

Behavior Contract

As part of promoting healthy behaviors, and minimizing negative ones, it is important for clients to surround themselves with people and environments in which this is encouraged. While self-motivation is the key to success, support from others who care about the individual can certainly aid in their progress. Lejuez et al., (2001) suggest talking to someone trustworthy, such as friends and family, about the need to increase healthy behaviors and avoid those that are detrimental.

This 'Behavior Contract' is a useful way to create a concrete agreement with friends and family, identifying the ways in which they can help the individual build better wellbeing. For instance, perhaps they want to ask friends to only let them spend 25% of their time together talking about problems and what's bothering them, leaving the rest of the time to speak about positive experiences or to do a fun activity.

Directions:

1. Identify which healthy behaviors you would like your friends and family to encourage, and which unhealthy behaviors they can help in avoiding. Write these down in the boxes provided.

Healthy Behaviors	Unhealthy Behaviors

2. Create multiple copies of the behavior contract (below), one for each friend or family member.
3. Fill out the contract together with your friend or family member so that you are both in agreement. Start yourself, by writing down the healthy behaviors you would like to start doing. For example, 'I, Alice Black, will do my best to engage in the following healthy behavior(s) to better my wellbeing: Going for a run 2 times a week'. Then, ask your friend or family member to fill out the next part. 'If I succeed in doing this, Adam Black will reward me by making me a nice breakfast'. Continue on to fill out the contract for unhealthy behaviors. For example, 'I will do my best to avoid the following unhealthy behavior(s): Staying in bed all day. If I do engage in these behaviors, Adam Black will avoid rewarding this by not bringing me tasty treats in bed'.
4. Ask your friend or family member to sign the contract and give them a copy as a reminder.

Reference:

- Lejuez, C. W., Hopko, D. R., LePage, J. P., Hopko, S. D., McNeil, D. W. (2001). A brief behavioral activation treatment for depression. *Cognitive and Behavioral Practice*, 8(1), 164-175.

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Behavior Contract

I, _____, will do my best to engage in the following healthy behavior(s) to better my wellbeing:

If I succeed in doing this, _____ will reward me by _____.

On the other hand, I will do my best to avoid the following unhealthy behavior(s):

If I do engage in these behaviours, _____ will avoid rewarding this by _____.

Signed:

You Name

Friend or Family Member

Date: _____