

Self-worth

Lesson 1001

part of the

MEE

Journal System

Interactive Journaling® and you

While research shows that all real change is self-change, having tools to help make it happen is essential. This Journal will assist you in applying effective, evidence-based strategies to make changes in your thinking, feelings and behaviors.

The process of *Interactive Journaling*® will serve you best when you are open and honest with your responses. Instead of worrying about neatness, handwriting, or spelling, focus on the accuracy and insight of your statements. Personalize the information to your own individual circumstances, and feel free to use any white space or margins to complete your thoughts.

With the right tools and your willingness to do the work of self-change, you can look forward to a more positive and healthy life. Remember, you are worthy and capable of change.

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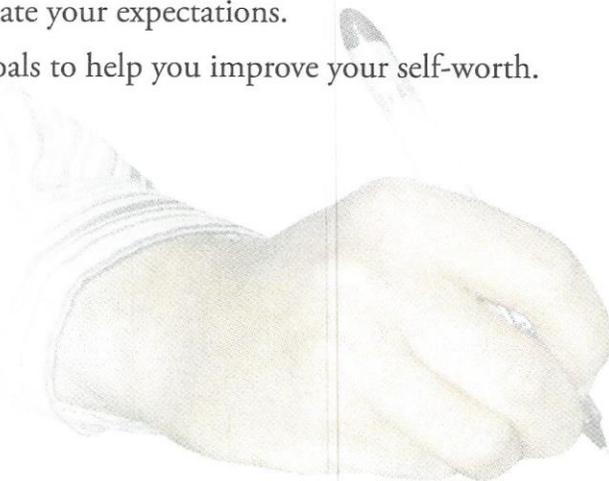


What you will learn

This Journal will help you to recognize the importance of building a healthy foundation from which to appreciate yourself.

The *Self-worth* Journal will give you an opportunity to:

- ◆ Learn what self-worth is and how it is connected to substance use behaviors.
- ◆ Consider how your use of self-talk influences your self-worth.
- ◆ Define your core values and learn the importance of sticking to your values.
- ◆ Focus on the benefits of living free from secrets.
- ◆ Examine the importance of self-care and how it impacts your self-worth.
- ◆ Evaluate your expectations.
- ◆ Set goals to help you improve your self-worth.



Name

Date

What is self-worth?

Self-worth is what you think and believe about yourself. You express your self-worth by the way you treat yourself.

People with high self-worth feel good about themselves. They value their own opinions and ideas. Their behavior and appearance reflect the positive view they have of themselves.

People with low self-worth place little value in their own opinions and ideas. This is often reflected in how they look and how they act.

It can be difficult for people with alcohol and other drug problems to keep up feelings of high self-worth. Their actions may not match their values.

Making positive life changes can improve your view of yourself. This Journal offers ways to help you increase your self-worth and gives you an opportunity to set specific goals for working on your self-worth.

“As I make recovery a priority in my life, I’m starting to see myself in a new light. I’m feeling better about the person I am.”

Describe how you feel about yourself today.

The influence of your self-talk...

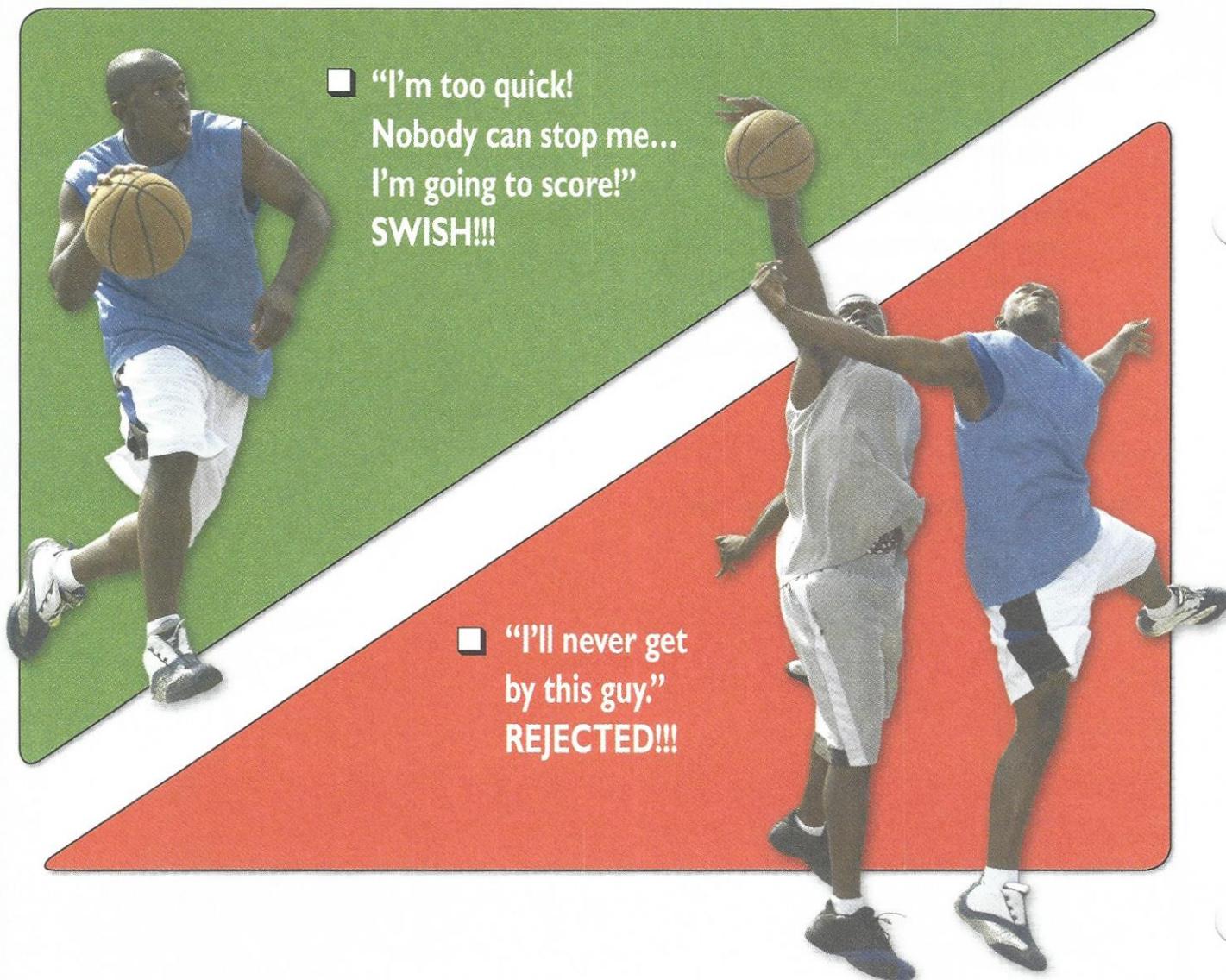
Why do some people seem to have high self-worth no matter what life throws their way while others struggle to find any sense of self-worth at all?

The answer often rests with your self-talk. Are you aware of a little voice inside you that is always giving you opinions and advice? That is your

self-talk, and it feeds you the beliefs and ideas you have stored up over your life.

Your self-talk is like a sports announcer giving you a play-by-play commentary of a basketball or football game: what you are doing right... but often what you are doing wrong.

It's your choice. What self-talk message do you want to announce?



...on your self-worth

Your self-talk can either strengthen or weaken your sense of self-worth. If the information is distorted or you have developed a pattern of seeing only the negative in what you do, then you are likely to have low self-worth.

Throughout your life you have received messages about who you are from family members, friends, teachers or bosses. Other sources such as books, movies and TV shows have also influenced how you see yourself today. As a result, you have developed a

pattern of self-talk you use to evaluate yourself or situations you experience.

Building your self-worth starts with learning how to use self-talk to your advantage. Get in the habit of replacing negative self-talk with positive self-talk messages. For example, you might think, "My kid really tested my limits today. Yet I was patient and used the time-out strategy to handle her." Instead of thinking, "My kid always tests my limits, I must be a bad parent," you emphasize the positive side of how you coped with a problem.

List three negative self-talk messages that weaken your self-worth.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Write what you can say to yourself instead to strengthen your self-worth.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Increase your self-worth...

Values are your beliefs about what is right and wrong, what is important and what is not.

Acting in a way that matches your values results in inner peace and harmony. When your behavior doesn't match your values, it can lead to feelings of shame, guilt and poor self-worth.

For example, if you have established a set of positive core values and you act in a way that doesn't match your values, you end up working against yourself in

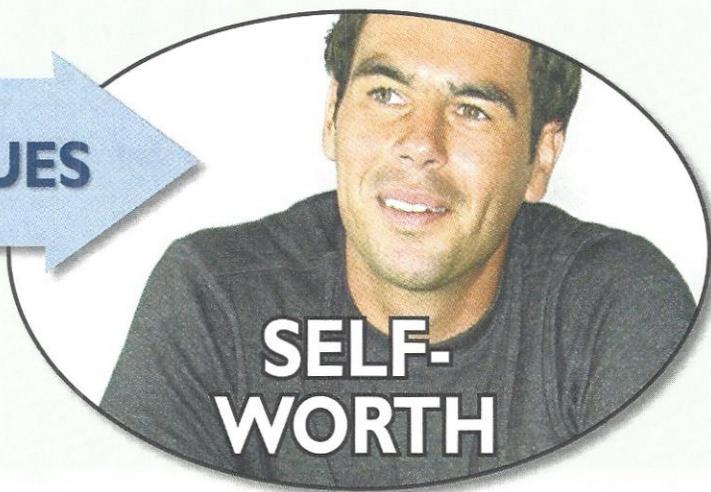
many ways. It may lead you to feel more anxious, ashamed or depressed. You may become unsure of yourself.

In order to avoid this conflict, you will want to adjust your behavior to match your system of values.

The first step is defining your values. What areas of your life do you value most? What's important to you? Once you have established your core values, you then have a base from which to make choices about how you behave.

BEHAVIOR = VALUES

The formula is simple. When your behavior is equal to your values, you are at peace with yourself. You increase your self-worth.



Read through the following list and rank the five values that are most important to you (mark them 1 through 5). Add your own values to the list.

- | | | |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--|
| _____ An exciting life | _____ Serenity | _____ Spirituality |
| _____ Money and possessions | _____ Love | _____ Security |
| _____ A job well-done | _____ Concern for the environment | _____ Respect and admiration from others |
| _____ Close family relationships | _____ Physical attractiveness | _____ Sobriety |
| _____ Friendship | _____ Sense of humor | _____ Other: _____ |
| _____ Independence | _____ Being physically fit | _____ Other: _____ |
| _____ Good health | _____ Honesty | _____ Other: _____ |

...by sticking to your values

From the values you picked on the previous page, answer the questions below for your top three values.

Value #1:

This is how I show this value:

This is what I could do differently to better show this value in the future:

Value #2:

This is how I show this value:

This is what I could do differently to better show this value in the future:

Value #3:

This is how I show this value:

This is what I could do differently to better show this value in the future:

Increase your self-worth...

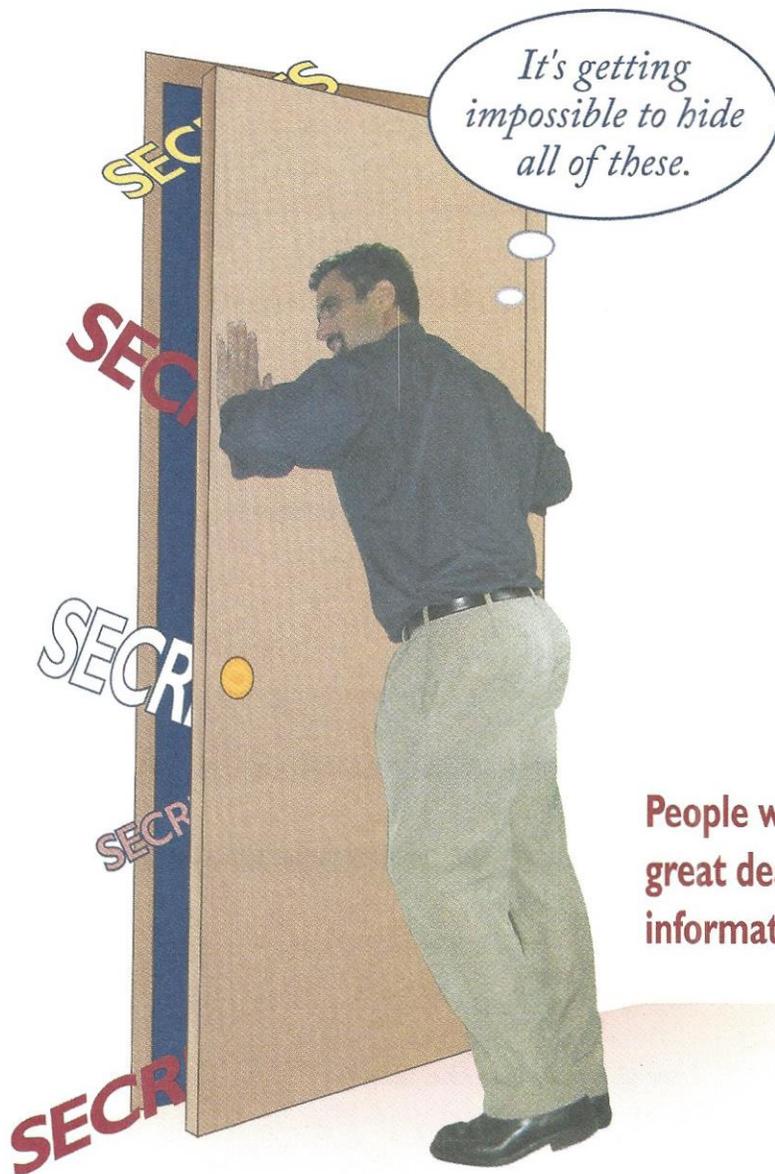
Often, individuals with alcohol or other drug problems live secret lives. They may have developed a pattern of hiding their true selves from others.

Their secrets may involve problems with the law, extramarital affairs, physical, sexual or emotional abuse, financial problems or involvement in other problem behaviors.

Secrets are powerful because they can end up controlling you. Often, the primary problem is not the content of the secret itself, but what you must do to keep it out of sight. You are forever in a defensive position with others because you are always on alert to protect your secrets.

This can result in uncomfortable feelings, which can lead to self-destructive behaviors. This is a common reason people return to alcohol or other drugs.

One of the benefits of working a healthy program of recovery is living a life free of guilt. It means speaking the truth. Exposing secrets does not mean that all things are to be shared with just anyone. Secrets become confidences you share with people you trust.



People who keep secrets spend a great deal of time and energy hiding information from others.

...by exposing secrets

Take a moment to explore the secrets you are currently keeping. There may be a secret or two you are not ready to tackle at this time. That is okay. Only respond below with information you feel comfortable with working on today. You may release other secrets as you continue in your recovery efforts.



My secret is... _____

I haven't shared this secret with anyone because...

I can share this secret with...



My secret is... _____

I haven't shared this secret with anyone because...

I can share this secret with...

Open the door to trust

Sharing your true self with others isn't all about exposing secrets. It also includes sharing something about yourself like your feelings and ideas. This helps you develop a trust with another person. It allows that person to feel comfortable sharing with you. And you may find you have had similar experiences and feelings.

Taking care of yourself...

Your body represents the outside you. It is the first thing that tells the world, "This is who I am." Taking care of yourself on the outside reflects how you see yourself on the inside.

When your focus was on alcohol or other drug use, you may have neglected routine self-care habits. Self-care can be simple tasks like making sure you're clean, feeling good about your appearance, maintaining a fit shape or

dressing in a way that helps you feel good about yourself.

Eating healthy foods, getting a good night's sleep and staying physically active are other examples of self-care.

Taking steps to improve your self-care will help you build your self-worth. Taking good care of yourself is a way of telling others around you, and also yourself, that you are a valuable person.

How do you take care of your body?

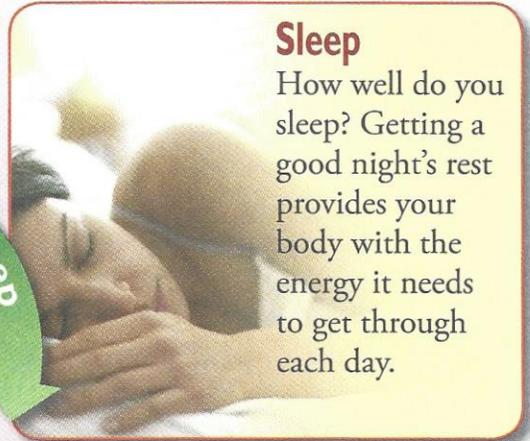
Activity

Do you get some form of regular physical activity? Being active offers a variety of benefits. You'll look better, feel better, sleep better, be more productive and have more energy.



Sleep

How well do you sleep? Getting a good night's rest provides your body with the energy it needs to get through each day.



Self-care

Activity

Sleep

Nutrition

Nutrition

Do you eat a balanced diet? Maintain a healthy body weight? Healthy eating means choosing a variety of nutritious foods and balancing them throughout the day.



...on the outside

What do you see when you look in the mirror?



"The day before I entered treatment I looked in the mirror. I saw my image snarling back at me. My eyes were glazed, my hair was all messy, my clothes were wrinkled. I just didn't care."

How would a stranger describe you?

Since beginning the program, explain how you have changed the way you take care of yourself physically.

What benefits do you hope to enjoy if you took better care of yourself on the outside?

Identify three things you can do to take better care of yourself.

1.

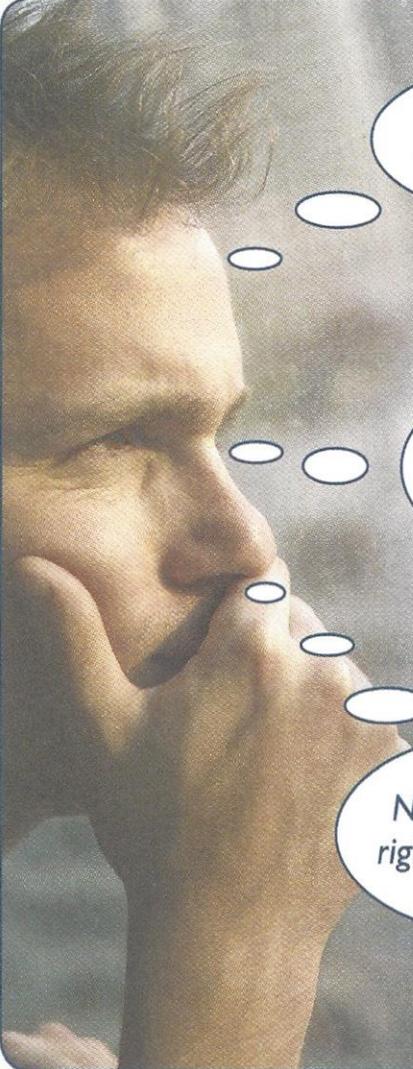
2.

3.

Set realistic expectations

Having realistic expectations goes hand-in-hand with positive self-worth. Being realistic about what you can and cannot do, as well as what is yours to handle, will play a key role in the success of your recovery.

You will want to guard against having either extremely low expectations of yourself and others, or unrealistic, "magical" expectations of yourself and others.



Magical expectations reflect an attitude of false pride or arrogance.

"I'm brighter than the rest, therefore..."
"Only my needs are important."
"The world owes me."

Realistic expectations reflect an attitude of inner worth.

"I need certain skills to achieve specific goals."
"I can do my part."
"I need to do the footwork."

Low expectations reflect an attitude of defeat.

"I can't."
"I will just fail like always. What's the use?"
"It's no use trying."

I don't need to do the footwork.

I know my strengths and limitations.

Nothing ever goes right for me anyway.

How would you describe your expectations of yourself? magical realistic low

What impact do your expectations have on how you feel about yourself?

Take your time

The ability to feel good about yourself is an important part of your recovery. Often people measure the success of their recovery by their ability to solve major life problems. They see recovery as taking place in leaps and bounds.

Recovery doesn't work that way. Major changes most often are achieved by taking many small steps over a period of time.

As you move along each day, you may fail to appreciate your progress. You may think you should be doing something more noticeable or dramatic.

Other obstacles – old friends who still use, old hangouts, new life problems – may stand in the way of your progress. Your patience and determination will be tested.

Recognize that this is normal. It is the challenge of recovery. You have the opportunity and right to celebrate each of your small steps toward healthy living. Take your time. Remind yourself that you are achieving major change with each small step you take.

Take time to identify the little steps in recovery, the little bits of success. This strengthens your sense of self and self-worth.

“Today I feel good about not using any alcohol or drugs.”

“Today I feel good asking some questions about my personal recovery.”

“Today I feel good about going for a walk and appreciating the fresh air.”

“Today I feel good about listening to what others say about my behavior.”

Identify two things you have done today that you can feel good about.

1. _____

2. _____

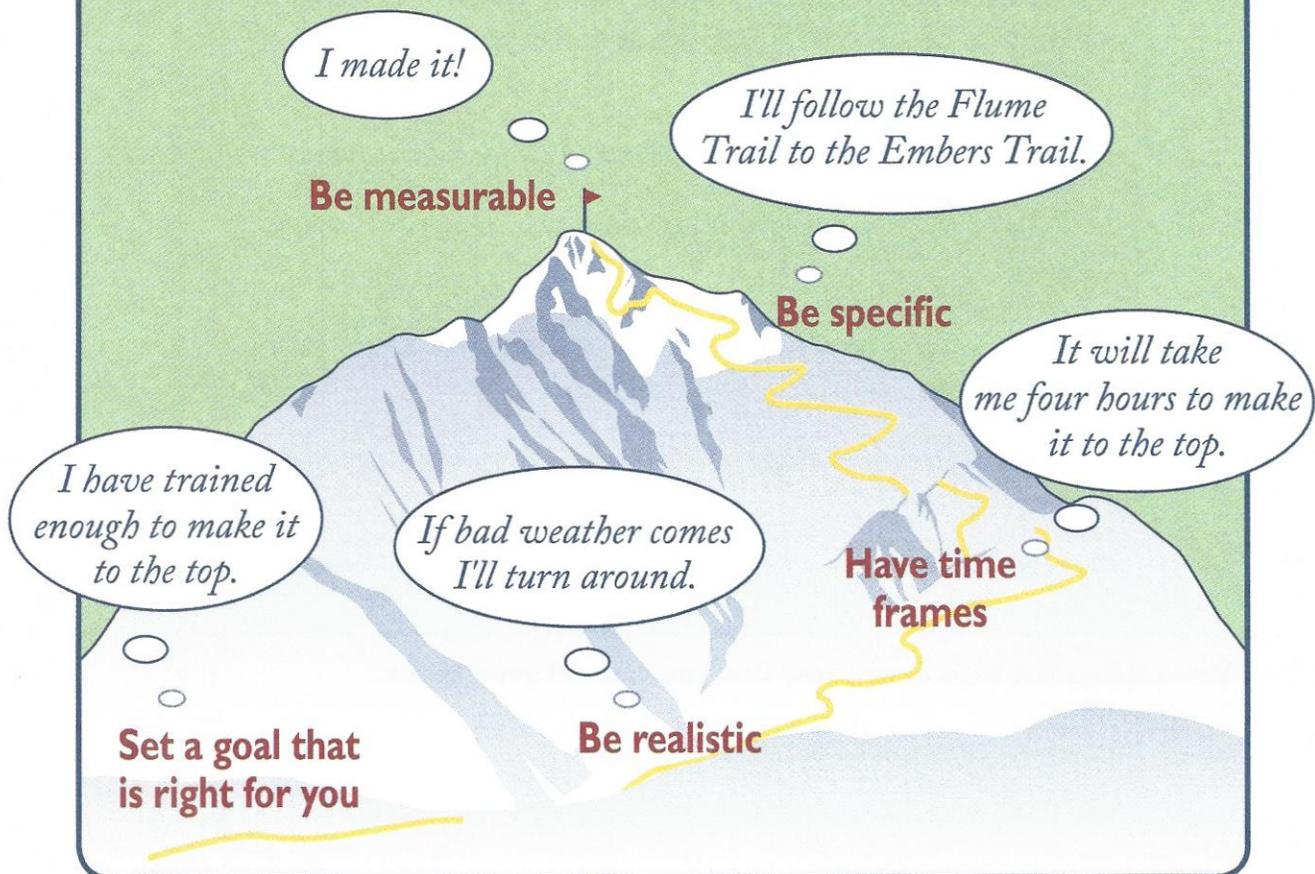
Setting goals...

Setting goals is a powerful tool in making positive life change. By setting goals, you increase your awareness of what you want and what's important to you. If your goals are clear and realistic, you feel a sense of accomplishment when you reach them. You can use positive self-talk to pat yourself on the back when you achieve a goal.

Review the information about ways to increase your self-worth and your responses in this Journal. Think about specific steps you can take to increase your self-worth. Then on the following page, set doable goals for yourself. You may want to break the larger goals into smaller ones. Each time you complete a mini goal, you build more self-confidence to reach your larger goal.

The nitty-gritty of goal setting

Setting goals gives direction. It lets you know where you are and where you want to go. When your goals are clear and reasonable, the journey toward their successful completion can add to your sense of happiness and self-worth.



...to increase your self-worth

Describe two realistic goals you wish to set for yourself to help you increase your self-worth. Explain the steps you plan to take to achieve each goal. Include what you specifically need to do to achieve this goal and a reasonable time frame for each.

“By setting goals for myself, I become more realistic about how much I can accomplish. It feels good when I can cross something off my list.”

1. My goal is... _____

I will take these steps:

1) _____

2) _____

This is what I need to do to achieve this goal: _____

Time frame: _____

2. My goal is... _____

I will take these steps:

1) _____

2) _____

This is what I need to do to achieve this goal: _____

Time frame: _____

As you complete one segment of your journey, glance back and appreciate your accomplishments and recognize the strength you possess for the path that lies ahead.

This Journal has helped me to... _____

Why Interactive Journaling[®] works

Since 1988, The Change Companies[®] has created Interactive Journals that have been used by more than 20 million people working to make life changes.

This Journal, part of the MEE (Motivational, Educational and Experiential) Series, will assist you in applying effective, evidence-based strategies to make changes in your thinking, feelings and behaviors.

Interactive Journals apply Motivational Interviewing principles, Cognitive-behavioral strategies and the Transtheoretical Model of Behavior Change to address the six dimensions of the American Society of Addiction Medicine's (ASAM) criteria and additional needs identified through the assessment process.

Research experts in behavioral change have helped create this Journal. David Mee-Lee, M.D., and William R. Miller, Ph.D., have helped to ensure this Interactive Journal has been designed and edited to best assist people in the process of making life changes.

We Can Help:

 **The Change Companies[®]**

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