

The key to sustained weight loss is self love!

The quest for complete lifestyle wellness involves shifting many pre-conditioned attitudes, habits and approaches to our every-days. In order to gain control and take responsibility for our own well-being it is necessary to gain a better understanding of our selves, our society, and the paradigms, (our ways of seeing/perceiving things) that we live with.

For those committed to sustained weight loss, and improved health, habitual thought processes need to be addressed as many of society's fads, pre-occupations, conditionings, as well as the food and drug industry itself, have tainted our attitudes and beliefs about body weight and shape, health and nutrition, food, diet and exercise. This article will touch on these areas and will hopefully encourage you to give your approach to your eating habits and thought processes more of the attention they deserve.

Lets begin with food....

Food provides us with energy carried within the molecules of three basic nutrients: carbohydrates, fats, and protein - (macronutrients). When our bodies break them down, energy is released and used for all our basic body functions in addition to our activities. Energy not used is stored as fat for later use. Info you likely are very familiar with.

Vitamins, minerals, and water are also derived from food - (micronutrients).

Vitamins are organic substances needed for almost all body processes and **minerals are metallic elements essential for a process called metabolism.** **Water is used in virtually all of the body's main functions and is required daily.**

In addition to food providing all the above nutrients, we eat for a variety of reasons including socializing, to help deal with stress, and often for emotional comfort. Food can be like a narcotic for those struggling with emotional challenges and is often used as a coping mechanism, an excuse, or an escape.

Becoming conscious of the reasons why we eat is the first step to over coming tendency to over eat or eat poorly. If emotional issues are related to eating habits, outside support and possibly counseling may be necessary to address the underlying problems.

Many weight problems are associated with underlying issues that are buried with the excess weight a resulting side effect. The most important aspect in sustained weight loss is understanding and then dealing with the issues causing over eating, and getting that weight loss is not the 'be all-end all' answer to our personal happiness.

The main focus is on increasing our self-confidence, inner strength, self acceptance, and discipline. It is a daily control over your own life and ownership of the responsibility to care for your self. Weight loss may give the impression of an answer to problems, however what really happens is a positive cycle of feeling better about yourself and as a result, feeling motivated to take better care of yourself physically, mentally, and emotionally.

As you approach your ideal weight you will typically begin to care enough for yourself and only do what is in your best interest. The process may be slow and it takes time, requiring many changes in your perceptions and actions.

Friends and loved ones may often play havoc on your efforts for a number of reasons - the most significant being the fear of how these changes will affect you and possibly cause you to drift from them. It is important to let these people know how important this is to you and enlist their aid, for you will need their support. Ask them for help and even possibly to join in your efforts.

It is important that you accept yourself as you are, and learn self love. Once you have self awareness, self acceptance, and self love, you can move forward and make the changes and commitment required to improve your lifestyle. If you don't have an understanding of who you are, feel unhappy with yourself, and believe weight loss is the answer to your problems, you will likely have a difficult time keeping the weight off. Weight loss alone cannot transform your life, changing your perception can.

People are often motivated to lose weight in hopes that it will radically change their life and alleviate all their problems. This is most certainly not the case, and when realized, these individuals often regain the weight lost. Unresolved unhappiness or problems trigger old coping mechanisms and the weight creeps back on. Excess weight is typically a symptom of something else in life - perhaps

a void, fear of letting people down, unhappiness with yourself, or unhappiness in/with your life.

In order to accomplish permanent lifestyle changes your perception needs to change. You must understand why you behave the way you do and whether you sincerely want to make the necessary changes in your life to achieve positive changes in yourself.

Getting to Know Yourself

Many of us spend more time and energy on getting to know and understand others than we do on knowing ourselves. Self-awareness and self-acceptance is an ongoing and lifelong process, one essential to our well-being. Take the time to know and understand yourself, it is one of the best investments you can make. Spend time getting to know your strengths and weaknesses, what motivates you, makes you happy, sad, what you like and dislike about yourself, what you want, how you want to be. Think about what can and can't be changed and be aware if the "can't be changed" beliefs are reality or perception.

To begin the process, begin a journal and replay your life in your mind. Recall major life events and pick out 4 unpleasant events that you would most like to change and write this down. Why were they unpleasant, how did you react, why, how would you like to have reacted, how would you react today, what did you learn from the experience? When did you learn this? Do this same exercise with pleasant memories. This exercise is to help you to explore your past, take a realistic look at your life and begin to know more about yourself. It is important to accept that events occur in our lives for a reason. Be honest with your self, acknowledging that self awareness means facing the facts about yourself - both good and bad.

Describe yourself: write down three things you like least about yourself. Can they be changed, have you attempted to change them? How have these aspects of yourself affected your life? Continue this process by writing down three aspects you like most about yourself. Have you always had these traits, and why is it you like them? How have they affected your life?

Accept that there will be some things you can change and some things you cannot change. Everything does serve a purpose in our life however, and even the most difficult challenges we face give us the opportunity to learn and to improve our self.

Spending time with our Self, knowing our Self, is part of lifestyle wellness and an ongoing process. Get to know what triggers happiness within and what triggers sadness. What traits do you like/dislike in others? Be open and consider that aspects you like least in others often reflect aspects of yourself you need to address and deal with.

Take a physical assessment of yourself in front of a mirror and visualize your self as you want to be. Accept that you can be better, you could be worse. The image you see is a reflection of what you have chosen up to now and you can make a decision to improve yourself and or seek excuses to let your self go. Understand that you have that choice and this is entirely up to you.

Many people are overweight for reasons such as poor self esteem, unhappy relationships, unfulfilling careers, buried fears and anger, discontent with themselves, and several other external factors. In most cases blame is placed on something or someone. Taking responsibility for your self is the way to ongoing success. As painful as this reality may be, you are the only one totally responsible for you - who you are, and how you are. Although events of the past may have caused you pain, it is essential you accept that as the past, deal with it, and take responsibility for your self and your life today.

“Blaming” people and events for how you are is a waste of time and energy with no positive results (ever). In order to have control of your life, you need to accept that only you are responsible for yourself and your situation, and only you can make it better. When you accept this responsibility and begin to accept yourself, you are able to feel self-love and can make loving choices for yourself. This is how you can sustain weight loss and well-being. Deciding you are worth it, and you are able to do it will make it so. Your thoughts carry more power than you may think – ensure they are focused on what you want rather than what you fear. From here it is a matter of time, consistency, commitment, and patience. Stay centered on what you want, accept you are worthy and begin the process of taking care of you. It is a lifelong process, and one with daily rewards when you get the amazing abilities you possess within your own head and heart.

May you be blessed and successful in your lifelong venture/adventure. *In light,*
Teri

An international presenter, Teri integrates over 20 years of experience in the health and fitness industry with her passion and lifetime commitment to positively affect the lives of all she encounters. Her work is focused upon whole body/self wellness.
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