

The 4 Secrets to Weight Loss Success the Diet Books Don't Tell You

Weight loss plans come in all shapes and sizes. Some are fad diets that are too restrictive to follow more than a couple of weeks, while others are provided by professionals that make customized plans for us. All of them give us some guidelines on what we should and shouldn't eat to ultimately reach our weight loss goals. No matter how many food plans we try, healthy or unhealthy, there are some fundamental things you must know in order to be successful in a weight loss program that, believe it or not, have nothing to do with food.

1. Readiness- Are you ready to make change in your life right now? How would you know? The reason many weight loss plans fail is because people are not truly emotionally ready for change. In order to have true lifelong weight loss you have to commit to trading your old habits in for a new, healthier lifestyle. This has more to do with readiness for change than a desire to shed pounds- there is a big difference. The good news is, as you start on the journey to change these old habits you will be amazed how much better you feel physically, psychologically, and emotionally. This is the place where the people who have experienced long term weight loss have entered and want to stay. When you are truly committed to changing your lifestyle you will achieve lifelong weight loss and so much more! Ask yourself a few questions. Are you ready to make permanent dietary changes for you and your family? Are you ready to start exercising regularly? Are you ready to defend your new lifestyle changes to those who are undermining your efforts? Don't fret if you aren't completely ready to dive into change. This is the stage to keep up the learning process by reading articles and gathering information. You will know when the time is right and that will be when you answer an unequivocal "Yes!" to the above questions.
2. Developing a vision. When I ask people what their goals are for a weight loss program the answer is always, "to lose weight of course", or "to lose x amount of pounds". It is crucial to have another more, heart-felt reason to lose weight other than losing pounds and appearance. This is because when times are tough, and they will be during any change process, you will need a heart-felt or internal reason to lose the weight to keep you motivated. Losing weight for appearance is ok but it is an external reason and will not help to keep you motivated for long. In the past my clients have chosen things like, being able to play with their kids, running a marathon, backpacking trip they have longed to go on for years, and a big motivator is often a health condition. I call this your vision. It is imperative to take a few minutes to learn what your vision is. What is important to you that you will be able to achieve with weight loss? Write this vision down and plaster it everywhere so you always see your end goal and it will always help to motivate you further when times are tough.
3. Self Talk – is yours negative or positive? Unfortunately it's true that we are our own worst critics and like hearing any critic it often leads us to failure because we believe the critic is right. Furthermore, we start to believe things are true that are absolutely not true. For instance, if a child is told they are a klutz from an early age they will likely always think they are a klutz. We believe what we are told repeatedly. What do you tell yourself? One common statement I hear a lot of these days is, "I can't eat carbohydrates because once I start I can't stop". This is a belief that you have set up from constant defeating self-talk and once you believe it then no doubt you will act it out. However, there is no scientific reason why a person would not be able to stop eating after having a bite of carbohydrates. Your belief makes it your reality. So whenever you hear yourself say I can't do something or any other self-defeating talk. Stop yourself and change the sentence to a positive. For example, I realize that carbs have been a challenge for me in the past but I can eat a portion and put the rest away for later. Keep working on your own positive reinforcement by being gentler with yourself and tell yourself all that you CAN do.
4. Be prepared for change. All weight loss programs require us to change a habit yet no one warns us about the process of change. The first thing to know is that the beginning of change is difficult and uncomfortable. This is because it forces us to get off autopilot and focus on our new behaviors. Luckily it takes about 21 days to make a new habit and the uncomfortable part goes away and our new habits become autopilot. For example: Imagine you get your dream job and it requires that you have to get up at 5:30am. Yikes! You normally get up at about 7:30 am. So, what do you think will happen that first morning when the alarm goes off at 5:30? You aren't going to feel so great and your body is going to beg you to get back into your warm bed! This will go on for about 2-3 weeks until your body stops fighting you and realizes this is the new habit. The same thing will happen to you when you change eating and exercise habits. Just expect a little resistance and keep going! Your new healthy changes will eventually become your new habit. You just have to keep at it.

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About the Author

NutriSystem Nourish weight loss programs are based on the Glycemic Index. Lose weight with nearly 120 delicious foods all rich in good carbs, yet still low.

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