

# Goals, Values, Thoughts and Motivation

The Knox Employment Entry Program adapted some great teachings from Dr. Russ Harris' *The Happiness Trap* to help you stay on track, achieve goals and stay motivated while at the same time possibly facing rejection and frustration. The great thing about this four-page handout is you can adapt these techniques to help with any area of your life should you choose to do so.

There is no doubt that looking for work can be difficult. Many people can find themselves frustrated, anxious, worried and often experience negative thoughts. The good news? This is normal.



You may have been told at some point “think positive thoughts” or “stop thinking negative thoughts” but the problem is, people can’t control thoughts! A more effective strategy is to make room for them and allow them to come and go. A great visual to understand this concept of allowing them is to imagine your hands as being your thoughts: If you place your hands over your eyes, it’s impossible to see anything else but if you make some space by moving them away from eyes or even better, moving your hands to your side, it’s easier to move forward to take positive actions to achieve what you want to. Notice that by putting your hands to the side, you aren’t getting rid of them, you’re allowing them to be there but they aren’t blocking you from anything. Remember, it’s not possible to control thoughts but you are always in control of the actions you choose to take.



## Both GOALS and VALUES are important in what you set to accomplish!

**Goals** are desired results that people set out to achieve. You can “check” them off your to-do list once they are achieved.

(Example: buy a Tesla, lose five pounds, or quit smoking)

**Values** are your deepest desires for how you want to be. Values are not about what you want to get or achieve; they are about how you want to behave or act on an ongoing basis; how you want to treat yourself, others and the world around you. Values are like a compass, they can guide you and they are instantly accessible!

(Example: be an adventurous person, be a great example for children or a person who constantly self-develops their skills/knowledge)



Your **actions, thoughts** and **choices** will dictate if you are moving TOWARD or AWAY from your goals and/or your values. The following diagram will help clarify **TOWARD MOVES** and **AWAY MOVES**.

# WHAT'S YOUR CHOICE?

MAXIMIZE YOUR SUCCESS BY BEING SELF-AWARE: PAYING ATTENTION TO YOUR THOUGHTS, ACTIONS & CHOICES.

## Ineffective actions

- Procrastinate
- Complain
- "Get lost" online
- "Party"
- Hang out with negative people
- Make excuses
- Take a nap
- Self-medicate
- Watch TV

# VERSUS

## Effective actions

- Research
- Implement KEE tips
- Apply in person/online
- Set up online job accounts
- Ask friends/family for leads
- Contact former employers
- Network
- Follow-up
- Improve your skills

## Helpful thoughts

- "I can do it."
- "I've done it before."
- "I'll do my best."

## Unhelpful thoughts

- "I'll fail."
- "No good jobs."
- "I'll try."
- "I can't do it."

These can get or keep you "stuck" and make things worse.

**TOWARD MOVES**

**GOAL**

**AWAY MOVES**

These will help you achieve goals, live your values & be the person you want to be.



Having goals are important but many people don't know the proper steps to take to actually achieve them. This can make people frustrated with the experience and often give up.

The following steps will help increase the chances of you achieving anything you want to.



The first thing you want to do is **decide the goal** you want to achieve.

Next, you will want to take the time to **think about the benefits** to achieving this goal. *What do you expect the positive outcomes to be? What will it feel like to accomplish this? For example: have more money, not have to answer to anyone, feel good, etc.*

### Write out a S.M.A.R.T. Goal!

**S = Be Specific.** What exactly needs to be accomplished? What steps will you need to take? Do not be vague! For example: "I'm going to get a job" is vague! Instead: I'm going to attain a job in customer service by applying at five places a day (list places) and follow-up with a minimum of two employers (list places).

**M = Make it Measurable** so you know when you've accomplished it. For example: I'm going to apply at five places per day in person (list places)

**A = Achievable.** On a scale of 1-10, how achievable is this goal?  
10 = this is totally achievable and I'll definitely do it!  
0 = this is totally unrealistic, I'll never do it.  
You goals should be at least a 7 on this scale. If you can't score a 7 then change the goal by making it smaller and easier to score at least a 7.

**R = Realistic.** Are you applying for jobs that you have the qualifications for? Are you ready both physically and mentally to work there? Are you able to get to that location? Do you have yourself set up for success? If not, you need to make a more realistic goal that fits your life situation. The new goal might be to find the missing resources to succeed (for example: finish KEE modules, update resume, get childcare in place, etc.).

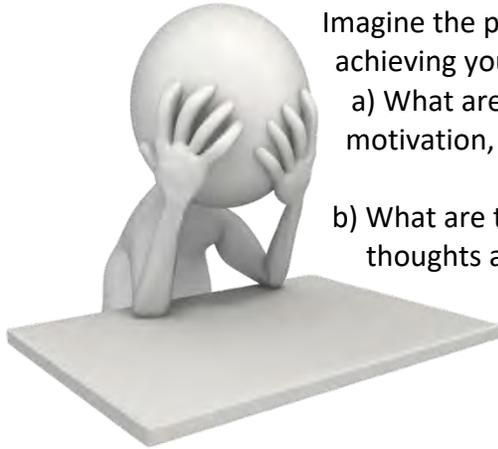
**T = Time-framed** - Put a specific time frame on the goal: specify the day, date and time that you will take the proposed actions.



One more step! Do you have someone supportive in your life that you can share this goal with? **Make a commitment** to them that you will do it. If you don't have anyone, make a commitment to yourself.

## OVERCOMING FRUSTRATIONS, OBSTACLES & REJECTION

### It's Good To Prepare For Obstacles So You Can Overcome Them



Imagine the potential difficulties and obstacles that might stand in the way of you achieving your goals, and plan for how you will deal with them if they arise. Consider:

a) What are the possible internal difficulties (difficult thoughts and feelings, such as low motivation, self-doubt, anger, hopelessness, insecurity, anxiety, etc.)?

b) What are the possible external difficulties (things aside from thoughts and feelings that might stop you)?

Examples: lack of transportation, lack of time, lack of skills, personal problems



What can you do to overcome these obstacles should they arise?  
Can you take steps now so they won't be a problem?

### It's inevitable that you will not get a job offer everywhere that you apply at, so:

- Don't be hard on yourself! This is part of looking for work.
- Do your best not to get lost in negative thoughts, make room for those thoughts and allow them to be there.
- To ease frustration, worry, anxiety and other negative thoughts and feelings, many people have success practicing Mindfulness. You can find free resources at your local library, YouTube and the Internet.
- Be kind to yourself, you're stepping out of a comfort zone and putting yourself out there! You're making "Toward Moves" and you should be proud of yourself. Good for you for doing this!
- Take some time and think what it is that you learn from this situation. What do you think went wrong? Can you do something better or do something different?
- A way to help get over any negative feelings or frustration is to direct your attention to your next goal. Take some time to think "**Where to next**"? Then take Toward Moves (perhaps amended ones) to achieve them.



### TIP: If you find yourself procrastinating – practice positive procrastination!

For example: If you just don't have it in you to go out and look for work today, tweak your resume or apply online or do something you've been putting off that needs to get done instead (like taxes or sending an update to your KEE coach).

**WARNING:** Do not wait to feel "motivated" or have the "willpower" or "discipline" before you start taking steps to achieving your goals. Those are terms other people use to describe someone after they do something. The best way step out of the comfort zone is to accept the discomfort and just do it!