



ELITE PERFORMANCE SERIES

Sports Psychology



GOALS: EXERCISE # 1

Goal Identification

It is theorized that all human behaviors and actions begin with some kind of *intention* of accomplishing something, i.e. a goal. From unconscious, automatic, instinctual motor skills like breathing to stay alive, to very specific directed actions like choosing a shirt, going for a run, or selecting a college we all pursue a means to an end. If this is true then we indeed all set goal after goal, from major to minuet.

This exercise is designed to illustrate how to set goals and to help you to find a new comfort level with goal uses. It should be done at the end of the day. The exercise itself is a review (or preview) of your day in as much detail as you can remember from the perspective of carrying out your intentions. You will need a pen or pencil, a piece of paper, and a place to reflect and write (If you choose to do this exercise at the beginning of your day list what you think you are going to do, and why).

Start with " I awakened". Then what happened, and why? Step by step, what did you do and why did you do it? (Another level of detail would be how (process) you did something.)

- 1.
- 2.
- 3... and so on

Some common daily activities you might consider:

- Eating
- Moving from place to place
- Communication
- Conditioning
- Spending
- Resting

Some questions you might ask yourself:

- Did I do anything without intending to do it?
- What did I intend to do today? Did I do it?
- How do the big goals effect the little actions?
- How did the little actions contribute to the bigger, longer-range goals?
 - Did I do something that contributed to my fitness goal?
 - My academic goals?
 - My social or family goals?
 - My mental skills goals? (Yes, you did.)
- If something happened unexpectedly, by accident, or without intention how did it affect the course of the day and what I was going to do?

Of course, it is possible to carry any single component of a program too far, to unproductive lengths. This exercise is not intended to cause you to obsess about setting goals but to illustrate the naturalness of setting and achieving intentions in everyday life and then to help you apply that skill to your athletic endeavors.