

Pathway to Change

Lesson 1

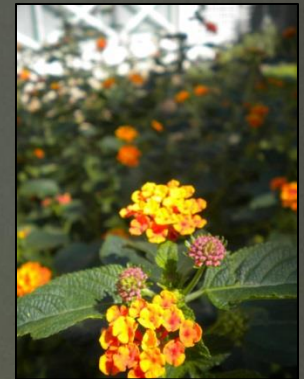


Goals and Objectives

- To become more comfortable and confident with making changes in your life
 - To discuss the importance of change
 - To list one or more of your barriers to lifestyle change
 - To use a “behavior chain” to explore ways to break a bad habit
 - To develop a realistic goal to prepare for a healthy change in your life

What is Change?

- To make different
- To give a different position, course, or direction
- To replace with another
- To transition
- To vary, or break away from sameness or repeating
- To modify, or adapt to a new purpose



Merriam Webster Online Dictionary. Retrieved November 6, 2008 from <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/change>

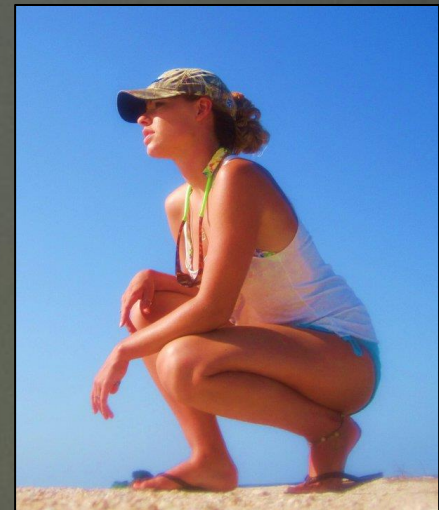
Why is Change Important?

- Sometimes our lives get off track and we have bad habits.
- Most people can think of something that would be a healthy change in their lives
- Your behaviors have developed over a lifetime, so changing them will also take time.
- Behavior change and goal setting may be difficult, but it can help you to manage your health better, and may even prevent hospitalizations.



How Can You Create Change?

- Set focused goals
- Move toward empowerment
- Analyze and prepare for fear
- Change bad habits to good ones
- Focus on what you **can** do
- Unlearn “all or nothing thinking”
- Break behavior chains
- Stay positive
- Be mindful and empowered



Start With Goals

- Finding the right goals may not be easy, but it's a place to start.
- *Example: A person with low energy had a goal to pick up the garden hose in his front yard before the weekend.*
- *Another person who avoided exercise had a goal to sit on her exercise bike for 1 minute. The next day she used it for 1 minute.*
- Sometimes the problem is not having “too little” motivation, but rather having “too much”, by setting the goals too high when starting out.
- Simplifying goals can increase the chance of success.

Set Focused Goals



- Make your goals specific, measurable, realistic, and timed:
- **Vague goal**- “I want to eat more fruits and vegetables.”
- **Specific goal**- “I will eat at least 5 servings of fruits and vegetables each day, at least 4 days per week.”
- **Vague goal**- “I want to be more busy and active.”
- **Specific goal**- “I will only watch TV for an hour at a time. I will go for a walk every day, or work on crafts.”

Gundersen Lutheran Medical Center. (2008, October). Breaking the behavior chain. Presentation at Winning Weighs Meeting, La Crosse, WI.

Move Toward Empowerment

- Empowerment is the feeling of having more control over what happens to you.
- It is a good feeling, but it also come with responsibility.
- When someone learns how to turn “wanting to do something” into “doing something”, it increases self-confidence and feelings of hope.
- Even unsuccessful efforts to change can open up opportunities for exploring other issues in a person’s life.
- Once change starts, the process of rehabilitation is renewed and you can begin to regain control of your life and health.

Wallbridge, H.R., Furer, P. & Lionberg, C. (2008). Behavioral activation and rehabilitation. *Journal of Psychosocial Nursing*. 46(3), 36-44.

Analyze Fear

- Think of something you want to change.
- Explore both “up and down sides” because fear can be mixed up with positive emotions like excitement, and courage.
 - *What is the most likely outcome?*
 - *What is the worst thing that could happen?
How likely is that?*
 - *What is the best thing that could happen?
How likely is that?*
 - *What if I don't do this?*



Prepare For Fear

- Use fear as a tool, to push you toward preparation and practice.
- Build a personal safety net or support system.
- Find a way to “test the waters” and take smaller steps.
- Preparation can increase feelings of self-confidence and empowerment.
- *What causes fear during your efforts to change?*
- *How can you prepare for the fear of change?*



Focus on What You Can Do

- Look at what barriers there are to changing your lifestyle - Do some problem solving to deal with them.
 - Old behaviors
 - Doubt or negative thinking
 - Busy schedules
 - Stress
- *How can I best move forward?*
- *What is my destination?*
- Be creative as you plan for change



Crowley, K. (2000) Creating change p. 99-108 in The power of Procovery in healing mental illness: Just start anywhere. Kennedy Carlisle: Los Angeles.

Change Bad Habits to Good Ones

- Changing your habits gets easier over time, but when fears come back, ask yourself, “What is different now?”
- Remind yourself that you have a treatment plan to follow
- Ask for support from your health care team as well as your family or friends
- “Just stop doing it” can be the hardest way
- **Instead, start by replacing unhealthy habits with positive ones**



Unlearn “All or Nothing” Thinking

- Be realistic and practical - Don't try to be perfect.
- Make goals achievable and specific.
- Work on consistency and moderation.
- Focus on your progress.
- Write in a journal or diary about your habits or behavior - good or bad.
- *It is unlikely you will meet your long-term goals right away, but you can take “baby steps”.*
- *If you are going in the right direction, and you keep going, you will eventually get there.*

Break Behavior Chains

- Change the steps leading to a behavior you want to change.
 - Linked behaviors can cause something else to happen.
 - Your emotions and behaviors tend to follow patterns in a series of events.
- Develop insight into your habits to help prevent relapses.
- If the chain of behavior patterns is broken at any point, it probably will not progress to the final behavior.
- The earlier the break in the link, the easier it is to undo a behavior chain.

Messina, J.J. & Messina, C.M. (2007). Use of behavioral chains in recovery. Retrieved from <http://www.jamesjmessina.com/seaslifestyletools/seasbehavioralchains.html>

Emotions and Behavior Chains

- Your emotions can cause unmet goals and relapse:
- **“I need to exercise. I’ll walk 15 minutes 3 days/week.”**
 - *Housework to do - Too busy today - Will do it tomorrow.*
 - *Had argument - Bad mood – Stressed out – not today.*
 - *Too tired – It’s been rainy – I want to stay inside.*
 - *I’ll start next week – I’d rather watch TV this weekend.*
 - *Can’t meet goal - Why bother? – I give up.*



Modify the Plan to Fit Your Life

- *Getting more activity can be a struggle! But you can “break” behavior chains by modifying the plan:*
 - *Schedule physical activity into the day like an appointment.*
 - *Walk with a friend for more fun, or to help relieve stress.*
 - *Walk in place, do stretching exercises while watching TV, or continue to move while you are on the phone.*
 - *Park further away from where you are going, and take the stairs more often.*
 - *Or, change the goal to 5 minute walks (either inside or outside) - Increase the time after you are in the habit.*

Stay Positive!

- If you get to the end of the week and didn't meet your goal, you can still be positive:
 - Change can build slowly, “brick by brick”.
 - Exercising even one day is better than not at all.
- You have more information about yourself and your barriers - You can make a more realistic goal.
- Making even a little change in the right direction is all you have to do.
- Increase your self-awareness - Consider if logging your activities or symptoms would help.

Be Mindful and Empowered

- **Use all senses** when possible- seeing, hearing, smelling, feeling, tasting.
- **Be present** (don't look backward or forward) and be aware of your surroundings - Do one activity at a time.
- **Be optimistic** - Think positively - "I can" rather than "I can't" to increase your self-esteem and body image.
- **Take control** - Don't be caught up in always wanting to please others, but strive to be healthy for yourself.
- **Find help, support, and resources.**
- **Set realistic, specific goals.**

Optional Web Activities



- Teens can go to Kidshealth.org website for **Making A Change: Your Personal Plan** at http://kidshealth.org/teen/your_mind/problems/make_change.html?tracking=T_RelatedArticle#cat20862
Make your own plan for change
- Watch **Keeping Well** video (1: 51 minutes) by SenseAbility at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pA1BDIRJYIQ> or learn about deep breathing for relaxation by watching **Keeping Well** Video (3:26 minutes) by SenseAbility at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2jK52Ac4YSQ>

Conclusion

- Change can be good, especially when dealing with bad habits.
- With realistic goals, change is less “scary” and can lead to a healthier you.
- *“Most people are consuming so much time and energy trying to do the impossible - to change and control the actions of others. They wrongly believe that they cannot do the one thing that is most possible - to change themselves.”*
- Albert Ellis (quote paraphrased)





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