

# Reaching Your Goals

Lots of times I kind of guffaw at all this goal setting stuff. People ask, "What are your goals?" and it seems like whoever can list the most goals wins. All they are doing is telling all the things they want but they may never get there. What people really need to ask is, "What will you do to make sure you reach your goals?" Having these goals will help **motivate** you to do something.

Anyway, let me tell you what this goal business is all about. It's actually pretty neat. There are three main steps to getting to where you want to go.

## **First, there's the dreams.**

We do this all the time. However, sit down and write it out. By writing it you will get a better idea of where you really want to go. Think about how you would like to be. Imagine yourself at the end of the semester or the end of the year or maybe in five years. What do you see? How do people see you? What are you doing? Are you successful? How do you know?

I'll give you an example. This is my first year of high school. I hope my first year is a good one. I really want to have as good an experience as possible. I'd like to do pretty well with grades and I really hope my parents are proud of me. I'm going to really miss my friends from my old school. I also hope to go on a Spring break someplace.

Well, that's kind of my dream. A dream is just that, it's a vision of the future, of how you see yourself in the future. Once you know the direction you want to go than you can begin working on some goals.

## **Second come the goals.**

Goals are "wants". So are dreams, but goals are more specific. Look back at your dreams. Start a list of specific things you want. Be really clear what you mean. If you want to be rich, tell how much money you need to be rich. If you want good grades, tell what you mean by "good" grades. In fact, the more specific the goal is, the easier it will be to get it. Now there are some rules for setting goals, and here they are.

- Goals are always things you want. They are never things you don't want.

Right: I want to stay at my current weight.

Wrong: I don't want to gain weight.

- Goals need to be specific. Tell exactly what you mean. Give numbers and times. Don't use words like "lots" and "more". Tell exactly what you want.
- Be realistic. Ask yourself if it is possible. Yea, winning the lottery is possible but it's not realistic.

I'll give you my example. I look back at my dream and then start to really think about what I *want*.

### My Goals

- I want a "B" in each of my classes.
- I want to keep a good relationship with my sister.
- I want to keep in touch with my friends.
- I want to be involved at school.

These are just some of my goals but you get the idea.

## **Third are the objectives.**

This is the neat stuff. So far, all we have is a wish list. This is where the action takes place. Objectives are the things we do to get our wants. If I look forward to being independent in college (dream) and I want a car (goal) and I save money (objective) now I can buy a car and I've fulfilled my dream!!

Now again there are some rules. Keep in mind that objectives are things you will DO.

- Objectives are very specific. They tell exactly what you will do and when you will do it.
- When you think about what you will do, make a commitment to it. Objectives are written: I WILL ... Don't use words like "try or maybe" Very bad words to use. Very, very bad.
- Be sure your objectives can be measured. Every day or every week I can say, "Did you do this?" and you answer with either a yes or a no. Don't leave room for maybes.

OK time for more examples. I said I want a "B" in each class. My objectives are:

- I will go to every class every day.
- I will sit in the middle of the class.
- I will re-read my notes from every class everyday.
- I will begin every assignment the day it is given.

Goal: I want to be involved at school.

My objectives are:

- I will meet with my teacher or counselor the first month of school.
- I will join a team.
- I will join a student club or organization.

Well, you get the idea. Each of my objectives is specific and each one can be measured. If I do all my objectives there is a pretty good chance I will get what I want which will then mean I'll fulfill my dream.