

Behaviour Change Assignment

Instructions

Learning Outcomes

- Gain first-hand experience with trying to change a health behavior.
- Find scholarly sources of information on the benefits of changing a health behaviour, along with the risks of not changing the behavior.
- Apply strategies to build your motivation to change a health behavior
- Develop SMART goals and find resources to help you meet your goals
- Apply a behaviour-change theory or model to frame and reflect on your success or failure.

Overview

The Behaviour Change Assignment has two parts. In this first part, you will identify a target health behaviour that you want to change. You will research the pros and cons (benefits and risks) of changing this behaviour and not changing this behaviour. You will then monitor this target behaviour for one week to determine your baseline and then create a plan of action for changing it. In Part 1, you focus on understanding your chosen target behaviour and creating a plan. After you have turned in Part 1, you will implement your plan and attempt to change your target behaviour using the resources and supports that you identified. You should also keep track of your progress towards your goals and reflect on challenges using your own health journal or an app. Please note that you will not be required to submit your personal journal

entries or data from an app, but will have to consolidate and summarize information from these entries. In Part 2, you will critically reflect on your successes and difficulties with carrying out the behaviour change project, and will be required to relate your experience to a specific theory or model on behaviour change

Your target behaviour is an isolated behaviour or unhealthy habit that you have tried to change in the past without success or a more recent behavior that you would like to try to change before it becomes a long-term troublesome habit. This is a self-directed and personal project that you will perform individually.

Before You Start

Read Chapter 1 of the Core Concepts in Health Textbook, focusing on the latter half of the Chapter starting in the Section titled “Reaching Wellness Through Lifestyle Management”. Also read the setting SMART goals material. You will be required to cite your textbook for this assignment.

Download the Behaviour Change Assignment Part 1 Template. You must use this template for your assignment submission.

Steps to Complete Part 1

Please read these steps in full before you begin working on this assignment. The steps are organized based on the question numbers in the Behaviour Change Assignment Part 1 Template.

Question 1

Choose a Target Behaviour

- A **target behaviour** is an isolated behaviour or unhealthy habit that you choose to focus on for a behaviour change program.
- Choose a target behavior that you will be comfortable to share with your instructor and your classmates.
- Some examples of target behaviors include:
 - Sleep hygiene: going to bed too late, not having a consistent sleep schedule
 - Diet: eating too much fast/junk food, not eating enough vegetables.
 - Substances: smoking, drinking too much alcohol, consuming too many caffeinated drinks, vaping,
 - Lifestyle: sitting too much, playing too many video games, spending too much time on social media, too much negative self-talk, not exercising enough

Describe Your Target Behaviour

- Including why you chose to focus on it, whether you have tried to change the behavior in the past as well, and any barriers you faced.

Question 2

Research and Document the Pros and Cons of your Target Behaviour

- Start to build motivation to change the behavior by examining the pros and cons. The pros/benefits of changing

your behavior need to outweigh the cons/risks of continuing with the unhealthy behavior.

- You will research the short-term and long-term risks as well as benefits of not changing the target behavior.
- You will research or reflect on how changing the target behaviour will enhance your current level of wellness.

You must cite a minimum of 3 different source in APA format

1. 1 source must be the Core Concepts in Health Textbook. You can cite any sections of the book that are relevant (not just Chapter 1).
2. 1 source must be a Scholarly journal, published in the last 20 years. Note that the end of every Chapter of the textbook has an extensive bibliography which is a great place to start.
3. 1 source must be a reliable source of information and can include websites and organizations. The end of every Chapter includes a list of reliable websites.

Note: Here is an example of using your textbook as a source: if your target behavior that you want to change is staying up too late, which results in you not getting enough sleep, you could look up Sleep in the index at the end of the textbook. You will find “sleep deprivation” as a topic related to sleep, and can go to that section of the textbook to read more on How sleep works, sleep and stress, and the short and long-term negative effects of sleep deprivation.

What if you can't see any benefits for continuing to engage in an unhealthy habit?

The benefits may not be obvious but keep exploring it. For example, the benefit of staying up too late might be having more time to unwind and relax after a busy day by watching Netflix or scrolling Instagram. If you are trying to start a new healthy habit,

like walking or running for an hour each day, you might think that there is only a benefit to adopting this healthier behavior, and not exercising for that hour would have no benefits whatsoever. However, a potential benefit of not exercising for that hour every day would be more time to study.

This may sound silly, but your brain is very good at rationalizing that you don't have time to exercise, especially on those gray and cold November days when you have a big exam or assignment coming up! The benefit will be personal to you and your situation.

Reflect on how changing the target behavior will enhance your current level of personal wellness

Although changing a target behaviour or unhealthy habit will certainly benefit you long-term, it is more motivating to think about immediate improvements in your quality of life. For example, you may find that you feel better, have improved performance in your academics, reduced feelings of stress, and better sleep if your target behaviour is being too sedentary and you implement a plan to incorporate short bouts of physical activity throughout your day.

Question 3

Monitor Your Target Behavior for 1 Week (Baseline: *Before Behaviour Change*)

You will use your own health journal to keep careful track of the baseline levels of your target behavior as well as the circumstances surrounding the behavior. Your health journal can be as simple as taking notes with a notebook and pen, typing information into a document or spreadsheet, or using a Health App on your mobile device. Please note that you will NOT be adopting the new healthier habit or curtailing the unhealthy habit

for this week, but observing patterns BEFORE you set about changing the behavior.

See the Table in Figure 1.8 of the textbook for an example a health journal entry for 1 day. For this one week, don't try to change the behavior yet. You should record each day for 7 days and be sure to include the following:

- What the behavior/activity was
- When and where it happened
- What you were doing at the time
- How you felt at the time
- Any other relevant information

You will be required to include an example of your recorded data. You could include a picture or snapshot of what you have recorded in your health journal. This could be a hand-drawn table but be sure the writing is clear enough to read. Alternatively, you could insert a Word table and fill in the information for 1 of the 7 days.

Question 4

Analyze Your Data, Recognize Patterns and Develop Strategies.

Analyze patterns in your data, such as feelings or situational factors that contributed to the behavior. For example, if staying up too late is the target behavior (contributing to lack of sleep), maybe 4 nights of 7 your house-mates were up late in the living room watching Netflix and you wanted to join them.

Based on the observed patterns, list 3 barriers you may face this term as you attempt to change your behavior.

Develop strategies for overcoming each of these barriers. You will be required to refer to and cite the textbook or other sources for at

least 1 of the strategies to overcome a barrier (in addition to coming up with your own ideas). For example, Chapter 1 includes some suggestions for boosting self-efficacy.

You **must include at least 1 citation** (in APA format).

Question 5

Set SMART Goals

- State your goal in specific terms, discuss how you will measure it, and explain how the goal is attainable and realistic
- Specify the time frame for meeting the goal. Be sure your timeline aligns with the due date for this assignment.

Question 6

Devise a Plan of Action

- Build a concrete plan for meeting your goal(s) and changing your target behavior within the specified time frame
- Identify at least 3 resources/supports that will help you to change your target behavior and reach your goal within the specified amount of time.
 - Provide a citation for 1 of these resources/supports in APA format. Note: this source doesn't need to be from scholarly source. For example, you could cite an app for mindfulness meditation.
- Describe two ways that you can modify your environment to lessen the cues that may trigger the target behavior.
 - For example, if you are trying to get to sleep earlier, you could use room darkening shades to block outside light, or a noise machine/fan to block outside sounds

- Specify 3 *different* rewards (preferably healthy ones) that will reinforce your efforts and help you to reach sub-goals along the way.

Question 7

Putting it all Together - Writing your Behavior-Change Contract

You will make up a Behavior-Change contract, similar to the Example Provided in Figure 1.10 of the Textbook.

Question 8

References

Be sure to include a reference list, in **APA format**, for every source that you cited. You also need to include in-text citations throughout your assignment.