

How to Get on the Same Page

By Harold & Bette Gillogly

• GOALS — What Are They?

Purposes, Objectives and

Goals: Purpose is the over-all general direction we want to take. We say, “Our purpose in life is...” It’s very broad and far-reaching. God is clear about His purpose in our lives. Romans 8:28-29 declares, *And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.*

An **objective** is still rather general, but is more narrow than “purpose.” Within one purpose, we might have three or four objectives. Within our life’s purpose of wanting God to “conform [us] to the likeness of his Son,” we can have the objective of reading God’s Word on a regular basis to find out about His plan for our lives. We might also have the objective to obey what He says and another objective to pray daily about our walk with Him.

When we speak of **goals**, however, we are being **specific**. That’s what we want to be in this chapter — specific. So let’s talk specifically about what elements a goal needs to have.

Goals must be...

REALISTIC: If my goal is to lose fifty pounds by next Wednesday, would that meet the criteria of a good goal? No, it’s not realistic. But if my goal is to lose fifty pounds in eight months, that would be realistic. We must keep our goals realistic or they won’t mean anything, and we will feel like failures.

SPECIFIC enough to be measurable: If my goal is stated, “I want to lose a lot of weight in eight months or so,” is that a good goal? No, it’s not specific and cannot be measured. How will I know if I’ve lost enough weight? Let’s restate the goal to read, “I want to lose 50 pounds by August 30 of this year (eight months away).” Stated this way, the goal is specific enough to be **measurable**.

TIME LIMITED: What if my goal is, “I want to lose 50 pounds as soon as possible.” Does that do it? No, there is no time boundary. When is “as soon as possible”? But if I say, “I want to lose 50 pounds in eight months, which would be by August 30 of this year,” that is a well stated goal. It’s **realistic, specific** enough to be **measurable** and **limited by time**.

• Is Goal Setting Scriptural?

We are to “**count the cost**” of projects and involvements: Luke 14:28:30 — *Suppose one of you wants to build a tower. Will he not first sit down and estimate the cost to see if he has enough money to complete it? For if he lays the foundation and is not able to finish it, everyone who sees it will ridicule him, saying, ‘This fellow began to build and was not able to finish.’*

We are advised to sit down and plan, to think things through before we proceed with them. Otherwise, we might end up with a lot of unfinished towers in our lives. Can you think of a few unfinished towers in your life?

Our goals must please the Lord. 2

Corinthians 5:9 — *So we make it our goal to please him, whether we are at home in the body or away from it.*

We must consult God’s Word to ensure that our goals are in line with biblical principles. His Word reveals many things about how we should conduct our lives. Setting goals that change our life style and behavior to reflect His ideals will naturally please Him. We also need to submit our goals to the Lord. Sometimes, we might choose a worthy goal, but He has other plans. For instance, we may set a goal to save a certain amount of money, but He may want us to offer the money for His service. As we search His Word and submit our goals to Him, He will guide us.

We are to “care for our own.” 1 Timothy 5:8 — *If anyone does not provide for his relatives, and especially for his immediate family, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.*

This verse gives us a specific objective: to provide for our family. To fulfill this responsibility, we need to have specific goals. We must determine many things, such as how much we need to earn, where we want to live, and what we can afford to buy. As you can see, this one objective — providing for our family — requires several goals.

• Goal-Setting in Nine Areas of Life

Definition - Sample - Writing of Goal:

We have identified nine areas of life in which we all need to set goals. They are: (1) Marriage, (2) Spiritual life, (3) Parenting/family, (4) Vocation, (5) Physical life, (6) Finances, (7) Recreation,

(8), Emotional life, (9) and Social life. Before going any farther, list these nine areas of life on a sheet of paper, leaving five or six lines of space after each.

As we go through each area, we will first (1) define the goal, then (2) give you a sample of what we’re talking about. Finally, we will ask you to (3) write out your own goal in each area on your goal sheets. As you write your goals, keep in mind that each goal you make impacts your marriage relationship and your coupleness. Try for goals which will enhance your coupleness, not tear it down. **Don’t give each other suggestions or look at one another’s goals yet.** You’ll have a chance to do that later.

1. Marriage goal definition — Goals that affect the husband-wife relationship.

Sample — “Plan a date for the entire day for our anniversary at least three weeks ahead of the day.”

Write a Marriage goal on your goal sheet, making sure it is realistic, specific and time limited.

2. Spiritual goal definition — Goals that affect our relationship with God and church.

Sample — “Have devotions with my spouse at least four times per week for 15-20 minutes each time.”

Write a Spiritual goal on your goal sheet, making sure it is realistic, specific and time limited.

3. Parenting/Family goal definition — Goals that affect our relationships with our children or relatives.

Sample — “Plan a date with each of my children for 2 hours apiece within the next 2 months.”

Write a Parenting/Family goal on your goal sheet, making sure it is realistic, specific and time limited.

4. Vocational goal definition — Goals that affect our career pursuits.

Sample — “Start classes for my Master’s Degree by September of this year.”

Write a Vocational goal on your goal sheet, making sure it is...you know the drill.

5. Physical goal definition — Goals that affect our bodies.

Sample — “Take a 30 minute walk at least 4 times per week after dinner, starting this week.”

Write a Physical goal on your goal sheet.

6. **Financial goal definition** — Goals that affect our monetary welfare.

Sample — “Collect a savings account of \$2000 for emergencies by November of this year.”

Write a Financial goal on your goal sheet.

7. **Recreational goal definition** — Goals that affect our fun and relaxation pursuits.

Sample — “Plan a two week summer vacation for this summer. Have planning done and reservations made by June 1.”

Write a Recreational goal on your goal sheet.

8. **Emotional goal definition** — Goals that affect the well-being of our mind, heart and souls.

Sample — “Read one book strictly for pleasure each month.”

Write an Emotional goal on your goal sheet.

9. **Social goal definition** — Goals that affect interpersonal relationships or civic welfare.

Sample — “Have one couple in our home for a social time at least once per month, starting next month.”

Write a Social goal on your goal sheet.

Working With Your Goal Worksheets.

You will be working with your goal sheets to complete this exercise. It is our hope that this exercise will help you think through your goals: why they are important to you, where they come from, whether they are viable or not, etc. Again, **do this**

without looking at your mate’s worksheet!

Place a star (*) beside the **4 goals** you feel are most important to your marriage. Then number them in order of importance — 1 through 4.

Place a zero (0) beside the **two goals** you would be willing to live without if it were absolutely necessary. These, of course, should be chosen from the remaining five goals. This does not eliminate these two goals. It is simply a tool to help you decide which are the least and which are the most important.

Place a dollar sign (\$) beside each goal that costs money.

Place a “P” beside those influenced by your parents, from either a negative or positive point of view. Positive: “I want to have family devotions just like my parents had with me.” Or negative: “I want to have family devotions because my parents never had them, and I don’t want our children to miss out.”

Place an “S” beside those you think your spouse has written down. No peeking!

Place a cross (+) beside the goals you feel God considers important. You might mark only a few or all of them. Think carefully and answer honestly.

Write a few sentences about one of your goals. Choose whichever one you wish and write two or three sentences explaining the importance of that goal to your marriage.

WRAP UP: Using your goal sheets, answer the following questions:

1. **Compare your goals. Which ones are the same?**

2. **Compare and discuss your four most important goals. Why are they the most important?**

Wife: _____

Husband: _____

Would you like them to be mutual goals?

Wife: _____

Husband: _____

3. **Together, choose one goal to work on mutually. Discuss a plan of action to accomplish it.**

Write that mutual goal here:

Pray over your goal sheets, asking God to help you keep your goals and promises. Then tape them both to the front of your refrigerator or bathroom mirror. Don’t stick them in a drawer and forget about them. Keep your goals (and your goal sheets) in plain sight.

REFLECT TOGETHER: Read Daniel 1:8-16. What goal had Daniel set for himself? (v. 8) Was it realistic, specific and time limited? (vv. 11-14) Was it a goal God considered important? Did God honor Daniel’s goal? (vv. 15-16)

PRAY TOGETHER: Oh, God, we want to “be resolved” like Daniel to follow through on our goals. Thank You that we, like Daniel, can experience the rewards of fulfilling our goals.

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Goal Worksheet

SPIRITUAL

PARENTING/FAMILY

VOCATIONAL

PHYSICAL



SOCIAL

FINANCIAL

EMOTIONAL

RECREATIONAL