

### The Wellness Compass Journey. Step 3: Action Phase

Congratulations! You have invested in a quality planning process for each of your goals. Are you ready to take action? Are you ready to implement your plans and monitor your progress until you accomplish your goal(s)? If so, let's get started with the following three steps that, if you choose to, you can do repeatedly for six weeks to effectively accomplish your goal(s). Note that this progress can be used for a little as a single goal, with one or two strategies, or as much as three goals/strategies implementing concurrently.

#### Suggested Directions and Tips

##### Step 3.1: Drafting a Wellness Compass Journey Checklist

The Checklist is a single-page form (found on the previous page) that focuses your the specific actions you need to complete: key activities, strategies, the behaviors you want to change, and measures of progress to track over a two-week period. You will need multiple copies of the Checklist for a Wellness Compass Journey. You can either copy the Checklist from the previous page or download it from [www.wellnesscompasstravelguide.com](http://www.wellnesscompasstravelguide.com) either as a \*.pdf file or as a MS Excel File. Using the MS Excel version allows you to personalize your checklist to more easily tweak it or make adjustments to it as time goes on, and to use it as an ongoing or long-term monitoring system.

- **Get started.** At least the first time you draft your Checklist, you'll want a pencil, blank copies of the Wellness Checklist, the step 2.3. Final Wellness Goal Plans you developed for each of your target goals, and your calendar. Label your initial checklist 1.1 to indicate it's your first plan, and first two-week cycle.
- **Draft your vision.** Outline key components of what your ultimate goal or vision is and when you aim to realize this vision. For example: 150 pounds and a thirty-two-inch waist by December 31, 2016. Alternatively, if this plan is very specific to short-time frame use that timeframe for your vision.
- **Specifically outline activities and measures for each goal.** For instance, if your goal is to lose ten pounds over twelve weeks, you could write in the first goal box: "Lose one pound a week" or "Stick to diet Y." Your activities should include all the specific activities you either do or do not do to ensure your success. These could include drinking six cups of water, eating breakfast daily, limiting alcohol consumption, or restricting calories to a certain range (e.g., 1,000–1,600). For each activity, add a process measure that you use to prove to yourself that you completed that activity (e.g., number of cups for water, check mark for breakfast, ounces of alcohol, and Y or N if you consumed within one hundred calories of your calorie target Also add key outcome measures that you will assess only once every week or two weeks—something like your overall confidence level, your weight or size, or a key fitness test. If you do use your weight, I encourage you to *not* weigh yourself daily but instead to weigh in once a week on the same day of the week, at the same time, and wearing the same type of dress, so your weight change is a more reliable measure.
- How do you plan activities that occur on specific days? Put a slash in pencil in the box indicating the day you plan to get it done, and then make an X in pen on the day you do it. Or reframe how you word the weekly activity to something like "Do X for forty-five minutes three times a week," monitor the minutes, and then put in the actual minutes you spent on the days you actually did the activity.
- Keep going for each goal or strategy. Then consider, is this realistic? too much? Cut back as needed if you are sure you can implement all aspects of your plan for two weeks. You can always start small the first few weeks with the first or easiest strategies, and then tweak your checklist with additional strategies once you've proved to yourself you can actually do them.
- When you are ready make a commitment to yourself to complete this for two-weeks. You are encouraged to either write on the bottom of the worksheet that you are committed to it or initial the plan and verbally commit to your plan, or do both.

### **Step 3.2: Take Action! Implement Your Checklist.**

*Note: There is no form or activity other than the wellness checklist for this step.*

**First Two-Week Cycle:** Step 3.2 starts with the first day you purposely implement the activities in your Wellness Checklist. When you implement, you are testing your mettle, showing the world what you are made of, and boldly changing. Go for it! Stay true to your plan. Own it!

- Post your Checklist in an area in your home where you can see it daily. If you are brave (and well supported), perhaps you can post it on the refrigerator. If you are bit shy, post it in your bathroom or in your daily calendar. Whatever you do, don't hide it. Be proud of your journey.
- Monitor your progress daily. It usually works best to check off your progress as part of the process of planning for the next day. Typically it's easiest if you do this after your evening meal.

#### **Should you reward yourself along the way?**

To keep yourself motivated, build in small nonmonetary low- or no-calorie rewards to celebrate your success at the end of each week or cycle. These should be things you really like to do but may not have the time, money, or calorie allowance to let yourself indulge in. For example, on weekends you could:

- indulge in something for pleasure (e.g., music, art, reading, or watching a movie),
- get outdoors or do something special,
- take a nap, or
- go out with a friend for a cup of coffee, a beer, or a glass of wine.

#### **Can you change or edit your Checklist before you complete a two-week cycle?**

This is a gray area that can be used to increase or decrease your chances of success.

- **Additions and substitutions**

Generally, constructive changes include adding or improving something in your Checklist. Typical changes include adding a better measure, substituting a new strategy, or changing the days or times of your activity. For example, you want to exercise more and realize that putting your gym bag in the car on Monday, Wednesday, and Thursday nights could really help, so you add "gym bag in the car" and add one line of an X to indicate when you planned to do it and the other half of your x as measure of completion.

- **Removal or reduction**

If you want to remove something on your Checklist that you previously committed to, in order to reduce the frequency or difficulty of an item, consider not changing anything until the end the two-week Checklist. Instead, add a new activity you want to do instead.

### **Step 3.3: Biweekly Reassessment of Your Checklist**

Well done! Just sticking to a plan for two weeks is a great start. After two weeks of implementing your Checklist, you need to assess how well your plan worked, if and what will be continued, what should be changed, and so on. Regardless of your goal or strategies, you should expect bumps in the road, such as obstacles you didn't consider, unpredicted weather or other life events that could not have been planned for, and time periods of motivation.

Some beautiful thoughts can't be discovered unless you get lost first.

—Erol Ozon

The key is to apply what you've learned from the past to improve your chances of success in the future, and to keep going!

There are a lot of possibilities for how to proceed. The following really provides only the generic, most common situations and focuses on situations in which the traveler is making progress and wants to continue in the context of either the same Wellness Journey or a similar journey. Chapter 22 provides guidance for travelers who are backsliding or not making the progress as planned.

Questions in the following activity will help you assess your progress on the past two-week Wellness Checklist cycle and guide you on what to do next. The key decisions you will need to make are (1) your overall confidence in how you are progressing and (2) how you want to continue. The first time you are assessing a Checklist, you should consider this entire process and write responses below. For every other time, follow the notes in italics for suggestions on how you can just make notations on your Checklist instead of a separate piece of paper with these questions. If you choose to use the italics method, be sure to keep all of your Checklists so you can backtrack if needed.