**Goal Setting – Tips for Success**

**What would you like to achieve by the end of 2023?**

Ensure these goals are **SMART -- S**pecific, **M**easurable, **A**ttainable, **R**elevant, and **T**ime-bound.

**S**

**Specific**

Using action words, what will you do specifically?

**M**

**Measurable**

What metrics, data, or criteria will you use to evaluate your achievement?

**A**

**Achievable**

Ensure the goal is possible to accomplish, attainable, and realistic

**R**

**Relevant**

Does it relate to your career, business, or life vision?

**T**

**Time-bound**

Set timelines and deadlines for each step of the goal

Studies have shown that goals that are **positively phrased**, i.e. start doing something, are more effective than those that are negatively phrased, i.e. stop doing something.

Instead of saying “I will stop binging on Netflix”, say “I will take a walk every day for 30 minutes after dinner”.

**BMAP:** Stanford Behavioural Scientist B.J. Fogg tells us that

**B**ehaviour = **M**otivation x **A**bility x **P**rompts.

In other words, for sustainable **Behavioural Change**, we need[[1]](#footnote-1):

**Motivation** to undertake that behaviour, e.g. training to cycle in a charity bike ride to raise funds for a cause that is important to us. 🡺 Know the “why” behind your goals.

**B=MAP**

**Ability** to do that activity, e.g. actually know how to ride, can cycle for that duration/distance, and have access to a bike. 🡺 Make sure your goal is realistic and feasible.

**Prompts** – Cues and triggers that will prompt or remind us to cycle daily, e.g. placing our bike helmet in view, diarize calendar popups, or use sticky note reminders. 🡺 Make reminders visible.

Psychologists tell us that **willpower is over-rated**. Rather, what we need to actually implement good habits is to **change our environment** to accommodate good habits and to make behaviour change easier.

Let’s face it, the environment will often win whether it is tornado 🌪️ vs. human 🧍🏽 or a bakery filled with yummy high sugar and carb treats 🍰 vs. a hungry person on a diet 😋. That is an important rule to keep in mind in forming habits.

**Environment plays a key role in developing good habits**

Psychologists tell us that **willpower is over-rated**. Rather, what we need to actually implement good habits is to **change our environment** to accommodate good habits and to make behaviour change easier.

In his book *Atomic Habits*, James Clear sets out the **Four Stages Habit Creation**[[2]](#footnote-2):

1. **Cue:** Information that tells us about the presence of a reward, e.g. passing by a bakery, which triggers us to do something, i.e. buy a cookie.
2. **Craving:** The motivation or desire to take action to actually get the reward, e.g. hunger.
3. **Response:** The action we need to take to get the reward, e.g. walking in and buying the cookie.
4. **Reward:** The satisfying feeling we get, e.g. tasting the chocolatey goodness of the cookie.

Keeping the four principles in mind, here is what we need to do to design good habits and to break bad habits in the context of eating healthier food.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Step** | **Designing GOOD Habits** | **Breaking BAD Habits** |
| **Habit** | Eating healthy food. | Stop eating junk food, sweets, chips.... |
| **Cue** | Make it **obvious**, e.g. put fresh fruit on the counter. | Make it **invisible**, e.g. hide snack food on the back shelf. |
| **Craving** | Make it **attractive**, e.g. buy fruit you actually like.  | Make it **unattractive**, e.g. buy a flavour of chips you don’t like as much. |
| **Response** | Make it **easy**, e.g. wash and cut them up in advance or buy them pre-cut. | Make it **difficult**, e.g. not having unhealthy snacks at home so when you have a craving, you’ll need to go out to buy them. |
| **Reward** | Make it **satisfying**, e.g. eat fruit that is naturally sweet to satisfy your taste buds. | Make it **unsatisfying**, e.g. have a rule where you can’t eat cookies until you have worked out for an hour and eaten a bowl of oatmeal. |

**Consider BJ Fogg’s Habit Stacking**

As it generally takes **66 days for a new behaviour** to become an automatic **habit**[[3]](#footnote-3), if you can stick to your plan for two months, you’ll be better able to maintain that behaviour for the long-term.

**Change is a process, not an event. ~ Susan David**

**2-Minute Habit Stack:** Start with 1 small habit change (that can ideally be done in 2 minutes) which is **anchored** to an existing habit, e.g. do 2 minutes of jumping jacks while you are boiling the kettle for tea.

**So, what will your first 2-minute habit stack be?**

**The bad news is**

**time flies.**

**The good news is**

**YOU’RE THE PILOT**.

**~**  **Michael Altshuler**

I hope these techniques will help you as you set and achieve your goals and get you closer to your hopes and dreams.

Still need guidance or support? KSky Coaching can help you reach that infinite potential and transform your life.
Please email to book your session at jeanette@kskycoaching.com.

**For more information about habits and goal setting, please see:**

* <https://behaviormodel.org/>
* <https://jamesclear.com/three-steps-habit-change>
* [https://www.psychologytoday.com/intl/blog/self-leadership/202012/new-year-s-resolutions-202](https://www.psychologytoday.com/intl/blog/self-leadership/202012/new-year-s-resolutions-2021)1
* <http://www.oprah.com/inspiration/how-to-lose-weight-new-years-resolutions/all#ixzz5b9Cnj02O>
* <https://thriveglobal.com/stories/resolutions-new-year-strategies-achieve-goals-habits/>

All images are royalty-free from the fabulous [www.pixabay.com](http://www.pixabay.com) and [www.pexels.com](http://www.pexels.com)

1. <https://behaviormodel.org/> [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. <https://jamesclear.com/three-steps-habit-change> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Note: In this study, habit formation ranged from 18 to 254 days s everyone is different.<https://centrespringmd.com/docs/How%20Habits%20are%20Formed.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-3)