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Ten Commandments of Goal Setting

By Jaime Mintun

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Setting goals is risky business. Depending on how you set your goals, they can elevate you or they can devastate you. And you want to know a secret? Not everyone who succeeds in life sets goals.

[pausing for the oooh's and aaaah's...]

Like any tool, however, your goals can be powerful victory-builders. But be careful. If you set your goals too high, you'll quickly become frustrated and experience feelings of failure and the desire to give up. If you set your goals too low, you won't be motivated to strive.

Though few people talk about it, there are certain tactics you can use to ensure that your goals significantly aid you in achieving success. Rather than simply be the measuring stick for your achievement, each goal will serve as a vehicle that gets you there. I call these tactics the Ten Commandments of Goal Setting.

The Ten Commandments of Goal Setting

1. **Thou Shall Be Passionate:** more powerful than any goal you ever set is the passion you have for what you want, what you do, and who you are. Find your passion first, then set your goals around that.
2. **Thou Shall Be Realistic:** if your goal is to make a million dollars in one year, and you only make \$500,000, according to your goal, you've failed. Yet, you've made \$500,000! Isn't that a huge success? So why not set your goal at \$100,000 dollars in one year, and beat the heck out of it five times that year?
3. **Thou Shall Be Value-Driven:** in the pursuit of wealth and satisfaction, many of us lose sight of our values and beliefs. Make a list of your goals, then a list of your values. If you can't directly associate each goal with one of your values, maybe you shouldn't invest your time in that particular goal.

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4. **Thou Shall Be Detailed:** the goal itself is almost never enough. The most effective goals are designed so that you know the goal, the date by which you will achieve it, the quantity by which you will measure it (is "rich" \$100,000 or \$500,000?), and how it will change your life.

5. **Thou Shall Plan:** start with the end result in mind, then work backwards. For example, if your goal is that your teenager confides all her secrets to you, the step before that has to be that she trusts you. To earn her trust, you have to listen, and allow her to tell you her mistakes.

6. **Thou Shall Remain Accountable:** find someone to hold you accountable to your goal, or create a system whereby you hold yourself accountable. An effective way to do this is to set a realistic "due date" for each step in your plan, and then report to yourself or a friend how far you've come in that step. These little goals are easier to measure and give the sense of accomplishment.

7. **Thou Shall Have Fun:** goals won't do you much good if they just frustrate you and make you feel guilt or a sense of failure. Have fun with them, reward yourself, and when things get tough, take a break and do something novel and entertaining.

8. **Thou Shall Believe:** many of us set goals we don't truly believe we can reach. Just think of the resolutions you made during New Years. Have you ever followed through on one of those? If your goal is to be healthy and fit, and you can't imagine being able to exercise every other day and stay away from chocolates, then you have to rework your goal into something believable for you. Otherwise, you'll only frustrate yourself.

9. **Thou Shall Seek Support:** most of us hate to admit it, but we often won't achieve our goals solely on our own. Depending on the goal, you may need a professional mentor, a coach, a close friend, or an inspiring book. Don't always try to achieve your goals alone.

10. **Thou Shalt Not Give Up:** what if you still don't achieve your goal? Don't give up. Maybe you're concentrating too hard on reaching the goal and losing sight of why you set it in the first place. Not everyone succeeds by setting goals. If you try the above, and they don't work for you, then try something else. The most important thing is to be passionate and have fun. You'll get there.

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Ms. Jaime Mintun is founder of the transformational growth assistance company, PhoenixFire and author of the forthcoming book, "Life Authorship." Her unique Life Authorship techniques and approach to personal growth have earned her a reputation for down to earth, applicable advice given with a bit of spice and what she calls, the "FUN Factor."

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The Kaizen of Goal Setting

By Ke o agile

There is an old way of goal setting and a new way of goal setting!

The old way of goal-setting involved setting your goals, preparing a list of sub-goals, and then carefully checking them off one after another (as and when they were being accomplished). Am I trying to pour cold water on the goal setting method many of us grew up on?

Not necessarily

While I am not saying the step-by-step approach does not work, I am advocating a flexible-goal setting approach.

The flexible goal-setting approach acknowledges the presence of chaos and unpredictability of our modern times, where change is rapid and conditions shift in an instant.

What's more, a tiny weeny change nowadays has the potential to create major upsets and instability.

Enter the flexible goal-setting system. And, this is how it operates.

Set big-picture, life-enhancing goals with flexible sub-goals that you can adjust to fit in with shifting conditions. The simplest way of putting this into practice is to build into your goal-setting, daily incremental steps that aggregate into your vision. Add to this sub-goal A, sub-goal B, sub-goal C, maybe sub-goal D.

Remember, each sub-goal must be flexible enough to respond adequately to the requirements of the shifting conditions.

You don't want to throw your hands in the air in desperation because your plans and goals have been derailed, do you?

Well, the 'Kaizen of Goal Setting' is about knowing the difference between the old and the new, and applying it to your goal setting.

Ke o agile is an NLP Coach and Publisher of In TheZone, an NLP focused ezine for capacity builders in the personal and professional skills development areas. In TheZone can be accessed freely at

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The Kaizen of Goal Setting

Ten "Travel" Commandments

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