

Small Steps to Health and Wealth

Strategy 8 - Make Progress Every Day (Health)

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Where attention goes, energy flows, and results show. —Unknown

Remember the phrase "a journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step?" That single step is doing something positive every day. "Make progress every day" is a strategy for improving health because it promotes a healthy attitude about behavior change. People expect progress to "happen" instead of building progress steps into their daily activities. Making progress requires hard work and may make you uncomfortable at times.

The secret to making progress is getting started... today. Three ways to make progress every day towards your goal are: daily affirmations, daily learning activities, and daily action steps.

Daily Affirmations help people believe that change is possible in their lives. They are positive statements about how someone *wants* to think and behave. They are repeated multiple times per day and should be short. They should be positively spoken, preferably out loud, and should be in present tense. They may not reflect your current reality. An example of this is "I weigh 140 pounds" when in actuality you weigh more. Your affirmation wouldn't be "I'm going to weigh 140 pounds" because this is a future-tense statement that mentally postpones action.

Daily Learning Activities: One way to make progress towards good health is through learning. Make a conscious effort to learn something new every day. Watch a TV show; read an article or listen to a radio show. Write down your daily learning activity and refer back to it when necessary.



Daily Action Steps: You can "keep your eyes on the prize" and make progress every day by setting realistic and attainable goals. Many people overestimate how much they can do in short time periods and underestimate just how much they can do over time. There are

no "magic pills" that guarantee good health but daily progress with build upon itself. If you do something consistently, at least five times a week, you will make progress. Each little bit adds up. For instance, lose 4 pounds in 5 weeks (less that a pound a week). Repeat that 10 times over a calendar year and you will lose 40 pounds. Ways to help lose could be as simple as:

- ⇒ Eat a piece of fruit instead of the cookie or cola
- ⇒ Eliminate 100 calories per day by using 1 TBSP less of mayonnaise, butter, or salad dressing

The most common reason given for neglecting one's health is "lack of time" for exercise, sleep and eating healthy. Invest in you. If you don't have a 30 minute block of time to set aside daily for exercise, break it up into 10 minute intervals. This can be accomplished by:

- ⇒ Take a 10 minute walk during lunch break
- ⇒ Take your dog on a brisk 10 minute walk when you get home from work
- ⇒ Use the stairs instead of the elevator for a couple of flights.

In short, **small daily changes can have a significant outcome.**

— Action Steps —

1. Identify three or more 10-minute chunks of time to make progress toward your health goals.
2. Follow one new recommended health improvement practice each day.
3. Keep track of your health progress (e.g., pounds and inches lost, lower BMI and blood pressure).



Deskercise!

The Silent Seat Squeeze: Believe it or not, some deskercises can be kept under wraps, and this isometric glutes exercise is one of them. To start toning, simply squeeze the buttocks, hold for 5-10 seconds, and release. Repeat until the agenda wraps up or the glutes