

Top Tips For Family Goal Setting

Dr Kate Owen
Clinical Psychologist and Family Therapist



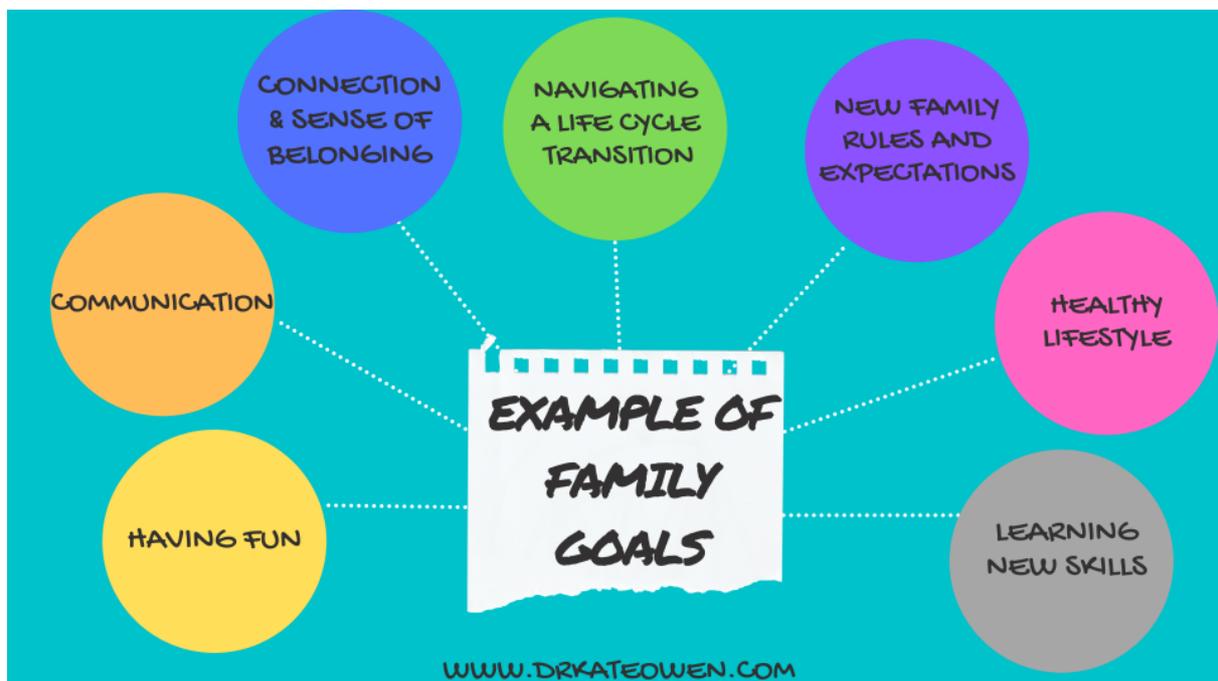
Top Tips For Family Goal Setting

SMARTER is a great acronym to help you and your family set goals.

SPECIFIC Goals

- Make sure your goal is clearly defined.
- Family goals work best when it is a SHARED common goal that everyone agrees on.
- Quantify the goal - consider "who" is involved, "what" do you want to accomplish, "when" will it happen, and "where" will it happen.
- A great question to ask your family is "If we had a movie of us achieving our goal, what would we see on the screen?".
- Always frame your goal in the positive - what do you want as a family as opposed to what you want to stop.
- Prioritise your family goals and work on one or two goals at a time.

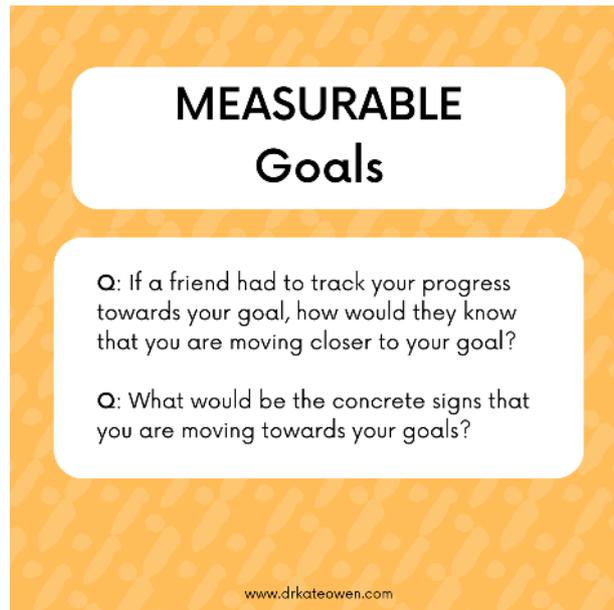
Examples Of Family Goals



Top Tips For Family Goal Setting

MEASURABLE Goals

- Make sure your family can measure the progress towards your goal.
- Talk as a family and decide on what the concrete markers of "success" would look like.



ACHIEVABLE Goals

- Set an achievable and moderate family goal that is realistic and attainable.
- Consider what resources your family needs to achieve the goal and if you have access to these.
- Sometimes it is useful to break goals into smaller goals and start with an easy first step.
- Consider the developmental needs and abilities of each family member - make sure that you are setting up your family for success.

Top Tips For Family Goal Setting

RELEVANT Goals

- Make sure that your goal is important, significant, and relevant to you and your family.
- Is the family goal worth the time and effort from everyone involved?
- Ask each family member WHY the goal is important to them.
- Choose goals that align with your family values.



TIMEFRAME On Goals

- Get your family to decide on a timeframe in which to achieve the goal.
- Write it down.
- If the goal is long-term, consider breaking down your family goal into smaller goals across time.

Top Tips For Family Goal Setting

EVALUATE Goals

- Regularly review your family goal altogether and evaluate progress.
- Make adjustments as needed.
- Discuss what is working well - and do more of it.
- Discuss what needs to change.
- Discuss if the goal is still relevant and important to your family.
- Don't be hard on yourselves if you need to adjust or even abandon your family goal.

REWARD Goals

- Reward progress towards your family goal to keep motivation high.
- Discuss with your family what reward schedule would work best - daily rewards, weekly rewards, etc.
- Celebrate once you have achieved your family goal in a meaningful way - plan this in advance.
- When you spontaneously reward your family members with praise, gratitude, acts of kindness, or small gifts, they will receive a big hit of dopamine. Dopamine is a molecule of motivation and reward in the central nervous system.

Top Tips For Family Goal Setting

More Goal Setting Tips

- A family goal focuses on the whole family unit and not just one person.
- Consider how you will plan the steps to achieve your family goal. Will you plan one small step towards the goal, and then decide what happens next? Or will you decide on the endpoint and work your way backward?
- Visualising achieving your goal provides great motivation to get your family started. Draw a picture of your family achieving the goal, or create a vision board with symbols of the goal.
- Talk as a family about what would be the downside of not achieving the family goal. This will provide motivation by considering the consequences of stopping.
- If your family goal is a specific behavioural task, watch videos of other people completing the task, and then visualise the family completing the task.
- Brainstorm ways of keeping the family accountable for working on the goal. Consider telling friends and family about the goal.
- When your family is living a healthy lifestyle (e.g., sleep, diet, exercise, connection, fun, and downtime) they will be in a better position to focus on the goal.
- Family goals only work when everyone is on board.

Top Tips For Family Goal Setting

Prepare For Obstacles

Obstacles and challenges are common, so predict as a family what could potentially get in the way of achieving the family goal. Decide what steps you can take to keep on track.

PREPARE FOR OBSTACLES

What obstacles can you predict will get in the way of achieving your goals?
What steps will you take to keep on track?

- Possible obstacles** (Icon: Spiderweb)
- What Can I Do?** (Icon: Clipboard with checklist)
- Who Can I Count On?** (Icon: Family of three)
- What Will Keep me Motivated?** (Icon: Note with text "note to self: DO NOT QUIT")
- Decide If This Goal Is Important To Me** (Icon: Person with question marks above head)

www.drkateowen.com

This booklet is educational in nature and does not constitute therapeutic advice or recommendations. Please seek professional support if required.