

Supporting Clinicians Through the COVID-19 Pandemic

Tip Sheet: Goal Setting and Keeping



This tip sheet offers suggestions setting and keeping wellness goals during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Why set a wellness goal during COVID-19?

- Goals are important for several reasons:
 1. Goals give you the power of control over achievable things in your life, especially during the pandemic when it seems like you have little control.
 2. Goals directly benefit Y-O-U!
 3. According to Stephen Covey, the purpose of goals is “Translating vision into achievable, actionable doing.” (The Power of Goals, 2003.)
- Goals can be a powerful process.
- Goals are the common denominator of successful individuals and organizations.
- Goals around wellness are valuable, if not critical during the COVID-19 pandemic because physicians are under such significant stressors - both at work and at home.



What should I select as my wellness goal?

- Wellness goals focus on your total wellbeing and provides a pathway for maintaining and supporting wellbeing.
- Take the approach of setting principle-based goals. These are goals that are “the right thing, for the right reason, in the right way.” - Stephen Covey, The Power of Goals, 2003.
- We can also add within the right timeframe when thinking about our current environment during the pandemic.
- Select wellness goals that focus on your individual wellbeing but make sure it is doable during this unprecedented time. For example: You may want to travel the world and that is a good wellness goal, but it is not doable at this time. You can modify it to self-directed learning about your top 5 places to travel. If you use the web, this prepares you for when you can travel and allows you to visualize the location. The process becomes a virtual vacation.
- Some important and needed immediate goals should focus on selfcare and behaviors that enhance resilience. (See our tip sheet on Staying Resilient or the Top 10 Things to do During COVID podcast.)

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Can others be included in my goal?

- Absolutely! Wellness goals can include family wellness goals, spouse/significant other/partner goals, work team goals, of broader extended network of family and friends goals.
- Prioritize a goal that works best for you.
- If a goal includes other individuals, make sure to bring them into the discussion early so you are still meeting the principle-based goal process.

“Even when it is not fully attained, we become better by striving for a higher goal.”

~ Viktor E. Frankl

(Accessed at: <http://www.azquotes.com/quote/1249808>.)

I never set or complete new year’s resolutions. How will I keep a wellness goal during this time of stress?

- There is no doubt this time is a stressful period in our lifetime. Only you can decide if setting a goal will benefit you or not.
- Our model is one that is usually successful because we include a variety of considerations before you embark on setting the goal.
- We all know barriers exist that thwarts even our best efforts even when we are not in a pandemic. However, the importance is the sense of control and doing what you can for yourself, to keep you healthy and well for yourself, your family, and your patients.
- Our B-A-SMART-ER model helps you identify all barriers and you should consider barriers along the entire pathway toward success.
- Time is always the biggest barrier listed by physicians.
- Identify short intervals (2-4 weeks) toward change and provide rewards to:
 - Self
 - Others (division/section, department, organization or family)



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What model should I use?

- We developed a model of goal setting that is likely to support success if done appropriately.
- Set aside 20-30 minutes.
- Determine what you intend to change. Use the B-A-SMART-ER™ model. We developed this model in the Center for Professional Health and it is based on two goal models and educational theory for learning success.
- Review the outline below. Then create your own. Take your time answering/completing each part.

Designing the Dream: Intent to Change and Goal Keeping **B-A-SMARTER™ Goal and Objective Writer**

Evidence shows that writing down goals increases the likelihood of fulfilling them. Review this framework and the example below, as we will use this or similar techniques during the session.

B - Barriers	Identify major barriers or challenges to executing or maintaining your new personal goals and objectives.
A - Accountability	Select someone to serve as an advocate and hold you accountable to the tasks.
S – Specific	Make sure your objective is <i>specific</i> .
M – Measurable	Make sure your objective has a <i>measurable</i> outcome to define success.
A – Appropriate	Make sure your objective is <i>appropriate</i> , something that is attainable – in this lifetime.
R – Relevant	Make sure your objective is <i>relevant</i> to you – personally.
R - Reward	Select rewards to give yourself for being successful. (e.g.: a massage after 4 successes or after 2 weeks of trying)
T – Timely	Make sure your objective is <i>timely</i> – list as either short-term (1-2 weeks), intermediate (2-4 weeks), or long-term (1-12 months).
E – Evaluate	Identify a time to <i>evaluate</i> your goal & objective on a short-term, intermediate, and long-term basis. (e.g. 1 mo, 6 mo, 12 mo, etc.)
R – Re-evaluate	<i>Re-evaluate</i> your goals/objectives and carry over those that worked well, re-adjust those that need modifying, and set new goals to build on the old ones.

- Consider making at minimum two goals. Make one goal for you personally, related you maintaining your wellness and resilience during the COVID-19 pandemic, and consider another one for your family, work, team, etc.
- If handling your own stress is all you can handle at this time, no worries. Prioritize yourself first!
- Start with your intent to change.
- Work through each checklist item. Push yourself to identify all possible barriers along with time.
- Write a completed objective – what will be done in detail based on your checklist items.

B-A-SMART-ER™ Goal and Objective: Personal

Goal: I intend to change the following:

Check List:

- ☐ B - Barriers
- ☐ A – Accountability
- ☐ S – Specific
- ☐ M – Measurable
- ☐ A – Appropriate
- ☐ R – Relevant/ Rewards
- ☐ T – Timely
- ☐ E – Evaluate
- ☐ R – Re-evaluate

☐ Barriers:

☐ Accountability:

☐ Specifics:

☐ Measures:

☐ Appropriate:

☐ Relevant:

☐ Rewards:

☐ Timely:

☐ Evaluate:

☐ Re-evaluate:

Write your complete objective here: My goal is to...

B-A-SMART-ER™ Goal and Objective: At Work, Team, Family

Goal: I intend to change the following:

Check List:

- ☐ B - Barriers
- ☐ A – Accountability
- ☐ S – Specific
- ☐ M – Measurable
- ☐ A – Appropriate
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☐ Evaluate:

☐ Re-evaluate:

Write your complete objective here: My goal is to...

What happens when I complete my goal?

- Once you complete your goal, you should celebrate your success and be present in that moment for a while.
- Then determine if you will continue working on it or make a change.
 - If unsuccessful: If you feel the goal was not completed, then re-evaluate it. Did you develop a principle-based goal that would benefit you during the COVID-19 pandemic? If not, start again from the beginning, select something that is for the right reason, at the right time, for the right purpose, in the right way. If it was a principle-based goal, but wasn't successful, review your barriers and other checklist items for areas that can improve or be strengthened and plan to overcome them if you will continue your effort.
 - If successful:
 - If the goal was beneficial and you value it, make it a lifestyles change (example: exercising more or maintaining better sleeping habits).
 - If you completed a goal and feel successful and more in control, then consider if you need another goal. Keep the process going if possible. I personally try to work on 2-3 wellness goals over the course of a year, so I am always focused on my wellness and resilience.
- As a physician we are at risk of burnout, so we should NEVER stop focusing on our wellness and resilience.



Will completing my goal help me during COVID-19?

- Yes! You may be happier, and you may also reduce your risk of burnout and impairment.
- Goal keeping will help you feel in control. It gives you ownership and once successful you have a sense of achievement. You need all of these to help get you through the COVID-19 pandemic because it will be a marathon and not a sprint.
- Goal setting and goal keeping help us because we directly benefit from the outcomes we design.
- Progress + rewards = success + happiness
- We are usually happier when we are high achieving. Goal keeping allows you to feel successful and gives us a sense of achievement when there may be other challenges (such as over working, stress, fear if contracting the virus or worse, dying from the virus) that reduce your resilience and are not supporting your professional health and wellness.



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Resources: MH specialists, coaches, psychiatry, primary doctor, etc. Each picture is hyperlinked to the actual webpage. Simply click on the picture.

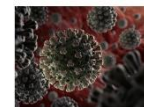
- American Psychological Association: <https://www.apa.org/> - click on *psychological help center*, then *find a psychologist*.
- International Coaching Federation: <https://coachfederation.org/> - click on *find a coach*.
- American Psychiatric Association: <https://www.psychiatry.org/> - click on *Patient/Families* then click *find a psychiatrist*.
- The American College of Physicians – COVID-19 Resources for physicians. <https://www.acponline.org/>
- The American Medical Association – resources for Physicians. <https://www.ama-assn.org/>
- The National Academy of Medicine – Well-being resources. <https://nam.edu/initiatives/clinician-resilience-and-well-being/clinician-well-being-resources-during-covid-19/>

Resources

- Find a Psychologist
- Order Free Brochures
- Request a Speaker

Find a Coach

PATIENTS & FAMILIES



COVID-19 (2019 novel coronavirus) resource center for physicians
5/27/2020

