

ACT

Start Action Planning

Congratulations on putting together a plan that will address all aspects of your health care needs and get you on the road to healing. At this point, you may be thinking to yourself that your plan looks nice on paper, but the thought of putting it all into action is overwhelming. When faced with a large, intimidating task, it can help to focus on individual achievements you can attain step-by-step over time.

Action Planning 101

Action planning is the process of breaking up larger goals into smaller ‘action plans’. It is an effective strategy for achieving health goals. Action planning will set you up for small victories throughout your journey, which will help you gain the confidence that YOU are in control of your health care journey. This confidence in your abilities – sometimes referred to as self-efficacy – can inspire hope. Never underestimate the power of positive attitude to promote healing, or the impact seemingly small or isolated changes can have on your overall health.

Where do I start?

Refer to your completed **‘MY CHOICES Integrative Health Care Plan®’**. Think about the options you’ve listed under each area of health care in your plan as individual goals for healing. Tackling all these goals at the same time is unrealistic, but you can set yourself up for success by choosing one or two of the individual goals to address at a time, and then developing action plans to achieve them.

To help you make choices about which health care goals to pursue using action planning, answer the following questions:

- 1) On a scale from 1-10, how IMPORTANT is making a change in this area of your health care to you right now?
- 2) On a scale from 1-10, how CONFIDENT are you in making changes in this area?

Which areas of your health care did you answer 7 or above for both importance and confidence? These are likely the areas you should start with to give yourself the best shot at success.

And remember, your goals should guide you toward your ultimate motivation for healing. Through action planning, you can take the individual steps required to achieve them.

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Draft your Plan

Review the ‘**MY CHOICES Action Plan**®’ on the following page to familiarize yourself with the components of a successful plan. Then, use one of the blank action plans provided in this section to create your own (additional action plans can be downloaded from the Caring Ambassadors website, or just use a blank piece of paper).

We encourage you to break up all your health care goals into smaller, attainable action plans. Celebrate the small victories along the way, and remember that journeys are naturally full of detours and dead-ends; you can always change directions and stop for a rest along the way.



Kickstart your healing by completing six weeks of action plans (included in this section). Track your progress using the tracking and self-assessment tool provided in the Tools and Resources section.

MY CHOICES Action Plan®: *Examples and Instructions*

1) Start date

Record the date on which you intend to begin this action plan.

EXAMPLE: *Monday, January 7, 2019*

2) Which health care area does your action plan address?

EXAMPLE: *Complementary Medicine*



3) Which health care goal does your

action plan address? Refer to “*MY CHOICES Integrative Health Care Plan*®”

EXAMPLE: *Try acupuncture*

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4) What is your **SMART** action plan?

What smaller step(s) will you take now to work toward achieving this goal?

Make sure your action plan is **SMART**:

Specific - Pick EXACTLY what you will do to meet your goal.

Measurable - Pick goals that are measurable: how will you know if you've met your goal?

Achievable - Pick an action that will challenge you (so that you find satisfaction in achieving it), but not one that is so challenging that it's unlikely to be achieved.

Relevant - Ensure that the specific steps you take will help you achieve your overall goal.

Timebound - Ensure that your plan includes information such as by when? How often? Within what time frame? Hint: Weekly action plans tend to work well.

EXAMPLE: *By the end of this week, I will contact my insurance company to find out if acupuncture is a covered service and identify three certified acupuncturists in my area.*

5) Who will you share this action plan with and turn to for support?

We are more likely to follow through on our plans when we are held accountable by others. To increase your chances for success, establish a trusted confidant, with whom you can share your weekly action plan. Knowing that you've shared your action plan intentions with a friend, loved one, or caregiver will help keep you on track and give you someone to celebrate milestones with.

EXAMPLE: *Julie, my sister*

MY CHOICES Action Plan©

1) Start date:

2) Which health care area does your action plan address?



3) Which health care goal does your action plan address?

4) What is your **SMART** action plan?

Specific | Measurable | Achievable | Relevant | Timebound

5) Who will you share this action plan with and turn to for support?
