

To Lose Weight, Stop Focusing on It!

While January screams 'time to lose weight' for many people, the drive to lose weight plagues us throughout the year. Spending more than \$33 billion a year on diet books, diet foods, diet programs and other schemes 'guaranteed' to take the weight off for good, people are being misled by the millions. The truth is, when we try to lose weight, we may end up gaining it. And according to the U.S. National Weight Loss Registry, those who do maintain weight loss from a diet do so at high cost. Their days are devoted to counting calories, fat or carbohydrate grams or otherwise monitoring what and how much they eat, and to exercise that doesn't often qualify as joyful – not a recipe for a pleasant lifestyle, in our opinion.



But what are we supposed to do if we're too fat and out of shape? It's called taking care of yourself. Now there's a concept!

Jumpstart Weight Loss by Not Focusing on Weight Loss

Read these tips for a quick refresher course on what taking care of ourselves is all about. Ironically, they can help jump start weight loss by removing our focus from the subject.

Accept your wonderful self. The first step in taking care of ourselves is to adopt a non-judgmental attitude towards ourselves, to help us see what's what without interfering, critical self-talk. Rather than causing us to 'give up' and just accept our current state of fitness, self-acceptance actually motivates us to take steps to improve things. Read our FitBriefing on self and size acceptance for healthy weight for more on this.



Quit trying to lose weight. Set our sights on doing what's necessary to help us feel great. Generally, those are activities that will take our bodies to their natural, healthy weight. Weight loss becomes an outcome rather than a goal, and with this method, it's likely a lasting result, rather than a yo-yo diet effort. Stop dieting. This may sound like a repeat of the previous tip, but here we're focusing on that

constant attention to what we're eating, how many calories, fat or carbohydrates it contains, when we eat it, etc., etc. Instead, start eating mindfully, using internal cues to guide eating. If you need a little help getting started, use the healthy eating plate model to help put together balanced meals and snacks that support your body's cues. Start moving. The first step is to just start moving in whatever way that feels good. It can be a walk around the block, a belly dancing class, a strength training session, a snowball fight with the kids. We can fine tune things as we go along to be sure we include aerobic, strength-training and flexibility activities that are all considered important for fitness. But don't get caught up in believing there's only one way to achieve each of these. If we don't like to lift weights, we can strength train with yoga, for example. Read our FitBriefing Intrinsic Exercise: Learning to Love Physical Activity for some good insight into making regular physical activity a part of your life.



Enjoy life. With these fundamental ways of thinking and doing in place, we're set for living a life doing what's important to us.

By Marsha Hudnall, MS, RD, CD (Green Mountain at Fox Run, Director)

At Green Mountain at Fox Run, we've been helping women learn how to do the above for over 37 years. Our healthy weight loss program can help you jump start your weight loss program by helping you to stop dieting and shift your focus from weight loss to living well. Join us for the time of your life that can change your life!

<http://www.fitwoman.com>

Date: 2009-01-26

Article link:

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