

LESSON 27: GOAL SETTING

Vocabulary Word:

Goal Setting — The process of identifying specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound objectives that guide and motivate individuals towards desired outcomes.

Lesson Content:

Rudy and I met during the final five years of my sentence. Rudy had already served 15 years when we met, and he anticipated release within two years. We worked together on the farm at a minimum-security camp in Lompoc, California. Like Rudy, I was in the final years of my prison term.

While we were on the job, we met Lee. Lee owned a large business, employing more than 500 people. He served a relatively short sentence for a tax-related offense.

While the three of us worked together on the farm, Lee offered career advice to us both. He recommended that each of us begin to write our goals. If we wrote specific goals and put clear timelines on those goals, we'd be more effective at making progress that would help us succeed upon release.

Recognizing that Lee had a lot of wisdom, I embraced the advice he offered. I showed him my goals, describing the accomplishments I intended to make during the final five years of my imprisonment. On the other hand, Rudy said he didn't need to write down his goals. He said he would figure out the steps to take once he got out. He didn't see any value in writing down goals.

Later, when I got out, I began building advocacy campaigns. Through that work, I had to profile people who faced challenges after their release from prison. By working with community groups, I saw Rudy again. As a homeless man, Rudy said he participated in the group because he had so many challenges trying to get on his feet.

After we parted ways, I remembered that conversation the three of us had during the time we spent working on that prison farm at Lompoc. Had Rudy listened to guidance from Lee, he could have set goals. Those goals may have led to better outcomes.

The salient point is that regardless of where we are, we can always work to set Specific, measurable, action-oriented, realistic, time-bound goals.

Goal setting is a fundamental skill for personal development. It involves defining and planning objectives that serve as guideposts for our actions and motivate us to achieve desired outcomes. By mastering the art of goal setting, we can create a clear roadmap toward success and maximize our potential.

Understanding the concept of goal setting is essential for personal development:

Specificity:

Goals should be specific and well-defined. By clearly articulating what you want to achieve, you create a target to focus your efforts and actions upon. Specific goals provide clarity and serve as a compass for your journey.

Measurability:

Goals should be measurable, allowing you to track progress and determine success. Establishing quantifiable criteria ensures that you can assess whether you are moving closer to your desired outcome or if adjustments are necessary. Measurable goals enable you to celebrate milestones along the way.

Achievability:

Goals should be realistic and attainable. While it's important to set ambitious goals that challenge you, they should also be within the realm of possibility. By setting achievable goals, you build confidence and maintain motivation throughout the process.



Relevance:

Goals should align with your values, aspirations, and overall vision for personal development. They should be meaningful and relevant to your individual circumstances and desires. Relevance ensures that you stay engaged and committed to pursuing your goals.

Time-bound:

Goals should have a defined timeframe or deadline. Setting specific timelines creates a sense of urgency and helps prioritize tasks. Time-bound goals enable you to manage your efforts effectively and prevent procrastination.

QUESTIONS AND ACTIVITIES: IN ONE HOUR, ANSWER AS YOU DEEM APPROPRIATE.

How do you understand the concept of goal setting?

Why is goal setting important for personal development, particularly during imprisonment?

Share an example of a goal you set for yourself in prison. How did goal setting contribute to your personal growth and progress?

How can effective goal setting help you prepare for a successful life after release?

What strategies can you employ to enhance your goal-setting skills during your time in prison?

Activity:

Think about a long-term goal you want to achieve after your release. Write it down and break it down into smaller, actionable steps. Consider the specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound aspects of each step. Create a timeline for achieving each milestone.



Reflect on a goal you set in the past and achieved. Write down the steps you took to accomplish it and how goal setting played a role in your success. Identify any challenges you faced and how you overcame them. Share your experience with the class to inspire others.

Remember, goal setting is a powerful tool for personal development and progress. By setting clear, actionable goals and applying the principles of specificity, measurability, achievability, relevance, and time-bound aspects, you can pave the way for success. Embrace goal setting during your time in prison as a pathway to a brighter future.



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