the results they want. Double ouch! (1)

In this special report, I'm going to give you everything you need to become a highly successful goal setter and goal getter. You're about to learn:

- The key step you must do to ensure you reach at least 80% of your goals
- How to engage your intrinsic goal-getting resources and prevent self-sabotage
- The two levels of goals that you must set to maintain momentum

What makes the 9.2% successful?

I doubt that the 9.2% who are successful with their goals are smarter, more hard-working or more worthy than the rest of humanity. But I'm guessing they know these basics:

Your goals have to be important to you, more important than what seems to be in the way. Achieving a goal requires some kind of sacrifice always. You give up something to get something. If you want to finish writing that novel, you might have to sacrifice a bit of sleep or time in front of the TV. If your goal is to lose weight, your sacrifice might be the thrill of pie a la mode or snacking before bedtime.

People who achieve their goals know that they'll be sacrificing, are willing to sacrifice and even plan their sacrifices in advance! Those who ditch their resolutions before Valentine's Day seem surprised that there is any sacrifice involved. "What? You mean if I want to spend more time with my kids I have to give up playing golf every weekend?!?".

Note to Neuro Linguistics Programming (NLP) Students: Throughout this report, I'll point out NLP techniques and practices you've learned that will amplify the power of your goal-setting and goal-getting. For non-students, learn more about NLP techniques to boost your goal-getting ability by attending one of our live trainings: <http://www.empowermentpartnership.com/>

Achieving goals requires taking action. The 9.2% who achieve their goals don't just jot them down and forget about them. They figure out a plan of attack and take the first steps. They may not know fully and exactly how to get where they want to go but they take whatever steps they know to take. And when they have taken all the steps they know to take, they look around for the next steps.

The 9.2% do NOT stay frozen in indecision or unknowing! They don't wait for the absolute perfect opportunity or circumstance before getting started. **They know that even a few wrong steps are better than no action at all.** They try to stay consistent with their action and if they slip up, they don't give up. They start again.

To attain your goals, you need buy-in from both the conscious and unconscious mind. People who are consistently successful at achieving their goals know that all parties must be rowing in the same direction! They know that underlying beliefs and attitudes must all be aligned to the goal or it will be an uphill struggle – and typically unsuccessful even if you do all the “right” things. If you consciously want to find the love of your life but are unconsciously terrified of being that close to someone, there's no dating site in the world that can help you!

We'll get into this in depth in the next section. Your conscious mind is the “goal setter” but it's your unconscious mind that is the “goal getter.” So the first step to realizing a goal is to get the unconscious mind on board by releasing any unconscious negative beliefs or decisions that could sabotage your efforts.

Note to NLP Students: Use the Mental Emotional Release® (MER®) process for any potential limiting beliefs. Parts Integration can also be useful.

*"Life can be pulled
by goals just as
surely as it can be
pushed by drives."
– Viktor E. Frankl*



Dr. Matt James

Goals have to be designed in a specific way with specific characteristics to be effective. The 8% know that if you're serious about your goal, it needs to be written and have certain basic ingredients. The simplest way to remember these critical ingredients is by using the abbreviation SMART. We'll detail exactly what SMART stands for and how to use it later in this report.

SMART is not just a clever acronym created by some slick motivational speaker. It came out of extensive research that began in the late 1960's. Dr. Edwin Locke and Dr. Gary Latham spent decades researching effective goal setting. They not only ran their own experiments but reviewed hundreds of studies from other researchers. The studies looked at the effect of goals on everyone from tree logging operators to typists (anyone remember typewriters?) to families. Through this work, Locke and Latham identified the specific five elements that need to be in place. (If you want to learn more about their research, they wrote a book titled A Theory of Goal Setting and Task Performance.)

In the 1970's, John Grinder and Richard Bandler, who founded NLP (neuro linguistic programming), added their insights into how the mind works to succeed—or fail—in achieving goals. They incorporated this practical knowledge into Locke and Latham's essential ingredients. So though many people use the same acronym of SMART, you'll find that the way we teach it in NLP is different—and much more powerful!

"What you get by achieving your goals is not as important as what you become by achieving your goals."

-Henry David Thoreau

Why bother setting goals?

Everyone talks about setting and achieving goals. But I've been thinking lately that the goal-setting process is getting a bad rap. It's becoming like flossing your teeth or creating a budget or "creating an eating plan." Boring. No! Goals are the juice of life!

Goals don't have to be only the should / obligations / responsibilities / burdens. Goals aren't only about fixing what's broken or getting what we lack.

When we set a goal, we're saying, "Hey! I came to this planet to be something! I am a unique expression of life! Here's what I'm about and here's what I will create!" Pardon all my exclamations points – but I'm telling you, life can be like that! Exclamation points! Excitement! Passion! Fun!

Goals are aspirations. Becoming more than we are now. Reaching above and beyond. So it's not just about "getting there." It's about the process we go through as we're on our way and who we become. As I often say, "Whoever you think you are, you're more than that." And that's where Neuro-Linguistic Programming (NLP) has made such a difference to myself and my students and our ability to achieve our goals.

Using the techniques of NLP, we are able to become the person for whom this goal is achievable.

Let's take an example. Say, I want to be wealthy and I've defined that as making over \$200,000 per year. I've written out my goal using the SMART acronym, and determined that it will happen one year from now. And I start taking massive action toward it. Great!

But if underneath I continue to perceive myself as someone who is unworthy of making that kind of money, somewhere along the way, I'll sabotage the process. I'll miss the meeting, forget to make the phone call, not see the prime opportunity – I'll do something to make sure that my external world stays in tune with my self-image. As that old comic strip, Pogo, said, "We have seen the enemy and he is us!"

But what if I become the kind of person who knows that making \$200,000 is not only possible but in fact natural for me? What if I walk around feeling certain that opportunities are waiting for me and that I'm fully prepared to take advantage of them? Can you see how that person has a much better shot at success with their goal?

To have what you want to have, and do what you want to do, you must first become who you need to become.

Note for NLP Students: You have several tools in your NLP toolkit to make sure that your internal representations match up with your goals. Besides MER®, consider using Like to Dislike or Resource Anchors, depending on the goal.

*"When every physical and mental resource is focused,
one's power to solve a problem multiplies tremendously."
-Norman Vincent Peale*

Your Intrinsic Goal-Getting Resources

From an early age, through my studies in metaphysics, the teachings of my spiritual path, Huna, my decades of training in NLP, and my studies in psychology, I've come to this conclusion:

Each of us is fully equipped with all the resources we need to live satisfying, successful lives.

Okay, great. You've heard this before. But if we all have everything we need, how come life can be such a struggle? Why is it so hard to push ahead in our careers? How come we can't find that perfect love? Or if we find it, how come it turns sour? Why can't we create the body/lifestyle/spiritual awareness we crave?

The thing I've come to understand is this: We do have everything we need but we often aren't accessing it. **It's like having one of those unbelievably powerful super computers – and not plugging it in.**

Before we talk about how to plug your super computer in, let's take a quick look under the hood at the "technology" each of us has been given.

Our bodies are brilliant self-regulating systems. When we get cold, our body shivers to help warm us, dilates the blood vessels to protect the skin, makes us pee more frequently to reduce blood pressure. When we get an infection, the body creates a fever (raising temperature to kill certain bacteria) and sends armies of white cells into battle. At any point in time, our body is processing food, filtering air and separating oxygen from carbon dioxide, pumping blood to whatever area is in most need. Our physical bodies are so intricately designed that we've spent centuries trying to figure out how it works – and still don't really understand it.

And that comes as standard equipment.

What about our brains? Don't get me started! Every second, our five senses pick up 2,000,000 bits of information and our brains filter that 2,000,000 bits down to a manageable 126 bits by deleting, generalizing (and distorting) the input. It instantly organizes the data and stores it, draws conclusions from the input and tells our bodies how to respond, and formulates lessons and learnings.

And that too is part of our standard equipment.

Think about any part of your natural resources: your eyes, your feet, your ability to hear and understand language, your capacity to turn pepperoni pizza into energy so you can stay up late watching The Daily Show. Isn't it mind-boggling? With all this going for us, how can we possibly not create extraordinary lives for ourselves!?!?

Unless we're not plugged in. Unless we're wandering around in a state that can't access the power of all we've been given.

In NLP, we train people to be in a "resourceful state." **A resourceful state gives you access to all the incredible resources you have.** You've experienced it. It's the state where you feel "on" or "in the zone." Where all you do seems to be flowing effortlessly. Where you feel grounded and powerful. All is in synch.

But too often, we operate from a non-resourceful state that's at odds with the power of our natural equipment. We worry and get tense — so our body is blocked from moving naturally and our golf swing gets choppy. We second guess and try too hard — so our brains are not allowed to respond to the environment and we blow that important interview. We panic and feel insecure — so we get tongue-tied when that attractive stranger approaches rather than letting our natural ability to relate take over.

Sound familiar?

Common wisdom (which might be common but usually isn't wisdom) says that "exceptional people" and top performers have much better equipment than we do. Really? Are Adele's vocal chords or Inbee Park's forearms better than ours? Does Stephen Hawking have a better brain? Okay, maybe he does, but what about Donald Trump? Steven Spielberg? We're all built differently, but I'd argue that we all have plenty of everything we need to be successful.

It's not about getting new, improved equipment. Our standard equipment is definitely well-designed. It's about putting ourselves in that resourceful state so we can access all we've got. (I'll show you how to access this resourceful state at-will instantly later in this report.)

Note for NLP Students: Anchoring techniques can help us "plug in." Also consider using the SWISH Pattern and Hakalau.

A resourceful state is only possible when our conscious mind and unconscious mind are aligned and heading in the same direction.

When the two are not aligned, we're in trouble.

It takes more than our conscious desires and decisions to get what we want. **The conscious mind sets goals but it's your unconscious mind that gets the goals.** You can think of the interplay between the two like the conductor of an orchestra and the musicians:

Your conscious mind is the conductor. It decides what the group will play and tells them when to chime in and how it should sound. The unconscious mind is the orchestra itself, the ones who actually make the music happen after they've been directed what to do. Without the unconscious mind, not much music would be made. Without the conscious mind, there'd be noise but it would be chaos.

We're all pretty familiar with the territory of our conscious minds but to many of us, the unconscious is somewhat mysterious. You don't need a PhD in psychology to work effectively with your unconscious, but you do need to understand a few basics.

Here are a few of the aspects of the unconscious that I teach my NLP students.

THE UNCONSCIOUS MIND

Preserves the body: One of its main objectives is the survival of your physical body. It will fight anything that appears to be a threat to that survival. So if you want to get rid of any negative behavior more easily, show your unconscious how that behavior is hurting your body. If you want to attain something new, show your unconscious how it might benefit your body.

Note to NLP Students: Rapport with the unconscious mind is critical here. Consider techniques like Reframes, Chunking Up, Cartesian Coordinates.

Runs the body: The unconscious handles all of your basic physical functions (breathing, heart rate, immune system, etc.). The unconscious holds the blueprint of your body as it is now and also the blueprint of your perfect health. So rather than telling the unconscious what perfect health looks like, you can ask it what it knows and what you need for better health.

Note to NLP Students: Elicit Root Cause of any limiting beliefs and use Limiting Decisions Process on the timeline to release them.

Is like a 7-year old child: Like a young child, the unconscious likes to serve, needs very clear direction and takes your instructions very literally. So if you say, "This job is a pain in the neck," your unconscious will figure out a way to make sure that your neck hurts at work! The unconscious is also very "moral" in the way a young child is moral, which means based on the morality taught by your parents or surroundings. So if you were taught that "sex is nasty," your unconscious will still respond to that teaching even after your conscious mind has rejected it. **Your unconscious mind will not allow you to violate your core values and beliefs.**

Note to NLP Students: Use questions from Detailed Personal History to elicit limiting beliefs then use MER® to release them. Use Values Elicitation to determine Values Hierarchy and Conflicting Values.

Communicates through emotion and symbols: To get your attention, the unconscious mind uses emotions. For example, if you suddenly feel afraid, your unconscious has detected (rightly or wrongly) that your survival is at risk.

Stores and organizes memories: The unconscious decides where and how your memories are stored. It may hide certain memories (such as traumas) that have strong negative emotions until you are mature enough to process them consciously. When it senses that you are ready (whether you consciously think you are or not!), it will bring them up so you can deal with them.

Does not process negatives: The unconscious absorbs pictures rather than words. So if you say, "I don't want to procrastinate," the unconscious generates a picture of you procrastinating. Switching that picture to the negative takes an extra step. Better to tell your unconscious, "Let's get to work!"

Makes associations and learns quickly: To protect you, the unconscious stays alert and tries to glean the lessons from each experience. For example, if you have a bad experience in school, your unconscious may choose to lump all of your learning experiences into the "this is not going to be fun" category. It will signal you with sweaty palms and anxiety whenever you attempt something new. But if you do well in sports, your unconscious will remember that "sports equals success" and you'll feel positive and energized whenever physical activity comes up.

Note to NLP Students: To unplug the entire string of negative associations, be sure to elicit Root Cause prior to the MER® process.

Why is getting your unconscious on board important? As Ambrose Bierce wrote:

"A person who doubts himself is like a man who would enlist in the ranks of his enemies and bear arms against himself. He makes his failure certain by himself being the first person to be convinced of it."

The power to achieve what you want to achieve is all in the mind, specifically the unconscious. If your unconscious holds a belief that is in opposition to your goal, you've got an uphill battle and will likely miss whatever target you've set. But once your unconscious is on board with your goals, you've got a powerful ally who is fully motivated to see that the external world conforms to your new self-image. Pursuing your goal is no longer drudgery or a battle but actually becomes fun!

You need to bring your unconscious on board with your goals in a couple of ways: First, to eliminate limiting beliefs and decisions that hold you back from achieving our goals. And second, to instill the natural behaviors, feelings and beliefs that make your goals accessible.

Note to NLP Students: In other words, use the MER® process to eliminate negative emotions and limiting beliefs. Install Strategies and appropriate Internal States to support the goals. Then insert your energized goal into your future Timeline.

It's like preparing for a great garden. First, you eradicate the weeds and pull out the rocks and any bad dirt. Next, you prepare the plot by adding in fertile garden soil. Only then do you throw the seeds down and plant seedlings. And if you skip the first steps? Well, you might grow something, but odds are that it won't be the lush garden you had envisioned.

And that's the power of your unconscious mind! When you set goals and begin the process, it's critical to get your unconscious on board so it will use its power for you, not against you. But before we cover how to do that, let's talk about the two levels of goals you need to maintain momentum.

Two Goals You Need for Success: Aim & End Goals

I've noticed that most people who teach goals don't make the distinction between "aim goals" and "end goals." The two are very different and have different functions. Not understanding the difference or not setting both can cause you to fail despite your best intentions. So let's get clear:

An aim goal is one that is ongoing. It never really comes to an end. It's the direction you want to go in life. It's like the umbrella goal over your other goals. It's the difference between "I live a healthy lifestyle" and "I am fit and toned, and weigh 175 lbs. as of December 1, 2016."

An end goal (which is what Locke and Latham studied) is for a specific outcome. When you achieve it, you're done and ready to move to your next goal. But if your end goal is not connected to an aim goal, you'll either fail or get results that don't feel satisfying. On the other hand, if your end goal fits your aim goal, achieving it will feel great!

When we talk about SMART, we're talking about end goals. **But the place to start is always with your aim goals**—and you should establish aim goals in every facet of your life: Health and Fitness, Relationships, Spiritual, Personal Growth, Career and Finance.

Note to NLP Students: Use Values Elicitation and Values hierarchy as well as parts integration to reconcile end goals and aim goals that are in conflict.

Begin with one area of life. Ask yourself what that area means to you. For example, "What does Health and Fitness mean to me?" Jot down everything that comes to mind. Maybe Health and Fitness means being strong and flexible. Maybe it means having a lot of energy. Write down whatever is true for you.

Next ask, "What is important to me about Health and Fitness?" Write down everything that comes to you. Maybe it's important because you want to be around long enough to see your daughter get married. Maybe it's important to you because you want to travel and have adventures. Find the "why's" that have real meaning to you.

Step back and take a look at what you've written. Highlight the parts that have the most juice for you. Create a one or two sentence statement that captures these points. That's your aim goal.

Here's the key: You should feel inspired by your aim goal. If you don't feel excited about it, it's not really your aim. Maybe you've written down what you think you should want or what other people want for you. Ask yourself the question again until you hit the aim goal really flips your switch!

HOW TO USE YOUR AIM GOAL

Your aim goal will provide the motivation to fuel your end goals so it's important to not just know it but to feel it, and remind yourself of this feeling. Some people like to create vision boards with representations of their aim goals. Others regularly visualize their aim goals internally and experience the satisfaction of attaining them. Do whatever helps you to experience how becoming your aim goal feels.

Note to NLP Students: Plant energized representations of your aim goals in your Timeline to draw you forward.

And when it's time to create your end goals, make sure they align with your aim goal. For example, my personal trainer recently encouraged me to train for the Iron Man race coming up. I could set that as an end goal for myself and it might be fun. But it doesn't really fit within my aim goal in Health and Fitness. So I know not to bother with it, at least not at this time.

*"Our goals can only be reached through a vehicle of a plan, in which we fervently believe, and upon which we much vigorously act. There is no other route to success."
- Pablo Picasso*

"The good life is a process, not a state of being. It is a direction not a destination."

-Carl Rogers

Creating Your SMART End Goals

Now that you're clear on the difference between aim and end goals, it's time to set some end goals. Each of the ingredients I describe here are important to the process! If you ignore any of them, studies show that you'll have less success with your goals or not achieve them at all. **If your goal is not well-formed, your unconscious mind will not be able to pursue it on your behalf** and may simply ignore it! So let's get detailed on effective SMART goal setting.

A goal needs to be specific so that you and your unconscious mind have a clear target. "I want to have lots of energy" is too vague. Do you mean you want to stay up all night? Jog everywhere instead of walking? Be able to power a lamp without electricity? A specific goal would be, "I have all the energy I need to be effective at work and still come home and play with my kids at night." That's a picture and a target you can work toward.



Simple means that you could explain it to a 5-7 year old child. Remember that your unconscious mind processes things like a 7 year old. Your goal needs to be clear but not so detailed that it comes too complex. A goal of "I market my skills in the social media so I can expand my website design clientele so that every month I have a new assignment or two to build or renovate websites and each assignment averages \$500-\$600 after taxes" will be less effective than "I make \$1500 per month from my website design work."

"M" IS FOR MEASURABLE AND MEANINGFUL

A goal must be measurable for several reasons. In an interesting study that Dr. Locke reviewed, a company wanted to improve its workers' compliance with industrial safety standards, things like wearing goggles when welding, clearing trip hazards quickly, etc. Initially, compliance was at about 55%. The company gave its workers a one hour training in safety and over the next 3 months, compliance improved by about 10%. Next the company set the challenging goal of 90% compliance. After 4 months, it had improved another 9-10%.

But when the company installed a large graph in the company cafeteria that tracked workers' compliance every day, compliance shot up over 90% almost immediately!

Dr. Locke attributed that improvement to the fact that workers could now measure exactly how they were doing in relation to their goal.

"Slim" is not measurable but "size 8" is. "Plenty of money" is not measurable but "\$4000 per month" is measurable. When your goal is measurable, you know exactly how close or how far you are from it—and can adjust your efforts accordingly.

Your goal must also be meaningful for you. It isn't what other people want, what we think we should want, or what others want for us. Since most goals are (and should be) a stretch, your heart has to be in it so you'll put forth the effort. If you're working on what is essentially someone else's goal, you need to find what about it motivates you. For example, you might have the goal to build your child's college fund. What about sending your child to college feels important to you?

By the way, studies show that people will work effectively on goals others (for instance, management) set for them if they understand why the goal is important. Research also showed that if the whole team set the goal, they worked just as effectively – but the goal they would set would be more challenging.

A STANDS FOR ACHIEVABLE, ALL AREAS OF YOUR LIFE, AND AS IF NOW.

By achievable, you have to believe that with some effort on your part, your goal is possible. **If you truly don't believe it's possible, your unconscious mind will thwart your efforts to help you prove that you're right!** If your goal is to speak in front of 5,000 people next month but you've never actually spoken in front of any audience before, you can ratchet back. Create an interim goal, such as speaking in front of your Rotary Club, that is believable to you as a step toward the bigger goal.

That said, a goal needs to be challenging to get you energized and all cylinders firing. Think about driving to the supermarket. Now think about driving across the country. Which one would stimulate your thinking, creativity, and physical energy?

Your goal also needs to fit into all areas of your life. If you're already booked and busy 24 hours per day, where will the time and energy to achieve this goal come from? If you pull time from one area, say from your career or relationship will that create a problem? How can you structure the goal so you don't short-change other things that are important to you?

As if now means to state your goal in the present tense. Write "I build a new house in December 2016" not "I will build a new house next year." Why? If you state your goal in the future tense, your unconscious will always keep it in the future, out there somewhere.

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Present tense also helps keep you accountable and your unconscious can use its guidance system. Sense the difference between "I eat salad every day" and "I will eat salad every day." In the present tense, it's obvious that you're either doing it or you aren't. In the future tense, well, who's to say that you won't, sometime in the vague future, actually eat salad?

Interestingly, past tense can cause problems too. When you say "I built a house in 2016," your unconscious can get confused and think the job is done!

"R" MEANS REALISTIC AND RESPONSIBLE

Your goal may be technically possible, but given where you are and what's on your plate, is it realistic? If you don't really think so, neither will your unconscious. We can always see exceptions to "realistic." At 5'7", Spud Webb became a super star in the NBA. Fauja Singh raced in marathons when he was over 100 years old. If the drive is strong enough, a lot of impossible things are possible!

But most of our goals should be a "realistic" stretch. For example, increasing your income by 200% within one year won't feel realistic for most of us. But most people can get their heads around a 10% or even 20% increase.

Responsible refers to what we in NLP call "ecology." Your goal must be good not only for you but also for others involved, your family, your community and even the planet. Goals that don't meet this criteria will meet resistance.

"T" IS FOR TIMED AND TOWARD WHAT YOU WANT

To work on a goal, your unconscious needs a timeframe. It needs a date to shoot for, to plan for. With a specific timeframe, we feel more focused and energized. Our conscious and unconscious minds know exactly how much effort we need to put forth. For example, say you want to have the resources to visit Tuscany for a month. If your timeline for that goal is 3 years from now, the effort required is totally different than if it's 3 months from now!

Toward what you want gives you a more sustainable focus than moving away from what you don't want. This shows up in people who are constant "yo-yo dieters." They're often moving away from the pain of being overweight. When they drop a few pounds, their pain lessens — and so does their focus and motivation. Rather than "getting out of debt," your goal should be "totally debt free." Exchange "No longer living at home" for "moving into my own apartment."

TIPS FOR ENERGIZING YOUR GOALS

Write your goals down!

A goal that rattles around in your head tends to get lost and confused. Write your SMART goals down on a 3X5 card that you can have with you or that you keep in a prominent place.

Read them aloud every day

Rather than "set it and forget it," you want to keep both your conscious and unconscious mind focused on your goals.

Visualize and feel the end point

What is the last thing that has to happen so you know you've achieved your goal? Imagine that and how good it will feel.

Note to NLP Students: It is this image of your completed goal that should be planted in your future Timeline.

Track Your Progress

Remember that old game "Hotter/Colder?" Someone hides something then tells you if you're getting closer (hotter) or farther (colder) from it. By listening, you could direct yourself to the hiding spot. But can you imagine playing that game with no one yelling hotter or colder? Just like those workers on the safety compliance study, we all perform better when we know where we are in relation to our goal.

Celebrate at 90%

It may seem counter intuitive, but you want to celebrate your achievement when you've reached about 90% of your goal. Why? At 90%, you've done most of the heavy lifting. You just have a little way to go and it may no longer seem that challenging so your energy and focus can weaken. So celebrate and set your new goal! Make that last 5 lbs. the first 5 lbs. of your new goal. Make that last hundred dollars of savings in your old goal the first hundred dollars of your new savings goal.

Have you ever noticed that "post partum" let down when you've accomplished a big feat or completed a big project? You can avoid that by celebrating at 90% and creating fresh, new goals for yourself.

"One way to keep momentum going is to have constantly greater goals." –Michael Korda

How to Not Hate the Journey

Goals get abandoned for many reasons: You may have limiting beliefs that sabotage your good intentions. Your self-image as the "fat boy" or "starving artist" is so strong that your unconscious thwarts any attempt to change it.

You may have run into resistance to changes you want to make from people around you. They might feel threatened by your desire to become healthier or wealthier or even happier!—especially if they aren't feeling so great about their own lives.

The pitfall I want to tackle in this section is: You simply hate the process it takes to reach your goal.

You hate getting up in the morning to run. You hate eliminating your favorite comfort foods from your diet. You hate not going to Nordy's half-annual sale to put money in your savings. You hate getting on that dating site and sifting through all those prospects. You hate taking time out of your already frantic schedule to do all the things you need to do to build your business.

You might be visualizing your end-goal in all its brilliant Technicolor glory. You spend time focusing on the goal, thinking how great it will be to be in a loving relationship, how wonderful you'll feel to fit in those skinny jeans again, how awesome it will be to be working for yourself in your own business, how secure you'll feel with a substantial retirement portfolio.

But whenever you think of what you "have to do" to get there, ugh! You haven't put that same positive attention on the process itself. So the path to that magnificent end still looks like a gloomy, damp trail through an alligator infested swamp!

Your negative feelings about the process to get to your goals can easily cause you to desert them before the start of Spring training! When Alan Thicke talked about fitness, he said something that applied to all of our goal getting: "Fitness (or any goal) needs to be perceived as fun and games or we subconsciously avoid it."

One of the tricks of the trade that successful goal setters and goal getters know is how to shift that negative attitude about the journey, so that the process toward the goal is as fulfilling as achieving the goal.

Sound impossible? Here are a few tips:

1. Reward yourself for effort, not just results. Don't wait until you've fully reached your goal to applaud yourself. Give yourself kudos for all the efforts you make along the way. **Each time you choose to eat something good for you and skip the junk food, give yourself a pat on the back.** Every time put \$20 into savings, give yourself a high five. Take time to feel good about the steps you take along the path. These rewards don't have to be huge or extravagant. Even a gold star on your calendar for each day you take steps toward your goal can make you feel proud of yourself. Focus on associating good feelings with the process to dissipate negative feelings that hold you back.
2. Find processes you already enjoy. Not everyone enjoys weight training or eating celery sticks for breakfast, lunch, and dinner! But the world of health, fitness and weight loss has a zillion options to help you get good results. Not everyone will enjoy going to singles' mixers, but aren't there other ways to meet new people? If you resent giving up your morning latte to save money, how about saving money by carpooling instead? Do some research and try out different ways to move toward your goals.
3. Turn your like to dislike and vice versa. In NLP, we have several specific techniques that instantly switch your feeling of "liking" something to "disliking" it or vice versa.

Note to NLP Students: Use SWISH Pattern, Submodalities Mapping Across, or Like to Dislike.

These techniques are most effective when you're guided by a qualified NLP practitioner. But to get a taste of how they work, try these steps using the example of a Health and Fitness goal:

1. Visualize a specific part of your health and fitness process that you don't like, for example working out on the treadmill. Notice how your body feels, your emotions. Is the picture of being on the treadmill in color or black and white? Far away or close? Focused or unfocused? Still or moving? What sounds do you hear?

2. Now think of an activity that's somewhat similar but is something you enjoy, maybe playing catch with your child. As you visualize this fun activity, notice how your body and emotions feel. Is this new picture in black or white, far or close? Sharply focused or unfocused? Still or moving? Any sounds?

3. Finally, go back to the picture of the activity you dislike. As you see this image, start shifting its characteristics to be similar as the activity you like. In other words, if your fun activity showed up in color, add some color to the picture of the one you don't like. Add the sounds from your fun activity. Make this picture farther or closer, moving or still to match your fun activity. As you do this, notice any shifts in your body and emotions.

Keep in mind that the vast majority of our lives will be spent heading toward our goals, not just achieving them. Make sure the journey itself is a joy-filled, satisfying one!

Finding the Joy in Small Steps

"It is good to have an end to journey toward, but it is the journey that matters in the end." –Ursula Le Guin

We've all heard it: The journey of a thousand miles begins with one step. Lao Tzu told us that centuries ago. He forgot to mention that it's not just that first small step but the one after that, and the one after that. Depending on how far the destination or how big the goal, we might have to take a zillion of those small steps to get where we want to go!

Maybe we don't hate the steps we need to take. **But the problem many people have with all these small steps is that they aren't very sexy or juicy, are they?** Our goals (if we've created them correctly) are inspiring and attractive and exciting to us. But those small steps to get there? Ugh.

And sadly, that's why many people give up on their goals. Not because the goal was too far out of reach. Not because the obstacles were too daunting or they hated the process. Not because the goal became undesirable. Just because those small steps were, well, boring.

On the flip side, we've got the goal gobblers. These are the people who hunt down goal after goal, belt notch after belt notch. They experience a brief sensation of "Yahoo!" when each goal is completed but then instantly start chasing after the next one. They grind it out, day after day, simply to keep moving. Not much juice there either.

Do either of those sound a great way to spend your life? Isn't there a better way to pursue our goals?

In my workshops, we talk about not only how to achieve your goals and get your unconscious mind on board, but also how to make the journey fulfilling along the way. There are several components to this:

Stay Present: It's a little scary to notice how often we are not where we are! By this I mean, we're texting the office while at dinner with a friend. We're talking on our phones while walking through the airport. We're worrying about our kids while sitting in a planning meeting.

We carry this over to our goals, spending our time imagining how great it will be when they are achieved and neglecting to notice how great things are where we are in this moment. Rather than focusing only on where we want to go, how about some appreciation for where we are now?

Maybe we want to be 45 lbs lighter—but isn't it great that we have our health even now? That we have the means to sign up for a gym or the intelligence to discover a nutritional plan that works for us? Isn't it awesome that our spouses and children still love us at our Plus-size? Isn't it amazing that others share our journey and have succeeded?

Honor the Season: **Every journey to a goal has "seasons" that are natural and valuable.** There is the Winter when you hit some level of discontent that makes you aware that you want something more. Next comes the Spring when you plant new fresh exciting ideas about where you want to go and how to get there. Summer is the time of longer days, keeping your ideas alive, nurturing them through doing. And Autumn is the harvest time when your ideas manifest.

As with Mother Nature's seasons, you may prefer one over the others. But each of these seasons is necessary for creation. Pay attention to which season you're in and appreciate it as you take your journey.

Find the Learning: Olympian Bill Toomey once said, **"Realize from the start that every activity has value and the ability to teach you something."** So it's not just the overall goal, but each small step is valuable in itself.

For example, say your goal is to find a romantic partner. One of the small steps you may need to take is to go out and meet new people. Ugh. Well, you can either look at sorting through all the Mr. & Ms. Wrongs as necessary but a drag — or you can make it a classroom. What can you learn by doing this step? How can you train yourself to be more comfortable in these situations? Are there ways you could learn to read people better? What can you enjoy about all those Mr. & Ms. Almost-Rights? By approaching it as an opportunity to learn, you'll gain valuable skills that apply to all areas.

Notice Who You Are Becoming: Over a century ago, Henry David Thoreau wrote, **"What you get by achieving your goals is not as important as what you become by achieving your goals."** It's not just the end result or the "what" of your goal. It's who you will become because of your journey.

Your goal might be to own your own business. What talents, skills, understandings, awareness and maturity do good business owners possess? A business is not just about the product. It's about the leadership at the helm. Who will you become along the way? How will you stretch and grow? What self-image do you need to have?

We know that goals are important to living a fulfilling life. But most of our hours will be spent doing the steps along the way, not in the achieving of each goal. As Greg Anderson, American writer and cancer survivor, said, "Focus on the journey not the destination. Joy is found not in finishing an activity but in doing it."

Trouble Shooting Goals that Don't Feel Good

Everybody and their grandmother (and probably your grandmother) will tell you that setting goals is key to success. I was taught goal-setting at an early age and I've taught goal-setting and goal-getting for many years to thousands of students.

And for the most part, students get really stoked as they work with goals and see the amazing results they can create. But every once in a while, a student approaches me and says that they hate goals, and that goals just make their lives miserable and stressful!

Huh? How could setting a goal and pursuing something you desire make you feel lousy?

I'd never had that experience so I wandered through some books and articles to figure it out. And I realized that there are certain goal-setting, goal-getting errors that can make the process backfire on you:

Your goals aren't aligned with who you really are

As Brian Tracy says, "Just as your car runs more smoothly and requires less energy to go faster and farther when the wheels are in perfect alignment, you perform better when your thoughts, feelings, emotions, goals, and values are in balance." **Do your goals really reflect what's important to you?** Are they the things you think you should want but don't really want? Pursuing a goal that isn't who you are is like wearing shoes that are two sizes too big or too small – you'll be miserable! Find the goals that fit who you really are and who you are becoming.

You're pursuing someone else's goals

This is similar to the error above. We look around and see what a great relationship that friend has or the amazing new career our cousin has. We see others winning awards or getting paid bundles of money. So we set our sights on what they've got. But as Marcus Buckingham says, "A note of caution: **We can never achieve goals that envy sets for us. Looking at your friends and wishing you had what they had is a waste of precious energy.** Because we are all unique, what makes another happy may do the opposite for you. That's why advice is nice but often disappointing when heeded."

You aren't here to live someone else's life, no matter how good it looks from the outside. Only your own internal voice can tell you what will really bring you joy and fulfillment.

You want something different but you're not willing to be different

Nope, not gonna happen. Change is an inherent part of goal-getting. When you set a worthy goal, it automatically stretches you and makes you confront some of your limiting beliefs and decisions. It forces you to become the kind of person who has or does whatever your goal is. As Les Brown said, "**You cannot expect to achieve new goals or move beyond your present circumstances unless you change.**" If you're determined to remain the same old you, expect to achieve the same old results.

You aren't appreciating the present

If your happiness is always "out there" somewhere, you'll never be happy. Waiting to be happy until you reach your goals is a sucker's game – because there's always a new goal just out of reach. It's okay to be a bit discontented with where you are. But you'll make yourself miserable if you don't look around and feel grateful for your life as it is now. As long as your heart is beating and you can take a breath, as long as you can experience a new sunrise, you have plenty to appreciate! As Bo Bennett says, "Success is about enjoying what you have and where you are, while pursuing achievable goals."

You don't really believe you can achieve your goal

You're trying to do something you believe is impossible for you to do? Why don't you just shackle a two-hundred pound weight to your ankles and leap in the bay?!? It doesn't matter how brilliantly you design your goals or how tenaciously you pursue them, if you don't really believe you can get there, you'll be fighting yourself the whole way. As Ralph Marston says, "Your goals, minus your doubts, equal your reality." You'll certainly create misery for yourself if you insist on dragging your doubts along with you as you work toward your goals.

Here's the thing about "impossible." You can never prove it. Think about "impossible." We can prove that something can be done. We can break the 4 minute mile and we can walk on the moon – both once considered impossible. But there's no way to prove that you can't do or achieve something. Even if a million people try and don't succeed, that 1,000,001st person may succeed. So why believe in impossible?

You're trying to get there too fast. People often say that life is a journey – but I'm not sure I've ever heard anyone describe life as a sprint! Goals can propel us forward. But natural momentum is not the same as a frantic chase. Andrew Bernstein writes, "We need to distinguish between stress and stimulation. Having deadlines, setting goals, and pushing yourself to perform at capacity are stimulating. Stress is when you're anxious, upset, or frustrated, which dramatically reduce your ability to perform."

You won't eradicate hunger all at once. But you can come up with a good project to feed the homeless in your community. You can inspire conferences and brain trusts to develop new approaches to the problem. Give yourself bite-size pieces to your large goals. As John Johnson said, "If you make them too big, you get overwhelmed and you don't do anything. If you make small goals and accomplish them, it gives you the confidence to go on to higher goals."

Setting goals and pursuing them should make you feel inspired, not tired; enthusiastic, not discouraged, confident, not insecure.

"When we are motivated by goals that have deep meaning, by dreams that need completion, by pure love that needs expressing, then we truly live."

-Greg Anderson

Your Instant Resourceful State

I promised to show you how to access a resourceful state, the state that makes anything you want to achieve — including your goals — easier. Earlier in this report, I talked about all the awesome standard equipment we've been given — brilliant brains, bodies that perform amazing functions in every moment, our incredible ability to see, hear, taste, feel, and communicate. Honestly, every one of us has all we need — as standard equipment! — to live highly successful and happy lives.

I also mentioned that most of us are walking around with fantastic equipment that we haven't plugged in! We've stopped the flow of our natural capacities so they can't function as magnificently as they could. **NLP would say that we're spending too much of our life trying to operate from a non-resourceful state which blocks the full power of our standard equipment.**

And as a result, we struggle and can't seem to create the life we desire. Even if we battle to where we think we want to go, we do so at a cost to our health or our relationships. We don't enjoy the journey and it just seems hard!

The good news (and there's only good news this time!) is that we can intentionally, easily and effortlessly, put ourselves into a resourceful state any time we choose. We literally can switch within seconds to a state in which we can think clearly and creatively, express ourselves authentically, and do whatever we need to do feeling energetic, powerful and happy.

First, let's get clear on what a non-resourceful state looks like. It includes things like worry, doubt, fear, tension, exhaustion, blame, self-flagellation, distractedness, foggy headedness, resentment, panic, anxiety, anger, distress, sadness — get the picture?

An extreme example would be a panic attack: You can hardly breathe much less think. Your emotions are running wild and you don't know who to trust much less which way to go. Your body freezes and your mind goes blank. Totally non-resourceful, right?

How about a more subtle example? You're a little concerned that your boss doesn't like your work. You spend your days trying to figure out what's wrong, running the "what ifs" over and over in your head and playing out worst case scenarios — rather than being proactive and productive. Perhaps that's not as painful as an anxiety attack, but you're still not using your brilliant natural resources as they're meant to be used.

In contrast, in a resourceful state, you feel calm, centered, “comfortable in your own skin.” You feel capable and confident. Your body is relaxed yet energetic and you’re able to move with grace and power. Your mind is able to generate all kinds of options and make clear decisions. You’re very aware of the environment and people around you and you can respond easily.

Most importantly, being in this resourceful state is not dependent on your circumstances or specific events. You don’t have to be winning or hanging out with people who adore you. You don’t have to be a master at whatever you’re doing or in the perfect environment.

**Just like every state, you are the one who generates this resourceful state.
You bring it to the circumstance.**

Let me be clear. When I talk about resourceful state, I’m not talking about positive thinking. It’s not the Little Engine chanting “I think I can. I think I can.” It’s a fully experiential state where you don’t have to convince yourself that you can. You simply know that you can and you feel it on every level, physical, emotional and mental.

So how to get there? And how to switch to that state when you feel yourself being less than resourceful? In NLP, we teach several techniques. One is to create an “anchor,” a trigger that will remind your unconscious and physiology to enter your resourceful state. An anchor can be anything you choose, like a word or a motion. It can be tapping a part of your body.

The process only takes a minute or so. The 4 steps to creating your resourceful state anchor are:

1. Recall a time when you felt especially empowered, confident, capable. Get into the memory until you can really feel what it felt like.
2. As that “resourceful” feeling builds, activate your anchor (do the motion or say the word you’ve chosen). Keep the anchor going until you feel the feelings in that memory begin to fade.
3. Break fully from the memory and, for a moment or two, distract yourself and think about something totally different.
4. Next, reactivate your anchor (say the word or do the motion you’ve chosen). How do you feel? Isn’t this the state you’d prefer to be in most of the time?

The keys to this process are intensity (choosing a very empowering memory that you can really get into), timing (making sure you activate your anchor when your re-experience of that resourceful feeling is peaking), uniqueness (choosing an anchor that is distinctive) and the number of times the state is anchored. (I teach this technique more thoroughly in our live trainings.

For more information or to register: <http://www.empowermentpartnership.com/event-schedule/>

Try it out and take your resourceful state on a road trip! Next time you are about to be faced with an experience where you would normally feel non-resourceful, use your anchor and step into your resourceful state instead!

3 Critical Keys to Goal-Getting

There are 3 steps that are critical for achieving the SMART goals you’ve set: 1) Let go of the baggage. 2) Take action and 3) Maintain focus.

Let Go of the Baggage

The baggage I’m referring to includes the negative emotions and limiting beliefs and decisions you’ve carried around for decades. Some of it may show up in negative behaviors or habits. Some may appear as doubt or fear. But unless we do some intensive and regular release work, all of us have some.

This negative baggage is the single most destructive force preventing people from reaching their dreams and goals!

Note to NLP Students: Use Mental Emotional Release® process. Be sure to include the entire area that your goal is within (i.e. Health and Fitness for a specific weight loss goal). Be ready to clean up peripheral issues like Secondary Gains using other techniques.

So how do we identify that baggage and what do we do to release it?

In my experience, the most thorough and effective way to fully release this baggage is through NLP and its techniques. But if you don't have that knowledge, here's a suggestion I heard from Edwene Gaines, a long time prosperity coach: After you read your goals aloud each day, ask yourself (or ask in prayer), "What do I need to change in myself to attain these goals?" When an answer comes to you, ask "Am I willing to change this? And if so, how shall I do it?"

To experience Mental Emotional Release® (MER®) process that releases limiting beliefs, the same process I've referenced throughout this report, please register for the 3-day Empowering Your Life® Seminar: <http://www.empowermentpartnership.com/event-schedule/>

Take Action

As Tony Robbins points out, "Remember, a real decision is measured by the fact that you've taken new action. If there's no action, you haven't truly decided." If your goal is important, then do something about it! You may not know all the steps you'll need to take or how to get to your destination. Just take the steps you know. They don't have to be huge steps; they can be small. But if you don't take action, your unconscious will assume that you weren't really serious about them, that hanging on the coach to watch football is more of a priority.

Once you start taking steps, you'll be amazed at what opens up for you. You'll think of new ideas and notice opportunities and resources you hadn't noticed before. It all begins with action.

Stay Focused

When we say "stay focused" in NLP, we don't mean to keep staring at your goal until your eyes cross! It's about recognizing that everything that happens on your journey is part of your path. Obstacles are merely markers that tell you you're moving forward.

Think of it this way: If you stay sitting in your chair and don't move, you won't experience any obstacles. But as soon as you get up and walk through the house, you'll find things you need to walk around or through or over, right? Those "obstacles" prove that you're on your way to wherever you are going.

Note to NLP Students: A key to maintaining focus is using Reframing.

I hope you've received a lot of insight and value from this Special Report on Everything You'll Ever Need to Know to Achieve Your Goals.

I've mentioned NLP a lot throughout this report because I have seen how it dramatically improves students' success rate with their goals – and their enjoyment in the journey of achieving them!

I encourage you to register for one of our trainings: <http://www.empowermentpartnership.com/>

When you complete this training, you'll be armed with tools to create instant and lasting change in your life. You can use these strategies to dramatically and measurably improve your finances, relationships, career prospects – any of your goals. And you'll have techniques that can help your family and friends create the changes they crave in their lives as well.

Wishing you empowerment and success!

Mahalo,
Dr. Matt

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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