

Top 10 tips for lasting weight loss



Weight Solutions
FOR PHYSICIANS

#1 Approach weight loss like a science experiment

- Remove the pass/fail thoughts and the emotional attachment to your results. Look at it objectively as much as possible. If you aren't getting the results you want, have a look at what you are doing and choose one thing to adjust. Don't change it all at once or give it all up because you haven't seen the results you want. There is a solution to be found!
- Treat yourself with kindness. You are going to need to do things that feel hard as you work through these changes. Asking yourself to make big changes from a place of kindness is much easier than from a place of blame or shame. Just like with kids, your brain will probably respond better to "positive parenting" than yelling.

#2 Know your "why"

- Losing a significant amount of weight takes real commitment. It requires you to step out of your comfort zone and make changes that can feel difficult at first. To pull you through the tough days, you really need to know why you are doing this. Why is it important for you to lose weight? What will you gain by losing weight? Can you come up with a reason for doing this that is so compelling to you that it makes it simple to stay on track and say no to cravings?
- When you come up with this powerful reason, write it down. Post it on your mirror. Put it in your phone. Repeat it to yourself regularly. Constantly remind your brain of why following your plan is more important to you than that doughnut in the staff room.

#3 Eat food that makes you feel satisfied

- Whatever you choose to eat to lose your weight is what you will need to eat to maintain it. So choose a style of eating that is effective, that you feel satisfied with and that is easy to incorporate into dining out or other social situations. I believe the approach that meets those requirements for most people is eating a lower carbohydrate and higher fat approach.
- As much as possible, eat real food. Unprocessed, unpackaged food that can be easily identified.
- Eating lower carb means limiting starches and sugars in your diet and focusing on proteins, vegetables, and fats.
- Listen to episode 2 and 3 of the podcast for more detailed information.

#4 Don't stress about exercise

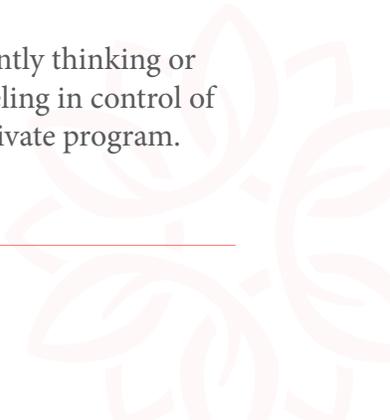
- I love to exercise and think it is a very important piece to overall health. There is so much evidence for the benefits it can give you: Better mood, better heart health, better bone health, more focus etc. What there isn't much evidence for is exercise being an effective weight loss tool on its own. Who has started on a new workout regime only to be disappointed that the scale doesn't move the way you expect it to? Our bodies can easily adapt how much energy we burn while exercising and in our day to day activities to accommodate for sudden increases in activity.
- When we focus on exercise to burn calories it becomes less enjoyable and can be frustrating. There are also studies that show our brains then trick us with all sorts of thoughts afterward about what we "deserve" or can eat because of the activity and we often wipe out the calorie burn benefit of the exercise.
- Use exercise as a tool for enjoyment, for mental health, to accomplish non-weight goals but focus on your food to make changes in your weight. Move your body in ways you enjoy as a gift to yourself because it feels good.

#5 Get to know your thoughts

- Thoughts are at the basis of all our feelings and actions. We often have deep-seated thoughts about food and our approach to food that are tripping us up regularly. Our brain tells us that we've had a hard day and food will make it better, that it would be impossible to celebrate a special occasion without overeating, that we have to eat certain foods to avoid offending people around us, or that there is no way we could ever stop following through on our cravings etc.
- Spend some time writing down your thoughts around food, in particular around times when you overeat. Think about how those thoughts make you feel and how you act when you are thinking them.
- Then choose a few to try and change. Make small changes to the thoughts that are still believable to yourself but generate a better feeling when you think them.
- Practice building awareness of what your thoughts are in the moment. When a craving suddenly hits, take a moment to think through what your thoughts are.
- At first, this may be that you have awareness after an eating behaviour has already happened. With time, you can start to get that awareness earlier and earlier. Ideally to catch the thought, recognize it, and change it before you end up in the eating behaviour.

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#6 Learn from your mistakes

- It is too easy to beat yourself up when you have done something you feel you shouldn't have. You ate off-plan, you had a binge, maybe you even completely lost track for months and regained a bunch of weight. No one benefits from you beating yourself up. It certainly doesn't make you feel confident and ready to try again! Instead, take a moment and write down some of your thoughts about what happened. What was going on around you? What was happening in your day/ life? What was your mood like? Did you pass any specific triggers? What thoughts were you thinking? Had you stopped any supportive habits like meal planning or self-care activities?
- Then make a plan for next time. What could you do to support yourself so those situations don't throw you off again in the future? Sometimes just knowing that certain things are triggers for overeating can help you prevent it. Knowing that a busy week or more time on call will likely give you more food cravings can let you prepare for it before it happens.

#7 Meal plan for success

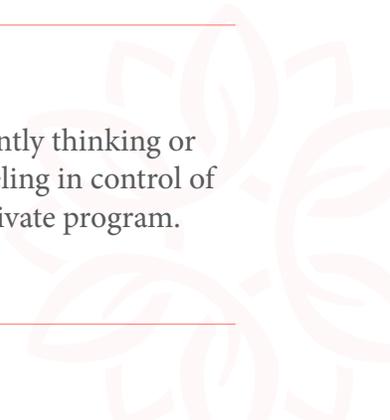
- Leaving what you are eating up to chance is letting your primitive brain feel like it is running the show. You are far more likely to eat off-plan or give up for the day if you have to make each decision because you haven't planned ahead. Your brain will give you all sorts of reasons why you should eat X, Y or Z and why there are no possible alternatives at that moment.
- If you plan ahead, have the groceries in the house, and try to have some leftovers in the fridge it takes very little time to eat healthily. Have some things you can quickly grab on your way out the door in the busiest of situations. Preparing your packed lunch the night before as you clean up from dinner is a great trick. Bonus to this is the money that can be saved by not eating lunches out.

#8 Accept your cravings

- We all have cravings. We usually crave food that isn't very good for us. These cravings often get worse and feel at their most intense when we are at our weakest (tired, overly busy, stressed). All of that is ok. It is fine to have cravings. You don't have to work on getting rid of them. What you need to work on is accepting them and allowing them to be in your life without acting on them. They feel so intense and urgent, it often feels like the only way to get rid of them is to act on them. That isn't true. You can just let them be there. They actually fade quite quickly and you come out the other side with a new sense of confidence. The more you let them be there and don't act on them, the stronger you get and the weaker the cravings get.

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#9 Have patience with this process

- If you are trying to lose a significant amount of weight and maintain it, it will take time. Even if you follow your plan perfectly, your body won't always lose weight as quickly as you want. Focusing on short-term results like this can make you feel defeated. But, have patience. Stick with your plan. Play the long game. What may seem like an insignificant change in the short term will add up to very significant changes in the long term. Patiently weathering the bumps in the road and staying focused on your long-term goals will get you there eventually. Stay patient and committed.

#10 Focus on the positive

- Our brains are naturally wired to focus more on the negative. So it is not surprising that when I talk to people about eating lower carb, they worry about all the things they won't be able to eat. Focusing on what you can't eat will make you feel deprived and unsatisfied. If you just shift your focus slightly to think of the things you can eat or the things you will be able to do, it will make it easier to say "no" to the bread and pasta.
- Things I like to rejoice in being able to eat with this way of life are (in no particular order): hot wings, warm cream cheese based dips, Brussel sprouts with bacon and parmesan cheese and delicious creamy dressings on my salads.
- As your body settles into this way of eating, it becomes much easier. Cravings for things like bread and pasta go away. Your relationship with food starts to feel more stable.

Weight management coaching for physicians.



Dr. Siobhan Key MD CCFP (EM) (PC),
Diplomat of ABOM

Whether this is your first time seeking out support or have been down this road before, you understand the importance of your own health and wellbeing – physically, emotionally, and mentally.

I offer six-week personalized private programs for physicians. The program consists of weekly video calls 20-30 minutes in length with email support between each call. Using a comprehensive approach including nutrition, CBT, and other techniques while working one on one allows us to dig deep and find solutions for the issues inhibiting your weight mastery.

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