

Goals by Brian Tracy

Book Summary and Review

Summary

Chapter 1: Get Started: Unlock Your Potential

What we get in life is a result about what we think about. Look around yourself and think about what you have achieved. It all started as a thought. Your actions and their results all began as thoughts. Successful people think about the things they want and how to get them rather than the things they don't want.

Determining your goals allows you to focus your energy and achieve them. Even if we are not consciously setting goals, we will work to achieve them. For some of us our unconscious goals are to watch TV and relax, so we end up watching TV and relaxing. Our mind has the automatic ability to pursue and achieve whatever goals we set for ourselves.

Brian Tracy lists 4 reasons people don't set goals.

1. They think goals aren't important.
2. They don't know how.
3. They have fear of failure.
4. They have a fear of rejection.

Setting goals and working towards them can help us to be happy. We feel happy when we are working on a goal that is important to us.

The end of the chapter lists several questions that are helpful to get you started in brainstorming some goals.

Chapter 2: Take Charge of Your Life

The most important thing you can do to be successful and happy is to take personal responsibility for your life. You must get rid of your negative emotions because these hold you back from achieving success and happiness.

Brian Tracy explains that there are four causes of negative emotions: justification, rationalization, hypersensitivity, and blaming. Justification is feeling that you have a reason to be angry or upset. Rationalization is giving excuses for your bad behavior. Hypersensitivity is when you are concerned with how others treat you. Blaming is when we believe that other people are the cause of our problems.

All of these 4 causes of negative emotions are a failure to take responsibility. By taking responsibility we have more control over our lives. Now you can take your positive energy and apply it to achieving your goals! You will be much happier as a person who takes responsibility and achieves your goals.

Now that you are in control, you should view yourself as the president of your life and career. You get to design the strategy and tactics to take your every area of your life and career where you want to go.

Psychologists have determined that something called “locus of control” is the determining factor of your happiness. People who have an internal locus of control feel in complete control of their lives and are self directed. These people are the happiest. Those who have an external locus of control feel like they don’t have any control. They believe that other people and circumstances control their life and are the least happy. Taking responsibility gives you an internal locus of control and makes you happier.

The end of the chapter gives several questions to help you take charge of your life.

Chapter 3: Clarify Your Values

Before we can begin setting goals, we must be clear on what our values are. Our values determine our beliefs, which determine our expectations, which determine our attitude, which determines our actions.

It is very common for people to pursue goals that are not in alignment with their values. This leads to wasted years and disappointment. Understand your values first, and then set goals which are aligned with your values.

It’s important to determine your values and organize them by priority. Then organize your life around these values.

What are you most proud of? What do you want to be remembered for? Answering these questions can help you determine your values.

Integrity is living in a way that matches your values. Living with integrity leads to more satisfaction and happiness in life.

Chapter 4: Analyze your beliefs

What we believe determines what we get out of life. We all have “self-limiting beliefs”. These are beliefs about ourselves that stop us from moving forward. All or most of these beliefs may be false, but if we believe them they become true because they limit us. Changing these beliefs is important so that we can achieve more in our life.

By deciding on the image of who we want to be, we can then act consistently with this image. This will help us to gain confidence and become the person we want to be.

Chapter 5: Create Your Own Future

In order to achieve great goals, you must decide where you want to go. It's important to know what you want, so that you can then work on how to get there. Make sure you know your ideal future. You can do some brainstorming of your ideal future by assuming you have no limits. If you could achieve anything what would your ideal future look like?

Chapter 6: Determine Your True Goals

One of the most difficult things to do is to determine your goals and be specific about what it is you want.

Brian Tracy says there are 7 keys to effective goal setting.

1. "Goals must be clear, specific, detailed and written down."
2. "Goals must be measurable and objective."
3. "Goals must be time bounded, with schedules, deadlines, and subdeadlines."
4. "Goals must be challenging."
5. "Goals must be congruent with your values and in harmony with each other."
6. "Goals must be balanced."
7. "You must have a major definite purpose for your life."

Brian Tracy also has 12 steps to set and achieve goals.

1. Have the desire for a goal.
2. Believe you can achieve you goal.
3. Write down your goal.
4. Determine where you are starting from.
5. Decide why you want to achieve the goal.
6. Set a deadline and subdeadlines for achieving the goal.
7. Identify the obstacles to achieving your goal.
8. Decide what new knowledge, information and skills you need to reach your goal.
9. Decide whose help you will need to achieve your goal.
10. Make a plan to achieve your goal.
11. Visualize your goal every day.
12. Decide to never give up.

Chapter 7: Decide Upon Your Major Definite Purpose

You should have one goal this is most important to you right now. Once you determine this goal, you should think about it as much as possible. Keep reviewing the goal and asking yourself how you can achieve it. Take the steps necessary to move toward that goal. Your brain has a way of helping you pay attention to things which will help you achieve what you are focused on.

Make your goal attainable, but not too easy. If a goal is too difficult it will not motivate you because you will not believe it is possible.

Chapter 8: Start at The Beginning

It is important to assess where you are currently at in your life. A concept that Brian Tracy explains is “Zero-Based Thinking”. He encourages you to take an honest look at your life, and ask yourself “Knowing what I now know, is there anything that I am doing today that I wouldn’t start again if I had to do it over?” After you answer that question it’s important to face reality and figure out how to remove those things from your life. These can be difficult realities to face as it may mean admitting you are in the wrong career, or have the wrong friends. Despite the fact that you have spent a lot of time or resources developing these things, it’s important to cut ties and move on to what you should be doing. Don’t waste more time and resources continuing something you don’t want to be doing.

Assess your current skills. What skills do you have and what skills do you lack. What are the skills you need to perform at a high level in your job? Which of these are you weakest in? You must find a way to improve your skills especially those which you are weak in.

Chapter 9: Set and Achieve All Your Financial Goals

This chapter walks you through the 12 steps of goal setting and achieving related to your financial goals.

Chapter 10: Become an Expert in Your Field

You can become an expert in your field. Keep in mind that every expert started at the bottom. They had to learn and practice in order to become an expert.

Learning is critical to become an expert in your field. Formal education is not necessarily critical. You must become a lifelong learner.

While it makes sense to focus your efforts on a field that you are naturally good at, you must also identify any areas you are weak in that are critical to becoming an expert in your field. You must learn and practice until you develop these critical skills.

Identifying your talents and gifting will help you determine what field to become an expert in. You must continue to learn and grow especially in the areas that are holding you back in that field. Anything can be learned with enough time and diligence.

Chapter 11: Improve Your Family Life and Relationships

Your family life and relationships is one of the most important areas that determine your happiness. Setting and achieving goals in this area is critical to your happiness and to be able to achieve your goals in other areas.

This chapter walks through the 12 steps of goal setting and achieving as it relates to your family life and relationship goals.

One concept I found helpful was that you should schedule your vacations a year in advance and pay for them in advance. This ensures that they will happen.

Chapter 12: Optimize Your Health and Wellness

Your health has a large impact on your happiness and success in life. Fortunately, you have a large amount of control over your health. Nutrition, exercise and control of the mind are critical to good health.

This chapter walks through the 12 steps of goals setting and achieving as it relates to you health and wellness goals.

Chapter 13: Measure Your Progress

By making your goals clear and specific you can measure your progress towards these goals. Measuring your progress toward your goals is important in achieving them. Make sure you know what specific progress you expect of yourself in relation to each of your goals.

Commitment to a goal is important before your subconscious mind can begin to work on completing a goal.

Completion of your tasks and goals is an important way to stay motivated. If you never fully complete your goals and tasks, you will not get the psychological benefits that come from completing things. When you create your goals make sure you define what completed is for each goal.

Chapter 14: Remove the Roadblocks

On the journey toward your goals you will encounter many things that get in the way of achieving your goals. It's important to identify these roadblocks, find the one that is the biggest limiting factor and focus your energy on eliminating or getting through that roadblock.

The biggest 'bottleneck' is the one you should focus your energy on. Eliminating your biggest obstacle in achieving your goal becomes your goal. Focus your mind on how you

can solve these problems and obstacles and focus your energy on eliminating them. This will allow you to move forward faster.

When you come up with solutions, don't just come up with one solution, come up with as many solutions as you can think of then choose the best one. It may help to define the problem in different ways as you think of solutions.

Chapter 15: Associate with the Right People

The relationships you build have a dramatic effect on your ability to be successful and achieve your goals. Make sure you are building relationships with people that are positive and optimistic. Sometimes it can feel like a waste of time to build relationships because the payoff is often delayed. Don't neglect building relationships or you will hinder your ability to achieve your goals.

Chapter 16: Make a Plan of Action

Before you begin to take action on your goal, you should create a detailed plan of action. Your plan will change and evolve after you start action, but the process of planning will save you a significant amount of time and make it more likely that you are able to reach your goal by your deadline.

You may want to consider brainstorming several ways to achieve your goal before you begin to create your plan.

The steps to creating a plan are listing every task, determining the priority and sequence of each task and identifying the limiting factors.

As you plan your project focus on the solution you are trying to achieve. Make sure you get your plan down on paper. Don't keep your plan in your head. Even your thinking should be done on paper. You can continually refine your thinking on paper as you create your plan.

Anyone who will be helping to execute the plan should be involved in planning process as their perspectives will help to build a better plan.

Chapter 17: Manage Your Time Well

After setting your goals, you must learn how to get your work done to achieve them. Learning to manage your time can help you get the right things done in order to achieve your goals.

Time management starts with identifying your current most important goal. This goal will change, but focusing on one important goal at a time you will achieve results much quicker. After you have decided on the goal that is top priority review your tasks and

mark any that will move you to that goal. Make sure you are working on the tasks that move you towards your goal.

Planning is an important time management skill. Plan out the tasks you will do each day before you begin. Planning your day the night before is a good way to allow your subconscious mind to begin working on the tasks of the next day so you can hit the ground running the next day. When planning your day, make sure to identify the small number of items on your list that will have the biggest impact on moving you toward your goals. Make those items a priority in your day.

Focusing on one task until it is complete is a good skill to learn. Take your concentration and work on one problem or task until you are done with it or unable to go any further. This usually is a much more effective use of time than bouncing around from task to task. In order to do this effectively you will need to carve out large chunks of time from your schedule.

The book says: Thomas Edison once wrote, “My success is due more to my ability to work continuously on one thing without stopping than to any other single quality.”

There are always tasks that need to be done that are best done by you, but don't forget to delegate and find ways to stop doing the tasks that are not contributing toward reaching your goals.

Completing tasks is a powerful source of energy. Keep moving through the day and get started even when your energy is low.

Chapter 18: Review Your Goals Daily

In order for your powerful mind to be at work on your goals, you should review them daily. You can write your goals down and review them when you get up in the morning and before you go to bed at night.

Another highly effective method for reviewing and refining your goals is to write down your 10 to 15 most important life goals every day. Do this without looking at what you wrote the day before. Over time certain goals will begin to emerge and eventually you will be writing almost the same thing each day. This process will help you to focus on your goals.

When you write out your goals you should write them in “the positive, present, and personal tenses.”

To make your goals positive, write what you want rather than what you don't want. For example you can say “I am kind and patient” rather than saying “I am not angry.”

To make your goals present tense, write them as if they are already here. For example you can say “I am exercising 30 minutes every day” rather than saying “I will exercise 30 minutes every day”.

To make your goal personal use “I”. You can say “I read for 30 minutes daily” rather than saying “My goal is to read for 30 minutes daily”.

If you can, add a specific deadline to the end of your goal it can make it more effective.

Chapter 19: Visualize Your Goals Continually

In order to achieve your goals, you should visualize them frequently. This helps you to focus on your goals and to make them more detailed and specific. Be careful not to visualize negative things as this sets your focus on things you don't want. Worry is a form of negative visualization.

Chapter 20: Activate Your Superconscious Mind

Your superconscious mind or your intuition can help you figure out how to reach your goals faster.

The first way to activate your superconscious mind is to focus completely on reaching your goal. As obstacles to your goal arise, focus your mind on how to overcome the obstacles.. The second method to activate your superconscious mind is to stop thinking about your goal and do something else. Sometimes stepping away from your goal and no longer directly thinking about it allows your superconscious mind to come up with solutions.

Chapter 21: Persist Until You Succeed

The number one factor in achieving success is persistence in the face of fears, problems and obstacles in the way of your goals. It is often in the difficulties that we learn most quickly.

Learn to focus on your goals and become courageous. Courage is the ability to face your fears and move forward despite them. When we are tired or unhealthy, our fears can have a greater grip on us. Make sure to get enough sleep, rest, exercise and healthy food. This can help you continue to move forward in spite of your fears.

Conclusion: Take Action Today

The most important factor in achieving success is taking action. Make sure you become an action taker. Your goals are important, but action is what moves you to your goals.

Review

Goals by Brian Tracy is a great book if you are interested in learning how to set and achieve your goals. There are practical steps laid out in the book as well as inspirational quotes and concepts.

One of the most helpful things that I learned was that when we are clear about our goals, our brain begins to work towards those goals consciously and unconsciously.

Another helpful concept was that the more we take responsibility for our lives and what happens in them the more successful we become. When we feel more in control of our lives we are also happier.

This was an excellent book for understanding the concepts of goal setting and achieving. It also helped me to set my own goals through the practical exercises in each chapter.

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