

Workshop 3: Goal Setting

One of the most important tools in supporting us to self-manage, when we live with long term health condition, is goal setting.

Goals focus our attention on something we want. If that something is important to us, we are more likely to put our efforts into achieving it. If it is something we have chosen, not something someone tells us we have to do, we are even more likely to succeed.

Achieving a goal we have chosen, which we feel is important and worthwhile to us, demonstrates to ourselves and to other people, that we are able to overcome problems and obstacles and be successful. Setting goals which we choose is a key self-management tool

A goal which is slightly challenging but which is achievable if we are willing to put in the effort is likely to bring the most benefit, both in what we achieve and in how we feel about ourselves when we succeed.

Goals help us to:

- Identify what we want
- Make a plan to get there
- Move to action
- Keep going until the goal is reached or a better one identified

Research has shown that people are most likely to stick to a plan if they have identified and chosen their own goals. A goal may be a short, medium or long-term aim.

Collaboratively setting goals with family and those close to us or our care team helps to ensure that the goals we set are relevant and important to us and allows them to help by supporting us.

Setting and reaching goals allows us to gain more control over the changes that living with a long term condition brings; it also enhances our self-esteem and self-confidence.

Goals can relate to any area of life. Some goals we might choose to work on may be around the medical side of the condition – for example managing our medication well- but they can be for any aspect of our lives where we wish to make changes or achieve something.

A goal could be to do something differently rather than something completely new. An example of this might be:

“Instead of worrying about my next meeting with the consultant, I am going to spend ten minutes writing down the things I want to talk about in the meeting.”

There are three steps towards identifying and setting a goal;

Set a reasonable goal: the goal should relate to a positive change and should make sense to us within our own life.

Plan: Break the goal into smaller steps, 'do-able' chunks – this is the **plan**

Carry out the plan: Taking it one step at a time, learning from setbacks

Use this space to identify some of your goals:

1)

2)

3)