



NHS Fife Department of Psychology

Making healthier lifestyle changes
whatever your starting point

Help Yourself @ moodcafe.co.uk



This leaflet aims to help people who are at different stages of thinking about a change. Pick the statement that best fits how you feel at the moment and you might find that the information helps you take the next step.

“I don’t feel like I want to change”

If you feel you don’t want to make a change, it may be that it’s not a priority for you at the moment, but that you would like to revisit this in a few weeks or months. Putting a reminder in your diary might help you to do this. It may help you to look at some of the benefits of changing your lifestyle and see if there’s anything that is relevant to you. The “Benefits of Maintaining a Healthier Lifestyle” leaflet on www.moodcafe.co.uk might help you with this. If you don’t want to try something because you feel you’ve tried everything before or you’ve not managed in the past, try not to let that stop you. Some of the tools on www.moodcafe.co.uk may help.

“I’m not sure whether I want to make a change”

If you’re not sure if you want to make a change, you could try writing down your reasons for and against it. There is a “Pros and Cons of Making a Change” worksheet on www.moodcafe.co.uk to download that might help you with this.

You could try and imagine what your life might be like now and in the future if you were able to make a change. This may be in relation to a number of areas. The worksheet “Imagine 2 Futures” might help you with this. This worksheet can be downloaded from www.moodcafe.co.uk. If there are things that seem to be holding you back, how could you tackle them so they don’t get in the way so much?

“I want to but I don’t know if I can”

If you are feeling like you want to make a change but are not sure if you can do it, can you think about times where you have succeeded in the past? Recognise what your achievements are during difficult times; even if they seem quite small now. Can you think about what helped you to manage during that time? Can you use those things now to help you in this situation? If you are not sure you can do it because it just seems too much, it may help to break it into smaller goals. The worksheet “Setting Goals and Planning” might help you with this. This worksheet can be downloaded on www.moodcafe.co.uk.

“I want to change now!”

If you want to make a change now, you may already have a plan/goal. Sometimes, it is difficult for us to stick to our plans or we try to do too much at once and set ourselves up to fail. Here are some things you could do to help with setting goals:

- Setting yourself small achievable targets and increasing it by small amounts once you have managed it e.g. walking for 10 extra minutes, drinking one less alcoholic drink, trying out strategies to go without a cigarette, replace crisps with a piece of fruit.
- Making specific plans about when and where you will do something e.g. choosing a low fat lunch every other day at work, go for a brisk walk for 30 minutes on a Tuesday and a Thursday evening.
- Get support from others to help you e.g. for them to give you encouragement, to join you in working towards a goal, ask them to remind you about your goal if you’re going off track.
- Sometimes it can help to write down the things that might get in the way of your goal and what you can do if that happens.
- Using the “Goal Setting” worksheet (available on www.moodcafe.co.uk)

“I’ve made changes but I’m finding it difficult to stick to them”

If you are finding it difficult to stick to a change, try to get back on track by thinking about setting small goals again. Making a plan might help [hyperlink to goal setting]. Think about what worked last time and how you can use those things to help you this time. It may help to remind yourself why you’re trying to make a change by writing it down or looking at the benefits of improving your health listed in the “Benefits of Maintaining a Healthier Lifestyle” leaflet on www.moodcafe.co.uk.

“I’m finding it too difficult to make any changes”

If you’ve tried some things and you don’t feel they’ve worked for you, try breaking down your goals even further using the goal setting worksheet. You might also find it helpful to discuss your difficulties with your doctor as there may be other services out there that could help you. These may include weight management services, stop smoking services, illness-specific groups including support groups, or something else. Sometimes people just need a bit more support to be able to make and stick to any changes.

Visit moodcafe.co.uk
for more helpful resources

