

- Choose areas for change: start with 1 for pleasure and 1 chore
- Be realistic
- Be specific about aims and achievements
- Don't build in an escape clause

A POSSIBLE STRATEGY:

- Make a baseline assessment of your current abilities: use an Activity Diary for a week; include all activities as well as rest periods. Write down what level of activities you can do with ease and without pain.
- List potential activities you would like to be able to achieve (include both enjoyable activities: try to list as many as possible; and chores)
 - Avoid the 'take it easy trap'
 - Have specific daily goals
 - Make a contract you have to stick to as a reminder/cue
 - Make a graph of your success
 - Choose a specific time for activities (taking into account when is best for you)
 - Don't exceed your daily goal
 - Avoid yo-yo-ing between overdoing it and doing too little
 - Progress may be slow and intermittent, but don't let set-backs deter you.

Examples of exercises that might be relevant are:

- Walking (aim to increase 1 step a day; if after a week, you have been able to sustain this increase every day, the following week, you could try 2 steps a day; if not, stay at 1 step a day or even reduce it to 1 every 2 days)
 - Sitting: (1 minute at a time increase)
 - Stair climbing: (aim for 1 step a day)
 - Riding in a car (aim for 1 minute at a time)

These activities will all help to increase your quality of life. Note the suggested increases are very slight.

For household chores, divide them into those done easily and those that are difficult; the latter may well include shopping, ironing, hoovering, making beds, washing etc.

For target tasks, try breaking them down into steps; work out at which step you run into difficulty; then drop back 1-2 steps before that as a baseline and work from there to build up a step at a time.

NB. The purpose of this is retraining, not a sparkling house!!!

Information on these various supplements is available in other articles on the website.