



10

THINGS THAT STOP YOU GETTING WHAT YOU WANT



A great many people really want to improve an aspect of their health, like losing weight, clearing up their skin, reducing troublesome digestive symptoms. And, while they might have the knowledge of what to do, they don't consistently do it.

Worse still, they actually sabotage their own progress. If you see something of yourself here, read on...



Have you ever heard that little voice in your head that tells you that you deserve a treat? I mean, you've just hiked five miles! Surely, it's okay to celebrate with a cup of tea and a slice of 'Death by Chocolate'?

Have you ever spent January virtually living in the gym, only to find yourself slumped on the sofa, clutching the remote, come February?

Maybe you said: "Enough is enough", dived headfirst into Magic Cleaning, but have been navigating around that pile of clothing in the middle of your bedroom ever since that fateful day?

Let's take a closer look at the top ten reasons why it is that we know exactly what to do but are just not doing it – and, of course, the fixes you can use to get what it is that you want with more flow, ease and consistency.

1 It wasn't your idea...

Did your doctor tell you that you need to lose weight to get your blood pressure down? Did your boss send you on a management course, so you can lead a team and advance your career? Did your kids advise you to go vegan to save the planet?

That's excellent advice and following it would be to your advantage, but weight loss, studying or going vegan doesn't always come easy. Unless you decide that that is what you want, it'll be tough to get yourself motivated and sustain momentum.



The fix: Making it your idea

Not everything other people think would be good for us really is. If, for example, your partner recommends cosmetic surgery because that would make him love you more, that is not a goal you will consider (I hope).

However, if your doctor is concerned about your blood pressure and advises you to lose weight, it's a different matter.

Of course, it makes complete sense, and you have a go but falter after just two weeks because weight loss can be really hard sometimes. Health should be motivation enough to hang in there, but let's face it, for many people, it just isn't.

But what if you could come up with a reason for weight loss that inspires YOU?

Sit down with a pen and paper and list all the advantages of losing weight that you can think of. Then take another look at your list and see whether you can see anything there that would motivate you MORE than optimum blood pressure.



If you lost weight, perhaps you would be able to run around the park with your kids again. Being lighter could enable you to join your family hillwalking, rather than just pack their lunches and wave them off.

Maybe this positive change would allow you to take up horse-riding again. And, yes, perhaps carrying off the latest fashion motivates you to lose weight more than health reasons would. So what? Whatever pulls your chain. But finding YOUR OWN reason should be the first step towards your goal.

2 It doesn't tally with your values


Everyone has a personal value system, which developed over the course of their lives and depends on their experiences, our circumstances and their family's values.

While one person may attach great importance to material wealth and money, other may not consider it important at all. If you are not entirely behind the 'cause', you may struggle to keep going.

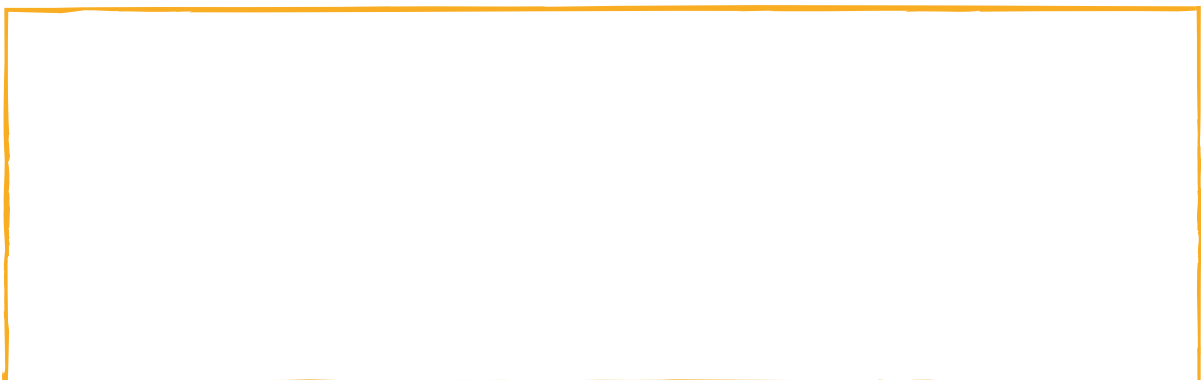
The fix: Get clear about your values

Examples of values are family, loyalty, honesty, compassion, health, freedom etc. Let's take a look at that in a little more depth.

Identify your top 8 - 10 values



Prioritise: Compare one with another
- select which is most important until you've reduced them to your top 5



3 The goal is too lofty

Having aspirations is a wonderful thing. We should all strive to better ourselves and realise our dreams. However, you need to keep our feet on the ground. If you set yourself the goal to learn how to play the saxophone with the aim of joining a jazz band, touring New York clubs and by next year, you may be overstretching yourself a bit – and that can be the exact opposite of empowering.

Although you may be a great talent, it is doubtful that you'd meet that goal, and realising that at some stage may put you off playing the saxophone altogether. Which would be a shame.

The fix: Set SMART goals

Research shows you are 80% more likely to achieve your goals if you:

- Make them SMARTER.
- Write them down.
- Make a contract to achieve them.

What are **SMARTER** goals?

SPECIFIC - "Lose weight" or "get fit" is not specific.

"Lose a stone" or "Run 5k" is.

MEASURABLE – weight, waist circumference, minutes run, number of steps ...

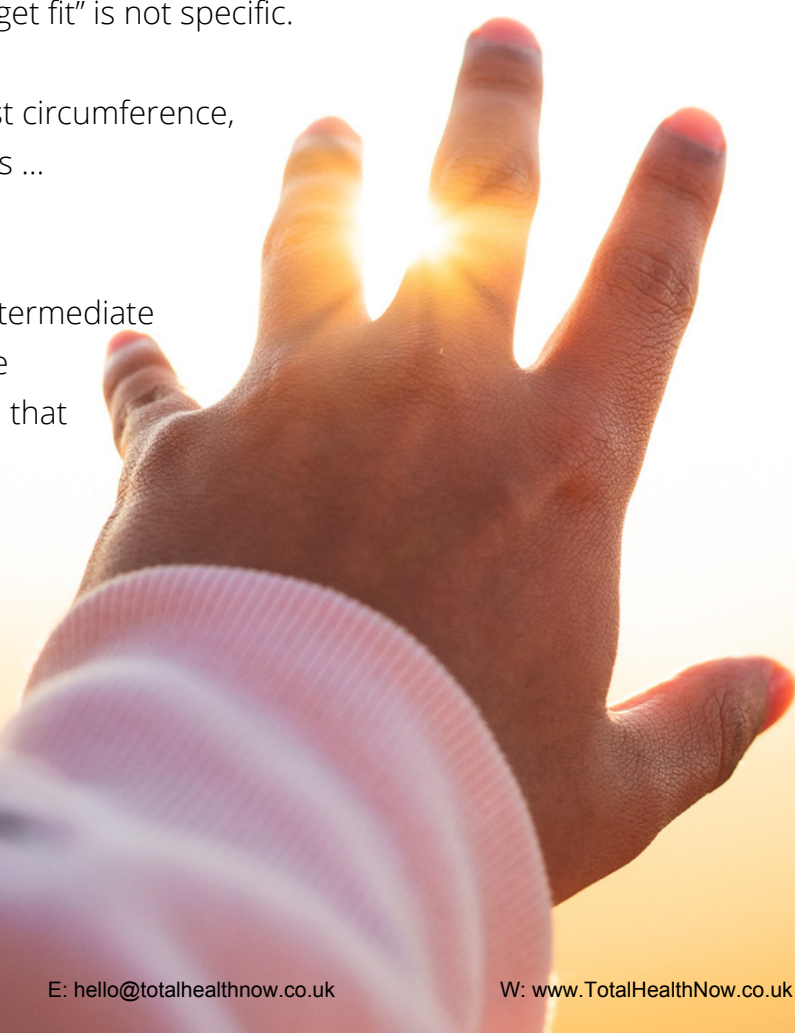
ACHIEVABLE – see #5

REALISTIC – see #4

TIME-BOUND – A goal (or intermediate goals) should have a deadline

EXCITING - find a motivation that works for you, see #1

REWARDED – see #8



4 The goal is too big

Say you'd like to run the London Marathon next year to get healthy and raise money for your favourite charity at the same time. Excellent idea! Oh, you don't currently run and never have? Ah ...

In that case, your goal may be a little too big. While running a marathon one day is absolutely within your capabilities, next year may be too soon. Signing up and committing may cause you to feel overwhelmed and give up.



The fix: Break it down to baby steps

The thought of running a marathon, sewing a ballgown or giving a 90-minute lecture in front of an academic audiences a little daunting – unless you're already a runner, seamstress or public speaker.

Intermediate goals – aka 'baby steps'– can help. They, too, should be SMARTER (see above), and then they'll help you approach the big goal step by step. For example, you could:

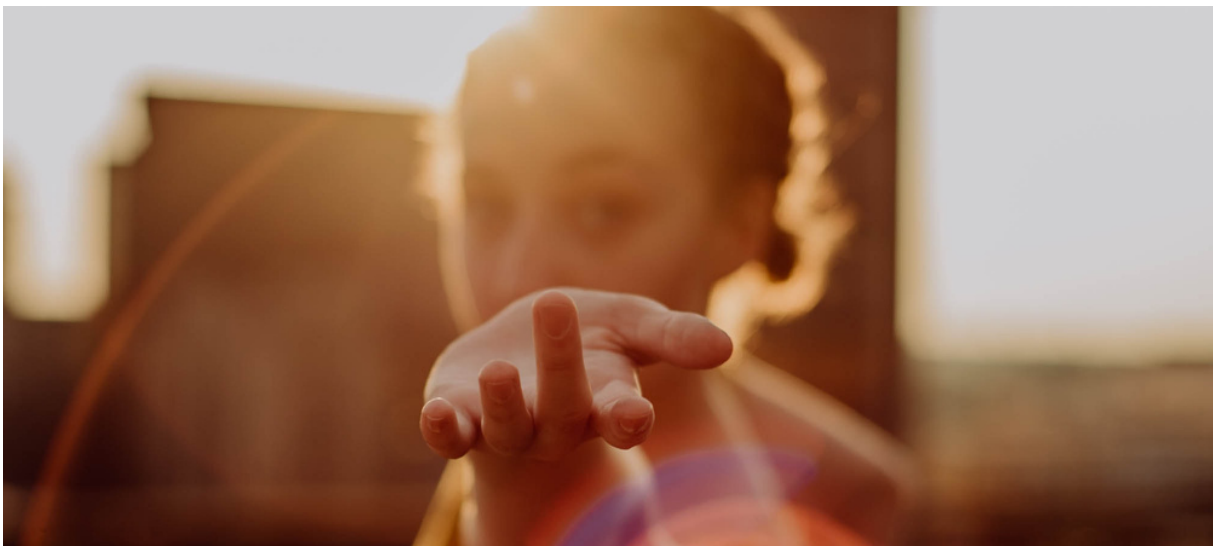
- Get a training plan and start running every day
- Run 5k
- Run 10k
- Run a half-marathon
- Run a marathon

Similarly, try sewing a sofa cushion (skirt, dress, trousers, baby grow, ballgown) or seek opportunities to speak in front of a friendly audience for 1 minute (5 minutes, 15 minutes and so on - there are workshops, clubs and networking groups that allow you to practice).

5 You give up too soon

Giving up too soon is one of the most common reasons you might not achieve the goals you have set yourself. Of course, it makes no sense to strive for a goal that is doomed to failure. You're not going to jive like a pro at your company's Christmas ball if your first dance lesson is tomorrow.

But you CAN learn how to jive, even to competition level, just not overnight. Some things take time, and even things that look easy – say, meditation – take practice. Sadly, many of us lose sight of the goal at the slightest resistance or even when success does not materialise at the expected time.



The fix: Accountability

There are very few people who just decide that they want to do something and then go off and do it. Most of us need some sort of accountability to keep us going, especially if achieving the goal may take some time, and long-term commitment is required.

Some people make a public announcement, e.g. post on social media that they are going to quit smoking or training to climb Mount Kilimanjaro. Others tell a friend or find a buddy.

American writer Gretchen Rubin likes to tell the story where two gym buddies exchanged a trainer after every gym session. That way, they knew that their friend wouldn't be able to train without them and felt obliged to show up every time. Genius! A great way to create accountability for yourself is by working with a coach. Your coach will support you week by week and gently hold you accountable for actions so that you achieve what you want and more.

6 You can't take setbacks

This reason is related to #5 because it is often due to setbacks that people give up prematurely. If that sounds like you, consider that hardly any goal worth reaching is achieved without any setbacks.

Sometimes, we are blinded by the success of others. Maybe you're impressed by a colleague's weight loss success and wish to achieve the same. After all, if she could, why shouldn't you?

Remember, you only see the status quo - she's lost 20lbs. But how she got there - the learning curve, the setbacks, the plateaus she reached on the way to success, the effort and persistence that finally led to the desired weight loss-is something you usually know nothing about. If you admire someone else, be aware that they had setbacks, too, but they kept going.



6 You can't take setbacks

The fix: Track your progress

If you're only keeping your eyes on the prize – in the case of a 20lbs weight loss – it can blind you to the smaller wins along the way. Lost 5lbs? Still 15lbs to go.

But have you noticed that your joints have already stopped hurting? That you no longer get out of breath as you run for the bus? That you now need a belt for the jeans you struggled to button up just a few weeks ago?

Yes, there may be setbacks on the way to your goal but sometimes stop to look back and appreciate what you have already achieved.

If weight loss is your goal, track your progress. If your goal is not weight or health-related, get a notebook and track a parameter relevant to your goal, e. g., the number of steps taken in a day, the minutes or miles run, the minutes meditated, the hours slept, etc.



7 You don't have time

Every goal requires time. You would love to get fit, but where would you find the time to go to the gym between work, family and social commitments? There seems to be little room for manoeuvre, and the goal remains a project.



The fix: Find out where your time goes

As some inspirational quote somewhere on Instagram probably says: “We don't have time; we make time.”

Time is a funny thing. Although it is indisputable that there are 60 minutes in an hour and that a day consists of 24 hours, somehow 20 minutes on the treadmill feel considerably longer than 20 minutes on Netflix.

Also, you thought you were busy when you were working and single and that there wasn't any time left for fun. Who knew that days were long enough to fit in being a working mum? It seems that we can magically squeeze in a) what we HAVE to do (no time for a shower, anyone?) and b) what we WANT to do (social media, TV).

So, if you struggle to find the time to realise your goal, ask yourself whether you really want it (see #1 and #2). Is the answer yes? Then how about tracking your time for just a week or so to find out where it goes? A simple notebook will do, but there are also (free) apps for that, of course.

Time tracking can help you identify where you may be wasting time, find areas where you may be able to delegate, highlight areas you devote time to that are not that important, or just show you that you magically find the time to spend 2 hours a day on social media or in front of the telly. No judgement. We all do it.



You lack discipline

There are some goals you feel passionate about. You tackle those with great enthusiasm and drive, so you are literally carried across the finish line. But such goals are the exception rather than the rule. If passion and enthusiasm are missing, a good deal of self-discipline may be required, which you might consider you lack.





You lack discipline

The fix: Reward yourself

Building in ways of making yourself feel good is essential for several reasons. You need to positively reinforce the tremendous changes you are making to encourage yourself to maintain them long term.

That means you'll want to create appropriate ways of making yourself feel better or to celebrate progress. Far better to choose to spend 5 minutes relaxing in the sunshine in the garden to recharge your batteries than to grab a glass of wine.

Most of the time, it's as simple as putting in a new habit to replace the old one. And even better when the new habit is one that you really enjoy!

Spend some time identifying some activities that you can build into your daily life that you enjoy and can use as your reward, a de-stressor, a way of taking a break, or just to have 5 minutes of indulgence or peace!

WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO SPEND MORE TIME DOING?

WHAT WOULD MAKE YOU FEEL GOOD?

WHAT WOULD HELP YOU RELAX OR DE-STRESS?

A few examples:

- Go to see a movie
- 15 minutes unstructured time to do what you want
- Read something uplifting and absorbing
- Phone a friend you love talking to
- Go for a walk in nature

Add your own. Think of at least 5 things or activities that lift your spirits and make you feel good.

Your monthly healthy habit tracker

habit

1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30

habit

1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30

Goal

Goal

Reward

Reward

9 You don't have a plan

"If you're failing to plan, you are planning to fail."
(Benjamin Franklin)

Any goal is reached by taking one step at a time. Even though this may sound obvious, some people find a structured approach hard. A planned approach proves more difficult, the more individual steps are needed to reach the goal. If you lose track of the next necessary steps or measures, your goal is likely to slip from your grasp.



The fix: Make a plan

1. Grab another sheet of paper and draw a table of four columns with the headings Goal – Deadline – How? – What can go wrong?/What if ...
2. Fill the table writing down your (SMARTER) goals (column 1), including intermediate steps (also column 1), if any.
3. Set deadlines by which you want to achieve your goal(s)
4. Under "How", write down what needs to happen to achieve the goal(s)
5. Under "What if ...", imagine what could go wrong and what you'll do then. That way, you won't get caught out.

9 You don't have a plan

"The fix: Make a plan"

Here's an example:

Say you have decided to walk 10,000 steps every day (This is your **goal**). You'll start immediately and do this for one month (**deadline**), after which it will be a habit. You know you'll only walk about 5,000 steps getting to and from work and at work. That means you'll have to go for a walk every day (this is **how** you achieve it).

Column 4: What could go wrong?

- You may have to work overtime and not have time to do your walk. – "Then I'll walk home instead of taking the bus. Or I'll go for a walk after dinner."
- It may rain. – "Then I'll wear my wellies and raincoat."
- In the autumn and winter, walking after work means walking after dark. – "Then I'll walk at lunchtime."
- You may not have time because you are meeting a friend for coffee. "Then we'll grab a coffee to go and chat while walking."



10 You're going it alone

Every goal is easier to achieve with support. Perhaps you see it as a form of motivation if you insist on going it alone. Wouldn't it be great to prove to others or yourself that you can do it? It certainly would, but why struggle? Why not make your life easier by getting support?



The fix: Book a complimentary call with me

Let's work together to tackle all aspects of what I've been talking about above. I'll bring the knowledge of what to eat for your goals, and support you to create healthy habits that last. I'll also be your cheerleader if you experience any barriers or setbacks that look like they might stand in the way of you achieving your goals. Now is exactly the right time for a brand new you: new diet, new attitude and new healthy lifestyle habits.

Contact me under ***hello@totalhealthnow.co.uk*** to book your free Health & Energy Review call.