

■ The Mastery of Self – Week 8

Goal Setting

Chapter Summary – Goal Setting from a Place of Self-Love

In Chapter 8, *Goal Setting*, Don Miguel Ruiz Jr. redefines how we approach goals by inviting us to examine the intention behind them. Rather than treating goals as ladders we must climb to prove our worth, he urges us to root them in **unconditional self-love**, where they become acts of authentic expression rather than attempts to fill inner voids.

Goals as Growth, Not Validation

Ruiz highlights how many of us pursue goals driven by self-criticism or societal pressure—what he frames as the **Parasite's motivation**—which often leads to guilt and disappointment if we fall short.

Conversely, **Ally-rooted goals** emerge from joyful self-expression and alignment with our deeper values. They carry energy rather than weight, making the journey itself nourishing, regardless of the outcome.

Breaking the Cycle of Conditional Self-Worth

Reflecting on childhood patterns, Ruiz shows how achievements often became measures of worth—what he calls **self-domestication**. We learn to tie happiness to external validation, rather than embracing ourselves as already whole.

Practices for Conscious Goal Setting

Ruiz offers practical tools:

- Grounding practices and affirmations to reclaim self-worth when negative self-talk creeps in.
- Visualization techniques, done with gratitude, to help manifest goals while savoring the process itself.

These aren't just strategies—they're invitations to align your intentions with who you truly are, anchoring progress in love rather than lack.

Reflection Questions

- When you set goals, do they come from a place of self-love or self-judgment?
- How might your motivation shift if you released the need to prove yourself?
- What's a goal you've set before—how did it feel when it was rooted in compassion versus fear?
- What would an Ally-inspired goal look like in your life right now?

Journal Prompts

- A goal that truly lights me up is...
- I feel pressure when I set goals because...
- I'd like to pursue goals anchored in joy, not insecurity. One way to start is...
- If I were to celebrate progress regardless of outcome, I could begin by...