

# 5 Steps for Personal Development



Many people want to commit to personal growth, but aren't sure where to begin. Experience the benefits of personal development by starting with these five steps.

**1. Set goals.** The first step to living the life you want is setting goals for each part of your life; that is, your health, career, finances, spirituality and family. Setting separate goals in each area of your life allows you to prioritize what you'd like to achieve so you can increase your chances of doing so.

Many people set goals, but fail to achieve them because they're vague. To increase your chances of achieving your goals, make sure they're **SMART**:

**S – Specific.** If you want to lose weight, specify how much. If your goal is to save money, specify how much money you would like to have in your savings account.

**M – Measurable.** The easier it is to track your progress, the better chance you have of attaining your goal. Tracking also makes it less difficult to determine if extra effort is in order, in case you experience a setback or are not seeing the progress you desire.

**A – Achievable.** Although you should aim high, make sure your goals are still achievable and action-oriented.

**R – Realistic in time and skill.** While some goals are achievable, they may not be realistic right now. For example, you may still be physically capable of running a marathon, but if you currently struggle to run a 5K, a marathon may be a long-term goal. Running a 10K this year may be a more realistic goal, and will help you build up to running a marathon in the future.

**T – Time-based.** Setting a deadline will help you remain focused and ensure you stay on track to reach your goals.

**2. Create an action plan.** Once you've set goals and written them down, create an action plan to ensure you achieve them. What activities do you need to do to achieve your goal? If you have a long-term goal, break it into mid- and short-term goals to act as milestones you achieve along the way. Remember to track your progress to stay on the path to success.

**3. Make time for growth activities.** Although you may be busy in your daily life, it's vital to make time for personal growth, such as reading, learning, listening to podcasts, etc. Many people wake up 15 minutes earlier to read or journal before the rest of the house wakes up. Others block out time during their day or before they go to sleep at night. Whenever you choose to do them, make sure to do them daily.

**4. Adopt a positive mindset.** Optimists are more likely to succeed than their pessimistic counterparts. Fill your head with positive information and surround yourself with positive people. Before long, you'll enjoy a sunnier disposition and the benefits that come with it.

**5. Keep a journal.** Journaling allows you to keep a record of your progress, from the challenges and setbacks you may face, to your triumphs and everything in-between. Writing regularly provides an account of your journey toward personal growth, affording you the opportunity to reflect on your entries and maintain perspective of your success.