



## Setting goals

The Asteron *Life!* program is all about getting you to make lifestyle changes that will improve you and your family's quality life. This all sounds great, however the part people struggle with the most is actually changing their habits.

Did you know that 95% of all new years resolutions are never achieved? (How many have you achieved lately?) One of the reasons for this is that we don't set the right kind of goals.

A fundamental step in changing behaviour is to **set clear goals** around what we want to do. This can seem a little daunting, but don't worry, setting goals is not that scary! We set goals every day. It maybe as simple as; "Before I go home from work today, I'm going to finish that report and file all those papers." Goals are how we get organised, take ownership of our work and home lives, and achieve things. It's exactly the same when you want to start changing your lifestyle.

A big danger with changing our lifestyle is that other people start setting our goals for us. When other people take control of our goals we feel disempowered. Research tells us that we achieve much more when we are in charge of the goal setting process. By all means listen to all the experts and take their advice on board, then use this information to work out what YOU will do.

With our clients we have found that a person with a clear goal around what they are going to do are much more likely to stick to it.

So how do we do it? There is a 2-step process to setting goals.

### Step 1:

Understand the difference between 'goal' and 'outcome'. An outcome might be 'I want to lose 10 kilograms'. Goals are the actions and steps you will take towards the outcome you want. These could be things like 'exercising five times a week for thirty minutes'.

A goal has to be something that you can control. 'Weight loss' is not recommended as a goal, because it is influenced by so many variables – what you eat, how much you exercise, your metabolism, other medical conditions and so on. Think of weight loss as an outcome that is influenced by setting goals around what you CAN control, such as cutting out soft drink, limiting your alcohol intake to 3 drinks per week.

### Step 2:

When you set goals, you want to set SMART goals – specific, measurable, attractive, realistic and timetabled.

**Specific** – Don't be wishy-washy ('I'll exercise more'). Be specific ('I'll exercise five times a week for 30 minutes').

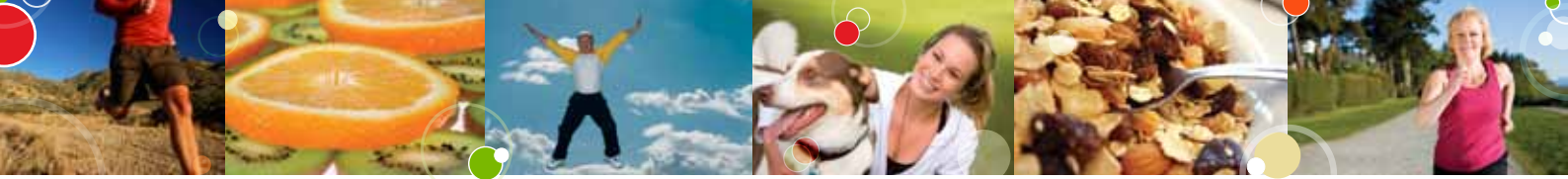
**Measurable** – You need to know if you have achieved your goal, so make sure it can be measured.

**Attractive** – You are more likely to do what you need to do if the result of doing so is appealing.

**Realistic** – You must be able to achieve the goal. Nothing is more demoralising than failing to achieve a goal!

**Timetabled** – When you want to complete the goal.

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Here's an example of a poor goal.

"This year I will exercise more and lose some weight and get fitter." It's a nice thought, but what exactly will you be doing to achieve it?

Here's a **SMART** goal:

**S** – I want to do exercise on a regular basis

**M** – I will exercise 3 times per week for 20 minutes each time

**A** – This exercise will improve my mood so I am nicer to be around, it will help me to lose weight and then I will feel better about my appearance. Also I know that when I exercise I have more energy, which enables me to get more out of life.

**R** – I have been exercising twice a week for fifteen minutes regularly, so I think this increase is a manageable one.

**T** – I will follow this goal for the next month then reevaluate my position.

Use the below Goal Template to map out your goal!

### Goal Template

<p><b>Specific:</b> What exactly am I going to do?</p>	
<p><b>Measurable:</b> How will I know I achieved it?</p>	
<p><b>Attractive:</b> What is my reason for doing it?</p>	
<p><b>Realistic:</b> Am I stretching too far, which region does my goal fall into (ideally want it to be in stretch)</p>	
<p><b>Time Dependent:</b> What is the time frame?</p>	