

# EXERCISE: Weak Willpower-Strategies Checklist

Choose a time when weak willpower was particularly relevant to your personal distress. Next read through the following statements and place a tick (✓) beside the statements that help to explain your lack of willpower at the time.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. *I was spread too thin; trying to exercise self-control over too many different things at once.*
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. *I was not pursuing a valued or well-defined goal.*
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. *I was focused on a goal that would not produce much improvement in my current situation.*
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. *I never really believed I could attain the goal.*
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. *I was trying to motivate myself while in a negative mood state.*

- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. *I tried to make a change on my own with little support from others.*
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. *I often engaged in self-criticism while trying to reach the goal.*
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. *I chose to work on the goal when physically exhausted.*
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. *I have neglected physical exercise, so I have less energy.*
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. *I became quite emotional and overly self-absorbed when trying to motivate myself.*
- \_\_\_\_\_ 11. *I tried to motivate myself by focusing on distant or remote benefits of self-control.*
- \_\_\_\_\_ 12. *If possible, I choose to avoid self-control opportunities as much as possible.*

Did you tick one or more statements? If so, do you have a better sense of why you've struggled with low motivation to achieve your goal? Each statement reflects a strategy that diminishes self-control. When you have strong willpower, you're using more effective motivation strategies, but when self-control is weak, you resort to easier but less effective motivation strategies (refer to the checklist items you endorsed).