



I see a gap between the person I set out to be and the person I've become. How do I rediscover who I truly am?

Veena, 36
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Let's take a journey down memory lane. Close your eyes and reflect. What did you aspire to be? What were your ambitions?

You started out with big dreams and life goals, but somewhere in your 20s, you started to shift gears. You began to lean out of the opportunities that life had to offer and started to lean into societal pressures and take on the goals of your family. Today, while you rightfully take pride in their accomplishments and are the unseen wind beneath their wings, where does that leave your own life goals and aspirations?

In my experience as a life coach, unless that core foundation of 'ME' is strong, all the other roles that are

built upon that foundation will get shaky. So, the greatest gift you can give your family, is to invest in that foundation of 'you'.

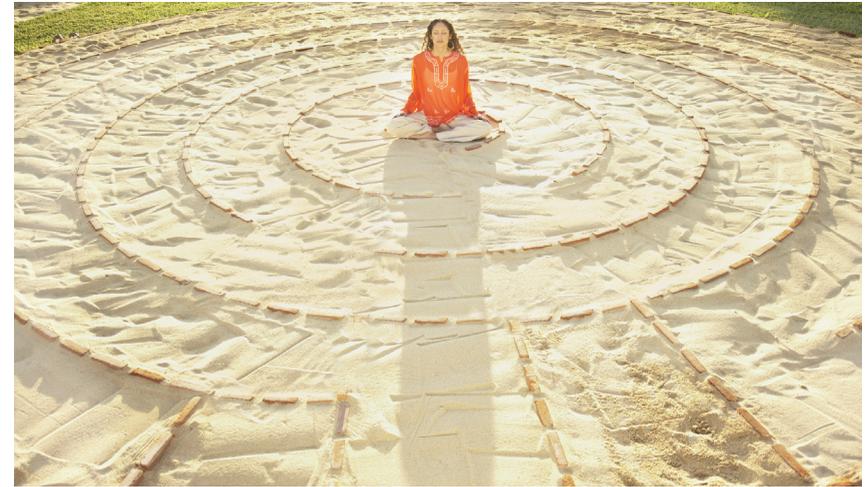
Let's hit that pause button of your life and take a look at 5 proven strategies to help you recalibrate your life, by setting 'SMART' goals that are specific, measurable, attainable, realistic and time bound.

■ **Begin with the end in mind.** Too often we make goals and then lose the motivation to work on them, as other realities of life take priority. One way to overcome that is to clearly quantify and pinpoint how your life will change once you achieve your goals. Once you can enumerate the benefits of achieving them, you are more driven to be persistent.

■ **Share it with others.** Research has shown that once you make your goal public by sharing it with others who care about you, you are more likely to accomplish it. It makes you more accountable to staying true to achieving it. You know people are watching!

■ **Visualise your life goals.** Add an emotional element, as you see yourself achieving them. So, if your goal is to lose weight, picture yourself getting back into your skinny jeans. Imagine how that would make you feel. By creating this visual in your head, you can reign yourself in, every time you feel tempted to feast!

■ **Break it down.** When you look at a big goal, it feels overwhelming and it's easy to lose hope even before you



begin! It's best to break down goals into smaller achievable milestones. So if you see yourself heading a social sector project, your first goal may be to build volunteering work into your day. As you pass one milestone, celebrate it! The success from that will propel you forward and fuel you towards accomplishing the next milestone.

■ **Be kind to yourself.** Just because you slip at times, it is not a lost cause. Be prepared for setbacks. See them as learning opportunities instead of failures. Think about what you can do differently, stay

positive and remember, Rome was not built in a day!

Your goals will help you rediscover who you are, making you feel less lost, and an overall happier, more content person. Life experiences that you've garnered over the years, your knowledge of yourself and capabilities have no doubt added to who you are. They will enrich the journey to what you want to achieve.

This in turn will infuse a renewed purpose, joy and energy in your other roles. It's a win-win situation all around! ▣

The greatest gift you can give your family is to invest in yourself. Because unless that foundation of 'me' is strong, all the other roles built upon it will be shaky.

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