

Weight Loss Coaching - Step 8

Welcome to Step 8.

Step 8 topics include:

- Techniques to facilitate change
- Positive suggestions

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Techniques To Facilitate Change

It is easy to understand how food can become your emotional crutch. It is a friend that is always there, it is highly accessible and fairly cheap, it never lets you down, it gives you a quick and easy fix and instant gratification.

Food is there to relieve your stress, your frustration, your loneliness, and unhappiness. It is there to comfort you when you are sad, scared, angry or depressed.

But at what price? What is this emotional crutch doing to your health and self-esteem? What if you found another way to give yourself the love and nurturing that you need and deserve - which didn't rely on food. What difference could that make to your life and your waistline?

If you are medicating yourself with food, sabotaging your own success and caught in this vicious cycle of comfort eating-feeling guilty-covering that guilt with more food-feeling more guilty and so on, you have to deal with the underlying problem. This cycle will not end until you do that. You are eating for a reason and you are feeding an unfulfilled need. You have to get real with yourself about what that need is.

Realise that you have choices. Say to yourself, "I do not have to think and feel this way anymore."

You might be wondering what other steps you can take as you bravely continue on this new and exciting path. There are many different things (some related to food and some that are not) you can do as you continue to take responsibility for your choices and your thinking.

Let's look at some of those options now (there is a page in your workbook for each of these options where you may like to make notes):

Keep a food journal (workbook page 1):

For some people, keeping a written record of everything they eat each day, helps to keep them on track. Having it written there in front of you, in black and white, can act as a stimulus to make wise food choices. If this plan sounds like it might work for you, then try it. You may also like to keep track of how you feel about yourself and what else is going on in your life.

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Focus on your breathing (workbook page 2):

When we are feeling stressed and overwhelmed it is easy to slip back into old patterns of thinking negative thoughts and allowing those negative feelings to take over. Make a pact with yourself right now that from this moment forward, any time any situation should occur that in the past might have caused you to respond with negative thoughts or feelings, negative reactions or emotions, you will instead respond by focussing on your breathing.

Breathe in for a count of 4.

Hold it for a count of 7.

Breathe out for a count of 8.

Repeat that sequence four times.

As you complete that breathing sequence, all the negatives will leave your mind and body and you will become relaxed and calm, clearly focused and in control. It won't be long before your powerful mind just takes over and breathes away those negatives, without you even realizing it's occurring. You will just feel a growing sense of calm, peaceful control, all through the mind and body. Try it. It really does work.

What did I do today that I am most proud of (workbook page 3)?

What have you done today that you are most proud of? That's probably not a question you ask yourself very often, but it is a question I am asking you right now and I am encouraging you to ask yourself that question every single day from here on. Every night as you are getting ready for bed, ask yourself - what did I do today that I am most proud of? You might like to buy yourself a journal or a notebook and each day make a note of what your proudest moment was for today.

Dream board (workbook page 4):

Another technique that can help keep you focussed on your goals and what you are moving towards is to create a dream board. Get a sheet of cardboard and some magazines and cut out pictures to stick on your dream board. The pictures could be of clothes you would like to wear, holiday destinations you would like to visit, and hobbies you want to take up. You might cut out positive words such as 'believe' and 'extraordinary'. Use any images that have meaning to you. Place your dream board in a prominent place where you will see it everyday.

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Give yourself what you need most (workbook page 5):

Sometimes you have to give yourself the things that you wish someone else would. If your parents didn't give you the love and encouragement that you needed when you were a child, or if your partner isn't giving it to you now - then give it to yourself. Now that you are no longer using food to fill those emotional holes, look for new ways to nurture yourself. Acknowledge your talents and gifts and how special you are. When no one else is giving you what you need, give it to yourself.

Focus on the inside (workbook page 6):

Stop focusing on the outside and start focusing on the inside. Focus on how you feel rather than on how you look. Take time for yourself. Know who you are, what you want, and what you deserve. Put yourself in charge of your happiness. Work on liking yourself rather than trying to please other people and living up to their expectations. Expect the best from yourself and believe in yourself. Once you truly believe that you have the ability to succeed, you will succeed. Make a strong commitment towards reaching your goals and focus on the rewards that achieving your goals will bring to you. Acknowledge you have choices. And remember to pat yourself on the back when you do a good job. Acknowledge you are a valuable and worthwhile person just as you are - regardless of what you weigh.

Social activities (workbook page 7):

If your social life is defined by food rather than activity then start making some changes. Rather than meeting friends for coffee and cake, meet them at the local park and catch up on your gossip while you walk. Go to a museum or art gallery or market. Talk while you walk.

Stop eating when you are full (workbook page 8):

As children most of us were taught that you can't leave the table until you have eaten everything on your plate. As adults we still tend to eat everything on our plate, regardless of how full we feel. If this behaviour applies to you, acknowledge it, recognise why it began and now change it. When you know you have had enough, stop eating.

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At meal times focus on your food (workbook page 9):

If you are completing other activities while you are eating, you easily lose track of how much food you have consumed. When it is mealtime, stop and focus on what you are doing. Taste each bite. Taste the different flavours of the food and enjoy your meal. Give your mind the opportunity to register that you have eaten a filling and delicious meal.

Compare your lifestyle to a thin person (workbook page 10):

Have you ever compared your lifestyle with that of a thin person? It is easy to assume that all thin people have an excellent metabolism and can eat all they want to and not put on weight, but is that really the case? Is their weight just good luck or is it good management? I have had many people say to me that I am lucky to be so slim, but it's not about luck. I practice what I preach and I have set up a lifestyle to maintain my weight as it is. I make time for exercise everyday. I follow the principle of there being everyday foods (such as fruit and vegetables) and sometimes foods (such as cakes and ice cream). When I have a chocolate biscuit I really enjoy it and I have no guilt about eating it, however, I only have *one* chocolate biscuit and I do not eat half the pack in one sitting. I have developed strategies to deal with the emotional ups and downs, that do not revolve around food. And you can too.

Immediate gratification (workbook page 11):

Immediate gratification feels more powerful than a remote reward. As humans we are impulse driven. We look for that immediate payoff but ignore the long-term price that comes with that. To help overcome this urge for instant gratification, keep your focus on moving towards something rather than away from something. Every step is taking you closer to what you want instead of moving you away from what you don't want. That image of you with the healthy, ideal body weight that you choose to have, is what you are moving towards. See it in your minds eye. See every detail of the image clearly. See yourself the way you now choose to be. See what you are wearing and notice how you feel about yourself. See yourself making powerful, positive decisions and having the strength to carry them through. This is what you are moving towards.

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Motivation (workbook page 12):

You may be wondering how do you keep yourself motivated when you have a lot of weight to lose? And the answer is - you don't stay motivated and that is why you need a lifestyle to support you. You have to plan ahead to ensure your success.

This is why it is important to clean up your environment and get those foods that tempt you, out of sight and out of mind. That is why you have to prepare for your triggers and danger times so you have another plan in place otherwise you will fall back to your old habit of eating all night or consoling yourself with food.

This is why you need to begin each day by visualizing that image of yourself as you now want to be. Hold on to that picture in your mind. That is what you are working towards. Remind yourself that you can do this and you can reach your goal. Keep setting yourself short-term goals that are achievable but also continue to stretch you.

The motivation may go but your new lifestyle will support you and continue to guide you down the path you now wish to follow.

Impulse control (workbook page 13):

If you feel like food is controlling you, and that you will not be able to resist eating whatever food is there in front of you, then it is time for you to require more of yourself. It's time to grow up. You need to stop being reactive and master the art of impulse control. Demand more of yourself. Put aside whatever excuses you normally use when you give yourself permission to indulge and be honest with yourself about what you are doing and why. Identify and deal with what is really going on in your head at those times.

Believe in yourself (workbook page 14):

I want you to now take the risk of believing in yourself. Put aside everything that has happened in the past and know that it is different this time around. Believe you can and you will do it. If you had continued to see yourself in the same way, you would have continued to respond and act the same way – but all of that has changed for you now. You now have the discipline to know that once you have decided what you are going to do, you will hold yourself to it. No exceptions. No excuses. Believe in yourself.

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Making yourself a priority (workbook page 15):

Make a pact with yourself that you are now going to take better care of yourself. Your health and wellbeing now becomes a priority.

If you have children, then one of the most important things you can do for your kids is take care of their parents. It is not selfish to put your wellbeing first, in fact the opposite is true. If your health deteriorates and you are unable to take care of your children then you are not doing them any favours.

What lessons are your behaviours and eating patterns teaching your kids? If caring for your own health isn't enough to get you motivated to make some changes, then what about being a good role model for your children? Take this opportunity to teach them the valuable lesson that you are just learning now, and save them from learning this lesson the hard way.

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Positive Suggestions

The positive suggestions written below will hopefully encourage you and boost your self-confidence. You might like to read through them on a daily basis and allow the suggestions to become positive self-beliefs, or make a recording of yourself reading them, substituting the words "I", "me", and "my" in place of "you" and "your", and listen to that recording daily.

You now use your power of choice to choose what goes into your mouth - when, where and how much.

You have an increasing satisfaction from the right amounts of those foods that help you reach your ideal, healthiest body weight and you make wise choices about your health and eating habits.

You have total control over your actions.

You are now in the process of creating a new lifestyle.

No matter what your age, no matter what your talents you can create the exact person you want to become. If you want to become more confident, you will mentally create a more confident person. If you want to become more relaxed, you will mentally create a relaxed person. You will write down all the characteristics you want to develop. List them all. You will write them down as continuous reminders that you can become the person you choose to become because you will become what you think about.

You recognise you are a creature of habit and you become what you expect to become so it is very important that you feed yourself good positive expectations and desires so that you may have in your life exactly what you desire.

You will eliminate all self-defeating thoughts. You will never tell yourself that there is something you cannot do. You must be valid, but never tell yourself you are not good enough, you are not smart enough, nor talented enough or that there is some goal you cannot accomplish. If you believe it is realistic you can accomplish it.

You will remember to write your desires down and then refer to them often.

You are every day in every way becoming more and more positive.

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If you find yourself thinking in a negative way you will quickly remind yourself that you are driving out that old habit.

Now you are going to make each day happen your way.

New experiences are going to help you become that kind of person that you want to be.

You feel this power now and increasingly everyday.

You begin to see things as they really are.

You realise the final choice, as to how you are going to feel in any situation, is always yours, no one can make it for you. No one does anything to you. It is your choice.

So make your life happen on purpose.

Now you are going to be completely successful in every way and surprised and amazed at the self-discipline and confidence that you have in yourself knowing that you have beaten this problem and that it will stay beaten.

You are on your way to achieving your goal of reaching your desired weight and body image and you can be congratulated.

See the photo of yourself as you want to be.

You have now put comfort eating aside forever. And when you put it aside, you put it aside with all other fears and anxieties. Because you don't need any of that.

Now you are making yourself successful.

Now you are setting goals and striving towards those goals.

Now you are loving yourself and appreciating yourself for the really good and wonderful person that you are.

You are now going to enjoy life fully in every way and feel happy, feel alive, laugh, love, and be happy for that's what today means to you.

Taking this journey of gaining control of your eating, is about you being the best that you can be.

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Feel your inner strength becoming stronger and stronger and feel the excitement of facing a fresh new beginning along the path that you truly wish to follow.

Taking your life along a new path now.

Experiencing total freedom from those things that no longer serve you.

Taking back what is rightfully yours - your life and your health.

Think about the wonderful smiling faces of those around you, the significant others in your life, who also receive the benefits of this change that you made for your life. See them celebrating, see them smiling, see the pride in their eyes and on their faces.

Feel the change in your body as ultimate health becomes a way of life and see the differences it makes for you every day.

Feel the sense of having achieved something very special.

See there is something I know about you that you may not yet know about yourself. You have within you more resources of energy than you have ever tapped into, more talent than has ever been revealed, more strength than has ever been tested, and more to give than you have ever given.

And now you will feel all those wonderful attributes come forward and reveal themselves to you.

Feel your inner strength radiating outwards. Feel your courage growing and as your courage grows, so too will your self-confidence and your belief that you can do absolutely anything you set your mind to.

Feel those wonderful feelings, hold them, remember them and carry them with you always.

Nothing can stop you now, from reaching your fullest potential.

Be proud of yourself for taking control of this situation and no longer allowing it to control you.

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And Finally...

There is no quick and easy answer for weight loss. It is hard work and it requires dedication and discipline but you *can* shed those excess kilos and keep them off for good.

After reading all of these notes and doing the exercises in the workbook, I hope you now understand your relationship with food and have put strategies in place to deal with your triggers and danger times and that you are now on your way to ultimate health.

The story of your life is about you and you decide how that story goes. You have choices and it's time to make some real choices about what you want from your life, rather than just going along with the flow.

Take control of your life and be responsible for yourself and your happiness.

When you are feeling lost and powerless, focus on what you have achieved in your life rather than on what you haven't. Don't let past experiences dictate what happens in your future. Today is a new day - make it a new beginning.

I wish you all the very best for the future and for a long and healthy life. Take care of you.

Many blessings,

Jennifer Lee