

Goal Setting and Action Planning Workbook Guide



GOAL SETTING & ACTION PLANNING

Making changes to habits and behaviors can be difficult

Setting goals and action plans is one of the best ways to:

- Manage your own health (self-management)
- Create better health habits and stick to them
- Keep track and keep motivated
- Problem solve when things get in the way
- Be successful

Goal Setting:

We think of a **goal** as something we would like to accomplish over the next 3-6 months. When choosing a goal, we often look at which cardiovascular risk factor we would like to change. Goals can come from many lifestyles, behaviours or health issues that we want to work on such as nutrition, smoking, stress and mental health and physical activity.

Example Goal:

“I want to be able to walk 3 km most days without stopping”

(for example 3km is about the distance of the McArthur Island long loop)

Possible steps to get there:

- walking in 5- 10 minute bouts in my neighbourhood
- using a stationary bike to increase my exercise tolerance
- arranging to meet a friend to walk with
- preparation – make sure I have the proper equipment needed such as footwear and raingear for activity outside

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My Goal and Options to Get There

- List a goal that you want to achieve over next 3-6 months
- In the space below, write down steps or ideas to achieve your goal
- Then check off one or two steps that you think may work
- You can make more than one goal, but it may be best to work on one thing at a time

GOAL #1: _____

List possible ways of achieving it:

Then ask yourself a few questions:

Why is this change important to me? _____

How important is it to me to make this change? (circle your response)



0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Not important		Unsure		Somewhat important			Very Important			Extremely Important

How ready am I to make this change?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Not ready to change				Unsure				Ready to change	

Consider how much effort it will take and how willing you are to make this change.

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Once you have weighed the importance of this goal and whether you are ready to make this change, then you can move on to the next step: making a weekly Action Plan.

If you are struggling to come up with a goal that is right for you, consider asking for support. Do not hesitate to ask your family, friends, colleagues or neighbours.

Goals are often too big to work on all at once. We tend to have more success when goals are broken down into smaller parts.

An **Action Plan** is taking a small step and setting a short-term plan that you carry out over the next week. Pick one of the steps you checked off above to make your own Action Plan.

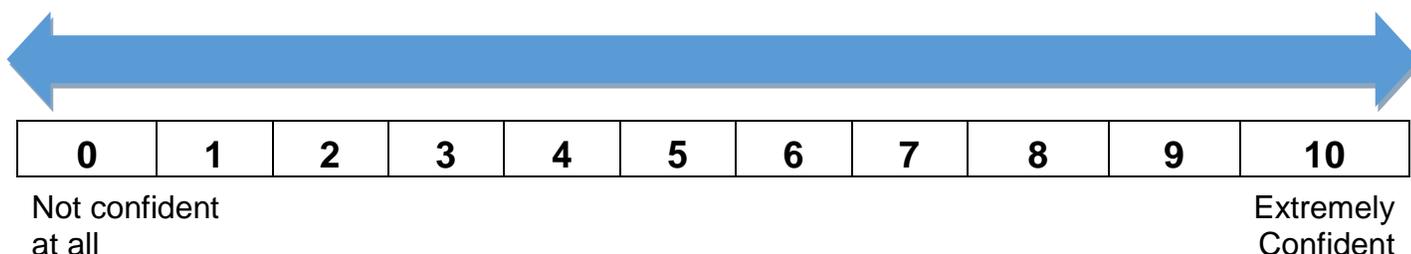
Action Plans should always:

- Be something you want to do
- Be something Reasonable (can you do it in the next week?)
- Behavior Specific (write down “walking” instead of “get fit”)

Rate your Confidence level:

On a scale of zero to ten, where 0 is not confident and 10 is extremely confident:

How do I rate my confidence that I can carry this out?



- If you rated yourself as less than 7, review the plan and see if there are ways to boost your confidence
- If you rated yourself 7 or more, then you are on your way to a good plan
- If confidence is a 10, the plan you have chosen may be too easy

Keeping Track is important:

- Check off when you accomplish your action each time
- Are you closer to reaching your goal?
- Make notes if things get in the way. This will help with your problem solving

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ACTION PLAN

DATE: _____

This week I will:

- _____ (What will you do?)
_____ (When will you do it?)
_____ (Where will you do?)
_____ (How much will you do it?)
_____ (How many times this week will you do it?)

I have the confidence level of _____ that I can do it.

(0 = not at all confident; 10 = totally confident)

KEEPING TRACK

Day	Check Off	Comments
<i>Monday</i>		
<i>Tuesday</i>		
<i>Wednesday</i>		
<i>Thursday</i>		
<i>Friday</i>		
<i>Saturday</i>		
<i>Sunday</i>		

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PROBLEM SOLVING:

Sometimes, something gets in the way of our goal. Do not give up! Here are some steps that you can take to help solve the problem:

1. Identify the barrier or problem (usually the most difficult step)
2. List possible solutions to overcome the barrier or problem
3. Pick one and try it for two weeks
4. If it doesn't work, try another one
5. If that doesn't work, look for help

Sometimes the problem may not be solvable at this time. This does not mean that the problem may not be solvable in the future. Make sure that you have gone through steps 1-5 before deciding. Do not dwell on what you cannot do, but rather pick another goal that you can accomplish.

Example Action Plan	
<i>What?</i>	Walk
<i>When?</i>	In the morning before work
<i>Where?</i>	In my neighbourhood
<i>How much?</i>	30 minutes
<i>How many times per week?</i>	5 times

Problem: Not able to get this done before work

Possible solutions: Get up earlier; set an alarm; call a friend who can give support; try a different time of day

Solution to try: I will try walking in my lunch break. I will try this solution for at least 2 weeks to see if it works

Confidence: How confident you are that your new plan will work for you?
If your confidence is at a 7 or more out of 10, then this may be a good solution to try.

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In Summary

Goal setting and Action planning are great tools to help you make meaningful changes for your health.

Keys to Success:

- Set a goal
- Make a list of options to achieve your goal
- Consider the importance of the goal to you and how ready you are to make change
- Make an action plan toward that goal
- Carry out the plan
- Check on progress weekly
- Make mid-course changes as necessary
- Reward yourself for a job well done

