

Prioritizing Goals

Think back to your visualization: your vision for your ultimate goals. Feel the inspiration that came from this, and its expansive and uplifting nature.

Now, let's work backward from that expansive place to the steps you will need to take to make this vision a reality. Be mindful of the intermediate goals you will need to set during the year in order to achieve success. These are the goals you will need to make your vision a reality. As we begin, let's think in terms of the first year only.

A wonderful way to prioritize your action plan is to create a list of things to-do from your visualization and intention. A to-do list is a tool for directing energy with concentration and willpower. To-do lists help you focus clearly on the steps—and each step's activities—necessary for success.

Here are key ingredients for a helpful to-do list:

- organization of activities by area of life (work, family, school, play),
- organization by projects (new garden, community service project, family trip),
- organization by time: immediate (for today), upcoming (for the week), and long term (future projects that align with your goals and vision),
- organization by place: to do at work, at home computer, by phone, etc.,
- format that will be easy to use and can be updated often (electronic or hand-written),
- and fun to use.

Writing down tasks helps release worry-energy, but only if your mind knows that somewhere the tasks are written down in a place you will check regularly. For example:

- A calendar (whether electronic or paper) that can send timely reminders. Try out the best-rated calendar app that syncs up with Microsoft Outlook email, iCalendar, and Google Calendar, Todoist (see below) and Asana: [Sunrise Calendar](#).
- System for connecting your to-do lists with those of teammates or family members who share projects, tasks, or events with you. Try an app called: [Todoist](#) – our new favorite app and desktop tool for creating lists with multiple people. You even earn karma points as you complete your tasks along the way! Perfect for organized yogis.
- [Google Inbox](#): the new task-oriented email system that helps you clear out your inbox in a few fun swipes!
- [Asana](#) (an organization service that can be used at no cost, or charged monthly depending on the # of users and features) is an excellent program you can use to develop our recommended to-do lists. You can also try Google's Gmail Tasks (a free service) to develop to-do lists. Through this service, you have access to Google Drive, where you can share information and documents with other team members, and Google Calendar, where you can share due dates and calendars for projects with teams.

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Fun fact: When sharing documents on Google Drive, more than one teammate can make comments and participate in brainstorming via group chat at the same moment. Asana has a similar feature, which emails you whenever team members make comments on a task.

Remember, the quality—not the quantity—of tasks completed is what matters most. Properly organizing our work through efficient use of to-do lists helps us act from a balanced, calm center, and in doing so, consistently produce the high quality of work necessary for success.

It helps to focus on a task of predetermined importance from your list one at a time, concentrating with your full attention, and thus giving it all of your energy. If you are thinking of other things while acting upon something else, your energy is divided. Instead, give your all to everything you do. Direct all of your will toward reaching your goal, and draw upon the unlimited energy from the universe to succeed. It cannot resist an individual who is determined never to give up.

Live each present moment completely, and the future will take care of itself. Fully enjoy the wonder and beauty of each instant. —Paramhansa Yogananda

Finding Balance and Harmony

If you have lots of health and lots of wealth, but lots of trouble with everybody, including yourself, you have very little. —Paramhansa Yogananda

As you go forth, remember the true meaning of success. Make the focus of all your efforts be to find balance and harmony in all aspects of your life; to maintain your inner peace and be true to your highest Self, your soul calling.

Remember that life is short; in reality we are only here for a short time. At the end of your life, what will matter most is whether you have done what in your heart is truly important to you. Be sure that you give energy to those things that will help you to live rightly, without regrets. Be true to your purpose and how you can be a channel for upliftment in this world. Success, ultimately, must be measured not by all of our outward achievements, but by our level of soul joy.

In this life, we have the opportunity to share our unique gift with the world. To do this, we must listen to inspiration and creativity when they are speaking to us. It is essential that we learn how to share our gift to the best of our ability, and that we direct our will power and concentration toward that noble end.

Ultimately, it is not for ourselves that we are trying to earn success. Rather, we are striving to serve in an expansive and beneficial way. The universe supports the success of those who strive to help others.

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PRACTICE EXERCISE:

You have come to earth to entertain and be entertained.

—Paramhansa Yogananda

See yourself as an actor or actress playing in the movie of your life. See all that you have done as coming from the light projecting the film onto the movie screen. That light is the light of Spirit. Offer everything that has happened and will happen back to that light. Share your successes and your failures with Spirit. Try to feel that the role you are playing is a part of all that is.

Each night to let go of all of the failures and successes of the day:

Feel, in your heart, memories of the day. Then lift them up from your heart to the brain, and forward to the seat of superconsciousness at the point between the eyebrows. Whether in the form of mental images or feelings, offer them to Spirit, that higher self that lives within and all around us. Try, also, to free yourself of remaining attachments, worries, and past hurts and regrets. Reflect on the day so that you can improve tomorrow.

