

Tips for Goals

- Break down the big picture into small, manageable tasks.
- Do something towards your goal every day, even if it's a very small thing.
- Use a timer to set a limit on the amount of time you spend organizing. This is particularly helpful if you have difficulties concentrating. If you need to, begin with 10-minute intervals and gradually build up to 30-minute organization sessions.
- Reduce all other distractions: turn off the radio or TV; unplug the phone; position yourself so you can only see the pile you are working on; or put a sheet over the other clutter piles so they do not catch your eye.
- Schedule regular times to work on your goal. A weekly activity schedule can help with this. Think of these as appointments (with yourself) that are important for your well-being. Don't wait until you *feel* like working on it. Motivation usually increases once an activity is started, not before.
- Expect that challenges will come up as you begin to work on your goal. Sometimes the most useful part of achieving your goal is learning how to overcome the difficulties along the way! This allows you to build new skills to sustain the gains you make over time.
- Making changes can be stressful. Practicing self-acceptance and compassion can allow you to appreciate yourself - wherever you are in the process. Reward yourself for the effort you are making.
- Share your goals with people you trust. Enlist their help. Ask them to help with sorting or other organization tasks. Plan to do something fun together as a reward for progress. Ask them to check in regularly on how you're doing.

Consider the big picture:

What do you want your home to be? What do you need to feel good?
What inspires you? How would you use this space without the clutter?
Who do you want to be?

2. Look at the short term:

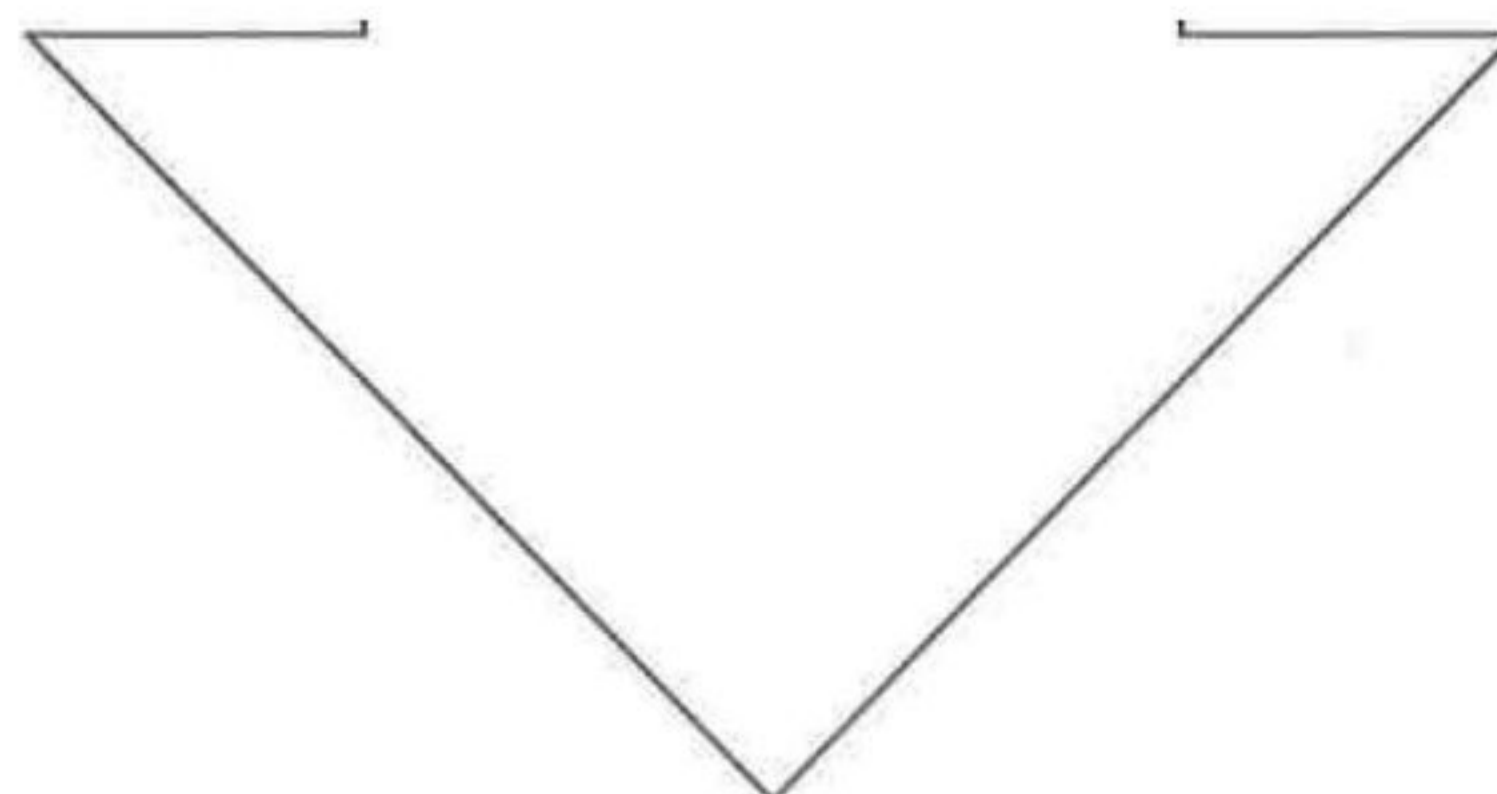
What changes do you want to make in the next three months?
What changes will move you closer to your "big picture" vision?
What does this look like? What actions could you take?

3. Apply the SMART technique:

Goals are easier to reach when clearly defined.

Use the SMART criteria below to help you do this [Schut & Stam, 1994].

- S** Specific.
- M** Measurable. (Involving an observable action, behaviour or result.)
- A** Achievable. Pick something that is within your control to change.
- R** Realistic. Change takes time. Choose goals that are within your reach.
- T** Timely. Choose a goal that makes sense right now. Create a timeframe or a deadline for completing it.



Your SMART goal: _____

Examples:



Big picture: I want to be able to find things; to have an orderly and efficient home. Short term: I will clean out my storage area and sort through my kitchen and office space so I can make meals and get my work done more easily.

SMART: I will dispose of a quarter of my possessions in the storage area within two months.



Big picture: I want to feel more relaxed and at peace at home.

Short term: I will stop bringing things home so the clutter doesn't get worse.

SMART: I will go to discount stores (like Walmart or Zellers) three times a week without buying anything or bringing anything home for the next month.



Big picture: I want to feel comfortable having people over.

Short term: I will learn to let go of things I've become emotionally attached to so I can make room for people in my life.

SMART: Over the next three months I will let go of two items every day that I feel attached to.



Big picture: I want to feel safe in my home and for others around me to feel safe.

Short term: I will clear pathways, doorways and exits; tidy the bathroom; and remove all clutter on top of and around the stove to prevent a fall, fire or flood.

SMART: I will remove all clutter on top of and around the stove within the next ¹ tw 0 weeks. I will do this by: pacing myself, stopping before I feel an increase in pain and accepting help from my neighbour.



Big picture: I want to be creative again with artwork.

Short term: I will pare down the amount of art material and tools I have so I have room to create in.

SMART: I will use the *Questions to Help Sort* sheet in this toolkit, for one hour daily, for the next two weeks, to dispose of half of my found objects and materials.

Implementing Your SMART Goal: The Action Plan

[Adapted from Nezu, Nezu & D'Zurilla, 2007]

Your SMART goal:			
Break your goal down into even smaller steps. (Include the people, places and things you might need to take these steps.) Add a time frame. Consider potential obstacles and solutions. You might need to change your plan over time, but having one gives you a roadmap with a clear direction to take.			
Steps	Time frame	Potential obstacles	Potential solutions
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			
6.			
7.			
8.			