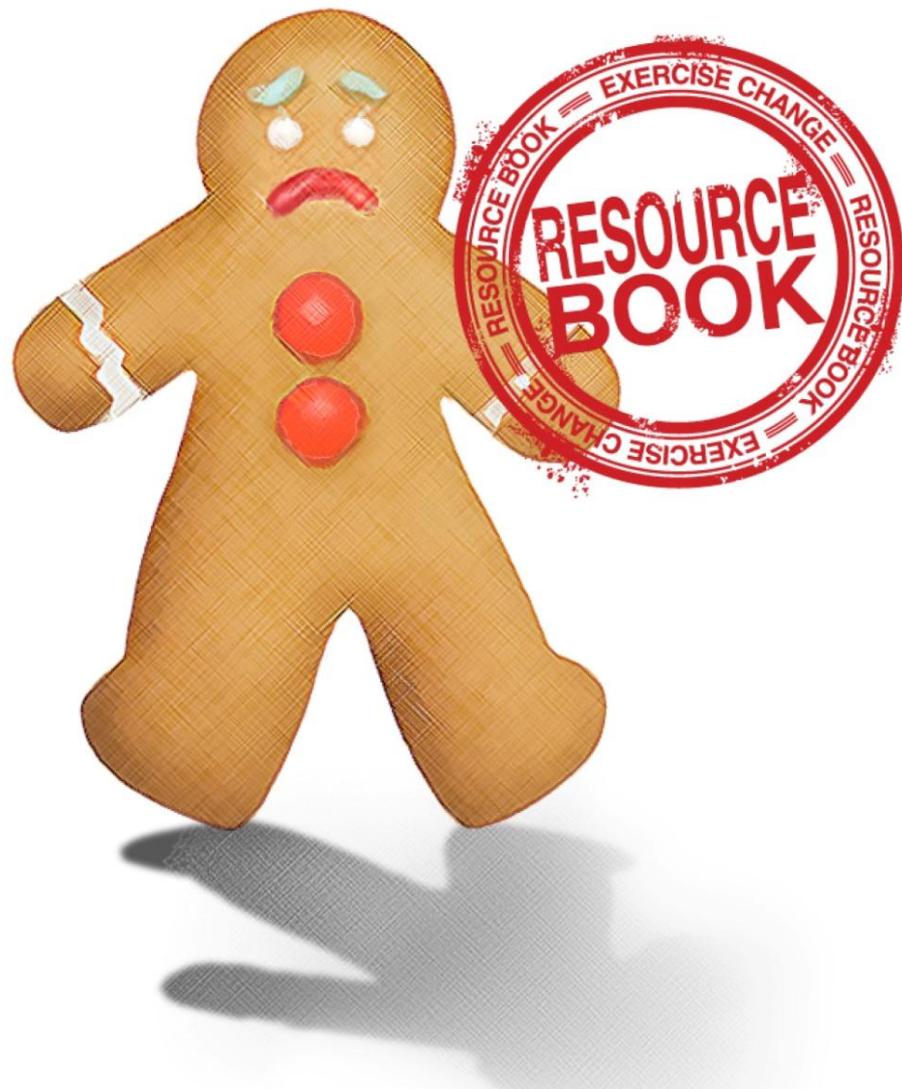


EXERCISE CHANGE

BUILD, STRENGTHEN AND MAINTAIN
MOTIVATION TO EXERCISE



LEARN ABOUT THE MYSTERY AND MAGIC OF CHANGE
TAKE ACTION AND TAKE CONTROL OF YOUR
HEALTH AND FITNESS

Matt Williams



EXERCISE CHANGE: Resource Book

Build, Strengthen and Maintain Motivation to Exercise!

Learn about the Mystery and Magic of Change - Take Action and Take Control
of your Health and Fitness

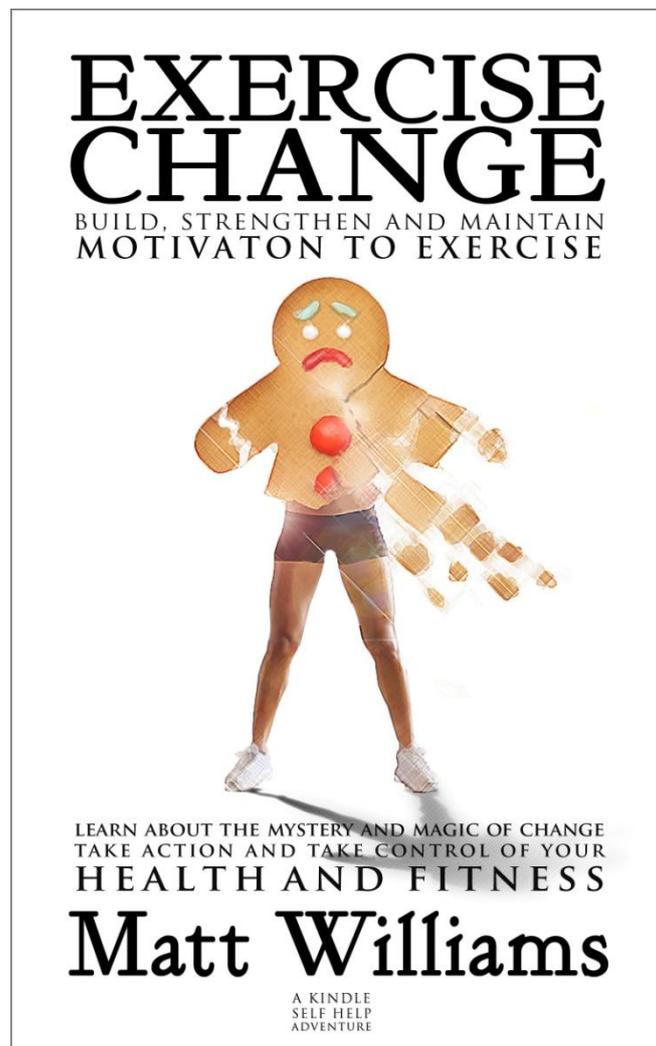
By Matt Williams



Source book

EXERCISE CHANGE

Build, Strengthen and Maintain Motivation to Exercise



[More info at ExerciseChangeBook.com](http://www.ExerciseChangeBook.com)

Description

A 27 year old mother of two young children looks at herself in the mirror and smiles. Over the past year she has dramatically transformed her physical appearance after having tried and failed multiple times in the past. She isn't worried about going back to how she used to look because this time it's different. She has experienced a fundamental shift in the way she thinks about and reacts to change.

A recently married 30 year old retail manager feels that he is finally achieving the physique he's always wanted. More importantly he is doing it in a way that fits with his lifestyle and for the first time in a long time he can see light at the end of the tunnel.

A 45 year old nurse and mother of two recently diagnosed with diabetes, beams as the doctor discusses her positive test results. Previously overweight, tired and confused about how to get out of a lifelong rut, she now feels empowered and in control of her health and fitness.

What do all of these people have in common? They succeeded in motivating themselves to exercise the 'right way' by learning how to effectively build, strengthen and maintain their motivation to exercise.

They succeeded by 'exercising change'.

In *Exercise Change – Build, Strengthen and Maintain Motivation to Exercise*, change expert Matt Williams takes us on an introspective journey that compels us to challenge our thinking and behaviour around making exercise related changes. With an ability to translate complex psychological theories into practical and insightful narratives, Williams brings to life a whole new understanding of exercise motivation through the introduction of a new model of change, the Exercise Motivation Change Cycle or EMCC.

Along the way we learn why some people struggle to make exercise related changes, despite years of trying, while others seem to have a remarkable ability to start and stick with an exercise programme on their first attempt.

We delve into the minds of behaviour change experts as well as everyday people who have accomplished extraordinary things to explore exactly how to make and maintain exercise related changes.

We discover how the right habits and mind-set were crucial to the success of nine time Coast to Coast winner Steve Gurney, NABBA Junior World Champion Kagan Orton and NZ cricketer Andrew Ellis. We go inside the minds of medical professionals, coaches, and martial artists and see how a well-rounded understanding of motivation and change can mean the difference between wanting to do something and actually doing it.

At its core, *Exercise Change* contains a refreshingly simple and empowering message: The key to exercising regularly, getting fit, losing weight, and improving health is understanding change.

Change doesn't have to be intimidating. As Matt Williams shows, by harnessing much of what you probably already know and are capable of doing, we can transform our bodies, our minds, and our lives.

[More info at ExerciseChangeBook.com](http://www.exercisechange.co.nz)

30 FREE Exercise MP3's

with every purchase of EXERCISE CHANGE

Available FREE for a short time only!



EXERCISEMP3

Transform your MP3/iPod into the ultimate training tool by downloading this large variety of Exercise MP3's. Tracks vary in length from a super intense 3 min workout to a more relaxed 30 min workout. Simply add your own exercises to create an almost unlimited number of workout possibilities!

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[More info at ExerciseChangeBook.com](http://ExerciseChangeBook.com)

[For a full description \(including samples\) of all 30 Exercise MP3's click here](#)

Access other Exercise Change resources

ExerciseChange.co.nz/Resources

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Write a positive review of EXERCISE CHANGE and receive an additional 20 PREMIUM Exercise MP3's!

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Published by: Exercise Change Books



About the author

Matt Williams is the author of several books including ‘Exercise Change: Build, Strengthen and Maintain Motivation to Exercise’, and is the creator of ExerciseChange.co.nz

Matt is a devoted husband, father and fitness fanatic who makes understanding change, and how to make the most of it, a priority. He has used the information in this book to successfully change many aspects of his own life as well as to teach thousands of others to do the same.



Visit the author's website:

ExerciseChange.co.nz

Subscribe to the Exercise Change mailing list and be informed about the latest site updates, including new interviews, resources, blog entries and more:

ExerciseChange.co.nz/Contact

EXERCISE

- 1) Physical or mental exertion carried out to improve or sustain health and fitness: *exercise improves heart and lung power, and mental alertness*
- 2) Something undertaken or performed in order to practice or train: *exercises aimed at improving self-awareness*
- 3) A putting into action, use or effect: *exercising self-control*

CHANGE

- 1) To transform, convert, modify or make something different from what it is, or from what it would be if left alone: *to change ones physical appearance and mental state*
- 2) To substitute one situation or thing for another: *they made the change to a sugar free diet*
- 3) The passing from one state, form or phase to another: *changing from being unmotivated and unhealthy to motivated and healthy*

RESOURCES

“When every physical and mental resource is focused, one's power to solve a problem multiplies tremendously.”

- NORMAN VINCENT PEALE, AUTHOR AND A PROGENITOR OF ‘POSITIVE THINKING’

Resources section

“Don't wait for extraordinary opportunities. Seize common occasions and make them great. Weak men wait for opportunities; strong men make them.”

- ORISON SWETT MARDEN, SPIRITUAL AUTHOR IN THE NEW THOUGHT MOVEMENT

Menu of resources

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Other resources

- [EMCC stage assessments](#)
- [Exercise log \(MALE\)](#)
- [Exercise log \(FEMALE\)](#)
- [Food diary](#)
- [S-O-S-S Goals supplement](#)
- [The 'What if...' game](#)
- [The Exercise Motivation Change Cycle \(EMCC\)](#)

Exercise MP3's

- [30 FREE Exercise MP3's](#)
- [20 FREE PREMIUM Exercise MP3's](#)



2-3-4 approach to change - info sheet

The 2-3-4 method involves 3 simple steps which explore...

- **2 WHATS:** One direction & One goal
- **3 WHYS:** Motives or reasons why you want it
- **4 HOWS:** Plans and actions for how you'll do it

Let's take a closer look at each step.

Step 1 - Identify 2 WHATS

A GOAL TO GET YOU MOVING AND A DIRECTION TO GUIDE YOUR EFFORTS.

So you want to make a change? The first step is to identify exactly what it is you want to change. The reason for choosing two 'WHATs' is that you can have the best of both worlds, that is both a direction to head in and a goal to aim for. The direction will sustain you in the long term and the goal will get things moving in the short term. The idea is that once you achieve your goal you identify another and so on and so on, all the while heading in your chosen direction.

When identifying your two 'WHATs' start with the direction as this will inform your goal. If you're not sure about the validity of your direction don't worry too much at this stage. If it really isn't what you want to do you'll know during the second step when you are unable to come up with any meaningful reasons for wanting to do it. If this is the case simply return to step 1 before again proceeding to step 2.

To get started consider the following questions.

Your direction (your FIRST 'WHAT')

- Think about your life now... How would you like things to be different?
- Given the things you would like to be different... What direction have you chosen?

Your goal (your SECOND 'WHAT')

Taking into account the things that would specifically help YOU as well as the things that might get in your way.

- What could be the first steps to making these things happen?

After considering the options...

- What is the goal you have decided on?

I will revisit this goal and either alter it or set a new goal...

- After this amount of time...
- Or when this happens...

Step 2 - Identify 3 WHYS

Identify three reasons why you absolutely, positively have to do what you are aiming to do. These reasons or motives will keep you moving when times are good and stop you from quitting when times are tough. This is about what's really motivating you.

It's your motivation in conjunction with the goal setting process that allows you to achieve your goals. The relationship between motivation and goals is hugely important yet is often overlooked by those eager to change. Think of the relationship between motivation and goals as you would a car and fuel. In the same way you need fuel to run a car, you need motivation to achieve your goals and to drive you in the right direction. In both cases having one without the other won't get you from A to B.

The key point is that making a change is not solely about a goal or a direction. What is actually more crucial is the importance you place on achieving a goal or arriving at a certain point. If something is highly important you will be more motivated to achieve it. Without this motivation, without the fuel to drive you, a goal is essentially pointless. You simply won't achieve anything meaningful without it being important, without there being a motive, without there being a clear reason why.

It is ironic that most people spend the majority of their time crafting their goals while neglecting to address the motivation needed to achieve them. This is not to say goal setting isn't a worthwhile exercise. It just means that the reasons why you choose to pursue a goal and not the goal itself is what will sustain your efforts.

To get started consider the following questions. `

- What are some broad reasons that will drive you to towards your direction or goal?

Considering the reasons you listed above...

- What are the top three broad reasons that will drive you towards your direction or goal?

It is useful after establishing your three reasons to expand on each of them. Doing this highlights the flow on effects that each reason might have and in doing do so increases the importance of each reason. For each of your three reasons consider the following.

- What are 5 additional benefits that could or would arise as a direct result of achieving each reason?

While five additional reasons sounds like a lot it really isn't. Remember you are trying to come up with as many reasons as possible to make this change. The more compelling reasons you come up with the more the importance of making your change will become. You can even expand on each of these reasons if there are additional benefits. See the '2-3-4 change plan - an example' for how this looks in practice.

Step 3 - Identify 4 HOWS

Now that you know 'WHAT' you want to do, and 'WHY' you want to do it, the next step is to plan 'HOW' you are going to do it.

To do this you need to think about four action steps that will get you started and help you to achieve your goal. Remember you aren't coming up with big action steps for your direction but rather smaller steps for your shorter term goals.

To get started consider the following questions.

- What are 10 to 20 actions you could take to achieve your goal? *Remember to include varied ideas even if they seem a little farfetched or out of your comfort zone.*

Considering your list of possible actions...

- Which of these actions would be realistic for you to follow through with at this time? *Remember to take into account any barriers that may impact on your choice of actions.*

Considering the remaining possible actions...

- What are the four actions you're going to take?

Achieved your goal?

Remember these steps are meant to assist you in achieving your shorter term goal while heading in your ideal direction. Once you achieve your first goal repeat the process again. It should look something like this...

- Review step one again to ensure your direction is still valid. Alter if needed.
- Consider another shorter term goal. This could be similar to your previous goal or totally different as long as it's taking you in the right direction. Go through the 'your second WHAT' process again.
- Review step two or go through the process again if needed. As long as you have strong reasons why you want to achieve your goal proceed to step three.
- Go through the step three process to come up with another four 'HOWS' and continue heading in your chosen direction.

So there it is, the 2-3-4 approach to change. The hope is that after completing these three steps you will have a clear understanding of WHAT you want to do, WHY you want to do it, and HOW you will do it.



2-3-4 change plan template

Use this resource to consider the WHATS the WHYS and the HOWS of achieving your goal(s).

2-3-4 approach to change

Step 1 - Identify 2 what's

Start by identifying 2 what's. This will include **1 DIRECTION AND 1 GOAL**. To get started consider the following questions.

Your direction (your 1st 'what')

- Think about your life now... How would you like things to be different?

- Given the things you would like to be different... What direction have you chosen?

Your goal (your 2nd 'what')

Taking into account the things that would specifically help YOU as well as the things that might get in your way...

- What could be the first steps to making these things happen?

- After considering the options your goal is...

Ill revisit this goal and either alter it or set a new goal...

- After this amount of time...
- Or when this happens...

Step 2 - Identify 3 why's

Identify 3 why's. These are your reasons for wanting to follow your direction and achieve your goal.

- What are some broad reasons that will drive you towards your direction or goal?

Considering the reasons you listed above...

- What are the top 3 broad reasons that will drive you towards your direction or goal?
 - 1.
 - 2.
 - 3.
- What are 5 additional benefits that could or would arise as a direct result of achieving each reason?

Reason 1: 5 benefits could include...

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Reason 2: 5 benefits could include...

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Reason 3: 5 benefits could include...

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Review these reasons regularly especially when you're struggling with motivation.

Step 3 - Identify 4 how's

Identify 4 how's. How you will go about achieving your goal.

Remember to include varied ideas even if they seem a little farfetched or out of your comfort zone.

- What are 10 to 20 actions you could take to achieve your goal?

Review your list then circle those actions that would be realistic for you to follow through with at this time? Remember to take into account any barriers that may impact on your choice of actions.

Once you've reviewed your list and identified the realistic options decide on which 4 actions would be the best for you to take now.

The 4 actions you're going to take are...

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

My 2-3-4 change plan in review

My 2 What's

- My direction is:

- My goal is:

My 3 Why's

1.

2.

3.

My 4 How's

1.

2.

3.

4.

NOTE: Ensure you regularly review your reasons for wanting to make a change, especially when you're struggling with motivation. If these reasons start to feel irrelevant or not that important it is recommended that you work through the 2-3-4 resource again



2-3-4 change plan - *an example*

Use this resource as a reference when filling out your own 2-3-4 change plan template.

Step 1 - Identify 2 what's

Start by identifying 2 what's. This will include **1 DIRECTION AND 1 GOAL**. To get started consider the following questions.

Your direction (your 1st 'what')

- Think about your life now... How would you like things to be different?

I'd like to feel happier and healthier. I'd like to look at myself and feel ok about it. Be more self-confident. Exercise more, maybe play a sport. I guess eat better? Just to feel positive.

- Given the things you would like to be different... What direction have you chosen?

I want to improve my appearance and confidence through exercise

Your goal (your 2nd 'what')

Taking into account the things that would specifically help YOU as well as the things that might get in your way...

- What could be the first steps to making these things happen?

Contact someone about joining the social tennis club. Try it out and if I like it join. Maybe while I'm sorting that I could go for a walk or a short run once a week. Mondays and Saturdays are out and if I did something on Sunday I will have to sort out child care. And I'd need to get some running shoes or other alternative and get my racket re-strung if I choose to play tennis.

- After considering the options your goal is...

To go for a fast 30min walk or a 15min run on Tuesdays or Wednesday and play tennis on Thursday.

Ill revisit this goal and either alter it or set a new goal...

- After this amount of time... *3 weeks*
- Or when this happens... *the walk or run gets significantly easier*

Step 2 - Identify 3 why's

Identify 3 why's. These are your reasons for wanting to follow your direction and achieve your goal.

- What are some broad reasons that will drive you towards your direction or goal?

I want to be healthier

I want to look better

I want to be happier

I want to be a good role model for my kids

I want more energy

I want to feel in control!

Considering the reasons you listed above...

- What are the top 3 broad reasons that will drive you towards your direction or goal?
 1. *I want to be healthier*
 2. *I want to look better*
 3. *I want to be a good role model for my kids*
- What are 5 additional benefits that could or would arise as a direct result of achieving each reason?

Reason 1: 5 benefits could include... **I want to be healthier**

1. *I'd have more energy (Day to day routine would be easier, More sex, Play with the kids more)*
2. *I would be less tired in the morning (It'd be easier to get kids off to school on time, I'd be nicer to my partner)*
3. *I wouldn't have to go to the doctor so much or take so much medication (This would mean less money too)*
4. *Better relationship with my partner*
5. *Be able to exercise more*

Reason 2: 5 benefits could include... **I want to look better**

1. *I'd feel more attractive (I'd be happier with myself, Could buy new clothes)*
2. *My confidence would go up (Fit in more socially)*
3. *I'd be proud in front of my kids*
4. *I would feel like I've finally got to where I want to be (I'd feel in control)*
5. *I could start swimming again and taking my top off*

Reason 3: 5 benefits could include... **I want to be a good role model for my kids**

1. *I'd feel more attractive (I'd be happier with myself, Could buy new clothes)*
2. *My confidence would go up (Fit in more socially)*
3. *I'd be proud in front of my kids*
4. *I would feel like I've finally got to where I want to be (I'd feel in control)*
5. *I could start swimming again and taking my top off*

Review these reasons regularly especially when you're struggling with motivation.

Step 3 - Identify 4 how's

Identify 4 how's. How you will go about achieving your goal.

Remember to include varied ideas even if they seem a little farfetched or out of your comfort zone.

- What are 10 to 20 actions you could take to achieve your goal?
 1. *Have some hits against the practice wall at the tennis club to shake of the rust*
 2. *Sort out logistics (a. Go to a sports shop and get all my gear sorted in one hit, b. Contact the tennis club to sort out details)*
 3. *Contact some other clubs in case they sound better*
 4. *Review daily the reasons why I want to do this until I get started (a. put a list on the fridge and on my screen saver at work)*
 5. *Talk to my wife and my friends and colleagues about what I'm planning to do so I'm accountable*
 6. *Get friends into tennis with me*
 7. *Contact friends to walk or run with for support*
 8. *Take diet pills or other supplements*
 9. *Eat healthier foods for more energy in general (a. Eat healthier sustaining food at afternoon tea so I have some energy on the days I exercise, b. Take some vitamins for improved health and energy)*
 10. *Organise things with my partner so nothing gets in my way*
 11. *Look for good routes for run or walk (a. Could drive to scenic places or other tracks?)*
 12. *Start doing some stretches at night so I don't pull any muscles*
 13. *Get a personal trainer*

Review your list then circle those actions that would be realistic for you to follow through with at this time? Remember to take into account any barriers that may impact on your choice of actions.

Once you've reviewed your list and identified the realistic options decide on which 4 actions would be the best for you to take now.

The 4 actions you're going to take are...

1. *Sort out logistics*
 - a. *Go to a sports shop and get all my gear sorted in one hit*
 - b. *Contact the tennis club to sort out details*
2. *Review daily the reasons why I want to do this until I get started*
 - a. *put a list on the fridge and on my screen saver at work*
3. *Eat healthier foods for more energy in general*
 - a. *Eat healthier sustaining food at afternoon tea so I have some energy on the days I exercise*
 - b. *Take some vitamins for improved health and energy*
4. *Organise things with my partner so nothing gets in my way*

My 2-3-4 change plan in review

My 2 What's

- My direction is:

I want to improve my appearance and confidence through exercise

- My goal is:

To go for a fast 30min walk or a 15min run on Tuesdays or Wednesday and play tennis on Thursday.

My 3 Why's

- 1. I want to be healthier*
- 2. I want to look better*
- 3. I want to be a good role model for my kids*

My 4 How's

- 1. Sort out logistics*
 - a. Go to a sports shop and get all my gear sorted in one hit*
 - b. Contact the tennis club to sort out details*
- 2. Review daily the reasons why I want to do this until I get started*
 - a. put a list on the fridge and on my screen saver at work*
- 3. Eat healthier foods for more energy in general*
 - a. Eat healthier sustaining food at afternoon tea so I have some energy on the days I exercise*
 - b. Take some vitamins for improved health and energy*
- 4. Organise things with my partner so nothing gets in my way*

NOTE: Ensure you regularly review your reasons for wanting to make a change, especially when you're struggling with motivation. If these reasons start to feel irrelevant or not that important, it is recommended that you work through the 2-3-4 resource again



Be aware and prepare

Use this resource to consider and prepare for all possible barriers, situations and circumstances that could prevent or hinder your current change attempt.

Awareness

Brainstorm all of the possible barriers, situations or circumstances that could negatively impact on your current exercise related change attempt. Ensure you think about past attempts to change and more specifically think of the things that prevented or hindered you from making these changes.

Several prompts to trigger thinking have been included below:

<i>Alcohol and/or drugs</i>
<i>Children</i>
<i>Disability</i>
<i>Discomfort</i>
<i>Dislike of conventional exercise methods e.g. gyms</i>
<i>Dislike of exercise in general</i>
<i>Domestic commitments e.g. house work</i>
<i>Embarrassment</i>
<i>Energy levels</i>
<i>Family commitments</i>
<i>Fear e.g. of failure, ridicule</i>
<i>Food intake</i>
<i>Injury</i>
<i>Lack of direction/goals</i>
<i>Lack of knowledge about exercise/nutrition</i>
<i>Laziness</i>
<i>Mental health e.g. depression</i>
<i>Money</i>
<i>Motivation</i>
<i>Not knowing where to start</i>
<i>Self-doubt/loathing</i>
<i>Sickness</i>
<i>Sleep/tiredness</i>
<i>Social commitments/situations</i>
<i>Stress</i>
<i>Taking the first steps</i>
<i>Transport</i>
<i>Travel commitments</i>
<i>Unhelpful habits e.g. smoking</i>
<i>Weather</i>
<i>Work commitments</i>

Preparation

After establishing all possible barriers, situations or circumstances, consider the two questions below then fill in the table

- What are the top three to five things that you feel will threaten or negatively impact on your current change attempt?
- What could you put in place to ensure that when these things occur they don't negatively impact on your change attempt?

My top three to five barriers, situations or circumstances	My plan for managing these barriers, situations or circumstances (Plan A)
<p><i>Most relevant/likely to occur</i></p>  <p><i>Not as relevant/likely to occur</i></p>	<p><i>Make sure any plans made are realistic and have the best chance of succeeding</i></p>

Plans B and C

Having a backup plan for when things go wrong is essential. Even better is having a backup plan for you back up plan.

Consider what you could do if for whatever reason you are unable or unwilling to implement Plan A. As these are backup plans to you first options (Plan A) it is ok for them to be a little more extreme.

If for whatever reason I can't implement my Plan A, I will try...

My Plan B

My Plan C

Remember

If for whatever reason you are finding that some or all of your pre-emptive strategies aren't working then ensure you rethink your strategies by completing this resource again.



Current and future me

Use this resource to identify how you currently see yourself, and then to identify how you would like to see yourself in the future.

Current you

Think about the 'current you' and all of the mental and physical qualities and features (both good and not so good) that contribute to your current make up. Use the prompt questions if you need help getting started. Once you have done this identify and record (in the body outline) the top ten most relevant qualities and features that sum up you right now. Do this by referring to the prompt words (included in the 'current me' worksheet below) or write your own words or descriptions.

Once you've done this do the following two things:

1. Describe the current you in one or two sentences
2. Rate how happy you are with the current you on a scale of 0 - 10? (0 = totally miserable and 10 = extremely happy and fulfilled)

Future you

Think about the person you want to be in the future including all of the qualities and features you would like to possess. Really visualise this and be as specific as you can. Use the prompt questions if you need help getting started. Once you have done this identify and record (in the body outline) the top 10 most relevant qualities and features that sum up the ideal future you. Do this by referring to the prompt words (included in the 'future me' worksheet below) or write your own words or descriptions.

Once you've done this do the following two things:

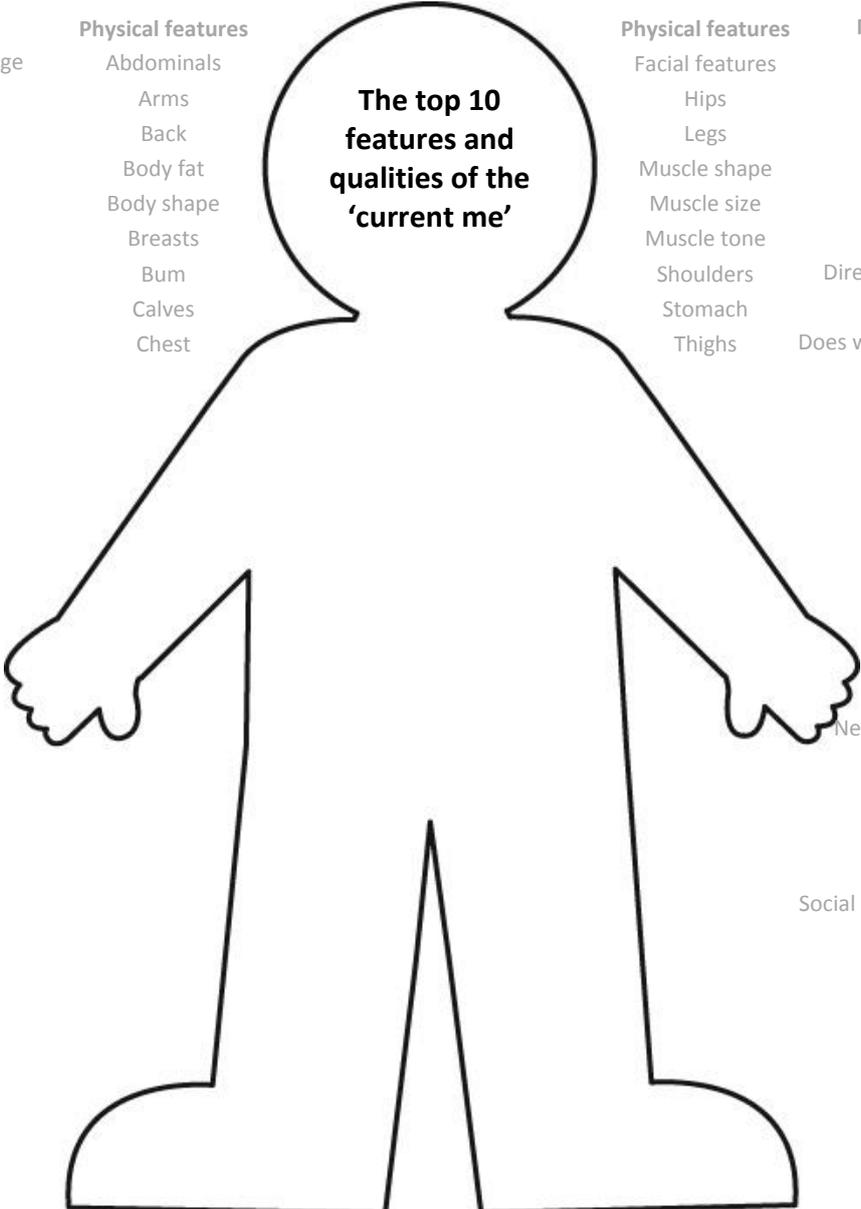
1. Describe the future you in one or two sentences
2. Rate (on a scale of 0 - 10) how happy you would be with life if you were able to transform into the future you? (0 = totally miserable and 10 = extremely happy and fulfilled)

The 'Current me'

Think about the 'current you' and all of the mental and physical qualities and features (both good and not so good) that contribute to your current make up.

If you need help getting started consider the following questions:

- *What are the things I like/dislike about my life?*
- *What are the physical qualities/features that I like/dislike about myself?*
- *What are the mental qualities/features that I like/dislike about myself?*

Positive qualities	Physical features		Physical features	Negative qualities
Accepting of change	Abdominals	 <p>The top 10 features and qualities of the 'current me'</p>	Facial features	Apathetic
Adaptable	Arms		Hips	Arrogant
Assertive	Back		Legs	Biased
Balanced	Body fat		Muscle shape	Blames others
Capable	Body shape		Muscle size	Complacent
Confident	Breasts		Muscle tone	Cynical
Consistent	Bum		Shoulders	Directed by externals
Decisive	Calves		Stomach	Disorganized
Dedicated	Chest		Thighs	Does what is convenient
Determined				Egocentric
Disciplined				Envious/Jealous
Efficient				Fearful
Enthusiastic				Gives up easily
Flexible				Impatient
Focused				Indecisive
Hardworking				Inflexible
Honest				Insecure
Logical				Lazy
Methodical				Narrow-minded
Motivated				Negative/Pessimistic
Open-minded			Rejects change	
Organised			Relents easily	
Passionate			Resentful	
Persistent			Small-minded	
Positive			Social approval required	
Practical			Stubborn	
Realistic			Uncommitted	
Resourceful			Undisciplined	
Self-confident			Unenthusiastic	
Self-directed			Unfocused	
Self-reliant			Unmotivated	
Strong-willed			Unrealistic	

How would you describe the current you in one or two sentences?

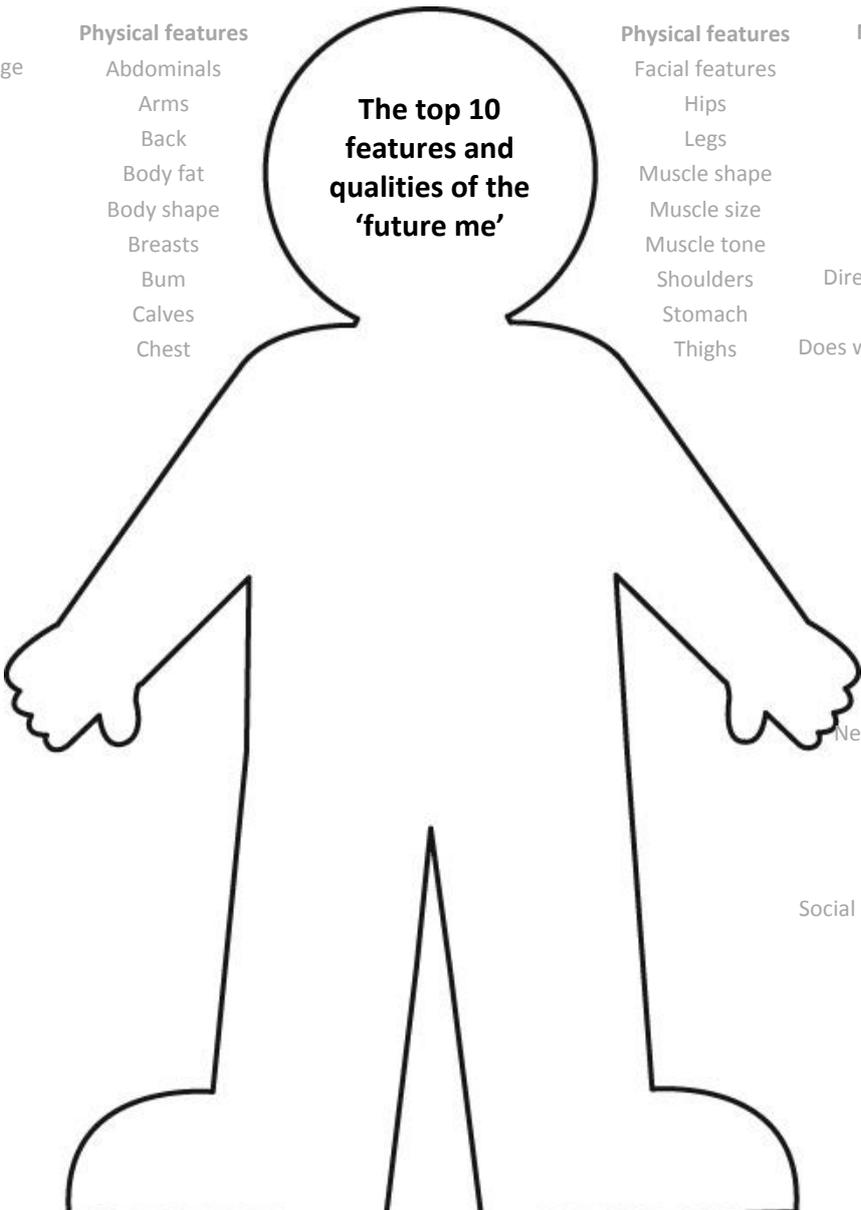
On a scale of 0-10 how happy are you with the 'current you'? ___ /10

The 'Future me'

Think about the person you want to be in the future including all of the qualities and features you would like to possess.

If you need help getting started consider the following questions:

- *What things about my life would I change if I could?*
- *What are the physical qualities/features that I would like to possess?*
- *What are the mental qualities/features that I would like to possess?*

Positive qualities	Physical features		Physical features	Negative qualities
Accepting of change	Abdominals	 <p>The top 10 features and qualities of the 'future me'</p>	Facial features	Apathetic
Adaptable	Arms		Hips	Arrogant
Assertive	Back		Legs	Biased
Balanced	Body fat		Muscle shape	Blames others
Capable	Body shape		Muscle size	Complacent
Confident	Breasts		Muscle tone	Cynical
Consistent	Bum		Shoulders	Directed by externals
Decisive	Calves		Stomach	Disorganized
Dedicated	Chest		Thighs	Does what is convenient
Determined				Egocentric
Disciplined				Envious/Jealous
Efficient				Fearful
Enthusiastic				Gives up easily
Flexible				Impatient
Focused				Indecisive
Hardworking				Inflexible
Honest				Insecure
Logical				Lazy
Methodical				Narrow-minded
Motivated				Negative/Pessimistic
Open-minded			Rejects change	
Organised			Relents easily	
Passionate			Resentful	
Persistent			Small-minded	
Positive			Social approval required	
Practical			Stubborn	
Realistic			Uncommitted	
Resourceful			Undisciplined	
Self-confident			Unenthusiastic	
Self-directed			Unfocused	
Self-reliant			Unmotivated	
Strong-willed			Unrealistic	

How would you describe the ideal future you in one or two sentences?

On a scale of 0-10 how happy would you be with life if you were able to transform into the future you?

___ /10



Logs and Diaries

Use the links below to access various Exercise Change logs and diaries

Exercise Change book resources

[Exercise & Motivation Log \(MALE\)](#)

[Exercise & Motivation Log \(FEMALE\)](#)

Other useful resources

[Exercise log \(MALE\)](#)

[Exercise log \(FEMALE\)](#)

[Food diary](#)

[Assembly instructions](#)

Optimism about change

- How confident are you that you can make this change?
- What makes you think that if you did decide to make a change, you could do it?
- What do you think would work for you (strategies, attitudes, values/beliefs, goals/plans etc.) if you decided to change?
- When else in your life have you made a significant change like this? How did you do it then and how could you do something similar this time around?
- What personal strengths do you have that will help you succeed?
- Who or what could offer you helpful support in making this change?

Intention to change

- How important is making this change to you? How much do you want to change (x)?
- At this point what is your thinking regarding changing (x)?
- What's going to have to happen before you feel ready to change?
- What would you be willing to try in order to change (x)?
- Of the options you've thought about, which option(s) sounds like it fits you best?
- Putting the how's of changing aside what do you want to have happen?
- Given what you've thought about regarding changing (x) what do you now intend to do?



Future board

Use this resource to visualise a better future as well as to keep your goals highly visible.

A future board is about inspiration and visualisation. It is designed to keep you motivated to achieve your goals and make the changes that will lead to a better future. You could put many things on your future board. Some suggestions are to write down goals, inspirational key words and relevant phrases or quotes. Writing the reasons why you want to change and/or why change is important to you is also useful as these are the things that will sustain your efforts. If you are a more visual person you could also draw or attach relevant and inspiring images. Get an A3 Future board template at the [Exercise Change resources page](#).



Importance, confidence and readiness: no. 1

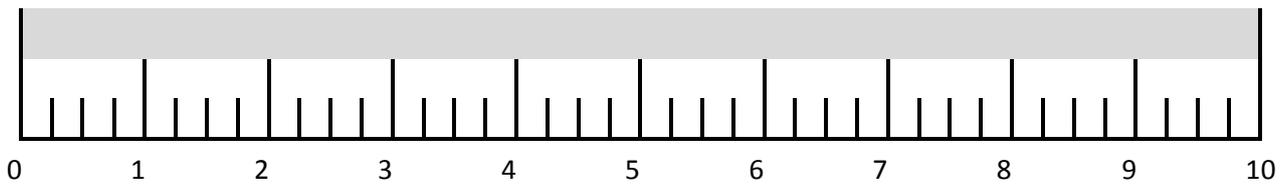
Use this resource to establish the importance you place on changing, how confident you are that you can change and how ready you are to change.

Considering the change you want to make or have thought about making...

1. How **important** is it for you to make this change?

0 = not important at all

10 = extremely important

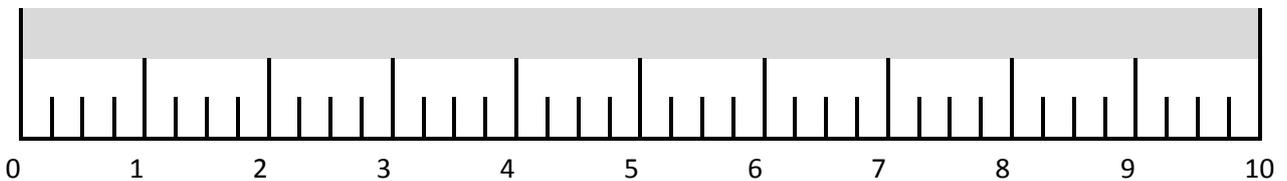


Why?

2. How **confident** are you that you could make this change if you chose to do so?

0 = not confident at all

10 = extremely confident

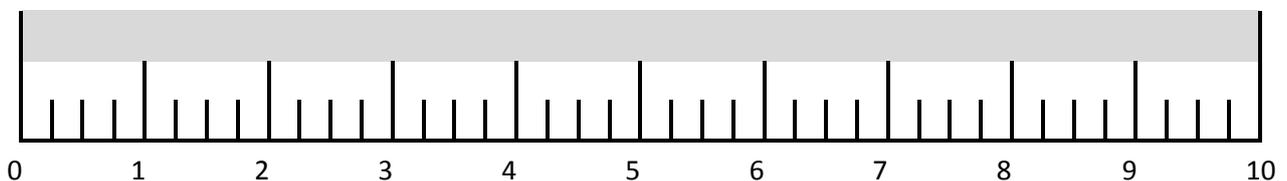


Why?

3. How **ready** are you to make this change if you chose to do so?

0 = not ready at all

10 = ready right now!



Why?

Results

If you scored a **7 or above** for each scaling question then you are likely in a good position to start or continue with change. If for whatever reason you scored **below 7** in any or all of the questions, it would be useful to spend some time building and strengthening importance and/or confidence around changing.



Importance, confidence and readiness: no. 2

Use this resource to figure out if change at this point in time is a good idea.

Potential change

- What would you like to change or what have you thought about changing?

Considering the change you want to make or have thought about making...

- On a scale of 0 – 10 (0 = not at all – 10 = extremely), how **important** is it to you to make this change?
- On a scale of 0 – 10, how **confident** are you that you can make this change?

Change talk

Considering the above assessments you made around your identified change...

- Why did you score importance and confidence a _____ and not at zero?
- What would it take for you to move to a higher score in each area?
- What would it take to make this change even more important to you?
- What would need to happen for you to become more confident that you could make this change, if you chose to do so?
- What support would you need to make a change, if you chose to do so?

Re-assess

Now that you have expanded on your original assessment results by considering the questions above, re-assess the importance and confidence of your proposed change before answering the questions below.

- Did your second assessment differ from your first?

If yes...

- How did your second assessment differ from your first and how do you explain this?

If no...

- Despite things being the same, what has exploring this change in more depth got you thinking about?



Importance, confidence and readiness: no. 3

Use this resource to figure out what the next step might be regarding any potential changes.

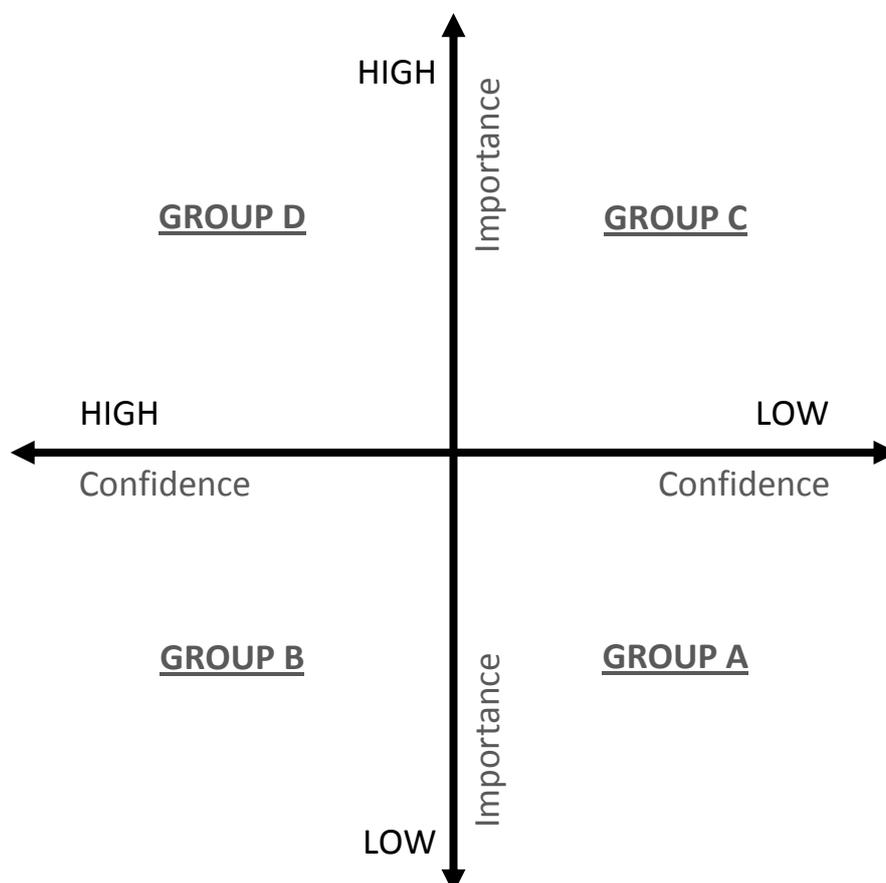
Importance

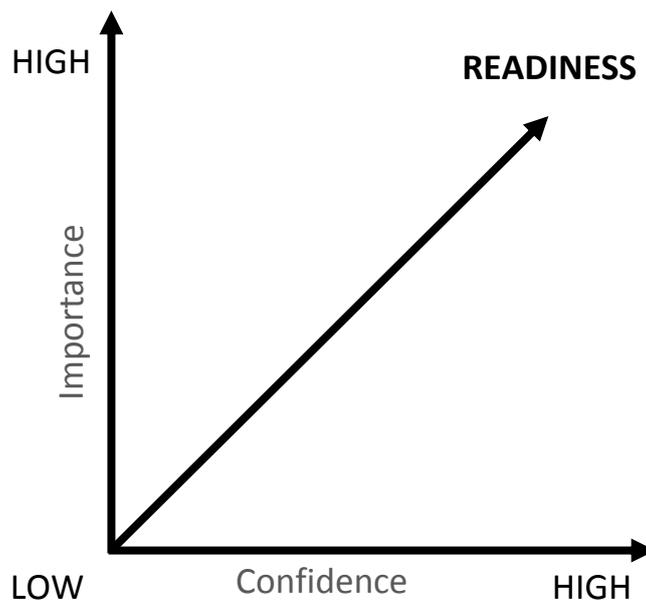
- On a scale of zero to ten with zero being 'not important at all' and ten being 'extremely important' how important is it for you to ___? (e.g. start exercising)
- Why did you score a ___ (e.g. a 4) and not a zero?
- What would need to happen for your score (e.g. 4) to become 'your score' + 2 or 3? (e.g. 6 or 7)

Confidence

- On a scale of zero to ten with zero being 'not confident at all' and ten being 'extremely confident', how confident are you that you can ___? (e.g. start exercising)
- Why did you score a ___ (e.g. a 4) and not a zero?
- What would need to happen for your score (e.g. 4) to become 'your score' + 2 or 3? (e.g. 6 or 7)

Based on your scores for both importance and confidence, you can determine which of four possible groups you fall into. This will then roughly determine how ready you are to take action and what your focus for any action or intervention needs to be. The four groups are described below:





Group A: Low importance, low confidence: You don't see change as important and/or don't believe you could succeed in changing if you tried.

If this is you: Importance needs to be worked on. If something isn't important for you to change, why would you change it? After you do this, begin building confidence.

Group B: Low importance, high confidence: You're confident that if you felt it was important to change you could. However you currently don't see how or why changing is important and aren't persuaded to do so.

If this is you: Again it's importance that needs to be worked on. It pays to note however that in some cases you might be using the mirage of overconfidence to cover for a lack of confidence. This may also mean the problem is important for you to change, but because your confidence is low you're minimising importance.

Group C: High importance, low confidence: You see changing as important but lack the self-confidence and self-belief that you could change if you tried.

If this is you: Building confidence is the name of the game here. Use affirmations and draw on past successful change attempts to build confidence.

Group D: High importance, high confidence: You see changing as important and also believe that you could succeed if you tried. This is the best position to find yourself in as you're technically more ready to change than proceeding groups.

If this is you: Use the momentum you will already have around changing. Continue to strengthen your motivation to change while putting action plans in place.



My current situation

Use this resource to explain both the good and the not so good things about your current situation.

Your current situation

Consider the following areas of your life and rate how satisfied you are with each using a scale of 0-10 (10 = extremely happy and fulfilled and 0 = totally miserable and at rock bottom). Don't worry about rating any of the below aspects if they aren't an important or valid part of your life.

Career satisfaction/development	/10	Parent/child relationship(s)	/10
Community involvement/ connectedness	/10	Relationship with your partner/husband/wife	/10
Creativity and creative expression/outlet	/10	Recreation (sport, hobbies interests)	/10
Environmental connectedness	/10	Philanthropy/service to others	/10
Exercise consistency/maintenance	/10	Relationship with exercise	/10
Exercise establishment/routines/habits	/10	Relationship with food	/10
Familial relationship(s)	/10	Spirituality/religion/faith	/10
Finances and money	/10	Romantic relationship(s)	/10
Food consumption (intake choices, portions)	/10	Self-confidence and/or self esteem	/10
Friendships (new and/or existing)	/10	Self-image and/or body image	/10
Habit forming/breaking	/10	Self-worth	/10
Health (mental)	/10	Relaxation time/activities	/10
Health (physical)	/10	Stress load and management	/10
Household commitments/maintenance	/10	Unhelpful habits	/10
Living ethically (socially/environmentally)	/10	<i>(Other)</i>	/10
Personal growth (learning new skills, continued improvement)	/10	<i>(Other)</i>	/10
Meaning or life/life purpose	/10	<i>(Other)</i>	/10

Reflection questions

- Having just gone through the above exercise how would you describe your life currently? *Include what you're actually doing, what you're not doing, how happy you are with individual aspects and how happy you are with your life as a whole.*

Considering the description of your life above...

- What are your thoughts on whether or not things could/should or need to change? What makes you say this?

Considering the areas of your life you scored low...

- What if anything do you find interesting about these areas? Is there a theme, e.g. health related areas

Considering all of the areas of your life, regardless of how you scored them...

- Which of these areas would you like to change and why?
- If nothing changed and everything stayed the same, how would you feel?
- Are there certain areas you're putting energy into that are at the expense of other areas in your life? If yes why do you think this is happening?



My hope and dreams

Use this resource to establish your hopes and dreams for the future.

The following resource is divided into five sections:

- 1. What are hopes and dreams?**
- 2. Brainstorm your hopes and dreams**
- 3. Prioritise your top 3-5 hopes and dreams**
- 4. Reflection questions**
- 5. What to do with your hopes and dreams**

1 - What are hopes and dreams?

Your hopes and dreams are essentially the things you would like to achieve now and in the future. Unlike goals however, your hopes and dreams should have more connections to other things in your life, e.g. your values and beliefs, what's important in your life or your long term direction. It is these connections that make your hopes and dreams more compelling to achieve and give them 'added value' when comparing them to a more traditional goal. As a result your hopes and dreams will ultimately be one of the most important factors in determining whether or not you make a long term change.

While simply being motivated to change is admirable, it's unlikely to be enough on its own. Unless you have a clear direction and a specific hope or dream for the future, your motivation will likely be misdirected as there will be no clear path or end point to work towards. It is ironic that people often get to a point where they are highly motivated to change, yet when you ask them exactly where they want to be in the future they are still unsure. Don't make this mistake! By establishing exactly what it is you want to do, and being clear about where you want to be, you will always be able to draw on your own motivation to change.

After all... why would you put effort into doing something that is likely going to be difficult, when you're unclear as to why you're even doing it? Think about it! Make it easy on yourself by first establishing what it is you want to do, and then secondly, after you have a clear set of hopes and dreams, put plans in place to get there.

Good luck!

2 - Brainstorm your hopes and dreams

Start by brainstorming all of the things you would like to do or achieve in the future. 'Future' in this context could mean months and/or years. As long as you feel it is relevant to you and the changes you want to make it will work.

A note on brainstorming: At this point don't be afraid to consider ideas that you feel are too unrealistic, or ideas you're not too sure about. Use this space to think of anything and everything you MIGHT want to do. When you complete the next section (prioritising your hopes and dreams) you can cull ideas then.

Several questions and prompts (exercise and health related) to trigger thinking have been included below:

Questions

If you could change anything what would you change?
What are the things that are important to you in life?
What do you like doing the most?
What would you like to be different in your life?
What would you like to do more/less of?
Where would you like to be in 6 months or 1/2/5 years from now?

Prompts

Body recomposition (gain (x) cm in chest, lose (x) cm in waist etc.)
Comfort (walk without puffing, play with kids etc.)
Diet (eat well 6 out of 7 days, eat more of (x), portions etc.)
Goal weight (weigh (x) kg)
Health (lower cholesterol, blood pressure, heart health etc.)
Injury and sickness prevention and/or recovery
Mental health (well-being, depression, alertness etc.)
More energy to (x)
Physical events (marathon, triathlon, specific race etc.)
Regular exercise (maintain 3 sessions per week etc.)
Relationships (meet someone, get someone back etc.)
Role modelling (for children, friends, colleagues etc.)
Self-confidence and body image
Sex appeal and desirability (in togs, underwear, naked etc.)
Special occasion (weddings, holidays, reunions etc.)
Weight loss lose (x) kg)

3 - Prioritise your top 3-5 hopes and dreams

Review your brainstorm and choose which 3-5 hopes and dreams are the most important, relevant or valid to you. Loosely prioritise each of your hopes and dreams, starting with the most important.

When you're done, review your list then consider and record why achieving each individual hope and dream would be important to you.

My top three to five hopes and dreams	Why is achieving these hopes and dreams important to me? How would things change or be different?
<p><i>Most important</i></p>  <p><i>Not as important</i></p>	<p><i>Remember to connect your hopes and dreams with other things that are important to you</i></p>

4 - Reflection

Consider the work you've done on your hopes and dreams then answer the reflection questions below:

- What connections do your hopes and dreams have with your values and beliefs?
- What other benefits or positive flow on effects might arise as a result of achieving your hopes and dreams?
- Apart from you, who else would be positively impacted by you achieving your hopes and dreams? What makes you say this?
- What connections (if any) does your motivation to change have with your hopes and dreams? How could you utilise these connections to strengthen your motivation?
- What would life be like if you achieved one or more of your hopes and dreams? How would you be feeling? How might you see the world differently?
- What are you going to put in place to ensure you keep your hopes and dreams at the forefront of your mind?
- What can you put in place so that when you are thinking about doing something, or about to do something you don't want to do (not exercising or overeating for example) you remember your hopes and dreams?

5 - What to do with your hopes and dreams

Identifying your hopes and dreams is great, but there is more you can do to really make the most of what you have learnt about yourself. Below are some additional things you can do to strengthen the work you've done on your hopes and dreams.

Revisit your hopes and dreams constantly

To give yourself the best chance of maintaining your motivation to change, make sure you revisit your hopes and dreams constantly. This is always important to do but it is especially important if/when you feel your motivation to change is slipping.

Keep your hopes and dreams highly visible

In order to think about and revisit your hopes and dreams regularly, they need to be on the forefront of your mind. Forgetting about your hopes and dreams is essentially forgetting about the purpose or reason you are choosing to make changes. Getting to this point makes quitting that much easier which is exactly what we want to avoid. One way to keep your hopes and dreams visible is to put reminders in places you look at or feel regularly. Places like the fridge, your pillow, the outside of the shower door, the TV or the ceiling of your bedroom are all good places that can be used to place a visual reminder. For things you feel, try a rubber band around the TV remote, a marble in your pocket or a new key ring for your keys. Either way you need to be reminded constantly. One note if using any of the above suggestions... change them regularly so as they don't become just another thing that blends into the scenery.

Link your hopes and dreams to your values and beliefs and to what's important to you

Linking your hopes and dreams to your values and beliefs is important if you want to achieve long term change. Doing this will strengthen and maintain your motivation to change. For example your hopes and dreams could be to lose 10 kilos and to run 10 kilometres without stopping. You could link this to your values of 'being physically fit' and 'being an active and involved parent' and to your beliefs that 'I should be able to play with my kids without puffing' and 'I need to be a good role model for my kids, part of which includes being physically fit and active'.

Develop discrepancy between your current and desired situation

Developing discrepancy, also known as 'creating cognitive dissonance', involves identifying what you want to do or find important (hopes and dreams/values and beliefs), then holding these things up side by side against what you are 'actually doing'. For example you might tell yourself that... *"Losing 10 kg and lowering my heart age is one of my hopes and dreams, yet I'm still eating large portions of high fat food and not doing any exercise."* Essentially what

you are trying to do is to create discomfort between your current position and your desired position. It's important to remember that change doesn't happen when you're 'comfortable' with life. Why would you put effort into changing a situation that you considered to be comfortable or not too bad? What developing discrepancy does is grow any underlying gap between where you are and where you want to be and in doing so creates discomfort that will hopefully drive change.

Use your hopes and dreams as a filter for future behaviour

We all have a pretty good idea when we are doing things we have told ourselves we don't want to do. For example you might have decided that you won't eat past 8:00pm every night for a week. When you get up from the couch at 8:45pm and you start looking in the pantry for food, there will no doubt be a little voice in your head saying "you said you weren't going to do this!" Most of the time, as you probably know, this voice is ignored. One way to get around this or at least give you a better chance of making the right choice, is to keep reminding yourself of your hopes and dreams. Using the same example, it might look something like this:

8:00pm – Your deadline for not eating arrives but instead of letting it pass unnoticed you tell yourself... "Right this is it! I've promised myself that I will not eat until tomorrow. If I feel the urge I'm going to remind myself that good health, including lowering blood pressure and my heart age (hopes and dreams) is important to me."

8:45pm – You're watching TV when in an ad break you find yourself drifting to the kitchen. You realise what you're doing as you grab the pantry door and at this point you remind yourself of your hopes and dreams (as above) and that achieving these goals is important.

This might not always work but it will definitely make you think more about whether or not to follow through with a specific undesired behaviour



My past successes

Use this resource to consider what has helped you to change in the past.

Considering past changes...

- What are 2-3 major or important changes you have made in the past? *Preferably these changes would be similar to the current change you want to make*

- What was going on in your life at the time that contributed to you being able to change and how could you recreate this environment?

- What internal factors helped you to make this/these changes? *Internal = the things you did without the help of anyone or anything*

- What external factors helped you to make these changes? *External = the things you did with the help of other people or assistance*

Considering all of the factors that have assisted you in the past (both internal and external)

- What can you draw on this time around to assist with your current change?

- How could you enhance the factors that helped you last time so they become even more effective?

- If you can't precisely duplicate any of the helpful factors how could you recreate similar factors?



My supporters

Use this resource to examine your current relationships and to consider whether these relationships are supportive, neutral or unsupportive of the changes you want to make.

Think about all of your significant relationships and then think about the level of support they might offer during the change you're planning to make. Once you've done this place each relationship in one of the three categories in the table below.

Ask yourself the following questions if you are unsure about the level of support certain people or groups could offer:

- Is what I usually do with this person(s) conducive or detrimental to the change I want to make? What makes you say this?
- Has this person(s) been supportive/unsupportive of similar changes I've tried to make in the past? What makes you say this?

Supportive	Neutral	Unsupportive

Considering both your supportive and your neutral relationships...

- How could you strengthen or alter these relationships so as they become more supportive?

Considering your unsupportive relationships...

- What could you do to ensure these relationships don't become, or continue to be unsupportive?

IMPORTANT! Relationships are an extremely important part of our lives, however they can be very complex and as a result they can present some unique challenges. When considering relationships that aren't conducive to changes we want to make, strategies such as 'I just won't see that person any more', or 'I will just tell that person to be supportive', are probably not realistic. Instead consider how you might maintain the positive aspects (of which there will be many/some) while minimising the negative aspects, i.e. I will still hang out with friend (x), but I won't hang out with them at a bar every time. Instead I will invite them round to my place.



My values and beliefs

Use this resource to identify your values and beliefs.

The following resource is divided into four sections:

- 1. Brainstorm your values and beliefs**
- 2. Prioritise your top 10 values and beliefs**
- 3. Finalise your list of values and beliefs**
- 4. What to do with your values and beliefs**

1 - Brainstorm your values and beliefs

Brainstorm all of the values and beliefs that mean something to you, and/or, brainstorm all of the values and beliefs you hold around exercise, health, fitness and well-being?

This could include values and beliefs you consider to be positive, negative or anywhere in between.

For an explanation of what values and beliefs are as well as a comprehensive list of values and beliefs see the 'Values and beliefs list'.

2 - Prioritise your top 10 values and beliefs

Review your list of values and beliefs and choose which ten are most important to you. Prioritise each value and belief, starting with the most important (no. 1) and finishing with the least important (no. 10). When you're done, consider your chosen top ten values and beliefs and answer the reflection questions.

Values	Beliefs
1.	1.
2.	2.
3.	3.
4.	4.
5.	5.
6.	6.
7.	7.
8.	8.
9.	9.
10.	10.

Reflection questions

- Which of your identified values and beliefs have either helped or hindered past change attempts? What makes you say this?

Positive (beneficial or helpful) values and beliefs

- Which of these values and beliefs are helping you, or taking you towards where you want to be currently? What makes you say this?

- How could you enhance these values and beliefs so as the positive impacts on your change attempt could be enhanced?

Negative (not so good or unhelpful) values and beliefs

- Which of these values and beliefs are taking you away from where you want to be, or at the very least aren't helping you get to where you want to be? What makes you say this?
- How could you begin to address these values and beliefs so as the impact on your change attempt could be minimised?

Other values and beliefs that you would like to develop

Considering the change(s) you currently want to make...

- What additional values and beliefs would help you to get where you want to be?

Values	Beliefs
1.	1.
2.	2.
3.	3.
4.	4.
5.	5.

- How/why would these additional values help you get to where you want to be?

3 - Finalise your list of values and beliefs

Describe why each of your identified top ten values and beliefs are important.

Now that you have a list of values and beliefs that are important to you it is crucial you link them to what else is important in your life. Putting this into words will help you to strengthen and resolve your thinking around why these things are important in the first place and why they will help you to achieve your goals.

My top ten VALUES and why they're important

An example of how you might write about a 'value' is as follows...

For the value 'DETERMINATION' you might write... *'By being determined now and in the future I will be able to maintain my motivation to exercise and finally achieve my exercise related goals.'*

VALUES	Why this VALUE is important
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	
6.	
7.	
8.	
9.	
10.	

My top ten BELIEFS and why they're important

An example of how you might write about a 'belief' is as follows...

For the belief 'I WILL ALWAYS GET TO WHERE I WANT TO BE' you might write... *'By thinking this way I will remain positive and focused even when my motivation is waning. This means instead of quitting like I've done in the past I will be able to get through these tough patches.'*

BELIEFS	Why this BELIEF is important
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	
6.	
7.	
8.	
9.	
10.	

4 - What to do with your values and beliefs

Identifying your values and beliefs is great, but there is more you can do to really make the most of what you have learnt about yourself. Below are three additional things you can do to strengthen the work you've done on your values and beliefs.

Link your values and beliefs to your hopes and dreams and to what's important to you

Linking your values and beliefs to your hopes and dreams is important if you want to achieve long term change. Doing this will strengthen and maintain your motivation to change. For example your hopes and dreams (goals) could be to lose 10 kilos and to run 10 kilometres without stopping. You could link this to your values of 'being physically fit' and 'being an active and involved parent' and to your beliefs that 'I should be able to play with my kids without puffing' and 'I need to be a good role model for my kids, part of which includes being physically fit and active'.

Develop discrepancy between your current and desired situation

Developing discrepancy, also known as 'creating cognitive dissonance', involves identifying what you want to do or what you find important (values and beliefs, and hopes and dreams), then holding these things up side by side against what you are 'actually doing'. For example you might tell yourself that... *"I'm saying that being healthy is an important value, yet I'm not looking after myself by exercising or eating a balanced diet?"* Essentially what you are trying to do is to create discomfort between your current position and your desired position. It's important to remember that change doesn't happen when you're 'comfortable' with life. Why would you put effort into changing a situation that you considered to be comfortable or not too bad? What developing discrepancy does is grow any underlying gap between where you are and where you want to be, and in doing so creates discomfort that will hopefully drive change.

Use your values and beliefs as a filter for future behaviour

We all have a pretty good idea when we are doing things we've told ourselves we don't want to do. For example you might have decided that you won't eat past 8:00pm every night for a week. When you get up from the couch at 8:45pm and you start looking in the pantry for food, there will no doubt be a little voice in your head saying *"you said you weren't going to do this!"* Most of the time, as you probably know, this voice is ignored. One way to get around this or at least tip the odds in your favour, is to keep reminding yourself of your values and beliefs as well as what's important to you. Using the same example, it might look something like this:

8:00pm – Your deadline for not eating arrives but instead of letting it pass unnoticed you tell yourself... "Right this is it! I've promised myself that I will not eat until tomorrow. If I feel the urge I'm going to remind myself that being healthy (value) and being determined and sticking to my plan (belief) is important to me.

8:45pm – You're watching TV when in an ad break you find yourself drifting to the kitchen. You realise what you're doing as you grab the pantry door and at this point you remind yourself of your values and beliefs (as above) and that achieving this goal is important.

This might not always work but it will definitely make you think more about whether or not to follow through with a specific undesired behaviour.



Values and beliefs list

Use this resource to identify your values and beliefs in conjunction with the 'My values and beliefs' resource.

The following resource is divided into three sections:

- 1. What are values and beliefs**
- 2. Values list**
- 3. Beliefs list**

1 - What are values and beliefs?

Values are concepts, themes, guidelines or rules that we align ourselves with, either consciously or unconsciously. Values are what tend to give us a sense of direction, security, motivation and connection with life (whether with people, places or the environment). Our values will vary hugely depending on a number of factors including but not limited to, education, upbringing, personality type and significant life experiences and influences. Usually they will be slow to develop and as a result will be slow to exceedingly slow to alter or change all together.

While values dictate the direction we tend to steer towards, beliefs are the things that provide us with the reasons or justifications we use (to ourselves and/or to others) to explain, validate and defend the ways we think, talk and behave. For example, you may value 'good health' and as a result believe that 'you should exercise regularly'.

Unlike values, beliefs will usually develop more quickly and because of this will often be the precursor to changing what we value in life. Often beliefs are not actually ours to begin with but instead are adopted from other people or groups e.g. from our parents, friends, education or religious systems.

While a lack of certain values can eventually lead to a deficit in some areas of life, it is your beliefs that can more directly lead to either a positive or negative self-image and as a result a negative or positive life outcome. Once you have established certain self-beliefs (either consciously or unconsciously) your perception, opinions and thoughts tend to look for evidence that support your beliefs. This concept is often referred to as confirmation bias. For example, if you believe that 'exercising is too difficult' and you 'can't stick to anything you try', you will actually look for (knowingly or unknowingly) evidence to support that belief e.g. heavy breathing, any kind of discomfort, the sacrifices you made to exercise etc. At the same time you will also ignore any evidence to the contrary e.g. actually completing a session without discomfort, exercising consistently for a two week period etc. Over time this type of thinking starts to snowball and become set in.

While it is never impossible to change, over time this type of thinking makes it increasingly difficult to look at things from another perspective and ultimately to make changes.

As difficult as negative self-beliefs can be, it also pays to note that this process can work in exactly the opposite way and can result in a positive snowball effect. If you believe that ‘you can do it’, and that ‘if I keep going I will get to where I want to be’ then it is only a matter of time (probably) before you do get to where you want to be.

All this equates to the outcomes we get in life being heavily influenced by our values and beliefs. So what do you believe in? The glass being half empty or the glass being half full...

2 - Values list

Use the list below to identify your values.

Some tips on identifying your current values:

- Your current values are probably those that really jump out at you and have you thinking “*yeah that’s me*”, or “*absolutely, that’s really important to me*”.
- The values that you have to think about might be those that you don’t really want to own up to or possess, or those that you want to have.
- The values that you skim over most likely don’t play a big role in what you currently value or want to value in the future.

Acceptance	Artistry	Change	Conformity
Accomplishment	Assertiveness	Charity	Congruency
Accountability	Assurance	Charm	Connection
Accuracy	Athletic	Chastity	Consciousness
Achievement	Attentiveness	Cheerfulness	Conservation
Acknowledgement	Attractiveness	Clarity	Consistency
Activeness	Availability	Cleanliness	Contentment
Adaptability	Awareness	Cleanliness	Continuous
Adoration	Balance	Clear-mindedness	improvement
Advancement	Beauty	Cleverness	Contribution
Adventure	Being the best	Closeness	Control
Affection	Belonging	Collaboration	Conviction
Affluence	Bliss	Comfort	Conviviality
Aggressiveness	Boldness	Commitment	Coolness
Agility	Bravery	Communication	Cooperation
Altruism	Brilliance	Community	Coordination
Ambition	Calmness	Compassion	Cordiality
Amusement	Camaraderie	Competence	Correctness
Anticipation	Capability	Competition	Country
Appreciation	Care	Completion	Courage
Approachability	Carefulness	Composure	Courtesy
Approval	Celebrity	Concentration	Craftiness
Art	Certainty	Concern for others	Creativity
Articulacy	Challenge	Confidence	Credibility

Cunning	Ethics	Global view	Intuition
Curiosity	Euphoria	Goodness	Inventiveness
Daring	Excellence	Goodwill	Investing
Decisiveness	Excitement	Grace	Involvement
Decorum	Exhilaration	Gratitude	Joy
Deference	Expectancy	Gregariousness	Judiciousness
Delight	Expediency	Growth	Justice
Democracy	Experience	Guidance	Keeness
Dependability	Expertise	Happiness	Kindness
Depth	Exploration	Hard work	Knowledge
Desire	Expressiveness	Harmony	Leadership
Determination	Extravagance	Health	Learning
Devotion	Extroversion	Heart	Liberation
Devoutness	Exuberance	Helpfulness	Liberty
Dexterity	Fairness	Heroism	Lightness
Dignity	Faithfulness	Holiness	Liveliness
Diligence	Fame	Honesty	Logic
Direction	Family	Honour	Longevity
Directness	Fascination	Hopefulness	Love
Discipline	Fashion	Hospitality	Romance
Discovery	Fearlessness	Human-centered	Loyalty
Discretion	Ferocity	Humility	Majesty
Diversity	Fidelity	Humour	Making a difference
Dominance	Fierceness	Hygiene	Marriage
Dreaming	Financial	Imagination	Mastery
Drive	independence	Impact	Maturity
Duty	Firmness	Impartiality	Meaning
Dynamism	Fitness	Improvement	Meekness
Eagerness	Flair	Independence	Mellowness
Economy	Flexibility	Individuality	Merit
Ecstasy	Flow	Industry	Meticulousness
Educated	Fluency	Influence	Mindfulness
Effectiveness	Focus	Ingenuity	Modesty
Efficiency	Fortitude	Inner peace	Money
Elation	Frankness	Innovative	Motivation
Elegance	Freedom	Inquisitiveness	Mysteriousness
Empathy	Friendliness	Insightfulness	Nature
Encouragement	Friendship	Inspiration	Neatness
Endurance	Frugality	Integrity	Nerve
Energy	Fun	Intelligence	Nonconformity
Enjoyment	Gallantry	Intensity	Nurturing
Entertainment	Generosity	Intimacy	Obedience
Enthusiasm	Gentility	Intrepidness	Oneness
Environmentalism	Gentleness	Introspection	Open-mindedness
Equality	Giving	Introversion	Openness

Optimism	Progress	Selflessness	Temperance
Order	Prosperity	Self-reliance	Thankfulness
Organisation	Wealth	Self-respect	Thoroughness
Originality	Prudence	Self-thinking	Thoughtfulness
Other's point of view	Punctuality	Sensitivity	Thrift
Outdoors	Purity	Sensuality	Tidiness
Outlandishness	Quality of work	Serenity	Timeliness
Outrageousness	Rationality	Service	Tolerance
Parenthood	Realism	Sexiness	Tradition
Partnership	Reasonableness	Sexuality	Tranquillity
Passion	Recognition	Sharing	Transcendence
Patience	Recreation	Shrewdness	Trust
Patriotism	Refinement	Significance	Trustworthiness
Peace	Reflection	Silence	Truth
Non-violence	Regularity	Silliness	Understanding
Perceptiveness	Relaxation	Simplicity	Unflappability
Perfection	Reliability	Sincerity	Uniqueness
Perkiness	Relief	Skilfulness	Unity
Perseverance	Religiousness	Solidarity	Usefulness
Persistence	Reputation	Solitude	Utility
Personal growth	Resilience	Solving Problems	Valour
Persuasiveness	Resolution	Sophistication	Variety
Philanthropy	Resolve	Soundness	Victory
Piety	Resourcefulness	Speed	Vigour
Playfulness	Respect	Spirituality	Virtue
Pleasantness	Respect for others	Spontaneity	Vision
Pleasure	Responsibility	Spunk	Vivacity
Poise	Responsiveness	Stability	Volunteering
Polish	Rest	Standardisation	Warm-heartedness
Popularity	Restraint	Status	Warmth
Positive	Results-oriented	Stealth	Watchfulness
Potency	Reverence	Stillness	Wealth
Power	Rigor	Strength	Well-being
Practicality	Rule of Law	Structure	Wilfulness
Pragmatism	Sacredness	Success	Willingness
Precision	Sacrifice	Support	Winning
Preparedness	Safety	Supremacy	Wisdom
Presence	Saintliness	Surprise	Wittiness
Preservation	Satisfaction	Sympathy	Wonder
Pride	Satisfying others	Synergy	Worthiness
Privacy	Science	Systemisation	Youthfulness
Proactivity	Security	Teaching	Zeal
Professionalism	Self-control	Teamwork	

3 - Beliefs list

Use the list below to identify your beliefs

Some tips on identifying your current beliefs:

- Your current beliefs are probably those that really jump out at you and have you thinking “*yeah that’s me*”, or “*absolutely, that’s what I think*”.
- The beliefs that you have to think about might be those that you don’t really want to own up to or possess, or those that you want to have.
- The beliefs that you skim over most likely don’t play a big role in what you currently believe in or want to believe in, in the future.

Change is difficult and tedious	I always need to be doing something	I am not normal
Change is exciting		I am not worth anything
Change is possible	I always stuff things up	I am shy
Dieting is impossible for me	I always succeed in what I set out to do	I am smart
Diets are doable	I am a bad person	I am strong
Eating well is important	I am a confident and strong person	I am stupid
Everything has its price		I am successful
Everything is predestined	I am a failure	I am too old
Everything needs to be perfect	I am a victim	I am too thin
Exercise is important	I am always lucky	I am too young
Exercise is impossible to do regularly	I am always right	I am ugly
Exercise is pointless	I am always the stupid one	I am undesirable
Exercise is too difficult for me	I am an awesome person	I am weak
Failure is bad	I am attractive	I can accomplish anything I put my mind to
Failure is normal	I am bad	I can be honest with myself
Fat can be lost if you try hard enough	I am clumsy (I have two left hands)	I can change if I want to
Fat is almost impossible to lose	I am easy to love	I can exercise regularly if I want to
Fat makes you fat	I am good for nothing	I can make time to exercise
Fat should be avoided at all costs	I am good looking	I can never change
Fats are good and not so good	I am helpless	I can never change my body
Happiness is the most important thing	I am inadequate	I can never stick with any diet
I always do everything wrong	I am independent and self sufficient	I can never stick with changes I make
I always get there in the end	I am lazy	I can never succeed
I always get there in the end	I am not brave enough	I can stick to things if I really want to
I always have bad luck	I am not good enough	
	I am not important	I can win if I really want to
	I am not lovable	I can’t be honest with myself

I can't complain because others have it worse than me	I must constantly improve	I want to be invisible
I can't fail	I must not rest	I want to be left alone
I can't get what I want	I need a partner to be happy	I will never/always be attractive
I deserve no attention	I need help from others to do anything	I will never/always be exploited by others
I do not want to embarrass myself	I need more money	I will never/always be fat
I do/don't belong	I need security	I will never/always be satisfied
I do/don't deserve love	I need the approval of others	I will never/always change
I do/don't deserve recognition	I need to be a good parent	I will never/always fail
I do/don't deserve to be in this world	I need to be a good partner	I will never/always get over things
I do/don't deserve wealth	I need to be a good role model	I will never/always get to where I want to be
I do/don't have enough time	I need to be careful in life	I will never/always get what I want
I do/don't know what I want	I need to be fit	I will never/always have a good body
I do/don't know what to do	I need to be healthy	I will never/always have to fight
I do/don't need help from others	I need to be humble	I will never/always make it
I hate my body	I need to be in control	I will never/always meet the right people
I hate my life	I need to be known	I will never/always succeed
I hate myself	I need to be strong	I will never/always win
I have a good body	I need to be thin	I will prove that I am better
I have a hard time in life	I need to decide on what I'm going to do	I will show you that I am good
I have many desirable features	I need to exercise	I would never have the discipline to change
I have many skills and strengths	I need to get it right	I'll never have a healthy relationship
I have never been able to do that	I need to have everything under control	If I do a little at a time I'll get there in the end
I have never been lucky	I need to keep up with those younger than me	If you want something you've got to take it
I have no desire to work hard	I need to know everything	In life you get nothing for free
I have no right to want...	I need to look good	It has to be perfect
I have to be better	I need to make myself useful	It is better to fail than never try
I have to be sensible	I need to protect myself	It is better to fail, in order to remain popular
I have to prove I'm better	I need to protect myself from the outside world	It is important what others think about me
I have to work harder	I need to save others	It is never too late to change and/or learn new things
I know I can do it	I need to take care of people	
I know what is best for me	I need to work	
I love my body	I should be different	
I love my life	I should eat the right thing most of the time	
I love myself	I should never/always show my true colours	
I make my own destiny	I think I can do it	
I might disappoint others		

It is not important what other think of me	People do not appreciate what I've done for them	There's no point because I will always fail
It only matters to me	People should be grateful	There's too much to do
Junk food isn't that bad	People should keep their promises	This has never worked for me
Junk food should be eaten now an again	People should listen to me	Time is money
Junk food should never been eaten	People should not be angry	Trust is good, control is better
Life is an amazing thing	People should not lie	Wealth only creates envy
Life is good	People should respect me	What does not kill you makes a stronger
Life is great	Perfection is nice but not necessary	What I say/think is important
Life is hard	Perfectionism makes me valuable and important	What I say/think is unimportant
Life is no fun	Power brings out the worst in people	What I want is bad
Life is too difficult	Power is destructive	When I get older, I will stop
Life will always be a struggle	Power is great	Who dares wins
Luck has nothing to do with what happens to me	Punishment is a must	Who has money has power
Men do not cry/show emotions	Regular exercise is impossible	Who is rich, has no true friends
Men should be able to protect others	Regularly exercising is important	Women are not strong
Men should be strong	Restraint in life is vital	Women do not cry/show emotions
Money will make me happy	Showing my feelings is dangerous	Women should be able to protect others
My body should be healthy	Something is wrong with me	Women should be strong
No money means I'm a complete failure	Status doesn't mean anything to me	Work first, and then play
No one can see what I'm feeling	Status is a substitute for personality	You can only get rich at the expense of others
No pain, no gain	Status is defined by power	You can't teach an old dog new tricks
Nobody cares about me	Status is everything	You get out of life what you put into it
Nobody loves me	Status is important	You have to take life as it comes
One day I'll be successful	Sugar is addictive and impossible to give up	You need to enjoy life without restraint
Only the brave get what they want	Sugar is/isn't bad	You should be content with what you have
Others do not care what I have to say	The easy way isn't worth it	You should be happy with what you've got
Others feelings are more important than my own	The world is not a safe place	
Others have it better than me	There are healthy and unhealthy foods	
Others needs are more important than my own	There is always time to do the things I want to do	
People are not trustworthy	There is not enough for all	



Preparation checklist

Use this resource to think about everything that needs consideration prior to taking action.

What do I need to consider prior to taking action?

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> What I want to change | <input type="checkbox"/> Negative thoughts and feelings strategy |
| <input type="checkbox"/> A direction to head towards | <input type="checkbox"/> Barriers to changing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Goals for the short term | <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-empting problems strategy |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Is my direction/goal(s) realistic? | <input type="checkbox"/> Reflection/review strategy |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Reasons why I want to change | <input type="checkbox"/> Being accountable to others |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Linking reasons to change to hopes and dreams | <input type="checkbox"/> Recording progress (logs) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> How will I change? (action plan) | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Is my action plan realistic? | Other areas to consider... |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Supporters/supports | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Areas of strength | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Areas of weakness | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Existing skills to draw on | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Skills I need to develop | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Emergency motivation strategy | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Motivational maintenance strategy | <input type="checkbox"/> |



Pros and cons grid

Use this resource to help you to make a strong decision to change by considering all the reasons there are to change, and all of the reasons there are to stay the same.

Pros and cons grid

One of the first and most important steps towards successfully changing any behaviour, (exercise, diet, smoking, drinking, nail biting etc.) is making a strong decision that you even want to change in the first place. The 'Pros and Cons grid', also commonly known as the 'Cost Benefit Analysis', is a great way to do this. Not only will it help to clarify your decision to either continue with, or to modify/stop a particular behaviour, but it will also provide a huge amount of motivation to make changes, if you ultimately chose to do so.

When we are confronted with serious choices or problems, it is common to acknowledge the potential benefits, i.e. what would be good about changing, as well as the negative aspects i.e. what wouldn't be so good about changing. You may know from previous non-decisions, ambivalence, or feeling two ways about doing something can often be the killer of change. Without making a strong decision to change, plans usually just peter out and we end up achieving very little. What the Pros and Cons grid aims to achieve, is to encourage you to take a considered position one way or the other i.e. "I am definitely going to go for it this time", or "now isn't the right time so I've decided against doing anything at this point in time".

In the following exercise, you will think about and record some of the important advantages and disadvantages of CHANGING, e.g. starting an exercise routine. As well as this you will also consider the advantages and disadvantages of CONTINUING WITH a specific behaviour, e.g. eating poorly or maintaining a sedentary lifestyle. This will allow you compare what you have to lose, against what you have to gain. By doing this you will hopefully be able to make a strong and informed decision about whether to change or not.

Be sure to follow all instructions and really give this activity some thought. Even if you feel like you have already covered certain questions, persevere with the process. As with many things there is often a lot of hidden value in the finer points and details. Without following the instructions the risk is that this activity will simply become a list of good things and bad things about changing. **THIS IS NOT WHAT YOU WANT.** The added value comes through putting in a little extra time by really thinking things through!

Pros and cons grid activity

Task instructions:

Follow these steps to complete your Pros and Cons grid:

1. Identify the behaviour you're thinking about changing
2. Start by considering the pros (good things) of CHANGING this behaviour and record these in BOX 1/6. IMPORTANT! You will be coming back to this box to expand on each point, so keep these initial pros broad. For example instead of writing "I'll look better in a swimsuit", and "My stomach would be flatter", just write "I'll look better".
3. Next, consider the cons (the not so good things) of STAYING THE SAME and record these in BOX 2/5. IMPORTANT! Again you will be coming back to this box to expand on each point, so keep these initial cons broad.
4. Next, consider the cons of CHANGING and record these in BOX 3. You will not be coming back to this box so you can be as specific as you like.
5. Next, consider the pros of STAYING THE SAME and record these in BOX 4. You will not be coming back to this box so you can be as specific as you like.
6. Next, go back to BOX 2/5 (Cons of STAYING THE SAME) and open up and expand on each of your initial points. The challenge is to GENERATE UP TO TEN OR MORE ADDITIONAL POINTS for each of your initial broad points*. Use the following (or similar) questions for each point to get started:
 - a. What would you/others notice?
 - b. What would that look like?
 - c. What would that mean to you/others?

*For example if you said a con of staying the same was, "I would remain overweight", you would expand on this by considering all of the additional flow on cons that would result from this one original point. You might identify some of the following: I would feel guilty, I would look and feel unattractive to the opposite sex, my confidence would remain low, I would not bother with trying to look good, I wouldn't bother with sports anymore because it would be too hard, and so forth. If you really get into this you could even expand on each of these points. For example when considering the point, "I wouldn't bother with sports anymore..." you might include additional points like: I would lose contact with the people in my team, I would no longer go to the bi-annual club get together, I would probably put on more weight as this is the only exercise I do, etc.

7. Next, go back to BOX 1/6 (Pros of CHANGING) and open up and expand on each of your initial points. Again the challenge is to GENERATE UP TO TEN OR MORE ADDITIONAL POINTS for each of your initial broad points*. Use the following (or similar) questions for each point to get started:
 - a. What would you/others notice?
 - b. What would that look like?
 - c. What would that mean to you/others?

*As you did with step 6 the aim is to expand on each original point and create ten additional points. This time however ensure you keep things positive and strengths based. For example if you said a pro of changing was, "I would look great", you wouldn't expand on this by saying, "I wouldn't have to wear old baggy clothes anymore". Instead you would say, "I could buy a new wardrobe". Again you could expand on any of your additional points by considering all of the additional flow on pros. The reason for expanding certain points is to generate enough motivation, energy and hope to successfully proceed through to the action stage of change. It is especially important that you do this with BOX 1/6. Really think about each point by visualising a changed future. This can be a huge motivator to change, as can visualising an unchanged future as in BOX 2/5.

8. After you have expanded on BOXES 2/5 and 1/6, consider your results by answering the reflection questions.

IMPORTANT

- An EXAMPLE of a completed Pros and Cons grid has been included after the reflection question activity. This will give you an idea of how to use this resource if you are still unsure.
- The Pros and Cons grid can often evoke a lot of thoughts, feelings and ideas, all of which are valuable and deserve to be recorded. As a result you may find that you need more space to write things down. If this is the case you could do any of the following:
 - Use the larger [A3 sized template \(Pros and cons grid – A3 TEMPLATE\)](#). You will also find this template at the [Exercise Change resources page](#).
 - Use additional [A4 templates \(Pros and cons grid – A4 TEMPLATE\)](#). You will also find this template at the [Exercise Change resources page](#).
 - Use your own paper to record additional thoughts, feelings and ideas.

My pros and cons grid

My identified behaviour is... _____

	Cons - What's NOT SO GOOD about...	Pros - What's GOOD about...
Changing behaviour	BOX 3	BOX 1/6
Staying the same	BOX 2/5	BOX 4

Reflection questions

- What was this exercise like for you? How did it make you feel and what did it make you think about?
- What epiphanies/light bulb moments did you have (if any)?
- What is your thinking around the identified behaviour (the change you want to make) after completing this activity?
- How would you describe your level of ambivalence before and after completing this exercise? If there has been a change, what do you attribute this change to?
- What are your thoughts about wanting to change and move ahead with an action plan after completing this activity?
- What would now need to happen for you to commit 100% to making a change?
- If you didn't end up making any sort of change because of the reasons you listed in BOXES 3 and 4, would you be OK with this? How would this sit with you?

My pros and cons grid - EXAMPLE

My identified behaviour is... *Changing my behaviour around exercising*

	Cons - What's NOT SO GOOD about...	Pros - What's GOOD about...
Changing behaviour	<p style="text-align: right;">BOX 3</p> <p><i>I'd have to motivate myself and to be honest I just can't be bothered, exercise is too hard</i></p> <p><i>I would have less time to do the usual things like cooking, movies, socialising</i></p> <p><i>It might cost money and I don't have a lot at the moment</i></p> <p><i>I wouldn't be able to drink as much or go out to eat. Basically I wouldn't socialise as much</i></p>	<p style="text-align: right;">BOX 1/6</p> <p><i>I would look better</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>• I would feel better about myself, like I wasn't invisible</i> <i>• I could buy new clothes</i> <i>• I could meet new people</i> <i>• I would feel ok about going swimming or taking my top off</i> <p><i>I would feel more confident</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>• I would feel happier and more content and satisfied</i> <i>• I'd be more assertive and decisive</i> <i>• I would get more respect and people would notice me more</i> <i>• Better performance at work and I might get a promotion</i> <p><i>I would be healthier</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>• I would lose weight and fat around my stomach</i> <i>• My blood pressure would go down</i> <i>• I would feel proud instead of feeling embarrassed or guilty</i> <i>• My wife would be happier with me and my children would be too. They might even be proud</i> <i>• I would be fitter and be able to keep up with the kids</i>
Staying the same	<p style="text-align: right;">BOX 2/5</p> <p><i>I would continue to look the same</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>• I would continue to hate my body and be unattractive</i> <i>• I would have to keep buying dowdy fat clothes that I can fit into</i> <i>• I would still be someone that nobody notices</i> <i>• I would never feel as if I could take my top off in public</i> <p><i>I would still have no confidence</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>• I would continue to be weak and be a victim (Bossed around and told what to do)</i> <i>• I still wouldn't get respect from people</i> <i>• Work will just plod on not going anywhere</i> <i>• I would feel embarrassed about myself</i> <p><i>I would continue to be unhealthy</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>• I'd still have my big stomach which is unhealthy and embarrassing</i> <i>• My blood pressure and cholesterol would continue to be high or even increase</i> <i>• I would feel helpless, guilty and ashamed of my body and my lack of self-control</i> <i>• My wife would continue to worry</i> <i>• My children would not look up to me and I would set a bad example for them and their health in the future</i> <i>• I would remain unfit and wouldn't be able to play with the kids for long</i> 	<p style="text-align: right;">BOX 4</p> <p><i>I wouldn't have to change anything or put in any extra effort to do anything new. Things would just stay the same</i></p> <p><i>I could continue to do the usual things I like doing such as cooking, movies, socialising, video games</i></p> <p><i>It wouldn't have to spend any money on anything exercise related</i></p> <p><i>I could keep up with my social schedule and not have to limit how much I drink and eat when I'm out</i></p>



EMCC stage assessments

Use this resource to assess which stage of the Exercise Motivation Change Cycle (EMCC) you are currently occupying.

The EMCC Assessment Questionnaire and Assessment Algorithm

Use one or both of the following assessments in conjunction with the Exercise Motivation Change Cycle (EMCC) to assess the stage you are currently occupying.

The EMCC Stage Assessment Questionnaire

(x) = Change you want to make (*what you want to achieve/your goal*)

Which ONE statement do you agree with the most?

1. I have no intention to change my behaviour regarding (x)
2. Something has happened within the last two weeks that has got me thinking about changing my behaviour regarding (x)
3. I'm thinking about changing my behaviour regarding (x)
4. I intend to change my behaviour regarding (x) and am putting plans in place to do so
5. I have begun to change my behaviour regarding (x)
6. I've already changed my behaviour regarding (x) for 6 months or more
7. I've already changed my behaviour regarding (x) for 6 months or more but now I'm slipping
8. I managed to change my behaviour regarding (x) for 6 months or more but I'm not doing it anymore

Results

1	2	3	4
Status quo	Trigger event	Thinking about change	Deciding and preparing
5	6	7	8
Taking action	Maintaining action	Slipping back	Back to old ways

My stage =

The EMCC Assessment Algorithm

(x) = Change you want to make (*what you want to achieve/your goal*)

Are you currently working towards achieving (x)?

Yes		Sort of		No	
Have you been (x) for longer than 6 months?	Have you been (x) for less than 6 months?	Have you been (x) for over 6 months but now find yourself slipping?	Have you been on again, off again regarding (x)	Have you recently (within the last month) stopped (x) after regularly (x) for 6 months or more?	
You may be in Maintaining Action	You may be in Taking Action	You may be in Slipping Back		No	Yes
Are you genuinely considering (x) in the near future?					You may be in Back to Old Ways
Yes			No		
Has something happened recently (within the last week or two) that has made you consider (x)?			You may be in Status Quo		
No		Yes			
Have you decided what it is you want to do regarding (x) and how you want to do it?		You may be in Trigger Event stage			
Yes	No				
You may be in Deciding and preparing	You may be in Thinking about change				



S-O-S-S Goals supplement

The following key points explore what is important when considering goals, and offer some ideas to get started.

The 4 key points are:

- 1. Selecting a direction or goal**
- 2. Options for change**
- 3. Settling on a plan, and**
- 4. Strengthening commitment**

Key point 1 - Selecting a direction or goal

Anyone who is motivated to achieve a goal is in some way unhappy or dissatisfied with their current situation. The reason we all choose to envision and pursue goals is because of a discrepancy or gap, between our current situation and our desired situation.

Therefore the first step in any goal directed behaviour is to have a clear idea of the direction or goal you want to move towards. In essence you need to be clear about what you want or what your desired situation would be. As previously discussed it is not vital to have a specific goal in mind, but what is important is that you know the direction you want to head in. Specifics can be incorporated at a later date.

The following questions are a good starting point for those that don't know what they want, or equally for those who suspect they know but aren't quite sure. Even if you do have a clear idea about the direction you want to move towards, or the goal you want to achieve these questions may still be useful.

- Think about your life now... How would you like things to be different?
- Given what you would like to be different... What exactly is it that you want to change?
- If you were successful in accomplishing what you want to change... What would be different?
- If you were to take things one step at a time... What do you think would be the first step?

It's important during this initial phase to think broadly about your direction or goal. By doing so you can evaluate whether your motivation is intrinsic or extrinsic, and from here you can deduce whether or not this would be a worthwhile pursuit. Remember that rushing into a decision around the changes you want to pursue is one of the most basic mistakes you can make. It would be pointless after all to put so much effort into something that you didn't truly want to do in the first place.

To assess how important this goal is and whether you are intrinsically or extrinsically motivated to achieve it, ask yourself the following questions:

- On a scale of 0 - 10 how important is it that you achieve this goal or consistently head in this direction?
- How important do you think the same goal or direction will be in six months, one year or two years from now? What does your answer to this question tell you?
If it's not as important what are the factors that are making it important now? And are these factors valid? I.e. intrinsic or extrinsic
- If you were to remove yourself from your current environment, e.g. the people you know, the places you go etc. would your importance remain the same? If no why, and what does this tell you?
If importance would diminish what are the factors that are making it important now and are these valid? I.e. intrinsic or extrinsic

The need for a realistic direction or goal (as in what's realistic for YOU and not for others in general) is also another important consideration at this point. One way to evaluate whether your direction or goal is realistic is to use confidence ratings. Obviously if you had little confidence in your ability to achieve something, chances are you wouldn't achieve it. E.g. I want to run a marathon but I have never run for more than 20 minutes in the past and I don't know where to start!

Another way to explore whether your direction or goal is realistic is to explore the consequences that might result from taking a particular course of action. You might have the ability to follow through on a plan but if the consequences that resulted were negative, would you still do it? Would it be realistic that you did it? E.g. to train for a marathon would mean running for 2 hours 3-5 days a week after work. This is the time my wife is most busy and needs help with the kids.

The following questions will help you to gauge how realistic your direction or goal might be:

- On a scale of 0 - 10 how confident are you that you can achieve this goal or consistently head in this direction?
- How would your life be different (both the good and bad) while pursuing this goal or heading in this direction? Is this going to work for you?

Once a direction or goal has been established the next key point is to consider change options. However if you feel concerned about your importance and/or confidence levels you will most likely have more work to do before proceeding. To not deal with this now means you are most likely setting yourself up for failure. Remember, there's no rush!

If however you feel it's important that you do this, and you're confident you can do it, move on.

Key point 2 - Options for change

The next step after establishing your direction or goal is to consider how you are going to achieve it.

Brainstorming and considering possible change strategies is a great way to do this. Often when we think about changing we have one or more predetermined ideas of how we would go about it. This can be good assuming the ideas you have are worthwhile, but if not you could again be setting yourself up for failure, especially if these ideas haven't been successful in the past. Brainstorming is a great tool for looking outside of your 'go to' ideas as it generates a range of new options. It allows you to look at multiple possible solutions and draw on both new and past options, including those you might even consider farfetched, before moving towards a plan.

When brainstorming it is also best practice to consider the ideas in their totality as opposed to one at a time. Thinking about individual ideas invites you to consider what's wrong with them. This in turn has the possibility to strengthen counter-change arguments for why something won't work. Coming up with a menu of ideas on the other hand, puts you in a 'what could work', as opposed to a, 'why won't this work' frame of mind. It's really all about keeping things positive while still being realistic. As we all know, changing can be hard. At the early stages of change we can be derailed by the smallest negative comment or thought, so keeping things positive and forward focussed is far more productive.

The sequence of thinking should look something like the following...

- These are the various new ideas and possibilities that I've come up with, and these are ideas I've used in the past.
- Considering these ideas... Which of these do I prefer?
- Which out of these ideas do I think might work best for me at this point in time?

After establishing which options would suit your purposes the best, the next step is settling on a plan.

Key point 3 - Settling on a plan

After considering options for change, the process of planning begins. This is the point where you need to self-negotiate in order to come up with a plan for change that suits you best. The plan obviously needs to lead you towards your goals, and it must be realistic for you and your situation.

Ask yourself the following questions to get started...

- So I've considered all my options. What is it that I specifically plan to do?
- What do I think is the first step in carrying out this plan?
- How will I go about taking this first step? What will help, and what might get in my way?

Depending on how you like to do things, you might find it useful to fill in a written change plan which is essentially a summary of what it is that you plan to do. Writing something down is in many ways a formal commitment to follow through on a plan. Of course this is up to you, but for those of you thinking “I don’t think I will do this” consider the following:

Have you ever noticed that when you write a to-do list you can remember most or all of what’s on it without revisiting it? What about when you write down a great idea in the middle of the night out of fear you will forget it, only to find you remember it without referring to your note. Often the very act of writing something down helps to imprint it into long term memory. It solidifies your thoughts and gives you a clear image or idea that can be recalled at a later date. What you are working towards then becomes a clearly stated plan of action, as opposed to collection of thoughts and ideas.

Once you have completed your change plan, either mentally or by writing it down, it is then useful to summarise your plan. Doing this ensures it fits with your original direction and your intentions regarding how you want to get there. Doing this is not everyone’s preference, but if you choose to write this down it is always best to use language that is in keeping with you. Something you can understand and something that resonates with who you are. Look at the following summary example:

What I want is to feel healthier. I plan to do this by working on getting my weight and blood pressure down through diet and exercise. For me this is a much better alternative to medication. I want to do this for at least a month after which time I will make a doctor’s appointment to see if any progress has been made.

After looking into a number of possible exercise options I plan to join the local walking group and walk for 30mins three times per week. I am friends with the group organiser whom I will ring in the next day or two to organise my membership. I intend to do my first walk this Friday.

I also want to start eating healthier. Ultimately I would like to eat only healthy foods, but for now I am not totally ready to give up all of the things I like. What I have decided then is to try and cut out sugar, within reason, and be conscious of my portions. I will also enforce a 7.30pm cut off time for eating each night on weekdays.

Feeling healthier is my priority but nonetheless I will weigh myself every week on Monday morning. I will also keep a chart to monitor my exercise, weight and feeling of well-being.

Key point 4 - Strengthening commitment

An often neglected aspect of the change process, strengthening commitment is vital if you are to maintain on-going motivation and see your goals through to completion. It is in many ways the most important aspect to consider when attempting a change. So often people start with a bang only to lose motivation and quit shortly after starting.

If when thinking about change, you thoroughly consider the previous three key points, you should to some degree already be committed.

A simple way to gauge your commitment is to ask yourself the following question(s):

- On a scale of 0 - 10 how much do I really want to do this?
- Or simply... Is this what I want to do?

The answer is hopefully... Yes! It is.

When asking yourself this question it's important to differentiate between an assertive 'yes', and more tepid responses, such as 'I guess so', or 'I really should do this'. What you want is strong commitment to follow through with your plans. If you don't have this level of dedication at this point then more work is needed. To plough ahead with a change plan when you're only mildly committed would be setting yourself up for failure. If you still feel unsure then it is likely that something has either been missed or not thought about enough previously.

The following is a list of things you could try in order to strengthen your commitment to change:

- Explore any reluctance or ambivalence you still have about your direction, goal or plan in an attempt to resolve ambivalence.*
** The 'Exploring and resolving ambivalence' resource can help with this.*
- Make yourself accountable to others by making your plan public. The more you verbalise your plans to others, especially those you care about, the more commitment is strengthened.
- Mobilise your support network. Getting others to help you, especially early on may be just the boost you need to get started and begin to form new habits.
- Go back over your plan so everything is crystal clear. Often when we are uncertain things seem overwhelming. Focussing on one or two steps that you can initiate immediately can also be helpful. Sometimes taking the first step can be hard but once we take it things start rolling. As I'm sure you've heard before, a journey of one thousand miles starts with a single step.

Most importantly, if after trying these suggestions you still feel you're not quite ready to make a commitment, simply stop and don't pressure yourself. Going ahead with a plan you're not that keen on will probably end badly. You have most likely experienced pressure in the past which has contributed to not following through on a plan. Remember again there is no rush. Especially if making this type of change is important to you. Trying half-heartedly and failing now will only strengthen your beliefs around not being able to change. Any setbacks at this early stage can very quickly lead to self-sabotage. Instead just keep the possibility of change in your mind and come back to making decision in a couple of days, or at another time where you feel more ready.



The 'What if...' game

Use this resource to check if you have thought about strategies to deal with every possible situation, scenario or issue that may threaten your plans to change.

What is the 'what if...' game?

The 'what if...' game is a game designed to check you have a plan or strategy in place for every conceivable situation that might threaten your change attempt. It requires you to recall the strategies you have planned to use when various challenging situations or barriers arise. Challenging situations refers to any situation that could weaken or derail your change attempt.

If you can recall a plan or strategy when asking a particular 'what if...' question, you are prepared for this specific situation. If you can't think of an answer for a particular 'what if...' question, this suggests you have a potential weak point that needs addressing.

Instructions

Ask yourself as many 'what if...' questions as you can think of, paying particular attention to the 'what if...' scenarios that have caused you trouble in the past. Some examples questions might include:

- What if you're really tired after a busy day at work and the last thing you feel like doing is exercising?
- What if a friend you haven't seen for a while asks you to have dinner or drinks at a time when you had planned to exercise?
- What if the weather is so bad you can't go for a planned run or outdoor exercise routine?
- What if you planned to exercise this evening but you are still really sore from exercising the day before?

If there are any 'what if...' questions you are unsure about, or if there are questions that you can't answer at all, then you will need to come up with a plan or strategy to ensure that if a particular situation arises you will be ready.

Remember, pre-empting problems and putting plans in place will mean your chances of overcoming problems will be greatly increased.

Good luck!

NOTE: This resource can be used in conjunction with the resource ['Be aware and prepare'](#).

The Exercise Motivation Change Cycle (EMCC)

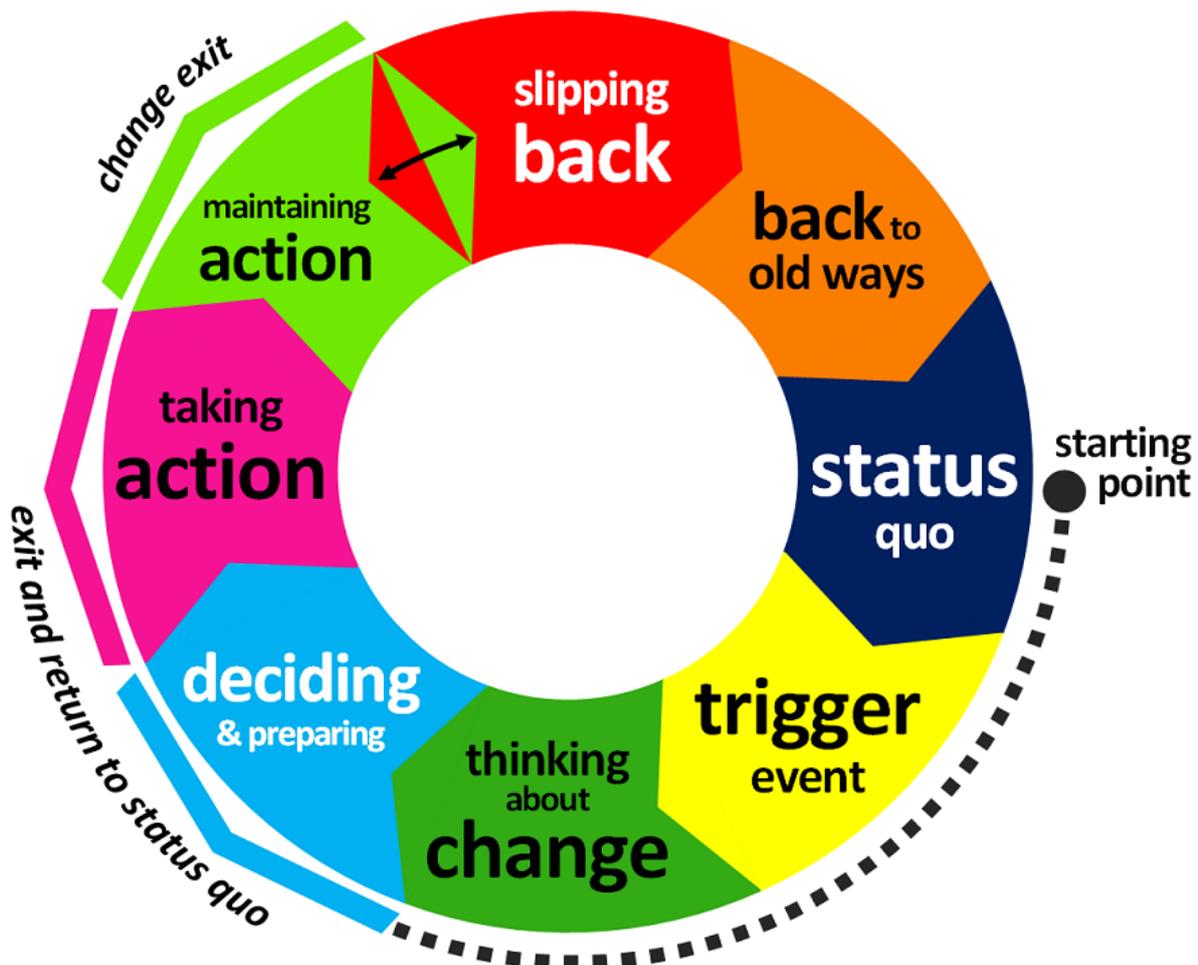
The Trans-theoretical Model of Behaviour Change describes how people can move through various phases when they undergo change in their lives.

The research behind the model is dedicated to solving the problem of how people intentionally change their behaviour, with and without professional intervention. The following question was the foundation for this investigation;

Are there basic, common principles, or stages that commonly occur when people make a change?

The research showed that YES! There were indeed similar structures underlying behaviour change in general, and thus the Trans-theoretical Model of Behaviour Change (1983) was born.

The following diagram, 'the Exercise Motivation Change Cycle' is an adaption of the original model.



The 8 Stages in the Exercise Motivation Change Cycle

1. Status quo

You're either unaware of needing to make a change or are in denial about needing to change. The latter often refers to 'the fear of being different being greater than the fear of staying the same'

2. Trigger event

An event occurs that kick-starts you into contemplating change. This event could be a small thing, like a comment from another person, or a big thing like a health warning from a doctor.

3. Thinking about change

Maybe you do, or maybe you don't want to change. At this stage you would be weighing up the pros and cons of change. You could be ambivalent (sitting on the fence) or you could be sure you want to change.

4. Deciding and preparing

You want things to be different, or you have decided it's not worth changing. After thinking about change you have now made a decision to either change or not. If you have decided to change you will now need to prepare.

5. Taking action

You are now walking the walk. This is where you put your plans into action. It's all systems go as you use initially high motivation to get things started. Alternatively you may get a shock, as you find actually doing it is harder than you thought.

6. Maintaining action

This is for real. This is where you start to see the light at the end of the tunnel and realise that this change could be for real. If you maintain your action for long enough you will exit having made a change. Alternately your initial motivation will fade and you find yourself questioning why you're changing in the first place.

7. Slipping back

You've done so well for so long so you can let your guard down. This is a dangerous stage and will often see you reengaging in old behaviours. Often justifications and minimisation of behaviours will occur at this stage, e.g. I've been going so well, I can afford to miss a workout.

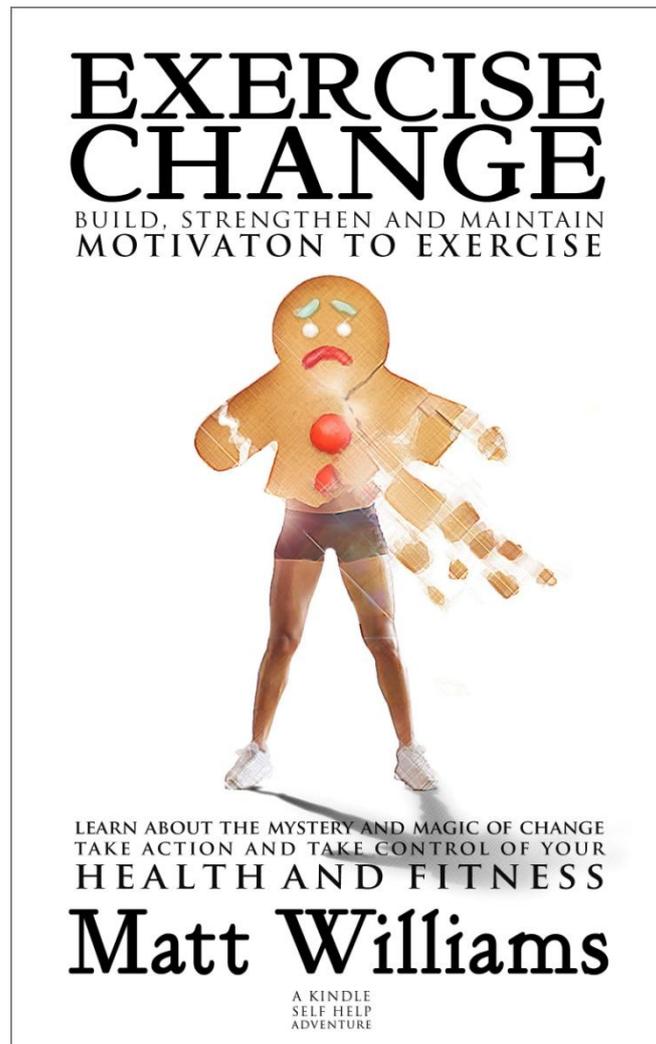
8. Back to old ways

Stuff it, this is too hard. This stage begins when the maintaining action stage has been left to languish and the previous stage, slipping back, has become dominant. You've now completed the cycle and will soon return to the status quo stage.

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ExerciseChange.co.nz/Resources