



How to combat social pressures & weight maintenance

Social pressure and maintenance can be stressful at times, particularly if you feel that you may be slipping back into old bad habits. However, it can be easily managed, you just need to be in control. If you feel you are slipping, acknowledge it and take back control.

Maintenance

Look back on your goals and check if you are achieving them. If you are, keep setting yourself further positive goals such as you have done over the last 11 weeks so that you are continuously working towards a healthier lifestyle. If you haven't achieved certain goals, don't be disheartened; perhaps ask yourself if it was realistic and whether you need to change it or if you are now ready to make that change?

Working towards a healthier lifestyle is an ongoing process, the more you are able to stick to your goals the more normal this will feel and will gradually become part of your established habits and routine.

Keep planning ahead and be consistent with your new habits as much as possible. There will be times you may give in to temptation, for example, overeating at a meal or not undertaking as much exercise as you would like for a day or two, however don't let it slip for long and get back on track as soon as possible otherwise you may be tempted to go back to old less healthy habits.

It is estimated that it takes around three months to establish a new habit, by the end of this 12 week programme, your goals from the first couple of weeks should start to be embedded as part of your new healthier lifestyle. Keep going and work on your recent goals so that these can become established too!

"Finding it hard to resist temptation sometimes? Follow an 80:20 or 90:10 rule, lead a healthy lifestyle for at least 80% of the time and enjoy your social life too."

Tips at work and at home to help maintain your progress

- Try to have your own healthy snacks available, as it can be difficult to find healthy snacks during working hours. Vending machines often just have high sugar, fat or salt snacks choices, and high calorie sugary drinks.
- Take a few moments to create a simple shopping list of food ingredients and snacks you need for the week.
- Plan a simple menu of meals for the next couple of days ahead; perhaps write this on your shopping list.
- Include one or two whole fruit with your light meals or lunches.
- Cooking in bulk is more convenient and can help cut the costs.
- Storage containers and zip lock bags are useful to store and portion out food or for snacks and light meals.
- Carry a reusable bottle drinking water bottle.
- See if you are able to keep some tins or non-perishable foods with you in your workplace, such as tuna, soup and chili beans tins, pasta, noodles and rice (pre-cooked, flavoured rice packs are available in most supermarkets which can be micro waved).

Social pressures

We have compiled a list below of some suggestions for when you are with friends that can help you maintain all the hard work that you have achieved over the last 11 weeks. Think about the ones that are relevant to you; these can be used as part of your goals for this week and ongoing progress towards a healthier lifestyle:

- Dining out. Whether you are going out with family or friends, perhaps opt to have a (small) meal at home before you eat out. This can help prevent over-eating and allow you to eat sensibly while focusing on the social aspects of the meal. For example, before you go out, eat a large plate of salad or a small tin of fish on a couple of crackers.
- Opt just for the main or a large starter, and consider your choices.
- Another quick tip is drinking a glass of water before your meal. This will help you feel fuller and satisfy your thirst.
- Be proud of your commitment to working towards a healthier lifestyle. Being honest with your friends and family will help them understand your goals and needs. This may also inspire others around you to take part in a healthier lifestyle.
- “No thank you” is one of the most effective and polite ways of getting people to step back when they try to push unhealthy foods or drinks onto you. You don’t have to justify why you don’t want to eat something. You can always add “maybe later”.
- If you are unable to resist or feel very pressured then just try a few small bites or ask for a small portion or share. Think as if you are ‘sampling’ the high calorie food.

T: 07778 218009

WWW.THEHEALTHYEMPLOYEE.CO.UK / OFFICE@THEHEALTHYEMPLOYEE.CO.UK