

# Goal Setting — Creating Your Destiny

modified excerpts from a keynote by Jody Johnston Pawel, LSW, CFLE at NY Extension conference

Now that you've learned the Inner Secrets to a Stress-Free Life. Now, I want to offer you some practical tips for *applying* what you have learned.

## 1. Find Your Passion

Are you passionate about your job and life or are you just going through the motions? Passionate people:

- *Love* what they do.
- They are energized to *be* more and *give* more.
- They *get up* in the morning feeling *excited* about what the day will bring.

Does that describe you? If not, you need to Find Your Passion.

## 2. Be Committed

The problem with motivation is that it doesn't necessarily offer anything that will create or sustain permanent long-term change. Once the rush wears off, you can easily lose your motivation.

Rhonda Britten, in her book *Change your Life in 30 days*, says, "Motivation is like inspiration; it is an effect. It is not the cause." If you are totally committed to something, it's easy to be motivated to do what you need to do, even when you don't feel like it.

I want to do more than "pump you up" — I want you to leave here committed to achieving at least one new goal... So the first place we need to start is by looking at what a goal is...and isn't.

## 3. Set and Achieve Your Goals

I want you to work with a goal throughout this presentation. So on a separate sheet of paper, take 10-15 seconds to write down ONE answer to the question:

**What in your life would you like to change or improve?**

Let's say someone named "Susan" longs for a financial independence; that is her desired result.

a. **Affirmations** are positive, result-oriented statements written in the present tense, *as though we already have* what we want.

So Susan's affirmation might be, "I am financially independent."

The problem with affirmations is that they too often focus on getting results from people or things outside of ourselves. So every time Susan says her affirmation, "I am financially independent," she is reminded that she isn't! — at least not yet.

b. **Intentions** are positive statements written in the present tense that inspire us to take proactive behaviors. Setting our intention is deciding on an outcome in advance. We write an intention in such a way that we feel inspired to *do* something.

An intention statement will immediately empower us, because *we* are responsible for its success.

So Susan's intention statement might be, "I am practicing financial responsibility in all areas of my life."

**Write an intention statement** by shifting the focus from a completed task to something you can practice.

c. **Goals support an intention.**

They are *actions* you take to achieve your intentions.

When you write a goal statement, state your full name, write in the present tense, in positive words, using "ing" verbs whenever possible.

Susan's possible goal might be, "I, Susan Jones, am now saving 10% of every paycheck I receive."

**Now you write a goal statement.** Write your goal as if you knew that you could not fail and your success was absolutely guaranteed. Dismiss any negative thoughts that enter your mind, like "How am I going to do that?" or "I can't do that!" We'll deal with those negative thoughts next.

Read this goal statement aloud every morning and night, until you achieve it.

#### 4. Fuel Your Creative Energy

Peggy McColl, author of *On Being...the Creator of Your Destiny*, tells us we have four levels of creative energy. Each brings a higher level of awareness and creative energy. The first is:

##### a. Thoughts

Ralph Waldo Emerson said, “You become what you think about all day long.”

When we repeatedly think about something *with conviction*, we *believe* the thought and we put energy into creating whatever we are thinking about. Unfortunately, on average, 75% of the thoughts people think about are negative.

Supportive beliefs help take us in the direction of our goals. Non-supportive beliefs take us away from our goals. So if you think you can’t do something, you probably won’t!

Subconscious thoughts filter how we see and experience the world, how we treat others and control the decisions we make.

For example, let’s say Susan is unhappy in her marriage, but she doesn’t divorce her husband because she believes she can’t make it on her own financially. Susan may never fully commit to doing what it takes to achieve financial independence, because she believes it will cause her marriage to end.

To take control of our thinking, we must first become *aware* of what we are thinking. We don’t judge our thoughts; we simply notice them and *choose* whether we want to change them.

Most people operate on the saying, “When I see it I’ll believe it.” In truth, it’s our beliefs that determine what we see — we filter out everything that doesn’t fit our belief.

For example, Susan will probably ignore the first small steps she achieves towards her goal, but notice any setbacks. The more Susan focuses on the setbacks, the more discouraged she will become and the more likely she will not achieve her goal or give up too soon. Then Susan will say, “Aha! I told you I couldn’t do this!”

**As Dr. Wayne Dyer says, “You’ll SEE it when you BELIEVE it.”**

##### b. Words

Words are thoughts expressed verbally, and are the second level of creativity. The words you say out loud to yourself or to others build on the flow of thought energy already in motion. The actual and specific words you say affect the intensity of the energy.

We cannot motivate ourselves through negative self-talk like, “I can’t.”

We must replace negative self-talk with positive self-talk, like “I can” and “I will.”

Start noticing how many times you hear yourself say, “*I have to,*” “*I should,*” or “*but.*”

- When we say we *have to* do something, we are giving away our power. In reality, *everything* is a choice. I don’t “have to” go to work. I *can* choose not to. Yes, there will be a consequence if I don’t, but I *do* have the choice. I’ve personally worked on changing this statement to “I *get to* go to work.” I truly love my job and this reminds me that I am privileged to be able to effect people’s lives every day through my work.
- When we say *should*, we stay focused on what other people want instead of what we want.
- When we say *but*, we are usually making excuses. (We’ll talk more about excuses in a minute.)

The strongest statement we can make is an “I am” statement. Whatever comes after the “I am” is what we create. Here are some statements we might hear. Ask yourself, “What will be the result?”

- I am sick and tired.
- I am so fed up.
- I am successful in every way.
- I am extremely creative.

**“The words I use today create my future tomorrow.”**

### **c. Actions**

Thought and word are two powerful levels of energy. When they are combined with action and the energies of all three levels are moving in the same direction, we will experience incredible results. Once we've set our intention or goal, we ask ourselves, “What do I need to do to move me in the direction my desired result or to achieve this goal?”

As long as we are taking some action toward our goal, we will move in a forward direction and using the creative energy of action.

If we don't know what action to take, we can:

- find an expert who can advise us
- create a mastermind alliance with a group of individuals who support each other
- search for the information

Just keep this in mind: If you have an **idea**, then you have the ability to make it a **reality**.

Homework: Take 2 sheets of paper. For the next week:

- On one sheet, write things you have been thinking, saying and doing that are *positive, supportive and take you in the direction of your goals*. (Keep this sheet and refine it.)
- On the other sheet, write things you have been thinking, saying and doing that are *holding you back from achieving your goals*. (Take this sheet and reword each negative statement. Write the positive statement on the first sheet. Then burn the second sheet, tear it up or scrunch/throw it away.)

### **d. Being**, which transcends the other three levels.

When you transcend all three levels of energy — word, thought and action — you are in a state of “being.”

**“We become what we think, say and do.”**

Your states of being attract other states of being. In other words, if you are being loving, you will attract love to you. If you are being prosperous, you will attract prosperity.

We want to discard our “trashy” thoughts, words, actions and states of being and collect those that will bring value into our lives.

**When all *four* types of energy are operating at their highest level, miraculous things start to happen.**

## **5. Remove the Roadblocks**

Next, let's look at the common roadblocks we all encounter when working towards a goal. The first relates to the 4 levels of energy we just learned about.

### **a. Energy Challenges**

One of the biggest reasons people don't reach their goals is that they create energy challenges with their thoughts, words and actions.

For example:

- If you take a positive *action*, but doubt you can succeed (which is a negative *thought*) or say you can't do it (which are negative *words*), your *actions* will not be as successful.
- If we have energy from positive *thoughts* and *words* but our *actions* are in direct opposition, that negative energy holds us back and restricts our success.
- If we have internal positive self talk but listen to negative *words* from others and allow ourselves to *accept* those words, it reduces our energy and restricts our success.

We need to align all four levels of energy to move in the same direction. The way we do this is to:

#1: be *aware* of our thoughts, words and actions...and

#2: consciously *choose* positive thoughts, words and actions, until they become second nature.

If we are simply unaware and unintentionally blocking our progress, then awareness and learning skills will correct the behavior. If we are aware of what we need to be doing and choose not to, we need to ask ourselves what purpose this serves us...which leads us to...

### b. Excuses

Rhonda Britten, author of *Change Your life in 30 Days*, says, “Excuses become the evidence we need to prove we are right in spite of being wrong. You can do such a good job proving excuses exist that they become very real to you and very hard to break. Excuses keep you small. They give you permission to blame others for your life. Excuses take away your power and keep you victimized. Your excuses may no longer be valid, but may still be running your life. If you have an excuse, you cannot be true to yourself.”

I would add, “As long as you make excuses, you will not achieve your goals.”

The interesting thing about excuses is that they seem to benefit us somehow. For example, if my excuse is:

- “I don’t have the money.” This implies money is the only way to reach my goal, so I can avoid looking for creative alternatives.
- “That’s just the way I am.” This is an excuse to avoid change and growth. People stay as they are because they know other people expect them to be that way.

Of course, we may get some short-term benefit from our excuses, but in the long-run, they prevent us from reaching our goals.

On your handout, name one **excuse** you use and the *benefit* this excuse gives you.

### c. Complaining

When I heard Rhonda Britten speak, she said, “**The reason we complain is to bond with others.** The old saying ‘Misery loves company’ is true. We need to realize that complaining disempowers us. Our complaints say we have no power to change what’s happening to us. If friends validate the complaint, it just fuels the fire and our commitment to the problem. Instead we need to do two things:

1. Focus on solutions instead of the problem.
2. **Turn the complaint into a statement of gratitude.**

This idea really stuck with me. I was not only complain a lot without thinking, I realized I used complaining as a form of humor. I actually tried to turn my complaints into a humorous story that would grip everyone’s interest and give me sympathy and attention. The day I heard Rhonda speak I had one of those days when everything went wrong. The next day, I wrote an e-mail to my parents to tell them what a crazy day I had and how neat Rhonda’s seminar was. I realized that almost every sentence was a complaint, so I deleted quite a few lines and created a statement of gratitude after every “negative” event I described. It really helped *me* get in touch with the blessings each event actually gave me.

Rhonda also defined the difference between Venting and complaining. When you want to Vent:

1. Ask for #minutes
2. Tell the person what you want. (No advice/coaching.) I just want you to listen.
3. Then get out the feelings.
4. Quickly change the subject.

She also recommended not going to people who will worry or feed the negativity.

After reading Gangaji’s chapter on Stories in *The Diamond in Your Pocket*, I became aware of when I was *choosing* to tell a story. If I chose to, I simply told it as such, a story about some past event, without getting hooked into the emotions or caught up in the drama of it, which kept it alive.

#### d. Negativity

When we put good into a mind that is full of negativity, it takes longer to experience any change.

We wish for something and then cancel it out by thinking about what we *don't* want. It's like planting a healthy seed and immediately putting weed killer on it.

Avoiding negativity is difficult, but you do have the option to block out negativity.

- You can choose carefully what you watch on TV or read in the newspaper.
- Watch how you talk with others. Never disrespect yourself or others by speaking negatively *to* yourself, *about* yourself or about *others*. Don't participate in conversations that are complaining or gossiping.
- Associate with positive people or stay positive in spite of the negativity around you. This can be extremely hard, but when you hear negativity, **let it bounce off of you**. Imagine you are surrounded by a transparent shield that repels negativity, but lets love in.

#### e. Obstacles, Adversity and Challenges

Some people look at successful people and say, "they are so lucky" and think that they don't have any challenges.

Find anyone who has achieved success and you'll find an individual who has had to overcome obstacles, endure adversity and work through challenges.

Challenges are universal and they are constant. There is no way to escape them.

It is our reaction to adversity that makes the difference.

A "Power of Attitude" Successories poster reads:

"Our lives are not determined by what happens to us, but by how we react to what happens to us; not by what life brings to us, but by the attitude we bring to life. A positive attitude causes a chain reaction of positive thoughts, events and outcomes. It is a catalyst...a spark that creates extraordinary results."

To manage any challenge, you have three options I learned from *the Power of Now*, by Eckert Tolle, that you can remember with C-A-R.

**Change** it. Find a solution instead of dwelling on the problem. If you can't change it...

**Accept** it.

- Look past it and say, "This too shall pass." Don't allow one challenge in area of your life spiral the other parts downward. Put it in perspective.
- Look for the gift. In every adversity there is an opportunity.
- Learn from it. The past is the past and you cannot change it, but you can learn from it and seek to change the future.

Peggy McColl, author of *"On Being...The Creator of Your Destiny"*, says "A person living in the past is like a driver who is driving down the road staring in the rear-view mirror. This can lead to catastrophe. At the least, the driver will miss the opportunities and lessons right in front of him.

If you can't change it and it's totally unacceptable, then...

**Remove yourself from** it. This does not mean you give up. Removing yourself is protecting yourself from toxic situations. It may only be temporary, but giving up is permanent.

#### f. Doubts and Faith

Abraham Lincoln once said, "To believe in the things that you can see and touch is no belief at all, but to believe in the unseen is a triumph and a blessing."

Peggy McColl identifies 3 levels of faith:

- If you **Hope** — you have **GREAT** doubt and **NO** certainty it will happen.
- If you **Believe** — you have **SOME** doubt and **SOME** certainty it will happen.
- If you have **Faith** — you have **NO** doubt and **TOTAL** certainty it will happen.

Think about your goal. What is your level of faith in achieving this goal? Do you *hope* to reach your goal? *Believe* you'll reach it? Or have absolute faith...?

See your goals in advance and have *absolute faith* that you *will* achieve them.

Once you set a goal, you've set the intention. You've started to create that outcome. The moment you start to doubt, you start to create *that* outcome (of not achieving the goal).

You may not know *how* you are doing to do it, *yet*, but you must have faith that the answer *will come* — maybe from left field.

If you doubt your abilities, remember that **confidence is determined by your beliefs, not your abilities.**

- Look beyond past results. Predict a different future — then make it happen.
- See the positive side of your character traits. For example, people who are often labeled “stubborn” are very “determined,” which can be a positive trait in goal achievement — if it's directed in constructive ways. If it's a destructive trait...
- Eliminate, change or replace it. **BECOME the person you wish you were!**

In a state of absolute faith, you expect challenges, but know they are natural occurrences and move through them. You do not allow anything to take you off track.

The defining moment” is when you say, “that's it, I'm doing this and nothing is going to stop me.”

Successful people may feel fear, but they step forward anyway. They challenge themselves to take the next step, even if it is only baby steps taken each day.

Absolute faith has a mystical quality. It creates what some people call coincidences or luck.

If you don't have absolute faith, the way to build it is to...

## 6. Visualize Your Success

- Write your goal and carry it with you. Read it frequently.
- Write out a detailed description of your life as you would like it to be.
- Visualize yourself **already in possession of** your goals.
- *Act* as if you have already achieved your goals.
- *Feel* what it will feel like when you achieve your goals.
- Decide how you will *celebrate* achieving your goal.
- Stay *focused* on your goals in everything you do.
- Notice what is *working*. Keep an accomplishment file and enter the goals as you achieve them. Review this file from time to time.

Even though you intend a desired result, you **must detach yourself from the outcome and when or how it will occur.** You never know exactly what will happen.

We often want things *now*, but trying to force change actually slows down the process.

Creating lasting change requires an investment of time and energy. The process does take time. The amount of time that it takes one person to achieve his or her goals can be dramatically different from the time it takes for another person.

We might not always get what we want, because the outcome is affected not only by our energy, but the energy of others. If there are collective goals and everyone is focused in the same winning direction, then it speeds up the creation of the results.

Simply detach yourself from the outcome and enjoy the process.

The final step in achieving your goals is to...

## 7. Accelerate Your Learning

- Be **open-minded**. Often, people hear the words, agree with the words, but don't let them in. They reject the ideas because they are so stuck in their limited mindset. You don't have to let every thought into your head. Just use common sense and simply consider another view.
- Believe you can **learn new skills**. If your belief is "I can't learn this," you will block the flow and cut off intelligence from coming into your conscious mind.
- Sit **in the front row**. Make eye contact with the speaker/presenter.
- Be an **observer**. Watch what other people do. Take what you can use, throw out the rest and develop your own unique style
- **Seek** answers. There are tons of resources available to you.
- **Create** answers. Then help others with your solution.
- Learn from your **experiences** — and **mistakes**. Every mistake has valuable lesson contained within it. You only need to be aware of it, learn from it and move forward.

**Plan to go to school for the rest of your life — the school of *Life*.**

To achieve your goals and be successful in the School of Life, you must master the fundamentals. Not some of them, or a few of them, but ALL of them.

This series has referenced what I'd recommend as the "textbooks" for the School of Life. Much of what I shared with you is from those books. Some, I've only discovered them in the past few years, but what I've learned and the results I'm already seeing are phenomenal.

As we go our separate ways, I encourage you to:

- Elevate your consciousness to a high level.
- Accept whatever shows up for you in your life and accept it with gratitude.
- Set goals, but detach yourself from the outcome.

**The secret to life is to not *have* everything you *want* but to *want* everything you *have*.**

I'd like to leave you with one final question to ponder:

Every day you are creating your future. What future will you choose to create?

Your seeds of greatness were planted when you were born. A farmer whose seeds are planted in the fields already has his crop; he just hasn't seen the physical evidence of it yet. So, too, when you nurture the greatness within you, you will reap a marvelous harvest.

Thank you for the privilege of being able to share these secrets with you.