

**Goals**

Exercise



15-30 min



Client



No



Hope Map

The science of hope explains that how we think about the future is a key determinant of our success in work, school, and life. For example, with all other conditions being equal, high hope improves workplace outcomes (Reichard, Avey, Lopez, Dollwet, & Marques, 2013), academic performance (Lopez, Reichard, Dollwet, & Marques, 2014) and happiness (Alarcon, Bowling, & Khazon, 2013).

Why is this? When we see a direct connection between the future we want and our behaviors and attitudes today, effort and commitment soar. Traditional goal setting relies on clarity in the specifics that we are trying to achieve (think SMART goals) and the willpower to achieve. While we can rely solely on willpower to achieve our goals, these efforts at self-control can become exhausting and ignore the psychological force that we activate when we tap into the motivating energy of hope.

Hope theory encompasses not only the willpower (agency) but also the waypower (pathways) to achieve our goals (Snyder, 2000). Lyubomirsky's (2007) proposition is that working towards a goal is as important to wellbeing as the attainment of the goal itself. Committed goal pursuit provides us with a sense of purpose and feeling of control over our lives, assisting us in feeling efficacious and, importantly, reinforces our sense of autonomy. This activity is designed to teach clients the power of pathway thinking while tapping into the motivation to fuel their persistence towards their goals.

Author

This tool was modified by Rachel Colla from an exercise described by Shane Lopez.

Goal

Many clients may struggle with the process of goal striving, particularly with maintaining motivation in the face of obstacles. This exercise is designed to teach 'pathway thinking' to clients to help unlock their motivating energy of hope. Hope works because it broadens our thinking and fuels our persistence. This activity helps clients articulate their high expectations for the future and develop a clear-eyed view of the obstacles they will need to overcome to get there.



Advice

- This activity was originally designed for implementation with students, but it can be modified to suit the age of any client.
- Clients who like working with a computer may consider using mind map tools (e.g., www.imindmap.com). Mind map tools allow them to create a graphical representation of their Hope Map digitally.
- Clients may use the preformatted version of the Hope Map, as shown on page 5, but may also decide to start from scratch. The latter option allows more freedom but maybe a bit more challenging for clients.
- Exposure to the Hope Map can serve as a prime or reminder. Therefore, your client can put the vision board where it can be seen every day (e.g., on the refrigerator or office desk). Note that some clients may consider their map a private source of inspiration. If this is the case, they should think of a place that limits who can view their work.



References

- Alarcon, G.M., Bowling, N.A., & Khazon, S. (2013). Great expectations: A meta-analytic examination of optimism and hope. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 54(7), 821-827.
- Lopez, S.J. (2013). *Making hope happen: Create the future you want for yourself and others*. Atria Books.
- Lopez, S.J., Reichard, B., Dollwet, M., & Marques, S. (2014). Relation of hope to academic outcomes: A meta-analysis. *Manuscript submitted for publication*.
- Lyubomirsky, S. (2007). *The how of happiness: A practical guide to getting the life you want*. Sphere.
- Reichard, B., Avey, J., Lopez, S.J., Dollwet, M., & Marques, S. (2013). Having the will and finding the way: A review and meta-analysis of hope at work. *Journal of Positive Psychology*, 8(4), 292-304.
- Snyder, C.R. (2000). *Handbook of hope: Theory, measures and applications*. Academic Press.



Hope Map

Instructions

To complete the following procedure, please use the Hope Map on page 5.

Step 1: Goal setting

Determine a clear and exciting vision of a Goal that you would like to achieve. Write your goal in the big box displayed in the last column of the Hope Map.

Step 2: Action planning

In the Pathways section (first column of the Hope Map), write down several actions, pathways, or steps you will take to pursue the goal. Use one action per box.

Step 3: Identifying obstacles

In the Obstacles section (second column of the Hope Map), identify at least one obstacle that might block each of the paths you have described. You may list several obstacles per box.

Step 4: Overcoming obstacles

Moving back to the Pathways section, review your existing pathways, including strategies to overcome the obstacle identified. This may include developing new pathways altogether or building additional steps to your existing pathways (you can use the boxes in the third column of the Hope Map to identify additional pathways). For any new pathways identified, repeat Steps 3 and 4 to overcome any obstacles that will block your progress.

Step 5: Ideas for maintaining motivation

In the circles around the edges of the page, write down ideas for maintaining your energy and motivation while you move toward the Goal Box along the selected pathways. Be particularly mindful of the situations and obstacles that are likely to sap your willpower and be sure to come up with ideas for countering those challenges.



Reflection

Now that the Hope Map is almost complete, review it several times over. Determine which pathway you will commence first, understanding that you have to pursue various strategies to achieve your identified goal.

Finally, take a few minutes to imagine what it would look like to pursue and reach your goal. Once you have a vivid image of reaching the Goal Box in your mind, mentally rehearse all the steps you need to take to get there in real life, creating a sense of energy and excitement to commence the first step on your journey to your goal.

Figure 1. Hope Map