

Go for your goals: Working out what you really *really* want

Take the first step in achieving the future you want for yourself by identifying your goals. To do this, you need to think carefully about your answer to this question:

If you could choose the life you will be living three years from now, what would it be like?

Now describe this life. Put your wishes down in writing or, if it is easier, record your thoughts on tape. But remember:

- The more **detail** you add to your description of your life three years from now, the more likely you are to achieve your goals for it. So make your description **vivid** and **appealing**. If your goals aren't magnetic, you're not going to see the point of making changes in your life. Involve your senses in creating your description.
e.g. "Living in a home of my own" is too vague. Where would that home be? What features would it have? How many rooms? A garden? What furniture?
- Your description needs to be **comprehensive** and **balanced**—so don't leave any areas of your life out. As you think about your life, you might find it helpful to use the mnemonic **SPICE**, as described below. You'll be returning to your goals from time to time, and fine-tuning them frequently and if you associate the word SPICE with them, you'll be unlikely to leave any aspects of your life out!

Socially	How would you like your relations with other people (with family, friends, colleagues) to have improved? What kind of things would you like people to say about you if they were asked about you as a friend or as a colleague?
Physically	Now think about your physical fitness, appearance and well-being. How would you like to have changed in this aspect of your life?
Intellectually	Now what about you as a learner or a thinker? Are there tasks or skills that are difficult for you to perform now, that you would like to have mastered? Are there skills that you wish you had, but have not had the opportunity to acquire? Are there courses you would like to take?
Career-wise	What would you like to be doing three years from now, either in your career or in advancing your career? Would you like to have changed jobs, taken courses, been promoted? Solvency is always desirable and tends to be a by-product of the work you do, so Cash Flow comes in here too! Will you have reduced a debt? Increased your income? (By how much?) Made investments?
Emotionally	Do you hope you will have matured emotionally three years from now? Are there emotions which hold you back that you would like to have ditched by then? How would you like to feel within yourself? How would you like to feel about life in general? Include here, also, any enriching experiences (including travel) that you would like to have had.

Some of my clients find it helpful to take the **SPICE** exercise further. Something that will help you pinpoint the essence of what you want, is to think of three words that you'd like people to associate with you.

Here's one person's example:

Three words

S	Warm, friendly, GSOH
P	Fit, energetic, zestful
I	Creative; innovative; supportive
C	Solvent; comfortable; achieving
E	Calm, resourceful, loving

If you want to try this for yourself, here are some prompts:

Socially	Think of three words that you would like people to use to describe you socially.
Physically	Think of three words that you would like people to use to describe your health and physical fitness.
Intellectually	Think of three words you would like people to use to describe you as a person with knowledge or with particular talents or skills.
Career-wise	Think of three words that you would like people to use when they describe you as an employer, a colleague or an employee.
Emotionally	Think of three qualities that you would like people to use when they describe your temperament.

Find this sort of thing difficult? Then fast track like this....

This will only take three minutes because you're going to set a kitchen timer. No timer? Then use your mobile phone or ask someone to watch a watch! When you've got the timer set up, get hold of paper and a pen, preferably a fountain pen. (I'm slightly serious here, so humour me. Even a pencil beats a ballpoint for magic.)

Looks like an ordinary pen, does it? For the purpose of this exercise, let me tell you it's really a magic pen. Write believing that whatever you write with it, will come true, but you have only three minutes before the ink runs out. Don't waste a moment. Write (or draw) what you would like to experience or achieve in your life over the next five years. Stop after three minutes.