





SELF-ACTUALIZATION

80. Have a Vision

Sometimes we need to imagine where we want to go in life to help us get there. With no vision for my life, I was assigned the task of creating one. I bought magazines, a board, and a glue stick to make a vision board to create the life I wanted. I wasn't excited about the prospect of vision boarding; but it turned out to be an effective tool to focus, to see what I wanted, and to work toward it.

Note: I was new to the idea of creating a vision for myself of what I wanted my life to be. I spent ten minutes a day working on my vision board for a month. Then, I spent 30 days meditating about it for ten minutes a day. Did it work? Try it and see.

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81. Vocalize Your Vision

There is something about saying what you want out loud to another person that changes everything. It makes your vision real and creates accountability. Once you know what excites and drives you, find someone you trust and share it. Sharing will also help attract all the things you need to achieve your goals. Sometimes friends, family, or even a colleague on your search team, will know someone who can help.

Note: One way to start is to tell a person you trust and get some safe feedback. As you crystalize your vision and get all the words right, go bigger and let it out into the universe. Ask friends, colleagues, anyone you think could help, if they have any advice on how to achieve your goals.

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82. Set an Intention

Setting intentions gives your brain a map of where you want to go. This is a common saying in recovery and useful in so many other situations because we all need a guidance system. For me, setting an intention focuses my mind on where to take the day. Even better, it helps me stay positive and grateful even when I feel rotten and want to lash out. Try setting an intention every day for one week and see how your perspective shifts.

Note: If you don't know where to start, try something simple like making one person smile every day. Build from there to establish your goals. I'm always working on manifesting happiness and focus. But you might be working on basic self-love.

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83. Focus on Commitment

People struggling with addiction have problems with commitment. Committing means we have become accountable and stay accountable. Commitment ultimately provides everything important—progress, achieving goals, trusting relationships, success at work. When I'm procrastinating, sometimes I have to ask myself, how committed am I to this goal? What am I willing to sacrifice in order to achieve it? If I'm fully committed, the motivation will follow. If I'm not, the task fades away.

Note: Tips to commit: Refine the goal; focus on what's important to achieving the goal; share your progress with someone who can hold you accountable; and get in the right mindset—even if you have to reinforce that mindset every day.

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84. Put Your Stake in The Ground

A therapist once told me I had to, "Put my stake in the ground." This action tip means to own a healthy choice you've made and stick with it. Don't jump from one thing to another, one person to another, one job to another, thinking the next one will be the right one. Claim your territory and say no to all the things that distract you from your goal. This is also good advice because it also helps you stay present.

Note: No idea how to do this? First, try getting your vision focused on one course of action. Then write out a plan. How you might search for a job, get better at something you like to do. What will your life be like next month? Six months? A year? Five years? What has to happen at each stage?

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85. Use the Language of Success

What you say to yourself matters, and what you say to other people matters. People recognize the language of success. People also recognize self-deprecating and self-loathing language. For example, if you want to reflect insecurity and a lack of commitment say things like, "I guess I could try..." If you want to assure people that you're reliable and confident, change that line to, "I'd love to take on that challenge!" If we're going to bother changing how we speak to ourselves, we need to change how we speak to others.

Note: This is another tip where you have to recognize how you sound, then adjust and practice. Think about what your boss, colleagues, partners ask of you and how you usually respond. If you're responding in wishy washy ways, rewrite those responses. Short and positive works best for me.

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86. Be Principled

A new sober life in recovery also requires bringing your new sober values into your actions and life. Being principled is recovering your moral compass in all your actions now. If you don't want something done to you, don't do it to someone else. Addiction is a great excuse for bad behavior, recovery is a perfect opportunity to repair the damage.

Note: This is where sponsorship and mentorship come in handy. If you need help deciding what's appropriate, ethical and moral behavior in sobriety, watch how others act in the situation. Or ask someone. They'll tell you!

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87. Stick with Your Dreams

When the going gets tough, what do you do? Nothing I've ever accomplished was easy. Today, I haven't even come close to realizing all my dreams. But, now that I know how long it took to achieve my early goals, I have the confidence to stick with my dreams. Be prepared to feel frustrated, angry and beaten down at times. But stay in the game to see what happens. You lose 100% of the shots you don't take!

Note: You need to know what you want first, as in tip 80. Then, create action plans to achieve it as in Tip 84. Be prepared to pivot, not give up, when the unexpected happens. Sometimes those curve balls send you down a different, but better, path. It's all part of the journey.

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88. Act Like the Person You Want to Become

It takes time to change your behavior. It isn't easy to be sensitive to other people and act pleasant when you don't feel pleasant at all. I had to fake appropriate behavior until it felt natural and right. Today, I can listen and be kind and patient. Becoming a better person took practice, but it has been one of the most valuable lessons I learned in sobriety. It taught me how to get along with other people.

Note: Are there people you admire for the right reasons? Start by visualizing how they talk, their habits, how they handle setbacks, and how they lead others, etc. You can practice being like them. If you behave like people you admire, you will transform.

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89. Set Your Top 5 Values

Knowing what you stand for is as important as knowing what you don't stand for. Take the time to write down your values to see what really matters to you. This also acts like a guide because once you're clear on what works for you, you can totally avoid the things that don't work without being confused as to why some things feel bad.

Note: If you're like me and have no values to report at first, maybe list the things you don't like and start there. Or, write down the values you'd like to have one day and give yourself something to work towards.

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90. Be Passionate

I wasn't passionate about anything before I got sober because I didn't know what I cared about. How could I possibly know what work or activities would be a good fit for me? Recovery is a process of growing into the person we are meant to be, or returning to who we were before using took us off the path. Learning what excites us and bringing that excitement into our daily lives is one of the greatest gifts.

Note: If you are in a career that doesn't light your fire, but you can't leave; try finding hobbies or activities for after work and the weekend that you love.

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91. Be Patient

It took a long time for me to find inner peace and happiness but creating a more positive attitude and lifestyle allowed me to transform from a miserable person to a happy one. It was worth the work and the wait. If you can learn to find patience in this process, or at least have faith that things will get better, positive change will be easier to manage as you let time take time.

Note: Timelines can be helpful with this one if you're waiting on specific things. It may help to plot on a calendar the goal or resolution you await. If the result you want is more general, this is where spirituality and vision come in handy to keep you positive as life happens slowly.

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92. Dont Give Up

This is the basic don't give up on yourself. It took me years for my recovery to take hold, so don't let your setbacks discourage you. If you don't succeed at first, keep coming back. Change and growth are processes. Remember your brain and body have to heal. So, get the don't-give-up mindset early. If you fall, just get up and try again.

Note: We all need cheerleaders in life. Surround yourself with some positive people who will encourage you in the right ways. Hire a life coach if that's something you're open to or can afford. Seriously, create a support network.

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