

*"I will prepare  
and some day my chance will come."*  
~Abraham Lincoln



Topic: **Setting goals and creating realistic action steps to reach your goals.**

## Hopeful Goals

The next hope tool we will learn is the importance of setting goals and ways we can enjoy the journey as we move closer to our goals.

Goals are tools for having hope because they give us something to look forward to and encourage us to work toward our future. We can enjoy the steps we take to get there and feel a sense of accomplishment along the way. Our goals may change over time and the good news is you can always set new ones.

To use goals as hope tools, we must set *realistic* goals.

We can make sure our goals are realistic by outlining the specific action steps we must do to help ourselves move forward toward that goal. **Action steps are pathways that help take us to our goal.** With each step, we can feel a sense of fulfillment and enjoy each success along the way.

For example, if someone wants to run a marathon, there are specific steps they can take now and soon to get to that goal. If their goal is to practice every day, this might not be realistic. This individual also has work and household responsibilities to complete. By knowing that they have certain obligations, they can plan around these commitments when they map out their pathways. It might be better to choose to practice three days instead of five days. Setting a realistic action step makes that goal attainable.

It is okay to set small goals and work toward them slowly. Every goal you achieve helps you stay hopeful. Setting big goals is exciting, but accomplishing the steps along the way is just as important. **Celebrate each step.**

You can set goals around anything that you want to do, to continue to have hope.

**"It doesn't matter how slow you go as long as you don't stop." Unknown**

## Story

### Kendra's Realistic Goals

Kendra always dreamed of running in the Olympics, but Kendra had never run a single race.

One day, Kendra's older sister asked what Kendra wanted to do one day.

"Be an Olympic runner," Kendra told her.

"Well, have you ever run even a mile?" her sister asked.

"No," Kendra responded, feeling defeated.

"I heard that the community center in town has a running club for high school students on the weekends. What do you think about you and me going over there one Saturday?" her sister proposed. "Why don't we start small, Kendra? Let's get you running half a mile, then one mile, and then if that goes well, maybe we can make it a goal for you to go out for the cross-country team next year. Let's take it one step at a time and worry about the Olympics in a few years."

The plan her sister proposed gave Kendra hope. She had established concrete action steps that were attainable and that she could begin immediately.

Kendra created additional pathways to her goal by continuing to make new and realistic action steps. By the time she was in 10th grade, Kendra was able to run 10 miles.

Having running goals gave Kendra hope. The goals were something Kendra looked forward to, could plan on, and were ones she felt successful about achieving. These goals are an important part of Kendra's hope foundation.

## Hope Exercise

Let's see how you did with Hopeful Goals and Pathways. Check out a few questions below, and answer to the best of your ability. Once you have answered correctly, you will be able to move on!

1. In order to use goals as hope tools, we must set
  - a. high goals
  - b. many goals
  - c. realistic goals

2. Action steps are \_\_\_\_\_ that help take us to our goal.

- a. Pathways
- b. Shortcuts
- c. Lists

3. With each action step we take, we can feel a sense of fulfillment and enjoy each success along the way.

- a. True
- b. False

4. Setting small goals is not necessary.

- a. True
- b. False

## Things to Think About

Take a moment to answer the following questions for yourself. Keep your responses in a safe place, as a reminder of what goals you have and what action steps you will take to reach them. Feel free to use your [Hope Sunflower Worksheet](#).

Write down a goal you would like to reach.

List the action steps you need to take to reach your goal.