GOAL SETTING

FROM DREAMS TO REALITY

Setting goals can be very exciting, and it provides an awakening to realities as the process unfolds. Goal setting is part of our everyday lives. A goal can be as simple as saying, “I will get up at 5:00 a.m. in the morning to go fishing.” It might be as complex as, “I will become an accountant after finishing high school.” Goal setting is essential to designing a successful future, whether that future is tomorrow, next year or ten years from now.

Goal setting needs to be applied to simple activities and practiced in order to be successful as goals become more complex. Goal setting includes:

• Recognizing personal limitations and barriers
• Setting and achieving simple goals
• Extending those goals to be more complex goals
• Accomplishing objectives one at a time until the goal is met
• Discovering and gathering important information
• Ranking or prioritizing major objectives
• Evaluating and changing goals

Students need to engage in goal setting at regular intervals throughout the year. Progress is assessed, and goals are re-evaluated during these sessions. Emphasize the fact that goals change as we change and grow into our lives and our futures.

GOAL WRITING GUIDELINES

If goal setting is a new process to students follow these goal writing guidelines:

A goal MUST be…..

CONCEIVABLE- put into words
BELIEVABLE- to the person setting the goal
ACHIEVABLE- person must possess the strength, energy and time to accomplish it
MEASURABLE- in terms of time and accomplishment
DESIRABLE- something wanted

A short-term goal is 6 months to one year. It re-clarifies the long range goal; it determines the immediate steps to begin the process; it sees the short-term plan has a goal within itself; it helps determine whether the student is following his or her plan or whether he or she needs to re-evaluate; and it is the steps to reach long-term goals.

A intermediate-range goal is 1 to 3 years. It’s development is similar to the short-term goal and covers a more complex steps that take longer.

A long term goal is 3 to 5 years. It is central to one’s life; it is reached after connecting short-term goals and intermediate-range goals; time issues are individualized; it is re-examined periodically; it is flexible and open to new ideas (don’t be afraid to shift directions). These three types of goals can be influenced by external and internal barriers.

A goal is a statement that specifies what you want to achieve or do within a certain amount of time. An objective is an action that will help you meet your goal — and measure your success. An objective tells you what will be different when you’ve accomplished it, by how much or how many, and by when. (Binham & Styler, 1990)
The more specific the goal and objectives are the more useful and they will be. The objectives should be measurable and have a timeframe in which to be completed. Diagram objectives to make sure they are useful. Look at this example using this diagraming key:

\(\text{\ = how much or how many, \text{___} = what will be different, \text{\(\square\)} = by when.}\)

GOAL: To read at least one book to know how to show sheep by June 1.
OBJECTIVE: Read a chapter in the book every month.

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Ask students to write about goal setting throughout the year. To begin, instruct them to complete this sentence and elaborate: “Now that we have finished this activity on goal setting, I am different in these ways:” Ask students to answer the following questions:

1. What three goals have you met this week?
2. What made you proud of yourself this week?
3. What is one thing you wish you had finished this week?

**Other ideas for free writing in a journal:**

1. When I am an adult I will:
2. A time I felt very important was:
3. Something I did that made other people proud of me was:
4. I can see myself working as a:
5. It would be too big a risk for me to go into a career such as:
6. My goals for this summer are:
7. Five adventures I would like to have during my lifetime are:

**Discussion questions for closure:**

1. What do you like best/least about goal setting?
2. What did you learn in this activity that you will remember and use?
3. What about these activities will you remember in 6 months?
4. What about this activity would you want to teach to a friend?