
The Zen of Goal Setting

**11 Easy Steps for Getting More
Out of Your Tai Chi, Qigong,
Kung Fu, and Meditation**

11 Secrets to Getting Results

Revealed: Why Students Don't Get Results

11 Reasons You Should Set Goals

By Sifu Anthony Korahais

Would you rather take 6 months to accomplish a goal, or 6 years? Obviously, we would all prefer the former! One big reason why some students progress faster than others is because they are clearer about their goals. Getting clearer about your goals is important. Really important. Did I mention that this is important?

This worksheet will help. I recommend that you set aside 60 minutes to go through the entire worksheet. Go to a café, or close your office door, or do whatever you need to do to be uninterrupted for 60 minutes. These 60 minutes will help to change the rest of your life.

Step #1 – Getting Ready

Before we get started with the fun stuff, you need to do a few things:

1. Print out this worksheet.
2. Separate the final 5 pages (the worksheets).
3. Arrange two stacks side-by-side (one for the instructions, and one for the worksheets).
4. Get a pencil (or an erasable pen).

Follow these steps! Don't try to do this worksheet on the computer, and don't just read through the instructions without writing stuff down. The entire purpose of this document is to help you to fill out the final 5 pages!

Step #2 – Allow Yourself to Dream

Dreaming is powerful. Unfortunately, most of us don't allow ourselves to dream. As Shakespeare says, our "doubts are traitors". Often, our traitorous doubts kill our dreams before they are even born!

In Step #2, I want you to dream big, and to have fun doing it. Don't write anything down for this step. Instead, I want you to close your eyes, relax, and *feel* the answers to the questions. Really try to feel the answer in every cell of your body.

Don't move on to the next question until you can feel each answer.

1. **Imagine yourself in perfect health.** Imagine yourself with zero pain, no disorders, no illnesses, and no conditions. Imagine yourself with such a strong immune system that you never get sick. Imagine yourself looking so vibrantly healthy that people regularly make comments. How does it feel?
2. **Imagine yourself with limitless energy.** From morning until night, you never run out of energy. Imagine having more than enough energy for all your projects, ideas, dreams, chores, and responsibilities. Imagine having extra energy for both work and play. How does it feel?
3. **Imagine yourself with zero financial stress.** Imagine having a trust fund that pays you \$250,000 every year, no matter what. Imagine having the freedom and the time to do (or not do!) whatever you want. How does it feel?
4. **Imagine yourself as happy as you've ever been.** Imagine being happy from the minute you wake up until the moment you fall asleep. Imagine having a zest for just being alive. Imagine being happy for no particular reason at all. How does it feel?
5. **Imagine your perfect day.** You've got limitless health, energy, and money. What is your perfect day like? What would you do? Who would you do it with? Where would you be? How does it feel?

Step #3 – I Don't Want...

Identifying what you *don't* want can be a powerful way to clarify what you *do* want. It can also be a powerful motivation.

For example, I went through major depression in my 20s (and then cured myself of it with Cosmos Qigong). I don't EVER want to go through that again. Keeping depression away – for the rest of my life – is a powerful motivation for me.

Although we are certainly not focusing on the negatives, we are trying to find out what motivates YOU.

Here are some examples of things you probably don't want:

- I don't want to rely on medication.
- I don't want to catch colds.
- I don't want to be in a wheelchair.
- I don't want to look old.
- I don't want to be frail when I'm older.
- I don't want to get cancer.
- I don't want to have a stroke.
- I don't want to get Alzheimer's.
- I don't want to get pulmonary disease.
- I don't want to be overweight.
- I don't want to get arthritis.
- I don't want to get diabetes.
- I don't want to have a heart attack.
- I don't want to be in pain.
- I don't want big medical bills.
- I don't want to be depressed.
- I don't want to die in a hospital.
- I don't want to have surgery.
- I don't want to be afraid.
- I don't want to fall or injure myself
- I don't want to be a burden.

If nothing on this list resonates with you, and if you can't think of any other negative motivations, then congratulations! You are one of the few people not motivated by negatives. You can move on to the next step.

For the rest of you, write down the top 10 things that you DON'T want, using the appropriate worksheet. Choose things that motivate you to take action. Choose things that are meaningful to YOU.

For example, I don't want to get Alzheimer's (who does?!?), but I'm also not particularly worried about it. For whatever reason, Alzheimer's doesn't motivate me. But Depression and Heart Disease are powerful motivations for me because they both run in my family.

So what are your motivations? Start by circling ones from the list above that resonate with you, and then write out your list of "don't wants" on the appropriate worksheet. You don't need to come up with 10, but it's a good exercise to try.

Step #4 – I Want...

Now that we've identified some things that we don't want, it's time to figure out what we DO want. This will be similar to, but not exactly the same as Step #2, where we allowed ourselves to dream.

It's important not to think about HOW you will get what you want. If you think about the "how", then you will block yourself from figuring out what you want. This is the single biggest mistake that students make. Don't fall into that trap.

For example, a student might want to be free of from arthritis. But because she cannot imagine HOW arthritis might be cured, she never allows herself to set it as a goal. The plane doesn't even get off the ground.

Even if arthritis couldn't be cured with Qigong (it can – lots of my students have done it), it doesn't matter. The point is to identify what you want. If you want to be free from arthritis, then you need to identify that desire. Here's a good quote from Henry Ford:

"Obstacles are those frightful things you see when you take your eyes off your goal."

Do you think that Henry Ford knew how he was going to build the Model T car? No. He didn't know any of the details. What he knew, without a doubt, was that he wanted to do it, and that he wasn't going to let anything get in his way.

When identifying your wants, you need to think like Henry Ford. It doesn't matter if people say that it's impossible, or if you have no idea how it will be done. What matters is what YOU want.

Take a few minutes now to identify some things that you want out of your Qigong, Tai Chi, Kung Fu, or Meditation practice, and then write them down on the appropriate

worksheet. Again, you don't need to come up with 10 wants, but it's a good exercise to try.

Step #5 – Understanding Aims and Objectives

The word “goal” is not really a good choice. It's too unspecific. Instead, we'll break our goals up into aims and objectives. But before we set our aims and objectives, we need to understand the difference between the two. The difference is actually quite simple:

Aims

- general
- not necessarily measurable
- long-term

Objectives

- highly specific
- measurable
- short-term

If you want to be healthy, then that's an aim. But if you want to fix your low back pain, then that's an objective. Getting healthy is an aim because it is a general, long-term goal. Getting rid of low back pain is a specific objective that can be accomplished within a few months.

You can think of objectives as short-term courses of study, like college classes. In fact, keeping your objectives roughly the same length as a college class (i.e. 3-4 months) is a great idea. Sometimes, an objective will take longer than 3-4 months, but you should always check your progress every “semester” to make sure that you are headed in the right direction.

Your objectives should match your aims. If you set a 3-month objective to be able to touch your toes, then you are working towards your general aim of being more fit. And vice versa, if your aim is to be more fit, then you need to pick objectives that will help you to reach that aim.

Step #6 – Setting Aims

With Qigong and Meditation, all aims can be classified into 5 basic categories:

1. Health
2. Fitness
3. Character Development
4. Mind Training
5. Spiritual Cultivation

With Tai Chi and Kung Fu, there is a 6th category that we should add:

6. Self Defense

Aims should be general, and they should fall into these categories. Here are some examples of aims, separated into the 6 categories:

Health

- I want a strong immune system that keeps me physically, emotionally, and mentally healthy, full of energy, and pain free even into my 90s.

Fitness

- I want to be strong, lean, and flexible. I want to look younger than my physical age, and to keep my cardiovascular system robust.

Character Development

- I want to be more disciplined in my personal and professional life, to be more caring and compassionate towards loved ones, and to be more ethically and morally upright.

Mind Training

- I want to have a clear mind and sharp memory. I want to be able to tap into my creativity whenever necessary.

Spiritual Cultivation

- I want to strengthen my relationship with my spirit, and to strive towards the ultimate goal of Enlightenment.

Self Defense

- I want to be physically, mentally, and energetically powerful, and to be able to defend myself and my loved ones against all kinds of physical and emotional aggression.

If you've followed steps #1-4, then you should have a much clearer picture of what you want and don't want. Using that information, it should be easy to set some aims. Do that now. Why do you practice Qigong, Tai Chi, Kung Fu, or Meditation? Write down your aims on the worksheet. Remember to keep it general. For each aim, circle the appropriate category.

Step #7 – Objectives

This is where the rubber meets the road. Objectives will change your life if you use them consistently. If you haven't yet discovered the satisfaction of meeting an objective that you've set, then trust me when I say that it feels amazing. You absolutely want to experience this for yourself.

Remember, objectives are much more specific than aims. They can also be very personal. I'll list some examples to get you started:

- To be completely free of my hypertension medication.
- To get compliments about how much younger I look.
- To be better at remembering names.
- To feel my "Spirit".
- To meditate for 5 minutes without my mind wandering.
- To be able to defend myself against boxers.
- To touch my toes without bending my knees.
- To get rid of my shoulder pain.
- To have the energy to play with my kids when I get home from work.
- To wake up feeling rested.
- To be able to stand on one leg for 30 seconds without wobbling.
- To not get sick this winter.
- To be able to climb a flight of stairs without getting winded.
- To have the courage to stand up for myself when my boss yells at me.
- To be more confident when dealing with clients.
- To fight less with my husband.
- To worry less about my finances.
- To catch a glimpse of Cosmic Reality.
- To be able to break a brick with my palm.

If your aims are set correctly, then it should be easy to come up with some objectives. Remember that objectives work towards fulfilling your aims. If you have an objective that doesn't match an aim, then you need to redo your aims.

Now write out some objectives on your worksheet, being as specific as possible.

Step #8 – Measuring Progress

A big secret to setting objectives is to make them measurable. Otherwise, how will you know when the objective has been met?

Some objectives have a measure built in, like touching your toes. But some are less specific, like worrying less about your finances. With the unspecific goals, you need to figure out how you will measure improvement.

For example, let's pretend that you typically get stressed out every time you open up a bill. You'll know that you have achieved your objective of worrying less about your finances when you can open up a bill without getting stressed. That's the measure.

Now, go through your objectives, and make each one measurable. Look at your list of objectives. In the left margin of each objective, write a measure. If the measure is self-explanatory (like being able to touch your toes), then write in "SE" for that objective.

Don't get complicated, and don't be a perfectionist. Just make an effort to identify a measure for each objective. Do this before moving on to the next step.

Step #9 – Time Frame

Setting a time frame for each objective is important. For each of your objectives, you're going to set a date for your "final exam." Keeping with the theme of a college course, the final exam is when you will review your progress.

Ideally, you will achieve each objective before the "final exam". For example, if you set a 3-month objective of touching your toes, and you achieve the objective in 2 months, then you've already passed the final exam.

But in other cases, you will "fail" the exam. Fail is not quite the right word. Let's pretend that, after 3 months, you still can't touch your toes. During the final exam,

you'll see whether or not you're making progress towards the goal. If you are, then all you need to do is continue another 3 months with the same objective.

The default for all objectives should be 3 months. Some objectives will take a little longer, and some a little shorter, but 3 months is a good starting point.

Now look at your objectives. In the right-hand margin, set a time frame for each one. But don't just write "3 months". Write down the date of your final exam. In the beginning, all of your final exams may be on the same day, which is fine. But as you accomplish objectives, the dates will start to stagger.

Make sure that you have a final exam date set for each objective before moving on to the next step.

Step #10 – Methods

Methods are the actual techniques that we will use to achieve our objectives. For example, if your objective is to be able to touch your toes without bending your legs, then you need to pick appropriate flexibility techniques for your methods. If you pick push-ups as the method, then you won't ever reach your objective.

This is a mistake that literally millions of people practicing Qigong, Tai Chi, and Kung Fu make. They never achieve their objectives because they are using the wrong methods! Don't be one of them!

How do you pick the appropriate methods? This is where having a good teacher is critical. Although you can learn a lot from books and the Internet, there is absolutely no substitute for an experienced instructor. I cannot stress this point enough: Having a good teacher is critical.

Methods should be specific techniques. For example, if your objective is to be able to touch your toes, then your method should be some sort of flexibility technique, like

“Lohan Taking Off His Shoes”. Do **not** simply write “flexibility” or “Tai Chi” as the method.

Many students get stuck on choosing methods. If you have clear objectives and a good teacher, this should not happen. Consult with your teacher. He or she should be able to help you to pick the appropriate methods to achieve your objectives.

If you don't have a teacher, then you have to do your own research. You have to find out which techniques achieve which results. For example, if your objective is to fix your back pain, then you not only need to find and learn the appropriate techniques, like *Carrying the Moon*.

Whether you have a teacher or not, my teacher's books are an excellent resource. I spent years and hundreds of dollars reading countless books. My teacher's books are among the best in any language. He has books on Qigong, Tai Chi, Kung Fu, and Zen. You can find descriptions and links to his books on my website: <http://www.flowingzen.com/books>

Look at your objectives worksheet. Place the “Methods” worksheet next to it. Then write down methods that contribute towards your objectives. Remember that some methods will contribute towards multiple objectives. Come up with methods for each objective before moving on to the next step.

Step #11 – Practice Routines

We're almost done! Now that you've set your aims and objectives, and picked the appropriate methods to accomplish them, it's time to create some practice routines. If you've followed all the steps, then this should be a piece of cake.

I recommend that you create at least 2 routines. In the beginning, you should create 1 routine for each objective. Later, once you've got the hang of this, you can start consolidating routines. (Many methods will overlap objectives. For example, “Lohan

Touching Toes” will help to achieve the objective of touching your toes, as well as your objective of improving your Kung Fu kicking.)

How many methods should there be for each routine? Well, that depends on your objective. If your objective is to practice the 24-Pattern Tai Chi Form every day for 90 days, then there’s really only 1 method (i.e. the Tai Chi Form). On the other hand, if your objective is to eliminate chronic shoulder pain, then you might have several methods (like “Lifting the Sky” and “Big Windmill Hand”).

I recommend that you hang the “My Practice Routines” page (or pages, if you have more than 2 routines) on your refrigerator or in your in your practice room. The chart allows for you to check off 100 days, which is roughly 3 months. Print out new pages and update your routines as needed.

When you are finished with an objective, don’t throw out the page! Create a file called “My Aims, Objectives, and Methods,” and put everything in there, even if you abort or change a routine. Years from now, you’ll be glad that you have a detailed record of your aims, objectives, and methods!

Qigong, Tai Chi, Kung Fu, and Meditation are amazing arts that can enrich our lives beyond our wildest dreams. I’ve seen this with my own eyes. My own life, and the lives of countless students have been dramatically changed for the better with these arts.

My mission is for you to be successful with these arts. I sincerely hope that this worksheet helps to make you more successful.

Good luck to you!

I Want...

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____

I Don't Want...

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____

My Aims

1. [Health – Fitness – Character – Mind – Spirit – Martial] _____

2. [Health – Fitness – Character – Mind – Spirit – Martial] _____

3. [Health – Fitness – Character – Mind – Spirit – Martial] _____

4. [Health – Fitness – Character – Mind – Spirit – Martial] _____

5. [Health – Fitness – Character – Mind – Spirit – Martial] _____

6. [Health – Fitness – Character – Mind – Spirit – Martial] _____

7. [Health – Fitness – Character – Mind – Spirit – Martial] _____

8. [Health – Fitness – Character – Mind – Spirit – Martial] _____

9. [Health – Fitness – Character – Mind – Spirit – Martial] _____

10. [Health – Fitness – Character – Mind – Spirit – Martial] _____

My Objectives

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

7. _____

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9. _____

10. _____

My Methods

1. _____
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