

The Power of Planning and Small Steps

Strategies for Getting
Participants to the Finish Line

LaDonna Pavetti

April 3, 2019



Reflection: Why am I here?

- **W**ISH
- **O**UTCOME
- **O**BSTACLE
- **P**LAN



For more information and practice on WOOP:

<http://woopmylifetoolbox.org>

Goals for this Session

By the end of this session, you will have:

- **Increased** your **understanding** of some reasons **why participants fail** to successfully complete program requirements
- Developed a greater appreciation for **what it means to break tasks into small steps** and why it matters
- Learned **why details matter**
- **Practiced** how to use a technique called, “**backward mapping**” to help participants break tasks into small steps
- Viewed **examples of forms** you can use with participants to ensure they leave with **detailed plans**

Why Do So Many Participants Fail to Follow Through?

Activity: What It Means to Live Under Conditions of Scarcity



Living in Chronic Scarcity

- ❖ Living in poverty means living in chronic scarcity:
 - Imposes a “bandwidth tax”
 - Reduces the cognitive resources that individuals have available to devote to activities aimed at achieving long-term goals
 - Participants solve one crisis and another one follows

- ❖ Researchers that have studied scarcity liken living in poverty to living perpetually on a missed night of sleep

- ❖ The impact of the bandwidth tax:
 - Causes individuals to “tunnel,” focusing on meeting immediate needs
 - Reduces capacity to think logically and analyze and solve novel problems and process information
 - Diminishes ability to evaluate options and make high quality decisions
 - Impairs self control, often leading to impulsivity

Strategies to Address Chronic Scarcity

- ❖ **Cut the costs** – make it easy for participants to get the services they need
- ❖ **Create slack** – don't impose unnecessary burdens on participants whose lives are already burdened
- ❖ **Reframe and empower** – reduce stigma; make it about what matters to them, not about compliance

Designing Service Delivery Approaches with Scarcity in Mind

A Structured Approach to Goal Achievement

Goal: Set a goal – something meaningful and doable

Plan: Develop a plan for how to get from here to there

Do: Do the plan – put it into action

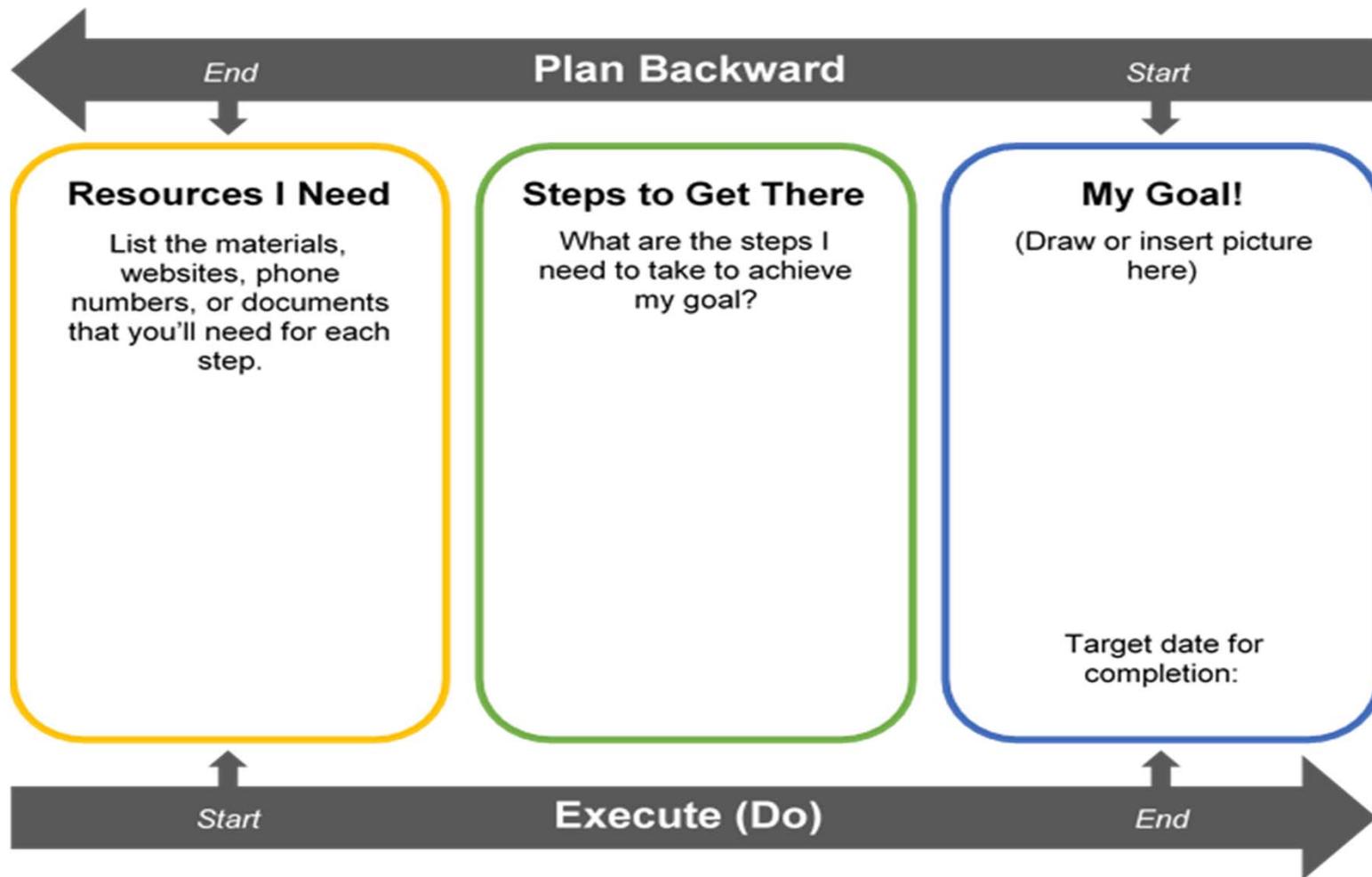
Review/Revise: Review and assess progress; take the next action steps, make a new plan, or set a new goal



Three Steps for Developing Effective Plans

- ❖ Break goals into small steps: backward mapping
- ❖ Make the plan actionable: add the details
- ❖ Anticipate potential obstacles and identify strategies for overcoming them: create if/then plans

Small Steps: Backward Mapping



Backward Mapping Activity:

- Wash a Car
- Pick up a Prescription
- Make Dinner
- Go Grocery Shopping
- Pick the Kids Up from School
- Doing the Laundry

Backward Mapping Activity #2

- **Application of Backward Mapping to Your Own Program**

Tools to Support Effective Planning

MY ACTION PLAN (VISUAL)

Name _____ Today's Date _____ Review Date _____

MY GOAL

▶ STEP 1

DETAILS

When I will do it:

What I need to take with me:

Where I'll go and how I'll get there:

▶ STEP 2

DETAILS

When I will do it:

What I need to take with me:

Where I'll go and how I'll get there:

▶ STEP 3

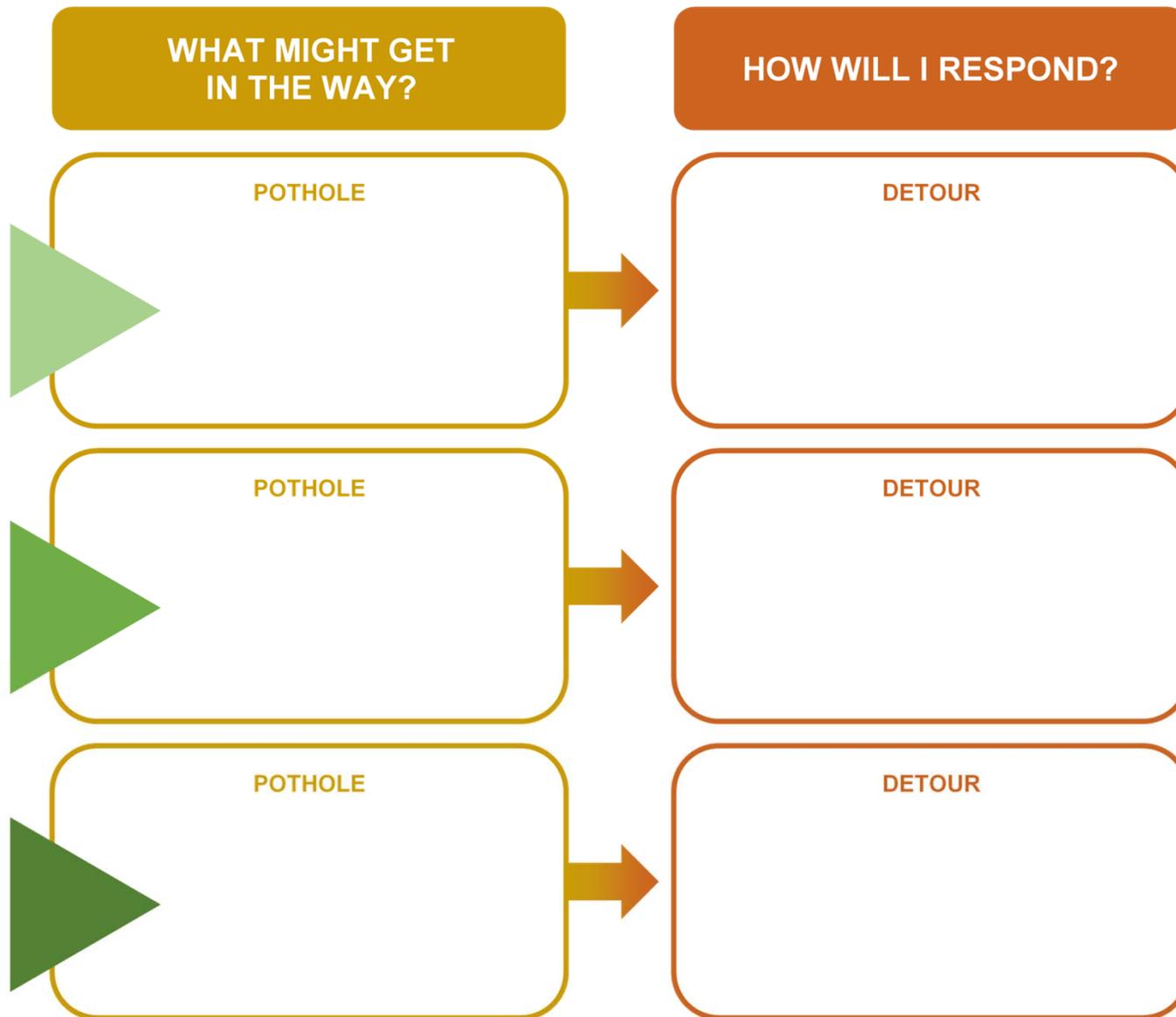
DETAILS

When I will do it:

What I need to take with me:

Where I'll go and how I'll get there:

POTHOLES & DETOURS



MY ACTION PLAN

Name _____ # _____ Today's Date _____
 _____ Review Date _____

MY GOAL	
----------------	--

WHY IT IS IMPORTANT TO ME	
----------------------------------	--

STEPS I'M TAKING TO REACH MY GOAL			
<i>What will I do?</i>	<i>When will I do it?</i>	<i>Things I need to take with me</i>	<i>Where I'll go + how I'll get there</i>

POTHOLES & DETOURS	
<i>What might get in the way?</i>	<i>How will I respond?</i>

LaDonna Pavetti
pavetti@cbpp.org

www.cbpp.org

