

Slipping Toward Success

Goals and Guidance

- 1 To normalize the occurrence of “slips” when making changes.
- 2 To encourage participants to consider a relapse in the change process as an opportunity to learn more about themselves and their triggers and to plan a strategy for the next time a similar challenge comes their way.

All too often people give up on making changes in their behaviour as soon as they have a slip. They generally place all the blame on their own shoulders and are convinced that they're incapable of being successful. They perceive the slip as a sign that they were destined to fail, again! This may be the way they have thought for many years, and their way of thinking may have been supported by family, friends, teachers, co-workers and health care professionals.

Learning the technique of relapse prevention is tremendously valuable for long-term maintenance of positive behaviour change and weight loss. Encourage the participants to prevent future slips by using the problem solving steps presented in The Change Buffet.

Here's where you have to pull out your sales skills. You need to sell the participants on a new way of thinking.



Facilitator's Notes

Point out to the group that they have now sampled over a dozen different techniques and skills offered by The Change Buffet. Explain that in trying the strategies they will have some challenges. Even when they feel they have adopted a new behaviour, they can backslide. Use Ppt Slide #35 or Overhead #30, if desired.

paraphrase

Everyone slips up or “falls off the wagon” once in a while. Especially when you are trying to change a life-long behaviour, you are bound to have some setbacks along your way to permanent change. Give yourself a break – you're just acting like a human.

Many things can cause us to slip - fatigue, a vacation, illness, and increased stress to name a few. Be careful not to slip into all-or-nothing thinking when you have a setback. Beware of your self-talk.

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Slips can get you down, or you can see them as an opportunity to learn more about yourself and your behaviour. Don't just blame yourself or a lack of will power for slips. Avoid being judgemental. There is usually a reason you ran into some difficulty.

Slips can be good. You can learn a tremendous amount from mistakes.

A great example of this was when Thomas Edison was asked how he handled the fact that he had failed 10,000 times before successfully inventing the light bulb. He replied that they were not failures; he had discovered 10,000 ways not to make a light bulb!

The best response to a slip is to - Be curious!

Ask yourself questions like . . .

What happened?

What was going on?

What was I saying to myself?

What was different compared to times I didn't slip?

Exploring the answers to questions like these will give you information that can help you plan for the future. This is called “relapse prevention”.

It is learning to do things differently to help avoid the same situation that caused the slip, or to respond in a different way the next time you're faced with the same situation. Follow the seven steps of effective problem solving. In other words, identify the problem that caused the slip, brainstorm some possible solutions to try next time, choose a plan, try it and evaluate how it worked.

There may still be some backsliding, but if you learn from the setbacks you'll still keep moving forward.

Ask the group if anyone has experienced a slip and then learned from it. Stress that this is a very important strategy for maintaining a positive attitude to change.