

Walk **NEBRASKA**

Visualize Your Health Goals

One of the most powerful motivational strategies to improve health is visualization. Many successful performers report “seeing” what they want to achieve long before they actually accomplish it. People can alter their lives just by altering their mindset. Mental imagery or visualization is a powerful step in the process of setting and achieving goals. Unfortunately, it is often ignored. All too often, people want to “do something” immediately or they are focused solely on current problems instead of picturing where they want to be in the future.

So how do you get started visualizing improvements to your health? Start by painting a mental picture of your preferred future. See yourself as active and walking 30 minutes a day. Experts also advise visualizing how you will deal with obstacles to your goals. Emotions are an important component of the behavior change process. Visualize, and then verbalize to others, how you think improved health will make you feel. Positive and long-term feelings can be powerful motivators.

Use the worksheet below to get started visualizing your health goal(s). Spaces are provided to write each goal and draw or attach a picture of it. Why include a picture? To remind yourself daily of your future goal(s) because visual cues can help you stay focused. Post the worksheet someplace you’ll see everyday such as a mirror or refrigerator. In order to make behavior changes, you must have a vision of what you want to achieve. Once you “see” it, you can name it, describe it, and take small steps over time to achieve it. Sometimes visualizing negative images can prompt a behavior change.

Visualization Worksheet for Health

1. What will it feel like to achieve your health goals?

2. Write a sentence to describe something you are good at or a past goal that was achieved:

3. Write a sentence that clearly states a health behavior change:

4. Write a positive health behavior in the present tense:

5. Write a negative health behavior in the past tense:

Source: O’Neil, Barbara and Ensle, Karen, “Put Your Mind To It”, Small Steps To Health And Wealth. 2006, Rutgers Cooperative Extension, pages 23-25.

Know how. Know now.



Extension is a Division of the Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources at the University of Nebraska–Lincoln cooperating with the Counties and the United States Department of Agriculture.

University of Nebraska–Lincoln Extension educational programs abide with the nondiscrimination policies of the University of Nebraska–Lincoln and the United States Department of Agriculture.