

GardenShrink – Real Change Series

Planning for Change That Can Survive Real Life

Printable Planning Worksheet (v5)

This is design, not self-command. You're not trying to force change through grit or motivation. You're designing conditions that help follow-through survive real life. Adjustment is part of the plan. Adjustment ≠ quitting.

Worked Example (Read This First) — Starting an Exercise Routine

1) *What Change Are You Designing For?*

- Example A: Focus = Start exercising consistently; Why = more energy, less stiffness.
- Example B: Focus = Build a basic fitness habit; Why = protect health as I age.

2) *The 1–3 Rule (Behaviors)*

- Example A: Walk 15 minutes; Stretch 5 minutes.
- Example B: Gym twice/week; One short walk on off-days; Lay out clothes the night before.

3) *Make It Specific*

- Example A: Mon/Wed/Fri after work; Neighborhood; Counts = 5-minute walk.
- Example B: Tue/Thu mornings; Gym; Counts = 5 minutes on any machine.

4) *Design the Environment*

- Example A: Shoes by door; Barrier = sitting after work; Change = shoes by couch.
- Example B: Gym bag packed; Barrier = forgetting clothes; Change = pack night before.

5) *Plan for Interruption*

- Example A: Late work nights; Counts = 2 minutes stretching; Restart next scheduled day.
- Example B: Low motivation; Counts = put on workout clothes; Don't make up missed workouts.

6) *Externalize the Plan*

- Example A: Calendar reminders; Tell spouse.
- Example B: Note on fridge; Tell walking friend.

7) *First Tending Check*

- Example A: Review in 2 weeks; Check if evenings work.
- Example B: Review end of month; Check if goal fits busy weeks.

Harvest & Next Steps

- Example A: Good enough = 2 walks/week most weeks.
- Example B: Progress = more movement than last month; Encouragement = 'Keep tending.'

1) What Change Are You Designing For?

My focus area:	----- -- ----- --
Why this matters to me:	----- -- ----- -- ----- --

2) The 1–3 Rule (Behaviors)

Behavior 1:	----- --
Behavior 2:	----- --
Behavior 3 (optional):	----- --

3) Make It Specific

When (days/times):	----- --
Where (location/context):	----- --
Smallest version that still counts:	----- --

4) Design the Environment

What makes this easier?	----- -- ----- --
What usually gets in the way?	----- -- ----- --
One environment change this week:	----- --

5) Plan for Interruption

Predictable interruptions:	----- -- ----- --
Counts version on hard days:	----- --
Default restart plan after a miss:	----- --

6) Externalize the Plan

Where will this plan live?	----- --
Who will I tell (if anyone)?	----- --

7) First Tending Check

Review date (2–4 weeks out):	----- --
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What will I check at review? (what worked / what didn't fit / what to adjust)	----- -- ----- --
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Harvest & Next Steps

What would good-enough success look like?	----- -- ----- --
What would progress (not perfection) look like?	----- -- ----- --
One encouragement to myself:	----- -- ----- --

Garden Takeaway

Before planting, gardeners design spacing, competition, support, and protection from weeds. You're not failing when you adjust your plan. You're tending the conditions.

GardenShrink — Better Harvests. Better Lives. | Tested in the garden. Proven where it counts.