



Making Healthy Changes for Life



Toolkit

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Making

Healthy Changes *for* Life

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Table of Contents

- 1) Preparing for Change
 - Cost Benefit Chart
 - Cost-Benefit Chart (Example)
 - Preparing for Change
- 2) Skills for Successful Change¹
 - My Goal Tracking Form
 - My Goal Tracking Form (Example)
 - Writing SMART Goals
 - Tracking My Progress
 - Arranging My Environment
 - Identifying Obstacles and Solutions
 - My Behavior Rewards
 - My Support Plan
- 3) Preventing Drift/Relapse²
 - My Drift/Relapse Plan
 - My Daily/Weekly Checklist



This toolkit contains resources to guide you through the steps to successfully make healthy lifestyle changes.

^{1,2.} *STAIRS Skills adapted from Living SMART, Five Essential Skills to Change Your Health Habits Forever, by Sheri Pruitt, PhD and Joshua Klapow, PhD.*

Cost-Benefit Chart (Example)

A good method for helping you get started with making a healthy change is to create a cost-benefit chart. On the left side of the chart, list the costs, or the *negative* outcomes, associated with engaging in the new behavior. On the right side of the chart, list the benefits, or the *positive* outcomes, that will result from engaging in the new behavior.

My new healthy behavior: Getting regular exercise.

Costs/Negative Outcomes of Making the Change	Benefits/Positive Outcomes of Making the Change
<i>I won't have as much time for other things I want to do.</i>	<i>It can improve my health conditions.</i>
<i>I might get sore or injured if I exercise.</i>	<i>It will increase my energy to do more things.</i>
<i>Exercising might make me more hungry and I'll want to eat more.</i>	<i>It will help me lose weight.</i>
<i>My spouse may be unhappy if I am exercising instead of making him breakfast or dinner.</i>	<i>It can help me manage stress better.</i>
	<i>It can help lower my blood pressure and cholesterol levels.</i>
	<i>My self-esteem might improve.</i>
	<i>It can help me sleep better.</i>

Are the benefits of making the change more important to you than the costs of making the change? If yes, then you are ready to take the next step. Use the outcomes most important to you to help keep you motivated and on track while making the change.

Preparing for Change

Directions: Write down the healthy lifestyle (behavior) change you want to make. Then complete the following activities to help you identify your desire, reasons, need, and ability to change. All these components help determine your readiness for change.

List the healthy behavior change you want to make: _____

Activity 1 – Identify Priorities

List your top life priorities in order of importance, for example, work, family, health, social activity. How will your healthy behavior change fit into your lifestyle? How will it impact your priorities?

-
-
-
-
-

List the reasons why you want to make this healthy behavior change:

On a scale of 0 to 10, rate how important each reason is. (0 = not important at all; 10 = extremely important)

-
-
-
-
-

Activity 3 – Identify Confidence

On a scale of 0 to 10, rate your confidence level for making this change. (0 = not confident at all; 10 = extremely confident)

My rating is: _____ *Don't worry if your rating is low. You can take small steps toward change regardless of your confidence level.*

Answer the following questions to help identify prior successes and challenges to improve your confidence level:

Why are you at this level and not a lower one? *For example, have you had past success or have a good support team?*

What would help you improve your confidence level? *For example, do you need support or information?*

My Goal Tracking Form

Set **S**pecific, **M**easurable, **A**ttainable, **R**elevant, and **T**ime-bound goals.

(Refer to the Writing SMART Goals handout for help with writing SMART goals.)

Directions: Fill in your weekly behavior goal at the beginning of the week. At the end of the week, complete the last three sections. Identifying your successes, obstacles and solutions for overcoming barriers will help you achieve your future goals. You can use this sheet as many times as you need to fit the number of weekly goals you choose.

Date:

Week #:

Weekly behavior goal:

Write down how successful you were this week:

List anything that may have prevented you from reaching your goal:

Write down possible solutions to overcome the obstacles listed above:

My Goal Tracking Form (Example)

Set **S**pecific, **M**easurable, **A**ttainable, **R**elevant, and **T**ime-bound goals.
(Refer to the Writing SMART Goals handout for help with writing SMART goals.)

Directions: Fill in your weekly behavior goal at the beginning of the week. At the end of the week, complete the last three sections. Identifying your successes, obstacles and solutions for overcoming barriers will help you achieve your future goals. You can use this sheet as many times as you need to fit the number of weekly goals you choose.

Date: December 12

Week #: 2

Weekly behavior goal:

I will walk two miles at least three days this week for a total of six miles.

Write down how successful you were this week:

I walked two miles two days and one mile another day this week for a total of five miles.

List anything that may have prevented you from reaching your goal:

The day I walked one mile there was good weather in the morning but it rained in the afternoon so I couldn't walk the second mile after work.

Write down possible solutions to overcome the obstacles listed above:

When I schedule the days I will walk, I will include a backup plan for bad weather. I will stop at the mall on my way home to walk or I will walk on Saturday or Sunday.

Writing SMART Goals

Most people start with an outcome goal. An example of an outcome goal is: *“The overall goal I want to reach is to live healthier and lose two inches around my waist.”*

To reach an outcome, you must have behavior goals. For example: *“I will walk five days a week for 30-60 minutes a day.”*

The chart below shows a brainstorming process to break this behavior goal down into a weekly SMART behavior goal. This is an example of what the final weekly SMART goal might be: *“This week I will walk 15 minutes a day at a brisk pace for three days.”*

Breaking down the steps to writing a **Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, and Time-bound (SMART) goal.**

Goal Component	Example
<p>SPECIFIC What, when, where, and how will the behavior be done?</p>	<p><i>I will walk regularly (at least five days a week) in the morning to help me reduce inches around my waist.</i></p>
<p>MEASURABLE How much, how many, and/or how often will you do the behavior?</p>	<p><i>I will walk 30-60 minutes a day at a brisk pace five days a week.</i></p>
<p>ATTAINABLE What are your steps to meet or reach your goal? Set your goal low enough to be reached, but high enough to be a challenge.</p>	<p><i>I will start walking 15 minutes a day for three days a week and work up to 30 minutes a day for five days a week. Seven days might be too high (no room for unexpected events or illness). One day is too low and not enough to help me lose inches.</i></p>
<p>RELEVANT Is it the right behavior goal to help you meet your overall outcome? Is it a good time in your life to be setting this goal?</p>	<p><i>Now that my children are back in school and the holidays are over I can start walking in the morning.</i></p>
<p>TIME-BOUND Make sure your goal includes a specific time frame in which you will achieve it.</p>	<p><i>I will increase my time each week by five minutes until I reach 30 minutes a day. I will add an extra day every two to four weeks until I reach 30-60 minutes for five days a week.</i></p>

Now it's your turn. Write and track your own SMART goal.

Tracking *My* Progress

My behavior goal is: _____

Check the box on days you complete your goal. Space is provided to write any notes.

Week of:	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	<input type="checkbox"/>						
	<input type="checkbox"/>						
	<input type="checkbox"/>						
	<input type="checkbox"/>						

Arranging *My* Environment

My behavior goal is: _____

I will make the following changes to my environment to help me reach my goal. For example, remove cigarettes from my car, clean out my pantry and refrigerator, put my walking shoes in my car.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

Identifying *My* Obstacles *and* Solutions

My behavior goal is: _____

Think about all potential challenges that could prevent you from completing your goal. Then brainstorm possible solutions for every challenge. Once completed, use your solutions as your backup plan.

Obstacles/Challenges	Solutions
Example: <i>If it rains ...</i>	Examples: <i>I will walk around the office at breaks and lunch time.</i> <i>I will go to the mall after work to walk inside.</i> <i>I will go to the health club to work out.</i>

My Behavior Rewards

My behavior goal is: _____

In the columns below, decide how you will reward yourself each time you complete your chosen behavior (short-term reward), and when you achieve a target goal (long-term reward).

Short-Term Rewards	Long-Term Rewards
Example: <i>I will put a star sticker or smiley face on my tracking form.</i>	Example: <i>When I have 10 stickers, I will treat myself to a new book.</i>
Example: <i>I will put a pretty, colored rock in my glass jar every time I exercise.</i>	Example: <i>When my glass jar is full, I will treat myself to a massage.</i>
Example: <i>For every pack of cigarettes I don't buy, I will put \$5 aside for my long-term reward.</i>	Example: <i>When I have reached \$100, I will go golfing.</i>

My Support Plan

My behavior goal is: _____

On the left side of the chart, list the people/tools you will use as support to help you reach your goal.
 On the right side of the chart, list how your support partner or tool will support you.

Who/What Will Support Me	How I Will Be Supported
Example: <i>My spouse</i>	Example: <i>My spouse will watch our children so I can exercise.</i>
Example: <i>Using a quitline</i>	Example: <i>I will call a quitline when I feel the urge to smoke.</i>
Example: <i>Using my phone</i>	Example: <i>I will set an alarm on my phone to remind me to get up from my desk and take a break to relieve stress.</i>

My Drift/Relapse Plan

My behavior goal is: _____

List the things that cause you to get off track with completing your healthy behavior goal. Then list your plan for getting back on track.

What Causes Me to Drift	My Plan to Get Back on Track
Example: <i>Moving farther away has caused me to get off track with going to the gym.</i>	Example: <i>My plan is to bring my clothes with me to work and go straight to the gym after work.</i>
Example: <i>I was sick in bed with the flu.</i>	Example: <i>Accept my drift and forgive myself. Then I will use my drift partner for support and start fresh with a clean slate when I am well.</i>

My Daily/Weekly Checklist

Print these checklists and place them in areas where you will be reminded to stay motivated and on track.

My Daily/Weekly Checklist

Goal: _____

(Example: I will eat three servings of vegetables a day for at least five days.)

Motivation: _____

(Example: I want to have enough energy to keep up with my young children and give them a great childhood.)

Each day I will:

- Plan for overcoming anticipated obstacles:

- Make adjustments to my environment:

- Check in with support person/people:

- Monitor my progress:

- Reward my accomplishments:

- Acknowledge and learn from setbacks or drift:

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