



AUTISM ALLIANCE OF MICHIGAN PRESENTS

MiNavigator

January 2020

MiNavigator Newsletter Issue 37

Presented by Autism Alliance of Michigan
www.AAoMI.org

Help. Hope. Answers. Today



GOALS

1.

2.

3.

TOP 3

Contributed by Jacelyn Krol, Mom

The start of a new year means new goals (bring on the resolutions) and new to do lists (finally going to organize the kids' playroom). It almost feels with the simple change of a number, 2019 to 2020, that we have been given a clean slate. Besides buying a Costco sized box of hand warmers, I love this time of year!

Before I share my "Top 3" piece of advice, I want to encourage you to ask yourself this question: "What comes first, achievement of a goal or happiness?" If you said achievement, then applaud yourself for being in the majority of the populations way of thinking. If you said happiness, applaud yourself for knowing the secret to success. This is the premise of "The Happiness Advantage" by Shawn Achor.

Most of us have been taught that if we lose 10 more pounds, get a raise, get engaged that happiness will follow. The field of positive psychology research shows that this way of thinking is actually backwards. Happiness and positivity makes our brains more motivated, resilient and productive. The fresh start we feel with a new year is a great time to take a step back and evaluate whether or not you are in the right frame of mind before tackling new goals.





When our son was first diagnosed, I became panicked and overwhelmed with all of the deficits we had to overcome. I won't lie, at first I tried to combat it all at once, placing a ridiculous amount of pressure on myself, my family, therapists, teachers, everyone. We did see small improvements; but as time went on, my relationships and mental health deteriorated. I started to run, not because I was being chased by a bloodthirsty pack of zombies, but for exercise. I started increasing my time, then I started increasing my mileage, then I started setting race goals.

I was taking care of myself, I was happier and my son's progress started to gain some real momentum. That was when I had my "Aha" moment. What if I set goals for my son in the same way I set small, attainable goals with running? This was a great concept, but we had too many areas to work on with our son. This is when I came up with the idea of "Top 3".

I decided to pick three goals to work on for my son. These three goals would be the mission statement for his therapy, schooling and home life. We set concrete, measurable and attainable goals. Having three things that we were focusing on made everything seem much more manageable and less stressful. Guess what happened? His progress improved even more and most importantly, he was happier. I have now taken this idea of Top 3 into my own personal life with yearly and daily goals.

I encourage you to sit down, make a menu of goals and to do's and maybe desired desserts. Then pick just three that would make an impact on your life and are attainable. Now you have your "Top 3"! Don't stop there; figure out what steps you have to take to get there, then it's just one step at a time.



NEW YEAR GOALS AND AUTISM

Contributed by Hetal Patel MA.CCC-SLP, AAoM Communication Specialist

January is the time of year many of us set goals for the New Year. It can be a time to help children establish goals for themselves as well. We may not think of setting goals for a child with autism, but this shouldn't be the case. When a child is successful in meeting their own goals, it helps motivate continued learning and build confidence. Setting appropriate goals, in the right steps, is key to achieving the goal set.

The SMART Goal method was developed in 1981 by George T. Dornan as a tool to create criteria to help improve the chances of success in accomplishing goals in the corporate world. This method, however, can be especially helpful in establishing specific and attainable goals for children of all abilities, too. Start by answering the questions below to identify some goals to work on in 2020!





SMART Goals

Specific: What exactly is the goal? Make goals objective instead of subjective. Think WH questions:

- What do you want the child to do?
- Why is this goal important or needed?
- Who needs to be part of this goal?
- When will progress on the goal occur?
- Where can this goal be worked on?
- What motivates the child to achieve this goal?

Measurable: Make the goal easily measurable. Measurability of goals helps in seeing the win. Visual supports, a simple chart or token system can help a child stay motivated and see the progress they are making.

Achievable: Is the goal established realistic? Does the child have the skill level to achieve it? It is important for you to know “how” you are going to help him or her achieve this goal. Remember, small wins can be more tangible for a child.

Relevant: Is the goal chosen relevant to the child? What will this goal help the child do? And is this a goal that is important to the child?

Timely: Can this goal be achieved in an appropriate amount of time? How long will it take to achieve? Many children can have a limited attention span, so making goals long term might make a child lose motivation. Consider making goals achievable within a week to a month.

Involve the child in the goal setting process. Allowing a child to choose their own goals increases the likelihood of the goal being achieved!





JANUARY AT A GLANCE

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1	2	3 GR Holiday Stress Group (Grayling)	4
5	6 Special Needs Ballet Class (Canton)	7 Emmanuel House Food Give-A-Way (Detroit)	8 The future of behavioral health in Michigan- Public Forum (Detroit)	9 The future of behavioral health in Michigan- Public Forum (Grand Rapids)	10 Movie/Pizza Night (Rochester)	11 Saturday in our Community (Canton)
12	13 V.I.P. Jump (Okemos)	14 Made in Michigan (Grand Rapids) Sensory Series Workshop (Clarkston)	15	16 EMU Free Neurological OT Clinic (Ypsilanti)	17 Great Lakes Bay ABA Collaborative Network - AAoMi/ Family Matters (Saginaw)	18 The Fowler Center WEEKEND RESPITE CAMPS All Ages (ages 6+) (Mayville)
19 OUCARES Winter 2020 Programs (Rochester)	20 SPAR Event – XC Skiing & Snowshoe Clinic (Marquette)	21 Clay Bead Design (Grand Rapids)	22 The future of behavioral health in Michigan- Public Forum (Marquette)	23 Great Start Macomb Parent Coalition: “Adventures in Parenting” (Clinton Township)	24 Sensory-friendly movies for teens/ adults (Bloomfield Township)	25 Martial Arts (Ferndale) Noquemanon Ski Marathon (Marquette)
26	27	28 SPAR Event – XC Skiing & Snowshoe Clinic (Ontonagon County)	29 ABLE vs Special Needs Trusts: An In-depth Discussion (Webinar)	30 The future of behavioral health in Michigan- Public Forum (Saginaw) Free Independent Living Training (Grosse Pointe Farms)	31 Prevention Prepared Communities (Flint)	

** For more information on any of these events, please contact the MiNavigator line at 877-463-2266.

2020 NAVIGATING AUTISM TODAY CONFERENCE

Friday, March 6th, 2020 | Wayne County Community College District - Ted Scott Campus | Belleville



Autism Alliance of Michigan

Tickets and vendor tables available at AAoMConference.org

