



fittogether™

Goal Setting Guide

Your roadmap to a healthier you.



Join the 94% of health coaching participants who are making improvements in their health and wellness every day.

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Introduction

Congratulations on taking the first step toward better health and well-being. This workbook is your guide to learning the art of behavioral change and goal setting. The exercises included can be used for making changes in any area of your life, whether it's weight management, physical activity, stress management, healthy eating, smoking cessation or social connection. Long-term success requires attention and patience. We recommend that you work through the exercises in this book at your own pace and with the help of a Providence health coach or other health professional.

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“Your beliefs become your thoughts, your thoughts become your words, your words become your actions, your actions become your habits, your habits become your values, your values become your destiny.”

— MAHATMA GANDHI

1. Building Motivation

Behavioral change takes more than willpower, it requires learning how to navigate your environment, problem solving, practicing mindfulness and setting SMART goals – specific, measurable, attainable, relevant and time-bound. It's a simple tool to help you translate ambiguous goals into an actionable plan. Prepare to become your own lifestyle coach! Use the spaces provided in this workbook to write answers, take notes or journal.

I want to make the following changes to my lifestyle and health:

What motivates me to take action now?

- I want to feel more energetic and vital.
- I want to have more control in my life.
- I want to be present for my children and grandchildren.
- I want to feel more confident.
- I want to improve my focus and productivity.
- I need to manage a health condition.
- I want to have less pain.
- I want to be more joyful.
- Other:

1.1 Stages of change

Change is not a linear process – there will be bumps in the road. You might stay on track with your goals for weeks or months then suddenly have a setback and relapse to old behaviors. It's normal to move through each stage more than once. Identifying where you are in the change process may provide insight on how to set appropriate goals to get back on track.

Stage of change	Language associated with change	Ways to motivate change
Pre-contemplation	"I won't" or "I can't."	Gather information related to the behavior.
Contemplation	"I might in the next six months."	Identify the pros and cons of making a change. Consider talking to a health professional to gain support.
Preparation	"I will in the next month."	Develop a detailed plan, set goals and establish rewards and accountability.
Action	"I'm doing it."	Establish weekly goals, review and evaluate progress. Identify barriers, problem solve and find creative solutions.
Maintenance	"I'm still doing it."	Continue to set new goals and challenge yourself. Give yourself credit for how far you've come and remember your motivation. Learn new ways to prevent relapses in behavior. Be a role model to someone else.
Relapse	"I was doing it."	Identify the triggers leading up to the relapse. Set aside blame. What did you learn about the situation?

Prochaska and DiClemente Transtheoretical Model

If you're struggling to find long-term motivation to change, consider using the exercise below. Recording the benefits helps establish a stronger foundation for change. When you experience a short lapse

Pros of changing	Cons of not changing

in behavior, consider returning to your list for inspiration.

On a scale of 0 to 10 (10 being very important), how important is it for me to make changes now? Check your answer.



What are my current obstacles to making changes now?

What will it take to overcome these obstacles?

On a scale of 0 to 10 (10 being very confident), how confident am I that changes are possible now? Check your answer.



1.2 Reflection: What went well last time, what can be improved?

Maybe you've attempted to make behavioral changes in the past. Take stock of what you accomplished and be proud of your successes. It's also a good time to ponder the low points.

What worked for me in the past?

What did I learn from my previous experience?

What do I need to do differently to be more successful?

What personal strengths can I draw from to help me along the path to being healthier? What am I good at doing?

“You must expect great things of yourself before you can do them.”

— MICHAEL JORDAN
(FORMER PRO BASKETBALL PLAYER)



“ My health coach was kind and affirming. The biggest benefit she provided was reflective listening. There are many things I already know I could or should do to improve my health. My coach listened to me then asked me straight forward questions, helping me focus on how to put these good ideas into practice in my busy life.”

-Christie, Health Coaching participant

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“ My health coach was amazing, very personable, a good listener, and collaborated with me in establishing goals that met my individual circumstances, interests, and motivation.”

-Lee, Health Coaching participant

A clear vision
will help give
your goals
meaning
and urgency.

Day-to-day visualization

There's ongoing communication between the mind and body. Your imagination is powerful and if properly trained, your thoughts can manifest into action. Mental workouts activate and stimulate many of the same neural networks that connect the body with the brain impulses. We can apply visioning to our day-to-day experiences in order to improve motivation, stay more positive and build resilience.

The essential elements of effective visualization

- Involve all your senses. Visualization techniques should be done with full emotional energy. Try to involve as many senses as possible: smell, touch, taste and hearing along with imagery to "feel it."
- Be an active participant in the scene – not a spectator. While visualizing yourself running, your heart, muscles of the legs and breathing pattern should feel as if you had actually run a few hundred yards.
- The process should be positive. If you want to stay away from sweetened drinks, visualize yourself being satisfied by water rather than visualizing that you dislike cold drinks.



2.2 SMART goal setting: Establishing three-month goals

Now that you've established your vision and a blueprint of where you'd like to go, it's time to set some goals. It's important to have goals that are just long enough to make it a meaningful process and short enough to create a sense of urgency and focus. Goals should be quantifiable and measurable. It's not enough to say, "I will exercise more" or "I will cut back on sugar." Well-written goals include, "I will walk 30 minutes per day, five days a week in the morning before work," or "I will limit beverages to water and unsweetened coffee or tea and limit dessert to once per week."

Combine both outcome and behavioral goals. For example, an outcome goal is to lose three inches off your waist or to lower your blood pressure to 120/80. Examples of behavioral goals are to exercise 45 minutes a day, five days a week, or to eat at least 8 to 10 servings of fruits and vegetables per day.

Attaining your goals can be influenced in two ways: Focusing on the great things you'll experience if you complete your goal (e.g., happiness, personal accomplishment and pride), or lamenting over the negative things that might happen if you don't (e.g., loneliness, a heart attack or the death of a loved one).

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"My coach was outstanding. He always was professional and friendly. He helped me set realistic and achievable goals. I never felt judged, and always could be totally honest with him (even when I did not meet my goals). Outstanding individual and service provided."

-Gerry, Health Coaching participant

You may not be able to control the rate at which your body loses weight, but you can control what you eat and how often you exercise, which usually leads to weight loss.

Fast track your health with SMART goal setting

What is my health and wellness goal(s)?

Step 1: Make your goal detailed and **SPECIFIC**. Try to answer who, what, where, how and when.

How will I reach this goal? List at least three action steps and be specific.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Step 2: Make your goal **MEASURABLE**. Tracking a meaningful goal helps you monitor and acknowledge your progress.

I will measure/track my goal by using the following methods:

(For example, minutes of exercise logged or amount of weight loss.)

Step 3: Make your goal **ATTAINABLE**. Find the sweet spot, a goal that is both challenging and realistic – something within reach that will take you out of your comfort zone.

What resources do I need to achieve this goal?

How will I make time for this goal?

What do I need to learn before I move forward?

Who can I talk to for support?

Step 4: Make your goal **RELEVANT**. A goal typically addresses something that's required immediately, necessary and (hopefully) a priority in your life. Set goals that are appropriate to you and your specific situation.

Create a list of reasons why you want to reach your goal:

Did you know?

You're more likely to meet your goals if you write them down and verbalize them to somebody else.

Step 5: Make your goal **TIME-BOUND**. Establish how much time you need to achieve your goal and set periodic benchmarks. Be realistic with your date to maintain performance and create a sense of urgency by making a short deadline.

I will reach my goal by (date) _____

My halfway measurement will be _____

On (date) _____

Additional dates and milestones I'll aim for:

To attain your desired outcome, it's critical to create a routine that allows you to review your goals on a weekly basis. By regularly evaluating your progress, you can more easily address roadblocks and make small amendments as necessary.

Write down when you will review your goals on a routine basis.

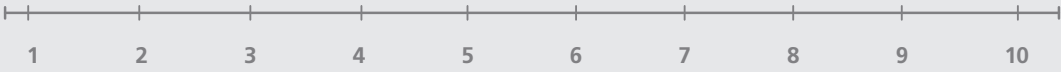
Day of week: _____

Time of day: _____

Reviewing progress

Establish a time each week to create an action plan and review your progress regularly. This helps you organize and assess your goals, ensuring they remain relevant and meaningful. It's also critical that you acknowledge progress – no matter how small or challenging. Some weeks will be more challenging than others. Set aside self-blame. If there's a week when you don't meet goals, ask yourself what you learned from the situation. What will help you be more successful next time?

USE THE EXAMPLE OF A SMART WEEKLY ACTION PLAN BELOW TO CREATE YOUR OWN.

This week, my goal(s) is:	
Some challenges I face:	
My strategies:	
My confidence level is (10 being most confident): Check your answer. 	
My successes this week:	
I learned:	



**“You simply have to put
one foot in front of the
other and keep going.
Put blinders on and
plow right ahead.”**

– GEORGE LUCAS

3. Building a network of social support

A strong social support network can be as critical to your success as the goal itself. Your family, friends and co-workers are an important part of your life and it's never too soon to cultivate these essential relationships. Taking the time to build a social support network is a wise investment. Numerous studies have shown that a network of supportive relationships contribute to physical and psychological well-being.

- **A sense of belonging.** Spending time with people helps ward off loneliness. Whether it's other parents, dog lovers, fishing buddies or siblings, just knowing you're not alone can help you cope with stress.
- **A sense of self-worth.** Having people who call you a friend reinforces the idea that you're a good person to be around.
- **A feeling of security.** Your social support network gives you access to information, advice, guidance and other types of assistance. It's comforting to know that you have people you can turn to in a time of need.

Ways to cultivate your social network

- Pick a cause that's important to you and get involved. You're sure to meet others who share similar interests and values.
- Join a gym or the local community center, or start a fitness group at work. You'll make friends and get some exercise in the process.
- Join a support group or attend a church, synagogue or other spiritual gathering.
- Take time to thank your friends and family, and express how important they are to you. Be the first to raise your hand when they need support.
- Avoid spending too much time with people who are negative and critical of you or the world around them, or involved in unhealthy behaviors such as alcohol or substance abuse.

Going public with your goals allows friends and family to know what you're trying to accomplish and how you plan to get there. Choose a few people in your social support network and ask if they would periodically follow up on your goals. Explain why this change is so important to you and share a copy of your goals with them. It's a lot harder to let your friends down than it is to slack off when you're the only one who knows or cares about your goals.

A good support person or group:

- Holds you accountable to your goals, no matter what
- Listens to you and is nonjudgmental
- Is able to help you solve problems and brainstorm new strategies
- Models healthy behaviors
- Provides positive feedback and celebrates your successes

What do I look for in a support person or group?

What type of support is helpful?

4. Accountability strategies

Accountability is critical to behavior change success. Even with the right information and the right intentions you won't succeed if you let yourself off the hook when it's time to do the work.

There are two very effective ways to increase your accountability.

1. The first approach challenges your excuses head on. No matter how difficult your circumstances may be, the only way to succeed is to take personal responsibility for making things work out the way you want. Own your decisions and don't use excuses to let yourself off the hook.
2. The second approach requires a written contract with yourself. A contract is a visible reminder of the commitment you've made to yourself as well as an effective tool to combat those pesky excuses. If taken seriously, you'll find it more difficult to break the contract than to overlook an ambiguous resolution to try harder. If you haven't already signed the contract form included in this workbook, do it now.

Challenging your common excuses

Observe your inner self – what goes on in your mind, especially when you don't want to do something that you know you should do? What do you say to yourself in that moment? Some excuses are much easier to identify than others.

For example, throwing in the towel just because you made one poor food choice is unnecessary. Other excuses are less obvious. For example, many people feel they don't have enough hours in their day to fit in some form of exercise or prepare a healthy meal. In most cases, it's a matter of improving time management.

Identify appropriate countermeasures

One solution is to begin thinking about yourself in a different light – one that puts you in charge. For each excuse or rationalization, think of an effective countermeasure. For example, if you find that your schedule is often so busy that you skip your workouts, countermeasure by spending a few minutes each morning planning what realistically has to be done, what can be postponed, what might save time and who might be able to help you get things done.

What is the most common excuse I use that gets in the way of my health goals?

Countermeasure: What is a countermeasure I will practice?

4.1 Self-talk

Everyone has trouble at times with negative self-talk. We're often our worst critic. The little voice inside may be telling you that you're not working hard enough or that you're not worth it and you should give up on your goals. It's not always a rational voice. Simply being aware of your inner dialogue weakens negative self-talk. Try to replace the negative belief with a countermeasure. For example: Instead of saying, "I'm never going to lose weight, I just don't have enough willpower," say "I can lose weight if I stay focused, keep a food journal and manage my stress in a more effective way."

It's also important to respect yourself and others. You're more likely to feel better about yourself. Be kind and honest to others, as well as yourself. Building self-confidence can take time, so be persistent.

What are some challenging beliefs that come up for me?

How can I respond differently?

Tips

- Change takes time. Prepare yourself for bumps in the road but know that it will get easier.
- Think of change as creating a new normal: A daily dose of exercise and a diet loaded with fresh, healthy foods.
- Grocery shop with intention – not when you're hungry.
- A good night's sleep is essential. Avoid late-night screen time and get at least seven hours of sleep a night.



5. Cues to eating and physical activity

Eating and drinking are often triggered by something other than hunger and thirst. These triggers are called cues and they can impact how much activity we do and how much food we eat. Some cues are positive and drive healthy behaviors while other cues can lead to more eating and less activity. When we repeatedly respond to a cue in the same way, we form a habit. We're often unaware of our cues and identifying them is useful in making long-term behavioral change.

Here is a list of some common cues:

- Hunger
- Emotions
- Walking by the break room at work and seeing candy/sweets
- Attending parties or social events

What are some of my negative dietary cues?

What are my new responses?

Handling problem cues

- Plan ahead. Eat a healthy snack before going out to eat.
- Avoid the break room at work. Change the path to and from your desk if necessary.
- Don't keep unhealthy snacks at home or within reach.
- Discuss goals with friends and family and request to take a walk instead of eating out.
- If you associate watching television with eating, try taking a walk or do something more active instead.
- If you're offered unhealthy food in a social setting, choose a healthier option.



**“No one can make
you feel inferior
without your
consent.”**

—ELEANOR ROOSEVELT

Cues to physical activity

Some of the negative physical activity cues that can deter your efforts include:

- Eating a heavy meal
- Not getting enough rest
- Feeling overly stressed
- Drinking alcohol
- Pain
- Being around others that do not value activity

What are some of my negative physical activity cues?

Positive physical activity cues include:

- Setting dates with a friend to exercise or go to the gym
- Keeping your gym mat, shoes or bike visible
- Creating reminders on your phone, or setting an alarm to be more active
- Walking for 10 minutes after every meal

What positive activity cues could I add to my routine?

What challenges do I face trying to implement a positive cue?

6. Stress triggers and healthy responses

Stress and anxiety can take a toll on your well-being and contribute to setbacks. You can't always control events, but you can learn new ways to cope with them. Be aware of past situations that have caused you stress.

Stress can come from:

- Physical environment (weather, traffic)
- Social environment (friends, family, colleagues)
- Physiological state (illness, fatigue)
- Your thoughts (anxiety, depression)

What are my sources of stress?

What can trigger this stress?

What is my emotional or behavioral response to this stress?

Is this response working?

If your typical reaction isn't helping you deal with stressful situations, maybe it's time to develop new strategies to manage your stress. Be very specific about these new reactions. What could be a new response to the stress trigger, or source of the stress? (Keep a journal, practice yoga or speak with a counselor.)

After you've tried this for a few weeks, think about what worked well and what didn't. If the new solution didn't help you cope with the stress, consider a new reaction. It might be a process of trial and error before you find the solution.



**“Never let the fear of striking
out get in your way.”**

– BABE RUTH

7. Practicing mindfulness

Mindfulness is paying full attention to the present moment. It's noticing your thoughts, feelings and sensations without judging them. When we begin paying attention to the activity of our own mind, it's common to notice that we often judge our experience. We categorize what we like and don't like, what makes us feel good or bad.

Do you notice neutral experiences? When you do find your mind judging, don't stop it, just observe. Mindfulness is a focus on "being" rather than "doing." It can be used to reduce stress and anxiety, manage pain, sleep and boost the immune system.

When we're not mindful, we can develop automatic reactions to stress that can be harmful. We may perceive everything as a threat. Stress hormones are released, blood pressure and heart rate increases, and we're less likely to access the reasoning mind. We may get very angry at others, and get into a mindset of catastrophic thinking.

Formal practices of mindfulness include:

- Deep breathing
- Yoga
- Tai chi
- Meditation

Mindfulness is not:

- Multitasking
- Thinking about the past
- Creating and rehearsing future scenarios
- Worrying about what might happen
- Eating in front of the television

When am I being mindful?

When am I not mindful?

Informal practices of mindfulness:

- Allow yourself five minutes in the morning to be quiet, meditate and relax.
- Eat slowly and pay attention to the flavors, textures, smells and presentation of your meal.
- Focus on one task at a time, such as chores.
- Listen with intent, try not to multitask when listening to friends or family.
- Notice habitual ways of thinking, such as worrying about the future and self-blame.

What are some ways I'd like to integrate mindfulness in my life?

S.T.O.P.

Stop

Take a
breath

Observe

Proceed

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*“ My coach was so supportive
and had great ideas!!!”*

-Olivia, Health Coaching participant

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Tips on practicing mindfulness

- Allow thoughts to come in and accept them as they are.
- Thoughts and feelings come and go like clouds in the sky, they will pass.
- Tell yourself that your thoughts are just thoughts.
- When an uncomfortable feeling comes up, pause and simply notice before acting on it.



What are some ways I'd like to integrate mindfulness into my life?

What are my current roadblocks?

What can I do to overcome these roadblocks?

8. Rewarding your progress

Changing habits is difficult and even small steps in the right direction should be celebrated. Rewards can help us stay focused on our goals and increase motivation. Rewards don't have to cost money but they should always be healthy in nature. Using food or alcohol as a reward can add unnecessary calories to your diet and the benefits are temporary. You may feel less motivated afterward.

Examples of nonfood related rewards:

- Massage
- Reading a new book
- Taking a walk or hike
- Taking a hot bath
- Playing a game

What are ways I can reward myself for my efforts?

Keeping a journal

Keeping records allow you to see more clearly what's working and what's not working. Patterns become more apparent and we're able to work with them more effectively. For example, you may notice when you go to a party, you start overeating after a glass of wine, or two. Maybe the next day you feel sluggish and skip your workout.

9. Physical activity log

Men and women of all ages benefit from moderate-intensity, daily physical activity, which can be achieved in longer sessions (such as 30 minutes of brisk walking) or in shorter sessions, (such as three 10-minute brisk walks). Activity of longer duration or of greater intensity offers additional health benefits.

Examples of moderate-intensity physical activities include:

- Walking briskly (15-minute walk)
- Bicycling 5 to 9 mph, level terrain or with hills
- Golfing, pulling or carrying clubs
- Swimming, recreational
- Yard work (raking leaves, digging in the garden, mowing the lawn)

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“ My coach is a great partner, motivator and listener. He kept me accountable and motivated.”

-Kelly, Health Coaching participant

Your body burns three times more energy walking or doing light activities than it does at rest.

One of the biggest barriers to regular physical activity is time. Finding time to be active is difficult and easy to neglect. This physical activity log example is designed to help you get a better understanding of your own activity, including frequency, duration and preferences.

Date	Activities	Duration	Notes
12/1	Stretching	15 minutes	Did Yoga

Using a pedometer is a great way to get a sense for how many steps you take daily.

10. Daily Food Journal

Studies show that keeping track of what you eat is one of the most powerful tools to help you shed unwanted pounds and keep them off for good. Use this food journal to keep your dietary pattern in check. Once you've practiced with this journal, you may want to find an online program or app to support you going forward.

Date: / /

Meal	What I ate	How much	How I felt, where I ate or other factors that influenced my food choices
Breakfast			
Snack			
Lunch			
Snack			
Dinner			
Beverages			



**“You may have to fight
a battle more than
once to win it.”**

— MARGARET THATCHER

11. Notes and questions

Use this space to write any questions you may have for your health coach.

Congratulations! You've completed your Goal Setting Guide.

The steps you've taken to achieve your goal give you a blueprint for continued success. It's time to acknowledge your progress. Every step toward your goal is an accomplishment.

Staying motivated is essential to maintaining your goal as you move forward. Remember to:

- Reflect on how you faced possible barriers
- Think about how you evaluate your progress
- Renew your commitment to take action
- Reward yourself along the way

Ready to set new goals? Try out new ideas? Get extra support? Your Providence health coach is here to help.

Call us at

888-819-8999 or 503-574-6000 (TTY 711)

Sources

http://www.cdc.gov/diabetes/prevention/pdf/handout_session14.pdf

http://www.cdc.gov/diabetes/prevention/pdf/handout_session8.pdf

<http://www.bemindful.org/mindmastery.pdf>

Kabat-Zinn, Jon, Full Catastrophe Living: Using the Wisdom of Your Body and Mind to Face Stress, Pain and Illness (Random House, 1990)



If you have any questions, need this in large print, braille or a different language, please call us Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., at 800-878-4445 (TTY:711)

For Medicare Advantage Plan members, please call 7 days a week from 8:00 am to 8:00 pm, at 800-603-2340 or 503-574-8000 (TTY:711)

Medicare Advantage Plan Members: Providence Medicare Advantage Plans is an HMO, HMO-POS, and HMO SNP plan with a Medicare and Oregon Health Plan contract. Enrollment in Providence Medicare Advantage Plans depends on contract renewal. This information is not a complete description of benefits. Contact the plan for more information. Limitations, copayments, and restrictions may apply. Benefits may change on January 1 of each year.

Our Mission

As people of Providence,
we reveal God's love for all,
especially the poor and vulnerable,
through our compassionate service.

Our Core Values

Respect, Compassion, Justice,
Excellence, Stewardship

Portland metro area

503-574-6300

All other areas

877-245-4077

www.ProvidenceHealthPlan.com/healthcoach



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