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Make it happen

Whether personal or professional, we all want to do better or be better at something in our lives. When setting a goal for yourself, start by thinking about something that’s important to you that you’re ready to pursue. It can be within any dimension of well-being including career, community, financial, social, emotional or physical. You don’t have to limit yourself to diet and exercise.

Vision
Start by envisioning yourself as the new person that achieved your overall goal. What new habits did you start? What do your surroundings look like? Take ten minutes to imagine yourself achieving your goal and note how you feel when you imagine a healthier you.

Link your values
Why is this goal important to you? What need does it fulfill? Connecting your goal to things you value or need in your day to day life, like family or health, can ensure your goal becomes a part of you.

Develop your plan
Also consider developing a support team, changing your environment, setting aside time and making your goal fun. Instead of reaching for a broad goal like “get all my work done” or “exercise every day,” break this goal into smaller or shorter goals to find success quickly and build toward your vision.

Make sure your goal is SMART
- Create goals that are specific and well defined.
- Keep your goal measurable. How will you know you’re successful?
- Consider attainability and develop a goal that is possible to achieve.
- Align goals with where you want to be in one year by making them relevant and realistic.
- Focus on deadlines to make your goal timely.

Confidence level
How confident are you that you can reach your goal on a scale from 1-10? If you rank between seven and eight, how can you make it a nine? If it’s a nine or greater, are you forgetting some barriers? If your number is less than seven, it’s time to re-write your goal into simpler steps.

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Book Club
Small Move, Big Change: Using Microresolutions to Transform Your Life Permanently
by Caroline L. Arnold

Changing habits and behaviors is difficult. Nearly 90 percent of personal resolutions fail. This failure is not due to a lack of motivation or willpower. It is related to way that we set up our goals to change our behaviors.

Small Move, Big Change is a guild to the microresolution system, or small behavior changes. You will master the art of instant and sustainable self-improvement with this complete set of rules for planning behavior change and guides for transforming sleep, exercise, nutrition, clutter, relationships, finances and more.

Discussion questions
1. Which of the seven rules of microresolutions do you struggle with the most?
2. Do you feel the microresolution approach is better than other approaches you have tried in the past?
3. What are your two microresolution topics to improve your well-being?
4. Have you been practicing one or both of your microresolutions? If yes, describe your experience.
Give it a try...

Quit tips

Have you been thinking about quitting nicotine, but feel overwhelmed or don’t know where to start? Start by breaking up with your nicotine habits and find small success to help you get started on your journey.

1. Be aware of your emotional triggers to use nicotine.
2. Find new ways to interact with smoke buddies.
3. Drive a new route to work to avoid using nicotine.
4. Take one nicotine free break at work in a new location.
5. Practice self-compassion during cravings.

Exercise: Prescription for good mental health

Improved mood. Higher self-esteem. Less stress. If you’d like to feel like this, then a regular exercise routine is your prescription for improved mental health. According to the American College of Sports Medicine, a single exercise session can lower anxiety and make a person feel calmer. Those who stay active on a regular basis are 45 percent less likely to develop symptoms of depression.

Research shows that moderate or more vigorous activities like brisk walking, dancing, running or swimming, improve mental health more than light activities like shopping or walking into your office. Both cardiovascular and strength training activities can help with anxiety and depression. Longer exercise sessions have also been found to be more beneficial than shorter bouts of exercise. But currently, there is no specific guideline on length or intensity.

You can design an exercise program to help maintain and improve your mental health by starting with exercises you enjoy. Talk with your doctor before beginning an exercise program if you have been inactive for a while. Start slow and at a pace you can tolerate. Slowly work up to longer workout sessions. Including family and friends can also make exercise more enjoyable.

Choosing a fitness tracker

Utilizing a fitness tracker to track progress, connect with others, or keep motivated can be a beneficial tool in reaching your health and wellness goals. With a new wave of technology and numerous devices to choose from, it can be overwhelming when looking for the right fitness tracker for you.

Consider everything you want to monitor, including all the activities you will be doing such as biking or swimming. Next, consider how much you can afford to spend on the device along with the necessary accessories. Then, you will want to think about the design of the tracker including the size of the display screen, where the tracker is worn, and whether the device can be worn with formal or casual attire. Finally, make sure to check out the compatibility features that allow you to sync to other devices such as smartphones, tablets, or with friends.

What features are you looking for?

- Exercise [steps, minutes, distance]
- Heart rate
- Inactivity measurement
- Sleep pattern
- Food and water intake
- General habits and goals
- Alarms and reminders
- Challenge and track along with family and friends
**Activate!**

*Track your habits*

By using a simple color coded yes or no system, you can track any health behavior you set out to change in less than one minute per day with the Way of Life app. When you skip or don’t perform your new habit, you can make a note to help you understand why you are avoiding the new behavior.

The app also provides weekly trends to help you discover how often you are actually doing your healthy habits. How much sleep are you really getting? How many days did you avoid spending money at the vending machine? The Way of Life app lets you track any behavior that you want to change.

There is no limit to the type of habit you can track; it is completely customizable to your personal well-being.

If you need a nudge to do your new healthy habits, this app will also let you set reminders. Alarms, quiet notifications and custom messages are some of the other features you can use to stay on track toward your goals.

**Monthly Observances**

- Blood Donor
- Cervical Cancer
- Birth Defects
- Thyroid
- 15—King Day of Service

Find a complete list of observances at healthfinder.gov/NHO

**QUICK LINKS**

- sanfordhealthplan.com/ndpers/dakotawellnessprogram

**SET-UP A**

- mySanfordHealthPlan

**ONLINE ACCOUNT**

- sanfordhealthplan.com/memberlogin

**CONTACT US AT**

- NDPERSWellness@sanfordhealthplan.com
- (844) 742-0014

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**Chicken chili**

* Serves: 8
* Total Time: 40 min | Prep: 10 min | Cook: 30 min

**Ingredients:**
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 small yellow onion, diced
- 1 pound chicken breast, cut into bite sized pieces
- 1 tablespoon chili powder
- 1 tablespoon cumin
- 1 tablespoon oregano
- 1 tablespoon garlic powder
- 15 ounce can diced tomatoes
- 2-15 ounce cans, no added salt, great northern beans
- 1 jalapeno, diced (optional)
- 2 cups frozen corn, defrosted
- 3 cups low sodium chicken broth
- 4 ounces reduced fat cream cheese
- ¼ cup half and half

**Directions:**

Heat oil in pan, add onion. Sautee for 2 minutes. Add chicken pieces, cook about 3 minutes or until chicken turns white. Add spices to chicken, stir to coat. Add in diced tomatoes, beans, chilies and broth. Bring to a boil and simmer for 20 minutes. Turn off heat and add cream cheese and half and half. Stir until cheese is melted.

A crockpot may also be used. Place all ingredients in crockpot omitting the olive oil, cream cheese and half and half. Stir together and heat on low for 8 hours. Shred chicken and add cream cheese and half and half, serve after cheese is melted.

**Nutrition Facts:**

- Calories: 360  |  Total Fat: 10 g  |  Sodium: 270 mg  |  Total Carbohydrates: 40 g
- Dietary Fiber: 8 g  |  Total Protein: 30 g

Nutrition information compiled using nutritiondata.com