

# VPS NEWSLETTER – JANUARY 2020 EDITION

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## New Year, New Beginnings!

With 2019 in the rear mirror and 2020 well on its way, it's time to evaluate where you are at in your NDIS journey, and where you want to be in 2020. How are you tracking? Are you meeting your goals and objectives, or needing to make some adjustments to get back on track?

Our dedicated staff discuss some classic goal setting and tracking hints and tips, as well as discussing some of our favourite tools to make sure we're staying on track.

The end of 2019 was marked by the devastating bushfires that continue to impact our beautiful bushland, our communities, and our unique native wildlife.

Moreover, in the last few weeks, the world saw the rapid spread of the Coronavirus. In brief, coronaviruses are a large family of viruses that can cause illnesses ranging from the common cold to more severe diseases. It is of concern to everyone but especially people with existing comorbidities especially people with health concerns, disabilities and older people. Indeed, this very morning the World Health Organisation has now declared a Public Health Emergency of International Concern in relation to the Coronavirus.

*"Do not wait to strike till the iron is hot; but make it hot by striking..."*

*William Butler Yeats*

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### Setting goals, achieving outcomes

So you have your NDIS plan in plan, outlining your goals for the coming year, or even two years. How can you determine how you're tracking so far?

As in any endeavour, we strongly believe in keeping things as simple as possible. This principle is often referred to as Ockham's Razor, after the 12<sup>th</sup> century Franciscan Friar, William of Ockham. This simply states when faced with a question or dilemma, among all possible answers, one's best bet is generally the one that requires the fewest assumptions. Simply put, when given a set of explanations for an event, the simplest one is most likely the correct one.

With that in mind, one of our favorite tools at VPS to keep track our goals and outcomes is the age-old S.M.A.R.T principle.

Let's take at a scenario, one step at a time: "I want to gain skills and experience to catch the local bus to the supermarket, so I can build on my skills and lead an independent life"

1. **Specific.** The goal should be specific an answer the five "W" questions, i.e. What do you want to accomplish; Why is this goal important; Who is involved; Where is it located; Which resource(s) are required
2. **Measurable.** Being able to track progress helps us to stay motivated, focused, and meet our deadlines, and it's a lot of fun to feel the excitement of getting closer and closer.
3. **Achievable.** How will I accomplish this goal How realistic is the goal.
4. **Relevant.** This step is about ensuring that your goal matters to you, and that it also aligns with other relevant goals. We all need support and assistance in achieving our goals, but it's important to retain control over them. So, make sure that your plans drive everyone forward
5. **Time bound.** Every goal needs a target date, so that you have a deadline to focus on and something to work toward. This part of the SMART goal criteria helps to prevent everyday tasks from taking priority over your longer-term goals.

A time-bound goal will usually answer these questions:

- When?
- What can I do six months from now?
- What can I do six weeks from now?
- What can I do today?

**"... among all possible answers to a question, one's best bet is generally the one that requires the fewest assumptions."**

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### 2019, The year that's been...

Last year was an incredible one for us at VPS. First off, mid-year we welcome our current Business Manager, Andrea Walters. Andrea recently moved to Melbourne from NSW, and aside from coming with a suitcase full of experience, she brings something that we find priceless: a can-do attitude and a solutions-focused approach.

We are incredibly lucky to have Andrea on our team and look forward to kicking some goals in 2020! Stay tuned and watch this space.

In the later half of last year, we embarked on a number of endeavours and all these journeys have come with their fair share of experiences, arming us with the knowledge - and we like to think: wisdom- to tackle what 2020 might have in store for us.

- In December 2019, we moved into our new offices in Collingwood. The hip funky vibe of the area fits in with the “new-look” provider at VPS, and we have already started making some interesting connections through our networking.
- We started working on our very own VPS mobile-app. Person-centred around our participants and their aspirations, we are currently in the process of fine tuning this, hoping for a launch later in 2020
- We further streamlined our systems and processes, in line with our focus on digitally transforming the company and being seen as a leading innovator in this space.

### What we didn't get right...

We've taken our fair share of wrong turns in 2019 and we would like to offer our most sincere apologies to all those impacted, whether it's our participants, their immediate support circle, or indeed external providers.

At VPS, we firmly believe that the first step in correcting any issues is to first acknowledge that there is an issue. We have at times struggled with returning communications in a timely manner. Some queries might have fallen through the cracks. We are confident that we have learned from these experiences and moving forward have put the necessary systems in place to ensure that all our partners in this amazing NDIS journey are receiving the same high-quality standard that they deserve.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank all those who have stuck with us through thick and thin. Your support and faith in us is what keeps us going when the going gets rough.

*“Anyone who has never made a mistake has never tried anything new”*

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For 2020, we have set some ambitious goals as their primary aim: the benefit of our program participants.

Without going into too much detail, we are excited about our mobile app which is aimed at offering knowledge or insight to our participants, their support circle, and the therapy teams.

We aim to inspire, encourage, enthuse, and provoke thought in others- our journey should elicit a positive response and a fresh breath in this dynamic industry. Your feedback and suggestions decide what programs or services we provide, as well as the solutions they need.

We've already hit the ground running in 2020 by actively participating in the MidSumma Festival. It was a great opportunity to just be out and about in the community, and we've had some fantastic chats with some very interesting people. Definitely something we're keen to do again and again!

### The bushfires; Coronavirus

Sadly since late 2019, Australia has been witnessed some of the most devastating bushfire in history.

At VPS, we are committed to leaving a safe and sustainable environment for our future generations, so they too can enjoy our amazing landscape and unique and diverse wildlife.

VPS will match all financial donations by VPS staff to the Australian Wildlife Foundation.

Beginning of January 2020, the world witnessed the outbreak of the Coronavirus, which has spread so fast that as of yesterday, 30<sup>th</sup> January, the Australian Government confirmed 2 cases in Victoria, bringing the national tally to 7!

The Australian Government Department of Health has a dedicated Coronavirus webpage which can be accessed [here](#)

In these troubling times, we want to conclude by urging everyone to stay safe and look out for each other.

See you all for our February 2020 Newsletter 😊

