

Goals

Many may be familiar with smart goals, where SMART goals, or goals that are specific, measurable, attainable, results focused and time bound are the types of goals projects define and pursue. Often times we set goals. We say things like we want to lose x amount of pounds within a certain time frame, or we want to complete a task perfectly (perfect as we define it), or we want to fit x, y and z into our day, every day.

These types of goals are not necessarily bad. However, SMART goals have the potential to increase stress levels, which may then hinder forward progress to reaching the goals that were intended to be good for us in the first place. If a goal is specific, but involves variables we have no control over, we can get frustrated easily. For example, I can say I am going to lose twenty pounds of fat in twelve weeks. Sounds like a good goal, but I have no control over how my body will respond. So when my body isn't responding and I have stalled for four weeks straight, the tendency is to get a little flustered because of the time frame I set for myself and not wanting to let myself down. This can lead to giving up, looking for short cuts, or over doing it, which can lead to bigger issues.



Goals

Habakkuk 2:2 & 3, comes to mind:

“Write the vision; make it plain on tablets, so he may run who reads it.³ For still the vision awaits its appointed time; it hastens to the end—it will not lie. If it seems slow, wait for it; it will surely come; it will not delay.

Habakkuk had a complaint of large proportions and he went to the Lord with it. God’s response included writing down the vision. In Ezekiel 12:25 the Lord also says, *“For I am the Lord; I will speak the word that I will speak, and it will be performed.”* Good grief, what does this have to do with goals, especially goals to lose weight, or finish this challenge from beginning to end, or to work out?! It has everything to do with it, and that is why everyone is encouraged to pray.

This may sound cheesy, but there may be such a thing as SMARTER goals. At least I am convinced there is such a thing. These goals are also Specific, but they are Meaningful, Adjustable, Responsive, in the Timing of God, Empowered by the Holy Spirit and Regenerative.



Goals

This is why we are encouraged to pray during the time leading up to the beginning of the challenge. As we pray for our goals to align with God's,

God will begin to form in us a sense, or idea, or picture of something specific in each of our lives. This picture, or vision, becomes very meaningful to us and we grow even more excited and energized about what can be accomplished during the challenge (because like Ezekiel, once the Word is spoken, or the vision formed, we can expect it to be performed). Rather than becoming rigid with our goals and getting knocked off our rockers over things not happening in the time period we expect them to, we allow for adjustability and trust God's timing, as we become more responsive to meeting our own needs – whether spiritually, mentally, emotionally, physically (or all four). Stress is also potentially reduced, due to trusting the Holy Spirit to empower us to reach our goals, because that is exactly what God said we would do. Finally, SMARTER goals are regenerative. Meaning, the goals aligned with God will create new life in and around us. How exciting and energizing to think of it this way!



As you have been praying about your goals for the challenge, do you get a sense God has something very

Goals

specific for you to accomplish as a result? Be sure to capture in your journal or daily guide. Or, feel free to share in the private commitment Facebook Group or with a friend. We' love to pray and believe with you.

Defining goals aligned with God's vision, needs to be practical. It is awesome to know God speaks into our lives and will bring a sense of direction, but we also need to know we play an active role in the places God desires to take us.

After praying and meditating on goals and anticipating a response, one may still conclude they in fact DO need to get twenty to thirty pounds of fat off their body. Not for vanity purposes, but to be more healthy. The conviction may come that reducing body fat will decrease chances of diabetes and other genetic diseases. It will increase stamina and energy to better answer God's calling. A reduction in body fat will help balance hormones and in turn positively affect moods, which improves relationships with a spouse, children, family and friends. The list can go on as to WHY a person senses a fat loss goal is necessary right now. So let's go back to the example goal from earlier: "I want to lose twenty pounds of fat in twelve weeks."

Goals

As was mentioned, this is a broad goal that one may not be able to control the outcome of. For whatever reason, the body may not yet be prepared and ready to reach such a goal. It seems more effective to set smaller goals within the larger goal. Smaller goals we DO have control over and increase probability of reaching the larger goal. It might look like this...

Goal: Lose twenty pounds of fat, ideally within twelve weeks, but be open to God's timing and keep the overall health of my spirit, mind, emotions and body the top priority.

o Smaller goals I know I can control and execute daily, weekly and monthly to get me there:

§ Scripture. My goal is to read daily Scripture, write one highlight, say a prayer, and share with a friend in the commitment, at least four times per week.

§ Sleep. My goal is to get a minimum of seven hours of sleep per night. I know sleep is very important for energy, reducing carb cravings, eliminating the need for caffeine, and reducing the stress hormone cortisol which inhibits fat loss.



Goals

§ Nutrition. My goal is to follow the guidelines of the Whole30 challenge. I believe eliminating sugar, alcohol, grains and legumes will help reset my body's chemistry and better equip me to reach my fat loss goals.

§ Exercise. My goal is to work out four days a week, incorporating both cardio and strength conditioning. I know an appropriate amount of cardio helps reduce body fat. I also know strength training builds muscle, which helps burn body fat.

§ Supplements. My goal is to identify the supplements my body needs and begin to slowly incorporate them into my day.

§ Stress. My goal is to better reduce stress by identifying stress reduction methods that resonate with me, and begin to implement them. I will look into prayer, deep breathing, Christ centered stretching, and listening to classical or uplifting music throughout my day to see which fits me best right now – and begin to practice on a daily basis, for at least five minutes.



Goals

Again, these are just example goals that have the potential to help an individual reach their overarching goal. Within each of these goals, a more specific goal could be made.

Like:

“I will go to bed at 10pm every night and get up at 5am”

“I will jog 35 minutes three days a week, and do total body strength training for 35 minutes three days a week”

“I will pray each morning following devotions and do Christ-centered stretching for 15 minutes each night before bed”.

The more specific the better, really, because this helps us measure and determine if we actually followed through on our goals for the day and week. This then helps us at the end of the week determine if we did everything we could to reach our goal(s).

The key is to identify goals that are realistic and practical, yet stretch us and help move us out of our comfort zones so we can grow.



Goals

In just a few pages you will be encouraged to do two things. One, establish your start point, or where you are today. You will capture your weight and body fat percentage, to name a few. You are also encouraged to take measurements and photos. These benchmarks will help you to do the second thing. The next things you're encouraged to do is create goals in the areas of Scripture, sleep, nutrition, fitness, and a few others. Be as specific as possible. Please also be encouraged to not dismiss this part. Yes, we are focusing on so much more than external things like weight and our physical capabilities, but it will be nice to see the overall transformation resulting from our multi-faceted focus.



The thing about setting goals, they move an individual from somewhere they currently are, to a place the individual desires to be. If goals are not challenging enough, efforts may be taken, but really there is no forward progress toward reaching the goal. If a goal is set that is too challenging, the individual may not yet be equipped for the challenge, creating the unfortunate potential to drown in their own good intentions. The goal (pun intended ;), is to find the “sweet spot”. This is the place where one is not only challenged, but fully equipped to move forward at a rate that will cause

Goals

someone to reach their goal.

As multifaceted beings with spirit, soul and body, each of these areas have the opportunity to bring about the currency of joy or pleasure. However, we also often feel we have limited resources of time. This is often due to a variety of things we have prioritized in our lives and choose to give our efforts to. When we set goals that we believe will align us with God, or bring us happiness, a sense of comfort or peacefulness, but instead bring discomfort and struggles (oh those growing pains!), we often resort to previous habits that seemed to bring pleasure, or we will look for life hacks that promise we will reach our goal faster, or we will work ourselves like crazy to reach the goal at all cost (often at the cost of our relationships with others), or we will look to others to make us feel happy.

What does this have to do with finding the “sweet spot”? If we aren’t truly being challenged we will not experience change and begin to experience frustration (rather than happiness), and potentially resort to things we think bring immediate pleasure. If we take on too much, we begin to feel overwhelmed (not peace), and again resort to



Goals



immediate fixes we know bring comfort. However, if we go to prayer requesting God help align us with His vision for our lives, we find the sweet spot. We KNOW He will cause it to be so, if we cooperate with Him (see Ezekiel 12:25) We know He will not allow more than we can handle and will provide a way to endure it (1 Corinthians 10:13). We know He will not allow us to be overcome, because we are His (Isaiah 43:1, 2). We know His grace is sufficient for us (2 Corinthians 12:9), while we ride the wave for as long as He needs us to.

So what do we do with all this? How does it become useful in our lives? We identify those smaller goals we mentioned earlier, and define them in a detail we believe is not only challenging, but realistic. We ensure each goal is in the “sweet spot” and aligned with God. By the way, if you’re wondering, God DOES care about our physical well-being. We know He desires we be strong in spirit, soul and body, because sanctification of all three is mentioned in 1 Thessalonians 5:23. Also, John hopes we are as healthy in body as we are strong in spirit (3 John 1:2). So yes, I believe we can conclude God cares.

Goals

It is a blessing to know God cares so much about each of us and He is providing these revelations to all of us. Do some of the goals you set for yourself for this challenge need to be refined? I pray God shows you where your sweet spots are!

Before we go any further, let's gain a clear picture of where we are today, with regard to some physical stats.

Weight: _____

BMI: _____

Body Fat%: _____

Muscle%: _____

Body Age: _____

Visceral Fat: _____

*Before photos and measurements are also great metrics to point back to



Goals

Now it's time to set goals for the commitment! Write goals you have control over, during this commitment:



§ Scripture

§ Sleep

§ Nutrition

§ Fitness

Goals



§ Relational

§ Supplements

§ Stress

