

Setting Family Goals

Every family could use a little bit of help in setting family goals.

Perhaps your family wants to take a really fantastic vacation together this year; That three day romantic getaway just for the parents that never seems to happen; the home improvement project no one ever seems to have time for.

Most families live in a certain budget. Living within budget can help your family pay off those credit cards once and for all and realize your child's dreams of going to college or your dream of getting a bigger and better house.

Perhaps your family's goal is to see your kids go from a C average to a B or have more quality family time together. Maybe you want to start your own home-based business so that you can spend more time with your family.

Yet, each and every one of these worthy goals can be easily achieved in a somewhat remarkable and FUN way.

In fact, when you know how, working toward a goal can be more fun than achieving the goal can. If you want to add some real teamwork in your family and deepen your familial relationships, you must set goals with your spouse and with your kids.

Just make sure that anyone who participates in the goal setting process is motivated enough to follow through.

Anyone who is not fully committed to achieving the goal should not be allowed to participate or reap in the rewards.

If you really want to teach your kids something worthwhile that will help with every aspect of their lives as long as they live, teach them how to set goals.

Here's the goal-setting system that seems to work for everyone who's tried it. It will work with basically any goal you can imagine and in specific, family goals that you can achieve together.

It is a great way to get the whole family working together toward a positive environment. If nothing else, your family will have a great time trying.

1. Dream the goal.

Make a list of everything that you each think you want... all the goals you think you want to achieve. They may involve:

- Money
- Material things
- Better relationships
- A special vacation
- A change in your personal attitudes or habits

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Get some paper and a pen and go somewhere where you can be completely alone and uninterrupted. Write down everything that comes to mind, being careful not to judge or dismiss any of your ideas. Remember that every member of the family should do this as well. You will all compare and agree to compromise on which goals to work toward first etc.

After you have this long list of goals written down, put the list away for a few days.

Some of the things you wrote may begin creating a burning energy in your mind. Review your list in about a week and see which of the goals you're still interested in. Anything that you don't feel strongly about should be removed from the list. Goal setting will not work if you're not really motivated to achieve the goal. Have your family members do the same.

After you identify the goal or goals that you want to work on start writing everything down. A spiral notebook just for your goals might be very helpful. Write down your goal on the first page of your notebook and you can all start formulating them in order of the least to most important.

2. Identify the obstacles that may prevent you from achieving the goal.

After you've set your goal, make a list of things that may threaten the successful achievement of the goal and what you can do to remove those threats.

For example, are you and your spouse or child fighting over some of these goals?

Write down ALL the obstacles that you feel may prevent you from reaching your goal. This is a particularly magical part of goal setting because it takes all of the obstacles that seemed so huge before and reduces them to little letters that form words on a piece of paper. Once the obstacles are clearly defined, they are more often than not, easily solved.

3. Identify the things you need to help you achieve the goal.

After you've identified the obstacles, make a written list of the things you will need in order to achieve your goal.

This list should also include the people whose cooperation can help you work toward your goal. Some of the items on this list may include some things that will represent solutions to the problems you wrote down earlier.

4. Set a date for the achievement of your goal.

Setting a date for the attainment of your goal is the ignition for the goal-seeking missile in your mind. Make sure that your date is realistic... not so soon that it's impossible, but not so delayed that it's not interesting.

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Make sure you write the date of your goal down next to your goal. Once you've set this date, you should never change it unless it is absolutely necessary.

5. Write down the goal. Review it often.

Once you have your goal and the date in writing, make more reminders of your goal.

Put these reminders all around your house, your car, and your bathroom.

They will remind you of your goal and the date that the goal will be achieved by, and each time you see this information you will be programming your mind to take action toward your goal. This is an important step.

6. Make a step-by-step plan.

First, let's review: You know what you want and you know you want it badly. You have identified the problems you need to remove before you can achieve your goal and you know whose help and cooperation you will need. You know the date for the attainment of the goal.

Now, make a step-by-step action plan. Write down every little thing, no matter how small, that you must do in order to reach your goal. Break the project into the tiniest of pieces... If you have a complicated list, jot down all the ideas that come to mind and then put them in date sequence later.

If necessary, number them and then type them into a word processor or re-write them in date sequence. Each item should also have a deadline for accomplishment so you can see you're on target along the way.

This is an important part of your goal achievement so don't cut corners on your plan, especially if it is a complicated goal or there are a lot of obstacles to overcome.

7. Follow your plan!

This is the fun part, because after you've set and hit your first goal, you'll know that all you have to do to achieve your goal is to follow your plan! Review your plan every single day. Work on something on your list every single day. Stay on schedule. Don't fall behind. Review your goal and the deadline. Mark off items off the list as you accomplish them.

You can't control every aspect of your future, of course, but you will be surprised how many things you really can control with these effective goal-setting techniques. This is a great way to get the family working together doing something positive that is for the benefit of all. If nothing else it will give you all the time spent together to achieve one or more goals and you will definitely be together.