



Unlocking the Learning

M9.1 Care for the Caregiver

It is important to our well-being that we feel we have some control over our lives and that we are continuing to change, to learn, in fact, to grow as a person. One way to achieve that sense of growth is to continue, throughout our lifetime, to set personal goals for ourselves. Achieving goals that we have set for ourselves, whether large or small gives us a sense of accomplishment and achievement. But even the process of setting goals and working towards them, gives you the reassuring feeling that there really is a space for you and your desires in your life.

The first step involves deciding what changes you want to make in your life, in fact, what are your personal goals? There may be several areas of your life that need attention, so the next step is to decide which are the most important and work on those first. The stress of trying to re-write your whole life overnight is likely the last thing you need. Make changes in your life-style gradually, because small changes do count, and they lead to bigger changes.

Spend some time thinking about yourself, your life, and your interests.

Using the following three steps, develop your own list of goals:

- List your goals
- Look at your list and assign a number from one to three to each of the items on it: 1 for very important, 2 for important, 3 for somewhat important.
- The next step is to list your 'hows.' What action do you intend to take in each of the areas?

Some tips for goal setting:

You may not succeed in all your goals, but you are more likely to if you follow a few easy rules:



Make your goals realistic - big changes most often come in many little steps. For example, if weight loss is one of your goals, you might start with increasing the fibre and reducing the fat in your diet. If physical activity is one of your goals commit to walking for a half hour, three times a week or keep a set of two pound weights beside the phone and do a mini weight-workout whenever you are on the phone. If organizing your home is a high priority, plan to tackle one room (or even one cupboard) a week until the job is done.

Celebrate your successes and forgive your failures.

If at first you don't succeed, try, try again.



Don't worry about how long it takes you to make changes - as long as you are moving forward, you are succeeding Don't forget that no matter how hard it is to make changes, all that effort will pay off in the long run and you'll have the rest of your life to enjoy your achievements!