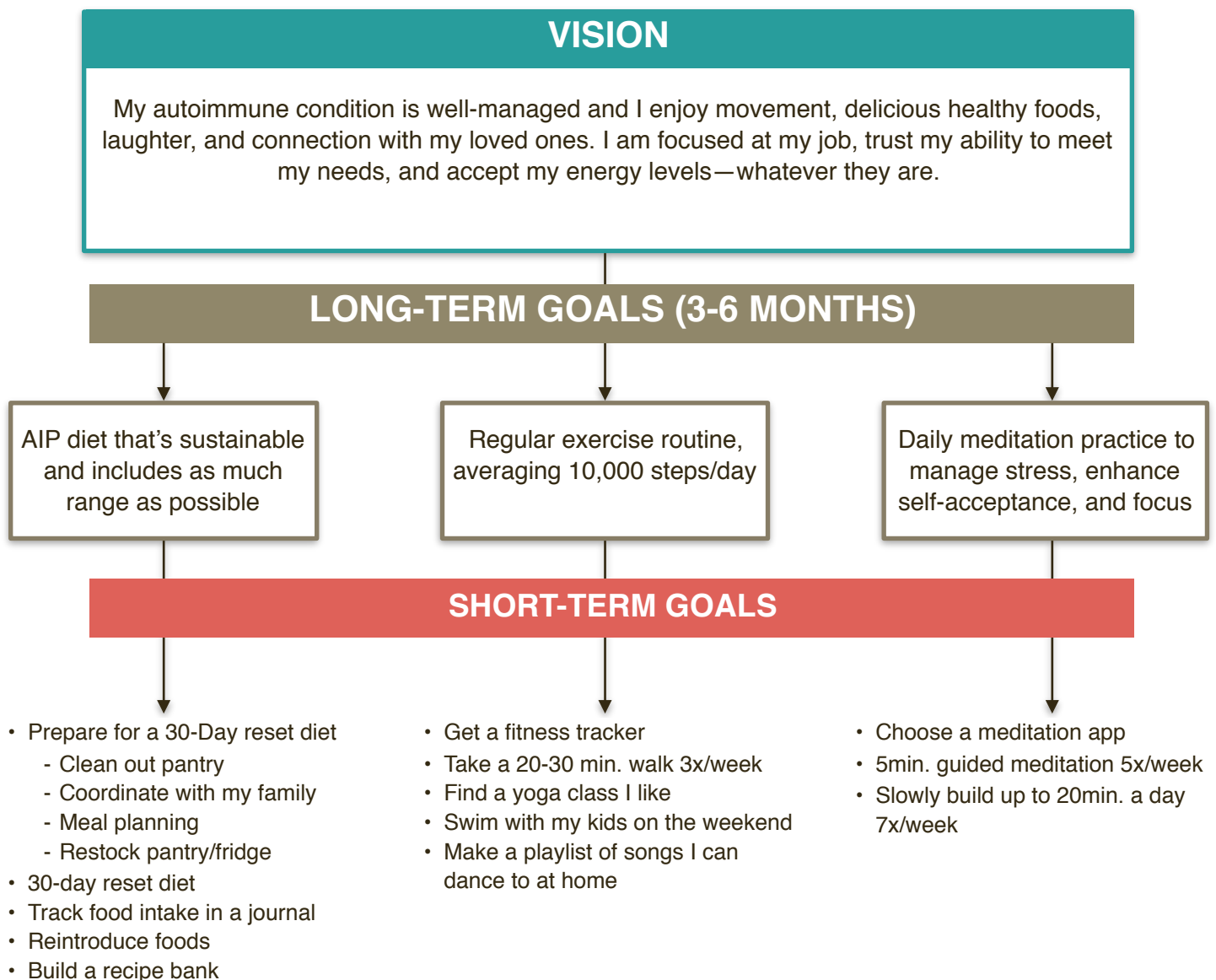


Goal Setting

The wellness vision is not a goal, but rather a vision that the client holds for themselves of their best self—of who and what they would like to grow into. Goals are what lead them to that vision. In order to achieve success, both long- and short-term goals must be SMART: Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, and Time-sensitive.



Using this example, let's look at how we can SMARTen up one of the long-term goals:

LONG-TERM GOAL:

Regular exercise routine, averaging 10,000 steps/day

- Is it **Specific**? Clarify with the client what regular means. How many days a week? What is the period for averaging? Per week? What specifically is exercise? What does routine mean?
- Is it **Measurable**? Yes; 10,000 steps/day is measurable.
- Is it **Achievable**? Clarify this with the client. If the client is currently not doing any exercise, then likely not, but if this is a doable stretch from current activity levels, then yes. You might also use a confidence scale.
- Is it **Relevant**? Yes. It ties to the client's vision, specifically elements of movement, energy, and stress-management.
- Is it **Time-sensitive**? The goal is three to six months, so you will want to get more specific on the time frame. Is it three months? Is it six? Adjustments can be made, but you want to know very clearly what the timeline is.

In the case of this goal, it may be specific enough for now—perhaps the nature of the routine and how the client would like to get to 10,000 steps will be determined through the short-term goals/experiments.

PRIORITIZING LONG-TERM GOALS

Prioritizing is critical, as too much at once can cause client overwhelm and failure. Small steps are shown to lead to more lasting change. Start where the client chooses, build on small wins, and move solidly toward that vision with self-efficacy. In this incremental way, the client not only moves toward the stated vision and goals, but learns how to make change and build confidence, which will serve them in making further changes in the future.

Therefore, once the vision is set, along with some long-term goals, we invite the client to prioritize. Where would the client like to start? It might be what is most important; it might be what feels most achievable; it might be what needs to be done before the other goals can be tackled.

HOW DO SHORT-TERM GOALS FIT IN?

At follow-up coaching sessions, ask what the client would like to focus on, and once they've chosen a long-term goal,* and it's SMART enough, discuss the steps that will get the client there. These are the short-term goals. Remember that after choosing the focus, we want to explore the client's values, vision, and motivation before we get to the planning. Taking into consideration the client's readiness/stage of change, elicit the client's ideas for short-term goals. These steps might be learning, observing, preparing,

or action. Once the client has chosen the right step for them (to do between sessions), you will guide the client to make those goals SMART. It is not necessary, nor even advisable, to lay out all the short-term steps all at once. Some people find it helpful to plot out all the steps, and others to focus on one step at a time.

*If the client chooses a focus that is not clearly connected to their long-term goals, you might ask the client how this area of focus connects to their vision and long-term goals or raise their awareness about this and ask how they'd like to proceed. The client may wish to amend their vision and long-term goals. They may also choose to work on this new issue even if it's not connected.