

REACHING HEALTH GOALS



nami

**Hearts
Minds**
Mental Health is Physical Health

STRATEGIES FOR SUCCESS

If you've ever tried to make a change in your life – especially a change related to your health – you know it can be a challenge. Whether you want to improve your diet, add exercise, or kick a smoking habit, the process of creating and sticking with healthy habits takes time and effort.

It's important to keep moving forward as you go from making healthier choices to enjoying better health. No matter where you are in the process of setting and achieving a health goal, try these strategies to stay motivated and on track for success.



You Can Do It

Think about your health goals. Which of the following statements do you most relate to?



"I'm thinking about making a change soon... maybe."

If you're thinking about setting a goal or creating a healthy habit but need more motivation, self-reflection can help you get started. Ask yourself questions such as:

- What do I value most?
- What are the most important parts of my goal?
- What short and long-term goals do I want to achieve?
- How could making healthy changes influence those around me?
- What would it feel like to set a goal and achieve it?



"I'm ready. I've got a plan in place and a start date circled on the calendar!"

As you get started on your health goal, be sure to think about potential obstacles that may hinder progress. Have a plan to manage them and stay on track:

- Identify and remove temptations from your environment.
- Decide how to respond to social pressure or other distractions.
- Find messages that are motivating – quotes, mantras, photos and videos that inspire you. Surround yourself with these positive reminders.



"I recently set a goal and I'm getting used to making healthier choices to achieve it. I'm feeling more confident that I can stick with it."

Even when you're feeling confident in your ability to achieve and maintain health goals, it might at times feel difficult or less appealing. It's important to safeguard your success and find new ways to stay on track.

- Remember to celebrate your successes. You have worked hard toward your goals. Acknowledge your efforts and enjoy the benefits.
- Enlist peers, friends, and family in your health goals. Share successes and support.
- Be creative – are there new activities, approaches or strategies that you could try?



"I've achieved a couple of health goals. I feel good, and healthy habits seem like a very natural part of daily routines."

Congratulations on achieving your goal! Find a healthy way to reward yourself for your hard work. You deserve it.

- Build on your success with new goals. Find new challenges that interest you or that you previously lacked the confidence to try.
- Continue to watch out for barriers, distractions, or other temptations that can derail your success. Update your plan to manage them.
- Remember to stay involved with peers, friends, and family. Talk about expanding goals, and how to keep each other motivated.



"I was doing so well, but I had one or two slip-ups. I want to get my goals back on track."

Change takes time and effort. If you find yourself slipping back into old habits, don't dwell on your setbacks. Instead, use them to learn about yourself and focus on moving forward.

- Reassess your goal. What adjustments can be made? What works for you? What doesn't?
- Reassess your plan for managing distractions and temptation. What new strategies could you add?
- List three ways you can reward yourself for getting back on track with your goal.

Creating healthy habits is a process that can be different for everyone. Some people take a while to get started, or to reach the first milestone. Others experience initial feelings of success and are quickly motivated to reach and set new goals. Nearly everyone encounters obstacles and setbacks.

Remember, you're a unique individual and your journey may not follow a pre-determined path or timeline. What matters most is that you recognize that you have the ability to achieve your goals.

Believe in yourself and you'll find that those small, intentional steps to change your health will soon become a natural part of your daily routine – and a healthier life.



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