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The Power of Goal Setting and Life Planning

How to Get Your Life Moving in the Right Direction

Welcome to Lesson 8

Learn the Number 1 Habit of Peak Performers

The power of goal setting is undisputed - it is one of the most common characteristics of successful individuals. Read the biographies of some of history's most successful men and you will find that they had **concrete dreams, visions or goals** of what they wished to achieve.

Yet studies have shown that only a mere 3% of the general population ever practice goal setting properly.

In this lesson we are going to teach you how to adopt the habit of goal setting and align this concept with some of the other techniques you have learned from this program.

We will also share with you one of the most effective goal setting techniques you can apply.

Desire - Belief - Expectancy

Jose Silva teaches that when you set a goal you need to adopt three qualities to help manifest the end result.

Desire

First, you must have a burning **desire** to achieve the goal.

Belief

Second, you must have a strong **belief** that the goal is possible and within reach.

Expectancy

Third, you must be in the state of **expectancy** - you must be expecting to see results.

Although Silva's methods may sound purely philosophical, plenty of evidence exists in the scientific community to support this theory.

The placebo effect is probably the most well known example.

Doctors have found that patients can often cure themselves of illnesses when prescribed sugar pills and made to believe that these sugar pills are powerful drugs.

The placebo effect has also extended to cancer research, and doctors are experimenting with getting patients to cure themselves of cancer naturally by visualizing themselves healthy and cured.

Can the same psychological factors that cause the placebo effect be applied to goal setting and thus help make a person or business more successful?

We believe it can

Perhaps nothing lends credence to the idea of desire, belief and expectancy more than the following story.

The Story of Sam

Sam was a poor kid who grew up in the heartland of America during the time of the Great Depression.

Times were tough and the kid worked hard to help his parents make ends meet. He would get up early in the morning to milk the cows and sell the milk to his 10 - 12 customers for 10 cents a gallon - a lot of cash in those days. He also went door to door selling magazine subscriptions when he was barely eight years old.

Sam had one good thing going for him - a sharp streak of ambition. His mother always told him that he should try to be the best he could at whatever he did. So **Sam always pursued everything that interested him with true passion.**

Even as a kid growing up in Missouri, Sam was big on setting bold goals. He was so ambitious that when he became a Boy Scout he took a bet with all the other scouts in his unit that he would be the first amongst them to reach the rank of *Eagle Scout*. Getting an *Eagle Scout* badge was no easy task and required a scout to show extreme bravery. Most *Eagle Scouts* were years older than Sam.

Sam won the bet when as a 14-year-old, he saved a man from drowning in a river.

Little Sam went on to become the youngest Eagle Scout in the state of Missouri at that time.

In high school Sam was elected President of the Student Body and was active in a lot of other clubs too. Despite being only 5'9, Sam joined the basketball team and was delighted when it won the State Championship. Sam also became a quarterback on the

football team – which went undefeated too.

"Thinking big just came naturally to him."

Sam's ambition and positive mental attitude stayed with him as he graduated from high school. By the time Sam got into college he was even entertaining thoughts of someday becoming President of the United States. Thinking big just came naturally to him.

Closer at hand, he decided he should try to be President of the University student body first. So he ran for every office that came along and by the time he graduated college he had been elected president of the senior men's honor society, an officer in his fraternity, president of his senior class and president of the Bible class. He was also captain and president of Scabbard and Blade, the elite military organization of ROTC.

While doing all this he also ran his own newspaper business and was making \$4,000 to \$6,000 a year – which was at the end of the Depression Era fairly serious cash. "[Sam] was a little scatterbrained at times," said the circulation manager of one of the newspapers Sam delivered while in College, "he would have so many things going on, he'd almost forget one. But boy, when he focused on something, that was it."

Sam graduated from college with a business degree and took a job at a J. C. Penney store as a management trainee for \$75 a month.

But Sam wasn't satisfied being a management trainee and soon started looking for other opportunities.

At the age of 27, with a loan from his father-in-law he bought a little discount store in Newport, Arkansas.

Despite initial poor sales and heavy competition from more spacious stores across the street, Sam set a goal "I wanted my little Newport variety store to be the best, most profitable variety store in Arkansas within 5 years".

Sam worked hard for five years and hit his goal. He soon had the largest variety store in Arkansas. But he didn't have much time to enjoy his success.

Soon his world came crashing down.

Sam's lease expired and the owner of his building refused to renew the lease. He knew Sam had nowhere else to go and decided he wanted to take over the store to pass on to his son.

"I felt sick to the stomach," said Sam, "I could not believe this was happening to me. It really was like a nightmare."

But Sam wasn't the type of man to resign so easily.

He and his family moved to a different town. There, in Bentonville, Arkansas, he opened a new store. He remembered overhearing some people comment on his new venture, "Well we'll give this guy sixty days, maybe ninety. He won't last that long."

Well, Sam lasted more than 90 days. And his new store became a success. Soon he began expanding his business and opening other stores throughout the state.

In 1962 at the age of 44 he opened his most ambitious store yet. He called it **Wal-Mart**.

The rest is history.

In 1985 Forbes magazine called Sam Walton the richest man in America. The kid who had to walk door-to-door selling milk and newspapers had founded what today is the largest company in the world. Wal-Mart made millionaires out of thousands of stockholders, provided jobs for millions of Americans and helped increase the quality of life in many developing countries by reducing the cost of goods.

In 1992, Sam Walton received the *Presidential Medal of Honor* - the highest civilian award that can be bestowed on an American citizen.

From childhood till the time he died in 1992, Sam Walton had been successful in everything he undertook. It's hard to place a finger on what qualities make people like Sam Walton successful in so many different endeavors. But in his autobiography he talks about why he believes he was so lucky.

"I don't know what causes a person to be ambitious," Sam later said, "but it is a fact that I have been over blessed with drive and ambition from the time I hit the ground."

He added, "I expect to win. I go into tough challenges always planning to come out victorious. It never occurred to me that I might lose, it was almost as if I had a right to win. Thinking like that often seems to turn into a self-fulfilling prophecy."

There are several lessons to be learned from this story.

1. Define Clear, Concrete Goals of What You Want to Accomplish

Sam motivated himself by knowing what he wanted and setting a concrete goal within a time-frame. When he opened his first store, he decided that he wanted his store to be "the best, most profitable variety store in Arkansas within 5 years."

2. Think Big



We create our own limitations. Most of us are guilty of aiming too low rather than aiming too high. Sam Walton dreamt big - even as a kid. With each accomplishment his confidence grew, and his goals became greater and greater. He did not set limits on himself.

When you're setting a goal, keep this in mind:

"A good goal should *scare* you a little - and **excite** you a lot."

Think of your current goals and test them against this rule. If your goals do not both

scare and excite you - try targeting something a little more challenging.

 **The mind is the limit. As long as the mind can envision the fact that you can do something, you can do it - as long as you really believe it 100 percent.** 

~ Arnold Schwarzenegger, world renown actor, sportsman and Governor of California

3. Don't Let Defeat Get You Down

Sam liked to smile when he thinks of one of his early bosses at *J.C. Penney* who had told him "I'd fire you if you weren't such a good salesman; maybe you're just not cut out for retail."

He did not let other people's negative ideas influence him. When he lost his first store he overcame his depression, then packed his bags, moved to a new town and started again.

Perhaps if Sam had not lost his first store and been forced to start new in Bentonville Wal-Mart would not have been founded. Defeat, when viewed from a greater perspective, is often simply a mechanism of setting us on the right path or teaching us a valuable lesson.

4. Desire - Belief - Expectancy



Your goals must meet the criteria of *Desire, Belief and Expectancy*.

The goal must be something you strongly desire. The greater your desire the stronger your will to pursue the goal. Napoleon Hill said "If your desires are strong enough you will appear to possess super-human powers to achieve."

Next, the goal must be something you believe is in the realm of the possible. This depends on your belief system. As you accomplish more in life your self-belief grows. This increases your confidence and fuels you to accomplish even bigger things.

Finally, you must expect the end result to occur.

Sam Walton said

 **I expect to win. I go into tough challenges always planning to come out victorious. It never occurred to me that I might lose, it was almost as if I had a right to win. Thinking like that often seems to turn into a self-fulfilling prophecy.** 

Expectancy is harder to create. But the tool of creative visualization helps tremendously.

Your subconscious mind cannot distinguish between a real experience and an imagined experience. By frequently visualizing the end result you desire you cause your subconscious to accept it to be real. This causes the mind to draw that situation into your life. Perhaps, no one has summarized this point more clearly than Gandhi when he said:

"The man I want to become, if I believe myself to be, I will become"

The Life Planning Process

Now that you understand the principles behind goal setting, it's time to put together everything you've learned so far.

We're going to show you a simple yet powerful technique you can use to create a life plan around your goals.

Step 1 - Identify What's Important to You

Think of the various aspects of your life. Health, Family, Friends, Career, Spirituality, Finances, Charity, Education...etc.

Identify which of these focus areas are the most important to you. Perhaps your main concerns are Family, Spirituality and Career. Come up with a list and rank each area in order of importance.

Step 2 - Set Long Term Goals in Each Area

Come up with a vision of where you'd like to be five to ten years from today in each of these areas.

Maybe your career vision is to be running your own business. Your family vision may be to take your spouse and children on a trip to Australia. Your financial vision may be to have \$250,000 in the bank.

Think of what you want. Remember the rule - a good goal should *scare* you a little - and **excite** you a lot.

By thinking of where you want to be five or ten years down the road, you have created a long term vision.

Step 3 - Decide What You Need to Do *This Year* to Achieve Your Long Term Vision

So you want to have \$250,000 in savings in the bank by 2009. What do you need to do this year to hit this goal? Perhaps you would need to take a course on investing, get a better paying job, or start looking for new business opportunities.

Do this with each long-term goal. This exercise helps you focus on both long and short-term planning.

Many people tend to plan for only the short-term and lose sight of their long-term vision.

Others only set long-terms goals but then forget what they need to do right now to achieve these long-terms goals.

To be effective at goal setting you need to have a long-term vision and short-term plans to get to this vision.

Step 4 - Put it All Down on Paper

We have provided a simple method called the *Life Planning Chart* to help you. You can see a copy of such a chart below.

The first horizontal bar represents time. The first vertical bar represents each focus area - in the chart below the focus areas are *Family, Health, Career, Artistic, and Financial*.

Now divide the sheet in half. Use the first half to write down your short term goals - goals to accomplish this year. Notice that each goal corresponds to a time frame.

The second half is used to list your longer terms goals - what you wish to accomplish next year and then each subsequent year for the next five years.

Time→ Goals↓	Jan to Mar 2004	Apr to Jun 2004	July to Aug 2004	Sep to Dec 2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
<i>Family</i>			<i>Start saving for college fund</i>		<i>Take family Europe trip</i>		<i>Move to larger home</i>	<i>Visit Australia</i>	
<i>Health</i>				<i>Attend Silver Seminar</i>	<i>be able to do 50 push ups Jan 1</i>				<i>Fit into my size 34 jeans</i>
<i>Career</i>			<i>Hit sales quota in Aug</i>	<i>be 150% over quota</i>	<i>Get promoted</i>		<i>Start new business</i>	<i>Get business to \$250,000 annual profit</i>	
<i>Artistic</i>				<i>Complete Art Course Dec 1 2004</i>			<i>have a painting or exhibit</i>		
<i>Financial</i>		<i>have to invest in stocks</i>		<i>\$10,000 Christmas Bonus</i>		<i>March 1 \$100,000 in bank</i>			<i>Jan 1 \$1,000,000 in bank</i>

If you have trouble seeing the image above you can open an enlarged version by [going to this page](#).

You start by first looking at your long-terms goals. Write down your long term vision for each focus area in the appropriate row and column.

Next ask yourself the question

"What do I need to do this year to make sure I'm on track for my long term vision?"

Write down your short-term goals in the appropriate row and column.

This document should be flexible. Go ahead and add new goals when you think of them. You can also remove older goals if your plans change.

Note: You can download a blank chart for you to print and use [on this page](#).

Step 5 - Begin the Process of Creative Visualization

You should place *Life Planning Chart* in a location where you're likely to view it daily. It could be in an office drawer you open daily, as a file on your computer desktop or in a frame on your wall.

When you meditate daily using the Silva System, spend a few minutes visualizing yourself achieving each goal. You could also create an affirmation for each focus area. (Refer to Lesson 4 of this Program).



Step 6 - Begin taking Action towards Your Goals

You now have your long-term vision. You have the steps you need to do this year to achieve that vision. Now put your plan in action.

Take a step, even the smallest step towards that goal. When you take your first step you set the wheels in motion for your mind to manifest your dreams into reality.

Make it a point to start your life planning process as soon as you can and to practice goal setting and creative visualization on a daily basis.

It's never too late to begin creating the life of your dreams.

 **Give me a stock clerk with a goal and I'll give you a man who will make history. Give me a man without a goal and I'll give you a stock clerk.** 

~ J.C. Penney, Founder of the J.C. Penney stores

This is the end of Lesson 8. Lesson 9 will be sent to you in 2 days.

Sources for this Lesson:

1. Sam Walton and John Huey, "Made in America: My Story," (New York: Doubleday, 1992), pp. 3-46.