

# CONNECTIONS

A NEWSLETTER ABOUT FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS & PERSONAL GROWTH

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*"Many men and women who try to combine jobs and family life are caught up in the urge to do everything perfectly. That is impossible. Begin to help yourself by realizing that your job and family-related goals have to blend into a comfortable mix for your particular family. If your life feels more like a bubbling cauldron about to boil over, you probably have too many goals competing for your energy, time, talent and skills."*

*Lois Bakawa-Evenson*

## PRACTICAL SOLUTIONS

### 10 Goals for Improving Family & Couple Relationships for 2005

10 *Weekly Family Time*

Scheduled family time on a weekly basis is an excellent way to improve family closeness and fun.

9 *Weekly Couple Time*

Scheduled couple time on a weekly basis (e.g., date night) is important to help maintain and build the relationship.



8 *Family Service Project*

Choosing, planning, and carrying out a service project for someone in need can help improve family closeness and gratitude.

7 *Spirituality*

Examining how you are doing spiritually can provide a renewed feeling of purpose and improved stress management.

6 *Personal Traits*

Improving ourselves naturally invites others to improve as well (e.g., working on patience, anger, forgiveness, stress management, overprotectiveness, etc.)



5 *Open Communication*

Establishing a desire to be more open with each other as a couple on a more frequent basis (e.g., 30 minutes before bed each night) can help build intimacy.

*(continued on page 6)*



FROM THE DESK OF

Charlotte Shoup Olsen



Goal Setting in Kansas!

We wish each of you a bright new year and hope you will have time for reflection and relaxation during the holidays. New Year resolutions capture attention at this time of year...thus, we are talking about goals and goal setting although we suggest that it might be useful to reread this edition in about six months to re-energize our new year's

thoughts about goals and what we want to accomplish.



Charlotte Shoup Olsen, Ph.D.  
W. Jared DuPree, M.S.

### Answers to Questions from Kansas County Extension Agents

#### Question:

Could you come to our Parent's University to talk about **PeopleTALK** and how it relates to couples, but could you also do a separate session on **PeopleTALK** that would help parents in communicating with their teenagers?

#### Answer:

The answer to this 2-part question was "Yes, that will be no problem to give both workshops." It, indeed, was a good experience, using the **PeopleTALK** lesson for persons who are focusing on different relationships. Also, another one-page handout was added to the parent-teenager discussion that can be retrieved from this website:

<http://www.extension.iastate.edu/Publications/SP213.pdf>

For those of you who attended the August Update training on the **PeopleTALK** lesson, you may remember that the lesson guide offers suggestions for several activities that can apply to any meaningful relationship,

whether it be with family, friends, or people in wider networks in your life. Besides a fact sheet for participants to take home, a bookmark master is offered as an easy way to remind persons of the following ways to maintain or build satisfying relationships:

*Share everyday happenings.*

*Show fondness and admiration.*

*Bring up tough issues "softly."*

*Avoid using the word YOU to blame.*

*Use 'I' statements to talk about problems.*

*Make messages short during disagreements.*

*Be respectful even during conflict.*

*Agree on rules for difficult discussions.*

*Suggest a 'time out' to cool down.*

*Calm your body in times of conflict.*

*Be willing to compromise.*

*Honor each other's hopes and dreams.*

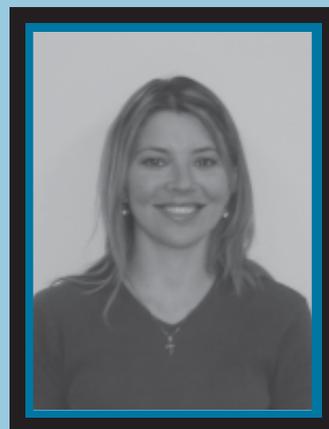
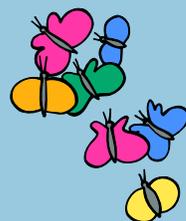
# Extension Spotlight

## Lea Stueve

Lea Stueve has been working in Butler County for over 2 years as the County Extension Agent in Family and Consumer Sciences. She started her Extension career as a summer intern with the Shawnee County Extension Office and also has worked for the Boys and Girls Clubs of America.

Lea has a master's degree in Family Life Education and Consultation from K-State and also her bachelor's degree in Family Studies and Community Services with a minor in Business Administration. In addition, she completed an associates of arts degree from Coffeyville Community College.

Helping people help themselves is an exciting part of Lea's job as a County Extension Agent. One of her more compelling projects has been "Parenting Classes" that started out with one community's educational effort and now has expanded to the entire county. The program runs for two months in the fall and two months in the spring to provide more flexibility for parents who are seeking to gain better parenting skills. "This effort has touched the lives of over 65 Butler County families in the two years since it began. We look forward to the continued success of this effort due to the support and interest in various community groups and volunteers." Lea also wants to expand her work with families to address healthy nutrition and physical activity education as she knows that emotional and physical health are both important.



"Empowering people with knowledge so that they can change their lives or that of their families is rewarding and fulfilling to me!"

Lea Stueve

Lea's job is very diverse and she lists her greatest challenge as staying updated with a complex amount of subject matter and keeping abreast of improved teaching strategies. Thus, she shows the same enthusiasm for professional development as she does for building collaborations to bring family and consumer sciences education to Butler County families.

In her spare time, Lea likes to play the guitar, read, garden, and travel. She is single and remains very close to her parents and siblings. Someday, she would like to take a mission trip somewhere in the world and might even be interested in running for political office. We wish her the best!

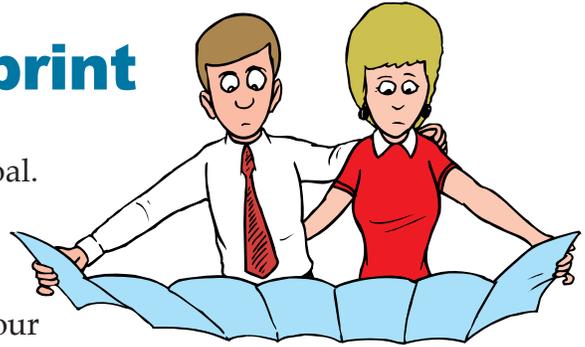


## PERSONAL INVOLVEMENT

# The Goal Setting Blueprint

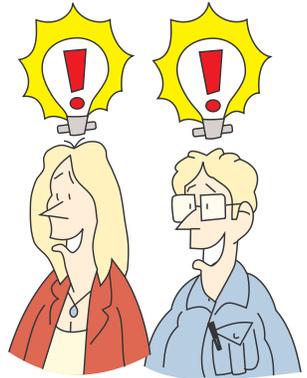
### STEP 1

Develop a **DESIRE** to achieve the goal. The desire must be intense. How do you intensify desire? Sit down and write out all the benefits and advantages of achieving your goal. Once the list reaches 50 to a 100 benefits, your goal becomes unstoppable.



### STEP 2

**WRITE** your goal down. Once it goes into writing, it becomes substantial and starts etching itself into your subconscious.



### STEP 3

**IDENTIFY** 1) the obstacles you will need to overcome, and 2) the help you will need to acquire, e.g. knowledge, people, organizations. In each case write them out in a clearly-stated list and analyze them.

### STEP 4

**DEADLINE** your goal. Analyze where you are now in relation to the goal and then measure how long you will reasonably need to complete the goal. Then set the latest possible date.

### STEP 5

Take all the details of steps 3 and 4 and make a **PLAN**. List all the activities and prioritize them. Rewrite the list, optimize it, and perfect it.

### STEP 6

Get a clear **MENTAL PICTURE** of the goal already accomplished. Make the mental image crystal clear, vivid in the mind's eye. Play that picture over and over in your mind.

### STEP 7

Back your plan with **PERSISTENCE** and resolve. Never, never, never give up even when you hit setbacks.

Source: ([www.about-goal-setting.com](http://www.about-goal-setting.com))



## Qualities of Effective Goal Setting

Setting goals appears to be very important in reaching success at the business, relational, and personal levels. In the book, “Mindstore,” by Jack Black (1996), research suggests that setting goals is not a matter of HOW one is going to accomplish a certain task. The most important aspect of goal setting appears to be more focused on **MAKING A COMMITMENT** to a certain goal and letting the HOW follow. Black described how some children have come out of abject poverty, facing the most challenging of situations, yet slowly but surely achieved the most fantastic outcomes in art, on stage, in film, in sport, in business, and in science and politics (Black, 1996).

In 1970, sociologist Dr. Edward Banfield of Harvard University wrote a book entitled, “The Unheavenly City.” He described one of the most profound studies on success and priority setting ever conducted. Banfield’s goal was to find out how and why some people became financially independent during the course of their working lifetimes. He started off convinced that the answer to this question would be found in factors such as family background, education, intelligence, influential contacts, or some other concrete factor. What he finally discovered was that the major reason for success in life was a particular attitude of mind.

Banfield called this attitude “long time perspective.” He said that men and women who were the most successful in life and the most likely to move up economically were those who took the future into consideration with every decision they made in the present. He found that the longer the period of time a

person took into consideration while planning and acting, the more likely it was that he/she would achieve greatly.

The essential key to success in setting priorities is having a long time perspective. You can tell how important something is today by measuring its potential future impact on your life. For example, if you come home from work at night and choose to play with your children or spend time with your spouse, rather than watch TV or read the paper, you have a long time perspective. You know that investing time in the health and happiness of your children and your spouse is a very valuable, high-priority use of time. Thus, the key word to keep in mind when you’re setting priorities is sacrifice. Setting priorities usually requires sacrificing present enjoyment for future enjoyment. It requires giving up a short-term pleasure in the present in order to enjoy a far greater and more substantial pleasure in the future.

Economists say that the inability to delay gratification—that is, the natural tendency of individuals to spend everything they earn plus a little bit more, and the mind-set of doing what is fun, easy and enjoyable—is the primary cause of economic and personal failure in life. On the other hand, disciplining yourself to do what you know is right and important, although difficult, is the high road to pride, self-esteem and personal satisfaction. So setting priorities begins with deciding what you want most in life and then organizing your time and activities so that everything you do is the most valuable use of your time in achieving those objectives.

Source: <http://www.goalsmagic.com/article014.htm>, retrieved on December 2, 2004.



# Resources

## Resources for Goal Setting

### Website

[www.cyfernet.org](http://www.cyfernet.org)

This national website has multiple resources for offering community education on goal setting. To find the resources, go to the website and do a search for "goal setting" or "goals" The following are some of the PDF files you will find from your search:

#### *Balancing Family and Work*

Through this publication you will learn the importance of setting goals in balancing family and work and methods for managing your time and your household by setting goals and making plans.

#### *Making a Change: Priorities, Goal Setting and Action*

A fact sheet on how to change your relationships, Physical well-being, Resource Manage-

ment, and psychological well-being by setting priorities, goals and taking action.

#### *Reaching Your Goals*

Setting goals help you to accomplish things that are important to you and your family.

### K-State Resource

A K-State notebook entitled *Managing Time, Work & Family* would be an excellent resource to refer to on the subject of goal setting. This notebook was distributed to each Kansas county office. It contains multiple resources for offering community education related to goal setting.

(continued from page 1)

## 10 Goals for Improving Family & Couple Relationships for 2005



### 4 Learn a New Hobby as a Couple

Learning a new skill and/or hobby is a great way (e.g., dancing, sculpture, etc.), as a couple, to build new bonds.



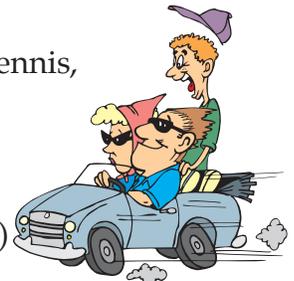
### 3 Weekly Walks

Taking a walk as a family or a couple can improve overall satisfaction and foster communication.



### 2 Couple Exercise

Exercising together (e.g., running, swimming, tennis, etc.) with an activity you both enjoy can lead to stronger bonds.



### Family Vacation/Trips

Planning a family vacation or trip (does not have to cost a lot of money) can help families come together and renew family bonds.