

ACTION SHEET #1

Your Current Situation

What is your "it" ...your situation?

What do I want to change?

What keeps me in this situation?

- What I think:

- What I say:



What I do (or do not do):

Obstacles to making the change:

Other thoughts:

ACTION SHEET #1

(Example)

What is your “it” - your situation?

After 25 years of marriage, I have found myself very alone when my husband suddenly died. My daughter is out of the house, and my son, although he lives here, has his own busy life and is rarely home. I deeply miss how the four of us were always together doing family things. I am 48 years old and I have never lived alone, having moved from my parents’ house to being married. The house feels very empty. My life feels very empty, lonely. It is scary to be fully responsible for myself. I have no one there to run things by; I have to rely solely on my own judgment for everything, for the first time in my life. Very scary! I feel overwhelmed by the house. It is a lot to maintain on my own. My friends are wonderful, but they have busy, full lives, and my time with them is small. I feel that I have let myself go physically. I am significantly overweight, and now that my children are 19 and 21, I really cannot use baby weight as an excuse (sigh). Although I work outside the home, my main chosen job for all these years has been to care for my family - my husband and my children. With that gone, who am I? Do I still have value?

What do I want to change?

I want to create a life that is based on my dreams and goals. I want to learn what those are, and then go after them. I want to be happy being by myself, independent, AND I also want a partner to share my life – the ups and the downs. I want someone to make me laugh, who shares my values and interests. Someone I am attracted to both physically and emotionally. I want to be with someone because I love them and *want* to be with them because we add to each other’s lives, NOT because I NEED someone or because I am trying to fill some hole in myself. I want to feel comfortable in my own skin.

What keeps me in this situation?

- **What I think:**

Maybe this is the way my life is supposed to be. Do I really deserve more than this? I should be thankful for the love and support I have from my family. You are lucky that it is not worse. Maybe it is selfish to focus on “just me”. Even though the house is a lot to manage, it was “ours” and is the children’s family home. What would they think if I sold it? Am I dishonoring my husband by moving on and letting go? I’m too old to change. If I were to think about dating, who would want me? I’m boring. I’m fat. Dating is done so differently from when I was dating 30 years ago! I’m not good enough. I am not strong enough to do this.

- **What I say:**

To others - I’m doing fine. I don’t need anything, thank you.

- **What I do (or do not do):**

Primarily, I keep the status quo, doing what I've always done – work, home – even though with my partner gone, everything has changed. I give into the fear and negative talk and do nothing.

Obstacles to making the change:

- Fear of what others may say/think – How could you sell the house? How could you think of dating someone...what about Dad?
- Fear of doing something new/taking risks – Making any changes at this point would be WAY outside my comfort zone.
- Guilt – for wanting to move forward/feeling disloyal, of wanting more
- Fear of not being good enough – too old, too fat, too boring...

ACTION SHEET #2

Challenges to Moving Forward

What will I have to give up in order to move forward?

How is not moving forward benefiting me?

How did I contribute to the situation being the way it is?

What is my biggest fear (fears) about moving forward?



ACTION SHEET #2 (Example)

What will I have to give up in order to move forward?

My identity of “wife” and “married” - of being part of a couple. How I identify my worth - I felt my worth came from being the family caregiver and glue. *Being a victim.*

How is not moving forward benefiting me?

I don't have to “put myself out there” and risk rejection or criticism. I don't have to do the work of identifying/nurturing other aspects of my identity, of who I might be. I don't have to take responsibility/ownership of what happens in my life from this point forward.

How did I contribute to the situation being the way it is?

I didn't do enough to establish my own individual identity outside of wife/mother.

What is my biggest fear (fears) about moving forward?

That I can't make it on my own. That I can't create a new, successful life. That others may disapprove of my new choices.

*Your answers may look completely different from mine. The example sheet is just to help get you started.

ACTION SHEET #3
Takeaways from my “it”

Free text. Write anything about lessons you have learned and insights you have gained about yourself:

Skills/resources/attitudes I have that will help move me forward:

ACTION SHEET #3
Takeaways from my “it”
(Example)

Free text. Write anything about lessons you have learned, insights you have gained about yourself:

Although I may have put some aspects of my personal growth on the back burner, I had the privilege of staying home with my children while they were young, which created a strong bond between us, and we continue to be close. I have great pride in being a part of them becoming the people they are today. The strong family closeness we have today because of my earlier focus is a huge source of strength for me now as I transition into a new life. I gained skills in areas I may not have in school or the workplace...patience and unconditional love come quickly to mind!

Skills/resources/attitudes I have that will help move me forward:

Patience (bears repeating. All parents will understand this!)

Commitment through the ups and downs of life.

Mediation and conflict resolution skills.

I am friendly and have a caring attitude.

I like to help people.

I am a survivor.

I love to read and gain knowledge.

I am intelligent.

ACTION SHEET #4

Challenges into Opportunities

Challenge: _____

Opportunity: _____

Challenge: _____

Opportunity: _____

Challenge: _____

Opportunity: _____

Challenge: _____

Opportunity: _____

Challenge: _____

Opportunity: _____

ACTION SHEET #4
Challenges into Opportunities
(Example)

Challenge: No longer have spouse to depend on

Opportunity: To practice doing things independently

Opportunity: To practice making my own decisions

Challenge: Fear of being alone

Opportunity: To practice spending time alone

Opportunity: To meet people I would never have met before

Challenge: No longer responsible for husband/children

Opportunity: Have time to explore new interests/skills

Challenge: Unsure of my identity

Opportunity: To explore my personal style (without the input of others)

ACTION SHEET #5

Clarifying My New Identity

I am in the process of becoming (identity you are incorporating)

Becoming this person is important to me because

What this new identity looks like...

What am I doing?

Where am I?

What am I thinking?

What am I saying?

How am I feeling

ACTION SHEET #5

Clarifying My New Identity (Example)

I am in the process of becoming (identity you are incorporating)

A healthy person

Becoming this person is important to me because

I want to be the best version of myself, looking and feeling my best. In my current state, I am tired all the time, feel bloated and uncomfortable. I do not have the stamina to go hiking or even do a minimal workout at the gym. I see on a daily basis – in myself and others – the long-term consequences of what not taking good care of oneself does. I want to minimize the likelihood that I will have to live with chronic health conditions. I realize that if I do not start to take better care of myself now, it won't be long before it is too late to capture optimal health. I want to fit comfortably into my clothes, and to feel that I look good in them. Looking and feeling healthy will help increase my self-confidence.

What this new identity looks like...

I maintain an active lifestyle; walking, hiking, exercising at the gym. I have the energy and stamina to engage in all the activities I would like. My body feels good and strong. I take care of my body, and my body takes care of me.

What am I doing?

I am engaged in physical activity that I enjoy - walking the dog, hiking with friends, swimming. I am trying new things like working out with a personal trainer. I am learning more about healthy food choices and incorporating them into my diet. I am creating a schedule around my healthy lifestyle choices.

Where am I?

I am outside walking in my neighborhood, enjoying the walk with my dog. I am exploring new walking trails. I am working out at the YMCA that is conveniently two minutes away. I am at the grocery store picking up the fresh, healthy ingredients for the new recipes I am trying. I am in bed at a decent hour to help ensure that my body gets the rest it needs.

What am I thinking?

"I am a healthy person." When faced with choices, I ask myself, "Is this what a healthy person would do?" "I am creating the best version of myself." "I feel good when I make healthy choices."



What am I saying?

“Would you like to go for a hike with me?” “Can we choose a restaurant with healthy choices?” “Can we meet earlier? I am working on getting to bed earlier.” “I’d like to share a great recipe with you!” “Would you like to be my gym partner?” “Guess what I’ve learned about...?”

How am I feeling?

I feel that I am taking control of my life. I feel strong. My body feels good. I feel more confident. I feel like “me”. I feel...healthy!

ACTION SHEET #6

Challenging Our Thoughts

<u>Feeling</u>	<u>Thought</u>	<u>Triggering Event</u>	<u>Alternative Thought</u>
Monday			
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
Tuesday			
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
Wednesday			
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
Thursday			
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____



Friday

Saturday

Sunday

ACTION SHEET #6

Challenging Our Thoughts

(Example)

<u>Feeling</u>	<u>Thought</u>	<u>Triggering Event</u>	<u>Alternative Thought</u>
Monday			
Anxiety	I don't think I can do this	Boss gave me a new project	Boss has faith in me; I can enlist help; I am resourceful
Tuesday			
Guilt	I am a bad person	Forgot an appointment & kept client waiting an hour	I am human & made a mistake; My daily schedule may be too full & need adjusting
Wednesday			
Disappointed	I am a failure	Didn't get the job	There are many reasons that may have nothing to do with me, personally
Thursday			
Anger	This is unfair! This shouldn't be happening!	Flight home delayed	How can I make the best of this? Catch up on work? Reading?
Friday			
Shame	I am a fraud	Presentation went poorly	Will prepare better next time; Will get feedback to do better
Saturday			
Annoyed	Why can't she just put it in the sink?!	Coffee cup left on the table again!	She is great in so many other, important ways. So lucky to have such a great partner
Sunday			
Apathy	It won't matter anyway	Invited to work out with a friend	Get to spend time with my friend; I may sleep better after exercise

ACTION SHEET #7

Taking Action

I am in the process of becoming - new identity (from Action Sheet #5)

Becoming this person is important to me because _____

My Accountability Person (AP) for this goal is _____

- I picked this person because _____
-

One action step I am willing to take today

(Today's date: _____)

(v when completed)

I shared my planned action item with my AP

I debriefed with my AP after I completed
my action item

My next action item is _____

Next action item will be completed by _____

I discussed my next action item with my AP

I debriefed with my AP after I completed
my action item

ACTION SHEET #7
Taking Action
(Example)

I am in the process of becoming - new identity (from Action Sheet #5)

A healthy person

Becoming this person is important to me because

To feel good, to look good, to be able to do the things I want physically, to avoid chronic illness...

My Accountability Person (AP) for this goal is: My sister because she is supportive and is also working to get healthy. She will be honest with me.

One action step I am willing to take today (Today's date: May 8)

Visit the gym closest to me for a tour

I shared my planned action item with my AP



I debriefed with my AP after I completed my action item



My next action item is: Use the free 5-day gym pass and try the treadmill and elliptical for a few minutes (go for at least two days).

Next action item will be completed by May 16

I discussed my next action item with my AP



I debriefed with my AP after I completed my action item



ACTION SHEET #8 Goal Creation

I am in the process of becoming - new identity (from Action Sheet #5)

Action/behavior that supports this identity _____

My Goal:

- I will complete the following action: _____

- How many times (per day, week, month): _____
 - On the following days/dates: _____
 - At the following times: _____

- I will review my progress
 - In the following way: _____
 - On the following dates: _____
 - With the following person/people: _____

ACTION SHEET #8

Goal Creation

(Example)

I am in the process of becoming - new identity (from Action Sheet #5)

A healthy person

Action/behavior that supports this identity

Eating a healthy diet

My Goal:

- I will complete this action: Eat a salad for lunch
- How many times (per day, week, month): 3 times per week
 - On the following days/dates: Monday, Wednesday, Friday
 - At the following times: Will prep after dinner for the next day (Sunday, Tuesday, Thursday)
- I will review my progress
 - In the following way: Will keep a chart on the refrigerator

ACTION SHEET #9

Habit Creation

I am in the process of becoming - new identity (from Action Sheet #5)

Habit I want to create: _____

Best time to do this: _____

(Keep in mind best time of day for your energy level)

I can make this easier to accomplish by doing the following:

Reward I can tie to my new habit:

(Reward must not undermine your desired identity; i.e., having a bowl of ice cream after the workout)

ACTION SHEET #9

Habit Creation

(Example)

I am in the process of becoming - new identity (from Action Sheet #5)

A healthy person

Habit I want to create: Go to the gym Monday, Wednesday and Friday

Best time to do this: On my way home from work

I can make this easier to accomplish by doing the following:

Packing my gym bag the night before

Setting an alarm on my phone reminding me to pack my gym bag

Placing my gym bag next to my purse

Attend the gym that is on my route home

Setting up sessions the first two weeks with a trainer (to make me accountable)

Reward I can tie to my new habit:

(reward must not undermine your desired identity; i.e., having a bowl of ice cream after the workout)

Checking out Facebook when I get home from the gym

ACTION SHEET #10

My Mentors

I am in the process of becoming - new identity (from Action Sheet #5):

Goal: _____

Potential mentor(s): _____

Goal: _____

Potential mentor(s): _____

Goal: _____

Potential mentor(s): _____

*Note: These are goal categories rather than specific goals as the term “goals” is identified in Chapter 5.

ACTION SHEET #10

My Mentors

(Example)

I am in the process of becoming - new identity (from Action Sheet #5)

A healthy person

Goal: Eat healthier/lose weight

Potential mentor(s): My sister who has lost 40 lbs. in a healthy manner, the nutritionist at work, friend from my club who teaches nutrition classes, friend who has been successful with Weight Watchers.

Goal: Exercise more

Potential mentor(s): My brother-in-law who has been working out for years, the lady who teaches T'ai chi in community classes, the local yoga studio teacher, hire personal trainer (coach).

Goal: Improve/maintain mental health

Potential mentor(s): My good friend who has meditated for years, my aunt who always seems to remain calm, no matter the situation.

ACTION SHEET #11

Tracking my Goal

I am in the process of becoming - new identity (from Action Sheet #5):

Goal (observable, measurable, specific time frame):

Tracking tool (i.e. daily planner, Fitbit, etc.):

Review period (daily, weekly, monthly):

Date of next review:

To be reviewed with (mentor, accountability partner, etc.):

How I will acknowledge/celebrate my success:



ACTION SHEET #11

Tracking my Goal

(Example)

I am in the process of becoming - new identity (from Action Sheet #5):

A healthy person

Goal (observable, measurable, specific time frame): Go to the gym Tuesday and Thursday on my way home from work and Saturday morning after breakfast.

Tracking tool (i.e. daily planner, Fitbit, etc.): Daily tracker tool in my daily planner

Review period (daily, weekly, monthly): Weekly. Every Sunday in order to prepare for the new week.

Date of next review: Sunday, June 23

To be review with (mentor, accountability partner, etc.): Mentor Gerry

How I will acknowledge/celebrate my success: I will make time to see a movie I have been wanting to see.

