

Step 1: My routine now



Use this diary to see what you're currently doing in an average week.

	Morning	Afternoon	Evening
Monday			
Tuesday			
Wednesday			
Thursday			
Friday			
Saturday			
Sunday			

Step 2: Looking at balance

Reflect on your average week and see if you are happy with the balance you have of each type of activity.

How do you tend to feel at the end of each day? Do you feel better on days you have more of a balance?

Think about whether you could do more or less of each kind of activity, to help life feel more positive and satisfying.

This will help you to set some goals for a new routine.

Write down below, which activities you plan to do more of:

Necessary

Routine

Fun

Step 3: Setting Goals

To make our goals as easy to achieve as possible, we want to take small stepping stones. We'll start with the easiest goal and work our way up.

Take your activities you plan to do, and put them in order of how easy they will be to include in your lifestyle.

Easiest



Hardest

Types of Activity

Necessary

Things we need to do. e.g. *paying bills, work*

Help us to feel secure, and some can give us a sense of purpose and achievement.

Routine

Things we do because we care about them, or we find the results satisfying. e.g. *cleaning the house, looking after others.*

Can help us to feel comfortable, capable and like we're 'on top of things'.

Fun

Things we do because we enjoy them. e.g. *spending time with friends, doing hobbies.*

Help us to feel content, happy and enjoy life.

Top Tip

Make your goals SMART

Specific: What exactly are you going to do?

Measurable: How will you know when you've done enough?

Achievable: Do you have everything you need to do it?

Realistic: Is it actually possible?

Timed: When are you going to do it?

Step 4: My new routine

To get started, use this diary to plan out where your first steps will fit into your routine.

	Morning	Afternoon	Evening
Monday			
Tuesday			
Wednesday			
Thursday			
Friday			
Saturday			
Sunday			

Pacing Yourself

As you start to work towards your new goals, it's easy to do too much too soon and need to take a break.

These breaks can feel like setbacks as we're forced to stop by tiredness, pain or feeling disheartened that we didn't achieve as much as we set out to do.

Then, once we've recovered, it can be tempting to push ourselves too hard again, to make up for that lost time. We call this the "boom and bust cycle" because we can end up repeating it over and over.

So pacing can help us keep up a steady level of activity, and not have to take these breaks.

Try this when you're planning your new activities:

1. Find your 'safe zone'.

Do your activity, but pay close attention to how you feel. As soon as you start to feel uncomfortable, tired or any pain, **stop**. Then take a note of how much you did, or how long you did the activity for.

For example, this might be walking for 1 mile, or singing for 15 minutes. Use the way of measuring that works best for you.

2. Plan to do half that.

To begin with, you want to stay well within your safe zone. This will help you get into a routine with your activity, without any discomfort or pain that might reduce your motivation.

3. Gradually increase your activity

Over time, you will be able to increase how much you do, little by little. Take this at the pace that's comfortable for you, but make sure you only increase by a small amount each time.

Plan in rest days

Having a planned break every so often will help you to stay motivated. Giving your body and mind a rest can mean you're less likely to have to take an unplanned break with pain or fatigue.

Why not use the time to reward yourself for the progress you've made?

Physical Activity

Physical activity is as good for our mind as it is for our body, but it can include a much wider range of activities than we tend to think.

Any activity that gets our body moving can have these benefits - whether it's a fitness class, going for a walk, or dancing, gardening, cleaning, or playing with the kids.

It can help us to:

- Sleep better
- Cope with stress
- Feel better about ourselves
- Feel more positive
- Reduce pain
- Connect with others

Top Tips

Think about your activity levels in terms of **intensity** as well as how much and how often. You may find you can do more if you take it easier.

- **Light intensity:** Breathing and speaking is easy.
- **Moderate intensity:** You can chat, but your breathing is heavier.
- **High intensity:** It's hard to keep up a conversation.