

GUIDED IMAGERY ARTICLES & RESEARCH

SOUND CHANGES™

5 Steps to Facilitate Change

By Ellen Simon, M.S., M. Ed., LPC

Provided below are 5 simple and easy steps anyone can implement to create positive change in one's life. As increasingly more documentation becomes available supporting the effectiveness of these techniques, we will continue to see medical communities throughout the world adopting these simple, life changing steps.

1. **Determine what it is that you want to change! what do you really want?**

I already know what you are thinking... This is common sense, right? However, what seems like the easiest & most obvious step can and will become the culprit of failure. YOU MUST BE CLEAR ABOUT WHAT YOU WANT! Of all the years I have spent in my practice helping people initiate positive change in their life, the most important step is often overlooked. For example:...because most of us want 2 things that are contradictory, we often tend to choose the voice that is the loudest.

People tend to listen to that little voice in their head saying "oh just this once, just eat this one cookie, bowl of ice cream, chocolate candy, French fried potatoes, tomorrow I'll start my diet". If instead we listened to the voice saying "nothing tastes better than being healthy feels" we would turn away with a sense of empowerment and a deeper fulfillment. Saying "No" can be infinitely more fulfilling than eating food. So what do you want? Really? Do you want to maintain an overweight, unhealthy body and attract heart disease, stroke and diabetes? What choice really makes you HAPPY? We cannot control a lot of things in life but one of the few things we can control; is What we put in our mouths. Ok you decide you want to eat it? ARE YOU WILLING TO TAPE IT TO YOUR BUTTOCKS AND WALK AROUND FOR AN HOUR FIRST? YOU'LL HAVE to walk around a lot longer with it on your rear end if you stick it in your mouth.

Bottom line...know what you want because you will get it!

2. **Ask yourself why** you want to make this change?

What will this change do for you? How will this change support your highest values and deepest desires List the benefits this change will bring to you.

3. **Visualize your desired outcome**Imadulate!. Olympic gold medalists do this all the time. This is beyond practicing and when you imagine something in your mind, your brain and your body respond as though it's happening in reality. Now **feel** the feelings in the here & now that you would have if you have arrived at your desired state.

Imadulation is using your imagination on purpose coupled with your intention. It's a great way to practice change!

" No matter if I was at practice, or about to kick a game winning field goal, I imagined my routine from start to finish over & over again in my head. From the moment the ball left my foot, I saw it go righthrough the middle of the uprights... Every single time!" -Todd Pegram, All-Time leading scorer, Texas A&M

4. **Identify the action steps that will bring you closer to your desired outcome. Break it into small steps! Choose a start time and if possible, a daily plan to support your goals. Do something however small every day to bring you closer to your desired change.**

You will develop confidence in your ability to realize your desired change by breaking it down into steps. Initially, change can be quite intimidating and overwhelming, as your final objective can seem far from your grasp. This feeling alone can cause insecurities in your ability to obtain your desired outcome. Therefore, developing smaller milestones to reach within your overall objective will not only allow you to track your progress and thus keep you on track, it will also build self-efficacy, which is the belief in ones own ability to do something. The more progress you see from your actions, the more momentum you will develop. This will keep you more focused and less doubtful while moving full speed ahead!

5. Create Accountability. If you have something that you want and intend to do, then tell someone close to you who shares your best interest about the change you are initiating in your life. This person could be a friend, family member, or even a co-worker. Agree that this person will be like a coach to support your efforts to change and push you if/when needed to keep moving forward!

Or.....

5. Remind yourself what you are working towards. You can do this by posting sticky-notes in strategic locations, or using photographs of people, places, or things that clearly remind you of what you are trying to attain. I'm sure you have heard the old adage "a picture is worth a thousand words." Well, this is even more so when initiating change. A visual of your desired outcome will act as a catalyst throughout the entire process. This is because you will have the end result in sight from the very beginning. It will also remind your subconscious mind of your specific intent to manifest positive change in your life.

© 2008 by Ellen Simon www.imadulation.com. Permission to reprint if left intact.

Ellen Simon is a nationally recognized expert in the field of mind body health. Ellen's unique brands of audio programs are in use in hospitals and health care facilities across the country. Ellen is the author of over 25 titles. This article is adapted from Food for Thought®, a 6 audio CD set. For more information visit www.imadulation.com.