

MINDFUL WEIGHT MANAGEMENT

Here are a few simple tips that can get you on the path to mindful weight management.

No diets, no deprivation, no long hours in the gym.
Just small easy changes that will make a difference.

DITCH THE DIET



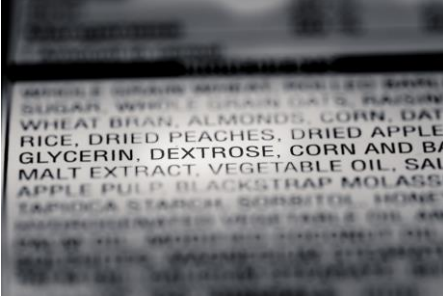
You've heard it before, 'diets don't work'. The reason is that diets set you up for failure because they are not sustainable for the long term. Diets cause deprivation which in turn cause cravings leading to overeating all of the forbidden foods that were 'off limits'. This leads to feelings of guilt and regret which perpetuates weight cycling (yo-yo dieting). This all or nothing thinking is not a balanced approach to long-term weight management. Diets don't allow you to use your own instinctive ability to know when, what and how much to eat. You are using external forces to control eating – not letting your body's cues of hunger and fullness be your guide.

Additionally, extreme reduced calorie dieting can lead to decreased metabolism which makes it more difficult to manage your personal ideal weight. When you eat less than what you need for normal bodily functions at rest (basal metabolic rate – BMR), the body adapts by putting the brakes on your metabolism to conserve energy.

EAT WHEN YOU'RE HUNGRY



Sounds silly, but many people ignore their body's signals of physical hunger. That empty, gnawing or growling sensation in your stomach, irritability, low energy are signs that your body needs fuel. Many times we are just too busy to stop to enjoy a meal. Waiting until you are ravenous can set you up for mindless overeating. It's a good idea to check in with yourself every few hours to look for the signs of hunger. If you are physically hungry, decide what you would like to eat and take time to enjoy your meal or snack.



DON'T COUNT CALORIES, COUNT INGREDIENTS

Opt for whole foods instead of packaged or processed foods. Whole foods are nutrient dense whereas processed foods are typically energy dense. Why does it matter? Nutrient dense food provides the vitamins, minerals, fiber and other compounds your body needs for optimal health. A whole food would be considered one ingredient (for example squash or avocado). Processed foods are usually higher in calories or may even have the same caloric value, but typically have added sugar, fat and preservatives which have little value for your body. There may be 50 ingredients in a processed food product!



Of course it isn't realistic to eat only whole foods, so when you do eat packaged or processed foods, view the ingredients list. Less is more!

Note: Some whole foods are both nutrient and energy dense. For example, nuts and nut butters, avocados, whole grains, full fat dairy, some meats, etc. Be mindful of portion sizes when eating these types of foods.



MINDFUL SNACKING

We can go through an entire super-sized portion of snacks like potato chips, cookies or candy without even realizing it or without even tasting the food for that matter.

It's fine to indulge in treats as long as we are mindful of how much we are eating. If you are going to eat it, pay attention and enjoy the food! You will be more likely to eat less if you are paying attention to your body for signs of fullness and for a reduced sense of pleasurable taste (full flavors of the food diminish after a few bites).



You can also try putting a small amount in a baggy instead of eating out of the large container. This will help you manage the portion size of what you are eating.

Another good option is to plan ahead and have wholesome snacks readily available like apple slices with nut butter or veggies with hummus.

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MOVE YOUR BODY

People who get at least 150 minutes of moderate activity a week are more successful with weight management. You can break daily exercise into 10 minute increments if you are just starting out.

Look for opportunities to get movement into your daily life like taking the stairs instead of the elevator, taking a walk during your lunch hour, playing ball with your children or grandchildren, doing some stretching while watching TV. Go dancing or do some gardening. Find activities that you love and you will be keeping fit without even trying!



80% RULE

The Japanese practice something that makes such sense and people who eat instinctively do it without realizing. It's called "hara hachi bu". It means, eat until you are 80 percent full.

Basically, this means eating until you are satisfied even if there is food left on your plate. Savor your food and eat with the intention of feeling vibrant and energetic when you have finished your meal.



USE THE SMART PLATE

People tend to eat more when the plate size is larger. Trick your mind by using a smaller plate. Our dinner plates have grown to be 12" in size! Use a smaller 9" plate instead.

Also, try to portion 1/2 your plate with veggies and fruit, 1/4 with protein and 1/4 with healthy grains as recommended by ChooseMyPlate.gov. Bottom line is to eat the foods that work for you because everyone has their own unique eating style. Choose a variety of whole foods that fit into your lifestyle.



BE MINDFUL OF WHAT YOU DRINK

Most people understand that sodas loaded with sugar can add significant calories, but when it comes to fruit juice, people don't realize how much sugar they are drinking and therefore how many extra calories are being consumed.

Instead of drinking fruit juice, eat whole fruit. As mentioned in 'Don't count calories, count ingredients', you will get the extra benefit of fiber from the whole food fruit. Fiber is important in weight management.



ACCOUNTABILITY

A buddy, support group or coach can help you stay accountable and on track to reach your weight management goals.



TEND TO YOUR NEEDS AND DE-STRESS

Uncover what your stressors are and find ways to incorporate self-care on a daily basis. Tending to your true needs will lessen the urge to use food as the only means to cope with stress. This is an important piece of the weight management puzzle.

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IT'S ABOUT
PROGRESS,
NOT PERFECTION.

COMPASSION

If you mess up, instead of paying attention to that inner critic, be kind and gentle to yourself. It's not about being perfect. Love yourself unconditionally and focus on making the small changes that will be sustainable for the long term.



CELEBRATE YOUR SUCCESS

Trade doubt for belief - people who believe they can succeed are more successful with managing their weight. Visualize how you will feel when you are taking care of yourself – eating mindfully & healthfully, moving your body, reducing stress. Feel that joy right now! For motivation, give yourself a round of applause for each and every step you take toward your goal – you deserve it.



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Meet Gayle, CPC, CHC, CPT

I was a yo-yo dieter for about 25 years. With each diet I tried, the more weight I gained. After each diet I would eat all the forbidden foods and the cycle would start all over again. I tried every diet that offered a 'quick fix'. Can you relate to my story?

In 2006 I decided I was done with diets and wanted a different approach because what I was doing clearly wasn't working. I wanted to make changes for my health and wellbeing because this time it was not about fitting into a certain size for a special occasion. I wanted to make sustainable changes to live a healthy and vibrant life.

That's when I began to understand that it was my unrealistic relationship with food and fitness (all or nothing thinking) that was tripping me up. I started to become more conscious about what I was putting into my body - both food and thoughts. By changing my beliefs, thoughts and feelings about food and fitness, I became unstuck. I was able to get healthy and I lost weight as a byproduct of the work that I was doing. It was a transformative experience!

Because of my own journey and the desire to help other people with weight management challenges, I became a Certified Professional Health & Wellness Coach, Certified Personal Trainer, Fitness Nutrition Specialist, Weight Loss Specialist and Am I Hungry? Licensed Coach. I received my personal training, health coach, fitness nutrition specialist, weight loss specialist certifications from the National Academy of Sports Medicine (NASM) and American Council on Exercise (ACE). I received my professional coach certification from the Institute for Professional Excellence in Coaching (iPEC), an ICF accredited Coaching Program, with over 340 hours of course-related work and hands-on training.

It is my passion to inspire and empower people to take life-changing action to manage their weight with ease and live a full and vibrant life.

Are you ready for a transformation?

Visit my website for my mindful weight management coaching programs

<http://www.gayledecarlo.com/>