

LEARNING TOGETHER



Specialized Services At Your Fingertips

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REMINDER



REMEMBER to self-screen and stay home if you're feeling unwell



Wash your hands for a minimum of 20 seconds with soap



Keep your mask on while at work



Use gloves only when needed for personal care



Get your flu shot

WE'LL GET THROUGH THIS TOGETHER.

COMMUNITY LIVING
Toronto

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Introduction & Webinar

Along with the constant stream of news surrounding Covid-19 we have heard many experts speak about the rise in mental health issues as a side-effect of the social isolation we have all experienced for the past number of months. With a Canadian winter ahead of us the term we all hear and see being used is **Self-Care**.

While it may appear self-explanatory it is necessary to break this term down into objective and measurable goals we can incorporate into our daily schedules. Self-care is any activity that we do deliberately in order to take care of our **mental, emotional, and physical** health. In this edition we are going to focus on how to develop new habits utilizing the concept of reinforcement schedules to increase our physical health.

TAKE CARE



OF YOURSELF

[Therapist Aid](#) has a self-care assessment designed to help you reflect on your current self-care practices, recognize areas where you could improve, and generate ideas for new self-care activities you may

enjoy. Take a look by clicking the picture.

Self-Care Assessment

Self-care activities are the things you do to maintain good health and improve well-being. You'll find that many of these activities are things you already do as part of your normal routine.

In this assessment you will think about how frequently, or how well, you are performing different self-care activities. The goal of this assessment is to help you learn about your self-care needs by spotting patterns and recognizing areas of your life that need more attention.

There are no right or wrong answers on this assessment. There may be activities that you have no interest in, and other activities may not be included. This list is not comprehensive, but serves as a starting point for thinking about your self-care needs.

1	I do this poorly	I do this rarely or not at all
2	I do this OK	I do this sometimes
3	I do this well	I do this often
★	I would like to improve at this	I would like to do this more frequently

1 2 3 ★ Physical Self-Care

- ☐ Eat healthy foods
- ☐ Take care of personal hygiene
- ☐ Exercise
- ☐ Wear clothes that help me feel good about myself
- ☐ Eat regularly
- ☐ Participate in fun activities (e.g. walking, swimming, dancing, sports)
- ☐ Get enough sleep
- ☐ Go to preventative medical appointments (e.g. checkups, teeth cleanings)
- ☐ Rest when sick
- ☐ Overall physical self-care

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Please join our webinar on November 25th, 2020 at 11:00 am for a deeper dive into Schedules of Reinforcement.



Join our Cloud HD Video Meeting
Zoom is the leader in modern enterprise video communications, with an easy,...

cltoronto-ca.zoom.us

<https://cltoronto-ca.zoom.us/j/7996050467>

Importance of Physical Activity

Dan is the owner and head trainer of Level Up Fitness, a gym located in Mississauga providing personal training and specialized fitness programs to individuals with developmental disabilities. Dan has studied and worked in the field of Applied Behaviour Analysis for over 10 years, providing support to youth and adults with special needs and developmental disabilities.

Our very own Rebecca Domm did an interview with Dan discussing the importance of physical activity and the challenges to initiate it across all different abilities. [Click here and enjoy!](#)

Schedules of Reinforcement (Continuous Reinforcement)

Reinforcement occurs when a behaviour increases as the result of a consequence of adding or removing something from the environment.

For further examples of reinforcement see editions [#2](#), [#7](#), and [#8](#)

Positive Reinforcement

Introduce a reinforcing stimulus following a specific behavior

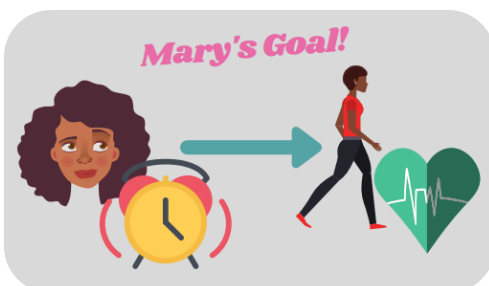


Self-reinforcement is a slightly more challenging concept as it involves building reinforcement into your own schedule. Much like a First/Then board we must **First** 'go for a walk' and **Then** watch a favourite tv show. We are holding ourselves accountable for our own behaviour. How do we ensure we don't cheat on ourselves? As most of us do not have access to a personal trainer we must design our own plan and understanding how schedules of reinforcement operate will provide us with a higher rate of success.

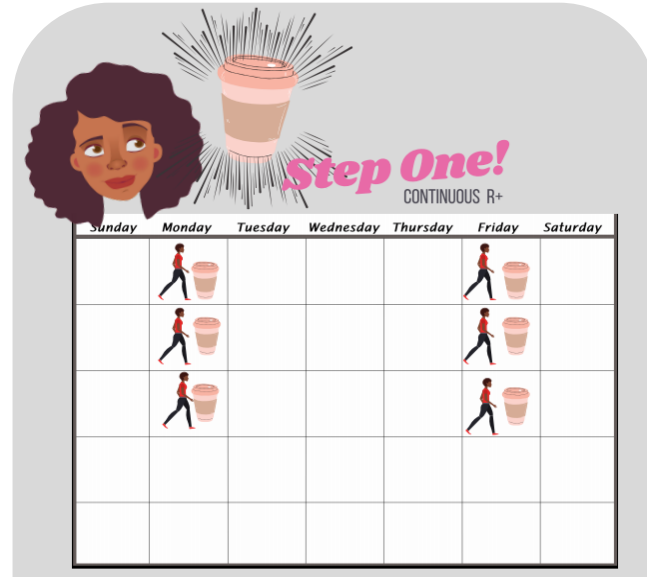
The first step in developing a new behaviour is to define that behaviour. The definition must be easily observed, countable, and have a clear beginning and end.

Example: Mary has decided that she would like to incorporate daily walks into her routine. She reviews her current schedule and notes that the only time of day this could be done is in the morning which means getting up earlier than usual. This is tough as she tends to hit the snooze button for at least 15 mins every day. Mary knows that walking in the morning will be of great benefit to her physically and mentally for the day and so she sets goals for herself.

OBJECTIVE: Mary will walk for 30 minutes every weekday morning before breakfast.



STEP ONE: To meet that objective Mary set short-term goals and utilized a **continuous reinforcement schedule**. In a continuous reinforcement schedule Mary will reinforce herself following every occurrence of the target behaviour. The first goal for Mary is to walk twice per week. She selects Monday and Friday as the days she will walk. Next Mary must decide what she will use for reinforcement. She lives close to a coffee shop where they sell the best Chai Tea Lattes. It will feel particularly good to earn a delicious Latte and so Mary will only drink Lattes after her walks on Monday and Friday. This is an important factor in self-reinforcement. The reinforcer should **only** be available following the target behaviour and at no other time. **First** a 30 min walk **Then** a Chai Tea Latte. Mary will follow this schedule until she has walked on Mondays and Fridays for a period of 3 weeks.



Schedules of Reinforcement (Intermittent Reinforcement)

Mary has reached her first goal of walking twice per week for a 3-week period. She has really enjoyed the feeling of accomplishment when drinking a Chai Tea Latte following her early morning 30 min walk. She will now move into the next stage of her plan utilizing intermittent reinforcement. An intermittent schedule of reinforcement occurs when reinforcement is delivered after some target behaviours but not all.

STEP TWO: Mary will now add an additional day to her schedule. She has chosen Wednesday which means she will now walk 3 days per week. She has decided that she will continue to get the Chai Tea Latte on Monday and Wednesday but remove the coffee on Friday. This continues for another 3 week period at which point she adds Thursday to the weekly schedule. Mary decides to change the reinforcer at this point. The Chai Tea Latte has lost its potency and she is now also walking more days. She considers all of the activities that she likes to engage in and chooses dinner with a friend on the Friday night as her new reinforcer. This means she will not go out for dinner on any other night of the week and must complete 4-30 min walks per week in order to meet a friend for dinner on Friday. With this new schedule in place Mary sets meeting dates with various friends over the coming weeks.



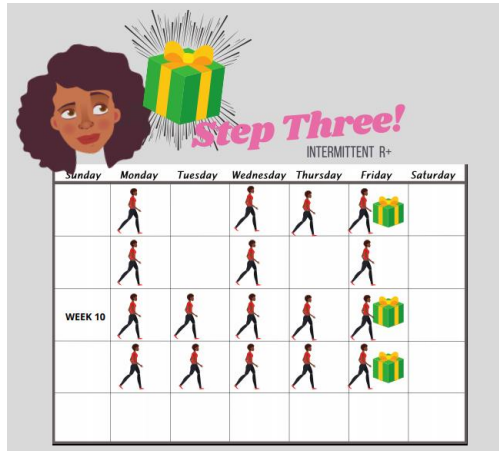
C Fading Reinforcement

STEP THREE: At the 10 week mark Mary is now looking at a full week of walking. She feels great. Each day she has had more energy. Friends and family have made comments about how good she looks. It has been a very positive experience and one she wants to continue with. While she has now arrived at the final stage she must begin to fade reinforcement as this new behaviour begins to become a constant in her life. She decides that she will begin to remove the reinforce on the odd Friday moving forward. It is also time to reconsider the reinforcer itself. She has a list of movies she would like to go see and this would be a good opportunity to see them while also making it contingent on this new behaviour. For the next few weeks she begins to fade reinforcement.

STEP FOUR: With a number of weeks under her belt Mary fades reinforcement to every other week. She continues to go to the movies and is feeling really great about herself.

STEP FIVE: Mary has achieved her goal!!! She is walking every morning Monday through Friday and she no longer uses self-reinforcement. The behaviour is now well established. Mary has such a feeling of accomplishment. In a little over 2 months she has gone from hitting her snooze button every morning to eagerly waking up to get outside. Reinforcement is no longer necessary.

This plan can easily be applied to any activity. Remember when developing your objective that you need to set obtainable goals. Apply schedules of reinforcement and away you go!



Activities in the Community & at Home

The holiday season is upon us and whether you celebrate Christmas or not there are many fun seasonal activities that may be incorporated into life in a social bubble. We created a list of activities you can do in the safety of your home or locations you can go to relish all things winter while still being able to practice social distancing. Click the blue links to learn more about each activity.

Have a paint party! [Click here](#)

Have fun with a family game night! [Click here](#)

Holiday themed baking is always a delicious idea. Enjoy all the sugary treats by clicking [here](#).

Get a puzzle for the entire family to do! [Amazon.ca](#) has a variety you can choose from.

Polar Drive-Thru:

Enjoy a multi-level holiday experience, with this photo spectacular event for all ages.

Niagara Falls Light Show:

Enjoy Canada's largest outdoor winter festival of lights

Drive-thru Winter Wonderland:

Located in Toronto, this drive thru experience will have a holiday themed light show.

Virtual Christmas Parade:

Due to Covid-19, the annual Christmas parade will be virtual. On December 5th the Christmas parade will be aired on CTV at 7pm.

Nathan Phillips Ice Skating:

With colder weather approaching, Nathan Phillips square will be opening their skating rink.



For feedback or questions please email us at: specsnews@cltoronto.ca



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