

Clarify Why and What by Chris Vasiliadis

OK, so you want to weigh less, eat better, exercise more, and/or improve how you handle stress.

Great: let's create a fertile environment for that goal to happen.

Block off 30 minutes for yourself (put it in your planner if you need to), where you won't have any interruptions. A quiet room, cup of tea, or lit candle may help in adding to the calmness and peacefulness of this session. Bring pen and paper along.

Write down the answers to the following questions:

1. Pick the one thing you want the most for your wellness: what's the top priority for you?
2. Now, ask yourself, why is it important to you that you achieve this goal? Jot down anything that comes to mind. Pretend that the goal has already occurred -- what does that event bring to your life?
3. When you've finished writing everything down from step 2, summarize your goal's overall importance in 1-3 sentences. Again, the focus is on why this is important *to you*, not anyone else.
4. Why now? Answering this question is especially important if you've attempted this goal before.
5. What does achieving this goal look like? Paint a picture, in words, of how your life will be, what you will be doing, how you will be feeling when you've met this goal. You're done when you have a brief paragraph that inspires and energizes you.
6. What do you need to support you in making this goal happen? Consider the environment, resources, and people.

In performing these steps, you'll either solidify the importance of your goal and what you need in place to make it happen, or decide that now is not the right time for moving toward this particular goal. Go easy on yourself if the latter is the case: you need to be in the right mindset for succeeding with a behavior change. If you're not there yet, either:

- put this goal on the back-burner and choose another priority, or
- do some more research in this area to learn more about how keeping things the same vs. making a change could impact your life.

Once you arrive a goal that you feel strongly about and you've gone through this process, use this foundation to help spring you into action. Secure the support you identified. Post the "why" in a prominent place, so it can both motivate you on your good days, and re-inspire you on the days when you feel like giving up. Review the "what it looks like" (step 5) on a weekly basis, and use that vision to help you create small weekly or daily steps to that end.

This is part of what my clients receive in their initial Wellness Planning session with me. Ultimately, they leave with a Wellness Vision, a set of 3 month goals, and a set of weekly goals for our next call. It's more than just creating goals: it's uncovering their meaning for each person, and what unique strengths each client brings to the table in making them happen. As such, it's a process and discussion full of action planning, discovery, and instilling motivation.

Chris Vasiliadis had a wake-up-call to her wellness in late 2005, when she was diagnosed with Multiple Sclerosis: a chronic disease of the central nervous system. That event initiated many lifestyle changes for Chris, ultimately leading to her improved health and new career as a Certified Wellness Coach. Through her business, Priority Wellness, she helps people regroup, recharge and take control of their wellness. With a special interest in helping sole proprietors and small business owners, clients come to Chris when they're tired, or tired of being tired. They know they're not eating right, exercising enough or consistently, and/or not managing stress well, and they've had enough of living that way. Working over the phone with Chris, they make their wellness a priority and create new habits to master their well-being. Chris can be contacted at 781-791-7642 or chris@prioritywellness.com.