



"Start with changing behaviors, not mindsets. It is much easier to 'act your way into new thinking' than to 'think your way into new actions.' Recurring and consistent performance results from behavior change will lead to lasting changes in the way people feel, think, and believe in the long run."

Jon Katzenbach

How Health Coaches Can Use Mental Contrasting and Visualization to Overcome Barriers to Health Behavior Change:

1. Explain to clients the definition of mental contrasting and the visualization process.

Mental contrasting is a technique used to set and reach goals. To use the technique, you imagine your desired outcome and the obstacles that could stand in your way. For example, if your goal is to get a promotion at work, you could imagine yourself achieving the promotion, then consider the obstacles such as brain fog or low energy at work. After mentally contrasting the options for improving your cognitive focus and energy, you can come up with a plan to overcome the obstacles and reach your goal.

Visualization in coaching is the practice of using mental images and scenarios to help a person reach a goal. It can involve imagining different outcomes, scenarios, and experiences that can help the person achieve their desired outcome. Visualization can be used to create a positive mindset and help to create a plan of action to reach the goal. It can also be used to help identify and remove any mental or emotional blocks that may be preventing the person from reaching their goals. Visualization can be a powerful tool to help people achieve their goals and make the most of their potential.

2. Support clients identify and focus on their specific goal.

Write their #1 focus goal here (use SMART format.)

3. Identify the potential obstacles or challenges that may stand in the way of achieving the goal.

List the potential obstacles here.

4. Mentally contrast the desired outcome with the potential obstacles.

Desired outcome vs. likely obstacles:

5. Help clients assess what is more important to them during their goal-setting process.

Brainstorm potential values conflicts and potential challenges to taking action steps:

6. Visualize the desired outcome and the steps needed to reach it.

What is the step-by-step to get the #1 focus outcome?

7. Reinforce commitment to the goals through regular visualization.

Map the details of the visualization exercise. (How often, what time(s), where, in what way? etc.)

8. Create accountability plan.

How would your client like to be held accountable to this visualization practice?

10. Track progress towards goals with clients.

What are the metrics that will be regularly tracked (when? by who?) to be sure that client is on the path to successfully reaching their goal?

11. Celebrate success regularly!

Write down all celebrations!

Share them with the coach/ community!

Plan micro-rewards along the way!