

Weight Loss Coaching - Step 3

Welcome to Step 3.

Step 3 topics include:

- Reasons for Changing
- Goal setting
- Weight Loss Goals
- Life Goals
- Exercise Goals
- Staying the same or making changes

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Reasons for Changing

Why are you taking this journey of losing weight and gaining control of your lifestyle?

Most people fear change. They prefer to stay in their comfort zone, doing what they have always done, following their old and safe routines – even when those old routines are not providing them with the life they wish to have.

It takes great courage to embark on the path of lifestyle change that you are now on. Congratulate yourself for being brave enough to take this journey and to step away from what is known and comfortable in order to achieve your goal of weight management.

It will help you to stay motivated and stick with these wonderful changes you are introducing into your life if you are clear as to why you are doing it.

What was your motivation to begin this journey? What are you wanting to achieve from this process?

Is it to feel better? To have more energy so you can play with your children? Is it to fit into a particular size of clothes? Is it to do something wonderful for yourself?

Workbook Activity

On page 1 of your workbook note your personal reasons for making these changes. Write your reasons down and refer back to them whenever you need a reminder as to why you are going through this exciting but sometimes challenging process.

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Goal Setting

Do you have a written list of goals for yourself, which outline the things you want to achieve? It's important for everybody to have a clearly defined set of goals so we have some idea where we want our life to be heading.

A study completed by Harvard business school revealed that only 3% of the population have written goals; 14% have goals, just not written down; and 83% have no clearly defined goals. The study also showed that the 3% of people who do have written goals earned 10 times more than the others. Now there's food for thought!

Individuals with written goals are more likely to have better health and happier marriages. If that doesn't inspire you to begin formulating and writing down your goals, then I don't know what will.

The power of written goals is indisputable. Writing down your goals gives you motivation and direction.

When setting goals for yourself there are a few things to keep in mind. Your goals must be realistic, achievable, relevant and specific.

Once you have clarified your long-term goals you can then break them down into achievable mid-term and short-term goals and set a specific and realistic time frame for each one.

You can then work slowly and steadily towards achieving your short-term goals, knowing that by doing this you are on track to reach your ultimate long-term goal.

As you complete each short-term goal, reward yourself. Be sure to acknowledge your success and your efforts. Doing so will keep you motivated to move on to the next stage of your goal plan.

Keep a written record of your short-term goals and tick them off as you achieve them. By keeping track of your progress if at any stage you feel like it's all a waste of time and you aren't getting anywhere, you can look back over your record to see that yes, in fact, you have made substantial and real progress.

When you are planning your long-term goals you need to specify what you want to achieve, then break it down into achievable steps.

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Set a clear and realistic timeline to each of these steps. Then put your plan into action and reward yourself for your success.

As you work towards achieving that long-term goal you may discover that your plans need to be altered. You may need to add an extra step or find you can skip over a pre-planned step. That's all ok. It is a work in progress and can be updated as needed.

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Weight Loss Goals

What is your long-term goal in relation to weight loss? How many kilograms do you need/want to lose?

It's not enough to simply say you want to lose weight, you need to specify exactly how much weight and give yourself a timeline in which to do it.

What is your current weight?

Now think about your goal weight. When you are deciding upon your goal weight remember that it is not about being thin, it's about being healthy.

What is a comfortable weight for you to be at? What has been a comfortable weight for you in the past? Use the BMI guidelines to help determine if that goal weight will get you into that ideal healthy range of 20-24.99.

Now set a time frame for reaching that goal weight. Ideally aim to lose 1 kilogram per week. For the first few weeks you may lose a little more than that and as the months go by it may be a little less, but 1 kilogram per week is a healthy average.

Workbook Activity

On page 2 of your workbook fill in the details of your current weight, your goal weight and the amount of time you expect it to take to reach that goal weight.

If you have a considerable amount of weight to lose, seeing that magic number of kilograms you need to move, may be quite overwhelming. So let's put that number aside for now and break it down into mid-term and short-term goals, which won't be nearly as threatening or overwhelming, and which you know are in fact achievable.

Perhaps your long-term goal is to lose 20 kilograms. A mid-term goal could be to lose 10 kilograms in the next 12 weeks. A short-term goal could be to lose 2 kilograms in the next two weeks.

Just 2 kilograms. You can do that! You can do that easily.

So right now the only thing you need to focus on is that short-term goal of losing 2 kilograms.

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Now that you have a clearly defined short-term goal, what steps are you going to take to reach that goal? Those steps might relate to exercising, drinking more water, practicing your new shopping techniques of only buying what is on the shopping list and avoiding the snack food aisles, not comfort eating, and so on.

There are no right or wrong answers as to how you can go about reaching that short-term goal but you must specify the steps you will take.

And at the end of these two weeks, having lost your 2 kilograms, congratulate yourself on that wonderful achievement. Acknowledge the efforts you have made and the changes you have introduced into your life. Celebrate your victory.

Then set your next short-term goal, which may be to lose 2 more kilograms over the next 2 weeks. And so on.

Each short-term goal you set is moving you closer to your mid-term goal, which in turn is moving you towards your ultimate long-term goal.

By staying focused on your short-term goals you avoid getting too far ahead of yourself, your goal remains manageable and achievable, and you stay on track.

Soon enough you will find you have reached that mid-term goal, which in this example was to lose 10 kilograms over 12 weeks and at this point you would re-assess your goals and develop new short and mid-term goals to guide you to that long-term goal of losing 20 kilograms.

Workbook Activity

On page 3 of your workbook is a space for you to formulate your own long, mid and short-term goals in relation to weight loss. Remember to keep them realistic and attach specific dates to each step.

When thinking about your long-term weight loss goal, remember it isn't just about a number on the scale. Think of your goal in terms of your health, wellbeing and self-image.

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Life Goals

Now think about other goals you would like to set for yourself, which are not weight related.

What is it that you want for your life?

A new career? A better job? To start your own business? An overseas holiday? More time with your kids? Better relationships?

The same goal setting rules apply.

For each life goal, break it down into a long-term, mid-term and short-term goal, and specify the steps you need to take to move towards achieving those goals.

What changes can you make right now that will lead you towards reaching your goals?

Workbook Activity

On pages 4 and 5 of your workbook, note two long-term life goals (which are not related to weight), and formulate the mid and short-term goals, and steps you will take, to achieve these life goals. As with your weight goal, keep each step realistic and attach a specific date to work towards.

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Exercise Goals

Workbook Activity

On pages 6 and 7 of your workbook formulate two exercise related goals. Again, make your goals realistic and specific. How many times a week are you going to exercise? What days and for how long? What activities will you choose to do?

Make a strong commitment to achieving each goal you have set for yourself and congratulate yourself each time you achieve one of those steps that will lead you towards your final goal.

It is a good idea to let someone else know what your goals are and have them follow your progress. Not only does this provide you with support but knowing you have to answer to someone else, helps to keep you accountable.

Pick someone you trust and are comfortable sharing this information with, but who is also firm enough to pull you back into line should you start drifting off track. Make a pact to report to them on your progress, on a weekly basis.

And if at any time you do find yourself drifting off track, take a few moments to consider where it went wrong and what you can do to prevent that happening again. There's no need to be cross with yourself or to lose faith in yourself. Chalk it up to experience, dust yourself off and get back on track, knowing you are a little wiser now for this extra experience.

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Staying The Same Or Making Changes

If you find yourself constantly drifting off track, ask yourself this question, "Am I sabotaging my efforts to reach my goals?"

While on the surface that may sound like a crazy thing for anyone to want to do, subconsciously it may be a way of protecting yourself from changes you are afraid to make. After all, although you hate your excess weight, you are used to it, and part of you may feel comfortable having that barrier of protection surrounding you.

If you are self-sabotaging or finding it difficult to make the changes that you outwardly claim you want, then consider these two questions: "What am I scared of?" "Why am I holding myself back?"

Workbook Activity

The activity on pages 8 and 9 of your workbook asks you to consider both the advantages and disadvantages of keeping your current behaviour patterns and changing your behaviour. (Please read the rest of this section before completing the activity).

This activity has been designed to help you develop insights into your behaviour and any reluctance to change. These questions require you to face the truth and be brutally honest with yourself. This may feel very confronting but remember, these answers are for your eyes only and as much as you may be hiding from the truth, deep down inside, you know these answers anyway.

For this activity you will develop a list of the advantages and disadvantages of continuing your old behaviour and travelling along your current path. For example:

Advantages may be -
Better the devil you know.
It's easy and comfortable.

Disadvantages may be -
My health will continue to suffer.
I will put on even more weight.
I will continue feeling this badly about myself.

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Then develop a list of the advantages and disadvantages of working toward your goals and making lifestyle changes. For example:

Advantages may be -

I will feel much better about myself.

I will have more confidence.

My health and energy will improve.

Disadvantages may be -

It's risky to try something new.

I might fail again.

Now develop your own list.

Once you have completed your list, compare the advantages and disadvantages of changing and remaining the same.

Do the advantages outweigh the disadvantages?

What do your answers tell you about your self-beliefs and willingness to change?

Are you ready to take that courageous jump into the unknown and change your behaviour?

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What's Next?

Coming up in Step 4 we will look at:

- Why you do the things you do
- Identifying underlying issues
- Techniques to release underlying issues

If you have previously been part of that large group of people who did not have clearly defined and written down goals, know that you are now part of that 3% of the population who do have written goals. This makes you part of that 3% that earn 10 times more than others, have better health and happier marriages. What a fantastic group to be part of!!

Enjoy the power that comes with knowing where you are headed and how you are going to make those goals and dreams, come true.