



## Goal Setting Collective – Looking at the Year Ahead

**General Introduction** – There are multiple group activities listed here all with the common theme of focusing on goal setting for the year ahead. It is up to you, the counselor/group leader to decide which activities to use for the needs of your group. For a longer session such as a 3-hour IOP session, perhaps you can use them all, or any combination thereof. There are several to choose from that can be used any time and this worksheet also includes some “Quarantine-specific” goal activities at the end. All of the activities can be adapted for in-person groups or telehealth

### Year End Icebreakers

**Background** - The transition from one year to the next can be very unique especially when there is a lot up in the air when it comes to what to expect in the year ahead. Regardless, it is always a good idea to set goals and work towards them. Goals keep us motivated and focused and we need goals to keep enduring and moving forward in spite of any obstacles that may get in our way. The activities and discussion points included in this worksheet are focused on goal setting especially when it feels like times may be uncertain

**Icebreaker 1 Art Exercise** – Directions are easy: Everyone in the group should get a pen or pencil and two pieces of paper. On the first paper write “This Year” at the top. Draw whatever you want to summarize the past year for you. Be creative and anything goes. Then on the next paper title it “The Next Year Ahead” and do the same: Draw anything that illustrates your goals and hopes for the next year to come. When everyone is done, take turns showing your drawings side by side and discussing feelings and hopes

**Icebreaker 2 – Getting Goals on the Mind** - Below is a random list of general goals. The counselor/group leader should read a goal from the list to the group and the group should take turns openly sharing their thoughts on the goal using the following scale:

- **Probably won’t do...**
- **I might (You never know)**
- **Definitely (I want it)**

### Goal List for the Upcoming Year

Read at least 6 books	Quit smoking	End a relationship
Start a new relationship	Get a new job	Move
Learn a new language	Create something artistic	Speak in public
Perform for a crowd	Write a journal	Create a viral video
Leave the country	Write and publish something	Eat strange new food
Serious body change	Collect something new	Climb a mountain
Set a new self-exercise record	Change your look	Change your clothing style
Buy a new car	Volunteer	Become a better me
<i>Come up with your own?</i>		



## Goal Setting Education 1 – SMART Goals

**Background** - You many have heard of SMART goals. SMART goals were developed in 1981 by George Doran, Arthur Miller and James Cunningham and the idea of SMART goals has been popular since then. The concept of SMART goals has been modified somewhat over time, but the general overview is pretty much the same. SMART goals consist of the following:

**SMART GOALS are...**

**S – Specific** – The goal should answer the “W” questions: Who, What, When, Where, Why – In detail

**M – Measurable** – Goals need to be stated in units that you can specifically measure

**A – Achievable** – A goal is not very useful if there is no realistic or possible way to attain it

**R – Relevant** – The goal should make sense and be both reasonable and worthwhile

**T – Time-Bound** – If a goal does not have an end point it probably won't be achieved

### ***A simple example of a SMART goals is:***

To get out of debt by this time next year, I will move back in my parents within 2 months and then with the money I will save from rent, I will pay at least \$300 a month\* toward my credit cards for the next 10 months  
*\*Assuming that you can afford this amount and that your parents allow this*

**Brief Group Exercise** – Everyone try to come up with at least one SMART goal. Discuss your SMART Goals as a group when everyone is done.

### **Follow-up Questions –**

1. Do you see the benefit of using SMART goals? – How was it helpful to make your goal Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time Bound?
2. What is your plan going forward with this goal? Are you serious about attaining this goal in the time you allotted? What can you do to get motivated to take action and then stay motivated straight through until the end?
3. Who or what can help you to achieve your goals? What resources do you have now and what do you still need in order to have long term success with your goals?



## Goal Setting Education 2 – Goal Setting Across the Four Dimensions

**Background** – READ - “Goal Setting Across the Four Dimensions” is a different approach to goal setting. This approach works on the principle that a goal is only as good as a person’s motivation to achieve it. In other words, goals that we are able to see through to the end are the ones that matter the most. Therefore, paying attention to motivation is a key element of the process. Without motivation to get started and then sustaining motivation along the way, then success is rarely achieved. Looking at goals across these four dimensions can help to keep us motivated, stimulated and inspired for long term success.

*For this exercise consider one area where you want to change your life and then try to set a goal. Use this same goal area for all four dimensions. The examples provided are for the goal of “quitting smoking”*

The Four Dimensions (in order) are:

**Emotional** – A goal that engages our emotions is often the easiest one to start. So, to get started, think about how your goal impacts your feelings. Also, think about how your goal impacts your figurative “heart”. Consider ideas that move you emotionally such as love, hope and desire. Frame your goal statement by taking these areas into consideration.

➤ **Example:**

- “I want to quit smoking” is one way to state your goal but it does not engage your emotions.
- Reframing that goal, taking your emotions and your figurative heart into consideration may sound more like – *“I want to quit smoking so I can be healthier and live longer to watch my kids grow up and be there to take care of them and help them one day grow into adults because I love them so much”*

➤ **Group question** – Can you make a goal statement and frame it in a way that takes into account your figurative “heart” and that stirs your emotions? – Give it a try and share it with the group.

**Mental** – Next, we should engage our mind in the goal setting process. This would include our thoughts, our intellectual abilities, our common sense, our ability to calculate and predict, our problem-solving skills, our resourcefulness, as well as our creativity and imagination. This may sound like a lot but the best way to do this is to let your brain flow openly and freely by doing some **brainstorming** about your goal

➤ **Example** – Brainstorming some thoughts on quitting smoking:

- *“Quitting smoking is hard so I have to decide if I want to go cold turkey or try to wean myself down. I need to think about how long I will work on weaning myself down until I completely stop*
- *“What am I going to do about my friends who smoke? – Being around them will be hard, I will need to come up with a plan for that”*
- *“I could consider getting Nicotine Replacement treatment like the patch or maybe medication like Chantix or Zyban. I don’t know enough about this; I should ask my counselor or doctor about options that will work for me and that I can afford*

➤ **Group Question** – This process can actually take a while and it makes sense to really dedicate some time to this, but for now in this group session: What are some things you can brainstorm that you need to consider for your goal? Share your thoughts with the group



**Physical** – Here is where we consider what is real and tangible. We must consider the physical universe in which we live with all of its potential obstacles and limitations. Constraints on time, money, energy, strength, as well as responsibilities and other “real life” considerations must be taken into account. This also includes our environment, education, and employment. A good way to do this is to take an inventory of your strengths and assets as well as potential obstacles and areas of need

➤ **Example:**

<b>Obstacles/Areas of need</b>	<b>Strengths and Assets</b>
Dealing with cravings for cigarettes is tough	My counselor can help me learn coping skills
Work breaks may be a problem	I have at least one coworker who does not smoke and at least one non-smoking friend for when I am home
I'll need some support	
Quitting is going to be STRESSFUL!	I have a gym membership and going to the gym will help me cope with stress

➤ **Group** – Discuss some of your potential obstacles and areas of need for your goal as well as your strengths and assets

**Spiritual/Transcendent** – This can be done regardless of one’s beliefs or faith (or lack thereof) Anyone can do this by considering your goal in terms of how it impacts your overall sense of **meaning and purpose**. Everyone should be able to identify with the importance of meaning and purpose in life. Why is it important to consider how your goal engages your sense of meaning and purpose? That is because in order to sustain a goal and keep enduring through the challenging times, it has to be meaningful and purposeful in our lives. Also, when considering the spiritual or “big picture” perspective we can consider how our progress will impact others including friends, family and even society itself. This also can be very motivating

➤ **Example** – Consider “quitting smoking” from the “big picture” perspective and how this goal adds meaning and purpose to life. – *“If I am able to quit smoking, I will be a healthier person. Being a healthier person is very meaningful to me because I am sure I will start improving in other areas as well because I will feel better about myself and have more energy for things like exercise and getting out in nature. I also won’t be impacting my family with secondhand smoke which will be very meaningful to me. I may even inspire some friends to try quitting smoking if I am successful. I am sure my self-esteem will improve as I make progress and feel cleaner. Looking even further at the big picture it will be nice to no longer support the tobacco industry which is responsible for a lot of damage and illness in this world.*

➤ **Group question** - Although this may be challenging: For your goal, think about how your life may increase in meaning and purpose as you make progress. Also think about “big picture” considerations such as how achieving your goal may positively impact your life in a meaningful way as well as how this may benefit friends, family, and even possibly the world itself even if in just a small way

**Final group discussion** – How can you use this “Four Dimensional” process to engage yourself on an emotional, mental, physical and spiritual level with your goals and what actions are you going to take from today’s discussion?



## 2020 to 2021: A Transition Like No Other

### Introduction –

2020 was a year that all people across the globe will remember for sure. The COVID-19 pandemic changed all of our lives and the hope for a better 2021 can open up many possibilities. Consider the following activities as a group based on this transition

### Getting Started –

Opening Icebreaker - If you did not already do this as a group, doing Icebreaker 1 from the beginning of this worksheet is a great place to start the 2020 to 2021 transition discussion – Directions: Everyone should draw one picture entitled “**2020**” and then another picture entitled “**2021**” The counselor/group leader should allow the group time to creatively work on their pictures. Anything goes and creative expression is highly encouraged. When everyone is done, each group member should share their drawings and discuss them side by side in comparison. Discuss feelings, thoughts and hopes that may come up when explaining these drawings. Allow group members to ask each other questions and give positive feedback (no criticism as this is not an art show but for the purpose of self-expression and identifying feelings)

### Follow up discussion: Quarantine-Proofing” your Goals for 2021

#### Discuss:

1. What are some of your “**Hope Goals**” for 2021- (These are goals you want to achieve if the world successfully returns to some semblance of being “normal” in 2021 – For example, places you would go, things you would like to do if there was again more freedom to freely go to places and gatherings one day in 2021)
2. What are some of your “**Fallback Goals**” for 2021 – What are things that you can still work on even if restrictions remain for most or all of 2021. These are things you can work on regardless of social or travel restrictions due to COVID-19 (For example, getting an online degree or losing weight)



**Next: As a group share where you hope to make progress in each of these areas in 2021:**

Treatment and Self-Help Goals – (Such as emotional and mental health goals or substance use related goals)

Employment/Education/Career Goals

Family Goals

Relationship Goals

- Social/Friendship
- Romantic

Physical/Health Related Goals

Legal Related Goals

Financial Goals

Spiritual Goals – (Increasing meaning and purpose in life)

Fun/Entertainment/Recreational/Hobby-Related Goals

Other – (Areas not already covered)

**Group close out questions:**

**How can you stay motivated, positive and hopeful all year round in 2021, (no matter what direction things may go)?**

- **Who or what will help you along the way?**

**How can this group help and support you in achieving your goals in 2021, no matter what comes our way?**