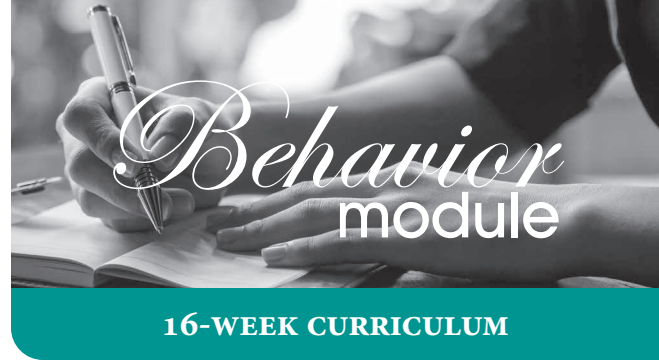


MOTIVATION PART 2: STAYING MOTIVATED



16-WEEK CURRICULUM

To Motivate Yourself to Lose Weight, It Helps to:

Believe that you can succeed.

An “I can do it!” attitude is motivating. Past weight loss attempts may throw you off course, but believing that you will succeed this time can be motivating.

Lose weight because it’s important to you.

Wanting to lose weight for yourself, rather than for someone else or for a special occasion, increases the likelihood of long-term success. External motivators, like following doctor’s orders, pleasing your spouse, or looking good for a special event may work for a while, but when the fear decreases, support subsides or the event is over, the motivation to keep losing weight can fade. Internal motivators, like feeling more energetic or in control of your eating, or liking the way you look and feel as a thinner person, can help you maintain the momentum.

Find enjoyment in your weight loss efforts.

If you like the foods you eat, feel good about the activity you do, and can incorporate your new eating and activity habits into your life, your motivation to lose weight will stay strong.

When Your Motivation Begins to Wane, Look for Reasons to Keep Going:

Focus on what you are getting, not on what you are giving up

...by following your weight loss plan. Review your reasons for wanting to lose weight and the positive changes you’ve experienced so far. Consider how you would feel if you had to start over.

Be realistic in your expectations.

Believing that your weight loss journey will be quick and without obstacles or that losing weight will guarantee happiness in all aspects of your life is unrealistic. You may feel happier and better about yourself, but life’s challenges will not automatically disappear.

Assess why your motivation is waning.

For example, is the problem that you don’t believe you can lose the weight, don’t feel like you’re doing something that you really want, or don’t see the benefits of continuing on? Review the tips in the section above to help build up your motivation.

Keep plateaus in perspective.

If your weight temporarily doesn’t budge, even when you are following your weight loss plan, don’t despair. Keep at it and your weight loss plateau will eventually break. If you experience an attitude plateau, experiment with new foods or recipes or try a new sport or activity.

Get in touch with your feelings.

If you’re afraid of losing more weight, identify the fear and ways to handle it. For example, if you’re uncomfortable with compliments about how you look, practice saying “thank you.” Or, consider taking a break from losing and instead focus on maintaining your weight to get more used to the “new you” before losing further.

