

Evoking Change

Medical Patient Education Module

Identify and understand what you want to change.

Whenever you decide to make a change, you must first understand why you're making the change in the first place. Associate Professor Anthony Grant, from the University of Sydney's Coaching Psychology Unit, says that you should start by defining your core values and identify what is important to you.

"You need to be able to identify what it is about your goal that adds to you as a person, that makes you feel better and more expansive," Grant says.

If your goal aligns with your core values, then "the thought of it will trigger a positive gut feeling."

Rid your life of negativity.

This is not as simple as it may sound. If you're surrounded by negativity, then how can you expect to have a positive and joyful life?

In fact, those who are negative or surrounded by negativity are more stressed, get sick more often, and have less opportunities than those who are positive. Chris Talambas says on Lifehacker, says "When we make a decision to become positive, and follow that decision up with action, we will begin to encounter situations and people that are also positive."

Of course, that's easier said than done. That's why he suggests that you can accomplish this goal by doing the following:

- Be grateful for everything.
- Laugh more often, especially at yourself.
- Help others.
- Change how you think.
- Surround yourself with positive people.
- Approach problems with positive actions and solutions.
- Take full responsibility and stop playing the victim.

You'll find when you complete these steps, you'll become more confident in your life.

Exercise more often.

You may be getting tired of hearing everyone telling you that you need more exercise. Sure. Exercising is great for you physically. But, it's also an excellent way to become more positive in life. Exercise can change the direction of most situations in your life. As Nike says, "Just Do It." The benefits of exercise are immeasurable. You gain purpose, drive, but most of all it teaches you a discipline.

For starters, when you exercise, you feel better about yourself, which leads to having more confidence. Exercise also reduces anxiety and stress and releases euphoric chemicals in the brain like endorphins and dopamine.

Be kind to others.

Sonja Lyubomirsky, a professor at the University of California, Riverside, says, "People who engage in kind acts become happier over time." The reason? "When you're kind to others, you feel good as a person--more moral, optimistic, and positive."

There numerous ways that you can be kind to others that don't take that much time and effort. For example, you could purchase coffee for a co-worker. Pay the toll for the person in line behind you. Visit a family member or friend or drive them to the airport. Smile at cashiers or servers. Or, you could volunteer whenever you have free time.

Build a support network.

According to the Mayo Clinic, a "strong social support network can be critical to help you through the stress of tough times, whether you've had a bad day at work or a year filled with loss or chronic illness." This group of friends, family, and peers is also important because they provide additional benefits like providing a sense of belonging, an increase in self-worth, and a feeling of security whenever you need advice, information, or guidance.

Eliminate the nonessentials.

After identifying the things that are most important in your life, it's time to start eliminating everything else. This is all about simplifying your life, so that you can focus on the things that matter most to you and prevents you from getting distracted.

Take baby steps.

"The one primary motivator that leads us to persevere is baby steps," says John Brubaker on Entrepreneur. That's because when we look at the big picture we can get overwhelmed with all of the steps involved in achieving a goal.

Instead, break the "big picture goal down into systematic, manageable baby steps." Then, document and celebrate your wins daily.

This will help you achieve that change that you've been seeking in a positive way and meaningful way.