

## Tailored plans

*Work with a patient to develop individualised actions*

## Environmental change

*Alter their surroundings so it encourages the healthier behaviour*

## Thoughts

*Help someone think more helpfully about healthy behaviours*

## Practice and record

*Help the patient try out the healthier behaviour and apply it in different situations*

## Emotions

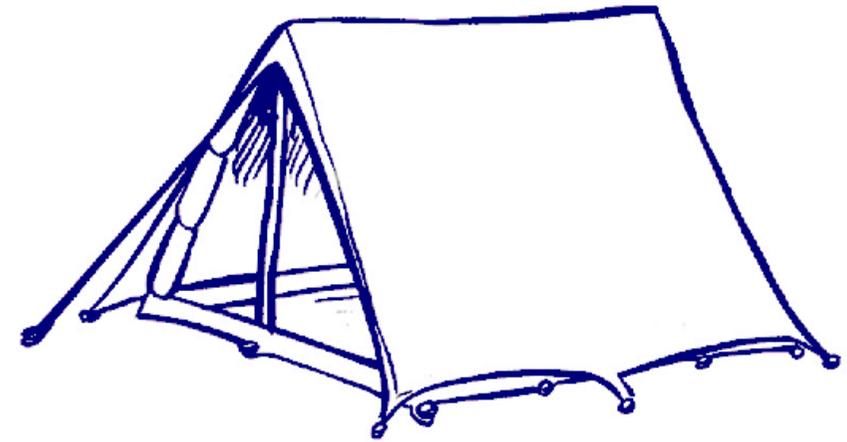
*Encourage positive feelings that will support behaviour change*

## Goals

*Set and review clear behaviour change targets with patients*

## Social influences

*Identify how family & friends can help support changes*



# Tent Pegs

## 7 easy ways to help patients change lifestyle

**The term 'patients' in this document refers to all groups of individuals seen by healthcare professionals including child bearing women and people at risk of lifestyle-related illness.**

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**T**ailored plans

**E**nvironmental change

**T**houghts

**P**ractice and record

**E**motions

**G**oals

**S**ocial influences

Cues to  
listen out for

## Work with a patient to **develop individualised actions**

There are a range of techniques to help patients change their lifestyle. Each is based on research evidence that shows it can help people adopt healthier behaviours. Listen for **cues** from the patient to let you know they may be receptive to this approach

### **1. Problem solving:**

Prompt the patient to think about possible barriers to the healthier behaviour and help them find ways to overcome these.

### **2. Action planning:**

Help the patient create a detailed plan of what they will do. This should include when and where to do something.

### **3. Commitment:**

Ask the patient to make a commitment to the new behaviour by using affirming statements and possibly put down in writing.

“ I know exercise would really improve my diabetes, I want to do it but it just never happens ”

“ I never have time to shop and buy healthy food or cook a meal from scratch ”

“ I don't want to put on a lot of weight, I know it'll be hard to lose after I have had my baby, but I just can't keep it in check. ”

# Help a patient **change their environment**

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**E**nvironmental change

Toughts

Pactice and record

Emotions

Ggoals

Social influences

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## 1. **Restructuring the environment:**

Advise the patient on aspects of their **physical or social** environment which can be changed in order to promote behaviour change

## 2. **Reducing exposure:**

Discuss ways to avoid exposure to specific physical and social triggers for unhealthy behaviour

## 3. **Adding objects, prompts or cues:**

Discuss ways to add to the environment in order to encourage the healthy behaviour

Cues to listen out for



“ I know I shouldn't buy pastries but I walk past a corner shop that sells them every day on my way to work ”

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## Explore thoughts underlying the patient's behaviour

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### 1. Triggers:

Help the patient to understand what triggers their unhealthy behaviour

### 2. Distraction:

Discuss an alternative focus for attention to avoid triggers for unwanted behaviour

### 3. Mis-perceptions:

Identify and challenge the patient's mis-perceptions that may be driving the unhealthy behaviour

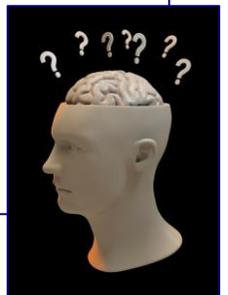
### 4. Reframing:

Identify where you could reframe the patients efforts to focus on performance of a healthy behaviour instead of removal of an unwanted behaviour

### 5. Pros and cons:

Explore the patient's pros and cons for wanting and not wanting to change the behaviour

Cues to listen out for



“ I spend most nights in front of the TV, especially after a stressful day at the office – doesn't everyone? ”

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## Encourage the patient to **rehearse and record behaviour**

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### 1. Having a go:

Prompt the patient to rehearse carrying out the wanted behaviour in different situations

### 2. Monitoring:

Establish ways for the patient to record and monitor their behaviour

### 3. Feedback:

Provide the patient with feedback on how they are doing



Cues to  
listen out for

“ I’m really good with food at home, don’t even touch the biscuits anymore but I find it really difficult when we eat out, it’s my downfall ”

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## Encourage **positive feelings** that will support behaviour

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### 1. Focus on past success, self-talk:

Prompt the patient to think about or list previous successes in performing the behavior (or parts of it).

### 2. Verbal persuasion about capability:

Reinforce that the patient can successfully perform the wanted behaviour, especially when you detect self-doubt in someone.

### 3. Praise.

Reinforce constructive thoughts, emotions and behaviours. This will be more powerful if genuine and linked to concrete evidence about the behaviour under discussion.

### 4. Valued self-identify:

Encourage patient to adopt a new persona e.g. 'I am an active patient' / 'I'm a healthy eater'. Prompt the patient to construct a new self-identity as someone who used to engage with the unwanted behaviour.



“ I have tried and failed so many times to include daily walking into my routine but I can never keep it up! ”

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## Set and review **clear behaviour change targets** with patients

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### 1. **Goal setting (behaviour/outcome):**

Set or agree on a goal with the patient. This goal should be defined in terms of a **behaviour** or an **outcome** that occurs as a result of the behaviour. It can be helpful to think about each component separately or together.

### 2. **Graded tasks:**

Setting small incremental tasks that work towards a larger behaviour change goal.

Cues to listen out for



“ I really want to do more exercise, eat less rubbish and have a better diet but I don't know where to start, it's overwhelming ”

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## Identify how family and friends can **help support** changes

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### 1. Social support:

Identify practical, emotional or social support (*e.g. from friends, relatives, colleagues, healthcare professionals*).

### 2. Social comparison and approval:

Draw attention to others' behaviours to allow comparison with the patient's own behaviours.

### 3. Identification of self as role model:

Prompt the patient to think about how their behaviour is an example to others.

### 4. Credible sources:

Identify verbal or visual information sources which are valued by the patient (*e.g. patient leaflets, advice from healthcare professionals, role models in the patient's life*).

Cues to listen out for

“ I have tried so hard to stop snacking after my evening meals but I can't keep it up for longer than 2 weeks ”

