



Your stage of readiness is:

## **ACTION**

### **“I AM”**

You're ready to make a change that's important to you. You have your plan in place and have been acting on it for less than 6 months.

Gradual change leads to permanent change. Taking one step at a time, at a pace that has you continue to stretch a bit beyond the last step you successfully mastered will keep you engaged.

### **Track Your Progress**

Looking at a record of your progress can really help you to set goals that are optimally challenging. To track how you're doing with your plan, write down a quick daily note, keep a

daily calendar, or use an online or mobile tracking tool. It's important to use what feels realistic and doable for you.

How your record of progress sets you up for success with setting each **SMART** short-term goal is it allows you to gauge when the time is right to make the short-term goal more challenging and by how much.

Each time you review progress with a short-term goal you will ask yourself what was the percentage of completion from 0 – 100%? If the percentage of completion was <60% than the short-term goal was too challenging and should be modified to a less challenging version of the goal, if it was 60 – 80% than this is still a challenging enough goal to pursue as it is and if it was >80% than you can set a more challenging version of the goal.

In order to gauge whether the new short-term goal is optimally challenging is to always ask yourself what is your confidence in completing this goal on a scale from 1 – 10 (with 10 being the highest) if your confidence is 6 or higher  
**-Go For It!**

## **Reward Yourself**

Change is a process that takes time and effort. Each small success in the direction of the desired outcome deserves credit and will support you staying positive.

Think about what would be rewarding for you. What celebrates your better, healthier life – a long luxurious bath, a massage, a walk in nature, a movie or show, something you have been wanting, etc....?

During this time there is a possibility for lapses. When a lapse occurs you want to get re-engaged with your plan as soon as possible.

I hope the following scenario aids you in keeping all or nothing, perfectionistic thinking in check when encountering a lapse.

If you dropped an egg from a carton of eggs would you then throw the remaining 11 eggs on the ground-probably not? You'd be curious about what happened, you'd figure it out and you'd apply what you learned in putting the rest of the eggs away without dropping them.

## Tool for Learning from the Lapse

### Behavioral Chain Analysis of Problem Behavior Worksheet

#### 1. Describe the specific **PROBLEM BEHAVIOR**

(flashback, cutting, disassociation, hiding, closeting, panic attack, eating etc.)

- A. Be very specific and detailed. No vague terms.
- B. Identify exactly what you did, said, thought or felt (if feelings are the targeted problem behavior).
- C. Describe the intensity of the behavior and other characteristics of the behavior that is important.
- D. Describe the problem behavior in enough detail that an actor in a play or movie could recreate the behavior exactly.

#### 2. Describe the specific **PRECIPITATING EVENT**

that started the whole chain of behavior.

A. Start with the environmental event that started the chain. Always start with some event in your environment, even if it doesn't seem to you that the environmental event "caused" the problem behavior. Possible questions to get at this are:

1. What exact event precipitated the start of the chain reaction?

2. When did the sequence of events that led to the problem behavior begin? When did the problem start?

3. What was going on the moment the problem started?

4. What were you doing, thinking, feeling, imagining at that time?

5. Why did the problem behavior happen on that day instead of the day before?

**3. Describe in general VULNERABILITY FACTORS** happening before the precipitating event. What factors or events made you more vulnerable to a problematic chain? Areas to examine are:

- A. Physical illness; unbalanced eating or sleeping; injury
- B. Use of drugs or alcohol; misuse of prescription drugs
- C. Stressful events in the environment (either positive or negative)
- D. Intense emotions, such as sadness, anger, fear, loneliness
- E. Previous behaviors of your own that you found stressful

**4. Describe in excruciating detail THE CHAIN OF EVENTS** that led up to the problem behavior.

- A. What next? Imagine that your problem behavior is chained to the precipitating event in the environment. How long is the chain? Where does it go? What are the links? Write out all links in the chain of events, no matter how small. Be very specific, as if you are writing a script for a play.
  - 1. What exact thought (or belief), feeling, or action followed the precipitating

event? What thought, feeling, or action followed that? What next?

2. Look at each link in the chain after you write it. Was there another thought

feeling, or action that could have occurred?

Could someone else have

thought, felt, or acted differently at that point?

If so, explain how that

specific thought, feeling, or action came to be.

3. For each link in the chain, as if there is a smaller link I could describe.

B. The links can be thoughts, emotions, sensations and behaviors.

**5. What are the CONSEQUENCES** of this behavior? Be specific.

1. How did other people react immediately and later?

2. How did you feel immediately following the behavior? Later?

3. What effect did the behavior have on you and your environment?

**6. Describe in detail different SOLUTIONS to the problem.**

A. Go back to the chain of your behaviors following the prompting event. Circle each point or link indicating that if you had done something different, you would have avoided the problem behavior.

B. What could you have done differently at each link in the chain of events to avoid the problem behavior? What coping behaviors or skillful behaviors could you have used?

**7. Describe in detail the PREVENTION STRATEGY for how you could have kept the chain from starting by reducing your vulnerability to the chain.**

**8. Describe what you are going to do to REPAIR important or significant consequences of the problem behavior.**



## **New Beginnings**

In addition to feeling pleased that you're changing, you may also have other, less positive feelings. It's normal to feel a sense of loss due to stopping something or doing less. To cope with this, fill your time with things that make you feel good. Get back to an old hobby, spend time with people you enjoy, or try something new. Ask yourself:

- Who brings out the best in me?
- What do I love to do?
- What have I always wanted to try?

Your vision of your healthiest life is in sight. Continue to visualize yourself learning from lapses, overcoming challenges and celebrating each step forward.