

Creating a Personal Wellness Vision

What is a Wellness Vision?

A wellness vision is a description of your best self; it explores your needs, wants and interests. The vision may include behaviors, actions, strengths, feelings, values and relationships. Your personal wellness vision should give you confidence, energy and a feeling of authenticity.

You may consider the following questions and ideas when conceptualizing and writing your personal wellness vision:

- What would you look and feel like at your ideal level of wellness?
- What kind of person do you want to be when it comes to your health, wellness or fitness?
- What are the most important elements of your personal health, wellness, or fitness?
- What have been your best experiences to date – times when you have felt fully alive and fully engaged?
- What do you value most about your life? What values does your wellness vision support?
- What makes this vision important to you?

In establishing goals to help you work toward your personal vision, you may consider these questions and ideas:

- How large is the gap between where you are today and your wellness vision?
- How confident are you that you can close this gap and realize your vision (on a scale of 1-10, with 10 being most confident)?
- What significant obstacles do you anticipate having to deal with on the way to reaching your vision?
- What strengths can you draw on to help you realize your vision and meet your challenges?
- What resources, people, systems and environments can you draw on to help you realize your vision and meet your challenges?
- What strategies may be effective in helping you realize your vision?

Goal Setting Using the SMART Acronym



Goal setting is the process of determining what your goals are, working towards them, and assessing whether or not you meet your goals. A prevalent process for setting goals uses the SMART acronym, Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, and Timely.

S = Specific

M = Measurable

A = Attainable/Achievable

R = Realistic/Repeatable

T = Time Bound

Specific

A specific goal has a much greater chance of being accomplished than a general goal. Provide enough detail so that there is no indecision as to what exactly you want to be doing. An example of a general goal would be, "*Increase consumption of fruits and vegetables.*" A specific goal would say, "*Increase fruits and vegetables consumption by including a serving at one meal per day.*"

Measurable

Choose a goal with measurable progress, so that you can see and celebrate the change as it occurs. A measurable goal has an outcome that can be assessed either on a sliding scale (1-10), or as a hit or miss, success or failure. Based on our example, "*Increase fruits and vegetables consumption by including a serving at one meal per day*" would be a measurable goal because we are measuring fruits and vegetables consumed at one meal per day.

Attainable/Achievable

An achievable goal has an outcome that is realistic given your current social, economic, or cultural resources and time available. Goal achievement may be more of a "stretch" if the outcome is difficult to begin with. Our example of a goal was to "*Increase fruits and vegetables consumption by including a serving at one meal per day.*" Is consuming a serving of fruits and vegetables one meal a day truly possible for you? If not, then this is likely not an attainable goal and so we might reconsider or rework the goal.

Realistic/Realistic

Start small and realistic. This way you can experience the joys of meeting your goal, rather than feeling like you've failed because you set an unrealistic goal to begin with. Gradually increase the intensity of the goal after you feel as though you've successfully established a new routine or habit with this goal.

Time Bound

Set a timeframe for the goal: for next week, in three months, by six months. Setting an end point for the goal gives you a clear target to achieve.