

BARRIERS TO ACTION

Problems almost always come up, even when people have good intentions or a sound plan for managing their health. Healthcare providers play an important role in helping patients recognize where they are getting stuck and managing what is getting in the way of them committing to or carrying out a desired action.

To increase a person's chance of success with change, a patient's behaviours, emotions, situations and thinking need to be considered. The acronym **BEST** can be used by providers to quickly identify and classify common barriers to action and work with patients to reframe thinking, problem solve sticking points and convert barriers to *facilitators*.

BEST Barriers to Action & Facilitators for Change

Behaviours - Actions, everyday habits, planning or lack of planning

Emotions - Emotional reactions to things that happen to us, mood states

Situations - Medical, physical, cognitive, social, cultural, access, money, changes in circumstances, clinicians

Thinking - Beliefs, attitudes, expectations and habitual thinking patterns, readiness, importance, confidence, knowledge (RICK)

Discussion about barriers might come up early in the medical visit when discussing what is important to the patient or when talking about a patient's social history.

Barriers could also pop up when doing collaborative goal setting with the patient. It is important to pay attention to these as they come up and to look for opportunities to replace the barriers with facilitators.

Sample Phrasing - Some tips & tricks to help your patient turn barriers into facilitators

Patient: I work 12 hour shifts so it is impossible to fit exercise into my day

Provider: Working long shifts can make that feel impossible. Has there been a time where you have been able to incorporate activity into your day despite your long shifts?

Patient: It's not fair that I have to live with this awful disease every day. Having it ruins everything.

Provider: It sounds like this can be very overwhelming. Do you find that there are days you cope better than other days? What helps to make those days better.

Patient: I know that I should be eating healthier, but I need to be able to pay rent this month.

Provider: Having a safe place to live is important. Would you be open to discussing some options that may be available to you to access low cost or free food this month?

Patient: I am a single mom and have so much on my plate already. How can I possibly add checking my blood sugars every four hours.

Provider: Checking your blood sugars regularly does require a bit of extra time and planning. If checking every four hours seems overwhelming at this point, what might be a more realistic target to start with?

