

# Level One – Workshop Three

# Weight Management

## Participant Workbook

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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## Today's Topics

Problem Solving

Habits

Eating Cues

The Environment

“Anything worth doing is worth doing poorly until you learn to do it well.”

- Zig Ziglar

## The Problem Solving Process

1. Identify the problem. What situations, circumstances, or settings create obstacles for you toward your chosen eating and physical activity behaviours?
2. List possible solutions to the problem. Use brainstorming to generate possible solutions to the problem.
3. Select one solution to try. Re-write your SMART goal.
4. Evaluate the success of your attempt.
5. If unsuccessful, try another solution. If you are out of solutions, use other resources. Be sure you identifies the problem correctly.

**Hint: Don't keep telling yourself to “try harder” with solutions that aren't working. Don't let negative self-talk tell you that YOU are the problem.**

## Problem Solving Activity



1. What were your SMART goals last week?

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2. What went well?

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3. Barriers or difficulties from last week's SMART goals:

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4. Possible solutions

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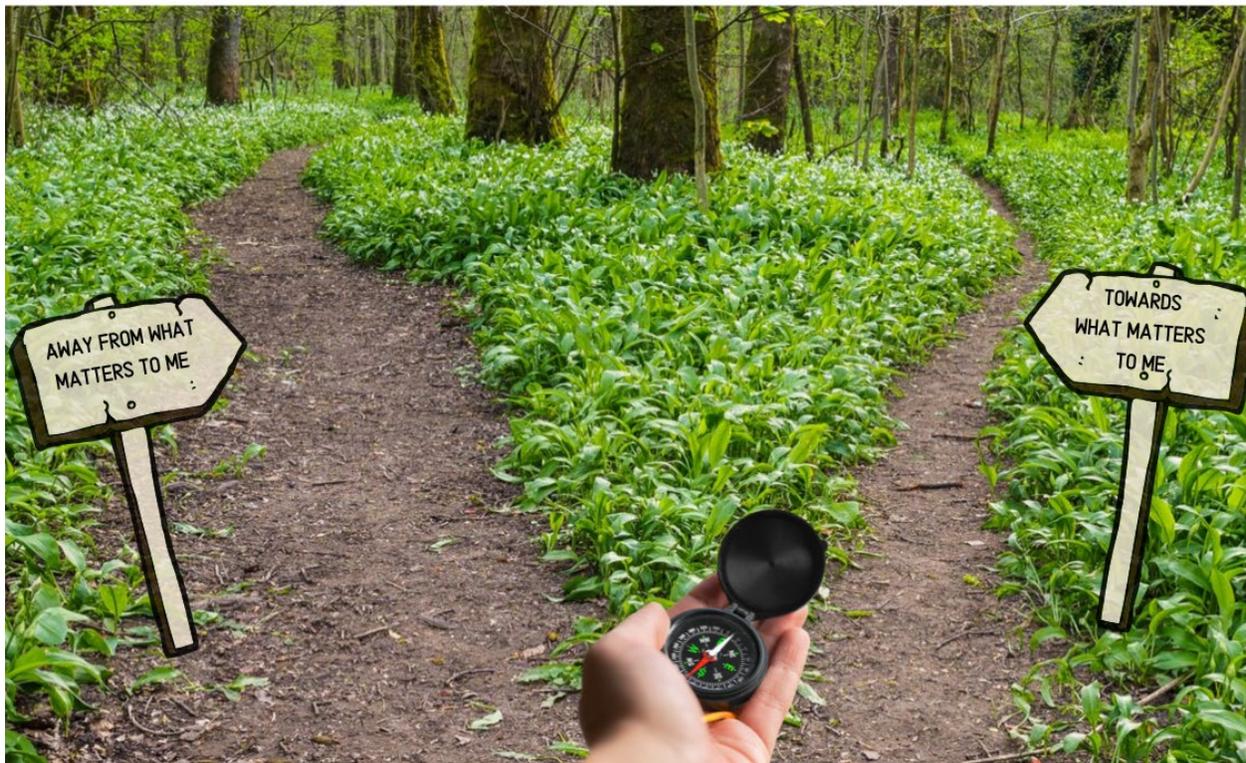
What solution are you going to try?

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### Automatic Instinct versus Planned Action

Living a healthy lifestyle is hard. We have evolved to want to avoid pain, seek pleasure, and take the path of least resistance. This preference for what feels best in the present is often not what leads us toward what we value in the future.

We can learn to over-ride these instincts and create healthy habits that lead us toward what matters to us. We do this by increasing our awareness of what cues our current behaviour, what motivates us to make change, how we can maximize our will power, develop new skills, and create opportunities to choose the healthy path toward the things we value.



Re-cap from week one:

What matters to you that decreased weight, improved health, or longevity will help you achieve or have more of (i.e. your values):

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When you consider your current life, do you spend the amount of time, thought, or effort working toward this priority as you would really like?

1. Which path do you spend most of your time on? The path toward what matters to you or away? 80 – 20? 50 – 50?

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2. What health habits do you have that you want to keep?

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3. What health habits would you like to develop?

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4. What habits would you like to get rid of?

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5. What do you value that makes difficult health habits worth it?

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## Procrastination

The one factor that seems to separate the good behaviours that we do easily from those we routinely put off doing is how good they feel. Part of our brain, the outer, reasoning part (the frontal lobe), is able to weigh the costs and benefits of a behaviour for us. It often comes to reasonable conclusions, like the cost of exercise is worth the benefits.

It's that more ancient part of our brain, the cave man brain that only seems to care about right now.

Can you think of something you procrastinate about?

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## Motivation

Motivation is a reason for doing something or a feeling of enthusiasm, interest, or commitment that makes somebody do something.

Like all feelings motivation comes and goes. This is where willpower or self-control comes in.

Ways to remind yourself of your personal reasons for making changes:

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## Willpower

Willpower is a source of energy that can be used when we don't have feelings of motivation.

It is like a muscle – it can be fatigued as we use it throughout the day, but it can also be strengthened to increase our stamina.

Strategies to strengthen our willpower include:

- a. Setting a **long term goal** based on our values/what matters to us.
- b. Making a **pre-commitment** such as announcing your goal publically or committing to pay for something that will help with your goal e.g. swimming lessons
- c. **Decreasing decision fatigue** doing harder things earlier in the day while we still have willpower or developing routine habits
- d. **Temptation bundling** – pair something that is hard to do with something you really enjoy.

- e. Mentally **reviewing past successes**.
  
- f. **Do instead** goals-a positive alternative behaviour to what you want to avoid doing

## The Environment

### Brainstorm Activity

Things that prompt us to eat:

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How has the food environment changed?

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What strategies can we use to manage environmental food cues? \_\_\_\_\_

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## Developing New Habits

**Motivation is what gets you started – habit is what keeps you going.**

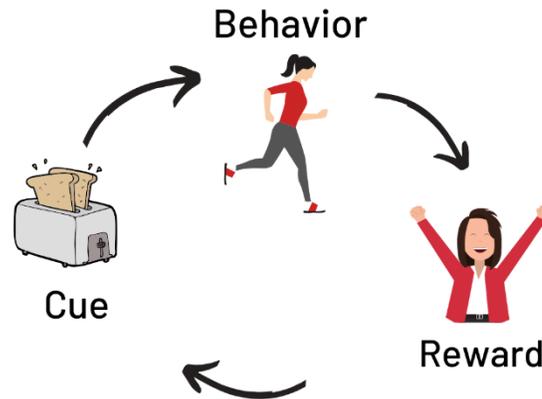
Habit learning is cue dependent. A new habit takes between \_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_ days to develop. The average is \_\_\_\_ days but it can vary.

Habits give us some control over our lives and help us overcome a fundamental human problem. The problem with most behaviour change is that our immediate goals and rewards are often things that are not good for us. They are things that reward the ancient pleasure seeking, pain avoiding part of the brain. It's down the line that we get the benefit of making healthy choices.

So if we have to control ourselves because we want the benefits of better health, weight loss, or longevity then we must value that over immediate rewards.

Developing habits helps us conserve willpower, which is needed to change behaviour.

## Steps to creating a new habit:



**Step One:** Choose what new behaviour you would like to turn into a habit.

**Step Two:** Choose a simple cue to start the behaviour.

**Step Three:** Choose an immediate non-food reward that you will give yourself each time you complete the behaviour.



## Skill Building

When \_\_\_\_\_ (cue – can be a time, place, being with a certain person, an activity, or emotion)

I will \_\_\_\_\_ (routine – the behaviour you want to become a habit)

Because it provides me with \_\_\_\_\_ (reward).

## Changing Unhelpful Habits

**Step One – discovering the cue.** What is cueing the behaviour? Again, it could be a time, place, a certain person, an activity, or an emotion. Look for what stays the same every time you feel the urge to do the behaviour.

**Step Two – discover the reward.** What are you getting out of this behaviour? Are there other behaviours that would get you this reward? What does the behaviour improve?

**Step Three – substitute a new, healthier behaviour.** See if it gets you the same reward.

## SMART Goal for your Food Environment

**S**pecific action \_\_\_\_\_

**M**easurable-how much, how often \_\_\_\_\_

**A**ttainable (?/10) \_\_\_\_\_

**R**ewarding: link to values \_\_\_\_\_

**T**imely-start date, re-evaluation date \_\_\_\_\_

One thing to increase motivation or willpower \_\_\_\_\_

Dr. David Macklin video: The GateKeeper, The GoGetter and The Sleepy Executive  
<https://youtu.be/VEJ6c5emPE8>