Holiday De-Stress Guide Week 6: Feel Empowered for 2013



January

It is that time of year when many people look forward to a fresh start for self-improvement. But, setting a New Year's resolution (and sticking to it!) may be a daunting task. Use this guide to feel empowered in 2013.

Set "SMART" Goals

Purpose of Goals

- Focus your energy
- Help you live a purpose-centered life
- Help you form plans
- Give you a feeling of accomplishment

S = SPECIFIC

Goals should be clear and specific. WHAT are you going to do? WHY is this important to you? HOW are you going to do it?

M = MEASURABLE

If you can't measure it, you can't manage it. Establish concrete criteria for measuring progress toward the attainment of each goal.

A = ATTAINABLE

Setting goals that are too far out of your reach may set the stage for failure. A goal should stretch you slightly so you feel you can achieve it.

R = **REALISTIC**

The skills needed to achieve a goal are available. The goal should be realistic for you and where you are at the moment.

T = TIME-BASED

Set a time frame for the goal. Putting an end point on your goal gives you a clear target to work toward. Time must be measurable, attainable, and realistic.

Simple tips to help you reach your goal

- Avoid perfectionist thinking
- Don't keep your resolution to yourself
- View setbacks as lessons for growth
- ▶ Give them some meaning

Value-Centered Goals

Values: powerful and effective determinants of human accomplishment and progress



Why is it important to establish value-centered goals?

- While goals may change, values are more anchoring and consistent.
- They differentiate the important from the unimportant.
- They drive our lives in a positive direction and move us forward.
- They provide an internal and personal reference for what is useful, beneficial, and desirable.

How to create value-based goals?

- 1) Write a short list of beliefs and principles that have shaped your life thus far.
- 2) What beliefs and ideals currently motivate you and drive your life today?
- 3) What are your strongest values and principles?
- 4) List some of your current goals (e.g., home, work, family, health, spiritual).
- 5) Divide those goals into what is urgent and what is not.
- 6) Divide the two urgent/non-urgent lists into what is important and not important.

The decision of importance is based on your values and principles. Try to get rid of, or at least reduce time and energy spent on non-important, non-urgent items. These are often distractions and energy wasters.

Create a Vision Board

Vision board: collage of images, pictures, and affirmations of your dreams and desires.

- 1. Decide the main theme of your board: specific goal, or general idea that makes you happy.
- 2. Find pictures that correspond with your theme (magazines, photographs, internet).
- 3. Print (if necessary) and cut out your pictures.
- 4. Type or write some affirmations that correspond with your theme.
- 5. Glue to a poster board or pin on a cork board.
- 6. Hang your vision board in a place you will see every day.
- 7. View your board at least once a day: focus on the objects, sayings, and theme of your board.

Focus on the why, how, when, and where you will make it happen. The "what" (vision) is the first step – not the only step!

Resources: www.psychologytoday.com, www.wikihow.com



