

Tailoring Coaching to Activation Levels

What is activation?

An individual's capacity or readiness to engage in productive health behaviors.

What are the levels of activation?

The research suggests that activation is developmental and that people pass through 4 different levels of activation on their way to becoming effective self-managers:

Level 1 Don't know or believe you can	Level 2 Don't know HOW	Level 3 Need to practice & take action	Level 4 Anticipate change & manage triggers
Increasing knowledge and awareness	Improving confidence in knowing how	Encouraging practice & taking action	Helping to identify triggers and ways to manage them in advance

During activation stages 1 and 2, coaches help patients to become more aware of target goals.

During activation stages 3 and 4, participants focus on improving on their self-management behaviors. It is realistic for these participants, to take on and maintaining more active self-management behaviors.

Let's Practice!

Match the activation level to the focus of the coaching sessions

A. Peers make small changes in their existing behaviors	___ Activation Level 1
B. Peers build self-awareness and understanding of behavior patterns, which are important foundations for tackling further competencies in later steps.	___ Activation Level 2
C. Peer work on maintaining behaviors/skills and handling new or challenging situations as they arise.	___ Activation Level 3
D. Peers focus on the adoption of new behaviors (eg, 30 minutes of exercise 3 times a week) and the development of problem-solving skills.	___ Activation Level 4

Answer Key: A: Level 2 B: Level 1 C: Level 4 D: Level 3

What are the benefits of tailoring coaching to activation level?

Tailoring coaching to peoples' activation level improves both the outcomes of peers and the efficiency of health management programs.

People who received coaching tailored to their individual level of activation showed greater improvement in their health and in their adherence to behavior changes compared to people coached in the usual way. Coaches who assess activation levels can be more targeted and efficient in allocating their time and effort.

How can coaches increase activation?

SCI&U focuses on the changes that people want to make, based on their current needs and desires for their health.

Remember, activation is an individual's capacity or readiness to engage in productive health behaviors. If we ask people to do something they're not ready for, they may not be able to achieve it.

By starting with goals that match activation level, patients can experience small successes. When people are successful in their goals despite the challenges they face, they build up a sense of self-efficacy, thus increasing their level of activation. As activation level increases, people feel more confident in managing their own health.



In the tables below, you'll find common presentations and focuses for each level of activation to help in your coaching and goal setting.

Level 1

May present as	Working on
<p>Passive recipient or unaware they must play an active role</p>	<p>⇒ Increasing awareness of importance of playing an active role</p>
<p>Displays negative feelings of being overwhelmed</p>	<p>⇒ Stress management</p> <p>Self-awareness and mindfulness behaviors</p>
<p>Has difficulty problem solving and making decisions.</p> <p>May not know how to identify a problem or area for growth</p>	<p>⇒ Identifying problems and areas for growth</p>
<p>Disconnected from or unaware of resources and supports</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Doesn't understand what a support system is or how to use one. ● Doesn't seek out supportive people. ● May not have anyone to support them with healthcare decisions 	<p>⇒ Understanding the value of social supports</p> <p>Refer to Peer Mentor services</p>
<p>Unable to navigate the HC system</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● May not have a PCP or have a weak relationship with PCP. ● Doesn't understand this should change if they want better care. ● Doesn't question treatment or ask provider questions. ● Doesn't seek out preventative services 	<p>⇒ Understanding the patient role in the health care process</p> <p>Understanding the value of the relationship with PCP and its impact on care</p>
<p>May have a lower health literacy</p>	<p>⇒ Connecting to basic resources basic and easy to consume e.g. fact sheets, short videos, etc.</p>

Level 2

May present as	Working on
Know they should take a more active role, but don't know how ⇒	BAP 🛠️ /MI focused on taking small steps or preparatory behaviors Introduction to approach of peer finding & using resources
Lack of knowledge about ⇒ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The health effects of SCI ● How their behaviors relate to how they feel and function ● How to navigate the healthcare system ● The patient role in the health care process 	Resource review 🛠️ direct to information that is basic and easy to consume (e.g. fact sheets, short video, etc.) Introduction to approach to finding and using resources
Lack of confidence in the ability to play a stronger role in HC decision-making ⇒	Building sense of self-efficacy in ability to become a Healthcare self-advocate
Aware of the impact of relationship with PCP on care. ⇒ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Weak relationship with PCP 	Strengthening relationship with PCP
Knows the value of support system ⇒ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● May not know how to develop & maintain supportive relationships ● May feel that providing input to caregiver/family caregiver will be viewed as: criticism, lack of appreciation, or more work for an already stressed caregiver. 	Increasing knowledge or understanding of how to develop and maintain supportive relationships Introducing assertiveness training to include addressing communication styles and history/personality of/with caregivers Refer to Peer Mentor services

Level 3

May present as	Working on
Beginning to take action, but lack confidence and skill to support behaviors. ⇒	Focus on supporting maintenance of adopted behaviors and initiating new behaviors
Understand that there are helpful services and resources available, and that they need to try to use them, ⇒	Practice the peer finding information, using information, and taking action with PHC
Understand that they need to have a strong support system and have some knowledge or understanding of how to develop and maintain supportive relationships ⇒	Practice the peer finding information, using information, and taking action with PHC
Not only understand they need to be more involved, but recognize they are becoming better advocates ⇒	Building confidence and self-efficacy
May be frustrated by previous attempts to advocate for their needs ⇒	Continue to educate and validate how long it takes to form a new habit Stress management

Level 4

May present as	Working on
<p>Have the skills to maintain adopted behaviors during familiar situations ⇒</p>	<p>Focus on supporting maintenance of adopted behaviors and initiating new behaviors</p>
<p>May not have the skills to prevent regression of recently adopted behaviors during stressful situations ⇒</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May not be aware of triggers/stressors for regression • May not know preventative techniques 	<p>Increasing awareness of environmental and situational factors that undermine the maintenance of adopted behaviors (i.e. illness, weather, transportation, etc.)</p> <p>Anticipating change and manage triggers</p> <p>Creating back-up plans</p> <p>Increase coping and problem-solving skills</p>
<p>May not have the skills to maintain recently adopted behaviors during stressful situations ⇒</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May not know coping and recovery techniques during regression 	<p>Increase coping and problem-solving skills</p> <p>Creating and implementing back up plans and new behaviors</p> <p>Stress management and recovery techniques</p>