



Association of Applied Performance Psychology

Managing Life Well If-Then Planning and Self-Calming

When faced with challenges, you may decide to be determined and succeed, then set goals to help you cope – which is great!

BUT: Determination to succeed, combined with a goal (although important) only accounts for about 20% to 30% of success – you need something else! So despite you being motivated and having a good plan/goal, you (like us all) would benefit from extra support to deal with challenges.

I am going to outline a simple, but *very powerful technique*, that will help you self-regulate (be in charge of) your emotions, thoughts, and behaviour.

This very effective method is called **If-Then Planning**: a two-part plan that helps you expect (predict) and manage situations that you may find challenging.

Remember: The best psychological techniques are doable, not tied up in technical terms that are difficult to either understand or do. Don't be fooled by If-Then Planning's concrete approach, it is a very powerful psychology tool, and if you use it regularly it helps!

Here we go:

The If-part: I think about situations you may find challenging.

The Then-part: I work out how you will manage them.

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Some examples:

If: I feel bored.

Then: I will listen to music.

If: I feel sad.

Then: I will speak to my parents or friends.

If: I get fed up being indoors.

Then: I will remind myself that being indoors keeps me and others safe and healthy.

If: I worry about not training.

Then: I will do my home-based training exercises.

If: I worry about losing my fitness.

Then: I will remind myself that my fitness will return when I start training again.

Sounds simple?

It is – and **POWERFUL** – but only **If You Do It!**

You can write your own If-Then Plans, or ask your coach or parents for help with your If-Then Planning.

Your If-Then Template

IF this happens:	THEN I will:
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

“Before anything else, preparation is the key to success.”

– Alexander Graham Bell

Self-Calming Activities

These techniques will help you calm - whenever you start to feel stressed.

Now I emphasise – this is about you doing something when you start feeling that you are becoming stressed or anxious. Don't wait till you are very stressed...as soon as you get the feeling that you're becoming stressed – do something – this is about you avoiding being over-stressed – you taking control!

To Self-Calm – take charge by doing the following:

1. **Engage in Constructive self-talk.** Tell yourself, “My **thoughts control** my **emotions** and **behaviour**, and I’m deciding to stay calm and look at the good things in my life.
2. **Do some relaxation exercises** – get guidelines from Dr. Lawrie – if you’re going to do it – do it properly!
3. **Use Imagery** – not just Visualisation – Imagery is far more powerful and can be used to relax, like taking a holiday in your mind, for instance.
4. **Practice self-compassion.** Be kind to yourself –listen to music – read a book – watch TV – have a cuppa.
5. **Other people matter too – be kind to others.** What goes around comes around – your kindness will be returned.
6. **Chat** to a friend – parent – coach!
7. **Exercise** – it helps both your body and mind.



NOW – A Powerful Thought – Just For You!



If you say to yourself I'm fed up not training or not going to school or not going out to meet people – then you will tend to feel sad etc....

Instead say to yourself: **'I chose to be healthy!'**

You then give yourself a very powerful message that reinforces the fact that **YOU** have **made a decision!**

Why does this matter?

Well – when you accept responsibility (I chose) **YOU** start to exercise control over **YOUR LIFE**. **YOU DECIDE** – because it's the correct thing to do.

This gives you power, helps you feel good, and it makes sense!

After all, there will come a time, in the near future, when you not being able to train or go to school etc., will be in the past.

Concentrate on YOU being the Best YOU NOW!

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