



BEHAVIOUR CHANGE STRATEGIES

GENERAL	Strategies that are generally helpful for someone changing their behaviour, that might have multiple positive impacts.
	Write (or draw) a plan if you haven't already.
	Encourage the client to have a practice period to get a feel for what you are asking them to do.
	Start really small - scale back the desired behaviour to an instance that the client feels they will have a high likelihood of success in achieving, even if that instance is sub-clinical in its benefit (it can be easier to get the habit formed and then increase over time).
	Encourage the client to engage in mental rehearsal, namely, get them to imagine themselves engaging in the behaviour, including the various activities that would precede and follow the behaviour.
	Help the client to find a way to self-monitor their engagement in the behaviour as well as the outcomes (e.g. journal or habit tracker).
CAPABILITY	Strategies that are generally focused on ensuring the client has the knowledge, skills and self-confidence to make a change, engage in a behaviour.
	Provide the client with some educational materials about the behaviour or encourage them to do some independent learning.
	Set up a monitoring and feedback system, so that you can assess whether they are doing the behaviour correctly and at the right frequency/intensity. This could include the client recording themselves doing the behaviour or using biofeedback devices (e.g. fitbit). Use those insights to provide clients with feedback.
	Get the client to think about actions that might precede the desired behaviour that improve the capacity of the client to engage in the behaviour. For example, having the right footwear improves the capability to engage in walking as exercise.

Capability continued

Performance on many tasks is often improved in the presence of positive emotions. Explore with the client ways to make the performance of the behaviour more fun and enjoyable.

If the behaviour(s) the client is trying to establish require considerable mental or physical energy, look for where else in their life they may be able to conserve energy.

OPPORTUNITY

Strategies that help clients set up their physical and social environments in such a way as it makes it easier to make their desired changes.

Get the client to take note of all the different barriers and problems that arise when trying to make the change ('barrier hunting'). This will help alert them to the many different factors that influence the change they are trying to make.

With the client's permission, engage a family member, friend or colleague in the process of behaviour change planning and get them to agree to play a role of social support and/or reminders.

Explore the use of different cues, prompts and reminders. This might include post-it notes, notifications on phone, alarms, signs and other signals.

Encourage the client to explore what kinds of environmental modifications might make it easier to change their behaviour. Such modifications include removing triggers, restricting access to assistive aids, removing aversive stimuli, adding objects to the environment (e.g. reminders, aids).

Train or restructure the environment to reduce time demand or competing time demands.

MOTIVATION

Strategies that help increase a person's motivation to engage in a behaviour, make a change.

Explore with the client the 'bigger picture', namely how they think their life would improve if they can make the necessary behaviour change. Connect the behaviour change to their bigger goals, hopes, aspirations. Review them regularly to keep them present in mind.

Help the client to set clear goals, both in terms of the behaviour changes they are trying to make as well as what they hope to get from making those changes.

Motivation continued	Provide information about the likely consequences (social, environmental, health, emotional) of making the behaviour changes and NOT making the behaviour changes. Make them salient and memorable.
	Work with the client to develop and sign a behavioural contract (commitment from the client, to you, on what they will or will not do).
	Set up a monitoring and feedback system, including recording of engagement in behaviour. Provide feedback and/or support so client can monitor their progress and correct if necessary.
	Engage a family member or friend to help with the client's behaviour change goals. Encourage the client to identify the ways that the family member or friend could help.
	Encourage the client to connect with others who are trying to make similar changes. If the change they are trying to make is relatively common, they may have someone in their existing network who is making similar changes.
	Find ways to add fun, play, amusement or pleasure to the activity to help create positive associations with the desired behaviour.
	Get the client to write a pros/cons or costs/benefits list to more deeply consider the positives and negatives of the change they are considering.
	If the client is keeping a record of the benefits of making the change, get them to consider also the benefits of the change to other people.
	Get the client to keep a record of the excuses they used to not change and discuss them in session. See if you can (collaboratively) find ways to challenge them.
	Advise or arrange repeated exposures to a situation or stimulus that reduces the drive to engage in an unwanted behaviour.
	In addition to monitoring the positive health impacts of the behaviour change, get the client to notice if their changes produce any positive mental health (e.g. emotional changes) as well.
	Encourage the client, if possible, to observe the positive or negative consequences of others engaging in a related behaviour.
	Get the client to imagine the positive (or negative) outcomes of engaging (or not engaging) in the desired behaviour.

MAINTENANCE**Strategies that help a client maintain beneficial changes over an extended period of time.**

	Show the client how to re-do the COM-B analysis. To sustain a set of behaviours over a longer time period may mean revisiting aspects of capability, opportunity and motivation, as well as modifications to the behaviour itself.
	Help the client translate the habit from one setting to another. For example, if they usually do the habit in the morning, get them experimenting with other times of the day.
	Encourage the client to recognise the behaviour as part of their identity and to communicate (where relevant) that identity to others. For example, rather than 'I meditate', see if the client can identify as 'a meditator'.
	Identify where the client might be a role model for friends, family or colleagues who are looking to make similar changes.
	Talk to the client about problem-focused coping, which involves identifying barriers, challenges, setbacks and difficulties and strategising specific ways to deal with them.
	With longer-term change, goals might shift or change. Support the client in reviewing their goals and making adjustments to their behaviour accordingly.
	Slowly fade out any cues or prompts that the client is using, to see if the behaviour can remain without them.
	Repetition helps with habit formation. The more times the client engages in the behaviour, the more embedded it will become.
	If a client falls back into old patterns, encourage them to overcorrect by bringing back the desired behaviour in an exaggerated way.
	If using external rewards, slowly fade them out over time to see if the change is supported by internal, intrinsic rewards.