



## Behavioral Change Goal

**Behavioral change goals need to be clear, measurable, and attainable.** You need to be able to answer “yes” or “no” easily on any given day (or week) if you have achieved your goal.

**Behavioral change goals should NOT depend on other people’s actions.**

**You can change your goal, but if you change it too much, it won’t be a goal anymore.**

Example of an effective/helpful goal change:

Jane’s behavioral change goal is to exercise by running at least 30 minutes 4 times per week. After 2 weeks, she experiences pain in her leg and is told by her doctor to stop running for a month. She changes her goal to walking at least 30 minutes 4 times per week and plans on resuming her running when her leg is healed.

Example of ineffective/unhelpful goal change:

John’s behavioral change goal is to stop all marijuana for 3 months (in order to see if his grades improve). After receiving an invitation to a bachelor party for his pot-smoking friend, he changes his goal to only smoking pot 1x per week.

### Examples of behavioral change goals:

- No candy, deserts, or sodas.
- Eat 3 meals per day. A “meal” is at least 300 calories.
- Drink 60 oz water per day.
- Exercise by swimming 30 minutes per day.
- Exercise by walking the dog at least 10 minutes 4x per week.
- Attend all college classes unless sick.
- Clean/organize for 30 minutes/day Mon-Fri and 45 minutes Sat.-Sun.
- Arrive on time or early to all appointments.
- Stop all alcohol.
- Drink only on Fri. – Sat.
- No spending money at Starbucks.
- Spend only \$50 online per week.
- Stop all Amazon shopping for 1 month.
- Spend 15 minutes quality time with child playing a game after school every school day.
- No looking at Tinder or other dating websites for a year.
- No giving or “loaning” money to friends & romantic partners, except Christmas. For Christmas, give less than \$50 in money or presents to anyone.
- No television after 11pm.
- In bed by midnight every night (including the weekend).

**You can have more than one goal. However, it is important to have a hierarchy of goals.** On a bad day of extreme chaos and stress, which one goal do you want to keep for sure? Remember that behavioral change takes time and effort. Can you afford to divide your emotional, social, time, and financial resources on more than one goal?

**My Behavioral Change Goal is:**

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## Behavioral Problem and Solution Analysis

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Time \_\_\_\_\_ Behavior (or behavior avoided) \_\_\_\_\_

Behavioral Analysis or "What went wrong?"	Solution Analysis or "What can I do now to have things go differently next time?"
What were the <b>consequences?</b> (e.g. feeling discouraged, others angry, DUI)	-----
<b>Vulnerabilities</b> or "What was the backdrop?" (e.g. tired, stressed already, PMS)	What can be done to reduce vulnerabilities (e. g. sleep more, use stress reduction techniques, extra precautions during PMS)
<b>What were the triggers to use or avoid?</b>	<b>Solutions</b>
Environmental cues (e.g. dessert served at meal, people smoking nearby, friends ask to "hang out" during study time.)	Change the environment
Social Pressure to Use/Avoid	Assertiveness or avoid certain people for now
Intense stress "I can't stand it."	Practice distress tolerance skills more when NOT triggered, so that they are more readily available to you.
Motivation issues "Screw it, I don't care."	Review the Pro's & Con's and Values sheets more. Add on more rewards or punishments
Environmental Blocks (e.g. injury prevents exercise, computer failure prevents studying, husband thwarts punishment of child)	Fix the blocks or change the behavioral plan
Other	

Solutions I will implement this week:

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## Creative ways to REWARD behavioral change

Remember that *eventually* behavioral change becomes rewarding in itself (e.g. weight loss, better relationships, endorphin release when exercising, well-behaved children). Since behavioral change is hard at first, it is important to add in as much immediate positive reinforcement as possible.

### Make the new behavior as enjoyable as possible;

- Music or podcasts while exercising
- "Mocktails"
- Watch a good movie and drinking a decaf latte while NOT smoking pot in the evening
- Make the vegetables taste as good as possible (maybe purchase from Whole Foods or the like)
- Do fun crafts or take a hot bath while NOT shopping on Amazon
- Study with others who are studying to decrease a feeling of isolation
- Review recorded study material while walking outside
- Aromatherapy or wordless music while cleaning/organizing
- Attend sober social events
- Bring a good book to read for arriving early (not late) to appointments

### Set up a token economy;

- Put a dollar in a jar every day you are compliant and then buy yourself something after you get \$10
- Give yourself an "I O U" every day of success and after you get 5, watch a movie

### Put up a calendar with stickers for successful days

### Get a cheerleading squad;

- On-line forum
- SMARTrecovery.org
- Ask loved ones to cheer you on
- Brag to (supportive others) even small successes

### Take pictures of organized/clean areas in your home and review and/or post.

**Avoid Perfectionism!!** This destroys motivation. Admire success without linking success to the future or immediately adding on goals. E.g. Do say to yourself, "I spend 20 minutes organizing my mail and I am halfway done!" Do NOT say, "Well, I got a lot of mail sorted, but I really should have cleaned the bathroom too."

## Creative ways to punish non-compliance with daily goals

### Rules for punishments:

NO Self-shaming. This destroys motivation and increases hopelessness.

- "I'm bad."
- "I'm just lazy."
- "I should want to clean, exercise, study. . . "

### NO Withholding other enjoyable events or self-care activities.

- Not eating breakfast or lunch because of a binge the day before.
- Not buying groceries after overspending.
- Not going to a social event because of not cleaning the house as planned.

### Commit publicly to the new behavior.

- Announcement on Facebook and ask others to check-in with you.
- Refuse alcohol, sugar, etc. and announce that you are now sober, eating health, etc.
- Share your effective parenting plan with your spouse/partner or other family.

**Give small amounts of money to organizations you do not like whenever you are non-compliant with daily goal.**

**Do a behavioral analysis whenever you "slip" or don't meet your goal.**

### Repair hurts to others.

- Apologize for being drunk/high around family members.
- Work extra to make up for not working during a binge eating episode.
- Do additional 12<sup>th</sup> step work.
- Spend quality time with child playing his/her favorite game.
- Apologize for causing stress to others by arriving late--without giving an excuse.
- Be at social events and appointments 10 minutes early for a week.

