

# FOUR MISTAKES TO AVOID WHEN SETTING YOUR GOALS



Wall Street legend Ray Dalio is famous for founding the world's largest hedge fund, Bridgewater Associates. But he might be even more famous for the management style he calls "radical transparency."

At his firm people can expect to receive immediate, honest feedback on their work. And they are, in turn, expected to speak frankly about the performance of their peers, managers, and even Dalio himself.<sup>1</sup>

It's not always comfortable, but radical transparency has enabled Bridgewater Associates to identify and solve problems quickly, and develop highly successful employees. Dalio has written extensively on what he's learned about personal achievement, including the fundamental importance of choosing the right goals.

In his book *Principles: Life & Work*, he writes, "Your choice of goals will determine your direction. There is always a best possible path. Your job is to find it and have the courage to follow it."<sup>2</sup>

It's easy to find advice on how to *achieve* your goals. But the biggest problem for many people comes one step earlier. They have trouble choosing the *right* goals in the first place.

## Four Pitfalls To Avoid When Choosing Goals

According to Dalio, these are the four biggest mistakes people make when setting their goals.

### 1. Becoming overwhelmed with possibilities

Saying "yes" to a major goal will always involve saying "no" to lesser priorities—even things that are worthy in themselves. Dalio writes, "Choosing a goal often means rejecting things you want in order to get things that you want or need even more."

## **2. Confusing a goal with a desire**

Dalio states the difference this way: "A proper goal is something that you really need to achieve. Desires are things that you want." It's possible to align your goals and desires, but you must always remember which is more important.

## **3. Focusing on the wrong rewards**

Don't mistake the trappings of success for success itself. Dalio observes that people who obsess over a \$1,200 pair of shoes or a fancy car are very rarely happy because they don't know what they really want, and so what will really satisfy them.

## **4. Not dreaming big enough**

What you think is attainable is based on what you know right now. That knowledge can and will change. Dalio writes, "If you limit your goals to what you know you can achieve, you are setting the bar way too low."

If you're constantly changing your goals, you have a much lower chance of attaining any of them. But if you can choose long-term goals that you can work towards year in and year out, you have a much better chance of reaching them, no matter what obstacles you find in your way.

As you pursue your goal of a fully funded retirement, it's important to know the big "why" that motivates you to be disciplined now for the sake of your future self, especially as periods of market volatility can make you feel like you're losing ground. So remember that we are here to help you persevere when others are throwing in the towel.

Have a great weekend!

Source: Efficient Advisors

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## Golf Tip of the Week



### Zero In On Your Impact Location

When your club makes contact with the ball, and the ball gets its marching orders, this is “the moment of truth.” Most golfers are unaware of where they are making impact with their irons and woods, and it’s extremely important information.

The next time you are on the range, mark the head of your irons with a dry erase marker or spray your ball with a can of powdered foot spray before you strike the ball with your driver or fairway woods. This will help you see exactly where you’re hitting the ball. Once you’ve tracked your impact location, make a mental note of your body mechanics and footing. With enough repetition, it’ll start to feel second nature, and you can leave your training tools at home.

Tip courtesy of Adam Young | [PracticalGolf.com](http://PracticalGolf.com)<sup>i</sup>

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## Recipe of the Week

### Out-of-This-World Granola Bars



12 servings

**Ingredients:**

3 cups organic, old-fashioned oats

2 tablespoons oil (try avocado oil or melted coconut oil—either packs a punch!)

1 - 2 Tbsp. brown sugar (to taste)

1 - 2 Tbsp. maple syrup

¼ cup honey

1 tsp. vanilla

1 tsp. cinnamon

¼ - ½ tsp. nutmeg

1 - 1½ cups “extras” (dried fruit, walnuts, pecans, sunflower seeds, chocolate chips)

5 oz. Belgian dark chocolate

**Directions:**

1. While the oven is preheating to 350°F, spread the oats evenly in a 9” x 13” pan. Put them in the oven and toast for about 15 minutes, stirring once or twice. Meanwhile, line a 9” x 9” pan with parchment paper or foil, leaving a few extra inches on each side so you can tent the bars after the granola mixture is transferred to the pan. Heat the oil in a small saucepan and add the brown sugar, maple syrup, honey, vanilla, cinnamon, and nutmeg; bring it to a simmer over medium-high heat. Stir until the brown sugar dissolves, then turn off the burner.
2. Add the oats to a large bowl, pour the hot liquid over the oats, and stir to coat evenly. Stir in all of your “extras,” then add the mixture into the prepared pan.
3. Fold the extra parchment or foil over the top of the granola mixture and press to fill the pan and to flatten out the granola in the pan. Cool the bars for about an hour or put them in the freezer to cool faster.
4. Invert the pan to transfer cooled bars onto a cutting board and set aside the parchment or foil. Slice the bars to the desired size and spread them in a single layer onto the foil or parchment. Melt the chocolate in a small saucepan over low heat. Drizzle the chocolate over the bars with a spoon and enjoy!

Recipe adapted from Sugar Dish Me<sup>ii</sup>

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## Health Tip of the Week



### 5 Health Benefits of Owning a Dog

It's true: America loves dogs. Besides our four-legged best friends being cute, friendly, and always glad to see us, they offer a whole host of health benefits to keep our spirits up, help to combat loneliness, and have an excuse to get outside for some fresh air and exercise. Here are a few added benefits of canine ownership:

- **Pet your dog for stress relief.** Petting a dog reduces stress. It triggers your brain to release oxytocin (known as the “love hormone”) and reduces the release of cortisol (a stress hormone).
- **Unconditional love.** No pressure—your dog loves you no matter what. Sometimes it's just what the doctor ordered.
- **Never lonely.** The companionship of a dog can alleviate feelings of loneliness and give meaning because a dog needs consistent care. Dogs are also good for those who have trouble connecting with other people, such as those diagnosed with PTSD or dementia.
- **Better than blood pressure pills.** Studies have shown that in some cases, dog ownership may help lower cortisol levels, which in turn, could result in lower blood pressure.

Tip adapted from Canine Weekly<sup>iii</sup>

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1. [http://go.efficientadvisors.com/e/91522/trategy-behind-my-success-html/5rzzmc/606957228?h=PPdcw74Tnjp61P7L1Cb6yZA9JrSLS1EaB\\_AbKLnYIS4](http://go.efficientadvisors.com/e/91522/trategy-behind-my-success-html/5rzzmc/606957228?h=PPdcw74Tnjp61P7L1Cb6yZA9JrSLS1EaB_AbKLnYIS4)
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<sup>i</sup> <https://practical-golf.com/golf-tips/>

<sup>ii</sup> <https://www.sugardishme.com/best-dang-granola-bars-ever-ever/>

<sup>iii</sup> <https://canineweekly.com/the-mental-health-benefits-of-dog-ownership/>