

Ignite My Wellness



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12 Weeks Incorporated
6-636 Clyde Avenue
West Vancouver, BC V7T 1E1
Tel: (604) 921-2348
e-mail: info@12weekstowellness.com
www.12weekstowellness.com

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introduction

Ignite My Wellness

Having the discipline and willingness to stay on a path of personal growth and development can be exciting, challenging and rewarding, all at the same time. With every turn in the road there is the potential for a new adventure.

Challenging yourself to change by empowering yourself with opportunities for growth and personal fulfillment can be gratifying. When you achieve success, your interest in life increases, self-esteem blossoms and your belief in yourself is strengthened. Finding the right balance of physical, emotional, mental and spiritual health can be difficult. At times the road can be paved with many obstacles, some of which are self-imposed.

How does the need to change come about? It often comes in the form of a significant life event. Your husband or wife may have been offered a job in a new location. Before you know it, you are packing your belongings and leaving the life you know to start all over again. A medical condition could force you into changing your lifestyle. You may find yourself unexpectedly unemployed. These are all things that could signify the need for change in your life.

Signs that it's time to change:

Signs that it's time to make changes in your life can come in a variety of forms:

- Ongoing daily frustrations
- Lack of control over some or all aspects of your life
- Feelings of instability
- Depression
- Sleep problems
- Poor eating habits
- Substance abuse
- An awareness that "something isn't right"

These signs and symptoms, if not paid attention to, can slowly erode your physical, mental and emotional health.



Regardless of whether you are forced into change or you are ready to take a preventative approach to your life, *Ignite My Wellness* is designed to help you take a step-by-step approach to changing your thoughts, beliefs and actions with the intent of bringing more light, energy, balance, happiness and personal fulfillment into your life.

The *Ignite My Wellness* handbook is designed in three specific stages to enhance a personal and successful plan for change:

Stage One – Preparing for change

Stage Two – Planning for action

Stage Three – Taking action

Working through each stage of this workbook will help you progress through the change process in a manageable way. Moving too quickly may affect your ability to stay motivated and remain on track. Be patient and take small steps. It is important to note that creating personal change could cause shifts in other parts of your life; tackling one stage at a time can help prevent chaos.





stage one

preparing for change

“The biggest step is making the decision
to make a change.”

Mary Roncarelli

Author *12 Weeks to Weight Loss & Wellness*

Steps to prepare for change

1) ASK FOR HELP AND GET THE SUPPORT THAT’S ESSENTIAL FOR LONG-TERM SUCCESS

When we contemplate change, we can sabotage our efforts before we even get started. Real and imagined obstacles can impede our progress. When this happens, we become susceptible to old habits.

Accepting help is a vital part of the process. It can be difficult to create change using only your internal resources. Eliciting the support and help of others ensures that you don’t feel alone or out of control. Ask for the support you need. It can make a big difference in your ability to stay on course and get through those tough times.

Keep in mind that friends and family can be very helpful and supportive, but employing professional help ensures that you receive direction and encouragement, which can keep you motivated.

Support resources include:

- Local community centres
- Internet resources
- Libraries
- Community support groups
- Counsellors
- Organization benefits and employee assistance program (EAP) services
- General practitioners
- Associations



My support system will include:



2) CHANGE YOUR MIND

Most people decide to change because they are unhappy with their lives. More so, they find that no matter what they do, they return to the same old pattern and maintain the status quo. This unproductive cycle can contribute to a feeling that you are unable to change.

As children, we develop ideas and beliefs about who we are and how we fit in. Much of this comes from things that were said to us, the environment we grew up in and the people who influenced us. As we grow, we integrate these beliefs and thought patterns into various aspects of our lives. Our belief system affects the decisions we make and actions we take. Those recurring situations can result from misguided beliefs and ideas about ourselves and the personal world we create.

We all develop a story about where we believe we fit in the world. Even the "potholes" we repeatedly fall into along the journey reinforce our belief that this route is our destiny. It is our perceived beliefs that play a role in creating our reality. To avoid these traps, you need to break old habits and create new pathways toward creating the life you want. You need to shift unhelpful or discouraging thought patterns and beliefs that keep you stuck in old patterns. The worst decision is to do the same thing over and over again and expect the outcome to change.

What thoughts hold me back from making a change?

Where do these thoughts originate?

Do these thoughts add value to my life?

☐ Yes ☐ No

What thought could I replace them with that would be more productive and empower me toward success?

Am I willing to practice saying this new thought often?

☐ Yes ☐ No

3) REVISIT YOUR STRENGTHS

THE SEVEN PERSONALITY TRAITS FOR CHANGE SUCCESS

Below are seven personality traits we exhibit to one degree or another. Review them and decide which ones you need to dust off and invite back into your life.

1. Resourcefulness—flexibility; the ability to do things differently; change schedules; make the most out of situations; utilize whatever resources are available; see more than one way to achieve a goal; cultivate a talent for creating new ways to solve old problems.

Situations in which I demonstrated resourcefulness:

2. Optimism and Confidence—believe in yourself; know that you are worth going through this process; see the glass as half full; accommodate change; turn obstacles and problems into benefits and opportunities.

Ways that I demonstrate my optimism and confidence:

3. Adventurousness—don't need to know what is around the corner; what life will be like with this new behaviour; the ability to take risks and the desire to pursue the unknown; love new challenges.

A time when I did something that required me to step outside my comfort zone:



4. Passion and Drive—passion fuels all the other traits; nothing seems impossible to passionate people; without passion, change can be exhausting.

Things I feel passionate about in my life:

5. Adaptability—includes two elements: flexibility and resilience; when things don't go as planned, flexible people can reorganize or create a new strategy; it's the ability to bounce back and move on without getting side-tracked.

A time when I demonstrated adaptability:

6. Confidence—having faith that you will be successful; feeling that you can overcome any obstacles.

Things I can say to remind me that I can be successful:

7. Tolerance for Ambiguity—change = uncertainty; without a healthy tolerance for ambiguity, change can be scary.

Describe a time when I dealt with "the unknown" well:

The personality strength(s) that best describe me is/are:

4) CHECK YOUR READINESS FOR CHANGE!

Your ability to change depends on your stage of readiness. The better prepared you are for change, the greater chance you have to create long-term success. Change can be compared to peeling away layers of an onion: it evolves slowly in layers. Every step you take toward your goal moves you closer to permanent change.

In the table below, you can assess your readiness for change. This can help you create more realistic and obtainable goals. Setting out to change something before you are truly ready can lead to failure. The more failure you experience, the greater chance you will lose motivation and give up. Setting yourself up for success is crucial.

STEPS AND PROCESSES OF CHANGE

STEP	CHARACTERISTICS	PROCESS STRATEGIES
Pre-contemplation (What problem?)	I'm not ready to change and may not need to change. Blame others. I think I'm okay the way I am.	Make a list of the benefits of change. Discuss the need for change with someone you respect. Complete a Health Risk Assessment.
Contemplation (Not quite ready)	I know I should change, but... I'm not sure I can do it. I need more information. If only it were easier...	Make a list of pros and cons. Read about your problem/ need and be open to new information. Talk to someone who made the change.
Preparation (I will, soon)	I'm making plans to get started in the next 30 days. I've tried before and it didn't work, but I'm going to do better this time.	Write down your goals; be realistic. Don't expect miracles. Keep a log of current behaviours. Make a verbal commitment to those close to you.



STEP	CHARACTERISTICS	PROCESS STRATEGIES
Action (Real behaviour change)	I have made changes and I'm working at maintaining them. I know I may have lapses, but I'm determined to succeed. I need all the support I can get. I have built-in rewards to help me keep to my plan.	Get help to formulate your goals. Develop a step-by-step action plan. Ask for support from those close to you. Make a plan to deal with lapses.
Maintenance (Hang on to the changes)	My changes are benefitting me. I know I need to keep focused and not revert to old habits. I know what to do if I start to lose motivation.	Increase, improve and add variety to your program. Maintain a plan to deal with lapses. Chart progress, reward yourself, be positive.
Termination (The ultimate goal)	I am completely self-motivated now, but I also know that I can slip. I still need support. I believe I can handle whatever comes along.	Continue to seek support. Keep a record of your ongoing success. Help others who desire to change. Be supportive to friends and family.



WHAT IS YOUR LEVEL OF READINESS TO CHANGE?

How do you know where to start? Are you ready to make changes? There is an easy way to tell where you need to start. Once you have determined or been told the areas you might need to change (smoking, weight, blood pressure, cholesterol, stress, etc.) look at the following statements. Each one requires a YES or NO response. Be totally honest in your answers.

Yes No

1. I solved my problem at least six months ago. I made a plan and took steps that resulted in health improvements.

☐
☐

2. I have taken action to resolve my problem within the last six months. I made a plan and took steps, with help, to improve my health.

☐
☐

3. I intend to take action within the next 30 days. I know I need to change and I fully intend to make those changes.

☐
☐

4. I intend to take action within the next six months. I know I need to change and I fully intend to make those changes.

☐
☐

D. If you answered YES to number 2, you are at the **action step**. Keep up the good work, stay focused and reward yourself for success.

E. If you answered YES to number 1, you are at the **maintenance step**. You are succeeding, keep following your plan and enjoy your improved health.

What I discovered about my readiness for change:

What your responses mean:

A. If you answered NO to all four statements, you are at the **pre-contemplation step**. Gather information and try to look at your health with an open mind.

B. If you answered YES to number 4, you are at the **contemplation step**. Continue to gather information, talk to others who have made changes and convince yourself that you **can** make changes.

C. If you answered YES to number 3, you are at the **preparation step**. Make a plan and set a date to start. Make sure you have support from others.

Next step

If you are absolutely clear that you are ready to change, then proceed to the next step of this process. If you are still contemplating change, take the time to review some of the things you can do in the "Steps and Processes of Change" chart to move you closer to the next stage.



stage two

planning for action

Steps to plan for action

1) DETERMINE WHAT YOU WANT TO CHANGE

Determining where you are in the many stages of change will help you to set realistic goals. Once you have determined that you are in a ready position, you will need to identify what it is that you want to change.

LIFESTYLE CHANGE INVENTORY

Use the lifestyle change inventory below to determine the lifestyle habits you would like to change. If there are others changes, choose the "other" space provided. Start with just choosing one thing to begin with. Once you have been successful, you can go back and duplicate the process choosing another item.

LIFESTYLE CHANGE INVENTORY

Rate your own competence in each area	STRONG				WEAK
	5	4	3	2	1
1. Eating awareness					
A. Making healthy choices					
B. Portion control					
C. Emotional eating					
2. Exercise / active living					
A. Starting					
B. Regular program					
C. Commitment / motivation					
3. Lifestyle balance					
A. 80 / 20 Rule					
B. Stress management					
C. Positive self-esteem					
D. Life satisfaction					

Other:

I have chosen to work on:



2) BUILDING YOUR PLAN

You will want to begin to build clarity around what it is you have chosen to change. Start by brainstorming. This can be an effective way to identify what specifically you need to change in order to be successful.

I want to change this behaviour:

I want to change this action:

I want to change this thought:

I want to change this attitude:

I want to change this feeling:

I want to change this reaction:

I want to change:

THE PRINCESS AND THE PEA THEORY.

"The Princess and The Pea" by Hans Christian Anderson was a fairy tale written about a princess. Her validity as a princess was proven only by her inability to sleep comfortably on top of 20 mattresses. Placed under the mattresses was a small pea. That small pea caused her to wake up "black and blue." Only a true princess could be so sensitive to be negatively affected by something so small and benign. All habits are based on underlying thoughts that cause us to react in accordance to them. The true essence of change begins when we start to understand and discover what is keeping us stuck. In most cases it is a thought, belief, idea or attitude that is keeping us from moving forward. What is the pea under your mattress?

I have discovered that this attitude or belief is keeping me stuck:

POWER GOAL SETTING

The best way to reach a goal is to set small, obtainable and realistic goals within that larger goal.

It is human nature to want and expect results fast by doing it all at once. With this in mind, make sure the goal you set is achievable. It will help ensure success each step of the way.

Once you have achieved success with your "one small goal," you can create your next "bite size" goal. Before you know it, you will find yourself moving one step closer to achieving your larger goal with each small success.

It is important to ensure that each goal, big or small, has the following essential components. Test your goal by clarifying that it meets these requirements:

1) Specific: Be clear and exact with what you want to accomplish; for example, I want to lose 30 pounds or I would like to fit into my white jeans.

2) Measureable: How will you know that you have achieved your goal? What measurement tool will you use; for example, the jeans fitting better.

3) Appropriately timed: Determine when you would like to accomplish your goal. Set a specific date.

Once you have clearly defined what you want to do, you can then decide how to get there. Successful lifestyle changes come from the completion of many small, well-planned goals; for example, exercise for 15 minutes three times this week and 20 minutes four times next week. A "bite-size" approach to tackling change can make or break the opportunity for success.



The first-step goal I would like to begin working on is:



stage three

taking action

The more you practice, the stronger
the new habit will get.

Once you have determined your first-step goal, you need to create a plan.

30 Day Action Plan

Research shows that in order to change a thought, attitude, behaviour or action, you need to replace and practice a new thought, attitude, behaviour or action on a daily basis. Changing something that is well embedded takes consistency and practice.

STEPS TO TAKE

Based on your first-step goal, identify the habit, behaviour, action or thought you wish to change:

Identify what benefits result from making this change:

CREATE YOUR "PRACTICE PLAN"

Some things may not fit into the once-a-day practice guidelines for this program. If your plan does not fit into such a routine, you can still use a four-week approach. In the lines provided below, indicate what your plan is that will help you achieve your first-step goal.

For 30 days I will practice:



CHECK YOUR PLAN:

- Is it achievable? ☐ Yes ☐ No
- Is it realistic? ☐ Yes ☐ No
- Is it bite-size? ☐ Yes ☐ No
- Can you do it daily? ☐ Yes ☐ No
- Do you want to do it? ☐ Yes ☐ No
- Are you motivated to do it? ☐ Yes ☐ No
- Will it help you to achieve your main goal? ☐ Yes ☐ No

CHECK YOUR ATTITUDE

Maintaining a positive attitude throughout the change process is key to success. Believing that you are worth it is vital, but believing that you have what it takes to change is also a must. Like habits, attitudes are something that we create and make stronger with practice. The more we wear them, the more we believe them and connect to them.

Determine the attitude(s) you need to focus on and practice to help you build daily success into your change plan.

Attitude examples include:

Optimism; hope; faith; positivity; believing you can make a difference; personal entitlement; confidence; etc.

There are many valuable attitudes we have the option of adopting. Think through and choose the attitudes most helpful to you and your lifestyle change program. Try them on and if they fit, wear them every day.

My new daily attitudes are:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Remember:

- Practice
- Get support
- Paste reminders around your environment (i.e., pictures, sticky notes, etc.)
- Recommit to yourself daily, all day long
- Recognize that each time you don't succeed it is an opportunity to restrategize
- Surround yourself with positive energy and people
- Listen to your intuition and inner wisdom
- Take one step at a time
- Be patient and forgiving
- Recognize that it is a journey, not a destination
- Keep the "prize" in front of you

Note:

Once you have completed your first 30-day plan, you can repeat this process with another element of your life you would like to change.

We know and believe that you are worth it.

Good Luck!



Mary Roncarelli

As a certified lifestyle counsellor and a Bachelor of Physical Education graduate, Mary Roncarelli has over 20 years of experience in the development and implementation of health

promotion programs for groups and individuals. Mary is committed to the belief that achieving a healthy balance in all aspects of life is an essential tool for personal happiness, health and professional success. She specializes in program designs for healthy weight management, effective stress management, and lifestyle balance.



Charles Curtis

Charles has been a leader in personal and organizational fitness, Health and wellness since 1985. Charles is responsible for business development, major account issues, team support,

new program and company directions as well as co-authoring the 12 Weeks trilogy of workbooks.

Charles has brought his passion for health, wellness, personal change and high service standards through many facets of business and the community and has redefined the new age of personal and workplace health, change and wellness.

Charles' creative work, service standards and passionate team has placed 12 Weeks to Wellness as a leader in personal change and Wellness Management.