

# Motivation and Realistic Goal Setting



Prevention and Health Education Unit  
Prepared by Licensed Health Educators

# Objectives

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**Define the concept of motivation and recognize** its importance in initiating and maintaining changes in health habits.

**Identify the importance of setting realistic goals,** recognizing how small, achievable goals can help maintain consistency and avoid frustration.

**Apply the SMART** method to set personal goals related to physical activity or other healthy habits.

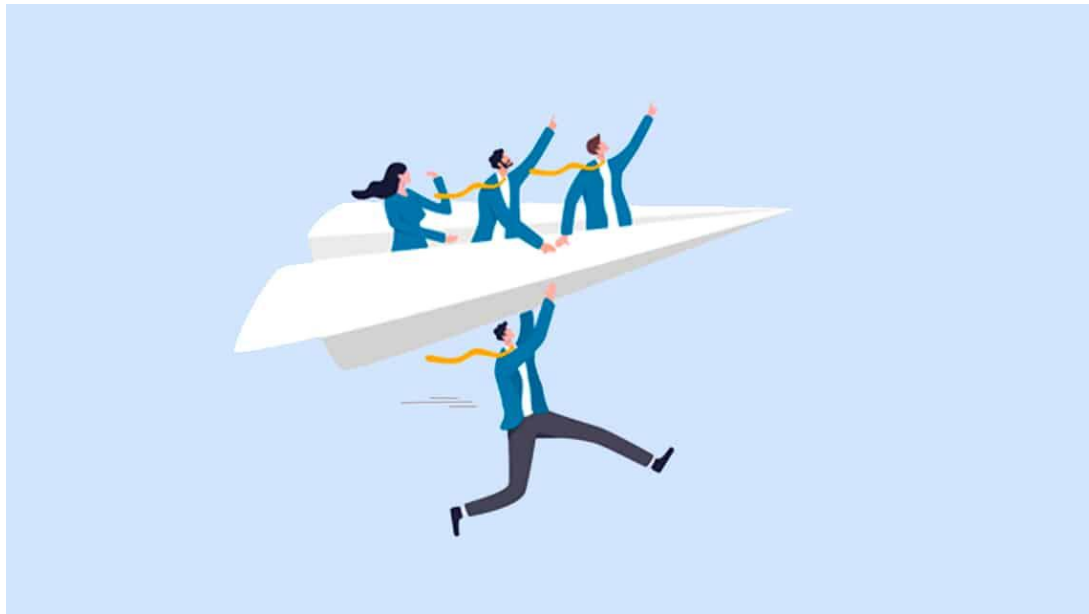


# Introduction

- Motivation is the first step to improving our health, but sustaining changes over the long term requires:
  - Clear and achievable goals
  - Small steps

# What is motivation?

Motivation is the impulse that moves us to act to improve our health. It helps us to:



**Initiate healthy changes**

**Maintain positive habits**

**Overcoming obstacles**

# Types of motivation

## Internal motivation

- Personal desire to feel better
- Have more energy
- Improve mobility
- Prevent disease



## External motivation

- Medical recommendation
- Support from family members
- Improve quality of life or job performance

\*Internal motivation is usually the strongest and most durable.

# Why set realistic goals?

Facilitate  
consistency

Reduce  
abandonment

Increase trust

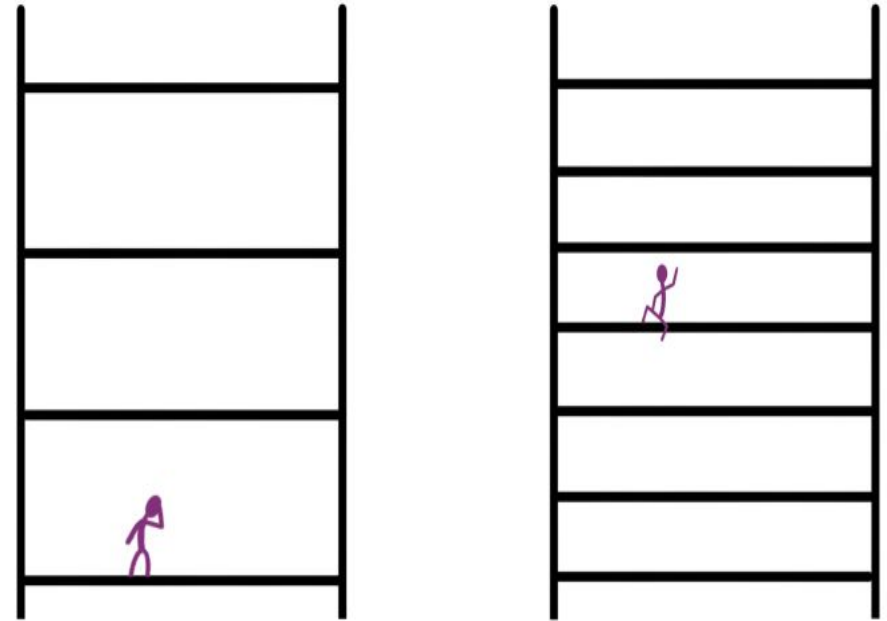
Decrease  
frustration

Promote  
sustainable  
habits

# The Power of Small Goals

When a goal is very big, it can seem difficult to achieve. **Small goals:**

- They generate a sense of accomplishment.
- They reinforce self-esteem.
- They build discipline progressively.
- They allow the body to adapt safely.



# Method for creating goals: SMART

- To increase the chances of achieving a goal, it is advisable to use the **SMART** method.
- This method helps make our goals clear, organized, and achievable, rather than vague or overly difficult goals.

**SMART**



# A SMART goal meets five important characteristics:



- **S** – Specific
- **M** – Measurable
- **A** – Achievable
- **R** – Realistic
- **T** – Time defined

# S – Specific



**SMART**

- The goal must be clear and concrete. We must define exactly what we want to do.
  - Instead of saying:  
"I want to exercise more"
  - We can say:  
"I want to walk in my neighborhood."
- When a goal is specific, it's easier to know where to start.

# M – Measurable

- The goal should allow us to measure our progress.
- This means that we can answer the question:  
How will I know I made it?
- For example:
  - Walk 20 minutes
  - Be physically active 3 days a week
  - Drink 8 glasses of water a day
- Measuring progress helps keep you motivated.



**SMART**

# A – Achievable



**SMART**

- The goal must be achievable according to our current capabilities.
  - It is important to consider:
    - Level of physical activity
    - Available time
    - Daily Responsibilities
- If the goal is too difficult from the start, it can lead to frustration.
- That's why it's best to start small and build up progressively.

# R – Realistic

- The goal must fit our lives and circumstances.
- For example, a person who works long hours may not be able to exercise every day, but they might start with 10 or 15 minutes a few days a week.
- Realistic goals increase the likelihood of sticking with the habit in the long run.



**SMART**

# T – Time defined



**SMART**

- Every goal must have a period of time to be achieved.
- This helps us stay focused and evaluate our progress.
- For example:
  - "Over the next 4 weeks"
  - "3 times a week"
  - "For 20 minutes a day"
- Having a defined time allows us to track our progress and adjust the goal if necessary.

# Strategies to stay motivated

Start with  
what's  
possible today

Recognize  
small  
achievements

Track  
progress

Seek support

Practice self-  
compassion

# How to Avoid Frustration

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- Do not compare yourself to other people.
- Adjust the goal if it is very demanding.
- Remember that progress is not always linear.
- Focus on long-term benefits.



# Goals and results



- Adopting healthy habits does not require extreme changes.
- The most important thing is:
  - ✓ Constancy
  - ✓ Small Goals
  - ✓ Patience with oneself
- Every step counts to improve your health.

# Questions or Comments



# References

- <https://odphp.health.gov/espanol/moveyourway/activity-planner/why-these-goals?>
- <https://www.who.int/es/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/physical-activity%E2%80%AF?>
- <https://odphp.health.gov/espanol/moveyourway/activity-planner?>



## **Social and Emotional Aspect**

For tips, tools, and resources on how you and your family can cope with the emotional and physical concerns that arise during and after medical treatment, please visit your primary care physician or call the following hotlines:

# Available Service Lines

## **Medical Advice Line**

24 hours a day/ 7 days a week

1-844-347-7801

**TTY/TDD 1-844-347-7804**

## **Customer Service**

1-844-347-7800

**TTY/TDD 1-844-347-7805**

Thank  
you!



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