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PERSONAL GOAL SETTING – Part 2.

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In the first part of this article we clarified the importance of setting goals in order to create a "road map" that would lead us step by step to the achievement of our final objectives. Without a proper Goal Plan it is highly probable that we will waste a lot of energy and time, very often losing our direction completely. However, there are specific basic rules that we have to respect and abide by, to make our Goal Plan realistic and achievable in the most effective way. However, by just writing down what we would like to achieve, it is too easy for our Goal Plan to become just a wish list that we will never achieve.

THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A PIPE DREAM AND A GOAL IS A REALISTIC PLAN OF ACTION.

Goal setting however is more than simply scribbling down some ideas on a piece of paper. Our goals need to be complete and focused, much like a road map, and that is the purpose behind the rest of this article. If you follow the 5 goal setting steps I've outlined in this article you will be well on your way to becoming an expert in building the road maps to take you to your goals.

Goals must:

BE REALISTIC: You must know that you are actually serious about reaching your goal and capable of obtaining it. Make sure the goal you are working for is something you really want, not just something that sounds good. And remember: When setting goals it is very important that your goals are consistent with your values - your goals can not contradict each other.

BE SPECIFIC AND POSITIVE: Describe what you want to accomplish and write your goals out in complete detail and always in quantifiable achievements - express your goals in positive achievements, instead of the negative intents to avoid something.

BE MEASURABLE: Describe your goal in specific terms achievement that can be clearly followed and evaluated. Reviewing your goals on a regular basis is a crucial part of your success and must become part of your routine

BE CHALLENGING: Set goals so that they are slightly out of immediate grasp, but not so far that there is no hope of achieving them - unrealistic goals lead to frustration and are easily abandoned. Goals that are set to low give false feeling of achievement and can lead to boredom - if we are not prepared to stretch ourselves and work hard then we are extremely unlikely to achieve personal growth or anything of any real value.

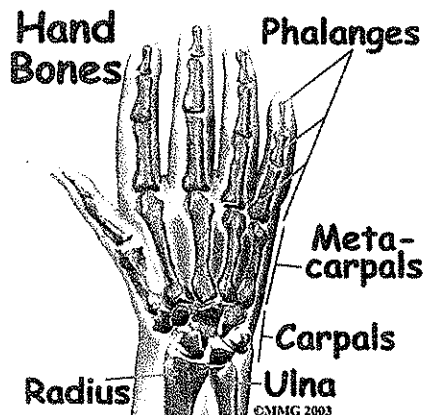
HAVE A STATED COMPLETION DATE: Have specific target completion dates. The global goal should be broken down in major sub-goals and this in reasonable shorter units with clearly specified target dates. Again- you must review your progress in terms of achievements and allocated time

FOLLOWING THESE SIMPLE RULES WILL ASSURE THAT YOU WILL ACHIEVE YOUR OBJECTIVES IN AN EFFICIENT AND SUCCESSFUL WAY

BOXING HAND INJURIES

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The human hand is not well designed to receive repetitive impact trauma. The hand and wrist is made up of a series of small bones and joints (see picture) that make it prone and vulnerable to injury. Therefore teaching and acquiring the proper punching techniques is vital, as injuries to the hand can have career ending consequences.



Experienced boxers will injure the index, middle or ring finger; while less experienced boxers with poor punching technique will fracture the little finger. Often poor equipment, (bad gloves, hard sand bags) or poor fist muscle contractions can generate fatigue that can lead to injuries, which will often happen at the end of a match.

If a broken bone is suspected, immobilize the hand and apply ice to the area on the way to the hospital for x-rays. Treatment involves wearing a cast for 3 to 4 weeks, followed by rehabilitation exercises to strengthen the hand. The fracture must be completely healed before returning to boxing and the injured hand must be as strong as the uninjured hand. The fracture must be completely healed before returning to boxing. The metacarpal bones can also dislocate or even subluxate, which is when a bone partially dislocates, but comes back into place on its own. A dislocated finger will have to be relocated by a medical doctor. A punch with a hyperextended wrist can cause the same injury as a fall on an outstretched hand, fracturing the scaphoid bone of the hand. If pain is felt where the thumb meets the wrist, x-rays are recommended. This bone needs to be casted for 4 to 8 weeks and x-rays should be taken after cast removal, since this bone may have difficulties healing.

It is also possible to get a stress fracture in the metacarpal bones; much like a runner would get a stress fracture in his foot. These fractures occur in the index, middle or ring finger. They should be treated as regular fractures and should be immobilized until they heal.

Thumb injuries are also common, due to the position of the thumb outside of the main glove. An inexperienced boxer may hit his opponent with the thumb side of the hand, forcing the thumb in and down. This could result in a fracture of the thumb metacarpal. Other thumb injuries include sprains and dislocations. Depending on the extent of the damage to the soft tissues of the thumb, the athlete may be unable to punch for 1 to 6 weeks.

The joints of the hand are also injured in boxing. The ligaments and capsule that surround the knuckle can be torn. This injury can be acute or an overuse injury. Any of the knuckles can be injured in this manner, but the middle finger is most often affected by "Boxer's knuckle". This injury is best treated with surgery, especially if the athlete would like to continue boxing. After surgery, the athlete can expect to return to boxing between 4 to 6 months.

The joints between the carpals and the metacarpals are also prone to stress during a punch and these joints can become sprained. Rest, ice and over the counter anti-inflammatory medications, such as Advil, are the recommended treatment.

Having the thumb forcefully pulled away from the hand could injure a structure called the ulnar collateral ligament, a ligament attaching the base of the thumb to the hand. X-rays will be required to see if the bone was damaged as well. Diagnostic ultrasound would be useful to determine the amount ligament tearing. A partially torn ligament would require complete immobilization in a splint, which could be removed for rehabilitation exercises. If severe enough, this injury may require surgery.

Preventing injuries to the hand can be done with proper training, adequate wrapping and quality gloves. An often overlooked component of treatment is adequate rest from further impact and injury. Extra protection should be worn during training to help decrease the amount of stress the hands are exposed to. The athlete needs to learn how to punch effectively and accurately, to be more effective and avoid high-risk punches. Punching should only be allowed if the hand is pain-free and well protected.

DISCLAIMER: This article is for general information purposes only. It is not intended for use as medical advice nor to replace evaluation and treatment by your medical/health practitioner.