

SANE AUSTRALIA

SANE Australia Online Peer Group Chat

Date: 02/06/2022

Title: Setting Goals

Description: For many of us, the impacts of Covid have meant that it has become harder to make plans for the future. But having goals and being able to look forward to things in life is important for wellbeing and recovery. Whether you're getting through each day or thinking of longer term goals, join this discussion to talk about – within the scope of what we can control – setting goals for our recoveries and our lives.

**Girasole
(Peer
Worker)**

Hi everyone! First, we'd like to acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the various lands we are all joining this event from. We pay deep respect to the Elders of those Countries, past and present, and we further extend that respect to any Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander people joining this group tonight.

Welcome everyone to today's Peer Group Chat talking about Setting Goals. We really value your thoughts on how these groups go, so we will send a link to a short survey at the end of this event for you to complete. While this survey is optional, it is a chance to provide feedback for us to improve our services. In case you might need to leave part way through the event, you can find the survey here now: https://sane.au1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_5uUF0sHJRKQ6wyW

**Girasole
(Peer
Worker)**

Tonight, Peer Support Workers @LittleSteps and @Girasole will be facilitating a discussion around the topic of Setting goals. Whether you have lived experience of complex mental health issues, you care for someone who does, or both, setting goals can sometimes be important to everyone's recovery and wellbeing.

We'll be moving through a number of discussion questions tonight, and it's entirely up to you how much or how little you are comfortable with sharing.

Some of the conversation may be heavy in nature as we talk about the successes and hurdles of goal setting. @Oshun_Blu, who moderates on the SANE Forums, is working behind the scenes to ensure our safety. If you're having any technical difficulties, please see our FAQ (<https://www.sane.org/peer-support/peer-group-chat/chat-faqs#what-if-i-am-having-a-tough-time-and-need-immediate-support>) or message @Oshun_Blu.

We're looking forward to creating a space where we can reflect and learn together and expand our ideas of Setting Goals.

Girasole
(Peer
Worker)

We will be starting the discussion shortly, and will just allow a bit more time for people to log on and join 🙏

Oshun_Blu
(Moderator)

Hey @the magician! Good to see you tonight!

LittleSteps
(PSW)

Hello @the magician :)

the
magician

hi people

Oshun_Blu
(Moderator)

Am very keen to hear your thoughts & experiences with goals and the SMART model, @the magician! Especially after the cool insights you shared last week :)

the
magician

oh dear the pressure

Oshun_Blu
(Moderator)

Oh no! No pressure at all, you're always welcome to share as much or as little as what is safe for you with no expectation to push beyond that

the
magician

haha

the
magician

who else is here tonight?

Girasole
(Peer
Worker)

You're the first participant here @the magician :) I'm here as well co-facilitating the event- we might get a start shortly and anyone else who joins can always catch up on the question/s :)

**Girasole
(Peer
Worker)**

Ok, let's start! First question for tonight: What are your goals? Are there any particular goals that you are working towards that you feel comfortable sharing tonight?

Oshun_Blu
(Moderator)

My goals have become somewhat more flexible these days, by which I mean that I've kinda shifted away from the mindset of viewing my goals as a must-have/to-do list of achievements and have instead leaned into the themes present within my goals so that I can look at them from a place of accessibility, intentionality and novelty. Without this I can become a bit unbalanced as my sole focus becomes the goal that happens to be in front of me

LittleSteps
(PSW)

I am in a place in my recovery where I have a few goals I am working towards – both long and short term. I am working towards a university degree. Other goals of mine relate to my health and relationships/friendships.

the
magician

short term goals what I'm working on at the moment both life and then health. a few stepping stones and then where I want to end up. including goals of symptom free 3months so i can work and be in a type of remission. i get stuck sometimes being a little overwhelmed which can be worked on with smart goals too. sounds like my life is goals! i just want to get the best out of the journey.

Oshun_Blu
(Moderator)

"sounds like my life is goals!" I love that. Life is a constant work in progress

LittleSteps
(PSW)

Hello @Snowie! :D Welcome!

Oshun_Blu
(Moderator)

Hey @Snowie :) Good to be here with you tonight!

**Girasole
(Peer
Worker)**

Q2: Has your ability to make goals and plan ahead been impacted by covid? Or have you faced other barriers? How has this left you feeling?

the
magician

my goals for this year are to complete my novel draft and design portfolio. to volunteer for short skilled penalty rates work. and be symptom free that means no voices controlled by tablets and leisure therapies and to be excited by my fears each day to get out of bed. not sleep.

Snowie

My goals vary depending on my mental health. Sometimes they are long term goals and other times they are short term goals, like just getting through the day as safely as possible. I try not to make any long term goals as I just feel bad when I don't reach them.

the
magician

the impact of covid was to give me a whole heap of time to catch up on things that needed doing in my rehabilitation. i was very busy. coming out of it im having small steps to not experience reentry anxiety.

Snowie

I think covid has impacted my goals a lot. There are many supports that got broken down because of covid. They all went to online support. It has left me feeling a little lost.

Oshun_Blu
(Moderator)

Love that you adapt your goals to suit your needs, @Snowie, it can be hard to do that rather than feeling like it has to be other way around

LittleSteps
(PSW)

Sometimes a barrier I have faced towards goals has been related to my mental wellbeing. This, at times, could make me feel down and overwhelmed. However, health professionals have been able to help me form healthy and feasible goals in my recovery. Goals have now become a big part of my recovery.

the
magician

having long term goals where i want to end up gives me something complete of myself to live for get through the day. its a real motivator to be setting goals around : what would you do if you could do anything you wanted with your life?

Snowie

I agree LittleSteps, my mental health is a big barrier to the goals I set myself

Oshun_Blu
(Moderator)

The pandemic and some other health issues that popped up last year have definitely impacted the ways that I set goals & plan ahead. I have felt anxiety at times in making goals, or dealing with thoughts like "what's the point? It won't even happen". It's been a big lesson in navigating impermanence for me, and balancing the future vs the 'now'

Girasole (Peer Worker) A number of my goals in life at the moment are being directly impacted by covid and other obstacles. It can be incredibly frustrating when it feels like you're stuck or can't make progress due to factors outside your control. I'm trying to re-adjust my expectations of time frames based on what's actually possible. We can only do what we can do; we can't expect ourselves to be able to do anything more than that

the magician I'm good at planning but ruminating searching for options without an out put or time bound can be overwhelming so am more likely to sleep, have symptoms, not attend classes.

LittleSteps (PSW) Hello @chibam! :)

LittleSteps (PSW) Hello @Pancake :)

chibam Q2: No, sadly. Covid has had minimal impact on my life, which sort of speaks to the sad state it was in to begin with. :disappointed:

chibam Hi @LittleSteps (PSW) !

the magician i think once i believe that my goals are possible and i have a psych that understands its important to me ie long term study. he thinks it will be harder with a mental illness than someone without but isn't everything? not a reason to not do it. that support can be liberating.

Girasole (Peer Worker) **Q3: What are some purposes we might have for making goals for our lives?**

chibam @the magician support is so important, isn't it? My therapist took it upon herself to tear down all my dreams. I wish there was a way of finding genuinely supportive support.

LittleSteps (PSW) Hello @teej!

Teej Hi 🤝

Snowie I think the purpose of goals is to have something to strive for. To try and take control of my life and motivate me. I think it also creates accountability in my life.

LittleSteps (PSW) There are many purposes why someone may create goals. For me, it has been to give me a sense of purpose. Goals give me hope about the future and for a better tomorrow. On the other hand, it's important to remember that goals can be very small and practical – like doing daily tasks, for example.

Girasole (Peer Worker) I like that @Snowie :)

chibam Q3: To fix the world, and make it a place worth living in. Because if we don't do it, who will? One could argue that the reason for our own misery is the fact that those who came before us couldn't or wouldn't make the fixes needed to make life worth living before we were born into it. So, if we can fix the world, maybe our kindred spirits who are yet to be born may be born into a world worth living in.

LittleSteps (PSW) @Shaz51 Welcome!

Shaz51 Hello @LittleSteps (PSW) , @Girasole (Peer Worker)

Oshun_Blu (Moderator) A very compassionate & hopeful perspective @chibam <3

Oshun_Blu (Moderator) Hey @Shaz51!

Shaz51 Hey @Oshun_Blu (Moderator)

chibam Thanks, @Oshun_Blu (Moderator) :)

Pancake The grief I feel for adjusting my goals to ones that are achievable again and again is huge. They're unrecognisable but I'm still the person who wants the original things at heart. It's so hard to make myself fit the challenges I face- they aren't who I am but they've shaped who I can be. :(today my therapist reminded me to adjust my normal to fit whatever is currently happening and difficult. It seems that's all I do these days.

- LittleSteps (PSW) @Pancake it can be hard to put your needs first, I hear you. But it is also something that takes great courage, in my eyes.
- Oshun_Blu (Moderator) Acknowledging that grief can be such an important part of the process, @Pancake. It sounds like you are giving yourself permission to explore areas of uncertainty, and that can be downright scary sometimes
- chibam @Pancake if only they would actually lend a hand in achieving difficult dreams, rather than destroying them. It sickens me that this is what the industry defines as "help". How many of us went in to their service, conned into expecting that they would actually help us with our dreams, rather than anesthetizing us until we were (seemingly) too weak to hold a dream at all?
- Girasole (Peer Worker) @Pancake I like how you were able to identify that it's legitimate grief we experience when we have to downgrade our own goals. I think if we can identify that, maybe we can seek out specific/appropriate support. For instance, the support line Griefline might be helpful in this regard (they support people experiencing any type of grief & loss)
- Oshun_Blu (Moderator) Finding your own way to thrive within systems that may oppress or push against you can be such a challenge, @chibam. I know that I have sometimes felt as if my goals were not allowed to exist under the authority of others, and carving out a space for myself that can co-exist within those systems while also supporting my livelihood has been a constant practice
- Teej My perspective has changed around goals over the last few years. I agree that our mental health does dictate our goals, especially when we are in the thick of just managing our mental health and not much else seems doable. I've now found short term goals are better for me personally. It alleviates the "letdown feelings" when I'm struggling. Mine are more around "make hay when the sun shines" type goals. Small steps towards hopefully something bigger one day.
- LittleSteps (PSW) I totally agree @teej - that's why I decided to name my profile LittleSteps :) haha
- Girasole (Peer Worker) @chibam it's sad to hear you've had experiences like that :(I think it's so important to find the right support professionals for us- people who will genuinely support us towards our goals. I hope in the future you'll be able to experience this more genuine type of support. (Quick side note, we've done a previous Peer Group Chat on this topic of finding the right support professionals for you- if you'd like to have a look later, the transcript can be found here <https://www.sane.org/images/peer-support/chat-transcripts/20220224-finding-the-right-therapist-for-you.pdf> :))
- Teej That's awesome @LittleSteps (PSW) 🍀

- Girasole (Peer Worker)** **Q4: We might set ourselves up for disappointment if we make goals that aren't entirely realistic or within a scope that we can control. Have you had this experience? Do you think it could be beneficial to be more specific or realistic about particular goals you have?**
- chibam Thanks, @Girasole (Peer Worker)
- LittleSteps (PSW) I have certainly had this experience. I have had experiences where I have taken on too much too early and it has backfired. But I have learnt to frame my goals around my values and wants. For example, I recently decided to pursue my degree in a part-time capacity, which has made it much more manageable and enjoyable for me.
- Pancake I try to remember that my ability to set and achieve goals is like my ability to exercise - it changes depending on my fitness level, how often I've been training etc. a goal that may have been very achievable 3 months ago, might not be at all now. So I try to set small goals and build up to things. A goal recently was to set a bigger goal!
- Teej I think I mentally word goals as wishes so that it's not so black and white. I very rarely achieve goals I've made but sometimes I surprise myself and do complete something that is for all intents and purposes a goal but it's something that I have on a Wishlist. It helps to let go a bit of the tick/fail stuff.
- Oshun_Blu (Moderator) For my disappointment and managing the feelings of perfectionism that can pop up around setting goals, I have found that focusing on broader aspects of the goal has actually been the most beneficial. My brain tends to zero in on details, but can struggle with the big picture. So I sometimes have to work at the big picture and then give myself permission to be playful with the details. So instead of "I will finish my study by *insert date*", I try to remain grounded in the goal of finishing study and the date itself of when I do that becomes less important
- Girasole (Peer Worker) That makes sense @Pancake - it is a skill, so like any skill practice would help us get better at it! :)
- tyme (PSW) Some incredible points raised tonight! For me, I have learnt to set small goals which are a part of a larger goal. That way, even if I achieve part of the goal, I don't feel like a total failure! But yes, realistic goal setting is so important. I've learnt that from experience and that's why I've learnt to set mini goals.
- LittleSteps (PSW) Great insights! @tyme :)

- chibam Q4: Honestly, no. And it's difficult to go into detail there without making compelling arguments in favor of suicide, which I realize would be a big no-no in a forum like this. But suffice to say there is a realm where survival is beneficial, and there is a realm where it is undesirable; and frankly, if you can't set a goal that allows you to cross over into the realm where survival is beneficial, because said goals are "unrealistic", there you aren't accomplishing anything of any worth by achieving a goal that falls short of that mark. Succeed/fail, if either way your better off dead, what's the point?
- Oshun_Blu (Moderator) Chunking things into smaller goals is definitely important, @tyme! And can certainly help us to build that goal muscle, as @Pancake said
- chibam Q4: Being more specific may, potentially be more beneficial. But it depends on who your talking to and whether or not the specifics may turn them off of you and/or your ambitions.
- teej It feels like goals can often be like a to-do list like @Oshun_Blu (Moderator) alluded to. My psych recently suggested not having a to-do list but a "things I've achieved list". Maybe looking back at what we've achieved helps us to look forward to what we'd like to achieve.
- Girasole (Peer Worker) I hear what you're saying @chibam about it being hard to have goals about wellbeing when in such a dark headspace :heart: At times like that I think anyone deserves (and I would encourage) connection with others, whether that's through the SANE Forums, support lines, or your own personal or professional networks
- LittleSteps (PSW) Hello @Krishna!
- Girasole (Peer Worker)** **Q5: Setting out to achieve new goals important to us can be challenging and may feel difficult if we do it alone - how could others be involved, to make resilience and success more likely?**
- LittleSteps (PSW) Sharing your goals can be really helpful as it might add a sense of accountability – but I suppose it's important to consider who we share our goals with. I try to share my goals with the supportive people in my life – like friends.
- Oshun_Blu (Moderator) I have found that being connected to others who are supportive & encouraging, has made a huge difference in making progress toward my goals, as @Girasole said. Having people in our corner who not just believe in our goals, but actively wish to see us thrive within our goals can do a lot to add joy and balance when making our way to the goals

chibam Q5: They can set us up with people who can make our goals come true. For example, if you know my ambition is to be a lawyer, and you have an uncle who works in a law firm, maybe you could tell him about me, and see if he can get me a job there? Or if you know I'm looking for a romantic partner who has the same type of character as your single sister-in-law, maybe you could set the two of us up together? Thousands of examples like that where a person willing to help can actually make a dream come true.

the magician back. chat about achievement levels like in education. what needs to be done in order to reach the goal point. like in work. the example of riding a bike in road before a car. adjusting to worklife before you get a cat. travelling in outdoors inc. before camps around Australia/Europe. joining groups like outdoors and peer groups to expand friend circles. taking steps that are almost like prerequisites. chatting to psychologists can be good for this. they have the time. to listen.

Oshun_Blu (Moderator) @chibam so true. The connections we create and maintain can support us not just in emotional ways, but sometimes very practical ones too!

the magician hi chibam

teej I find this area tricky. It does involve being really vulnerable and exposed when your goals might be outside the mainstream ones. I have shared goals with others because they were what I thought the person wanted to hear. I am only just taking baby steps in letting others in to my real goals/wishes. I'll tell you how it goes later 😊

Girasole (Peer Worker) **Q6: What happens when you achieve your goal? What is the impact of that? Or if you are still striving for your goals, what do you imagine the impact will be?**

chibam Hi @the magician !:)

LittleSteps (PSW) I would say I am still striving for my goals as they are long term. The feeling I think I will get, however, when I reach those goals – is pride! When I reach smaller, more short term goals, I also feel a sense of accomplishment.

LittleSteps (PSW) Hello @Peps :)

the magician also figuring out your strengths and skills can lead you in the right direction. goals need to be time bound and have practical outputs otherwise its just daydreaming.

Oshun_Blu (Moderator) Hey @Peps & @Jacques :)

LittleSteps (PSW) @Jacques hello and welcome!

Jacques hi oshun and everyone :)

the magician likewise little steps

the magician like you have a meaning and a purpose

Oshun_Blu (Moderator) Love that @LittleSteps! That feeling helps build confidence and can help to strengthen the progression of setting future goals, as @Pancake said earlier

Jacques i have been told i need to set goals, but i have never set any goals in my life.

chibam Q6: I'd imagine that I would finally be able to feel a sense of relief for a second. Finally able to look somewhere and trust that life was going to endear me and uplift me rather than disappoint me. Finally stop being nagged by all this turmoil about why my life sucks, and what I'm supposed to do about it; and the constant fear/knowledge that tomorrow, next month, next year, will be just as bleak and terrible as today. I think things would just stop feeling broken, and I would finally be able to go about my life feeling as if things were alright.

Girasole (Peer Worker) **Q7: Do you think, like recovery itself, that your progress in moving towards your goals might be non-linear? I.e., that you might move forwards, then face hurdles, maybe go backwards, before moving forward again? Have you experienced this before? What have you learned?**

the magician id like smart goals around being overwhelmed and not sleeping in. ive slept in for 33 years. i need this to retrain myself.

teej I'm not so sure about the time bound @the magician . There are definitely some that are but some not so much such goals that need certain conditions to exist , maybe like overcoming a phobia or something.

the magician only allowing positivity and understanding in your life's plane

chibam Q7: More non-existent than non-linear, @Girasole (Peer Worker) :confused:

LittleSteps (PSW) Absolutely. Some days it feels like I'm cruising through my goals, and some days it's one step forwards, two steps back. I have learnt that it is important to be flexible within goal setting, and that sometimes life can get in the way, but to always have hope.

Girasole (Peer Worker) @chibam :heart: Hopefully the discussion tonight, and having a look at the resources we will share at the end, might help make a positive impact for you :blush:

teej Sorry for the word salad @the magician . And it was a comment that I probably didn't need to say out loud 🙊

Oshun_Blu (Moderator) I love that idea of looking back on the things we have accomplished, as @teej said earlier. Sometimes it can feel like I have not gone very far at all in making progress toward my goals until I take a moment to glance over my shoulder at where I've come from

chibam That would be wonderful, @Girasole (Peer Worker) :relaxed:

the magician the ladder. by time bound not going over and over figuring out goals without achieving an output. putting a time limit on your weeks space.

the magician sometimes life related goals and achievements are more important than the other concrete stuff

Girasole (Peer Worker) As we start to wind up for this evening- Have you learned anything helpful from others' experiences here tonight that you might be able to apply in your own life? If yes, what did you learn? :)

teej Absolutely @Girasole (Peer Worker)

the magician hope that there are practical smart solutions to my problems.

LittleSteps (PSW) I have learnt everyone's perspective on goal setting! I have learnt the value of goal setting in everyone's eyes - and different approaches to goals. I particularly enjoyed talking about goals in the context of our values. I really enjoyed learning all these things tonight :)

Teej We all come to view goal setting differently.

the magician remember to enjoy the journey not just reaching the end

Oshun_Blu (Moderator) I've learned that there are as many ways to set & work toward our goals as there are humans on the earth, and that has also re-affirmed to me the importance of adapting our goals to suit where we're at to accommodate our needs and encourage sustainability

LittleSteps (PSW) Absolutely @the magician :)

Girasole (Peer Worker) I have a lot of takeaways I found interesting! Prepare for a big list XD
@teej: "My psych recently suggested not having a to-do list but a "things I've achieved list". Maybe looking back at what we've achieved helps us to look forward to what we'd like to achieve"
@Pancake: "I try to remember that my ability to set and achieve goals is like my ability to exercise - it changes depending on my fitness level, how often I've been training etc."
@Pancake: about the legitimate grief that exists when we are required to downgrade our goals due to factors beyond our control
@Snowie: "I think the purpose of goals is to have something to strive for. To try and take control of my life and motivate me. I think it also creates accountability in my life."
@Oshun_Blu (Moderator): "Having people in our corner who not just believe in our goals, but actively wish to see us thrive within our goals can do a lot to add joy and balance when making our way to the goals"

Oshun_Blu (Moderator) definitely @the magician! If we focus only on the destination, we'll miss all the cool stuff to see along the way

Girasole (Peer Worker) Q: Tonight's topic could have brought up some heavy feelings as we talked about the successes and hurdles of working towards goals in our lives. Would some self-care be helpful for you after we finish? If so, what might you do?
😊

the
magician

nice one

Girasole
(Peer
Worker)

I'm going to continue watching on of my favourite comfort shows :)

Oshun_Blu
(Moderator)

I have some family visiting from overseas at the moment, and we've been watching the new season of Stranger Things so probably pop the popcorn and finish that off :)

LittleSteps
(PSW)

I am going to eat a nice filling dinner :) Maybe whip up something I enjoy eating!

Girasole
(Peer
Worker)

We'd like to invite you to complete a survey reflecting on your experience in this Peer Group Chat. We'd love to hear any feedback you may have. It will only take a few minutes to complete. Please click this link: https://sane.au1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_5uUF0sHJRKQ6wyW

teej

Thank to everyone. Goodnight to all 🙏❤️👋

Girasole
(Peer
Worker)

Here are some further resources we recommend having a look at:

1 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TD4uveH1CMk> - About creating what is referred to as “mini-micro goals,” to help with things you might be struggling with, like doing the dishes or having a shower.

2 <https://www.healthdirect.gov.au/goal-setting> - Goal setting - How to create some longer-term goals

3 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WK-sZjuXA6A> - Setting goals vs creating sustainable “systems” that work for us - focusing and investing more on processes than on specific outcomes

Oshun_Blu
(Moderator)

G'night teej!

Girasole
(Peer
Worker)

Thank you for joining, and we hope you enjoyed the discussion tonight 😊 If you'd like to be informed when our next Peer Group Chat will be taking place, you can sign up to our mailing list here <https://www.sane.org/peer-support/online-mental-health-meet-up>. You can also ask questions for us to discuss in future peer chats!

the magician I've done 20 years of community activities and 7 years in that of writing. looking back its a lot. compared to just thinking i was chronic. i found it motivating that i hadn't wasted my time.

Oshun_Blu (Moderator) Thanks for tonight, everyone. It's been awesome to absorb your insights and perspectives

LittleSteps (PSW) Goodnight everyone!

Girasole (Peer Worker) Thank you so much everyone! I really enjoyed tonight's conversation with you all :) Take care

the magician good night see you next week

the magician i still didn't receive the email on relationships!

chibam @the magician I think there must be some problem with SANE's mailing system. There was a guy on the forums earlier saying that he didn't get an email one of the mods sent him.

LittleSteps (PSW) The email newsletters will resume next week @the magician :)

the magician awesome

LittleSteps (PSW) Thank you all! :D Goodnight!

the magician :innocent: :hugging: :stuck_out_tongue:

