

PERSUer's Handbook

VOLUME 3: THE METHOD

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PERSU[®]
GOALS
Pursuing personal sustainability.

Volume 3

The Method: 4-Step Sustainable Growth Cycle



www.persuggoals.com

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VOLUME THREE

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Introduction

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Founder/Author

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Key Framework Components

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The anatomy of “Theme Sheets” in Vol. 2
and “Step Sheets” in Vol. 3 of the
PERSUer's Handbook

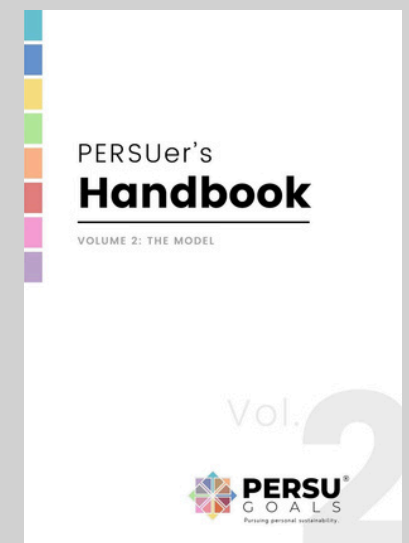
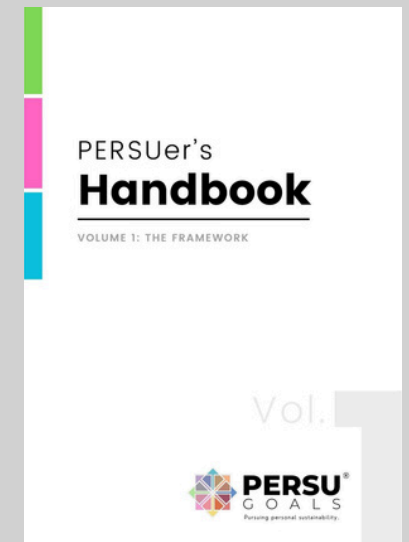
Vol. 2 The Model

PERSU Goals® Framework's Model

The SELFCARE Model

Spirituality	Career
Education	Avocation
Lifestyle	Relationships
Finance	Entrepreneurship

Other Volumes

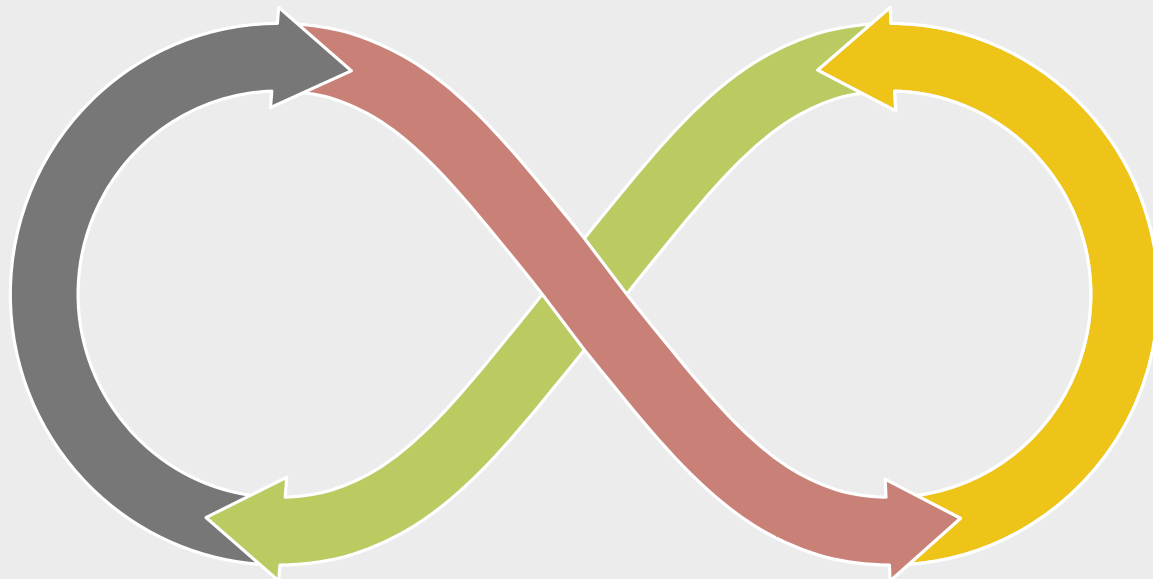


The Method

In order to achieve an effective, lasting integration of the personal sustainability principles of the eight key life themes (The SELFCARE Model) discussed in Vol. 2 of the Handbook, the PERSU Goals® framework introduces a methodology called, the “Sustainable Growth Cycle” (or simply “The Cycle”). This 4-step looping method allows you not only to set personal life goals but also lets you define what success is by setting out your own criteria based on your own belief system, current environment and life situation, as well as available resources.

With this approach, achieving your life goals are both attainable and sustainable in long-term, or shall we say, for the rest of your life. Simon Sinek, a renowned author and inspirational speaker on business leadership, named a rather similar theory, “the infinite game.” Diagram below describes the 4 key steps in The Cycle, which is crucial to understand for applying the PERSU Goals® framework into your life.

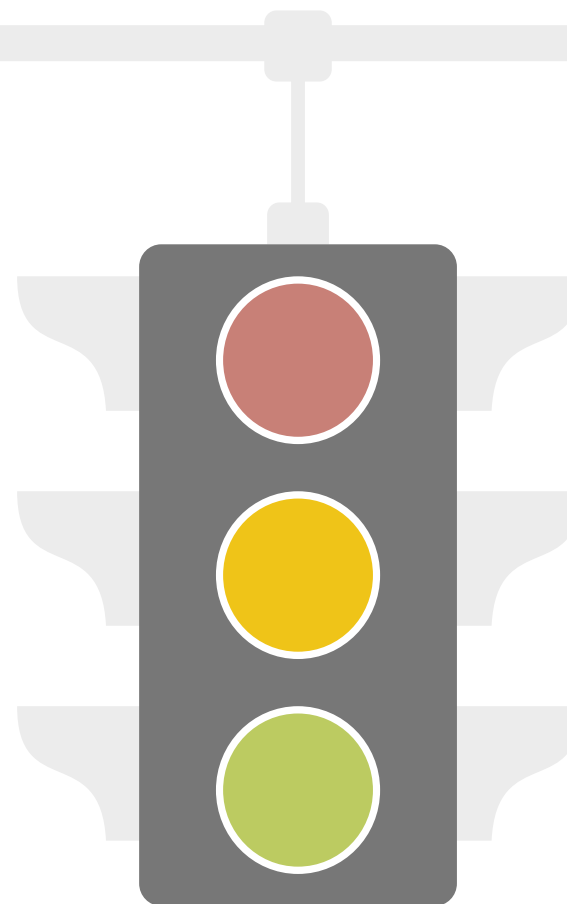
The 4-Step Sustainable Growth Cycle



How to apply The Cycle? Imagine life as a long, continuous journey – it starts the moment we were born and ends when we die. In this journey, we have the power to go wherever we want to go. However, the problem many people have is that they don’t know where to go and how to get there. To put it simply, most people don’t have a roadmap to achieve the goals and become their best selves.

The previous volume, The Model, gave you a structure on how to create that roadmap. In this volume, The Method will give you a system in a form of traffic lights on that roadmap you designed. It serves some sort of a checkpoint wherein, despite any circumstance you’re going through in your life journey, you will be able to allow yourself to pause and re-evaluate yourself, your goals (destination), and course of actions. Having these traffic lights will ensure you’re on track as it will give you a moment to deliberately think which path you take depending on your current priorities in life.

Each time you encounter a traffic light, you have to go through The Cycle. As shown in the diagram below, it consists of 4 steps: Assessing, Knowing, Setting, and Doing. All these steps are integrated within a digital tool, PERSUTool® found in your PERSUer’s Pack. It is advised to find a place without distraction when you start using this tool. The following pages will break down each of these steps and explain how to use the PERSUTool®, along with practical tips, examples, and space for your notes.



Step 1

ASSESSING

Before anything else, take the personal sustainability assessment to evaluate yourself against the personal sustainability principles – result is generated in a Dashboard to inform you as you take the next three steps.

Step 2

KNOWING

Stop and pause for awhile to know yourself deeper – your present and future best self. This will be your foundation on setting your goals, making sure you will stay authentic as you grow.

Step 3

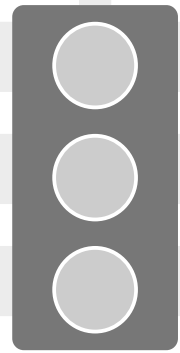
SETTING

This is where you prepare by building or updating your personal sustainability roadmap. You will need G-R-I-T at this part! Don’t worry, we will explain that later.

Step 4

DOING

In PERSU Goals®, you define your success and we will help you how to do that. This is the hardest yet most important part of the framework – to start taking A-C-T-I-O-N!



STEP 1

Assessing

Evaluate yourself against the personal sustainability principles of the themes in The SELFCARE Model.

The first step of The Sustainable Growth Cycle is Assessing, where you evaluate yourself against the eight personal sustainability principles outlined in The SELFCARE Model: Spirituality, Education, Lifestyle, Finances, Career, Avocation, Relationships, and Entrepreneurship. By completing a 30-question personal sustainability assessment in the PERSUTool®, you gain a comprehensive view of your holistic growth across all key areas of your life via quantified results summarised in a Dashboard. This step is crucial before moving forward because it reveals which areas you've nurtured or neglected, helping you determine whether those areas align with your priorities. The results will guide you in sustaining the areas where you've made progress and refocusing on those that need attention, unless they are intentionally not your current focus. Research shows that self-assessment is essential in personal development, as it increases self-awareness, enabling you to make more informed decisions for growth and improvement. The following outlines how to take the personal sustainability assessment.

How to do it

Below are the guidelines on this first step of The Cycle. Follow them in order to get the best and accurate result from your personal sustainability assessment.

1.1 Set a time - make it an event

The assessment itself is easy, the challenge is finding the time to do it. You have to set an appointment with yourself - block your calendar in advance! Make the people around you e.g. your partner, family, or friends about what you're doing, if necessary. They should support you and understand you are taking time alone. Much better if you ask someone to join you in this personal sustainability journey.

1.2 Find a place without distractions

You must also take this assessment in a place with an environment that would allow you to focus, self-reflect without any distraction. This could be in a room at home, a café, a park, a holiday house or anywhere you can concentrate. Turn off your notifications from all your devices. No multitasking!

1.3 Answer with honesty and promptness

Go to 'Step 1 Assessing' tab in the PERSU Tool and take the Personal Sustainability Assessment, which is composed of 30 questions/statement that describes your current personal life situation, holistically. Rate each one of them from '-3' (Very Poor) to '3' (Very Good), otherwise, you can choose '0' (Neutral, Not Applicable/Priority). It is imperative that you choose the first answer that comes to your mind.

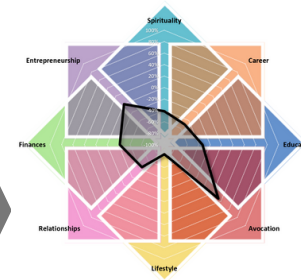
1.4 Interpret the results and use it for next steps

After taking the assessment, go to the 'Dashboard' in the PERSU Tool for the results. As you can see, it has two diagrams. First, the 'persumeter,' which generally measures your personal sustainability against the 3 Pillars of Personal Sustainability (i.e., wellbeing, connections, and wealth). Second, the Personal Sustainability Compass, which breaks down your growth into eight themes (SELF-CARE) and will show how balance or imbalance your life is. This should inform your inputs for the next three steps of The Cycle. See next page to see more explanation and examples.

Interpreting Your PERSU Compass

In the PERSUTool Dashboard, you will find the 'Personal Sustainability Compass,' which is a diagram that looks like the PERSU Goals logo. It represents the eight personal sustainability themes and principles of the framework and form The SELFCARE Model. After taking the Personal Sustainability Assessment, you will see which of these key life themes you are currently in good or poor state, unless not applicable or not a priority in your life. Have a look at the examples below to learn how to interpret your results and use it for the succeeding steps. You may need to go back to PERSUer's Handbook Vol. 2 The Model to understand the interrelationships and hierarchy of the themes.

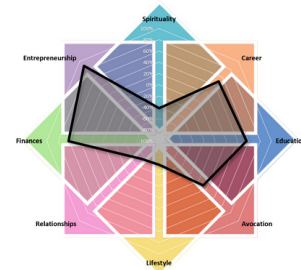
EXAMPLES



All your life themes (both Base & Top Tiers) have negative (-) or below 35% scores.

INTERPRETATION: It is likely that you are barely okay or perhaps struggling and now beginning to realise and recognise that you need growth or transformation in most areas of your life, which is good!

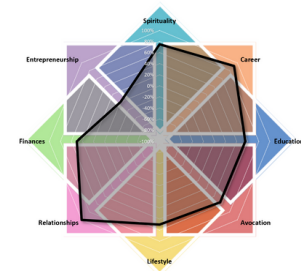
ACTION: Start with the internal life themes (Base Tier).



One or more of your external life themes (Top Tier) may have above 50% score, but one or more of your internal ones (Base Tier) are having negative (-) score.

INTERPRETATION: You are too focused on growing only one or two life themes, neglecting other key areas of life that will not only cause imbalance but long-term damage.

ACTION: Ensure holistic personal development, prioritising internal life themes before the external ones.



All your internal life themes (Base Tier) scores are 50% and above, whilst some external ones are below 50% or negative (-).

INTERPRETATION: You are on track towards holistic personal growth and sustainability.

ACTION: Keep it up with your internal life themes. You are now ready to push it further and grow your external ones.

If a life theme has zero (0) score.

INTERPRETATION: This life theme is neutral, which could mean it is not a priority at this time of your life. Zero can be applied to Entrepreneurship if it does not apply to you.

ACTION: No action needed.



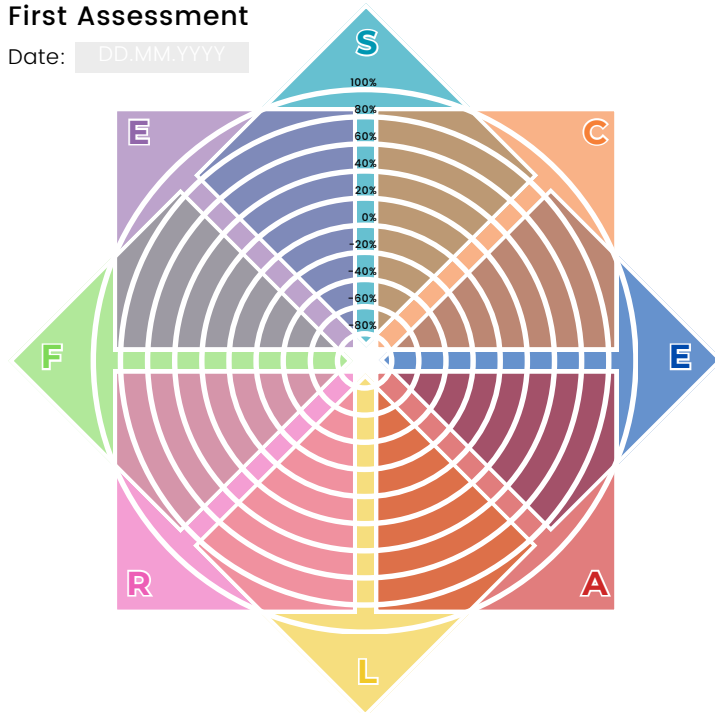
For further help, please reach out to us at support@persuggoals.com.

Your Assessment Results

Record the results of your personal sustainability assessment to monitor your overall progress.

First Assessment

Date: DD.MM.YYYY



Scores:

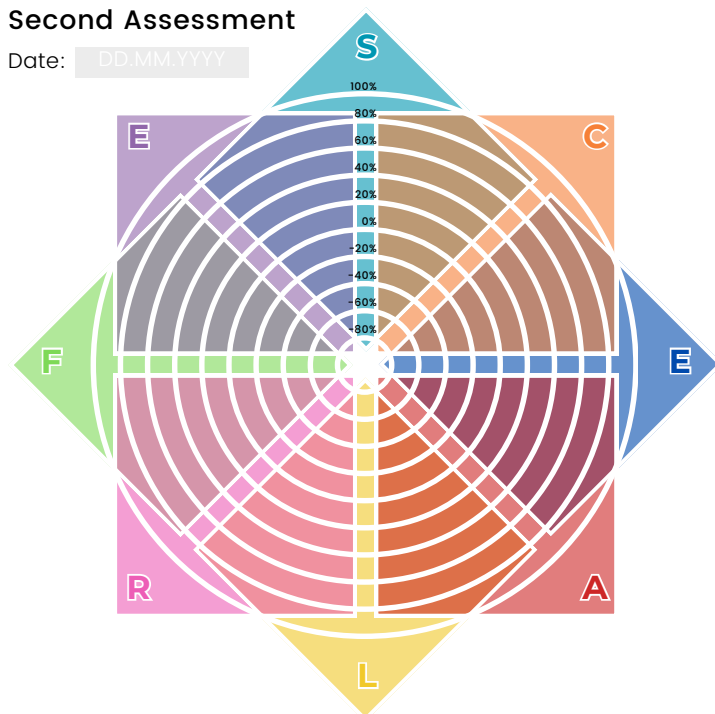


Notes:

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Second Assessment

Date: DD.MM.YYYY



Scores:

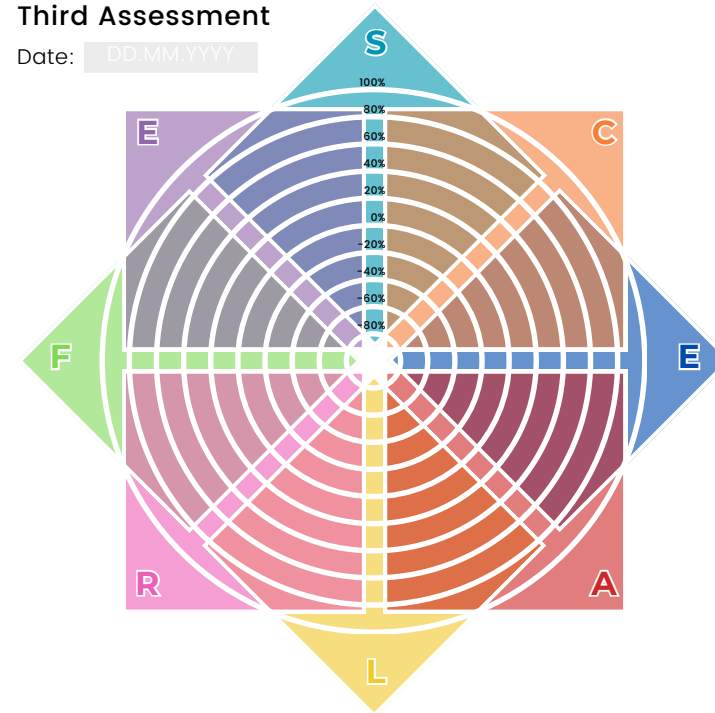


Notes:

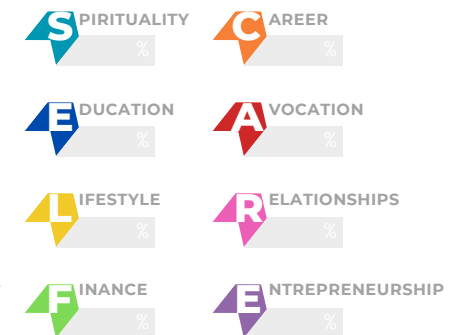
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Third Assessment

Date: DD.MM.YYYY



Scores:

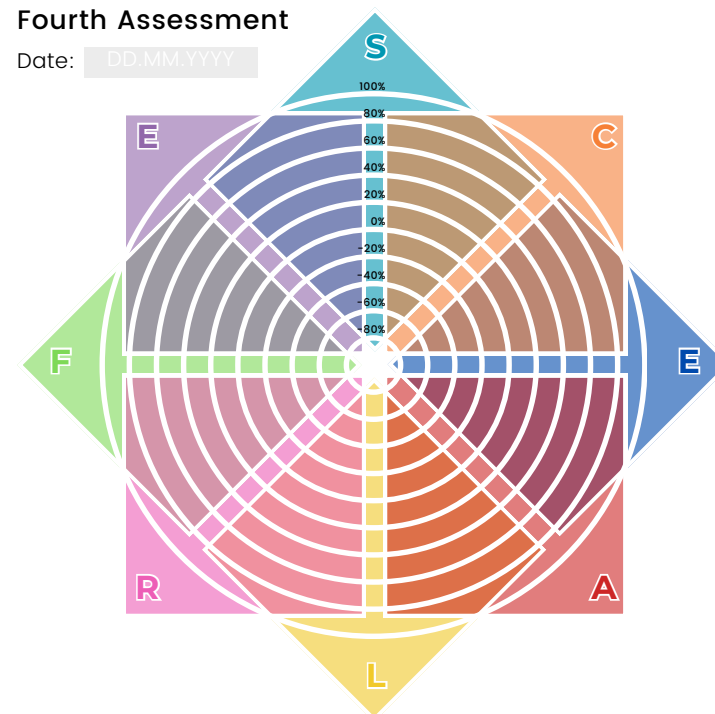


Notes:

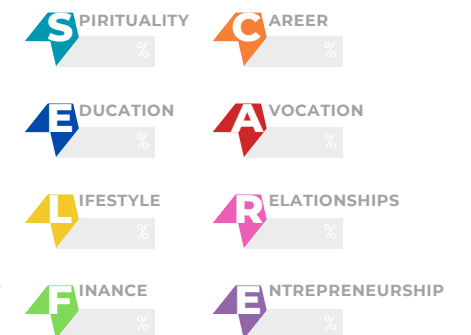
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Fourth Assessment

Date: DD.MM.YYYY

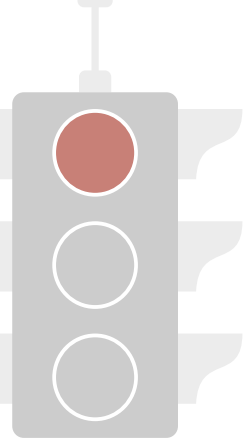


Scores:



Notes:

[illegible]



STEP 2

Knowing

Stop and pause for awhile to know yourself deeper – your present and future ‘best’ self (FBS).

In the second step of The Sustainable Growth Cycle, Knowing, you take a moment to truly understand your present and envisioned “best” self. This reflective stage is vital before you proceed to creating your roadmap, which involves defining your life goals (Step 3) and outlining a course of action (Step 4). Knowing who you want to become, where you’d like to go, and what you aspire to achieve serves as your personal North Star, guiding you through your sustainable growth journey. Research shows that a lack of self-awareness is one of the primary reasons nearly 80% of people abandon personal development goals; without a clear understanding of their desires, direction, or self-identity, motivation and consistency diminish (Forbes, 2020). In this step, you’ll learn how to write a powerful vision statement by describing your future best self, focusing on a vision that’s both ambitious and grounded in authenticity. Here’s how to craft this guiding statement, creating a roadmap that aligns with your true, unique self and fuels sustainable progress.

How to do it

Maintaining an open mind and a focused environment, go to ‘Step 2 Knowing’ tab in your PERSUTool and start creating your personal vision statement by doing the following:

2.1 Describe your present self

In the “Who I am now” section, create a short statement that reflects who you are at this moment, based on an honest assessment of your emotional, mental, financial, and physical state. Your observations might be positive or negative—the essential part is to recognise them all. Here are some questions you can ask yourself with:

- How do I feel physically and mentally?
- What are the things that are stressing me out or bringing me joy and contentment?
- How is my financial and career situation?
- What are my behaviours, habits, lifestyle, or personal branding that I need to change or improve on?
- How do I describe my life in general?

2.2 Describe your future ‘best’ self

Next, in the “Who I will become” section, write a brief statement envisioning yourself one, two, or even three years from now, highlighting the positive qualities you aspire to embody without losing sight of your authentic, good self. Be specific—this should capture the best version of you! Ask yourself these guide questions:

- How is the attitude and character of my future self like?
- How does my future self see and approach life in general?
- How does my future self look like?
- What does my future self do (work/business)? Describe the fulfillment, income, impact, etc.
- What kind of relationships I have with my partner, family, friends, and community?

Writing Your PERSU Vision Statement

A personal vision statement is a high-level narrative that describes your overall life aspirations, from which your personal sustainability goals and action plans evolve. There are various ways to write it. But, here in PERSU Goals, the only correct way of writing it is that it must have all these 5As: Authentic, Aligned, Accurate, Actionable, and Affirming.

EXAMPLES



Authentic

It must be about and coming from yourself; based on your personality, beliefs, interests, attributes, etc.

DON'T WRITE: “I will act, look and dress like [name of the person you admire].”
WRITE THIS: “I take care and present myself very well with simple yet quality clothes as well as mindful behaviour, radiating self-love and positivity.”



Aligned

Make sure that it is aligned with the concept and principles of personal sustainability i.e. holistic growth.

DON'T WRITE: All about money – business, income, promotion, luxury, etc.
WRITE THIS: About your physical and mental wellbeing, healthy connections with individuals and communities, and financial success/independence.



Abstract

It is only a summary of your life in the future – you can mention specifics but keep it short! Maximum 100 words.

DON'T WRITE: One sentence with less than 50 or more than 1 paragraph with more than 100 words.
WRITE THIS: A brief paragraph with contains 50 to 100 words.



Actionable

You should be able to translate your vision into goals and action plan. Make it aspirational, but realistic.

DON'T WRITE: “In 2030, I will be living in Mars and bring my family with me.”
WRITE THIS: “In 10 years, I will be a successful aeronautical engineer working in NASA or Space X, helping to build a spacecraft that goes to Mars.”



Affirming

Your vision must be about life-building (your best self), promoting only holistic growth, authenticity, and sustainability.

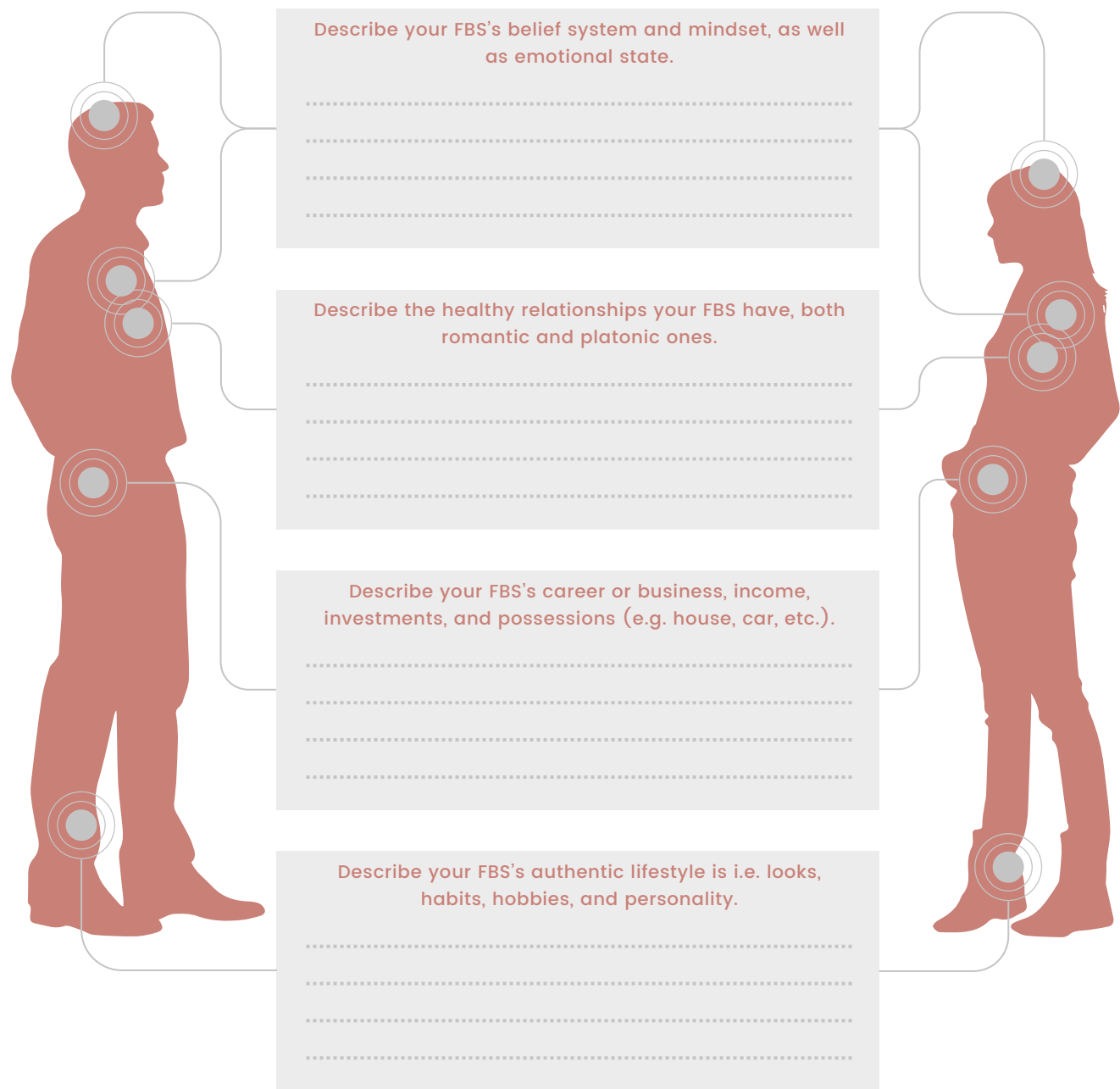
DON'T WRITE: “Avoid taking on new projects to prevent making mistakes or being criticised by others.”
WRITE THIS: “Take on one new project whenever there's opportunity at work to build skills, even if mistakes happen.”



Your vision statement should pull you, not fool you.

Design Your FBS Character

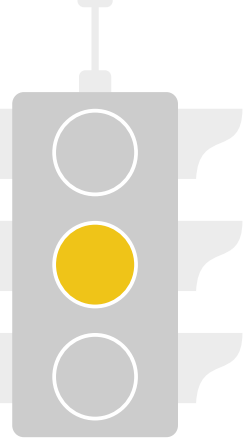
Writing your life vision is like creating a character in a video game. You need to define what your 'future best self' (FBS) would think, feel, look like, how they would behave, and what they would possess—both materially and immaterially—in the next 3 to 5 years.



Your personal vision statement is a concise paragraph that captures all the elements of your future best self (FBS). You can add this to Step 2 of your PERSU Tool. Also, consider printing it out and placing it somewhere visible as a daily reminder of the person you are becoming.

Notes

Notes section with horizontal dotted lines for writing.



STEP 3

Setting

Build or update your own personal sustainability roadmap by having your G-R-I-T in place.

The third step of The Sustainable Growth Cycle, Setting, involves defining clear goals for the areas in your life where you either want to sustain growth or work on improvement over the next 3 to 12 months. At this point, you're already familiar with the eight core areas in the SELF-CARE Model—spirituality, education, lifestyle, finances, career, avocations, relationships, and entrepreneurship—and have a vision of your best self that will guide you through this process. This step will allow you to deep-dive on your holistic personal development aspirations by identifying what goals you want to achieve that will support the realisation of your vision, why you want to achieve them, how important it is to achieve them given your current circumstance (is it a priority?), and what type of goals are they (whether it is a habit, a milestone, or an event). By the end, you'll establish G-R-I-T (a Goal, a Reason, its Importance, and its Type) for each life theme outlined in the SELF-CARE Model. This structured goal-setting will serve as a roadmap, helping you maintain focus and providing clarity and purpose as you work toward the person you aspire to become.

How to do it

In Step 3 of the PERSUTool, you will see a table with all the life themes in the SELF-CARE Model. Select sub-themes from a drop down list under each life theme, then, set out your G-R-I-T by doing these:

3.1 Goal

Write a one-sentence goal for the chosen sub-theme, using the SMART criteria—ensuring it's specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and time-bound. This goal can be either short- or long-term, as long as it aligns with your vision and is a priority for the next 3 to 12 months.

3.2 Reason

Next, writing down your reason is just as crucial as setting the goal itself. Identify your ultimate motivation for achieving this goal by digging deep and asking yourself "why" three times. For example, if your goal is to lose 20 kg and reach your "happy weight," start by asking:

- Why #1: Because I want to look good and fit into any clothes I choose.
- Why #2: Because I want to regain my confidence.
- Why #3 (your ultimate reason): Because I want to be physically and mentally fit and healthy, while feeling free to participate in any social activities without being self-conscious.

3.3 Importance

This part is a priority test for your goal, allowing you to rate its importance from "Low" to "High." Assess how essential it is to achieve such goal within the next 3–12 months. If it ranks low in importance, consider setting it aside for now. Ask yourself: is this goal worth investing for now in terms of time, energy, and resources? Does it align with my vision? Are there other goals that deserve more focus? Your answers should be informed by your Personal Sustainability Compass.

3.4 Type

Lastly, identify the type of this goal by selecting one of the options in the drop-down list:

- Habit – If your goal is to develop a routine as part of the lifestyle you see your future best self having. No specific date set, only the desired time/days/frequency of action.
- Milestone – If it part of a series of goals with different target dates. You need to achieve this goal first in order to accomplish the next one
- Event – If the goal is only set to be achieved once, having a specific due date.






Optimising Your G-R-I-T

You may already be familiar with the concept of 'SMART' goals, a model coined by George T. Doran in 1981 to help create clear and actionable objectives. Today, nearly 80% of businesses use the SMART framework to guide their goal-setting. However, the challenge isn't just writing SMART goals—it's identifying the 'right' ones. To achieve this, you need G-R-I-T, which you have just learned earlier. Now, you'll discover one simple strategic approach to writing goals that will maximise the effectiveness and impact of your personal sustainability roadmap. This enables you to create a time- and cost-efficient action plan, allowing you to live and enjoy your present life without being overwhelmed by future goals and outcomes. The single approach, or shall we say the 'art' of writing goals we recommend you to adopt and eventually master is:

“SYNERGY”

To have a "synergistic goal" means that your goal is designed to create multiple benefits or outcomes simultaneously, where each outcome enhances or complements the others.

The idea is that different aspects of the goal interact in a way that amplifies the positive effects, leading to a more efficient or impactful outcome overall. For example, your synergistic goal is to making hiking a hobby, here's how you write your goals:

GOAL	REASON
 Go hiking with my partner or a hiking group every month – make it a hobby.	Having hiking as a hobby would make me stay active, whilst allowing me to socialise and travel.
As you can see, the outcomes of this goal reinforces the outcomes of the following goals. This is what makes the goal synergistic—it creates a cascade of positive effects that build on one another, making the activity more rewarding as a whole.	
 Travel to at least 6 new places per year, whether local or international.	I want to visit as many place as possible, learn something new and live life to the fullest
 Prioritise my mental health by meditating first thing, practice gratitude and mindfulness daily.	It will allow me to live in the present, stay focused, leading to high-productivity and happiness.
 Develop walking as a daily habit, achieving a minimum of 10k steps per day.	I want to lead a healthy and active lifestyle that I can sustain long-term.
 Join social activities at least once a month and meet new, like-minded people.	This will expand my network whilst being part of a community that helps me achieve my goals.

By setting synergistic goals in Step 3, you are preparing yourself for Step 4: Doing—the final and often most challenging phase of the growth cycle—making it more manageable and seamless, as your goals will feel purposeful and natural to pursue.



Having synergistic goals is like hitting multiple birds with one stone.

EXAMPLES

STEP 3

SETTING

Built around the framework of PERSU Goals, this personal sustainability tool or PERSUTool has been designed as a mechanism for creating your own roadmap towards personal sustainability. This sheet, however, is the light version of the interactive digital version found in your PERSUer’s Pack. Refer back to The Method section of this Handbook to know how to use it.

		GOAL	REASON	IMPORTANCE	TYPE
SPIRITUALITY					
EDUCATION					
LIFESTYLE					
FINANCE					
CAREER					
AVOCATION					
RELATIONSHIPS					
ENTREPRENEURSHIP					

ATTACH STEP 4 HERE



STEP 4

Doing

Define and sustain your success, which only becomes real when you start taking A-C-T-I-O-N.

The fourth step of The Sustainable Growth Cycle, 'Doing,' is the final, yet the hardest and most crucial part of the journey. Goals are only as effective as the Action Plan you create to achieve them. Success isn't just about reaching your goals; it's about sustaining those achievements over time. Research shows that around 80% of people fail to maintain their New Year's resolutions by February, which highlights that while achieving initial success is possible, sustaining it is the real challenge (Forbes, 2021). In PERSU Goals, the focus is on sustaining success, meaning achieving holistic growth. This can only be accomplished by setting actionable steps, defining clear criteria and targets to measure success, and establishing regular intervals for evaluating, noting, and grading your success and personal development. Simply having G-R-I-T is not enough; you need to start taking A-C-T-I-O-N as well. Consistent action, paired with ongoing evaluation, transforms short-term achievements into long-lasting growth and fulfillment, ensuring that you not only achieve success but also sustain it in the long run.

How to do it

For every goal you set in Step 3 of the PERSU Tool, develop an execution plan (A-C-T-I-O-N) that includes the following:

4.1 Approach

Briefly outline your specific, actionable strategy to achieve the goal, considering its type (i.e., habit, milestone, or event). Include the steps you need to take, the tools you'll use (e.g., app, book, etc.), who is involved, where these actions take place.

4.2 Criteria

This is how you define your success: set your own criteria or metrics—indicators that will measure and track your progress. For a habit goal, this could be the frequency (min/max) per week or month. For a milestone or event, it could be the target date for achieving or acquiring something. You can also use specific measures like weight, percentage, amount, or quantity.

4.3 Target

Indicate your target—whether it's a numeric value, a specific time, or a date—based on the criteria you've set and your preferred frequency for progress reviews, ideally monthly or quarterly.

4.4 Intervals

Decide how often you want to revisit your goal and record your progress in the PERSU Tool. You can choose from the following options: one-time, monthly, quarterly, or annually. Since PERSU Goals is a long-term life planner, it requires at least once-a-month progress review.

4.5 Outcome

Every quarter, assess your progress and provide a high-level indication for the result of each goal:

- Exemplary - you exceeded the target
- Done - you met the target
- Progressing - you're still working on it
- Postponed - you changed priorities
- Awaiting - action hasn't started yet
- Cancelled - goal is no longer being achieved

4.6 Notes

During your progress review, record update on your goal or how far you've come in achieving it based on the criteria and targets you've defined.

Taking Your A-C-T-I-O-N

To make your personal sustainability roadmap both comprehensive and effective, setting your goals must be paired with your own action plan. Both are integrated into the PERSU Tool for convenience. Having an action plan and monitoring your progress is crucial for three reasons:

- 1.It provides a detailed, specific course of action for achieving your goals, so you stay on track. If you do lose track, you'll know exactly how to get back on course.
- 2.It keeps you aware of your progress—whether big or small—empowering you through self-appreciation rather than feeling insecure or thinking you haven't done enough.
- 3.It allows you to gauge your limits and adjust your goals and targets accordingly.

Here are examples on how you create your action plan by filling out PERSUTool Step 4 Doing:

Habit Type Goal	Milestone Type Goal	Event Type Goal
Develop a habit of taking a walk everyday after lunch or whenever there's opportunity.	Acquire a UK driving license this year.	Save £7,500 for my emergency fund that is equivalent to 3-month salary.
APPROACH		
Take a walk after lunch. Set up a reminder and count steps using smart watch (Samsung Health).	Study and take driving theory test. Then, take driving lessons and pass driving test.	Set up an auto-savings and save at least £750 per month.
CRITERIA		
Minimum number of steps per day	Theory and driving tests	Amount saved by end of October 2024
TARGET		
8,000 steps/day	April - pass theory test June - pass practical driving test	£7,500
INTERVALS		
Monthly	One-time	One-time
OUTCOME		
Progressing	Awaiting	Progressing
NOTES		
Jan - 8,020 average steps/day Feb - 10,154 average steps/day Mar - 9,406 average steps/day		On track as of April 2024



PERSU Goals is not your typical yearly planner, but rather a “life” planner.

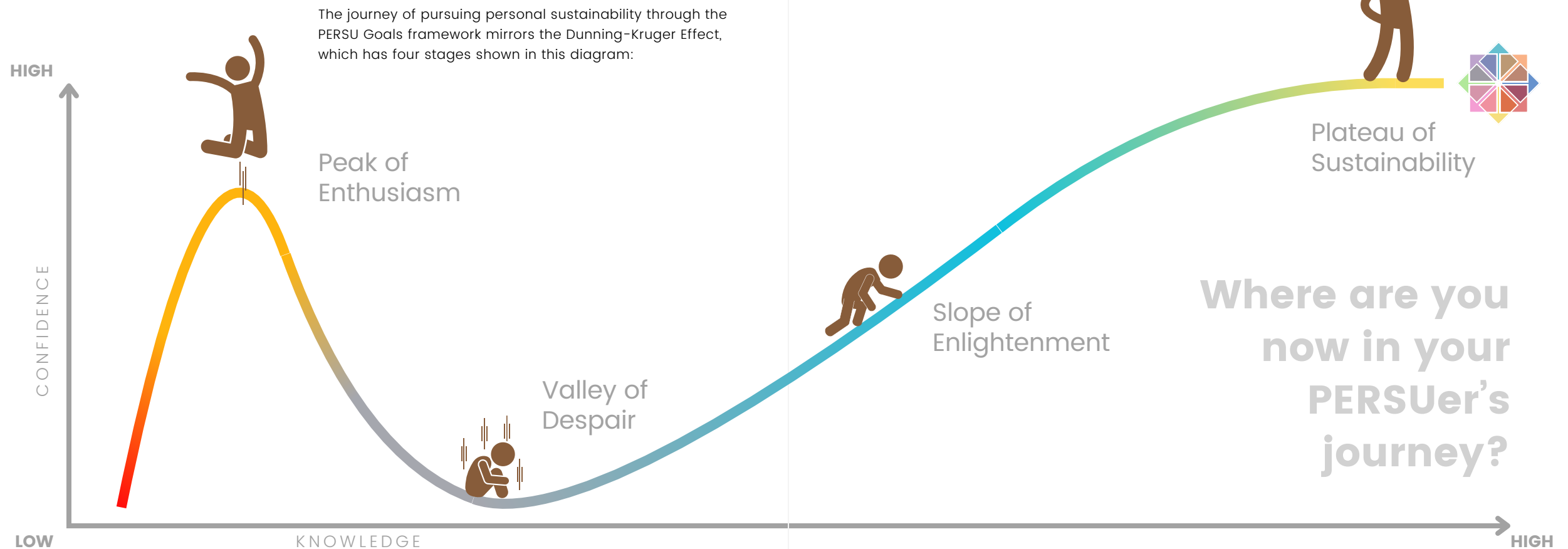
STEP 4
DOING

Once you have your G-R-I-T in place, now it's time for A-C-T-I-O-N. If you are using this light version of PERSU Tool, you can either digitally fill this out directly or you can print it on paper for manual writing and post it on your wall that you regularly see. Otherwise, you can use the digital version of the PERSU Tool.

APPROACH	CRITERIA	TARGET	INTERVALS	OUTCOME	NOTES
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Your Journey

The Dunning-Kruger Effect



ENTHUSIASM

A PERSUer's journey starts with the **Peak of Enthusiasm**. At this stage, you are energised and confident, celebrating early successes. You might share achievements widely, feeling like you've figured it all out. However, your limited knowledge and experience often lead to overconfidence, masking the depth of the work ahead. For example, adopting a few sustainable habits and assume you've already mastered the path to transformation.

DESPAIR

Next comes the **Valley of Despair**, where reality sets in. You realise the journey is more challenging and complex than anticipated. Frustration and self-doubt creep in as progress feels slow or nonexistent. Many quit here, mistaking this phase as failure. For instance, you might struggle to maintain new routines or feel overwhelmed by setbacks. Recognising this as part of the process is crucial to moving forward instead of giving up.

ENLIGHTENMENT

Persist and you will reach the **Slope of Enlightenment**, where growth becomes gradual but steady. Here, you embrace learning, adapt to challenges, and find fulfillment in the journey itself. Confidence returns as you notice tangible improvements in your habits and mindset. For example, you start understanding how to balance ambition with patience, making sustainable changes more intuitive and rewarding over time.

SUSTAINABILITY

Finally, you arrive at the **Plateau of Sustainability**, where your transformation becomes ingrained and enduring. The habits and growth you've cultivated now feel natural, requiring less effort to maintain. For instance, you've aligned your lifestyle with personal sustainability goals, achieving a rhythm that supports lasting well-being. This stage is not the end but a foundation for continuous, mindful, and holistic progress.

Your Journey

to holistic personal growth and sustainability...



Starts Here!

In PERSU Goals®, we care for your progress and results just as much as you do.

So, if you have any questions or you need support on your personal sustainability journey,

WE ARE HERE TO HELP!

Reach out to us at
support@persuggoals.com



www.persuggoals.com



@persuggoals



@persuggoals



