The Emotional Side of Losing Weight

The prospect of losing a significant amount of weight can be discouraging. We want to look and feel better quickly with little sacrifice. However, people who lose weight gradually and steadily – about 1 to 2 pounds per week – are most likely to avoid regaining those extra pounds.

The best weight plan includes adopting an ongoing lifestyle through eating smart (e.g., more fruits and vegetables) and staying active. It takes self-confidence and a fresh attitude. For many people, overcoming the emotional challenges of losing weight is essential to reaching weight-loss goals.

Start by strengthening your resolve to succeed. Here are 5 predictors that can make a positive emotional difference:

1. Be ready for change. Ask yourself if now is a good time to commit to new habits that affect your lifestyle.

2. Identify specific goals in your diet and activity level that result in burning more calories than you consume. Example: Walk 30 minutes a day, 5 days a week; cut back on added sugars and portions; and track your results.

3. Allow time to adapt. Rather than rush to reach unrealistic goals, patience can help you handle the challenges and minor setbacks along the way.

4. Stay positive. Even a modest weight loss of 5% to 10% can produce several health benefits, including improvements in blood pressure, blood sugar and cholesterol levels.

5. See it as a journey, not a final destination. While the overall goal may seem huge and far away, remember you want sustained change. And always learn from your previous attempts.

Weight loss is the outcome but it's the process that leads to success.

QuikQuiz™: Exercise Blunders

☐ T ☐ F 1. Doing the same workout month after month is recommended for maximum fitness improvement.

☐ T ☐ F 2. Vague or impractical exercise goals can lead to dropout and injuries.

☐ T ☐ F 3. The best time for stretching is after a workout warm-up.

☐ T ☐ F 4. The key to strength training is to lift more weight than your muscles can handle.

Are you going about exercise in the right way? True or false:

☑ ☐ Answers on other side.

☑ ☐ Continued on other side.
**Cool Meals for Hot Days**  
By Cara Rosenbloom, RD

As the temperature soars, your desire to turn on the stove likely wanes. Keep cool and stay healthy with these delicious, no-cook dinner ideas.

**Rely on fresh produce:** In the summer, vegetables and fruit are plentiful and at their flavorful peak. Use them for salads, appetizers, side dishes and dessert. Try pre-washed greens as a quick salad base, and for a meal, add protein-rich options such as canned tuna or salmon, chickpeas, cubed cheese, nuts, seeds or last night’s leftover chicken. Top off your meal with fresh fruit for dessert.

**Quick vegetable-based dishes include:**
- Southwestern corn, avocado and cilantro salad.
- Tomato and mozzarella salad with basil.
- Gazpacho.
- Greek salad.
- Peach salsa with corn tortillas.
- Eggplant dip (baba ghanoush) with whole-grain pita.
- Lentil and sweet pepper salad.

**Try a cold soup:** Minestrone or hearty chowder may warm you up in the winter, but don’t ignore soup as a dinner staple in hot weather. Simple blends such as gazpacho are a refreshing change and simple to make with no heat required. Try fruit soups (cherry, watermelon, etc.) with a dollop of Greek yogurt. Don’t forget fragrant fresh herbs!

**Make a sandwich:** You can also cool off at dinner with a well-stacked sandwich. Start with whole-grain bread and load it with vegetables and high-protein fillers such as chicken or turkey breast, canned fish or crab meat, sliced leftover steak, hummus and cheese. Go easy on high-sodium condiments such as pickles, mustard and mayo.

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**QuickQuiz™: Answers >> Continued from other side.**

1. **False** – Lack of variety in exercise can lead to fitness plateaus, overuse injuries and boredom. **Goal:** Try to fit in a mix of cardio activities, stretching and strength training both the upper and lower body. Change your routine every few weeks.

2. **True** – **Goal:** Choose a plan that is specific and suitable for your lifestyle and skill level – a bit challenging but not so difficult you get discouraged.

3. **True** – Stretching can prevent injuries, prepare your body for exercise and improve flexibility. **Goal:** Stretch after warming up your muscles and again after vigorous exercise.

4. **False** – Hefting too much weight may cause abnormal motions that lead to strain. **Goal:** Gradually increase the resistance guided by proper form.

**Listen to your body:** If exercise movements are painful or feel clumsy, lower your intensity, take a break or choose another activity.

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**Checklist: Safeguard Your Health**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Recommendations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Respiratory</strong></td>
<td>Avoid common allergens; prevent colds and flu; cardio exercise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cholesterol</strong></td>
<td>Weight control; no smoking; exercise; monitor levels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Type 2 Diabetes</strong></td>
<td>Weight control; exercise; monitor blood pressure and glucose</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Stress Control</strong></td>
<td>Meditation; regular relaxation and exercise</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The common denominator here is regular exercise. Strive for 30 minutes of cardio exercise (you can exercise in 3, 10-minute segments) at least 5 days a week; include 2 to 3 strength-training sessions weekly. Join your workplace wellness activities, if available, such as smoking cessation or diabetes education.

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**Eyeglasses or Contacts?**

Choosing between glasses and contact lenses mostly comes down to your preferences, ease of use and appearance. Both can correct common vision problems, and each has pros and cons. The most essential factor is the health of your eyes.

**Eyeglasses are the most popular lens choice.** They require little maintenance and you may have less risk of eye infection than with contact lenses. While some people don’t like the look and feel of glasses, others enjoy the fashion statement they make.

**Contact lenses offer obvious advantages.** They float directly on the eyes and move with the eye for vision correction that feels and looks natural. Unlike eyeglasses, contacts improve peripheral vision and are especially suitable during sports, driving and other activities. Children often favor contacts for convenience and appearance.

**Contacts may require time to learn proper use.** Conditions that make it harder to wear contacts include allergies and dry eyes. General discomfort can occur when wearers don’t follow instructions for proper use and care.

**When choosing contacts, review the types that best meet your needs.** Most people can wear contacts, even if they prefer glasses as their primary form of vision correction.

“*I believe that the greatest gift you can give your family and the world is a healthy you.*”
– Joyce Meyer

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Smart Moves toolkit is at www.personalbest.com/extras/15V7tools. 07.2015

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