

## SOULSAVVY PLANNING IDEAS

Tools for Best Laid Plans to visit every quarter, and/or every year

### I. Models for Simple, Effective Planning

#### Why setting goals makes sense

A big part of why people make plans is that once your priorities are clear, life can be simpler. For example, when there is a decision to be made about whether or not to say yes to a project, or an invitation, you can ask yourself, does this help with my goals? Is this relevant to, and does it serve, my priorities? Often your intuition can give you a yes or no pretty quickly, when viewed in light of the exciting priorities you've mapped out.

#### Considering limits to our awesomeness

Peter Bregman, in his 2011 book, 18 Minutes: Find your Focus, Master Distraction, and Get the Right Things Done, shares a head turning and revolutionary nugget for our times. His book was born of his own overwhelm in examining the plethora of today's time management tools. He suggests that we can't do it all, and that it's important to acknowledge our limits. He suggests that you can actually manage 5 projects a year, perhaps 3 in the work/career area, and 2 personal projects. His simple system uses 5 minutes to plan the day, one minute each hour to evaluate how the hour went and how well you accomplished your plan, and five minutes at the end of the day to review and plan again.

#### The ABC, 1,2,3,4 system

Another exercise that helps with prioritizing is a method Brian Tracey, a sales and business guru, uses in his book Time Power: A Proven System for Getting More Done in Less Time than You Ever Thought Possible.

He suggests you list all the goals you have for the next 5 years, listing all the things you'd like to accomplish. Then, prioritize them using three levels of importance by categorizing each goal with a letter A, B, or C – A is the most important groups of goals, B the next important, and C the final tier of importance. Then you rate each group numerically in order of importance, with 1 being the top goal.

One cool thing you see at the end of this exercise; your "A1 Goal" will be named. That can be helpful and enlightening – even if it's a challenge to narrow it down. Just go for it, and know goals are fluid and don't have to be set in stone for all eternity. Plus, once you complete a goal, you can move the next priority up to the active list.

#### Flipping the Bummer to a Positive Goal

Another model for planning that can be helpful in naming priorities is noticing what you're not happy about in your life. I heard this model in a few places, and really liked the late Lynn Grabhorn's book, Excuse Me, Your Life is Waiting.

It is human nature to focus on what's not working; those problems that vex you or demand your attention. You can use this tendency as a jumping off point in a positive way. OK, have you noticed what

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you don't want? Well then, what DO you want instead? In terms of the law of attraction work, it's best to focus on what you do want, versus what you don't, or what's not working.

Let's say you're not feeling as healthy as you like, and it's been going on too long, and is getting to be a real pain. You're not comfortable in your clothes, you get too easily winded, and you're shy about affection with your partner, or about dating. Rather than focusing on the challenge of this, and being hard on yourself, you can name the goal of getting more healthy or fit.

So here, you'd want to feel great in your clothes, and be confident with the opposite sex. You see yourself as a lean machine hiking, biking, swimming and/or dancing with ease. Lynn would suggest that you really imagine that goal happening, and FEEL the feelings (creating a "buzz") of what that would be like in reality. Thus if you find yourself revisiting a certain area of life that is a bummer – you may want to choose this as one of your goals. Every time you say to yourself, "Ack! My pants are too tight!" – this becomes a cue to tune in to the positive buzz of your goal - to get more fit and have more fun in your body.

### **SMART Goals**

Another useful key with goals is the SMART system. Sure, you can say, "I want to be more fit by summer". Compare this to, "By June 21st, I'm going to lose twenty pounds and be able to wear my polka dot bikini to the family reunion. To get there I'll join the rec center and workout four times a week for 45 minutes." I think you get the idea here.

The SMART letters stand for:

#### **SMART**

S - specific, M - measurable, A – attainable, R – realistic, T – timely

It helps to not only have clearly written goals, but plans and timelines for how to get there. This is where the SMART details come in to play. It may not be necessary yet to get this detailed – for some; it's a great accomplishment to name five or six priorities and to honor these in your daily work and decision making. Yet you'll hear it said, the clearer and more specific your goals, the better.

#### **A couple of points here are worth mentioning.**

It's discussed frequently that setting huge goals – while it can be motivating for some – often can get too overwhelming. So do check if your **goals feel realistic and attainable**.

**Second, timelines can help you get real** about the steps needed to make something happen. Even if you don't get the goal done "on time" – you continually learn to better estimate the time things will take. That's a lifelong skill you want to build. The better you get at this, the less you stress yourself out with unrealistic planning and the chaos it causes.

**If you had 10 million tax-free, what would you do?** How would your life change? What would you stop doing? What is the first group of things you'd buy? Where would you visit or vacation? How long would you sleep in? Often called the "miracle" question, see what information arises from this inquiry – even if there are quick and general flashes, you can keep these in mind as you are creating your palette of goals. This is part of Brian Tracy's clarifying of goals in his book, [Time Power](#).

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Example:

**GOAL: Improve Health**

**SMART:** Lose 5-10 pounds and resume exercise program before the March backpack trip.

**SYMBOL CHECK:** *When I got still, I first saw myself dancing - cool. So that says, this could be fun. When I asked for a symbol, I saw myself on a chin up bar or are they called pull up bars? Not going to happen lol, but I like the words here "CHIN UP" as a symbol, with exercise helping my mood/to keep my spirits up.*

**NEXT STEPS:** Make sure to get the Tuesday dance nights in, dance at home more, exercise in calendar. (SMART goals named here to re: amount of exercise currently doing, and how to add on to that slowly.)

**TIMELINE NOTES:**

OK now it's your turn!

**MY GOALS FOR 2019**

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**GOAL 1:**

**SMART:**

**SYMBOL CHECK:**

**NEXT STEPS:**

**TIMELINE NOTES:**

**GOAL 2:**

**SMART:**

**SYMBOL CHECK:**

**NEXT STEPS:**

**TIMELINE NOTES:**

**GOAL 3:**

**SMART:**

**SYMBOL CHECK:**

**NEXT STEPS:**

**TIMELINE NOTES:**

**GOAL 4:**

**SMART:**

**SYMBOL CHECK:**

**NEXT STEPS:**

**TIMELINE NOTES:**

**GOAL 5:**

**SMART:**

**SYMBOL CHECK:**

**NEXT STEPS:**

**TIMELINE NOTES:**

**GOAL 6:**

**SMART:**

**SYMBOL CHECK:**

**NEXT STEPS:**

**TIMELINE NOTES:**

## **Woo hoo! Congratulations!**

If you've made it through this process, wow for you. That is great work that will pay off for 2019.

**If you had any challenges**, such as regrets from the past that are blocking you, a lack of clarity about what is next for you, wondering how to make a desired goal happen - HOW TO WRESTLE YOUR DREAM into reality, check out [my Soul Savvy coaching services](#) - I have room for two new clients currently.

**Denise Barnes, MA, LPC, REV - see testimonials on the website; stay in the loop with our newsletter.**

**<https://soulsavvy.net/coaching>      Call or text 303.501.7402      Feel free to share this program!**

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