

HELPING PEOPLE IDENTIFY & SET MEANINGFUL GOALS

NYAPRS 5th Annual PROS Implementation Academy

Building the Recovery Platform for Tomorrow

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“Even the tiniest of hopes can show me the way to arrive at my goal.”

-Sri Chinmoy

“A goal properly set is halfway reached.”

-Abraham Lincoln

Our Journey

- Setting the Atmosphere
- Opening the Dialogue
- Setting the “Stage”
- Identifying the Roadblocks
- Creatively Connecting

Goals

- Goals express the hopes and dreams held by the individual
- Goals are influenced by individual's core principles and values
- Goals are broadly stated, and reflect the “big picture” or “end game”
- In PROS, goals identify the desired destination to be arrived with the services provided
- Goal development is an essential part of engagement and creating a collaborative working relationship
- Goal becomes the “shared vision of success”

Characteristics of Meaningful Goals

- Behaviorally specific (*how will the participant and practitioner both know when the goal is achieved?*)
- Something important and significant to the participant
- Constructive not eliminative:
 - ▣ things that one is going to do, such as “go to college”
 - ▣ things that one is not doing to do, such as “stop feeling depressed”
- Functionally-oriented when possible (*not just related to feelings*)
- Ambitious goals are okay; but so are basic ones

Setting The Atmosphere for Hope & Recovery:

First Steps in Paving the Way Toward the Identification of Recovery Goals

Setting the Mood: Themes of Recovery

- Hope and optimism: where motivation to change emerges
- Self-respect and self-determination: the road to empowerment
- Coping: strategies for confidence
- Opening to discovery and new experiences: learning opportunities

The First Message:

How Your Agency Presents Itself

- Who is your website designed for? Would participants understand the recovery philosophy by viewing it?
- Do your brochures answer the questions that participants care about?
- Do you make your course catalogs easy to find for participants and family members interested in your program?
- What kind of 'vibe' does your social media give off?
- Is the physical environment warm and inviting or a throw-back to treatment programs years ago?

The First Contacts

- Which staff have contacts with new participants?
- How is your program explained to new participants?
- How do you make personal and secure connections with new/old participants?
- From the first phone call to walking in the door for the first time, how are individuals welcomed?

The Pre-Admission Interview

- Who is completing the assessment?
- What are the first few questions asked during the intake?
- When are goals brought up for the first time?
- How are groups identified for participant to audit?
- How often are we 'suggesting' that participants attend? Do you have a 'mandate'?
- Are there attendance expectations imposed on the participant from other providers?

Opening the Dialogue:

Tips, Examples, Tools & Questions

Opening the Dialogue

- Provide a welcoming atmosphere
- Exude warmth
- Focus on a strength and something the participant does well as soon as possible during the rapport-building phase
- Ask strengths based questions, such as:
 - ▣ What do you do well?
 - ▣ What do you like to do in your leisure time?
 - ▣ What are the best three moments you can recall in your life?
 - ▣ What is the best thing you have ever made happen?
 - ▣ Which of your life challenges has taught you the most about your own resilience?
 - ▣ What sources of strength did you draw from as you faced these challenges?
 - ▣ What have you learned from what you've gone through?

*See Handout “Opening the Goal Setting Dialogue”

Stepping Up & Setting the Stage:

Utilizing Change Process & Stage-Based Approach

Steps in the Usual Change Process

- Thinking about different areas of one's life
- Identifying a specific area of life that one is dissatisfied with
- Articulating the change that one would like to see
- Identifying the necessary steps for making the change
- Steadily working on taking steps
- Celebrating successes and overcoming obstacles along the way

Utilize Stage-Based Approach

Stage	Description	Example
Pre-Contemplation Stage	At this stage the participant is not considering the possibility of change.	The participant is reluctant to set goals. “I don’t have goals.”
Contemplation Stage	Awareness of the problem has arisen and the participant is ambivalent about making a change.	The participant is open to exploring goals but is not ready to set goals or is not able to set meaningful goals. “I don’t know what I want. I’m not really good at anything.” Or “I just want to manage my mental health.”
Determination Stage	The participant has motivation to do something about the problem and has not yet taken the initiative.	The participant is ready to set goals, but has not taken steps towards working on them. “I want to work.”

Utilize Stage-Based Approach

Stage	Description	Example
Preparation Stage	The participant states that they are ready to start looking for a job and want to explore their options.	The participant starts to research career options. “I want to know what career might be good for me.”
Action Stage	The participant engages in action steps for the purpose of bringing about change.	The participant has set a specific goal and is actively working on it. “I want to work as a part-time receptionist in a not for profit organization. I have a resume and 10 years of work experience.”
Maintenance Stage	The participant engages in behavior to sustain the change.	The participant has set and achieved a goal and is looking to sustain the achievement. “I want to keep my job.”

Rolling with Resistance

- Minimize confrontation
- Engage in mutual recovery planning
- Have a sense of humor
- Avoid power struggles
- Avoid early labels
- Be willing to have a sensitive discussion about race, gender, and other differences if they are barriers to communication
- Ask for permission to give feedback
- Be aware of countertransference reactions
- Honor a variety of approaches to recovery

Identifying & Overcoming Roadblocks:

Strategies & Approach

Recovery Roadblocks

People May Be Reluctant to Talk About Recovery & Identify Goals

- Discouraging messages often result in developing lowered expectations...The notion that recovery is possible may not be consistent with participant's self-concept...

Prospects of a
meaningful life are
bleak



Overcoming Challenges in Goal Setting

Participant is Reluctant to Explore Change

- Keep in mind that the desire for change is not the same as wanting to work on change.
- First focus on developing the desire for change.
- Ask what change would look like, how life would be different.
- Explore reasons for not wanting to change despite being dissatisfied.
- When the person is preoccupied with troubles, ask how their life would be different if those troubles were gone.

Overcoming Challenges in Goal Setting

Participant Expresses That They're Not Dissatisfied & Don't Want to Change

- Take emphasis off “here and now.”
- Explore previous experiences in life, past desires.
- Encourage fantasy, “what if. . .”
- Take your time, don't rush it.
- Find out if participant's life is what he or she wants it to be, has always wanted it to be.
- Don't work harder than the participant.
- Find out what the participant used to enjoy, what he or she used to want to do with their life before some of their current problems developed.

Overcoming Challenges in Goal Setting

Participant Doesn't Believe Change is Possible

- Support self-efficacy.
- Explain how change can occur when working together in PROS.
- Express optimism that change is possible.
- Reframe prior “failures” as examples of participant’s personal strengths and resourcefulness to cope with problems.
- Acknowledge past setbacks while remaining positive about possible change.
- Review examples of participant’s achievements in the past or in other areas.

Overcoming Challenges in Goal Setting

Participant Doesn't Want to Invest Effort in Change

- Explain gradual change process.
- Talk about breaking down goals into very small steps.
- Give option to work briefly on a goal, and then re-evaluate.
- Explore the pros and cons of change vs. no change.

Taking the Road Less Traveled:

Creative Approaches to Goal Setting

Creative Techniques

- Give participants opportunities to work on their objectives in classes, instead of just talking about it
- Use Motivational Interviewing techniques to work through roadblocks
- Discuss participants' goals and progress in rounds- celebrate successes
- Offer 'staged' goal planning classes: What's Getting in The Way, Planning for Change, Coping with Change to address the stages and barriers of setting and achieving goals

Creative Techniques (cont.)

- Establish classes aimed at helping participants establish meaningful goals, such as Finding My Purpose, Positive Life Changes, or Who Am I?
- Seminars/workshops to motivate participants
- Establish activities geared at helping participants explore what they are good at

Sample Curriculum & Class Outcomes

- **Finding My Purpose:** This class is designed to assist people in developing a better sense of what their purpose is, and incorporate it into a living goal. Identification of favorite memories and achievement, development of a personal inventory, and an analysis of what makes one feel special and experience happiness are all tools used throughout this class.
- **Positive Life Changes for Older Adults :**The purpose of this class is to aid older adults with recognizing the meaning and purpose in their lives. Using concepts and practices from the Life story Workshops and Visible Lives interventions, this class utilizes displayed storytelling to help participants identify areas of satisfaction with their lives, and areas in which they would like to find increased meaning. Overall aim is to help older adults identify meaningful, personal goals.
- **#Insta-Positive:** Young adults are empowered to recognize their strengths, identify challenges, overcome obstacles, and make life choices that have positive outcomes. Topics covered include: a sense of self, impulse control, friendships, relationships, peer pressure, empathy, evaluating consequences, and most of all-goal setting.
- **What's Your Story?:** Using narrative therapy, this class explores how mental health issues have affected a person's life, so as to evaluate the problem's influences. The use of narrative conversations help people clarify for themselves an alternate direction in life, taking into consideration a person's values, hopes, and life commitments.
- **Finding My Mojo:** Mojo- or finding one's motivation and joy in life can be a difficult task. This class assists with establishing what is truly important to oneself. Additionally, strategies for combating "mojo saboteurs," and moving beyond short-term happiness to sustained long-term happiness are explored.

Let's Explore!

Technique for Eliciting Meaningful Goals: Card Sort

Large Group Discussion

Thanks for joining us!

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