setting and reaching goals

using values, stress management, and teamwork
In this chapter...

you explore answers to the following questions:

- **WHY** are values the foundation of successful goal setting?  p. 96
- **HOW** do you set and achieve goals?  p. 98
- **WHAT** are ways to manage stress as you pursue your goals?  p. 104
- **HOW** will learning to work with others help you reach your goals?  p. 113

Lidia is experiencing overload. She is a full-time office assistant during the week and spends nights and weekends taking college accounting courses. With a toddler, a 10-year-old, and a husband who works nights, child care is a major problem. Her mother watches the kids on Mondays and Tuesdays, but she works too.

Lidia often has to drop everything in the middle of a study session to deal with her kids. She can’t afford full-time child care, so she tries to find help day by day. She is trying to keep this up for another two years until her oldest can babysit his younger brother. In the meantime, she worries that she will be unable to stay on the path toward completing her courses and earning a degree.
To set the goals that are best for you—and, even more importantly, to move ahead toward achieving them—you need to identify the **core values** that motivate you. This chapter will show you how to set S.M.A.R.T. goals (specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, and linked to time frame) based on these values. It will also give you tools to manage the stress that can hinder your efforts to reach your target, and strengthen your ability to work with others so you can achieve goals faster and more efficiently than you could if you worked alone.

For the best chance at success, your core values should guide the goals you set and the choices you make. Lidia’s choice to pursue a degree reflects her belief that a college education will help her get ahead, and focusing on child care shows that she prioritizes the needs of her family. Discovering what matters to **you** ensures that the changes you make in your life in the goal-setting process are meaningful and will keep you motivated.

Your values help you to:

- **Understand what you want out of life.** Your top goals reflect what you value most.
- **Define your educational path.** Values help you to explore what you want to learn, your major, and career goals.
- **Create “rules for life.”** Values form the foundation for decisions and behavior. You will return repeatedly to them for guidance, especially when dealing with new problems.

Values are influenced by family, friends, culture, media, school, work, neighborhood, religion, world events, and more. Your strongest values are often linked to childhood experiences and family, but values may shift as you...
A goal without a plan is just a wish.

Larry Elder, radio talk show host

**TAKE ACTION**

*Explore Your Core Values*

Rate each of the following values on a scale from 1 to 5, 1 being least important to you and 5 being most important.

- Knowing myself
- Self-improvement
- Political involvement
- Leadership and teamwork skills
- Getting a good job
- Pursuing an education
- Having a family
- Helping others
- Being liked by others
- Taking risks
- Being with friends
- Political involvement
- Being organized
- Spiritual/religious life
- Health and fitness
- Participating in an online community
- Having time to read
- Time to myself
- Lifelong learning
- Competing and winning
- Financial stability
- Making a lot of money
- Creative/artistic pursuits
- Participating in an online community
- Other (write below)

Write your top three values here:

1. 

2. 

3. 

Often, musical choices reflect values. Putting your musical intelligence to work, find a song that inspires you. Now imagine that you’re creating a CD for a friend with that song on it. Write a quick note about why you included the song on the CD. Be sure to mention how it connects to one or more of your top values.

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

Setting and Reaching Goals
acquire knowledge and experiences and build new relationships. For example, a student whose family and friends were there for him after a serious accident may place greater value on relationships than he did before the accident.

Values form the bedrock of meaningful goals. The stronger the link between your values and your long-term goals, the happier, more motivated, and more successful you are likely to be in setting and achieving those goals.

### How Do You Set and Achieve Goals?

When you set a **goal**, you focus on what you want to achieve and create a path that can get you there. Learning to set and achieve goals isn’t just important for students. It is essential in your personal life and career.

Setting goals involves defining what you are aiming for in both long-term and short-term time frames. **Long-term** goals are broader objectives you want to achieve over a long period of time, perhaps a year or more. **Short-term** goals are smaller steps that move you toward a long-term goal, making it manageable and achievable, piece by piece (see Key 4.1).

### Set Long-Term Goals

Take a moment to imagine: What do you want your life to look like in 5 years? In 10 years? In 20? What degree do you want to earn, what kind of job do you want to have?
want, where do you want to live? Your answers to questions like these help you identify your long-term goals.

Some long-term goals have an open-ended time frame. For example, if as a nursing student, your long-term goal is to stay on top of developments in medicine, you will pursue this goal throughout your professional life. Other goals, such as completing the required courses for your degree, have a more definite end and often fewer options for getting there.

One way to make long-term goals real is to put them in writing. For example:

My goal is to become a nurse practitioner, emphasizing preventative medicine, who works in a clinic in an underserved community.

To determine your long-term goals, think about what you want to accomplish while in school and after you graduate. For example, it is no surprise that Lidia, who values financial stability, is motivated to do well in her accounting courses.

### Set Short-Term Goals

Lasting as short as an hour or as long as several months, short-term goals help you narrow your focus and encourage progress toward bigger dreams. The student aiming to be a nurse practitioner might set supporting short-term goals like these for her second year of college:

- Choose courses that keep me on track to complete pre-med requirements.
- Locate a medical practice serving an underprivileged community and apply for a summer internship. Research graduate schools that offer a nurse-practitioner degree.

Getting more specific, this student may set these short-term goals for the next six months:

- I will learn the names and functions of every human bone and muscle.
- I will work with a study group to understand the muscular-skeletal system.

These goals can be broken down into even shorter time frames. Here are one-month goals:

- I will work with on-screen tutorials of the muscular-skeletal system.
- I will spend three hours a week with my study partners.

Your short-term goals may last a week, a day, or even a couple of hours. Here’s how Lidia might use smaller short-term goals to support a month-long goal to set up weekend child care:

- **By the end of today:** Text and e-mail friends to see if they know of available sitters or are looking to pick up some extra cash themselves
- **One week from now:** Have at least two potential sitters to contact

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By the way . . .

focusing on one goal at a time increases your chance of success. Studies show that switching back and forth too often, or trying to accomplish more than one goal at a time, reduces focus and can actually increase stress.\(^1\)
- **Two weeks from now:** Have spoken to potential sitters and evaluated the possibilities
- **Four weeks from now:** Have plan in place for regular help for at least one weekend day

**Your Syllabus: A Powerful Goal–Achievement Tool**

Remember: For each course you take, your syllabus provides a clear layout of the goals you will target throughout the term and when you need to achieve them. Keep paper syllabi where you can refer to them frequently, and bookmark electronic syllabi if your instructors post them online. Key 4.2 shows a portion of an actual syllabus with important items noted.

**Set Up a Goal–Achievement Plan**

At any given time, you are working toward goals of varying importance. Prioritize goals so you can put the bulk of your energy and time toward those that matter most (see Chapter 3). Then draw up a plan, using the S.M.A.R.T. system to make your goals Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, and attached to a Time Frame (see Key 4.3).

**Step 1: Define an attainable, relevant goal.** *What do you want?* Is it attainable (within reach)? Is it relevant (connected to your needs)? To develop an attainable, relevant goal, consider your hopes, interests, abilities, and values. Then, reflect on whether your goal is possible, given your resources and circumstances. Write out a clear description of your goal.

**Step 2: Define a specific path.** *How will you get there?* Brainstorm different paths. Choose one; then map out its specific steps. Focus on behaviors and events that are under your control.

**Step 3: Set a timetable.** *When do you want to accomplish your goal?* Schedule steps within a realistic time frame. Create specific deadlines for each step you defined in Step 1. Charting your progress will help you stay on track.

**Step 4: Measure your progress.** *What safeguards will keep you on track?* Will you record your progress in a weekly journal? Report to a friend? Use an alarm system on your smartphone to remind you to do something? Create a measurement system to evaluate your progress.

**Step 5: Get unstuck.** *What will you do if you hit a roadblock?* The path to a goal is often rocky and stressful. Anticipate problems and define specific ways to alter your plans if you run into trouble (stress management strategies are presented later in the chapter). Reach out to friends, family, and college personnel who can help you. Be ready to brainstorm other ideas if your plans don’t work.

**Step 6: Action time.** Follow the steps in your plan until you achieve your goal.
**ENG 122 Spring 2007**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instructor:</th>
<th>Jennifer Gessner</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Office Hours:</td>
<td>Tue &amp; Thur 12:30–1:30 (or by appointment) in DC 305</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phone:</td>
<td>303-555-2222</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E-mail:</td>
<td><a href="mailto:jg@abc.xyz">jg@abc.xyz</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Required Texts:**
- *Good Reasons with Contemporary Arguments*, Faigley and Selzer

**Required Materials:**
- a notebook with lots of paper
- a folder for keeping everything from this class
- an active imagination and critical thinking

**Course Description:**
This course focuses on argumentative writing and the researched paper. Students will practice the rhetorical art of argumentation and will gain experience in finding and incorporating researched materials into an extended paper.

**Writer's Notebook:**
All students will keep, and bring to class, a notebook with blank paper. Throughout the semester, you will be given writing assignments to complete in this book. You must bring to class and be prepared to share any notebook assignment. Notebook assignments will be collected frequently, though sometimes randomly, and graded only for their completeness, not for spelling, etc.

**Grading:**
- Major Writing Assignments worth 100 points each.
- Final Research Project worth 300 points.
- Additional exercises and assignments range from 10 to 50 points each.
- Class participation: Based on the degree to which you complete the homework and present this in a thoughtful, meaningful manner in class.
- Attendance: Attendance is taken daily and students may miss up to three days of class without penalty, but will lose 5 points for each day missed thereafter.
- Late work: All work will lose 10% of earned points per class day late. No work will be accepted after five class days or the last class meeting.

**Final Grade:**
The average of the total points possible (points earned divided by the total possible points). 100–90% = A; 89–80% = B; 79–70% = C (any grade below 70% is not passing for this class).

**Academic Integrity:**
Students must credit any material used in their papers that is not their own (including direct quotes, paraphrases, figures, etc.). Failure to do so constitutes plagiarism, which is illegal, unethical, always recognizable, and a guaranteed way to fail a paper. The definition of plagiarism is “to steal and use (the writings or ideas of another) as one’s own.”

**Week 4**
- **2/1**
  - The Concise Opinion.
  - HW: Complete paper #1 Rough Draft (5–7 pages double-spaced)
- **2/3**
  - How Professionals Argue
  - HW: Read Jenkins Essay (p 501 of *Good Reasons*) and Rafferty Essay (p 525); compare argumentative style, assess and explain efficacy of arguments.

**Week 5**
- **2/15**
  - Developing an Argument
  - Essay Quiz on Jenkins and Rafferty Essays
  - HW: Chap 5 of *Good Reasons*; based on components of a definition of argument, write a brief explanation of how your argument might fit into this type.
- **2/17**
  - Library Workday: Meet in Room 292
  - PAPER #1 DUE
Chapter 4

Staying motivated on your way to a goal can be tough when you have years of work ahead of you. (As a student just beginning college and with your degree years away, you know what that feels like.) Your challenge is to find ways to “keep your eyes on the prize.” You might visualize yourself accomplishing your goal or remind yourself of what you stand to gain when you complete your goal. Checking off short-term goals and seeing them as signs of progress will also help. Lidia, for example, might keep a photo of her kids in her notebook to remind herself of how getting a degree will help her support her family.

It will take work and persistence to pursue your goals. The changes—positive or negative—that happen along the way are likely to cause some stress. If managed well, however, it shouldn’t stop you from reaching your goals. Next, we examine potential sources of stress and strategies for dealing with them.

Key 4.3 Make your goals S.M.A.R.T.

Goal: To raise my algebra grade from a C to a B.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MY GOAL IS...</th>
<th>MEANING...</th>
<th>EXAMPLE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Specific</strong></td>
<td>Name exactly how you will achieve your goal.</td>
<td>I will accomplish my goal by studying algebra at least an hour a day and working with a tutor once a week.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Measurable</strong></td>
<td>Find ways to measure your progress over time.</td>
<td>I will look at my weekly quiz grades to see if I am making progress. I will also use the exercises in my text to take practice tests and use the answer key to grade my work.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Attainable</strong></td>
<td>Set a goal that challenges you but isn’t too far out of your reach.</td>
<td>Algebra is tough for me, but I know that I can manage to pull up my grade.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Relevant</strong></td>
<td>Define a goal that is meaningful to you and your needs.</td>
<td>I need to pass this required course to move ahead in my major.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Time Frame</strong></td>
<td>Set up a time frame for achieving your goal and the steps toward it.</td>
<td>I will do an extra problem set every Monday and Thursday night. I will get my grade point up by the end of the term.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
TAKE ACTION
Create a SMART Goal Achievement Plan

Name a general area in which you want to change or improve this year.

Using the S.M.A.R.T. system and your visual intelligence, define a goal in this area by filling in this think link and the table underneath it.

1. Define your goal
   - Be specific. What exactly do you want to accomplish?
   - Why is this goal relevant—how does it relate to what you need?
   - What makes it attainable—enough of a challenge to motivate but not so tough that you give up?

2. Define a path
   - What are the specific steps?

3. Set a timetable
   - What is a realistic time frame within which you can accomplish this goal?

4. Be accountable
   - Describe the system you will use to stay on track and measure your progress.

5. Get unstuck
   - Think of a potential roadblock you might hit as you try to reach your goal. Name two specific ways you can get back on track if this roadblock occurs.

6. Action time
   - Put your plan in motion.

Define your path within the time frame from number 3. Use this grid to assign estimated dates to specific steps.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Date done</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
What Are Ways to Manage Stress as You Pursue Your Goals?

If you feel stress as you try to reach your goals, you are not alone. Stress levels among college students have increased (see Key 4.4). Handling stress involves identifying and defusing stress triggers, keeping your body and mind healthy so that you can handle increased pressures, and avoiding poor personal health choices that take you off your path.

For Lidia, and almost every other student, dealing with stress is an everyday challenge that can take a toll on your health and on your ability to achieve your goals. However, some amount of stress gives you energy to do well on tests, finish assignments on time, or prepare for a class presentation. Key 4.5 shows that stress can be helpful or harmful, depending on how much you experience. A manageable balance empowers you to forge ahead.

**Key 4.4 How college students experience stress**

- Students say that their top stressors are ... grades (71%), schoolwork (74%), and financial worries (62%).

- 62% of graduating seniors are worried about finding a full-time job after graduation.

- Stress had significant effects on many students. Some say that it interfered with their motivation (63%), made it tough to get work done (63%), and made them not want to participate in social activities (55%).

- 34% of students said they have felt depressed at some point in the last 3 months.

- 70% of students reported that they have never considered reaching out to a trained professional for help with stress or anxiety.

Identify and Address Stress Triggers

When psychologists T. H. Holmes and R. H. Rahe measured the intensity of people’s reaction to specific changes, they found that stress is linked to both positive and negative events. On the next page is an adaptation, designed for college students, of the Holmes-Rahe scale. It delivers a “stress score,” based on events in the past year, that indicates your likelihood of experiencing a stress-related health problem. Understanding your stress score can guide your actions in two ways:

- Seeing what you face on a regular basis can help you decide how to handle ongoing pressures.
- In a high-stress period of your life, understanding what’s causing the pressure can help you re-evaluate and, if necessary, adjust your goals.

How can you cope with stress and prevent it from derailing your plans? First, remember:

- **The goal-setting strategies in this chapter are stress-management strategies.** When you set SMART goals and pursue them step by step with focus, reaching out to others along the way for help, you reduce stress.
- **The time-management strategies you learned in Chapter 3 are stress-management strategies.** When you create and follow a schedule, complete items on your to-do list, and avoid procrastinating, you reduce stress.

Setting and Reaching Goals
To determine your stress score, add up the number of points corresponding to the events you have experienced in the past 12 months.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Death of a close family member</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Death of a close friend</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Divorce</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Jail term</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Major personal injury or illness</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Marriage</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Firing from a job</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 Failing an important course</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 Change in health of a family member</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 Pregnancy</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 Sex problem</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 Serious argument with close friend</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 Change in financial status</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 Change in major</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 Trouble with parents</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 New girlfriend or boyfriend</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17 Increase in workload at school</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 Outstanding personal achievement</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 First quarter/semester in college</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 Change in living conditions</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 Serious argument with an instructor</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22 Lower grades than expected</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23 Change in sleeping habits</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24 Change in social activities</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 Change in eating habits</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26 Chronic car trouble</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27 Change in the number of family gatherings</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28 Too many missed classes</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29 Change of college</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 Dropping more than one class</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31 Minor traffic violations</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32 Increase in workload at work</td>
<td>19</td>
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<tr>
<td>33 Outstanding personal achievement</td>
<td>18</td>
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<td>35 Change in living conditions</td>
<td>16</td>
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<td>36 Outstanding personal achievement</td>
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<td>37 Change in financial status</td>
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<td>38 Change in major</td>
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<td>43 Outstanding personal achievement</td>
<td>8</td>
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<td>44 First quarter/semester in college</td>
<td>7</td>
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<td>45 Change in financial status</td>
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<td>46 Change in major</td>
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<tr>
<td>50 Outstanding personal achievement</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Total: ________________

If your score is 300 or higher, you are at high risk for developing a health problem. If your score is between 150 and 300, you have a 50–50 chance of experiencing a serious health change within two years. If your score is below 150, you have a 30% chance of a serious health change.


Here are some additional ways to keep stress under control:

**Be realistic about commitments.** Students who combine work and school may become overloaded and fall behind, increasing the risk of dropping out. If you need to work to pay tuition, set up a schedule you can realistically meet. You may need more than two years (for an associate’s degree) or four years (for a bachelor’s degree) to graduate, but taking extra time is much better than not graduating at all.

**Work with your personality.** If you are a night person, schedule your course work in the afternoon or evening—or, if there’s no choice, use external (three alarm clocks) and internal strategies (“I’m determined to do well”) to stick to the schedule. If you are fidgety, keep a squeezeable object in your hands during class to help you stay focused. If you need to blow off steam with exercise, make time to go to the athletic center between classes.

**Have some fun.** Doing things you enjoy, such as meeting up with friends on a Thursday night for pizza, will take the edge off of stress. Put fun on your schedule so you are sure to have time.
Actively manage your schedule. Get in the habit of checking your planner throughout the day. Also, try not to put off tasks. If you can take even one tiny step toward a goal, do it.

Try relaxation techniques. Techniques that will help you relax and increase your awareness of your physical body can help calm you. These include various breathing techniques (some based in yoga), progressive relaxation (tensing and relaxing different muscles one by one), and visualization (focusing on a place that you find calming).

Check things off. Use a physical action when you complete a task—check off the item, delete it from your task list, crumple up the Post-It note. A physical act can relieve stress and highlight the confidence that comes from getting something done. Consider listing the courses you need to complete your degree and checking off those you complete every term.

Manage family responsibilities. Students with elderly parents, relatives with health-care issues, or young children often have to juggle family responsibilities as they try to study (see Key 4.6 for helpful suggestions on child-care issues).

Know when you need help—and ask for it. Trying to do it all on your own may not be possible and can actually make things worse. Call on family and friends to take the pressure off. Switch shifts at work to free up study time, ask a friend to take your kids the day before a test, or have a family member take your car for servicing. Because her mother already babysits when she can, Lidia might talk to a neighbor about trading child care in a pinch.

Keep Your Body Healthy

Even the most driven goal achiever has trouble moving ahead when illness or injury hits. If you do your best to eat well, get exercise and sleep, and avoid substances that can throw you off your game, you will be in shape to stay in motion.

Eat Well

Eating well and getting exercise can be tough for students. The food environment in college is often filled with unhealthful choices, and students tend to sit a lot, eat on the run, and get too busy to exercise. Healthy eating requires balance.

Inside Tips from Sarah, Self-Management Coach

You can’t get new results with the same old behaviors. To reach new goals, you may need to change some personal health habits, such as how much sleep you get per night. Start small, and go step by step: Target one specific problem and decide on a concrete change that you think will help (go to bed an hour earlier, send your last text at 11 p.m., go without refined sugar). Put this change in place for a week. If it makes a difference, keep it up—and maybe add another.
(varying your diet) and moderation (eating reasonable amounts). Here are some ways to incorporate both into your life:

- **Vary what you eat and reduce portion size.** The government “food pyramid” recommends certain amounts of food in particular food groups. (Go to www.mypyramid.gov.)
Setting and Reaching Goals

- **Limit fat, cholesterol, sugar, white flour, and alcohol.** Try to eliminate trans fats, which increase the risk of heart disease. Minimize candy, desserts, sugar-filled drinks, and alcohol, which is calorie-heavy.

- **If you need to lose weight, reach out.** A campus counselor can help you find a support group, such as Weight Watchers or an on-campus organization, which can help you stay on target. Set reasonable weight-loss goals and work toward them gradually.

Exercise Regularly

Being physically fit increases your energy, helps you cope with stress, and keeps you goal-directed. Here are some ways to make exercise a regular part of your life:

- Walk to classes and meetings. When you reach your building, use the stairs.
- Use your school’s fitness facilities in between classes.
- Play team recreational sports at school or in your community.
- Find activities you can do on your own time, such as running or pick-up basketball.
- Work out with friends or family to combine socializing and exercise.

During solo exercise sessions, although your body is occupied, your mind is often free. Whether you are walking, using an elliptical trainer, or doing laps, you can brainstorm new goal-achievement strategies. Be open to the ideas that pop into your head.

Get Enough Sleep

Research indicates that eight to nine hours of sleep a night is ideal for students. But the average student sleeps only six to seven hours a night—and often gets much less. Overwhelmed students often prioritize schoolwork over sleep, staying up regularly until the wee hours of the morning to study or pulling “all-nighters” to get through a tough project or paper.

Being sleep deprived hinders your ability to concentrate, raises stress levels, and makes you more susceptible to illness. For the sake of your health, your goals, and your GPA, find a way to get the sleep you need. Sleep expert Gregg D. Jacobs, Ph.D., has the following practical suggestions for improving sleep habits:

- **Reduce consumption of alcohol and caffeine.** Caffeine may keep you awake, especially if you drink it late in the day. Alcohol can prevent you from sleeping deeply.

By the way . . .

A survey of nearly 10,000 students at the University of Minnesota showed that students who reported getting adequate sleep had a higher average GPA than those who reported sleep difficulties. Lack of sleep is also linked to greater risk of illness.
Nap. Taking short afternoon naps can reduce the effects of sleep deprivation.

Be consistent. Try to establish a regular sleep time and wake-up schedule.

Complete tasks an hour or so before sleep. Give yourself a chance to wind down.

Avoid Alcohol and Drug Abuse

Some students choose to use alcohol and other potentially addictive substances to alleviate stress temporarily or for other reasons. Actually, using these substances can affect your life in ways that increase stress. The abuse of these substances can have potentially serious consequences, including sending you way off the track that leads to your goals.

Alcohol is a depressant and the most frequently abused drug on campus. Of all alcohol consumption, binge drinking is associated with the greatest problems. Students who binge drink are more likely to miss classes or work, perform poorly, experience physical problems (memory loss, headache, stomach issues), become depressed, and engage in unplanned or unsafe sexual activity. Even a few drinks affect muscle coordination and, more importantly, the ability to reason and make sensible decisions. All of these effects can send your stress level skyrocketing.

College students may use drugs to relieve stress, be accepted by peers, or just to try something new. In most cases, the negative consequences of drug use outweigh any temporary high. Drug use violates federal, state, and local laws, and you may be arrested, tried, and imprisoned for possessing even a small amount of drugs. You can jeopardize your reputation and your student status if you are caught using drugs or if drug use impairs your performance. Finally, long-term drug use can damage your body and mind. Every consequence of drug use has the potential to derail you from the goals that mean the most to you.

If you drink or take drugs, think carefully about the effects on your health, safety, and academic performance. Consider the positive and negative effects of your choice. If you believe you have a problem, reach out for help. Your college and community resources can help you generate options and develop practical plans for recovery.

Keep Your Mind Healthy

Although feeling anxious is normal at times, especially when you have a lot to do, some people react to high levels of stress in more serious ways. Mental health disorders interfere with your ability to reach your goals, and they can be caused or worsened by problematic health decisions. If you recognize yourself in any of the following descriptions, contact your student health center or campus counseling center for help or a referral to a specialist. These disorders include:

Panic disorder. Specific situations bring on “panic attacks” that may include heart palpitations, rapid breathing, dizziness, and fear.
Multiple Intelligence Strategies for Stress Management

Briefly describe a stress-related problem you have.

Now, brainstorm potential solutions to your problem, linking each solution to an intelligence. Use the right-hand column to record your ideas.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INTELLIGENCE</th>
<th>SUGGESTED STRATEGIES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Verbal-Linguistic</td>
<td>■ Keep a journal of what situations, people, or events cause stress.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>■ Write letters or e-mail friends about your problems.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Logical-Mathematical</td>
<td>■ Think through problems using a problem-solving process, and devise a detailed plan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>■ Analyze the negative and positive effects that may result from a stressful situation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bodily-Kinesthetic</td>
<td>■ Choose a physical activity that releases tension—running, yoga, team sports—and do it regularly.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>■ Plan physical activities during free time—go for a hike, take a bike ride, go dancing with friends.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visual-Spatial</td>
<td>■ Enjoy things that appeal to you visually—visit an exhibit, see an art film, shoot photos with your camera.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>■ Use a visual organizer to plan out a solution to a stressful problem.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpersonal</td>
<td>■ Reach out for help to people who care about you and are supportive.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>■ Shift your focus by listening to others who need to talk about their stresses.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intrapersonal</td>
<td>■ Schedule time when you can think through what is causing stress.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>■ Allow yourself five minutes a day to meditate: Visualize positive resolutions to your stressful situation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Musical</td>
<td>■ Listen to music that relaxes, inspires, and/or energizes you.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>■ Write a song about what is bothering you.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Naturalistic</td>
<td>■ Try to categorize what’s bothering you to identify solvable patterns.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>■ If nature calms you, spend time outdoors, watch nature-focused TV, or read about nature or science.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Setting and Reaching Goals
PO W E R F U L  Q U E S T I O N S

Consider whether the way you eat, exercise, sleep, or use drugs and alcohol are adding stress to your life and sidetracking you from your goals. If you are unhappy with where you are at, who can help you change?

Find resources at your school that support student health—counseling, exercise facilities, health center, support groups, classes, and so on. Identify at least two people you might use as a resource, and write down the steps you will take to obtain the help you need.

- **Post-traumatic stress disorder.** Past trauma (rape, war experiences, assault) triggers flashbacks, irritability, emotional distance, and sometimes violence.

- **Eating disorders.** *Anorexia nervosa* (severe restriction of eating), *bulimia* (eating excessive amounts of foods followed by purging), or *binge-eating disorder* (bingeing on foods without purging) cause serious health problems.

- **Clinical depression (depressive disorder).** At varying levels of severity, sometimes leading to threats of suicide.

Of these disorders, depression in particular has become fairly common on college campuses, due in part to the wide range of stressors that students experience. Recent research reports that nearly half of surveyed students reported feelings of depression at some point, with more than 30% saying that the level of depression made it difficult to function at times. Key 4.7 shows possible causes of depression as well as some typical symptoms and offers helpful coping strategies.

At its worst, depression can lead to suicidal thoughts and attempts. A recent survey conducted by the American Psychological Association of students at 70 colleges and universities found that 15% of students had thought seriously about committing suicide, and 5% had made actual attempts. Many of these students reported that they did not seek help when in crisis.

These disorders have the power to derail goals and dreams, so get medical care. The right help can change—or even save—your life.

Nearly all goals seem more reachable and less stressful when you work with others. As you will see next, getting the most out of your personal relationships requires both knowledge and skill.
How Will Learning to Work with Others Help You Reach Your Goals?

In school, as at work and in your personal life, being able to achieve your goals depends on your ability to relate effectively to others. Students taking the same course may work on projects together, create and perform a presentation (see Chapter 11), or form a study group that aims to prepare for an exam. Math and science instructors sometimes initiate student study groups, known as peer-assisted study sessions or supplemental instruction, to help students improve performance in those courses. Students in online courses may meet in chat rooms for virtual study group sessions or project work. No student is an island!

Setting and Reaching Goals
To work well with others on the way to your most important goals, you need to know:

- How emotions affect relationships
- How to value and benefit from diverse people and their perspectives

Start by examining how to manage your own emotions and understand the emotions of others.

**Focus on Your Emotions**

Psychologist Daniel Goleman says that **emotional intelligence** is essential to achieve your goals and helps you make the most of personal relationships. He believes that you can develop the ability to know yourself, manage your emotions, and understand the emotions of others. The qualities of emotional intelligence are found in Key 4.8.

The key is staying aware of what your goals demand from your relationships. For example, succeeding in the classroom might require that you present yourself in appropriate ways both in the classroom and in meetings with your instructor. Lidia can use her emotional intelligence to get help from others with both academics and child care.

Here are some examples of how emotional intelligence can help you set and pursue goals:

- “Because I get bored quickly, I need to emphasize short-term goals.”
- “Because I enjoy hands-on experiences, I will explore majors in the sciences that require lab courses.”
- “My project partner is not himself today, so I’ll reschedule our study session and see if he wants to go for coffee after class and talk instead.”

You are building your emotional intelligence throughout your work in this text. Some of the Habits for Success—thinking before you act, for example, and being flexible—involve looking at your emotions and needs before deciding how to move ahead. Also, the self-assessments in each chapter help you learn more about who you are and how you react to a variety of situations.

Often the people you work with have different values and cultural backgrounds. In an increasingly global world, learning to appreciate that diversity and to understand and accept those who differ from you will help you work with others more successfully.
Cultural Competence
the ability to understand and appreciate differences and to respond to people of all cultures in a way that values their worth, respects their beliefs and practices, and builds communication and relationships.

Setting and Reaching Goals

Become Culturally Competent

Most academic goals that you set will require you to work with other students, teachers, and administrators. Work goals will require you to work with clients, colleagues, and employers. Chances are that you will work with others who differ from you in ways both visible (race, ethnicity) and invisible (communication styles, values). The goal of cultural competence is to develop the ability to understand and appreciate diversity and adjust your behavior to improve how you get along with the people around you.

Building cultural competence means taking the following actions:

1. Learn more about why and how people differ from you, and what tends to happen when differences in culture occur.
2. Become self-aware about your own perceptions and attitudes, including whether you have any prejudices or judge based on stereotypes. Challenge yourself to set them aside as you get to know and work with others.
3. Find ways to adjust to the differences of others that will create opportunities. Look past external characteristics, put yourself in other people’s shoes, and recognize what you have in common with people everywhere.

For instance, if Lidia couldn’t attend her study group as often because of family commitments, cultural competence could help both her and her study group to solve the problem. Realizing that she has responsibilities as a parent, a study group member could ask her to come up with a way to help the group when she’s not there. She could then offer to work at home to combine notes from the text and class for a week. This contribution will help her and the group reach their goals of learning the course material.

**Maximize Your Team Work**

Whether you aim to complete a project or study for an exam, what can you gain from working with others?

- **Increased knowledge.** When group members share knowledge, each member spends less time and energy learning the material. Another benefit: Talking about concepts or teaching them to others helps solidify what you know.

- **More motivation.** Knowing that you are accountable to others and that they will see how prepared you are—or aren’t—may encourage you to work hard.

- **Better teamwork skills.** Nothing teaches you how to work effectively in groups better than experience. What you learn will be invaluable throughout college and in the workplace.

- **Strength from diversity.** Working with students from a variety of backgrounds creates team strength. The more diverse the team, the more varied the approach to problem solving.

**Strategies for Group Success**

The way a group operates may depend on members’ personalities, motivation, and knowledge; what you are studying; group size; and where you are meeting. These general strategies will help all groups succeed:

- **Set long-term and short-term goals.** At your first meeting, decide what the group wants to accomplish. You may want to have an agenda (a meeting plan) for each meeting.

- **Set a regular schedule.** Determine how many meetings are needed and what members’ schedules can handle. If you are studying for a final, you might start a month before the test with a weekly meeting. As test day nears, you may decide to meet more frequently.

- **Choose a leader for each meeting.** Rotating the leadership among members willing to lead helps everyone take ownership of the group.

- **Share the workload.** Your willingness to pitch in and work is more important than how much you know.

For groups with a study focus, here are further tips:

- **Create materials for one another.** Give each group member one topic to compile, photocopy, and review for the others.
Help each other learn. Have group members teach each other information, work on problems, give feedback on responses to essay questions, or go through flash cards together.

Pool your note-taking resources. Compare notes and fill in any information you don’t have (see Chapter 9 for more on note taking).

Study groups and other teams need both leaders and participants to accomplish their goals. Lidia, who rarely has time or energy to take a leadership role, needs to understand that she is a crucial part of a group no matter which role she plays (see Key 4.9).

### Defuse Potential Problems

As beneficial as it is to work in a team, issues can arise. Be prepared to address them if they happen to you:

- **People not pulling their weight.** At some point in almost every group, one or more people will not fulfill their responsibilities. If it’s a one-time incident due to an illness or a personal problem, it’s best to let it go. However, if it happens regularly, take action. Try reassigning tasks or having a group problem-solving session.

- **Trouble scheduling.** Finding a time and location that works for a group of people can be challenging. Coordinate everything on a group e-mail first. Once you find a time a day that works, schedule meetings consistently. You may want to rotate locations if there isn’t one that is convenient for all group members.

- **Too much talking.** Although it may not be realistic to keep friends out of your study group, you can set boundaries. Set up some talking time at the end as a “reward” for accomplishing a goal.

Identifying your core values, setting goals that reflect them, learning techniques to manage the stress that can keep you from reaching your goals, and tapping the wisdom of the group will help you stay on target toward what you most want to achieve in college and beyond.

### Setting and Reaching Goals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>For Participant</th>
<th>For Leader</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Do your share of the work.</td>
<td>Define projects, and focus everyone’s efforts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stay organized and focused.</td>
<td>Assign work tasks, and set a schedule and deadlines.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Be open and willing to discuss.</td>
<td>Set meeting and project goals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perform your responsibilities on schedule.</td>
<td>Keep everyone on target and moving ahead.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Set a fair, respectful, and encouraging tone.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Evaluate progress, and make changes if needed.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Key 4.9** The group process needs leaders and participants
Gaile Edrozo was on track to earn a biology degree in a year’s time and then begin medical school in her native Philippines. However, financial difficulties got in the way of her plans.

Aiming for more opportunity to work and earn a living, she and her family came to the United States in 2004. Because of her immigration status, she knew that she would be considered an international student when she started college.

Stop and Think
Have you experienced a sudden change, like Gaile’s, that forced you to rethink your plans? What happened, and where did it take you?

As she and her family adjusted to living in Washington state, Gaile decided to explore nursing and enrolled as a nursing student at Highline Community College in the fall of 2004.

Gaile was on course to a meaningful, productive goal, but the cost of her education was too high for her family to manage. Even more frightening was the possibility that Gaile would lose her status in the U.S. if she were unable to stay in school and would have to return to the Philippines alone.

“My fears were so many I was drowning in them,” says Gaile. “I wanted nothing more than to become a nurse, have a career I love, and help my family at the same time. I wanted it so much it hurt to think it could all be taken away—again.”

Stop and Think
Gaile thought that academic success would be a key to many doors—and found that this was not true because of her immigration status. When have you thought that a skill or accomplishment was a sure thing only to find out that it wasn’t enough? How did you react?

It was time to reach out for help. Gaile had heard about a course at Highline that helped students explore scholarship opportunities, prepare portfolio and résumé materials, and look at four-year institutions. She registered for Honors 100. In this course she met Dr. Barbara Clinton, her instructor and the head of the honors program at Highline.

With Dr. Clinton’s help, Gaile was able to see the positive in her challenges, focus on what made her unique, and express those qualities in her portfolio and résumé so that they made a statement. When she shared her financial concerns, Dr. Clinton helped her find—and win—scholarships for which she was eligible. “The most beautiful thing is that Dr. Clinton did not stop helping me after the class was over. She became my greatest resource.”

With the confidence she gained from her mentor, Gaile has forged ahead to success. After getting employment authorization from the Immigration and Naturalization Service, she worked as a critical care nurse technician while finishing her nursing studies. She graduated in 2007 and started working as a registered nurse. She has also completed a baccalaureate degree in nursing from the University of Washington at Tacoma and will soon change her immigration status to permanent resident. She considers Dr. Clinton a resource for life and understands firsthand the value of reaching out to others.

Think about Gaile and Think about Yourself

As the old saying goes, “No person is an island.” What have you accomplished with a partner or team that you could not have done alone?

How could reaching out to someone help you at school? Whom can you call? What help would you ask for?

Source: Highline College Honors Scholar Program Success Stories (adapted with permission from original story, online at http://flightline.highline.edu/honors/success/gaile.htm).
Habit for Success

reach out to others

Below are examples of how you can put this habit into action in different situations. Use the three spaces to add your own ideas for actions you can accomplish now or in the future. Be specific, and be realistic.

- Get advice from close friends or family about how not to overdo the alcohol when you need to relax on weekends.
- Find writing and math help at your school’s writing center or tutoring center.
- Post notes and questions to online communities that can provide advice as you work to lose weight.
- When thinking about different majors, talk to students majoring in areas that interest you.
- When you can’t get to a chore or need support with family responsibilities, ask for help—or trade something you do for something you need done.

Sticks in a bundle are unbreakable.

Kenyan proverb
Why are values the foundation of successful goal setting?

Describe three ways that identifying your values can help you achieve college and life goals.

___________________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________________

How do you set and achieve goals?

Explain what short-term and long-term goals are and how they relate.

___________________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________________

List the steps to take toward achieving a goal.

1. ____________________________________________________________________________
2. ____________________________________________________________________________
3. ____________________________________________________________________________
4. ____________________________________________________________________________
5. ____________________________________________________________________________
6. ____________________________________________________________________________
What are ways to manage stress as you pursue your goals?

In your own words, define the word "stress" in the context of your life as a student.

___________________________________________________________________________________

___________________________________________________________________________________

Name the three general categories of what to do to get stress under control, and include one strategy for each category.

1. _________________________________________________________________________________

2. _________________________________________________________________________________

3. _________________________________________________________________________________

How will learning to work with others help you reach your goals?

Describe what emotional intelligence is.

___________________________________________________________________________________

___________________________________________________________________________________

Give some ways to participate effectively in a group setting.

___________________________________________________________________________________

___________________________________________________________________________________
Use Short-Term Goals to Explore Majors

Declaring a major is a long-term goal made up of short-term goal steps. Although many entering students don’t yet know what they want to study, it’s smart to explore possibilities now so that you can match your talents, skills, and dreams with an academic path. Use the following short-term goals to get moving.

**Short-term goal #1: Identify interests and talents.** If you can choose a major that focuses on what interests you and what you do well, you are more likely to have a positive attitude and perform effectively. To pinpoint areas that may work for you, consider questions like the following:

- What are my favorite courses, topics to read about, activities?
- Am I a “natural” in any academic or skill area?
- How do I learn and work with others most effectively? (See Chapter 2.)

Based on your exploration, write down two majors that you think are worth considering.

- ____________________________________________________________________
- ____________________________________________________________________

**Short-term goal #2: Explore general academic options.**

Use the course catalog, the school Web site, or other resources to explore the following:

- When do you have to declare a major? ____________________________________________
- What majors are offered at your school? (No need to write here; just read through the list.)
- What are the options in majoring? (double majors, minors, “interdisciplinary” majors that combine more than one academic area) ____________________________________________
- What is the process for changing a major once you have declared?
- ____________________________________________________________________
- ____________________________________________________________________
**Short-term goal #3: Explore details of selected majors.** Use the table to nail down specifics for each of the three majors that interest you. Check your course catalog and school Web site, talk to people currently majoring in this subject, and consult your academic advisor.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MAJORS</th>
<th>#1: ______________________</th>
<th>#2: ______________________</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Minimum GPA for being accepted</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minimum GPA required in coursework for the major</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of courses required</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career areas that relate to this major</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Department head name</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Department secretary name and contact information</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How many students declare this major each year</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Where the department is located</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Courses you would have to take in the next year</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Finally, name the exact calendar date here when you will need to have declared your major:

___________________________________________________ Put it in your planner and stick to it!
Actively Dealing with Stress

Working alone, look back at the college stress scale on page 106. Note the stressors you included in your “stress score” for the past year. As a class, identify four stressors most commonly experienced by students. Divide into four groups, and assign a stressor to each. With your group:

- Discuss your stressor and the effects it has on people
- Brainstorm solutions and strategies, making sure to include ones that relate to health and teamwork (eating, sleeping, exercise, substances, getting help)
- List best coping strategies
- Choose a group member to present strategies

Finally, each group makes a presentation to the rest of the class about ways to handle this stressor. Groups may want to make extra copies of their lists for every member of the class.
Work with Others to Prep for Tests

Remember all of the advantages to studying in a group (see page 116)? Make them yours by setting up a study group now for your next big test. Check your syllabi and note here the topic, date, and course for your closest upcoming test:

Test topic ________________________________________________________________

Test date and time _________________________________________________________

Course _________________________________________________________________

Set up a study group with between one and four classmates. Write their names and contact information here:

______________________________________ _ _____________________________________ ____

______________________________________ _ _____________________________________ ____

______________________________________ _ _____________________________________ ____

______________________________________ _ _____________________________________ ____

How much time do you have from now until the test?______________________________________

Plan at least two sessions during that time—one two days before the test and one a week or so earlier. For each, name the date, time, and location (put this information in your planner).

Session 1: ________________________________________________________________

Session 2: ________________________________________________________________

Finally, read over the strategies for group work success, and communicate with your group before you meet in order to set goals and decide who will serve as leader for both sessions.