

Goal-Setting Worksheet

Many people find that setting and working toward specific goals makes it easier to follow their self-care plan. This worksheet can help you set realistic goals and create clear steps to reach them. Use the SMART approach to goal-setting.

What is the “SMART” approach to setting goals?

The SMART goal system is a way to set goals that make it easier to achieve them. SMART is an acronym where each letter stands for something that helps your goal be strong and clear:

- **Specific:** Make your goal clear and exact. For example: “I want to improve my mental health by exercising regularly.”
- **Measurable:** Make sure you can track your progress. For example: “I will exercise for 30 minutes, four times per week.”
- **Achievable:** Set a goal you think you can reach. For example, “I will choose activities I enjoy, such as walking or biking, and fit them into my weekly schedule.”
- **Realistic:** Pick a goal that is important to you and makes sense for your life. For example, “Exercise is important because it helps me feel less stressed and boosts my mood.”
- **Timely:** Give your goal a deadline. For example, “I will follow this plan for 10 weeks and check my mood at the end.”

Here are some steps to follow to think about your goals and create a plan that will work for you:

Choose an area of your life that you want to improve. This may be your mental, physical, or financial health, finding activities you enjoy, or working on your education or career.

Reflect on your recent experiences related to this area. What's been working well? What's been hard?

Decide what progress in that area might look like over time. Be specific and honest about what feels realistic for you.

Set a short-term goal related to the standard you're trying to reach. (Use the "SMART" approach when determining your goal.)

- Specific:
- Measurable:
- Achievable:
- Realistic:
- Timely:

Make a plan. Think about what might get in the way of you achieving your goal and how you will handle it.

Put your plan into action. Start small, track your progress, and celebrate small wins.

Adjust the goal as needed. If something isn't working, that's okay. Modify your plan and keep going!

For more mental health educational resources, visit depressioncenter.org/toolkit.

This document provides general educational information developed by the Eisenberg Family Depression Center. It is not a substitute for professional medical advice. Please consult your health care provider if you have questions about your health or treatment options.