# STEP 4 – GUARANTEED STRATEGIES

The fourth step to discover yourself is to review guaranteed strategies. These strategies are based on steps 1 and 2.

Life is a process of continuous change. Throughout our lives, we learn and re-learn things about ourselves, others, and our environment. This section summarizes strategies to help you attain desired goal. In the Additional Strategies section, write out additional strategies you have used in the past that work or strategies that you want to use in the future.

In step 5, use this section as a reference to create actions and daily habits.

## Step 1 Tune In and Turn On

Here is a summary of principles and practices to engage in to help you tune in and turn on.

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|  | Strategies to help you Tune in and Turn On |
|  | Pay attention, on purpose, in the present moment |
|  | Accept yourself as you are today |
|  | Get into a habit taking deep breaths each day, throughout the day |
|  | Incorporate activities, throughout the day, that will help you be present, relaxed and calm |
|  | Throughout the day, focus on what you are grateful for, especially in a time of distress |
|  | Focus on the journey, not just the destination |
| **Additional Strategies** | |
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## Step 2 - Building a Better Future Strategies

### Take Control of Your Thoughts

Here is a summary of principles and practices to engage in to help you take control of your thoughts.

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|  | Strategies to Eliminate Unhealthy Beliefs |
|  | Become aware of your unhealthy core beliefs |
|  | Don’t judge yourself for having this belief. Practice mindfulness |
|  | Create an alternative solution When your thoughts of this belief arise, create alternative, healthy beliefs |
|  | Practice behaviors that enhance this belief |
| **Additional Strategies** | |
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|  | Strategies to Take Control of Your Thoughts |
|  | Keep disruptive emotions and impulses under control by deep breathing, remaining  gratitude focused and accepting yourself just as you are (step 1) |
|  | Maintain a realistic evaluation of your emotions and how your emotions impact your work performance and relationships |
|  | Practice positive thinking and don’t let negative situations or thinking derail you |
|  | Admit your feelings and accept them |
|  | Know your strengths and areas of development |
|  | Accept yourself as you are; remind yourself that you are not perfect |
|  | Seek encouragement (possibly counselor/friend) if needed |
|  | Surround yourself with tools and resources that help you learn about yourself and others (such as books, retreats, counseling, etc.) |
|  | |  | | --- | | Keep thoughts of gratitude and appreciation at the top of your mind (step 1) | |
|  | Gain insights from mistakes |
|  | Have a strong and positive sense of self-worth |
|  | Revise self-defeating assumptions/beliefs with PAIA (Positive affirmations, intentions, and actions) |
| **Additional Strategies** | |
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| Sample Development Activities | |
|  | Manage a new project that has a high likelihood of creating conflict |
|  | Observe coworkers who handle tough and emotional situations very well (take note of their actions when faced with a crisis; ask them how they did it) |
| **Additional Strategies** | |
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### Take Control of What You Say

Here is a summary of principles and practices to engage in to help you take control of what you say.

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| Strategies to Improve Active Listening | |
|  | Give the speaker your undivided attention |
|  | Listen to understand others – adjust your communication style to suit the situation and audience |
|  | Avoid looking at your phone or other gadgets while listening to others |
|  | Be conscious of your body language. Make eye contact. |
|  | Avoid being distracted by environmental factors. For example, side conversations |
|  | Pay attention to verbal and non-verbal cues that create a deeper understanding of the message |
|  | * Disbelief is often indicated by touching the ear or scratching the shin |
|  | * Standing erect and leaning slightly forward shows you are approachable, receptive and friendly |
|  | * Speaking with your back turned or looking at the floor or ceiling should be avoided |
|  | * Closing, folding your arms may indicate that you are not open to what the person is saying |
|  | * Ask clarifying questions that elicit clearer or more detailed information |
|  | * Confirm understanding by paraphrasing or summarizing what your heard |
| **Additional Strategies** | |
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| Sample Active Listening Developmental Activities | |
|  | Think about a time when you were **not** actively listening to others? What could you have done differently? |
|  | Ask a peer or manager to identify a section of a meeting for you to practice listening and note-taking. Afterward, ask him/her to discuss or quiz you on what you heard and to give feedback on your notes |
|  | Ask someone you trust to evaluate your listening skills by telling you how many times you interrupt others |
|  | When presenting, listen closely to your audience. Watch their reactions to each part of your presentation. You will see that some parts prove especially engaging. After the presentation, take time to identify the parts that particularly caught the audience’s attention. Re-draft your next presentations around these highlights |
| **Additional Strategies** | |
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| Strategies to Improve Communication | |
|  | Be a mindful listener |
|  | Maintain a support network. Spend time with friends and family |
|  | Use “I” statements often.   * + Say: “I don't agree with that idea", not, "your idea is stupid”   + Say: “I feel” statements rather than “I think” statements |
|  | Be compassionate with others as you recognize that everyone is unique |
|  | Communicate in a clear and effective manner |
|  | Communicate with integrity |
|  | Always use eye contact and manage your tone |
| **Additional Strategies** | |
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| Sample Communication Developmental Activities | |
|  | Record yourself speaking during a real conversation. Play the tape and listen to your tone. Rate your clarity of speech, instances of interruptions and active listening behaviors |
|  | Volunteer to facilitate a meeting in your group/social activity. Ask for feedback on your communication skills |
|  | Solicit feedback from friends/colleagues on your communication skills. Ask them to list three things you do well and three things you need to work on |
|  | Think about a time when you were able to effectively communicate a new idea to others. Write down what you did that you believe contributed to your success. Also, think about a time you had difficulty getting your message across. Write down what you think you did that decreased your effectiveness. Determine when and where you are more likely to communicate effectively or ineffectively |
|  | Describe one or more times when you whished you had been able to express intimate feelings to someone? Why were you able to express these feelings? What could you do differently next time? |
|  | Describe a time when you were able to effectively express your feelings to someone? How were you able to express your feelings? How can you better express your feelings with others? |
|  | Express your feelings using the “I” word (I feel angry when you don’t pick me up on time; I get upset when you break your word). Practice expressing your feelings to others |
|  | Volunteer for opportunities to present |
| **Additional Strategies** | |
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### Take Control of Your Physical Body

Here is a summary of principles and practices to engage in to help you take control of your physical body.

**Diet**

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|  | Listen to your body through mindfulness and meditation (step 1) |
|  | Talk to your doctor or nutritionist about your specific needs |
|  | Create a plan of what you eat daily at the beginning of each week |
|  | Increase your intake of fresh fruits and vegetables and decrease your intake of fatty and processed foods |
|  | Eat smaller portioned meals |
|  | Limit processed foods and foods made with white flour, white rice, and white sugar |
|  | Stop eating before your body becomes full |

**Exercise**

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|  | Talk to a personal trainer about your specific needs – create an exercise plan and follow it |
|  | Develop a regular exercise regime that you can stick with (with the help of your physician) |
|  | Find creative ways to exercise (e.g., walking at lunch, wake up early and walk in your neighborhood, if you come to work early, walk around the building) |
|  | When your exercise regime falls off track, quickly reflect and determine why. Ask yourself what do you need to do to continue a regular exercise regime (e.g., examine your schedule, attitude)? |

**Stress**

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|  | Accept the reality of frustration and discomfort |
|  | Know that things may not go as planned at times |
|  | Keep your challenge in perspective. Recognize there are always people in a tougher situation |
|  | Pick a single, unproductive thing that is wasting your time and stop doing it today. Eliminate something else tomorrow |
|  | Write down the cause of your stress and reflect on it |
|  | Get organized - order your priorities professionally and personally |
|  | Recharge (e.g., spend time with family and loved ones, read a book, joke with a friend, take a short vacation) |
| **Additional Strategies** | |
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