

Introduction

What is the goal of this project?

Living with diabetes is not always easy. You have to manage many different parts of your life (like what and how you eat) to make sure your blood sugar is in good control. Even if you are already doing these things, it can be difficult to continue to do them on a daily basis. At the same time, many people have found that with a few changes in their life, they can feel better, get healthier, and have better control over their diabetes.

One of the best things that people with diabetes can do to get healthier is to increase their physical activity. As we will discuss, being active can help your mood and your health in so many ways, yet it can be a challenge. Many people with diabetes find that they sometimes struggle with low energy and low mood, that they already have a lot to keep up with, and that getting and reaching goals can be tough.

We believe that finding ways to increase positive thoughts and feelings can really help people to become more physically active. Research shows that people who experience more positive feelings (such as feeling more hopeful or more grateful) exercise more and have better overall health. This makes sense: when you are feeling happier and more confident, it can be easy to start (and stick to) healthier habits!

In this project, you will complete “positive psychology” exercises designed to increase your mood and self-confidence, and we will teach you skills that you can use every day to help you feel more energetic, motivated, and hopeful. In our studies, people with diabetes have found positive psychology exercises to be easy, fun, and helpful. We think having more of these good feelings will make it a lot easier to become more active and to accomplish all of your health goals!

We will combine these positive psychology activities with a specific goal-setting program that will help you set and reach goals related to physical activity, like walking more often. We will give you a step counter, help you identify places and times to exercise, help you track your progress, teach you skills to most effectively reach your goals each week, and support you every step of the way.

Our goal by the end of this program is that you feel happier about your life and that you have become more active. We think this will have all sorts of benefits for your diabetes, your overall health, and the quality of your life.

What is my role?

We believe that these exercises will help people with diabetes—but we need your assistance to find out for sure! Based on our experience with these exercises and extended interviews with patients with diabetes, we have specifically selected the positive psychology exercises that we think will be most helpful to you, and have combined it with a goal-setting program to safely and gradually improve activity in people with diabetes.

Introduction

Your participation and feedback will help us to determine whether this program helps you to feel more positive and become more active. If it works well, we may someday make this program part of standard treatment for patients with diabetes. Your participation will help us figure out how we might do that.

So what is this ‘positive psychology’, anyway?

Positive psychology is an area of psychology that focuses on helping people to experience greater life satisfaction through specific activities. These include identifying and using your personal strengths, appreciating pleasant events during your day, performing kind acts for others, and using past successes to accomplish your goals in the future

Is it really possible for a person to experience more positive emotions?

Yes. It appears that almost 50% of a person’s happiness is directly under their own control, and specific activities focused on good feelings can improve well-being. The activities in this program aim to do just that!

This does not mean that it is always easy. Like other activities that can benefit health, positive psychology exercises take practice. Of course, taking specific actions to generate and pay attention to good feelings is not always natural, but these activities get easier and more effective the more you do them. Some exercises will really be a great match for you, while others might be a less perfect fit. With some effort, we believe that you will discover positive psychology activities that you will enjoy and that will provide you with lasting benefit.

In many ways, experiencing more positive emotions is a lot like gaining any new skill, like learning to speak a foreign language. Some people learn how to pronounce new words and acquire foreign accents easily. But with effort and practice, anyone can learn a new language. Similarly, some people have found it a great struggle to experience the positive, but with deliberate and consistent effort it is possible to feel stronger, happier, and more hopeful.

Performing the specific exercises you will complete in this program can still help you to feel more positive, even though you may still be having symptoms related to diabetes. In turn, having more positive thoughts might make it just a little easier to be physically active, which in turn can help with physical symptoms in a positive, healthy cycle.

Introduction

With my diabetes and other conditions, will these exercises really help?

We do not want to gloss over or ignore the effects that diabetes (or other medical problems) have had on your life, or how difficult it can be to follow all of the recommendations made by your doctors. We know that you may be asked to make a lot of changes, and getting more active is not easy!

However, we know that people with more positive emotions exercise more, and that people who get specific help with getting and staying active have the best success. So we think that combining the positive psychology program (to improve your outlook and your ability to use your greatest personal strengths) with a specific goal-setting program (to help you set and reach your own physical activity goals), will have a great chance of helping you.

How will the program work?

Each week, you will get a new positive psychology exercise from your study trainer. You will complete the exercise during the next week and write about it. You will discuss how it went with your trainer and how you can use those skills in your daily life. Each week you will also discuss a specific physical activity goal (like walking) with your trainer and will also discuss tips to help you reach those goals, like using resources in your community or finding new walking routes. The program takes 16 weeks to complete.

By the end of the study, we hope that you will:

- Be more aware of positive events in your life.
- Be more able to use your personal strengths and qualities to accomplish goals and feel good about yourself.
- Learn simple but powerful new skills that you can use in your daily life to increase your positive thoughts and feelings.
- Be able to regularly use these skills to develop a habit of happiness.
- Find it easier to make healthy lifestyle choices because you are feeling more positive.
- Learn how to set realistic, specific physical activity goals.
- Develop skills to overcome barriers and challenges in getting and staying active
- Sit less, move more, feel better, and thrive!

Session One

Positive Psychology
Gratitude for Positive Events



Gratitude for Positive Events

Introduction

In this part of the BEHOLD program, we will focus on three different positive concepts: gratitude, strengths, and meaning. For the first three weeks of the program, we will focus on developing skills related to gratitude—feeling thankful for people, places, or things. We will help you find ways to be more aware of (and grateful for) positive things in life, express gratitude to others, and then integrate these skills into your everyday life. Over the next four weeks, you will complete the following activities:

Enhancing Gratitude

- ❑ *Gratitude for positive events* → Developing awareness for positive events
- ❑ *Expressing gratitude* → Developing a habit of expressing gratitude to others
- ❑ *Capitalizing on positive events* → Boosting positive feelings from positive events by reflecting on them or celebrating them in some way.
- ❑ *Using gratitude in daily life* → Using gratitude as part of everyday activities

In the first part of this session, we will focus on *identifying* and *savoring* positive events that occur in your life. It can often be easy to focus on the negative events going on in life. This makes sense to some degree: focusing on challenges or negative events can help you to learn from them and avoid them in the future. However, a single-minded focus on the negative can lead you to miss out on the positive things in life and can affect your health and well-being.

Most of us are not *nearly* as good at savoring and appreciating positive events as we are at analyzing bad events, so this is a skill that needs practice. The good news is that as you become better at focusing on the good in your life, it will become easier to feel even more grateful for what you have and more hopeful about the future.

We know that having to manage a chronic illness like diabetes might sometimes make it hard to feel grateful or to remember good things on a regular basis. Our team will work to help you develop an ability to more easily think about the good in life, even with diabetes!

Gratitude for Positive Events

Instructions

This week, we will focus on being more aware of—and grateful for—the positive events in life. For this exercise, please think about three positive things that happened over the past week. Then, use the space on the next pages to write about the events. The things you list can be relatively small in importance (“I enjoyed my lunch today”) or relatively large in importance (“My granddaughter came to visit”). They can be related to your diabetes, or completely separate.

Please follow these instructions:

- Give the event a title. (e.g., “my sister remembered my birthday”)
- Write down exactly what happened in as much detail as possible, including what you did or said, and if other people were involved, what they did or said.
- Record how this event made you feel at the time. Use the most specific positive emotional words that you can think of to describe how you felt: Joy? Satisfaction?

Tips for completing the exercise:

- The goal of the exercise is to remember the good event and then enjoy the positive emotions that come with it. Focus your energy on this goal!
- If you are having trouble thinking of specific positive emotions, please refer to the list of positive emotions (page 10).
- You may find yourself wanting to write something like “I felt less stressed.” It’s good to note this, but try to describe the feeling or thought using positive emotions and words. So, for example, instead of writing “I felt less stressed,” you might write “I felt a little bit of relief.”
- Focus on the positive. If you find yourself focusing on negative feelings or emotions, turn your mind from the negative feeling and refocus yourself on the good event and the positive feelings that came along with it. This can take effort, but it gets easier with practice and can make a real difference in how you feel.

Gratitude for Positive Events

Exercise

Positive event #1:

1. Event title: _____
2. What happened? What did you do or say, and if other people were involved, what did they do or say?
3. What positive thoughts and emotions did you experience at the time of the event? (Be as specific as possible and give as much detail as you can).
4. What specific positive thoughts and emotions do you have now as you look back on the event?

Gratitude for Positive Events

Positive event #2:

1. Event title: _____
2. What happened? What did you do or say, and if other people were involved, what did they do or say?
3. What positive thoughts and emotions did you experience at the time of the event? (Be as specific as possible and give as much detail as you can).
4. What specific positive thoughts and emotions do you have now as you look back on the event?

Gratitude for Positive Events

Positive event #3:

1. Event title: _____
2. What happened? What did you do or say, and if other people were involved, what did they do or say?
3. What positive thoughts and emotions did you experience at the time of the event? (Be as specific as possible and give as much detail as you can).
4. What specific positive thoughts and emotions do you have now as you look back on the event?

**Please think about how you can use this skill
(being more aware of positive things) in your daily life.**

Session Five

Positive Psychology

Remembering your Past Successes



Remembering Your Past Successes

Introduction

Congratulations! You have now completed the first portion of our program, which focused on experiencing and expressing gratitude. We hope that you have found the program to be interesting, enjoyable, and useful so far. We also hope that you have been able to continue to use the skills you have learned in your daily life. The second portion of the program focuses on **identifying and using strengths**.

Focusing on strengths, successes, and accomplishments is critical to getting the most out of life. This focus can remind of you of positive events and how you played a part in making them come about. You can also observe which qualities (like toughness) and skills (like social intelligence) you used to make those happen, so you can apply them to future goals, like getting more active. The exercises you will complete in the next four weeks are:

Using Strengths

- ❑ *Remembering past successes* → Boosting positive feelings from prior good events and remembering what skills you used to make them happen
- ❑ *Identifying your personal strengths* → Identifying a “signature strength” and observing how you use it in different ways throughout your week
- ❑ *Using perseverance* → Choosing a time to use the strength of perseverance—persisting at something—and observing its effects.
- ❑ *Using strengths in daily life* → Remembering and using your strengths in everyday life to meet your goals and feel better

In this week’s exercise, you will focus on a time when you experienced success. You will think about the success you had, how it felt, and how you played a role in making it happen. For this exercise, **“success” can mean any positive event in which you played a role and felt proud or happy about your contribution**, whether your contribution was big or small. It can be a “classic” success, like doing well at work or a community event, or, it can be a different kind of event that was smaller, less public, or just different, but was still meaningful to you. As with all the other exercises, your positive event can be related to your diabetes or completely separate.

Successes can be large or small, public or private, individual or group efforts. In many ways, the outcome is less important than the process—the ingredients within you that made it happen. What we want to figure out is: How did you do it? How did it feel? How can you use those skills again? Can you use those skills to tackle challenges and goals related to diabetes?

Remembering Your Past Successes

Take the next few minutes to think about a time when you succeeded at something. It can be a small, daily task, or it can be an incredibly difficult task that happened in a specific moment or over a long period of time. Think as specifically as possible about the situation (for example, instead of “raising my kids,” it might be “raising my son to be kind to others, like the time he thoughtfully consoled a classmate who had lost his grandmother”).

If you can't think of anything, you may be trying too hard to think of a “major” life event. Think about the past few days: was there anything that happened, even very small, that was a success? On the other hand, you may be thinking too “small”. Think about the big events of your life, and times when you were the proudest or happiest—those times may be worth thinking and writing about.

Use the instructions below to help guide you through this process:

Instructions:

1. First, write about the event. Next, write about the positive feelings and thoughts you had during the event. Then, write about the positive feelings and thoughts you have now, as you look back at your success.
2. Finally, write about how you did it—what role you had in making the success happen and which of your good qualities “came out”. Your trainer will then help you think about other times when you have used those good qualities.
3. Do not worry about perfect grammar and spelling.
4. Write these responses on the next pages. When you next speak with your study trainer, you will review the event, how it made you feel, and how you were involved in your success.

Remembering Your Past Success

At the end of the week, please answer the following:

4. As you look back on the success and write about it, what positive thoughts and feelings do you have right now? Describe in detail.

**Think about how you can use this skill
(remembering success) in your daily life!**



Session One (Part 1)

Goal Setting

Moving for Better Health



Moving for Better Health

Setting Goals to Get Moving

In the Goal Setting part of the BEHOLD program, we will work together to help you set and reach goals for walking and other physical activity. Being active is one of the best things that you can do for your diabetes and for your overall health.

Did you know that physical activity can...

- ✓ Improve your mood
- ✓ Improve your energy
- ✓ Improve your immune system
- ✓ Grow new brain cells and improve your focus and memory
- ✓ Increase your muscle mass
- ✓ Strengthen your bones
- ✓ Strengthen your heart
- ✓ Improve your blood sugar regulation
- ✓ Help you lose weight
- ✓ Possibly decrease the amount of medication you will need for your diabetes
- ✓ Help you look younger
- ✓ Reduce the risk of damage to your eyes, heart, nerves, and kidneys from your diabetes
- ✓ Help you live longer

I am worried that I won't be able to get active—it can be hard!

Getting active is hard—if it was easy, you'd already be doing it. It is perfectly normal to have trouble reaching the recommended physical activity level for people with diabetes. You may have tried to become active in the past and found that it was challenging. Perhaps you felt very tired, or had uncomfortable symptoms during or after exercise, or you found it difficult to fit walking or other activity into your busy life. It may have been hard to even find the right place to be active. You may even have been successful in getting more active, but found it was hard to keep the habit going.

We are here to help! In this program, we will provide you specific skills in setting physical activity goals that are right for you—reachable, realistic, and safe. We will work to:

- ✓ **Keep track of your progress** using a step counter.
- ✓ **Set reachable and specific personal goals** for these behaviors and adjust them based on your own experience and symptoms.
- ✓ Identify barriers to being active, and **help you find ways to overcome challenges to getting and staying active.**
- ✓ **Help you identify resources** (people, equipment, new routes, and education) that can help you on your journey to becoming a more active person.

We will work with you **at your pace** to help you set goals that make sense for you and then work to achieve them. **You will always get to set your own goals in this program.** We are just here to help, and will help you every step of the way.

We think that by working together, you will be able to set and achieve your goal of being more physically active. We believe that this will help you to feel better, have better control of your blood sugar, and be healthier!

Moving for Better Health

How will we set goals?

We will:

- ✓ Assist you in tracking your current level of activity.
- ✓ Help you to come up with a plan for a specific, realistic activity goal, and then help you reach your goal gradually and safely.
- ✓ Work with you to keep track of your progress, address any problems that arise, adjust your goals based on your experience, and maintain any gains you have made.
- ✓ Help you develop a system to stay active even after the study.

How will the sessions work?

Each week, we will review your activity during the past week and review how much progress you made toward that week's goal and your overall goal. You will have a chance to ask questions, discuss the benefits of these behaviors, and review the pros and cons increasing your activity. Next, your trainer will help you to determine whether you feel ready to set a new goal, and if so, will help you set one that is within your reach and feels right to you.

We'll give you a step counter to help you measure your progress, and each week we will focus on a new topic, like identifying resources to help you get active, and finding new walking routes. We'll also work to help you spend less time sitting, which is another way we can help you be healthier.

The goal-setting part of the phone sessions will come right after the positive psychology part of the sessions, during the same call. Our feeling is that the first part of the calls will help you to feel more motivated, energized, and hopeful about yourself and your diabetes, which will put in you in the best possible frame of mind to think about setting and reaching a physical activity goal.

By the end of the program, our goals are that you will:

- ✓ Be more aware of the benefits of physical activity.
- ✓ Learn how to overcome common barriers to setting goals and staying active.
- ✓ Reach your personal activity goal.

As a first step, let's simply focus on how you are thinking and feeling about physical activity right now.

Moving for Better Health: Worksheet

Physical Activity: Where Have You Been and Where Are You Going?

1. What do you want to get out of this program, in terms of your physical activity and overall health?

2. What kinds of physical activities did you like to do earlier in your life, and what do you like to do now?

3. Importance and confidence ratings:

On a scale of 0-10 (0=not important, 10=very important) how **important** is it that you increase your physical activity? _____

On a scale of 0-10 (0=not confident, 10=very confident) how **confident** are you that you can increase your physical activity? _____

4. Think about the activity you would like to be completing by the end of this program.

Type (for example, walking):

Frequency (for example, 5 times a week):

Duration (for example, 30 minutes):

Intensity (for example, medium effort):

Which **symptoms** will alert you to slow down (such as low blood sugar or having difficulty talking while walking)?:

Session One (Part 2)

Goal Setting

Tracking Your Activity



Tracking Your Activity

Introduction

One of the most helpful things to do is tracking your physical activity each week using a step counter (“pedometer”), a device that clips onto your belt or pants and counts the number of steps you take over the course of a day. Tracking helps give people a real and clear sense of how and what they are doing with their physical activity. This information will really help you (and help us help you) to make physical activity progress!

What does tracking mean?

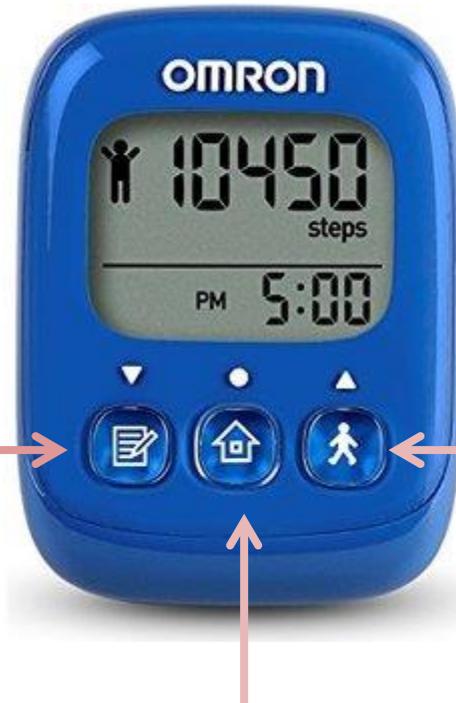
It means writing down your activity at the end of each day or week on the sheet provided in this manual. You can track your activity pretty easily, especially if you use a pedometer. For example, you can track by taking a few minutes each day to write down how many steps you took, or what physical activities you did.

When you write down your activity, think about patterns related to when you are active, when it is hard or easy to be active, and how it feels to be active.

Tracking Your Activity

Your Omron Pedometer

As part of this program, you have received an Omron pedometer, and we will ask that you use it (or another pedometer, if you already have one) throughout this program. Here are some tips for how to use it:



This button lets you look through the past seven days to see how many steps you took each day.

This button lets you change what the top number means. You can choose steps, miles, kilocalories, or aerobic steps. For our program, it is probably best to just keep it on “steps.”

The home button brings you back to today, so you can see the time and the number of steps you have taken today.

Tips for using your pedometer:

- ✓ When you haven't touched the pedometer for a while, the screen shuts off. Don't worry, it is still counting your steps! Just press any button to turn the screen on again.
- ✓ The pedometer will probably work the best if you clip it to a belt, waistband, or pocket.
- ✓ Please do not wear this into the shower or pool, and please do not put it in the laundry. It is not waterproof!
- ✓ If you have any problems with your pedometer, please feel free to call us at 617-724-9142. We are happy to help sort out any problems you are having! And if you lose it, or it gets damaged, we can get you another one!

Tracking Your Activity: Tracking Sheet

Date	What activity did you do? How much time did you spend performing the activity?	# of Steps
Mon. _/_/___		
Tue. _/_/___		
Wed. _/_/___		
Thu. _/_/___		
Fri. _/_/___		
Sat. _/_/___		
Sun. _/_/___		
Total		

Did you meet your goal this week?

Why do you think you did or did not?

Session Five

Goal Setting

Finding New Routes



Finding New Routes

Exploring your neighborhood: Finding new places for walking

Where we live, work, and play all affect the ways we are active. Think about the area in which you live or work. Are there safe and comfortable places to walk or be active in other ways? Many things about the physical surroundings affect how much people walk in a neighborhood.

What makes a good walking area? Having sidewalks and pleasant scenery helps people walk more. More destinations to walk to are also important, like shops, parks or transit stops. Ramps at crosswalks also help anyone using wheels to stay active (like strollers or wheelchairs). Having streetlights is important for walking safely at night. Finally, having a buffer (like a row of trees between the road and sidewalk) and having benches available can help make a place better for walking.

This week we will ask you to take a closer look at your surroundings by finding a new walking route in or near your neighborhood and thinking about its qualities. You might consider looking at things that make walking more or less likely, like sidewalks, crosswalks, and nice scenery!

Specifically, this week we will discuss a new route or place to walk in your neighborhood, near friends, or near your workplace. We know that when you are dealing with a chronic illness like diabetes and everything you have to manage, it has to be an easy solution!

What is a new route or place you could walk? _____

Instructions:

- 1) This week, walk (or bike, or otherwise be active) in your new route or new location. Gather anyone who wants to walk this new route with you!
- 2) Look over the walking guide items below.
- 3) As you walk, pay attention to the things on your route that make it easier or harder for you to walk.
- 4) Once you have completed your route, think about:

How was your new walking route?

What were some helpful or unhelpful factors for walking there?

Is this a route you can continue to walk? Why or why not?

Finding New Routes: Worksheet

Think about which of these things are present on your new walking route!
Some features of a good walking environment:

Feature	What did you notice?
There are public parks	
There are benches or places to sit	
There are streetlights	
There are sidewalks or paths/walkways present	
The sidewalk or paths/walkways are well-maintained or clear (e.g., clear of snow, branches, or things that may make it easy to trip/fall)	
The sidewalk or walkway is covered by trees or awnings, or other shade.	
There is a buffer between car traffic and pedestrian areas (like a row of trees, grass, or bushes)	
Crossings have a pedestrian walk signal	
There are ramp(s) at curbs at street crossings	
There is a marked crosswalk	
You feel safe from traffic	
You feel safe from crime	

Finding New Routes: Worksheet

1) Physical activity goal for this week:

2) Walk in a new place this week. Where and when will you do this?

Are your goals SMART?

Specific

Measureable

Attainable

Relevant

Time-based

Date	What activity did you do? How much time did you spend performing the activity?	# of Steps
Mon. _/_/_		
Tue. _/_/_		
Wed. _/_/_		
Thu. _/_/_		
Fri. _/_/_		
Sat. _/_/_		
Sun. _/_/_		
Total		

Did you meet your goal this week?