

Outcome vs. Action Goals

Supports: Block — Outcome vs. Action Goals

Why It Matters

Most people set goals like “lose 20 pounds” or “lower my blood pressure.” Those are outcome goals — the results you hope for. The trouble is you cannot directly control an outcome; you can only control what you do. That is where action goals come in: the specific, repeatable steps that lead to the result. Shifting your focus from the outcome to the actions is one of the most powerful changes you can make, because actions are something you can actually do and win at every day.

What to Know

The difference

- Outcome goal — the result you want: “lose weight,” “run a 5K,” “lower cholesterol.”
- Action goal — the repeatable step that gets you there: “walk 30 minutes on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday.”

Why action goals work better

You control your actions, not the scale. Action goals give you something to succeed at daily, they build the habits that create the outcome, and they keep you motivated even when results are slow to show. The outcome tends to follow the actions.

Make it a plan: A good action goal names exactly what, when, and how often. “Eat vegetables at lunch and dinner on weekdays” beats “eat healthier” because you know precisely what to do.

Try This

Turn a wish into an action.

? What outcome are you hoping for?

? What is one specific, repeatable action — what, when, how often — that would move you toward it?