

Ideal Scene, a radial approach to achieving Goals

When I used to think about setting goals, my heart sank. I had been taught to think about setting goals in a mechanistic, linear way. By linear I mean stating a goal and then designing a progressive step by step approach to attaining the goal. I tend to think and operate in a more radial way. For me when I set goals in a linear, structured way I found I pushed to make things happen, using a lot of effort and energy. When I pushed I lost the fun and the joy in the process. Also, I lost sight of why I set the goal in the first place and it was downhill from there. No wonder I would get a sinking feeling when talking or even thinking about setting “goals”. What chance did I have of effectively attaining my goals if I started out feeling negatively about them?

While studying for my masters degree, I had the good fortune of attending classes that taught me to create “Ideal Scenes”. For those of us who tend to operate from a radial perspective I find this approach can work well. In an ideal scene there are no limitations on what we want. Practical considerations are not allowed to interfere with the desired outcome. The best way to describe how an Ideal Scene works is to give you an example of one I created years ago when my husband and I were looking for a house to rent. At the time I was a full time student with little income and my husband was just starting a new career. On learning about ideal scenes, I decided to create an ideal scene of my home figuring I had nothing to lose and a lovely home to gain.

At the top of the page I wrote “My Ideal Home”. In a circle in the middle of the page I wrote “I AM”. I then created prongs coming out from the circle on which I completed the sentence starting with “I am”. For example, “I am delighting in my three bedroom, two bathroom home”, “I am relaxing in my office as I look out the window at the beautiful garden”, “I am easily meeting my payments and house expenses each month”.

I took great delight in fleshing out my Ideal Home, mentally creating my ideal for each room and the home as a whole. At the bottom of the page I wrote “This or something better for the Highest Good of all concerned”. I write this on all my Ideal Scenes as insurance, as I don’t want to limit myself from achieving something that I may not have thought of, and I also don’t want to create something that may in anyway be harmful to myself or anyone else. The key to creating the Ideal Scene is using adjectives to evoke a positive emotional response to each criterion and writing it in the present tense, as if already attained.

Given our financial situation at the time, as much as he liked it, my husband thought I was being unrealistic in terms of what I wanted and what we could afford. Nevertheless, I held to my ideal scene. Within two months of creating that “goal”, we moved into a home that had ninety percent of what I had envisioned. This didn’t happen by magic, of course, but by enthusiastic effort and actions on both our parts. The ideal scene was the inspiration and the catalyst to each of us taking the right steps to achieving it, which included being present to opportunities as they showed up.

I now use Ideal Scenes with most aspects of my life making it a joyful experience; and in the process, I am meeting my goals while creating my ideal life.