



Motivation to Change

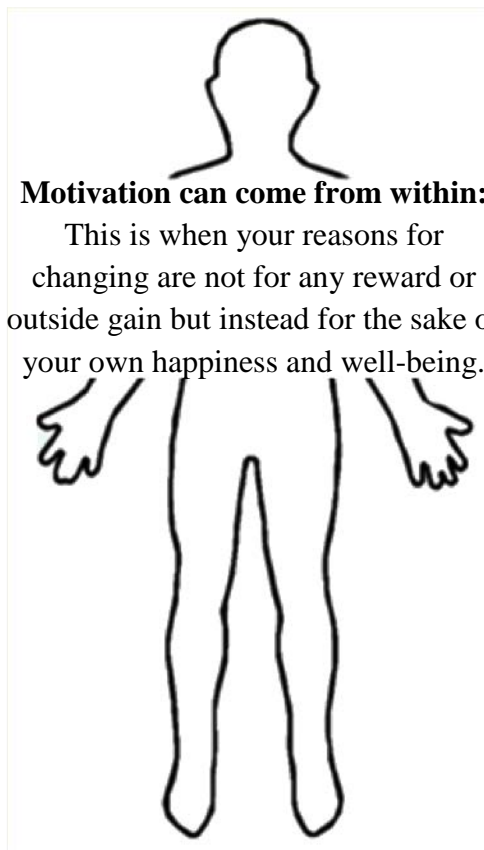
Client Handbook Series
January 2015

Developed by Carleton University, Criminal Justice Decision Making Laboratory
& Ontario Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services
© Ralph C. Serin, Angela DeWolf, Sarah McQuaid
& the Ontario Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services

This handbook series is public domain and can be copied and used with clients
without cost but also without evidence regarding efficacy.

What is Motivation to Change?

Motivation to Change is a person's drive to change his or her own beliefs and behaviours.



Motivation can come from within:

This is when your reasons for changing are not for any reward or outside gain but instead for the sake of your own happiness and well-being.

Motivation can come from the outside:

This is when you want to change to get some kind of reward or outcome.

For example, participating in treatment to help you get parole or get off probation. Other people, especially family and loved ones, can also affect your desire to change, for example, when your reasons for changing are to make other people happy.

What Helps and Hurts Motivation to Change?

Things that help motivation:

- Staying out of jail
- Feeling like a success
- Having supportive friends and family

Things that hurt motivation:

- Not having support
- Feeling like a failure
- Fear
- Doubt
- Negative thinking

Draw a line anywhere on the scale below to indicate how motivated you are to change right now.



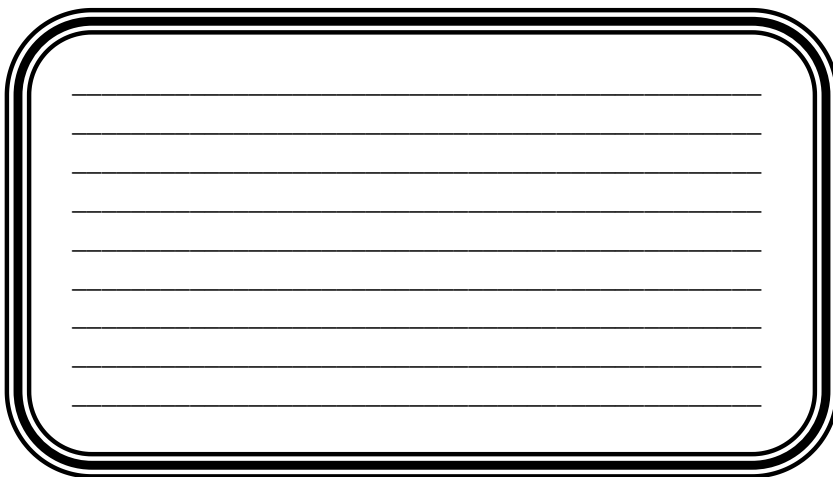
Not at all motivated

100% motivated

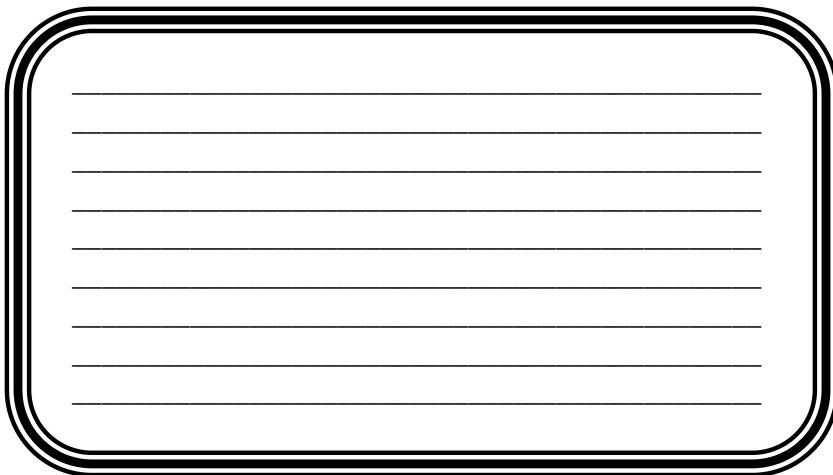
What Change Means for You

Start thinking about what you might want to change about yourself or your life. Sometimes we make personal changes for ourselves, and sometimes we feel pressured to make changes for other people. Think about why you want to change. Is it for you, or for someone else?

In this box, list some things you think (or know) other people in your life would like you to change about yourself. For example: "My girlfriend wants me to get a better paying job."



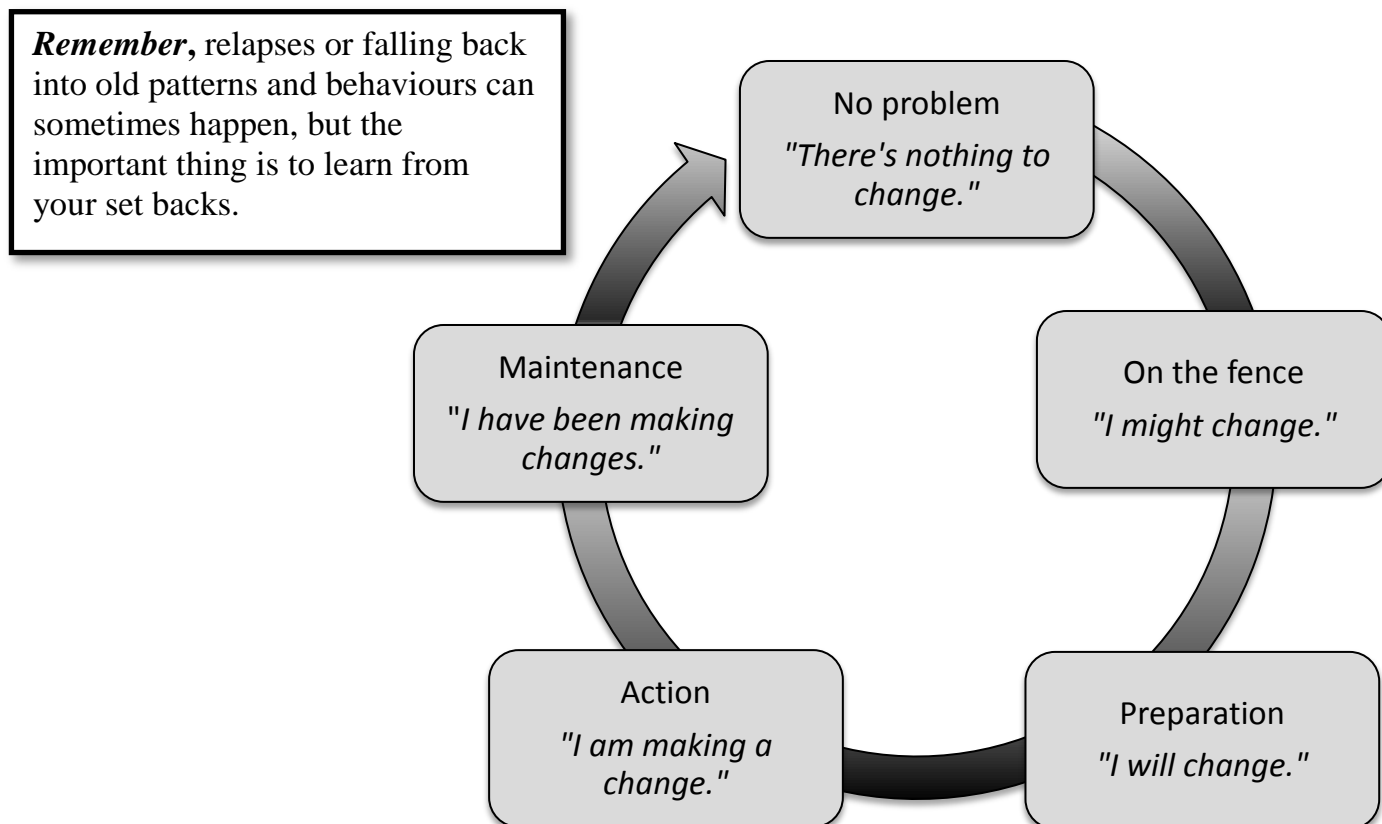
Good, now in this box list some things that you want to change about yourself. Try to start with small changes that you can easily make, but make sure that they are things *you* want to change. For example: "I would like to try and stop drinking for a week"



Remember, while making positive changes about yourself often also changes the lives of the people around you in a positive way, the goal of this workbook is to help you better yourself for *you*.

Stages of Change

There are several stages a person must go through before they can change their behaviour. These stages of change are a cycle, where people may go through them a few times before lasting change happens.




1. **No problem:** Unaware of a problem and no thoughts of change.
2. **On the fence:** Thinking about changing, but still on the fence.
3. **Preparation:** Intending to change and planning what it would take to make the change happen. e.g. *"I want to stop drinking, so I should go to treatment."*
4. **Action:** Taking first steps toward changing behaviour. e.g. *"I have started treatment and I have stopped drinking for 3 days."*
5. **Maintaining change:** There is a commitment to change and is practicing new skills and behaviour to maintain change.

Expectancy about Change

Changing your behaviour is a long term process that won't happen overnight. It will be hard at times, and you may doubt yourself and think: "*I've tried this before and failed, so I doubt I can do it this time*". However, if you are committed to changing your behaviour, change is possible.

List what you expect to happen throughout the change process (e.g. it will be hard, I might fail):

 Nice job! Now that you have thought about what to expect during the change process, it's time to start thinking about what things might slow down or stop your change process.

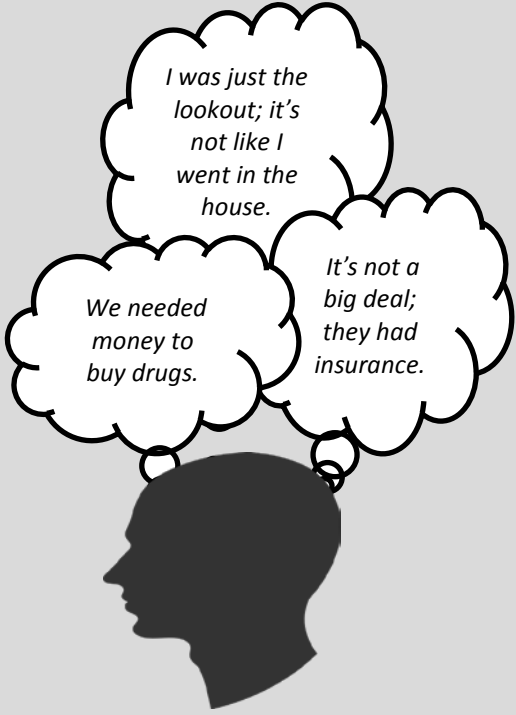

Barriers to Change

Sometimes you might face roadblocks that can make changing harder, such as hanging out with criminal friends, doing drugs, and having harmful thoughts.

Sometimes you might try to justify or explain why you did something wrong. These thoughts can get in the way of being honest about your problems. Some of these thoughts include:

- ❖ **Minimizing Actions:** Downplaying the seriousness of your actions.
- ❖ **Justifying Actions:** Making up excuses for why you did something wrong.
- ❖ **Shifting Responsibility:** Moving the blame onto something or someone else.
- ❖ **Denial:** Denying anything happened or that you did anything wrong.

Below are some examples of thoughts that might be used for different types of crimes:

Break and Enter	Assault
 <p><i>I was just the lookout; it's not like I went in the house.</i></p> <p><i>We needed money to buy drugs.</i></p> <p><i>It's not a big deal; they had insurance.</i></p>	 <p><i>I don't really have an anger problem; I just drank too much.</i></p> <p><i>I didn't even really hurt him that bad!</i></p> <p><i>He got in my face, so he had it coming.</i></p>

Barriers to Change

- ❖ Now it's your turn. Write down some of your own thoughts that you might use when committing a crime.



Well done! Now that you have written down some of your harmful thoughts, it's time to look at some of the events that contributed to your offending.

Offense Chain

- ❖ Making an offense chain means looking back at what happened before, during, and after you committed a crime. This will help you understand everything that happened and how events link together.
- ❖ Consider the people, places, situations, and feelings that may increase your risk of getting into trouble. For example:

Who else was there? (e.g. friends, by yourself)

What did you do? (e.g. steal, hit someone)

Where were you? (e.g. at home, at the bar)

When did it happen? (e.g. during the day or night)

Why did you do it? (e.g. revenge, money problems)

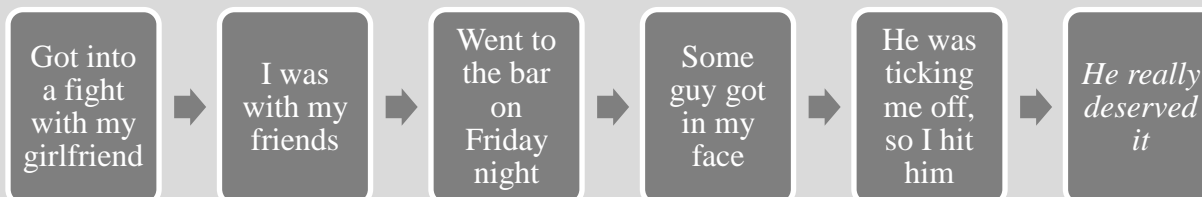
How did you feel/what did you think before, during, and after? (e.g. anger, stress, relief, justifications)

Below is an example of an offense chain of someone who was arrested for assault



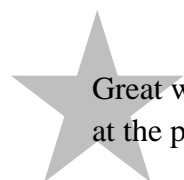
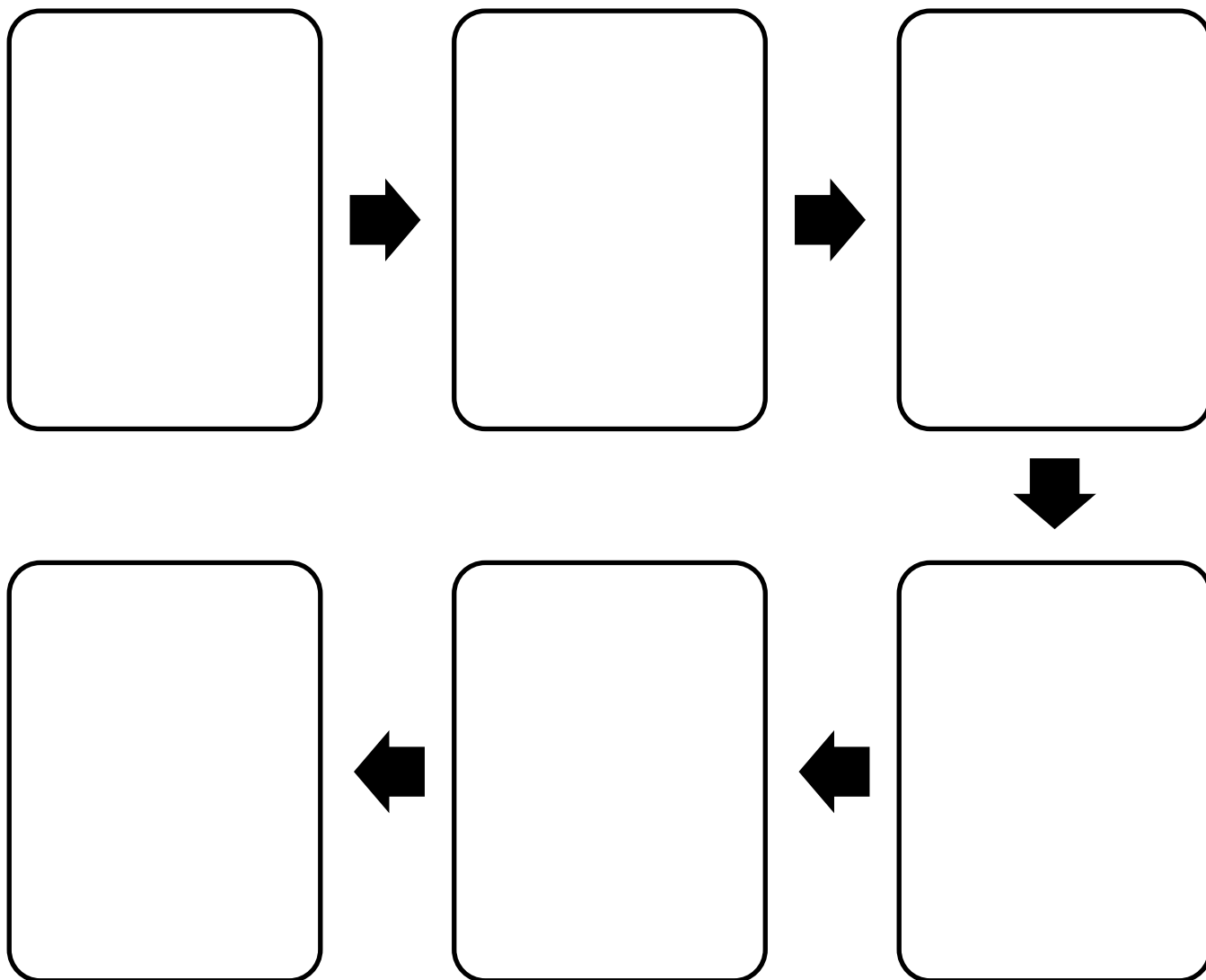
Dave got into an argument with his girlfriend. He went out to a bar with friends to get away from his girlfriend. Trying to cool off, Dave began drinking heavily. However, someone at the bar started calling Dave names and his friends were pushing him to do something about it. Already angry from his fight with his girlfriend, and now drunk, Dave hit the other person in the face and shoved him to the ground. Afterwards, Dave justified his behaviour by blaming the victim and saying the victim got in his face and deserved it.

Offense Chain:



Offense Chain

❖ Using the example above, it's now your turn to create your own offense chain.



Great work in writing down some of the factors that led up to your crime. It's now time to look at the pros and cons of offending.

Costs and Benefits

Often, people have clashing thoughts and feelings, and even fears, about change. For example, someone might want to change his behaviours to stay out of jail but also doesn't want to change because he feels like he will lose friends and money. When someone doesn't want to change, it may be because he sees more good things about offending than bad things.

These feelings are normal, but they can decrease motivation to change. It helps to be aware of what you believe are the costs and the benefits of offending.

In the table below, make a list of the things that you will gain (benefits) if you continue offending and the things that you will lose (costs) if you continue offending.

Benefits of Offending	Costs of Offending
E.g., Easy money, I keep my reputation	E.g., I'll go to prison, I feel shame and guilt
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Think About...

- How do the costs outweigh the benefits?
- Why might change be a good idea?

Good! Now that you have weighed the costs and benefits of offending, you are ready to start thinking about what your most important reasons for changing are.

Reasons to Change

You have just thought about the costs and benefits of offending and seen that the costs of offending are greater than the benefits of offending. Now it's time to take it a step further and think about what your reasons are for changing and what your reasons are for not changing.

Examples

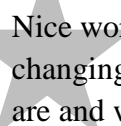
Reason for *not* changing: *"I don't want to stop stealing because I can't make money any other way."*

Reason for changing: *"I want to stop stealing because being in jail takes me away from my family, and I want to be there while my kids grow up."*

Now it's your turn:

My reasons for not changing are...

My reasons for changing are...

 Nice work! You have expressed why you want to change and what some of your fears about changing are. Now, move on to the next activity to determine what your strengths and challenges are and what steps you can take to start making a change.

Steps to Follow

Now that you have a better understanding of your expectancies about change, it's time to move toward creating goals.

First, it's important to decide what you think are your strengths (things you are good at or qualities in yourself that you like) and what things about yourself you feel you need to work on.

Making a list of your own strengths and challenges can help increase your motivation to change and can help you to create strategies for making real changes. Your challenges are things that you will work toward changing, and your strengths are qualities that you already have that you can build-upon to help you reach your goals.

Strength Examples

- Trustworthy
- Loyal
- Hard-working

List your *top 3* strengths:

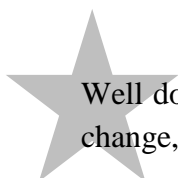
1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Challenge Examples

- Give up easily
- Don't stick to a task
- Have a temper

List your *top 3* challenges:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____



Well done! Now that you see what your strengths are and what things you would like to change, you can move on to creating goals to make those changes.

Steps to Follow

Step 1. Setting Goals

Writing down your goals is an important step toward making changes. Having goals can help keep you on track, but there are a few important things to remember:

- ✓ **Goals should be something you can easily measure and track.** For example, having the goal of “becoming a better person” is good but too hard to measure or track. A better goal would be to “attend AA meetings twice per week.”
- ✓ **Goals should be realistic and achievable.** While it’s great to have big life goals, you are much more likely to reach your goals if they are smaller. For example, setting a goal to not drink any alcohol for one month is much more reachable than having the goal to not drink any alcohol for one year. You can then build up from there. *Everyone is different so find goals that are right for you.*

Step 2. Considering Options

Every good goal requires some kind of skill in order to achieve it. Once you have picked a few key goals, *consider your options* by thinking about these questions:

- ✓ **What skills and resources do I already have to achieve these goals?**
- ✓ **What skills and resources do I need to achieve these goals?**

Step 3. Making a Plan

The third step is to make a plan for how you are going to work toward reaching your goals. Remember that reaching goals will, and should, take time -- *so be patient with yourself!*

When creating a plan you should write down each step you will take to reaching the goal, and then look at your plan whenever you need some extra motivation.

Step 4. Reviewing Your Goals

After you have started to change your behaviours and work towards your goals, don’t forget to go back and review your goals. It can be a lot to remember on your own, so write it down to see how you improve over time. This involves tracking your own progress (*e.g.*, “*I haven’t had any drinks in one week*”) plus reminding yourself what your goals are and how you are trying to reach them.

Now that you have reviewed the steps involved in setting goals, check out the next page for an example of a Goals Sheet. Then, you will fill one out for yourself.

Goals Sheet Example

Goal #1 (Example)

Write down your goal. Make sure it is realistic.

My goal is to remain completely drug and alcohol-free for 30 days.

List the specific steps you will take to reach this goal.

I will meet with my parole officer once per week and submit to any drug testing that needs to be done.

I will attend AA meetings three times per week and follow all the steps.

I will remove all the drugs and alcohol from my house.

I will tell my friends and family about my goal and how I would like their support to achieve it.

What are some things that might get in your way? How will you deal with them?

My birthday is on Wednesday and all my friends will want me to come drink with them. I will spend my birthday with my family instead.

My work schedule might interfere with AA meetings. I will tell my boss about my goal and ask for a different work schedule on those days.

List at least 3 things about yourself that you know will help you stay on track (strengths).

I am hardworking and reliable so my boss will be okay with me changing my schedule to make AA meetings.

I am good at sticking to things once I start them so I will be consistent with attending AA meetings.

I am confident so I will have no problem telling my friends that I can't hang out with them anymore if they continue to drink and do drugs around me.

Who will help you?

My wife, sister, and children, my boss, my parole officer, my AA sponsor.

Now that you have seen an example of a goals sheet, it's time to create your own on the next page. You are asked to pick only two goals to focus on, so pick the ones you are most committed to reaching.

Goals Sheet

Goal #1

Write down your goal. Make sure it is realistic.

List the specific steps you will take to reach this goal.

What are some things that might get in your way? How will you deal with them?

List at least 3 things about yourself that you know will help you stay on track (strengths).

Who will help you?

Goal #2

Write down your goal. Make sure it is realistic.

List the specific steps you will take to reach this goal.

What are some things that might get in your way? How will you deal with them?

List at least 3 things about yourself that you know will help you stay on track (strengths).

Who will help you?

Summary

Here's a quick summary of what you have learned about motivation:

- 1) Motivation to change is a person's drive to change his or her own beliefs and behaviours.
- 2) The stages of change are a cycle, where people often don't get change right the first time. It's important to be realistic in your expectations about how and when the change will happen.
- 3) There will always be roadblocks during the change process; if you can plan for it beforehand, you will have a better chance of overcoming it.
- 4) If you get stuck during the change process you can always look back to your offense chain or make a new one to help you see where the problem starts.
- 5) It's important to know, and keep track of, your reasons for changing and why you may or may not want to change.
- 6) Your strengths will keep you on track while your challenges might hold you back. While working through your challenges, don't forget to build up your strengths.
- 7) The steps to follow are: 1) Set realistic goals, 2) Consider your options, and 3) Make a concrete plan for how you are going to make the changes.

Now that you know more about motivation, rate yourself again on the scale below to indicate how motivated you are to change right now.



Not at all motivated

100% motivated