GOALS | PERSONAL GROWTH | WISDOM

Creative Goal Setting for Kids and Teens

"What is your secret of being an expert tracker and trail-blazer?" a visitor asked him.

The guide answered: "There is no secret. One must only possess the far vision and the near look.

by **Denis Waitley**

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An Indian guide who displayed uncanny skills in navigating the rugged regions of the Southwest was asked how he did it. "What is your secret of being an expert tracker and trail-blazer?" a visitor asked him.

The guide answered: *"There is no secret. One must only possess the far vision and the near look. The first step is to determine where you want to go. Then you must be sure that each step you take is a step in that direction."*

> **A dream is what you would like for life to be. A Goal is what you intend to make happen. A goal is the near look; what, specifically, you intend to do on a daily basis to get there.**

No matter what their current ages, try to determine the sensory learning style of each of your children: visual, auditory, or kinesthetic. Visual learners understand and remember best what they *see*. Auditory learners prefer to *hear and verbalize* in order to comprehend. Kinesthetic learners need to involve touch and movement into the processing of new concepts, and to learn by doing. All of these styles have some overlap because we all use hearing, seeing and doing. But keep these styles in

mind when you stimulate your children's creative and goal-setting activities.

> **To build a pattern of positive expectations for your children, they need a way to keep score. Children know they are doing well when the task or project is well defined and the goals are clearly stated.**

How can a child experience the thrill of hitting the bull's eye, when he or she doesn't know what the target is? Kids need to see the end before they begin a task or they will lose interest. When you are giving your child a task, such as cleaning her room, be specific in telling her what you want her to do and when you want it done and stick to it. By providing a clear and specific ending, your child can look forward to enjoying time with her friends when the task is completed.

> **Goals are the target of success! Who you see is who you'll be. What you set is what you get. Help your kids get the far vision, the dream.**

Help them get the near look, the steps and action plans that pave the road to their dreams. Participate in your children's games, problem-solving exercises, field trips and creative projects. Instead of telling them how things work, help them learn to discover the "hows" and "whys."

Help your children dream about their future. Set the example by jotting down and cutting pictures out to describe family dreams. Assist them in defining their own goals and writing them down on index cards.

Post the cards in their bedroom or on a board where they can see and review their goals daily.

Help your kids prioritize their goals. Have them consider their goals in the order of their importance. Place beside each written goal, a proposed target date for the attainment of that goal.

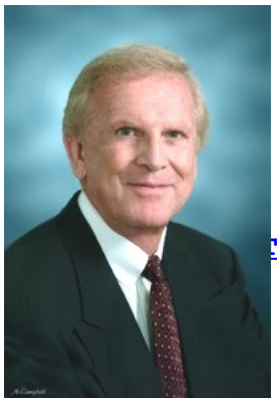
Help your child make plans. Unfortunately, many kids view problems as insurmountable mountains. Your role as parents is to help them view problems as opportunities. Teach them to go over, around, under or to bore a hole right through their roadblocks.

Show children how to prepare a daily "to do" list. In the evening, help prepare a list of a few important things to do the following day. At the end of the day, help them review their progress. By using index cards, you can use a file box to store daily activity cards. Monthly, quarterly and yearly, let them go through the cards in the box, to see all they have accomplished through step-by-step actions.

Help your kids to visualize, in advance, what the accomplishment of their goals looks and feels like. Bedtime is an ideal setting, where you can see in their imaginations where they want to be, what they want to do, and things they will have to work and save for to get.

Build goals and evaluations around the school year. When you go over your child's report card, discuss the goals that he set for himself and how he is doing toward achieving those goals. Share with your child any comments teachers might have regarding his grades.

Kids need rewards and behavior that gets rewarded gets repeated, especially if they understand that the reward is coming when the goal is accomplished. Rewards do not have to be strictly financial, but can be going out for an ice cream or whatever your child enjoys doing. By rewarding goal directed behavior, you are providing additional incentive to achieve almost any goal.



Denis Waitley is one of America's most respected and beloved authors, keynote lecturers and productivity consultants on high performance human achievement. He has inspired, informed, challenged and entertained audiences for over 25 years from the boardrooms of multi-national corporations to the control rooms of NASA's space program. Denis has been voted business speaker of the year by the Sales and Marketing Executives' Association and by Toastmasters' International and inducted into the International Speakers' Hall of Fame.

With over 10 million audio programs sold in 14 languages, Denis Waitley's CD album, *The Psychology of Winning*, is still the all-time best selling program on self-mastery. To order this Best-Seller or his newest release, *The Platinum Collection* and to subscribe to the free Denis Waitley Weekly E-zine visit his website here: DenisWaitley.com