

Setting and Achieving Goals

Setting and achieving goals can do wonders for our self-esteem, and our sense of purpose. The first step is to decide what, for you, constitutes a meaningful goal that is in line with your values and interests, and which lies within your capabilities. Ideally the goal should stretch you a little bit. The second step – and this is often the hardest part – is taking that initial action that will propel you forwards on your desired route.

Having decided on your personal goal, - whether this be learning a new language or taking up ice-skating (and of course the list of possibilities is endless), it is a good idea to put this down in writing as a visual reminder to yourself. What may seem impossible to start with, will seem less so when we break the task down into small, manageable steps. It doesn't really matter *where* you start, and you don't need to see the whole staircase...just make that initial commitment, and you will be surprised by what follows. It may be helpful to enlist the support and encouragement of others who can help you along the way. And don't forget to reward yourself for each milestone you reach.

Short-term goals can often lead to long-term goals, and new unexpected opportunities may reveal themselves to you along the way. You will gain in confidence and ability, and your horizons will widen. All it takes is persistent effort and self-belief. We all suffer occasional setbacks from time to time, and this is a necessary part of the learning process. The trick is to pick yourself up, dust yourself off, and then start again where you left off with renewed optimism and vigour.

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