

Why am I not taking action?

Approach

Our actions and results are caused by our thoughts (yes, that's true!). The thoughts you have are what cause you to have positive or negative feelings, which will in turn determine what action you will take and these actions are what then deliver your results. Negative thoughts and emotions tend to lead to inaction and lack of results.

The first step to being able to resolve issues around inaction is to identify the patterns you are experiencing and the thoughts and feelings underpinning this. Really noticing and identifying these thoughts is often enough in itself to help move forward. If not, there are further questions on page 2 to consider.

Current situation

What actions are you taking (or not taking) that are unhelpful?

This could be abandoning plans; not turning up for things; not delivering what you promised to yourself or others; avoiding difficult situations/meetings/people

How do you feel just before you take these actions?

Using an emotion wheel might help you to pinpoint some of these emotions as they can be surprisingly difficult to isolate. Common negative emotions leading to inaction include apathy, inadequacy, fear, anxiety, disappointment, hopelessness.

What thoughts are you having before you take these actions?

Focus on the thoughts you are having that are leading to the negative emotions. For instance, if the feeling is apathy, the thought might be "this won't work anyway so there's no point doing it" or "I've tried before and it never works, so there's no point trying again"

KEEP TRYING

It can be difficult to pinpoint these thoughts and emotions, you might need to spend some time exploring this and that's totally normal. Don't worry if you can't work it out straight away. Relax and when the next opportunity comes along try again.

Future situation

What actions do you want to take?

Identify those actions that you feel would help move you forward. This could be one small action or something much bigger that you are struggling to complete. Being very specific about what you are trying to achieve can help with this.

What feelings would help you take these actions?

Once again, you might want to look at an emotion wheel to help with this. Common feelings that lead to positive action include excitement, hope, optimism, pride and passion, determination. What feelings would lead you to take the actions you desire?

What thoughts would lead to these emotions?

For instance, if you want to conjure up the feeling of excitement you might want to think about all the amazing opportunities that taking these actions could open up for you, or you might want to think about the pride that would come from completing these actions and getting the results you want.

EXPERIMENT

You might want to start slow and experiment here as it is important that you can believe these thoughts and that they feel good. For instance, if you want to get to the feeling of 'excitement', but you are struggling to believe that you will get the results you want, you could start by introducing thoughts such as 'this *could* all work out brilliantly' rather than forcing yourself to believe it *will* all be perfect.