



Goal Setting – ‘SMART’ Goals

When setting a goal for yourself it is always a good idea to make it a **SMART** one!

Specific and Measurable: Can I identify my goals? What do I want to achieve? How will I know when I have got there? How many? The questions ensure you can work out when you have achieved the goals, and celebrate the fact.

Achievable, Realistic and Timebound: Can I achieve this? What do I need? What are the likely problems? Am I being realistic? Do I believe this is possible? Am I willing and able to work for this? Can I do this in a reasonable time frame? The questions ensure you're not trying for the impossible.

Please write your goals in the space provided below.

	Self	Relationships	Work
Within one week			
Within one month			
Within own time frame			



Goal setting is a useful technique at any time but has many significant benefits for people who have been depressed and/or suicidal because:

1. It promotes a focus on the future.
2. It can be used in combination with problem-solving, a technique known to be an effective strategy for depression and deliberate self-harm.
3. It promotes the process of breaking down problems into small, achievable goals.
4. It can also highlight whether the goals are possible. Having impossible goals can increase a sense of anger, or frustration and helplessness.
5. It can be used by individuals, alone or in association with partners, families, colleagues.
6. It can promote useful discussion with significant others.
7. The 'within own time frame' section of the chart may refer to 'within a day', in the case of people who are feeling very overwhelmed by their depression; for others it may be further into the future 'within 6 months.....5 years'.



Recommended reading and resources for further information

Barlow David H, Rapee Ronald M (1997), **Mastering Stress: A Lifestyle Approach**. Lifestyle Press. *This book contains practical suggestions for handling stress.*

Falloon I, Laporta M, Fadden G, Graham-Hole V (1993) **Managing Stress n Families: Cognitive and Behavioural Strategies for Enhancing Coping Skills**. Routledge. *Useful skills for families.*

Fanning P (1994), **Visualisation for change**. New Harbinger. *Very useful visualisations for sport, study, anger, depression, anxiety, smoking, illness.*

O'Hanlon, Bill (1999), **Do One Thing Different: Ten Simple Ways to Change Your Life**. Quill. *Useful solution-focussed strategies to think and act differently.*

Treatment Protocol Project (2004), **Management of Mental Disorders. Book 1**. WHO Organisation Collaborating Centre for Mental Health and Substance Abuse. *Contains information about goal setting in the Core Management Skills section.*

http://www.depressionet.com.au/inspiration/making_changes.html

This site has a series of useful tips for those wishing to make changes to their life. It can be used to provide electronic tips and updates, if requested.

<http://www.topachievement.com/smart.html>

This site is one of many discussing the concept of SMART goals