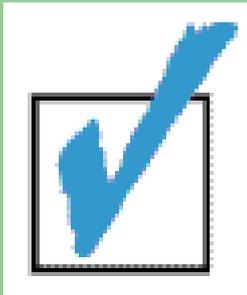


# Overcoming Helplessness

*Going for the 3 Increases: Increase in Health, Increase in Happiness & Increase in Energy*

Strategies for  
Success in Health  
Management

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# What is the State of Your Self-Help Skills and Behaviors?

## Self-Help Skills and Behaviors Inventory

Rate each item on a scale of 0-3 where

0 = don't need more of since this skill you have plenty of and practice it most of the time

1 = need a little more than you currently have since you are aware of the skill and at times practice it but you could benefit from more training and practice in it

2 = need a great deal more than you currently have since you have a sketchy understanding of it and on a rare occasion have even tried it

3 = an overwhelming need to learn about it to alter your feelings about it and to put it into practice since you have only heard of it and know nothing about it and have never practiced it in your life.

Add up all of the ratings when you have rated all 60 items.



# RATING INTERPRETATION

0-60 **Good self-helper.** You have enough skills and behaviors to assist you to overcome the sense of helplessness in your life.

61-120 **Fair self-helper.** You have a need to learn more about normal self-help skills and behaviors if you are to successfully overcome the sense of helplessness in your recovery process.

121-higher **Poor self-helper.** You are in great need of training in the tools for coping which will assist you to know, feel, and act in a more normal way and grow in self-esteem and gain self-confidence, self-respect and self-healing so as to overcome the sense of helplessness in your life.



# What is Helplessness? It is:

- Learned behavior by which you have been able to hook people into caring for and nurturing you
- Vehicle by which you were able to get your ignoring or neglecting caretakers in the past to pay attention to you
- Composite of physical illness, academic problems, failures, work problems, and relationship troubles which have drawn the attention, support, and caring for you from other people
- Vehicle by which you have manipulated people to allow you to remain over dependent on them
- Making others believe that you lack the competence, intellect, skills, and abilities to handle your own problems
- Mask you hide your fear of success behind so others are convinced that you can't succeed when in reality you are afraid of succeeding.



# What is helplessness? It is:

- Inability to establish a sense of trust in self so that you can open yourself up to be vulnerable to hurt & failure by taking a risk to do for yourself rather than to rely on others to do it for you
- Being locked into little child mask which gained you lots of approval in adult life but is not a helpful coping mechanism to deal with problematic life realities
- Refusal to grow up & be an adult, because you would be held responsible for the outcome of your life which responsibility you avoid for fear of failure
- Mask for the anger & rage inside of you for being expected to be mature, personally responsible & self-approving in adult life when in your child life you felt neglected, ignored & non-approved & now want others to do for you what you need to do for yourself
- Use of humor, entertaining & mascot behaviors to divert attention from the need for you to take personal responsibility for your own life
- Acting out in way which draws others' sympathy & compassion but in reality is manipulative ploy to get them to do for you what you don't want to do for self



# Negative Effects of Helplessness

If you continue to function in a helpless way, then you could:

- Become disabled by other people's attitude towards you because they do not believe you are capable of doing anything on your own
- Become over dependent on caretakers to help you to overcome the negative impact of your problems
- Convince yourself that you are indeed as incapable as you project yourself to others
- Fear stepping out on your own, to pursue anything that you are convinced you are not capable of handling on your own
- Lose your potential to have a happy & content existence convinced that there are forces in the world always trying to handicap & keep you down
- Become convinced that no matter how hard you try to do things you are never good enough to succeed
- Become locked into a victim mold of existence always needing a rescuer to help you to overcome the negative impact of the negative perpetrators in your life
- Find that your inherent competencies, skills, and abilities wither and atrophy from non-use



# Negative Effects of Helplessness

If you continue to function in a helpless way, then you could:

- Become locked in the *yes... but* attitude whenever you are being presented with viable alternatives & solutions to your problems so much so that you drive people away from wanting to help you in the future because of your pessimistic or fatalistic outlook on your problems & the frustration they experience in having you reject all of their offers of help, advice & support
- Be figured out by others as a person who doesn't want to become self-sufficient & independent & it could be recognized that your asking for help is simply a ploy to control them to keep them from choosing to leave you alone to solve your own problem
- Project an image of being frail, weak & non-confident, thus making yourself unappealing to people who desire to have a mature adult relationship with you
- Hook caretakers and fixers to take care of you resulting in the possibility that you could run through a series of new ones in turn after you have been dropped by recovering persons who see you for what you are
- Become overly depressed and despondent because you run out of people to take care of you & despair because you are in reality no longer competent to take care of yourself.
- Find that your low self-esteem becomes more exacerbated as you continue to believe & put out the myth of being helpless to care for yourself



# What are some things you can do to cease being helpless?

In order for you to reduce your sense of helplessness and to begin to become more self-sufficient, competent, and self-confident, you need to try to do the following self-help activities:

1. Identify those problems, obstacles, fears, or issues over which you feel helpless and identify what beliefs keep you locked into being helpless for each one.
2. Develop a new belief system that encourages you to recognize that being independent, competent, self-confident, and capable of helping, fixing, and changing yourself is healthy, desirable, and necessary for you.
3. Learn what normal coping behaviors are from others who are in a healthier place than yourself.
4. Practice healthy coping, problem-solving, fear-desensitizing, and conflict-resolving behaviors.
5. Build on your successes at being an independent, free-standing self-helper, self-coper, and self-healer.



# What are some things you can do to cease being helpless?

6. Remember that success breeds success and be sure to reinforce yourself for all of your successes even if they be small ones
7. Accept that relapse is part of the recovery process and get back with your program of self-help if you should slip or fall back to your old mold of helplessness
8. Call upon your Higher Power to give you the courage, strength, and persistence necessary to gain self-sufficiency to cope with your life
9. Give permission to your network of support to call you on any lapses back into a helpless mode of being
10. When you get angry about always having to do it on your own, do anger workouts to ventilate these emotions which are traps waiting to draw you back into your old attention-seeking, helpless role in life



# What are some things you can do to cease being helpless?

11. Parent your inner child by nurturing & self-loving self-scripts & allow your inner child to grow to be a healthy adult with freedom to make mistakes or fail in attempts at self-help
12. Develop a sense of patience to accept that it takes time (an entire lifetime) to fully rid yourself of a sense of helplessness since it is often such an ingrained, automatic habit of acting, thinking & feeling for you
13. Let go of your perfectionistic need to be healed perfectly since it traps you to give up if at first you don't do it exactly right
14. Emotionally detach from all enablers in your life so as not to fall into their need for you to be helpless in order for them to relate to you
15. Stop hiding behind all your old excuses, beliefs & clichés about why you can't possibly help yourself
16. Let go of that old you and as in any death grieve all of the losses involved in no longer benefitting from the old role of helplessness
17. Embrace the new you who is more self-competent, self-helping, self-healing, self-respecting, self-confident, and self-enhancing & recognize all of the healthy, normal, natural, beneficial consequences of living your life in this way



# So are you committed to your Self-Care?

- Review your results on your Self-Help Skills and Behaviors Inventory with your support team
- Encourage your support team to keep you on track to get your health and life back on track and in good shape.
- You can feel confident that we will be there for you!