



RUTGERS

New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station

Small Steps to Health and Wealth™

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Deskercise! The Twinkle Toe: Tap into your inner Fred Astaire by speedily tapping those toes on the floor under your desk. Or, graduate to a harder (and less conspicuous) move: Stand in front of a small trashcan and lift up those legs to tap the toes on its edge, alternating feet, in soccer-drill fashion.



Healthy on the Job!

Small Steps to Health & Wealth Workplace Newsletter

Family & Community Health Sciences
Rutgers Cooperative Extension

Strategy 3

Focus: Put Your Mind to It

PUT YOUR MIND TO IT

http://njaes.rutgers.edu/sshw/workbook/03_Put_Your_Mind_To_It.pdf

One of the most powerful motivational strategies to improve health and increase wealth is visualization.

As the quote above describes, many successful performers report “seeing” what they want to achieve long before they actually accomplish it. People can alter their lives just by altering their mindset. Visualization

(a.k.a., mental imagery) is a powerful step in the process of setting and achieving goals. Start by painting a mental picture of your preferred future. If you have a weight loss goal, picture

I’ve discovered that numerous peak performers use the skill of mental rehearsal of visualization. They mentally run through important events before they happen.
—Charles A. Garfield

Make some “quiet time” to visualize yourself making behavior changes to improve your health.

Write an “I will” statement to describe each health behavior change.

yourself 20 pounds slimmer fitting into clothes that you haven’t worn for years. See yourself as active and walking 30 minutes a day.

If you plan to reduce debt, imagine yourself receiving a credit card statement that shows a zero balance. Experts also advise visualizing how you will deal with obstacles to your goals (e.g., enjoying a holiday party without over-eating).

Emotions are another important component of the behavior-change process. Visualize, and then verbalize to others, how you think improved health and increased wealth will make you feel. Positive and long-term feelings can be powerful

motivators.

In addition to visualization, there are several other ways to “think yourself” healthy and wealthy.

The first is to frequently remind yourself of your strengths as an individual and goals that you’ve already set and achieved.

Success is a powerful motivator and failure is a mind-set that can be changed. When you are tempted to abandon your health and wealth objectives, think about how good it felt to achieve a previous goal.

Challenge the negative influences around you with affirming messages such as, I can certainly save money or I can lose weight [action].”

ACTION STEPS

Speak of positive health behaviors in present tense and negative health behaviors in past tense.

Make some “quiet time” to visualize yourself making behavior changes to improve your finances.

Write an “I will” statement to describe each financial behavior change.

Speak of positive financial behaviors in present tense and negative financial behaviors in past tense.

Health and Wealth Action Steps This Week

Use “language of change.” Start by banishing “weasel words” such as “I hope to,” “I plan to,” and “I’ll try to” from descriptions of future action steps.

Replace them with bold declarative statements starting with words such as “I am,” “I can,” and “I will save \$100 a month,” for example, has a much more powerful impact on the unconscious mind & increases accountability to yourself.

Another language “trick” is to describe the behavior you intend to take in the present tense, preferably with words like automatically,” “annually,” and “always,” as if you have already been doing it for some time.

Again, there is an accountability aspect to talking this way. It is an incentive to start “walking your talk” because, otherwise, you are basically telling other people a lie. It is also motivational to focus on small, positive action steps.

Some examples of present-tense phrases include:

- **I quit smoking.**
- **I almost always exercise at least 30 minutes a day.**
- **I have a Roth IRA account and contribute to it regularly.**

<http://www.getmovinggetthehealthynj.rutgers.edu/workforce/index.html>

http://www.successconsciousness.com/index_00002e.htm

<https://www.jeanchatzky.com/books/money-rules/>

Health Visualization and SelfTalk

My “Health Goals” are:

What will it feel like to achieve you health goals?

Write a sentence on a goal you achieved.

Clearly state a health goal without any weasel words.

Write a positive Health behavior in the present tense.

Write a negative health behavior in the past tense.



Financial Visualization and SelfTalk

My “Financial Goals” are:

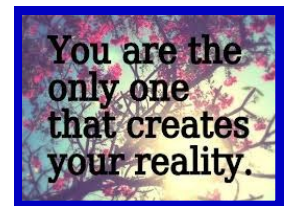
What will it feel like to achieve you finance goals?

Write a sentence on a goal you achieved.

Clearly state a financial goal without any weasel words.

Write a positive finance behavior in the present tense.

Write a negative finance behavior in the past tense.



Take the “small steps approach” throughout the day

Use the above questions for visualizing your health and wealth goals. Write each goal in your notebook and draw or attach a picture of it. Why include a picture? To remind yourself daily of your future goal(s) because visual cues can help you stay focused.

In order to make behavior changes, you must have a vision of what you want to achieve. Once you “see” it, you can name it, describe it, and take small steps over time to achieve it. Sometimes visualizing negative images can prompt a behavior change. For

example, seeing a relative die of lung cancer and envisioning yourself in a similar situation might provide the necessary impetus to quit smoking.

In addition to visualization, there are several other ways to “think yourself” healthy and wealthy. The first is to frequently remind yourself of your strengths as an individual (e.g., personality characteristics and things you are good at) and goals that you’ve already set and achieved.

Success is a powerful motivator and failure is a mind-set that can be changed. When you are tempted to abandon your health and wealth objectives, think about how good it felt to achieve a previous goal.

Challenge the negative influences around you with affirming messages such as “I can certainly do [action].” Draw upon the focus and discipline you showed at an earlier time in your life. If you and/or people around you are saying you’ll never be able to do something, ask yourself, “Why not?”

