

Module 17: Building a Good Life

Objectives

- Build a fulfilling life where you no longer feel the need to offend!

So this may seem like a big task but it can help to break down the different aspects of your life into sections and tackle each one in small manageable steps.

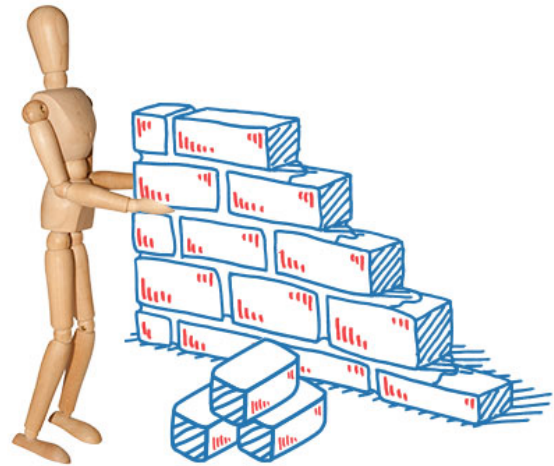
Goal setting

Avoidant and Approach Goals

Approach goals: these are things or states that you want to achieve and fixed on success e.g. I want to run 10km. They are therefore more motivational and working towards them makes you happier and more successful.

Avoidant goals: these are things you try to avoid, or not do e.g. I will stop eating chocolate. Avoidant focused people are constantly scanning their environment for threats.

Often both approach and avoidant goals are necessary for making positive changes. The relapse prevention section focused on thoughts or actions to avoid or be alert to, now we are going to focus on setting your approach goals.



So how **do** you identify the **parts** of your life you need to work on and what goals you want to set?

Good Lives Model

A really good approach uses the Good Lives Model developed by Tony Ward (a psychologist) and colleagues. The model breaks down the states of mind, personal characteristics, activities or experiences that are sought by people and, if achieved, they are likely to increase psychological well-being. He calls these needs that people try to achieve **primary goods**. The primary goods are personal to the individual and therefore will differ according to the kind of person the individual would like to be. The diagram below shows the primary goods Ward has outlined.



For full descriptions of each section, please see below:

Creativity

It is important that we have activities in our lives that we feel good at. In order to feel good about ourselves, we need to have a sense of achievement. This can also help with our self-esteem. This doesn't mean actually being 'the best' in comparison to others, but feeling that we are doing the best we can in whatever we do.

Excellence in work

This can also involve feeling like we have 'mastered' activities and skills-training that are important to us in the work place. Additionally, it can include creativity, i.e. being able to create/make new things, come up with new ideas, or be artistic or practical in some way.

Excellence in play

This is about how people spend their time and the range of activities in which they are involved. It is important for people to see that all activities are worthwhile and for people to have activities which offer elements of fun, excitement, challenge and achievement. This might involve hobbies, work, and exercise. This also about balance of activities (e.g. work / life balance).

Spirituality

Whoever we are, it's important for us to feel like we understand our purpose in life. This could stem from religion, but it doesn't have to. This could be something like 'being a good friend', 'being a good brother / sister' or contributing to your community in some way.

Inner peace

This is about feeling peaceful and comfortable. It means that we should feel free from difficult feelings, and that we should know how to deal with these feelings if we have them. This also means feeling safe; physically and emotionally.

Life

This is about how we live our lives in terms of our physical health (exercise, diet, feeling comfortable with our appearance) and emotional health (looking after ourselves inside).

Relatedness

This is about having intimate, romantic and familial relationships.

Excellence in Agency

This is about feeling like we can manage and control our lives. The ability to make decisions and to feel as though you have a say in your life is very important. This is also about being able to manage the way you behave and the way you feel (e.g. knowing what to do if you have had a bad day). This is also about being able to make decisions and solve everyday problems in life.

Knowledge

This is about having knowledge and understanding so we feel informed about our world, so that we feel we understand what is going on around us. Knowledge can come from life experience, what we learn at school, from books or from the media. It does not mean 'being clever', but feeling as though we know what we need to in order to feel ok in the world.

Community

This is about having a sense of belonging and responsibility to the social group you live in. This also includes a sense of fitting in. It is important that we have a group of people where we feel we 'fit'. Belonging might stem from friends, family, colleagues, a religious group or another group of people.

Pleasure

Feeling good in the here and now.

You can find out more about the Good Lives Model from the following book: Ward, T., Laws, D.R., & Hudson, S.M. (2004) (Eds.). *Sexual Deviance: Issues and Controversies*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Module 17: Building a Good Life

What are my primary goods (needs)?

The following exercise will help you identify some of the things that are important to you, the needs that your offending might have been trying to meet and start the process of identifying the parts of your life you want to improve.

Exercise 1 - Understanding your Needs

[Download printable version of this exercise, with space to fill in answers >](#)

Consider your life right now. Scale how well your essential needs are being met by giving a rating for each question between 1 and 7. 1 = the need is not being met; 7 = the need is well met.

For each question, write down one specific example that justifies your response. Additionally, make a note if you feel that this need is/was in some way being met through your illegal online behaviour.

1. Do you have a sense of achievement?

Do you have activities in your life that you feel good at? What is your general feeling of accomplishment from day to day?

2. Are you satisfied with how you spend and divide your time?

Are you satisfied with your job? Do you have a range of other worthwhile activities in your life that you enjoy and give you a sense of fun, excitement and challenge?

3. Are you spiritually connected?

Do you feel secure with an understanding of your meaning and purpose in life?

4. Are you at peace and feel comfortable with your life?

Do you feel free from difficult feelings and know how to deal with these feelings when you have them? Do you feel physically and emotionally secure?

5. How healthy do you feel?

Do you take care of your body physically? Are you emotionally healthy?

6. Are there people who are important to you and to whom you are important?

Is there at least one person with whom you can be yourself? Do you have a sense of belonging and fitting?

7. Do you have a sense of autonomy and control?

Are your views heard and do you feel that you have a healthy influence over events? Can you manage the way you behave and the way you feel?

8. Are you secure in your knowledge and understanding?

Do you feel as though you know what is needed in order to feel ok in the world?

Although all of these needs are important, some will be more important to you than others. This next part of the exercise asks you to identify which needs you feel are priorities in your life.

Take a look back at the above needs. For each need, write the number 1, 2, or 3 with 1 being a high priority and 3 being less of one.

Select your highest priority need that was being met through your offending behaviour. Focusing on this one need, answer the following questions:

1. What specifically makes this need important in your life?
2. Do you have any ideas of how you could meet this need without the illegal online behaviour?

Meeting your primary goods (needs)

Ward also describes the role of **secondary goods**. Secondary goods are the means in which the primary goods are obtained.

- For example, a *primary good* example of happiness may be achieved through the *secondary good* of a positive personal relationship.

People who have offended online were often trying to meet primary goods but in a harmful way. The most common primary goods that people try to meet online are:

- Inner peace
- Pleasure
- Relatedness
- Knowledge (curiosity)

(but some people might identify they were trying to achieve other 'goods' too).

SO REMEMBER THIS:

You need to identify the need (primary good) that is important to you and healthy ways (secondary goods) of meeting those needs.

For example, consider, Tony, he is a man who has previously been convicted of internet offences. Tony lives alone and is quite isolated. However, he places great emphasis on the 'primary good' of social contact/activity which he used to meet through online chat. Tony has decided to meet this need through volunteering to undertake work in a community garden where he would meet a lot of new people.

Beware of obstacles!

Sometimes it can be really hard to meet your needs and there can be things that get in the way.

If this is the case then it increases your chance of trying to meet them through unhelpful ways - particularly if these are things that you have done before (we often revert to old habits, particularly in times of stress!).

Continuing with the example of Tony - if his way is blocked; for example restrictions due to previous convictions means he can't volunteer in the garden because a lot of young people spend time there. Tony has the potential to relapse into inappropriate use of the Internet in order to meet other people again. However, Tony was aware this might be a problem and had planned ahead, so he had a back-up plan. He thought that if he was unable to do voluntary work in the garden he would be able to do work for the local animal shelter. Tony was able to start walking dogs for the charity and met other volunteers so still got a chance to meet his need for socialising, plus he started doing more exercise so felt healthier.

How do I plan for obstacles?

Some obstacles are easier to overcome than others, and to overcome some you may need to get help or support from professionals or specialist organisations (such as counselling to deal with grief or other negative life experiences). Some obstacles can take a long time and will be hard work to overcome (for example building self-confidence) but obstacles can be beaten and it is important to keep positive when tackling obstacles. See the [problem solving section](#) for advice on how to overcome obstacles.

Understanding your Needs

Part A:

Consider your life right now. Scale how well your essential needs are being met by drawing a circle around the number that seems right for you. 1 = the need is not being met; 7 = the need is well met.

In the box next to each question, write down one specific example that justifies your response. Additionally, place a tick in the corner of this box if you feel that this need is/was in some way being met through your illegal online behaviour. Ignore the priority box on the far right for now.

<p>1. Do you have a sense of achievement? Do you have activities in your life that you feel good at? What is your general feeling of accomplishment from day to day?</p> <p>NO 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 YES</p>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 150px; margin-bottom: 5px;"></div> <p style="font-size: small; margin: 0;">Need met through illegal online behaviour <input type="checkbox"/></p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 50px; height: 20px; margin: 0 auto; text-align: center; font-size: x-small;">Priority</div>
<p>2. Are you satisfied with how you spend and divide your time? Are you satisfied with your job? Do you have a range of other worthwhile activities in your life that you enjoy and give you a sense of fun, excitement and challenge?</p> <p>NO 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 YES</p>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 150px; margin-bottom: 5px;"></div> <p style="font-size: small; margin: 0;">Need met through illegal online behaviour <input type="checkbox"/></p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 50px; height: 20px; margin: 0 auto; text-align: center; font-size: x-small;">Priority</div>
<p>3. Are you spiritually connected? Do you feel secure with an understanding of your meaning and purpose in life?</p> <p>NO 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 YES</p>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 150px; margin-bottom: 5px;"></div> <p style="font-size: small; margin: 0;">Need met through illegal online behaviour <input type="checkbox"/></p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 50px; height: 20px; margin: 0 auto; text-align: center; font-size: x-small;">Priority</div>
<p>4. Are you at peace and feel comfortable with your life? Do you feel free from difficult feelings and know how to deal with these feelings when you have them? Do you feel physically and emotionally secure?</p> <p>NO 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 YES</p>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 150px; margin-bottom: 5px;"></div> <p style="font-size: small; margin: 0;">Need met through illegal online behaviour <input type="checkbox"/></p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 50px; height: 20px; margin: 0 auto; text-align: center; font-size: x-small;">Priority</div>

5. How healthy do you feel?

Do you take care of your body physically? Are you emotionally healthy?

NO 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 YES

Priority

6. Are there people who are important to you and to whom you are important?

Is there at least one person with whom you can be yourself? Do you have a sense of belonging and fitting?

NO 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 YES

Priority

7. Do you have a sense of autonomy and control?

Are your views heard and do you feel that you have a healthy influence over events? Can you manage the way you behave and the way you feel?

NO 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 YES

Priority

8. Are you secure in your knowledge and understanding?

Do you feel as though you know what is needed in order to feel ok in the world?

NO 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 YES

Priority

Part B:

Although all of these needs are important, some will be more important to you than others. This next part of the exercise asks you to identify which needs you feel are priorities in your life.

Take a look back at the above needs. In the Priority box on the far right, write the number 1, 2, or 3 with 1 being a high priority and 3 being less of one.

Part C:

Select your highest priority need that was being met through your offending behaviour. Focusing on this one need, answer the following questions:

Need Selected: _____

1. What specifically makes this need important in your life?

2. Do you have any ideas of how you could meet this need without the illegal online behaviour?

Module 17: Building a Good Life

Reviewing progress

Have you ever found yourself making New Year’s resolutions and then within a few weeks forgetting what they are or going off track? If we set goals we need to check on our progress and that we are still on target to achieve them otherwise there is a danger of losing focus or becoming lazy and stopping altogether.

The following diary is a great way to keep motivated and review your progress each week.

Exercise 2 - Gaining Ground (Daily Progress Record)

Every day of the week, be sure to do something for each category to help promote a balanced lifestyle and recovery. Complete this sheet at the end of each day and complete the review at the end of the week. Then, copy and paste the table to continue your record for the following week.

Of course, this sheet can be modified. Feel free to change, add or remove categories to suit your needs. Just remember to keep your goals in mind, stick to what is attainable, but also be sure that you challenge yourself.

Week Starting:					
	Personal health <i>(physical and emotional)</i>	Family and friends <i>(stay connected)</i>	Career and community <i>(be productive)</i>	Home <i>(upkeep – don’t veg about)</i>	Self-help <i>(get better!)</i>
Monday					
Tuesday					
Wednesday					
Thursday					
Friday					
Saturday					
Sunday					
END OF WEEK REVIEW	Highlight what Emotional Needs are best being met? <i>Physical and emotional safety</i> <i>Autonomy and control</i> <i>Free time to reflect and recharge</i> <i>Wider connections</i> <i>Giving and receiving attention</i> <i>Intimacy and friendship</i> <i>Status in society</i> <i>Competence and achievement</i> <i>Aims and ambitions that challenge</i>	Comment on any noticeable <u>patterns</u> over the past week. What has been <u>positive</u> ? Were there any <u>missed opportunities</u> ?		Target(s) for next week:	

Gaining Ground – Daily Progress Record

Every day of the week, be sure to do something for each category to help promote a balanced lifestyle and recovery. Complete this sheet at the end of each day and complete the review at the end of the week.

Week Starting:					
	Personal health <i>(physical and emotional)</i>	Family and friends <i>(stay connected)</i>	Career and community <i>(be productive)</i>	Home <i>(upkeep – don't veg about)</i>	Self-help <i>(get better!)</i>
Monday					
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END OF WEEK REVIEW	Highlight what Emotional Needs are best being met? <i>Physical and emotional safety</i> <i>Autonomy and control</i> <i>Free time to reflect and recharge</i> <i>Wider connections</i> <i>Giving and receiving attention</i> <i>Intimacy and friendship</i> <i>Status in society</i> <i>Competence and achievement</i> <i>Aims and ambitions that challenge</i>	Comment on any noticeable patterns over the past week. What has been positive? Were there any missed opportunities?	Target(s) for next week:
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Module 17: Building a Good Life

Reflection

You've learnt:

- What 'goods' are important to you
- Which ones you tried to meet online

You know:

- You can meet them in other ways
- How to start generating ideas to overcome obstacles

But you also know:

- Some goals take time and perseverance
- And you'll need to continue to review and set goals in the future to continue building a 'good life'.

So think about what you have achieved and focus on what changes you need to make. You might need to go back through some of the self-help modules a few times, or seek support from other people or places, but you are here now and therefore clearly motivated to make changes. So use the skills you have and what you have learnt to be the person you want to be and have a fulfilling and good life!

If you want to discuss anything covered in this module, have struggled with working through the self-help material or just want the opportunity to work through the self-help site with a practitioner to guide you then please [call the Stop It Now! Helpline](#) for confidential support from our trained staff.

