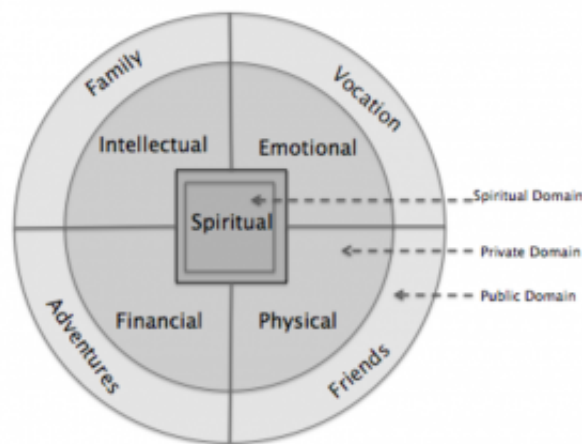


6 Benefits of Personal Goal Setting

Over the last couple of years I've stumbled upon a nonlinear approach to personal goal setting that has greatly impacted my life for the better by changing my behavior, and thus transforming my life. The simple drawing below represents not only how I set my goals, but how I tackle them. They are arranged in spiritual, personal, and public domains.



- My Spiritual Domain – This first and inner most domain ultimately answers the question, “Why do I exist?” I believe this is the question we have to answer before we can answer any other. In this domain I don’t set specific goals; however, I do seek to answer the *Five Irreducible Questions of Leadership* we use at [Auxano](#) in organizational consulting that include:

1. What am I doing
2. Why am I doing it?
3. How am I doing it?
4. When am I successful?
5. Where is God taking me?

Please note this is not a *life planning* process. If you are interested in a *life planning* process, you will want to check out Will Mancini and David Rhodes’ personal vision and life planning process at [LifeYounique](#). I have confidence in both of these men and am a huge fan of their process.

- My Personal Domain – This domain creates balance and momentum for life. We have to lead ourselves before we can lead others. We must bring mastery over these goals before we can master others. Because of this, I set four goals around four areas that include personal, intellectual, emotional, and financial.
- My Public Domain – This domain allows you to create greater meaning in life by adding value to those around you. It’s the playing field where we live our lives. I include family,

friends, vocation, and adventures in this domain.

I chose these three domains and eight areas because it's how I view my whole life. While they are not exclusive to me, they are unique to me. You may choose to define your domains in a different way and have eight very similar or different areas within these domains. At the same time, I do think each of these domains and areas are important to each one of us as we pursue living a whole and fully integrated life. My spiritual anchor for this holistic and integrated approach to goal setting is the teachings of Jesus. In John 10:10 he declared, "The thief comes to still, kill, and destroy your life. I have come that you might experience life to the full."

While my napkin drawing is the original way I write my goals, I also borrowed from Michael Hyatt's and Daniel Harkavy's in *Living Forward: A Proven Plan to Stop Drifting and Get the Life You Want*. Here's the four-step process I use.

1. Begin with a purpose statement for each area. The purpose statement is simply a summary of what it means to win in each area.
2. Write a vision for each area. This consists of three to four sentences describing the preferred future for that specific area within the context of a specific period of time. I typically think in terms of where I want to be in the next five years.
3. Perform an honest assessment of how you are doing in each specific area. I include both the things I'm doing well and the things I'm struggling with. This section is made up of four or five very focused bullets.
4. Finally, set behavioral specific goals based on where you want to be. I'm typically thinking through what I want to accomplish over the next 12 months.

The biggest benefit from this approach to goal setting is, what I believe to be, the holistic and integrated nature of it. Here's what I'm learning.

1. The more clarity I have in my spiritual domain, the clearer my goals are.
2. I must master my personal domain before I can master my public domain.
3. Getting stuck in one area can impact all the other areas in a negative way.
4. Focusing on mastering one area at a time builds momentum and synergy for accomplishing my goals in all of the areas, especially when we focus on our personal domains before our public domains.
5. Focusing on an integrated approach to goal setting creates a whole and healthier me.
6. The more often I read and reflect on my goals, the more they become a normal part of my everyday life.

To help, I'm including a sample of my goal setting for one of the eight areas of my life. You will note this process is robust and involves an investment of your time and hard work to complete, but it's well worth it.

Physical

Purpose Statement:

My purpose is to live a physically optimal life and to die healthy.

Envisioned Future:

Physically, I am at the top of my game. My body-to-fat ratio is at 14%. I am in the top 100 worldwide, in my age category, in Crossfit. I am disciplined when it comes to exercise, diet, and rest. I have an abundance of energy to do what's important to me. I am setting an example of fitness for those around me.

Current reality:

- I am committed to exercising 5 days a week. However, my work schedule and travel hinder me from working out the way I desire to work out.
- I am 10 pounds heavier than what I believe to be my preferred weight.
- I eat clean eighty percent of the time, but tend to snack at night.
- I have a lot of energy and feel really good most of the time, but my travel, when at its peak, tears me down.
- I am growing in my understanding of exercise, rest, and nutrition.

Specific Commitments:

- I will exercise at least five times a week.
- I will replace all unhealthy snacking in the evening with healthy snacks.
- I will stick to a Paleo Diet on and off the road.
- I will limit my cheat meals to once a week.
- I will continue to train and compete at a high level in Crossfit.

> [Read more from David.](#)