

## Make your health a priority Dr Lynda Morris Parham [www.DrLynda.org](http://www.DrLynda.org)

The beginning of the New Year is a good time to think about making a personal vision or dream come to life.

Many of us have moments of personal inspiration layered with hopes and wishes for our lives and the lives of those we love. In this season of new beginnings, let us renew our hope for the future by setting goals that will transform our dreams into realities. Be encouraged that you can accomplish the unfulfilled wishes in your heart; you can start by simply naming your vision and setting goals.

### 1) Name your Dream.

The mundane duties of life can often rob us of living out our special purpose. Taking some personal time to sit and listen to our hearts, to assess our skills, to take an inventory of our life's accomplishments can be a starting place for naming a personal dream. Many of us get frustrated because we think our vision must be BIG. More important than being big, the vision needs to be something you can be personally invested in. When



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your vision has personal meaning, you can stay committed to it, despite the obstacles to making it come alive. Naming your dream and writing it down will give you direction.

**2) Set your Goals.** The difference between a person with a dream on paper and one with a dream that is a reality is an action plan. In order to follow your dream, you need a road map. Most of the productive people in this world live by setting goals and deadlines. Setting goals will enable you to stay focused, eliminate distractions, measure progress, make

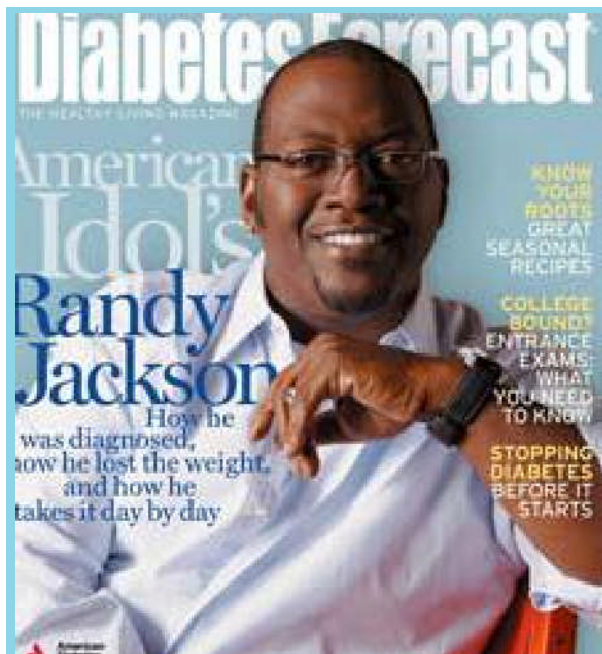
corrections and to move towards your vision on a daily basis.

As you systematically deconstruct your big idea into clear, identifiable, and manageable goals, you will be creating a to-do-list. Many people simply keep their ideas in their heads. Taking the step to write them down enables you to take ownership; power is released as you direct your energy to make your vision a reality. Your mind and spirit can work towards accomplishment of the goal in conscious and unconscious ways.

**3) Regularly Review your Goals.** If you take the time to review your to-do-list on a regular basis, it will help you stay focused. You will be able to revise your priorities and adjust your short and possibly long term goals. This is a time to be realistic about the areas where you are successful and the areas that need some adjustments. If you find that you need to make major changes in your vision, think of the shift as moving you in a direction that may be a better fit for you. Change does

not mean failure, it means a new opportunity. 4) Share your Goals. Hopefully, you have one or two trusted friends you can share your vision with. If they know you well, they will be able to say if they think your vision and your plan of action are suited to you. Often these people can serve as accountability partners for you. You can establish check points: times when you will share with them your progress, your stuck points, and get some feedback from them.

Perhaps this is your season for writing a vision and creating an action plan to get moving towards accomplishing it. There is personal power that comes with setting goals and making them turn into realities. Not only does your own confidence begin to grow, but you become an inspiration to those around you. As you nurture and develop your own vision, you plant the seeds in others to bring life to their personal visions. We all can start with one of the steps listed above and we can do it today!



## Randy Jackson on Diabetes

This year, Randy Jackson will celebrate ten years of living with diabetes. In an interview with Diabetes Forecast, the consumer magazine of the American Diabetes Association, the American Idol judge and Grammy-award winner shared his story of being diagnosed with diabetes, the hurdles he faced, and the path he chose toward better health.

Jackson, who was diagnosed with type 2 diabetes in 1999, was shocked when he learned that he had a chronic disease. "They were sneaky symptoms," he says. "Of course, I didn't take into consideration that a history of type 2 diabetes ran in my family, because you always think that happens to somebody else, not you."

Soon after his diagnosis, Jackson took charge. He turned his diet around from the "Southern-fried" foods he was accustomed to, began to exercise regularly, and after much careful consideration, had gastric bypass surgery. As a result of these changes, Jackson has set out to talk to people about lifestyle changes that can prevent diabetes and its complications.