

GOAL PLANNING AND VALUES

Goal planning can help us stay accountable to ourselves in our pain management plan. When setting new goals, it is helpful to think about why we want to change our current situation. Often, our goals align with our personal values, and our values can help us stay on track towards achieving our goals when things are tough.

INTENTIONS, GOALS, AND DREAMS - WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE?

Goals are the objectives you want to achieve, while values are your core beliefs that inform the way you interact with the world. Examples of values include respect for others, accountability, honesty, and connection. Unlike goals that have an eventual endpoint, values follow us in life and inform our goals, decision-making, and behaviours. When struggling to make progress towards your goal, pausing to reflect on why you set the goal can boost your morale and help you to overcome challenges.

Intentions are about how you feel in the present moment, while goals are your desired future state. Intentions encourage you to take actions in the present that fit with your values and goals, without the checklists or timelines of a goal.

Dreams are bigger picture - your wishes and desires of how you want your life to be. Your dreams allow you to think boldly, sometimes even beyond what is possible.

One way to think about the distinction between these terms is that dreams are what inspire us to create goals (go on the journey), and values are the fundamental beliefs that inform the journey we take (like a road map). Your destination is the completion of your goal, while your intentions are your ride to that destination.

SMART GOALS

SMART is an acronym for the five things to consider when setting goals. These are the components of SMART goals and how you can use each to support chronic pain self-management:

SPECIFIC: Being specific in your goal setting helps you focus on exactly what you want to accomplish. For example, instead of saying “I want to be healthier,” a specific goal might be “I want to drink more water.”

MEASURABLE: Measurable means you have chosen clear **ways to know** whether you have accomplished your goal.

For example, instead of saying “I want to drink more water,” a measurable goal might be, “I want to drink an additional eight ounces of water each day.”

ATTAINABLE: As much as we want to accomplish big goals, it is important to create goals that are realistic and attainable.

In a perfect world, the ideal water intake for adults is 72-104 ounces every day, but that may not be attainable right now. It’s better to start small and build your way up as you complete your initial goals!

RELEVANT: A relevant goal aligns with your values and what is important to you. One way to determine if your goal is relevant to ask yourself, “Why do I want to accomplish this goal?”

A relevant goal might be “Proper hydration can improve some pain symptoms, so I want to drink an additional eight ounces of water each day.”

TIME-BOUND: Time-bound goals keep us accountable to ourselves and to the goals we have set.

Looking back at our water goal, a time-bound addition may sound something like, “Proper hydration can improve some pain symptoms, so I want to drink an additional eight ounces of water each day, increasing by another eight ounces **each** week until I reach 56 ounces per day.” This creates a time-bound seven week goal if starting from zero. And just like that, we have created a SMART goal!

RESOURCES

- SMART Goals: A How to Guide. Performance Appraisal Planning (2016-2017):
www.ucop.edu/local-human-resources/_files/performance-appraisal/How%20to%20write%20SMART%20Goals%20v2.pdf
- Shifting Resolutions to Intentions by Shirvin Lee:
shirvin.ca/blog/shifting_resolutions_to_intentions/

VALUES WORKSHEET

Choose your top ten values from the table below or choose your own if they are not on the list!

Accountability	Accuracy	Adaptability	Altruism
Ambition	Amusement	Awareness	Balance
Beauty	Boldness	Bravery	Calm
Challenge	Certainty	Charity	Clarity
Comfort	Commitment	Communication	Compassion
Competence	Confidence	Connection	Consistency
Cooperation	Courage	Creativity	Curiosity
Dedication	Dedication	Dependability	Determination
Development	Devotion	Dignity	Discipline
Discovery	Drive	Efficiency	Empathy
Empowerment	Endurance	Enjoyment	Enthusiasm
Equality	Ethical	Excellence	Experience
Exploration	Fairness	Family	Feelings
Fidelity	Focus	Fun	Generosity
Giving	Goodness	Grace	Greatness
Growth	Happiness	Hard Work	Harmony
Health	Courage	Creativity	Curiosity
Humility	Imagination	Improvement	Independence

Individuality	Innovation	Intuition	Joy
Justice	Kindness	Knowledge	Lawful
Leadership	Learning	Logic	Love
Mastery	Maturity	Meaning	Moderation
Motivation	Openness	Optimism	Order
Organization	Originality	Passion	Patience
Power	Productivity	Professionalism	Purpose
Quality	Realistic	Reason	Recognition
Recreation	Respect	Responsibility	Restraint
Risk	Satisfaction	Security	Self-reliance
Selflessness	Sensitivity	Serenity	Service
Sharing	Simplicity	Sincerity	Skillfulness
Solitude	Spirituality	Spontaneous	Stability
Status	Strength	Structure	Success
Support	Sustainability	Talent	Teamwork
Thoughtfulness	Timeliness	Tolerance	Toughness
Tradition	Tranquility	Transparency	Trust
Truth	Understanding	Uniqueness	Unity
Valor	Vigor	Vision	Vitality
Wealth	Welcoming	Wisdom	Wonder

Next, try to cut this down to the top three values that are most important to you.

Reflect on the following questions:

Why are these the most important to you?

How do I know when I am aligned with these values?

How do I know when I am not aligned with these values?

What can I do to align myself with my values should I find myself struggling?

How can I make goals for pain self-management that honour one or all of these values?