

THE DIAMOND STANDARD
CURRICULUM

**BIBLICAL DISCUSSION TEACHER
GUIDE**



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THE DIAMOND STANDARD

BIBLICAL DISCUSSION GUIDE



Aligning Our Dreams with God's Will

Scripture: Deuteronomy 6:4-9

Students are encouraged to explore what goals and dreams they have for themselves, how God gives us dreams and goals to honor him and how to effectively meet those goals through a Goal-Setting Model.



Living Out God's Best

Scripture: Romans 12:1-2

Students learn to distinguish between healthy and unhealthy coping behaviors when dealing with stress. Students explore healthy coping strategies that God gives us to deal with our stress in ways that don't harm us further.



Searching God by Knowing your Gifts

Scripture: 1 Corinthians 4:1-11

Students explore their strengths through Howard Gardner's multiple intelligences and the Five Factor Personality Model (Big Five) and how these inform interests, hobbies and potential career paths. Students learn that God gives us each unique personalities and gifts that we can use to glorify him.



Loving Your Neighbor Through Healthy Communication

Scripture: James 1:19-20

Students learn about the cycle of communication and tips for effective communication in relationships, careers, academics and social media. Students explore how God desires for us to use our words to encourage others.



Navigating Conflict with a Biblical Perspective

Scripture: Matthew 18:15-20

Building Bridges in the Body of Christ

Scripture: Matthew 18:21-35

Students learn to distinguish between a "win-win" and "win-lose" approach to resolving conflict.



Delighting in the Lord's Values

Scripture: Psalm 37:4

Students examine how their relationship with Christ impacts their personal values and guides their view of success and shapes their character. This session focuses on diligence, gratitude, dignity, empathy, service and forgiveness.



Supporting the Church through Love

Scripture: John 13:35

Students address their own support system and evaluate whether they could use additional support in areas of their life. Students also have an opportunity to reflect on how they serve as support for others. This session focuses on the importance and impact of a healthy community.



Establishing Christ-Centered Relationships

Scripture: Philippians 2:1-5

Discovering God's Hope for Intimacy

Scripture: 1 John 4:7-21

Healthy Boundaries within a God-Honoring Relationship

Scripture: 1 John 4:7-21



Becoming Imitators of Christ

Scripture: Ephesians 5:1

Students reflect on the type of guidance they have received and how it has impacted their life. Students are encouraged to discover skills and qualities of an effective mentor and identify someone in their life to seek out as a mentor. Students explore the importance of having mentors who follow Christ.



Living by God's Greatest Commandments

Scripture: Ephesians 2:8-10

Students assess thoughts, feelings and attitudes and clarify their vision for the future. Students revisit the goal-setting model from the first session to make steps towards specific goals and strategies that support who they are as a whole person.

DREAM

1

Live Out Your Goals



BELIEVE
IN YOUR
DREAM

Teacher's Guide

Session Objectives:

- Encourage participants to think about their future.
- Introduce a goal-setting model as a practical way to achieve dreams.
- Teach brain structure and development related to the pre-frontal cortex and limbic system.
- Have participants understand the importance of developing healthy neuropathways through executive skills practice.

Executive Skills Focus:

Organizing

Planning Ahead

Problem-Solving

Vocabulary:

Impulse

Prefrontal Cortex

Limbic System

Executive Skills

Intentional

Teacher Aids:

PowerPoint

Dream Puzzle bags

Dream Puzzle images

Blank 8.5" x 11" paper

Glue sticks

Goal-Setting envelopes

Poster paper

Markers

Candy

Room Preparation:

Set up the computer/projector for PowerPoint Session 1. Write the words "Dreams" and "Obstacles" on the board/poster paper (see page 6). Put the fill-in-the blank steps for the Goal-Setting Model game on the board/poster paper (see page 12).

Biblical Discussion Guide Focus

Aligning Our Dreams with God's Will

Scripture: Deuteronomy 6:4-9

DREAM: Live Out Your Goals

1

Activity: Dream Puzzle



Purpose:

To introduce students to the objectives of Session 1 through an activity that illustrates important considerations for achieving goals.

Preparation:

To create a Dream Puzzle, select an image that is pleasant to look at and complex enough that it takes students a few minutes to put together. Make two 8.5" x 11" copies of the image, one colored and one black and white. Place all of the colored pieces into a bag with a few pieces of the corresponding black and white image. Repeat this process for 2 – 4 different images so there are different puzzles being created in the classroom. There should be one Dream Puzzle bag for every group of 3 – 4 students.

To Play:

1. Give each team a puzzle bag, an 8.5" x 11" sheet of blank paper and a glue stick. Be sure to use a different image to create each puzzle bag so that different teams are working on different images. Only when you say "go" are they to start putting the puzzle together. Let them know the completed puzzle has to be glued onto the blank paper.
2. Carry a copy of each of the images with you as you walk around the room.
3. Observe the assembly for a few moments. Ask participants, "Would it be easier to put the puzzle together if you were to see the picture?" If they want to see the picture of their image, show them for only a moment.
4. Allow a little more time, then quietly place the images throughout the room where the entire class can view them, but don't draw attention to what you are doing.
5. If teams don't figure out for themselves that there are extra black and white pieces in their puzzles, say, "Be sure you're working with all the right pieces to the puzzle. Sometimes not all of the pieces belong."
6. The first team to complete their puzzle and bring it to the instructor wins. Candy can be used as a prize.

Slide 1



DREAM: Live Out Your Goals

1

Discussion Points:

1. Was it easier to put the puzzle together before or after you saw the original picture?

Share This: *We can often accomplish more when we have a good picture of what we want to achieve, and we can plan ahead.*

2. What about those stray black and white pieces? Were they a distraction?

Share This: *Sometimes, in order to accomplish our dreams we have to figure out what is distracting us from staying focused on our dreams and what doesn't belong in the picture we are trying to create.*

3. Did you have to reposition any of the puzzle pieces after you had them glued to the paper?

Share This: *Sometimes things don't fit in the way we expected, and we have to adjust to new circumstances.*

4. Was it hard to work with multiple hands all working on the puzzle at the same time?

Share This: *The puzzle can only go together one piece at a time, no matter how many hands are in the process. The same is true with dream building and goal setting; it is a step-by-step process where one piece leads to the next piece.*

5. Why do you think there were different images being put together by the groups in the class?

Share This: *Everyone has unique dreams and goals, and they come together in different ways and at different times.*

Slide 1



BDG Share This:

Similar to how our lives can be likened to a puzzle, spiritual formation can be understood in the same way. All of our experiences, whether cultural, familial, spiritual, relational, academic, or anything else—contribute to our formation. Although these experiences are valuable in determining our ultimate shape, viewing them in light of what is presented in Scripture is essential in determining the truth about ourselves. With the foundation of the Bible, we can discover where to turn, who to believe, and our identity as children of God.

Transition/Session Overview

Review the following objectives:

Advance to slide 2.

- We will encourage you to think about your future and your goals.
- We will teach you about the structure of your brain, how it develops, and how you can actively work on your brain right now by practicing executive skills.
- You will learn and practice a Goal-Setting Model that will give you a practical way to pursue your dreams and achieve your goals.

Executive Skills Focus:

Organization
Planning Ahead
Problem-Solving

Slide 2



DREAM 1 SESSION

Objectives

- Think about the future and creating goals.
- Learn about brain development.
- Learn a goal-setting model.
- **Executive skills:** Organization, Planning Ahead, Problem-Solving

DREAM: Live Out Your Goals

1

Dream: Live Out Your Goals



1. Ask students to volunteer to read a quote from the page. Ask a few students why they chose their particular quote and if they had a connection to what it said or to the author.
2. Advance to slide 3. Read the Langston Hughes quote aloud or have a student read it. Ask the students what they think the quote means.

Teacher Note: In case students have difficulty thinking of responses, you might ask: “What do you think the quote might be saying about dreams and their place in our lives,” or “Why do you think the quote says we have to ‘hold fast’ to dreams?”

Share This: Something is going to challenge your dreams. This quote implies the need for perseverance and resilience in order to achieve your dreams.

3. Advance to slide 4. Have students take a minute to answer the two questions on the page. Put the words “Dreams” and “Obstacles” as headings for two columns on the board/poster paper.
4. Have the students share their responses from the two questions aloud and have two volunteers write them under the appropriate column heading on the board.

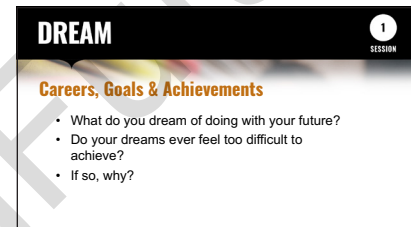
Share This: There are amazing dreams and goals in the room, and we are going to learn more about setting goals, reaching your dreams and responding to the obstacles or challenges that make achieving goals difficult.

5. Read the final few sentences at the bottom of the page that will help students transition to the next section on the brain.

Slide 3




Slide 4



BDG Share This:

As it was in the puzzle activity, it can be especially difficult when we are not sure of the overall picture being assembled. While each of our life “pieces” or circumstances are unique, God gives us a glimpse into the big picture with his promises in Scripture! He promises restoration, reconciliation, and hope through the Kingdom of God. In the meantime, though, the Bible gives us guidance on how to faithfully put our pieces into place. One of the most important Scriptures for understanding this is Deuteronomy 6:4-9. (Read this aloud with the class). These verses are quoted by Jesus himself as the “most important” commandment (Mark 12:28-31)! This scripture reveals God’s hope for our lives—that we glorify him with everything we’ve got. It is a holistic experience: body, mind, and soul are involved in keeping this commandment. Although it can feel like God’s will for our life is the picture on the puzzle box, Deuteronomy 6:4-9 reminds us that his will for our life is also achieved by dedicating every piece of the puzzle to him.



DREAM

1
SESSION

Live Out Your Goals

No matter where you are from, your dreams are valid.¹
LUPITA NYONG'O

Having the courage to stand up and pursue your dreams will give you life's greatest reward and life's greatest adventure.²
OPRAH WINFREY

Nothing happens unless first a dream.³
CARL SANDBURG

Do you hear what I say? This is where dreams – dreams, do you understand – come to life, come real. Not daydreams: dreams.⁴
C. S. LEWIS
Voyage of the Dawn Treader

LANGSTON HUGHES, a famous African American author and philosopher, wrote:
“Hold fast to dreams / For if dreams die / Life is a broken-winged bird / That cannot fly.”⁵

1. What do you dream of doing with your future?
Dreams might include pursuing a passion, career interests, traveling, relationship or family goals, or working to change or improve a community. Help participants think big!

2. Does it ever feel too difficult to achieve? If so, why?
Financial limitations, academic struggles, family issues, trauma and losing hope can make dreams seem unreachable.

The prefrontal cortex of the brain is where we process things like deciding on dreams and how to achieve them. Learning more about the structure of the brain and how it develops can help you to better understand how these skills can mature.

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BDG Optional Activity



Have the class compare the Langston Hughes quote with Isaiah 40:31:

- A crucial part of dedicating every aspect of our life to God is also giving our dreams to him. One of the best comparisons in scripture for “dreaming” is the idea of hope.
- Biblically, a centerpiece of “hope” is the person of God and the reliability of his plans. However, there are a multitude of hopes the human heart can carry.
- Our soul’s health and quality of life are connected to the expectations of hope. God acknowledges the truth found in this famous poem by Langston Hughes (Revisit Hughes quote). The author of Hebrews writes on the certainty of God’s promises: “We have this hope as an anchor for the soul, firm and secure” (Hebrews 6:19).
- We need to hold fast to our dreams and the promises of God so that we do not resemble, as Hughes wrote, “a broken-winged bird.” If we hold fast to this hope, we will embody Isaiah 40:31:

“Those who hope in the Lord
Will renew their strength.
They will run and not grow weary,
They will walk and not be faint.”

A High-Level Executive — How the Brain is in Charge of Planning, Solving and Understanding



Teacher Note: Things to keep in mind before you teach this section:

- When we refer to executive skills, we are talking about the mental processes that facilitate our ability to:
 - Solve problems
 - Plan ahead
 - Adjust to new circumstances
 - Regulate behavior
 - Control impulses
 - Be flexible in thinking
 - Think ahead
 - Exercise good judgment
 - Be organized
 - Be empathetic
 - Learn from mistakes
 - Concentrate
 - Have a long attention span
 - Think critically
- This curriculum provides intentional opportunities to practice and develop strong executive skills that can help youth to be more successful in life.
- After the brain development section, you want the students to know:
 - Where the prefrontal cortex is and that it is responsible for executive skills. It is not fully developed until our mid-20s, but youth can actively work on their brain development right now.
 - That the limbic system is the emotional center of our brain, and it is mature by the time we are teenagers.
 - That the prefrontal cortex can regulate our limbic system through the pathways that are formed in our teens and 20s, and those pathways are formed when we practice executive skills.

DREAM: Live Out Your Goals

Notes:

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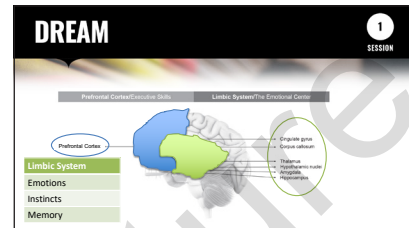
DREAM: Live Out Your Goals

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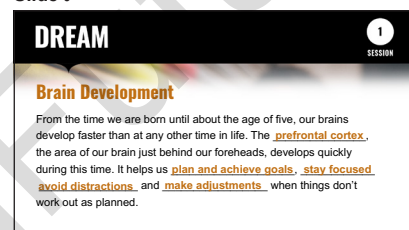
A High-Level Executive — How the Brain is in Charge of Planning, Solving and Understanding (Cont.)

1. Advance to slide 5. This slide is animated and will highlight the locations of the prefrontal cortex and limbic system.
2. Explain to students that you will be talking about each area of the brain as you advance through slide 5. The functions of the prefrontal cortex connect with executive skills and the limbic system acts as our emotional center.
3. Read through the material on brain development on page 2. Click through slides 6 – 9 and the words for the blank spaces will appear. Use the words to highlight the information as you teach, and have students follow along by filling in their student manuals.
4. Read the final paragraph on this page, which transitions the students into the Goal-Setting Model.

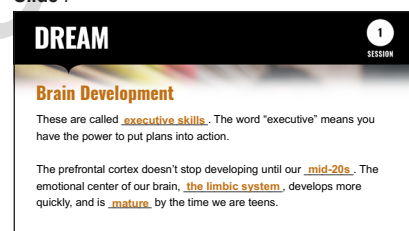
Slide 5



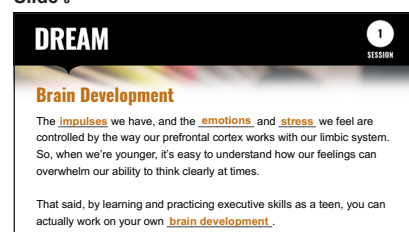
Slide 6



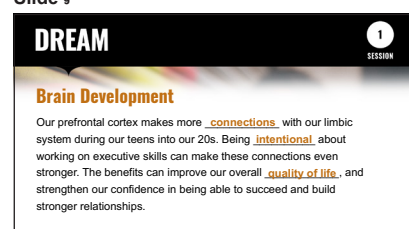
Slide 7



Slide 8



Slide 9



BDG Share This:

God created our brains with everything that we need to be healthy, successful, and relational beings. We can learn a lot about God based on how he created us (Psalm 139:13-18).

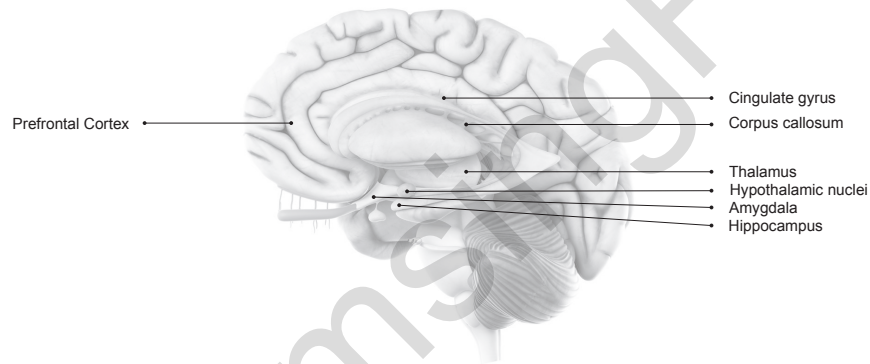
DREAM

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SESSION

A High-Level Executive: How the Brain is in Charge of Planning, Solving and Understanding

Prefrontal Cortex/Executive Skills

Limbic System/The Emotional Center



From the time we are born until about the age of five, our brains develop faster than at any other time in life. The prefrontal cortex, the area of our brain just behind our foreheads, develops quickly during this time. It helps us plan and achieve goals, stay focused, avoid distractions and make adjustments when things don't work out as planned. These are called executive skills.⁶ The word "executive" means you have the power to put plans into action.

The prefrontal cortex doesn't stop developing until our mid-20s. The emotional center of our brain, the the limbic system, develops more quickly, and is mature by the time we are teens. The impulses we have, and the emotions and stress we feel are controlled by the way our prefrontal cortex works with our limbic system. So, when we're younger, it's easy to understand how our feelings can overwhelm our ability to think clearly at times.

That said, by learning and practicing executive skills as a teen, you can actually work on your own brain development. Our prefrontal cortex makes more connections with our limbic system during our teens into our 20s. Being intentional about working on executive skills can make these connections even stronger. The benefits can improve our overall quality of life, and strengthen our confidence in being able to succeed and build stronger relationships.

Since working on executive skills takes practice, this session will focus on helping you plan and achieve goals through a step-by-step process.

DREAM: Live Out Your Goals

1

Goal-Setting: Bringing Your Dreams to Life



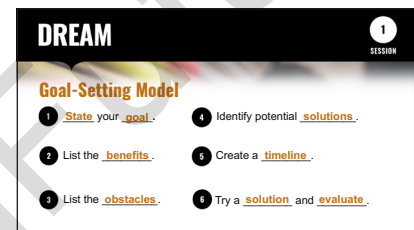
Goal-Setting Model Game:

1. Advance to slide 10 and have the students turn their manuals over.
2. Tell the students they are going to play a game to learn the steps of the Goal-Setting Model.
3. Refer the students to the board/poster paper that lists steps 1 – 6 and the blank spaces for students to fill in the steps of the Goal-Setting Model.
4. Let students know they will be divided into six teams — one for each step of the Goal-Setting Model that corresponds to the six numbers listed on the board. Show them the goal-setting envelopes and tell them that each team will be given an envelope with the step number and description of their goal-setting step that corresponds to their team number. Each envelope contains letters to unscramble that will create the word each team needs to fill in the blanks for their assigned goal-setting step. Team 1 and Team 6 will have two words to unscramble.
5. When you give the teams permission to start, they will compete to create the word(s) for their goal-setting step and run to the board/poster paper to fill in the blank spaces that correspond to their step in the Goal-Setting Model.
6. Answer any questions they may have about the activity.
7. Divide the class as evenly as possible into Teams #1 – 6 — one for each step of the Goal-Setting Model.
8. Hand out the envelopes and start the game.
9. After everyone has finished, you can let them know that every team is a winner because we need to have all 6 steps for a complete Goal-Setting Model!
10. Advance to slide 11 and have the students turn to page 3. Have volunteers from each team read their goal-setting step. Slide 11 is animated, so click through the slide as each team reads their step. Tell the class to write the steps into the spaces on page 3.

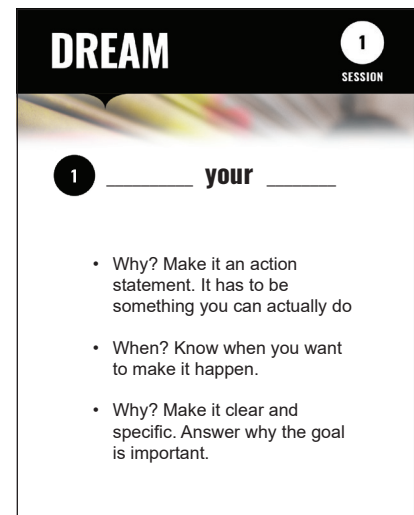
Slide 10



Slide 11



Teacher Aid: Goal Setting Model Game
Envelope Cover



DREAM

1
SESSION

Goal-Setting Model — Bringing Your Dreams to Life

1

State your goal.

- *What?* Make it an action statement. It has to be something you can actually do.
- *When?* Know when you want to make it happen.
- *Why?* Be clear and specific. Answer why the goal is important.

2

List the benefits.

- In what ways will reaching your goal improve life for you and others?
- Think about short-term and long-term benefits.

3

List the obstacles.

- Name any challenges you have to face or problems you need to solve to reach your goal.
- Think about the resources, knowledge or skills you will need to reach your goal.

4

Identify potential solutions.

- Directly address the obstacles you list.
- Brainstorm and use multiple resources to find solutions. These can include family and friends, professionals from fields you need like medical doctors, counselors and social workers, libraries and online databases, classes and trainings, or agencies that offer services to the community.

5

Create a timeline.

- Include when you plan to start solutions you've thought of, how long those solutions will take to work on, and how you intend to schedule them into your own personal calendar.
- Be sure to make the timeline specific. How many hours, days, months or years will the plan take?

6

Try a solution and evaluate.

- Decide if you need to try a new solution.
- Figure out if you need to adjust your goal.

Goal-Setting Model Example



1. Give each team a few minutes to look at the information describing their goal-setting step then have each team explain their assigned step in their own words to the class. After each team summarizes their step with the class, expand on the step by using slide 12 based on page 4: how a student would use the Goal-Setting Model to prepare to buy their own car. Add any important information for each step that students may not have addressed in their presentation.

Teacher Note: Let the students know that in the following activity they will break down the Goal-Setting Model and practice it in sections, using examples that are provided in order to fully understand each step. This will be helpful, because in the homework section, students will be asked to complete an entire Goal-Setting Model on a goal of their choice.

Slide 12

DREAM 1 SESSION

Goal-Setting Model

- 1. State your goal.**
 - I will buy a car by the end of next summer because I need to gain more independence.
- 2. List the benefits.**
 - I will gain independence in transportation.
 - I will gain work experience through a job.
 - I will learn how to save money.
- 3. List the obstacles.**
 - I don't know the costs.
 - I need to find a job.
 - I need to save five months I earn.
- 4. Identify potential solutions.**
 - I learn more about the cost of a car.
 - I find a job and create a savings plan.
- 5. Create a timeline.**
 - Talk to my parents about this goal on Saturday.
 - Headline: saved on food to allow on finding a job.
 - After I get a job, I will ask a parent/guardian for help in setting up a savings account.
- 6. Try a solution and evaluate.**
 - I want to talk to my parent/guardian first to seek advice, permission and support before I start working on the next steps in my plan.

BDG Share This:

Walking with God, our Creator, makes us more of who we were created to be and we find our greatest fulfillment in that pursuit. As believers, our goals should reflect our identity in Christ. This does not mean, however, that all of our goals must be spiritual. Instead, if our goal is to buy a car by the end of next summer, we can glorify God by being good stewards of our money, honoring the boundaries of our parents, and driving responsibly.

DREAM

1
SESSION

Goal-Setting Model Example

State your goal:

I will buy a car by the end of next summer because I want to gain more independence.

2

List the benefits:

- I won't have to rely on parents or public transit to take me places.
- In order to buy a car I will need to get a job, which will provide work experience.
- Making a major purchase will teach me how to manage my finances.

3

List the obstacles:

- I don't know the costs of a reasonable vehicle or ongoing maintenance.
- I need a way of making money and a plan for saving it.

4

Identify potential solutions:

- Conduct online research to learn about overall car costs.
- Find a job to earn the money needed to pay for the car and expenses.
- Create a savings plan and set up a savings account with the help of a parent/guardian.

5

Create a timeline:

- This Saturday, I will start researching and seek my parent's advice.
- Next week, I will spend an hour a day researching and applying for jobs.
- After I am offered a job, I will ask my parents for help in opening a bank account.

6

Try a solution and evaluate:

- I want talk to my parents/guardian first to seek advice, permission and support before I start working on the next steps in my plan.

Activity: Goal-Setting Model Practice



Let the students know they are going to work in pairs for this activity, and they will switch partners for three of the steps.

Step 1: State your goal. (10 min)

1. Give the students 15 seconds to find their first partner, sit down and turn to page 5.
2. Review the information for creating a goal statement.
3. Remind the students of the three criteria (what, when and why) that need to be included with any goal statement.
4. Read the three areas of focus related to stress reduction and have the students choose one to fill in the blanks and create a goal statement.
5. Circulate throughout the room and help the students create goal statements that follow the three criteria of what, when and why.
6. Have a few students share their goal statements.

Step 2: List the benefits. (5 min)

1. Give the students 15 seconds to find a new partner.
2. Review the information for creating a list of benefits.
3. Invite students to read the two goal statements aloud. Have students choose one goal statement then create a list of benefits for that goal.
4. Circulate throughout the room and check for understanding.
5. Have a few students share their list of benefits.

DREAM

1
SESSION

→ Give it a Try

Step 1: State your goal.

- *What?* Make it an action statement. It has to be something you can actually do.
- *When?* Know when you want to make it happen.
- *Why?* Be clear and specific. Answer why the goal is important.

Write a goal statement for one of the following ways you can improve your health.

- Learning more about nutrition in order to improve your diet.
- Regular exercise through an activity of your choice.
- Getting more sleep on a regular basis. (Studies recommend aiming for 8 – 10 hours a night)

I will **follow the suggestions on ChooseMyPlate.gov**

(What?)

the spring semester

(When? Length of time.)

because **I want to track what I eat, learn healthy food choices and stay accountable.**

(Why? Reason goal is important.)

Step 2: List the benefits.

- In what ways will reaching your goal improve life for you and others?
- Think about short-term and long-term benefits.

Write a list of benefits based on one of the following goal statements:

- I will volunteer for a community gardening project over the summer and learn more about the environment, growing healthy foods and giving access to gardens for families in need.
- I will take a class in active listening over the next few months to improve my personal communication with family and friends.

Benefits:

• **Being outdoors, earning community service hours, helping families in need.**

• **Resolving conflict better in relationships, meeting new people.**

DREAM: Live Out Your Goals

1

Step 3: List the obstacles. (5 min)

1. Students will stay with the same partner.
2. Review the information for creating a list of obstacles.
3. Using the same goal statement from Step 2, students will create a list of obstacles.
4. Circulate throughout the room and check for understanding.
5. Have a few students share their list of obstacles.

Step 4: Identify potential solutions. (10 min)

1. Give students 15 seconds to find their final partner and sit down.
2. Review the information for identifying potential solutions.
3. Ask students to write potential solutions for the goal statement, list of benefits and list of obstacles for the given scenario on ending marijuana use.
4. Circulate around the room to check for understanding. Remind the students that the solutions should directly address the obstacles listed in the scenario.
5. Have a few students share their potential solutions.

Teacher Note: *Since marijuana use can be a hot topic, it may be helpful to review information on state laws regarding marijuana use as well as side-effects of marijuana use in case students have questions.*

DREAM

1
SESSION

Step 3: List the obstacles.

- Name any challenge you have to face or problem you need to solve to reach your goal.
- Think about the resources, knowledge or skills you will need to reach your goal.

Write a list of obstacles based on the goal statement you chose in Step 2:

- *Transportation, no previous experience gardening.*
- *Transportation, need a class that works with my schedule, need help finding classes.*

Step 4: Identify potential solutions.

- Directly address the obstacles you list.
- Brainstorm and use multiple resources to find solutions. These can include family and friends, professionals from fields you need like medical doctors, counselors and social workers, libraries and online databases, classes and trainings, or agencies that offer services to the community.

Write out potential solutions for the following goal statement with its list of benefits and obstacles.

1. State the goal:

- I will stop using marijuana as a stress relief and recreational activity in the next year because I want to improve my physical and mental health.

2. List the benefits:

- Improvements in my memory and concentration.
- Better judgment and sense of motivation to get things done when not using.
- Don't have to worry about legal or disciplinary consequences if underage.
- Don't have to worry about drug-testing keeping me from certain job opportunities.

3. List the obstacles:

- Have to find new ways to deal with stress.
- Experiencing cravings might make me want to use again.
- Could create issues in relationships with friends who still use.

4. Identify potential solutions:

New ways of dealing with stress could include joining a support group, journaling to process frustrations and adding physical activity to expend stress-related energy. To handle this time of transition, I can find a trustworthy friend who can offer encouragement and help me to stay committed to my goal.

DREAM: Live Out Your Goals

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Step 5: Create a timeline. (5 min)

1. Students will stay with their partners.
2. Review the information for creating a timeline.
3. Students will create a timeline for the potential solutions they identified in Step 4.
4. Circulate throughout the room and check for understanding, reminding them that the timeline should directly address when they plan to start the solutions they have identified.
5. Have a few students share their timelines.

Step 6: Try a solution and evaluate. (5 min)

1. Students will stay with their partners.
2. Review the information for trying a solution and evaluating.
3. Ask students to choose their favorite option from Step 4 and explain how this solution will help achieve the goal from this scenario.
4. Circulate throughout the room and check for understanding.
5. Have a few students share the solution they would try.

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Step 5: Create a timeline.

- Include when you plan to start solutions you've thought of, how long those solutions will take to work on, and how you intend to schedule them into your own personal calendar.
- Be sure to make the timeline specific. How many hours, days, months, or years will the plan take?

Write your timeline for the potential solutions you identified in Step 4.

5. Create a timeline:

Talk with my parents today about joining a fitness club or rec center. Next week I will see my counselor about support group resources. By the end of the semester I will talk to each of my friends about who is interested in quitting.

Step 6: Try a solution and evaluate.

- Decide if you need to try a new solution.
- Figure out if you need to adjust your goal.

Choose your favorite option from Step 4 and explain how this solution will help to achieve your goal in this scenario.

I joined a basketball league at the YMCA and play on a team several nights a week. I'm more active and handle stress better as a result. I've made new friends who don't use marijuana that keep me accountable.

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Take it Home: Part 1



Advance to slide ¹³ and review Part ₁ of the homework. Draw attention to the fact that they get to choose which short-term goal from page ₉ that they would like to work on to fill out the Goal-Setting Model on page ₈.

Slide ¹³

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Take it Home

Part 1:

- Choose a short-term goal from "Take it Home: Part 1."
 - Decreasing Stress and Trauma
 - Improving Life
 - A Dream you Want to Fulfill
- Use the goal-setting model to achieve this goal.

BDG Share This:

Aligning our dreams with God's will should not be a process that diminishes the unique and purposeful way God created us. Our individual hopes, dreams, passions, and gifts all combine to form the "good works" God made us and prepared us to walk in (Eph. 2:10). As we practice goal setting, remember that the Lord has equipped us with the strengths we need to achieve our dreams, but we need to do our part in accomplishing them.

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Take it Home

Use this diagram of the goal-setting model for one of the options from the following page. Pick an option from the different categories that is important to you right now. Follow the steps given here from the goal-setting model and write your responses in the spaces provided.

State your goal:

I will _____
(What?)

_____ *(When? Length of time.)*

because _____
(Why? Reason goal is important.)

2

List the benefits:

3

List the obstacles:

4

Identify potential solutions:

5

Create a timeline:

6

Try a solution and evaluate:

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Take it Home

A PROBLEM YOU WOULD LIKE TO SOLVE

Decreasing Stress and Trauma:

Eat Well

- Decrease my soda consumption, and drink 8 – 10 glasses of water each day.
- Decrease my intake of fast food, and make sure to eat breakfast.
- Eat less processed sugar, and eat more fruits, veggies, whole grains and lean protein.

Deal with My Emotions

- Express myself through sports, art, music, journaling, praying or spending time in nature.
- Talk to a trusted adult who will listen and ask him or her for advice.
- Communicate positively with my family and friends.

Avoiding Risks:

Help Decrease Teen Dating Violence

- Respect yourself and others.
- Stop exerting power and control over another person through violence and threats.
- Create ways to develop your own individuality and self-confidence.
- 1 in 10 teens experience physical dating violence.⁷
1 in 3 girls experience dating violence of some form.⁸

Reduce Instances of Bullying

- Counteract being a bystander (witnessing bullying or violence happen and ignoring it).
- Understand the signs associated with bullying behaviors.
- Create standards for acceptance and support in a community (do this electronically for online communities as well).

IMPROVING LIFE

Improve My Academic Success

- Commit to taking responsibility for my own learning.
- Create good homework and study habits.
- Create study environments that will encourage learning and completing homework.

Creating an Employment Goal

- Think of a short-term goal you have that you will need a job to reach (ex. getting a car, saving for college tuition, starting a savings account or making low-risk investments for future plans).
- Identify the career you want for the future and the steps it will take to actually get there.

A DREAM YOU WANT TO FULFILL

- Create your own goal for a dream you want to fulfill, a problem you would like to solve, or a part of your life you want to improve.

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Notes:

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Take it Home: Part 2



Advance to slide 14. In Part 2, draw attention to the list of activities they get to choose from to increase their ability to dream big! They will choose one to complete over the course of the next week and a few people will be able to share their experience.

Slide 14

DREAM SESSION 1

Take it Home Part 2:

- Increase your ability to dream big!
- Choose one of the activities from "Take it Home: Part 2."
- Complete this activity over the next week, and share your experience with the class.

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Take it Home

Part 2:

Increase your ability to dream big and set goals by doing one of the following activities over the next week. Then share what you experienced with your class.

- Watch a movie about a famous person or group who succeeded despite barriers in life.
- Go to the library and read about another country or a subject you have always wanted to learn about.
- Create a visual collage with pictures of things you want to achieve in the future.
- End every day by documenting what you are grateful for.
- Choose to spend time with people who have a positive view of life.
- Fill your mind with music that inspires you to dream.
- Take some time to sit with a child in your life and listen to his or her dreams for the future.

Additional Resources



Highlight the resources on this page and encourage the students to access them.

Teacher Note: Become familiar with the additional resources at the end of each session.

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→ Additional Resources

- **Brain Healthy Life:**
Search online for the Amen Clinic's blog post "12 Prescriptions for Creating a Brain Healthy Life."
- **Stress Management:**
The American Academy of Pediatrics website, HealthyChildren.org, has a page titled "For Teens: Creating Your Personal Stress management Plan."
- **Improved Sleep:**
Check out the National Sleep Foundation's article, "Teens and Sleep," online for facts on the importance of good sleep and helpful tips.
- **Dating Violence:**
Look through the resources on LovelsRespect.org for more information or for assistance in dealing with dating violence.
- **Marijuana Facts:**
Visit the National Institute for Drug Abuse at drugabuse.gov and search for Drug Facts: Marijuana.
- **Finding a Job:**
Visit Youth.gov and search "Employment" for resources about job searches and preparation.

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3. Sandburg, C. (1992). Slabs of the sunburnt West. "Washington Monument by night." New York: Harcourt, Brace and Co.
4. Lewis, C. S. (1994). Voyage of the Dawn Treader. New York: Harper Collins.
5. Hughes, L. (1994). The collected poems of Langston Hughes. "Dreams." New York: Alfred A. Knopf.
6. National Scientific Council on the Developing Child. (2012). The Science of Neglect: The Persistent Absence of Responsive Care Disrupts the Developing Brain: Working Paper 12. DevelopingChild.Harvard.edu
7. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Surveillance Summaries: Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance – United States, 2013 (pdf, pg. 172). MMWR (2014); 63(no. SS-4).
8. Davis, Antoinette, MPH. 2008. Interpersonal and Physical Dating Violence among Teens. The National Council on Crime and Delinquency Focus. Available at http://www.nccd-crc.org/nccd/pubs/2008_focus_teen_dating_violence.pdf

Summary of Session 1



Advance to slide 15.

- We encouraged you to think about your future and your goals.
- We learned that the limbic system is the emotional center of our brain and is fully developed by the time we are in our teens.
- We discovered the location of the prefrontal cortex, that it is not fully developed until our mid-20s, that it is responsible for executive skills, and that you can actively work on your brain development right now.
- We learned that the prefrontal cortex can regulate our limbic system through the pathways that are formed in our teens and 20s, and that the pathways are formed when we practice executive skills.
- We learned and practiced the Goal-Setting Model so you can improve the quality of your life and achieve your dreams and goals.
- Briefly review the steps with the students.

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Review

- We thought about our future goals and challenges.
- We learned about the prefrontal cortex and executive skills.
- We practiced the goal-setting model.

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Additional Biblical Resources

→ Discussion Questions:

- What life circumstances (family, culture, school, etc.) have shaped your faith in God?
- How easy or difficult is dreaming for you? Is it difficult to believe that God cares about your dreams? Why or why not?
- How has God shown examples of Himself being a dreamer? (Consider creation and how God might have imagined and dreamed of creation before He started creating. Remind students of how God used dreams throughout Scripture to communicate with His people).
- How did you receive the information concerning the bats? What does this tell us about God? Look at Romans 12:2 and Hebrews 3:1

→ Additional Scriptures:

- Zechariah 10:2
- John 4:24
- Hebrews 11:1
- Ephesians 2:10

→ Additional Literature:

- *Wade for This* by Jeany Allen
- *Don't Waste Your Life* by John Piper
- *Autopsy of the Soul* by Dr. Carl Thompson

→ Optional Activity

- Consider starting a dream journal or vlog with God. Begin writing or speaking all of your thoughts and dreams and see if there is a pattern for how the Lord is leading you. You may discover new passions and directions for yourself.