



Train the Brain to Lose Weight and Keep It Off for Good

The Cycle of Maintenance

Not enough is written about maintaining a weight loss, and this is a problem because for most dieters, that's where the real work begins. Losing weight is unquestionably difficult but it comes with enormous positive reinforcement – watching the scale go down, fitting into clothes, getting compliments, etc. Weight maintenance has many fewer new and motivating milestones and it becomes about getting ourselves to keep doing what we're doing, even though most of the excitement has passed.

A big misconception about maintenance that we hear all the time is this: dieters think that they'll get down to a weight and ultimately stay there; they think that maintenance is a straight line. In reality, for almost everyone we've worked with (ourselves, included) maintenance is actually a cycle. It's a cycle of getting down to a certain weight, which requires a lot of energy and focus. Eventually, we naturally start to lose a little bit of focus and we loosen up in certain ways. After a while, that bit of loosening up starts to feel completely normal and we loosen up even more from there, and then the scale goes up by a few pounds. Once we realize that the scale has gone up and stayed up for a few days, we refocus, figure out where we've gotten loose, and tighten back up. And then the scale goes back down. And then overtime we lose focus, loosen up, the scale goes up, so we tighten back up and the scale goes down, and so on. Some people go through this cycle every six months, some people once a year, and some people less frequently than that. But the bottom line is, it happens to almost everyone.



It's not necessarily a problem that this happens; we think that loosening up overtime is normal and for most people pretty unavoidable. What is a problem, though, is when dieters don't catch the loosening up before it's really gotten away from them, or if they do, they don't know what to do to tighten back up.

First and foremost, we think that for almost everyone, it's critical to be getting on the scale somewhere between once a day and once a week. If dieters aren't getting on the scale, it's extraordinarily hard to catch a loosening up at the two- or three-pound mark. We also remind dieters that just because the scale is up by two pounds one day doesn't

necessarily mean they have to do anything differently, because the scale fluctuates. But if it's up by two or three pounds for three or four days, that's usually an indication that it's time to get refocused.

Slippery Slope

Another thing we do with our clients is help them identify what we call "slippery slope items." These are skills that dieters sometimes have trouble keeping consistent, and are the most likely culprits of their loosening up. Everyone has different slippery slope items. For some it may be that they've: started eating standing up again, have started eating in response to stress, have stopped eating very slowly and mindfully, have stopped eating in a structured way on the weekends, have lapsed back into eating snacks in the evening instead of a real meal, etc. We have them make a list of these slippery slope items (sometimes worded in the form of questions: Am I eating too much candy in the evening? Have I started taking seconds at dinner? Have I stopped bringing a healthy lunch to work?), which gives them very clear things to refocus on.

Catching a weight gain at the two- or three- pound mark is such a different story from trying to recover from a twenty, thirty or more pound gain. Consider making your own slippery slope and using the scale as a tool to tell you when to pull it out. Maintenance is hard but with the right preparation, it absolutely can be achieved!

Give us a Call today to set up a FREE CONSULTATION and start losing 3-5lbs this week!

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