

## Set goals



An article in the March 24, 1972 issue of Life magazine featured John Goddard who, at age 15, wrote down 127 goals which he wanted to accomplish in his lifetime.

Included in his goals were: climb Mounts Kilimanjaro, Ararat, Fuji, McKinley (and thirteen others); visit every country in the world; learn to fly an airplane; retrace the travels of March Polo and Alexander the Great; visit the North and South Poles, Great Wall of China, Taj Mahal (and other exotic areas); become an Eagle Scout; dive in a submarine; play flute and violin; publish an article in National Geographic magazine; learn French, Spanish and Arabic; milk a poisonous snake; read the entire Encyclopedia Britannica; and other goals, similar in variety and scope.

By age 47, Goddard had accomplished 103 of these goals and was in the process of completing several others. Goddard was neither wealthy nor gifted when he began his amazing saga of adventure and accomplishment. He was just a young boy who believed all things were possible and that he could accomplish his goals.

I wonder how many of those experiences he would have had if he had not formally expressed them as goals.

Goal setting is so beneficial. They clarify intent and focus resources. Without them, we may drift through life, accomplishing little.

**Here are some guidelines for goal setting:**

- Set goals in all major areas of life: financial, relational, physical, professional, spiritual, social, and intellectual.
- Write them down. It's not sufficient to have them only in your mind; transcribe them into your journal or computer.
- Measure and review your progress, often. If you don't measure your goals they will fall off the radar screen.
- Don't bludgeon yourself if you don't accomplish every goal. Partially completed goals can be very fulfilling because sometimes the journey is just as rewarding as arriving at the final destination.

What happens if you don't set and pursue goals? You will most likely not reach your potential and you will underutilize your gifts and squander your resources. If you aim at nothing, you will hit it. Or, as Wayne Gretzky said, "You'll miss one hundred percent of the shots you don't take."

For the past 40 years I have designated the week between Christmas and New Years Day as a time to think about the previous 12 months and set goals for the next 12-18 months. It is a simple process that has produced good results. I double-dog-dare you to give it a try.

"Que sera, sera. Whatever will be will be" is a cute song to sing but a lousy philosophy on which to build your life. Decide now that you are going to be a planner and that you will set and accomplish meaningful goals.