**Goal Setting Worksheet**

The purpose of this exercise is to help you understand what goes into setting and achieving your goals. You will do some intensive self-examination with regard to these goals. This is for your own benefit, and for your eyes only, unless you choose to let someone else see the results when you have finished. Feel free to be specific about things that you can only talk about with yourself. The more objective and open-hearted you are about this, the more benefits you will see as a result.

Goals and dreams give meaning to life. They enable us to see where we are going and to evaluate whether we are going where we want to go. Appropriate goals, agendas, and life-quests can contribute a remarkable level of personal satisfaction, and these are essential to feel a sense of contentment with your life. The better you know yourself, the more effectively you move through your world.

You are going to have to do some inner work to answer these questions truthfully and helpfully. Self-analysis is a tool with which you evaluate hidden areas that impinge on how you live your life. It can be difficult, raising issues you don’t really want to look at, or bringing you face-to-face with aspects of yourself you would rather deny. It can become obsessive, and needs to be held in balance, as it can get in the way of moving through your life. It can also significantly help you get where you want to go, however, and should become a skill that you know how to use when it can help. For the purposes of this exercise, you don’t need to go too deep into the dark places of your soul. You are not going to dissect yourself, but rather you should be prepared to look at yourself frankly and open-mindedly.

There are lots of various terminologies that you could use to describe these things: goals, challenges, objectives, dreams, agendas, milestones, and so on. There are three ‘levels’ that you will identify and look at, and I have chosen to describe them as *short-range objectives*, *extended goals*, and *dreams*. These terms are fairly self-explanatory, but I want you to have a clear sense of what they are meant to refer to for the purposes of this exercise in order to make this exercise more productive.

There is an *art* to setting goals. They are like medicine for the soul, and they need to be chosen carefully so they help build your strength, rather than poisoning you against yourself. Setting goals that are far out of your reach gives you the feeling, at the outset, that you have great potential and that you can do anything. However, if you are unable to make significant progress towards those goals as time goes on, you will become discouraged, and the voices inside of your head may become more negative and self-degrading. When goals are chosen wisely, they add a sense of accomplishment to life and extend your sense of what you can do. They should be out of your current reach, to teach you to push beyond your current limits, but they should be chosen so that they can be achieved with reasonable effort (that needs to be defined for each individual).

**Short-Range Objectives**

These are things that you set your sights on to accomplish in the immediate future – such as what you set out to accomplish today or this week. These goals follow from a clear set of longer-range objectives – making an offer on your first deal, for example, or reaching out to other students in an effort to network and develop those relationships that will be important to you. These are concrete steps you set out for yourself that will make direct progress toward your extended goals.

When you set these goals, they should be worded in a way that specifically details the successful accomplishment of your goal. Vague statements, such as ‘I want to learn more about real estate,’ don’t enable you to move forward clearly, whereas ‘I want to read the first 4 chapters of my Leveraging Real Estate - Leveraging Real Estate - Cash at Closing Blueprint and complete all related assignments’ gives you the ability to measure clearly whether you have achieved your goal. This is called having a measurable outcome.

**Extended Goals**

These are larger goals which define where you are heading. ‘I want to submit my first offer’ is an example of one of these extended goals. They are characterized by being clear and have measurable outcomes. They can be extended in the sense that they pertain to something you cannot achieve until later (I want to purchase my first investment property within the next 6 months), or they may be extended in the sense that they are unachievable now, but will be at some point in the future (I want to buy my first apartment building within 18 months).

**Dreams**

Dreams are, well, *dreams*. These are things that make your heart jump in response – for one person it might be financial freedom, for another it might be qualifying for fame and fortune. Generally, dreams have some element of achievability to them, but they are more about who you are inside than what you are truly trying to make happen. Dreams also influence your choices of extended goals and color the way you look at the world around you. They are part of having a vision for life and should be nourished and given room to grow. It’s easy to let the kind of self-analysis that helps you analyze goals and dreams become overly introspective, but it’s equally easy to let it drop out of the picture altogether. This can significantly weaken your ability to dream and to reach for goals.

**Identifying your goals:**

We will start in the middle. Short-range objectives depend on clearly articulated goals, and dreams are less practical, generally, than goals – so we will start with goals.

**List your four most important investment goals – these should be framed in phrases like ‘I will do \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ by such-and-such date,’ or ‘I want to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_by \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ .’**

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**What are the most important goals in other areas of your life?**

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**Do any of these goals conflict with each other?**

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**Do any of these goals help each other out?**

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**Pick your most important investment goal – your heart’s strongest desire. Write it out below.**

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**Answer the following questions about that goal:**

1. How close to, or far from, achieving this goal are you (leaving time considerations out of the picture for now)? *In other words, is it within easy reach? Is it way out of reach? Does it depend upon a whole bunch of other factors you can’t control?*

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2. Are you making clear and steady progress toward this goal in your day-to-day activities? In what ways does that need to improve? (As this exercise is to help you increase your effectiveness in achieving your goals, do not be *too* kind to yourself on this question. Look seriously at yourself and examine where you are effective and where you are not. In particular, as you think about this question, tune your awareness to those things that hold you back from making forward progress – usually they are elements inside yourself… *fear of failure, fear of success, self-doubt,* and so on, are typical obstructive patterns).

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3. What is your biggest reason for wanting to achieve this goal? (Give this some serious thought. As you write out answers to this, ask the same question about each thing you write until you are at the heart of why you want to achieve the goal).

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4. What inner conflicts do you sense as you envision truly going after this goal? (Is there self-doubt? What is it that you doubt? Is there fear? What is it that you are most afraid of? Why do you think these doubts or fears, or whatever you identified, are there? What do you feel when you look at them? What do they give back to you? What benefit do you derive from them?)

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5. In light of your answers to that last question, what is the biggest obstacle that holds you back from achieving this goal? Give this detailed thought – often these things are like living creatures and will try to escape detection. It may be difficult to force yourself to be clear about this area, but be as detailed as you can.

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6. Is there a way of dismantling this obstacle – putting it aside, giving it permission to go somewhere else in your life for a little while – or breaking it into smaller, manageable pieces?

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7. If all the big obstacles were cleared out of the way, how would your approach to achieving this goal be different?

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8. If, or when, you accomplish this goal, how will you change? What will it bring to your life? How will it change your perception of yourself and the world around you?

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**Setting new objectives**

Imagine that nothing in your inner self held you back any longer from achieving the goal you worked on above. Write out four short-term goals that you would set out to accomplish over the next two weeks. Be sure to frame the goals as having measurable outcomes.

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After writing these out, write down how it felt to articulate these objectives. If you sensed nervousness, identify what made you feel nervous. If you felt excited, be specific about what that excitement was about, etc.

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***Each time you rethink a long-range goal, re-evaluate the objectives related to it, and set a few short-range objectives that will set you immediately on the road of achieving your new goal.***

**Dreams**

It is a wonderful thing to have a clear idea what you dream of; but *why* you dream of that particular thing is perhaps one of the most important things you can discover about yourself.

**Write out a short list of dreams that you envision for your life. Do not be self-conscious … this is for your eyes only. Try to let your mind go without judging what it comes up with.**

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Usually, dreams are about what we need to feel good about ourselves. They can tell us a lot about the motivating forces in our lives. Sometimes, in looking at these motivations, we discover that they are not really what we want in our lives, and we find other ways to achieve what those dreams are reaching for.

Ask yourself some questions about *why* you are dreaming these dreams. (For example, if you dream about owning several apartment complexes, do you do so because you want the recognition that comes with success? What would that recognition bring for you? Or is it perhaps about proving to someone – maybe your spouse? – that you *are* in fact good enough? How does it make you feel to envision that dream made into a reality?)

*For some people, this is an extremely difficult exercise – either they don’t want to look at their motivations that closely, or they find themselves unhappy with what they see. The great rule of this exercise is BE KIND TO YOURSELF IN THIS PROCESS. There is nothing gained in harsh self-criticism. If you find you don’t really like the idea of being motivated by something you find (power? ego? fame?), ask yourself if that really is the bottom line for you, or is that motivating factor that you don’t like simply the façade of some deeper need, as they so often are. There is nothing wrong with having needs, being insecure or self-centered, or feeling helpless. They are all part of being a whole human being. When you find something that makes you uncomfortable, it is often only because you have not yet found what connects that thing to your deepest heart. Fear of failure may simply be a deep desire to make the world a better place.*

**Now: Take your most private courage in hand, and write out your deepest dream. What is at stake for you in this dream? What do you want or need from it? If you don’t make this dream come true, is there some way to fulfill that need in another way? If this dream were made reality, would you change? In what way?**

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***Onward***

There is one more step in this process which you can begin to undertake. It is one which will be ‘under construction’ for much of your life, but the process itself is a journey with great impact.

You have looked at a number of pieces of your own inner nature, and you have evaluated goals in terms of, not only what you want to achieve, but also *why* you want to achieve those particular goals. You now have some of the tools you need to define your life philosophy. When you are able to articulate some form of this, you have a clarity about who you are in the world that will help you make decisions throughout your life.

***Is there anything which seems to tie all these dreams and goals together?***

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***If you were to live well and gracefully for a hundred years, in looking back on your life, what would you like to be able to say was your greatest gift to the world around you?***

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**Now that the goals are set, please begin Getting Ready Chapter 2.**