

April Weighing In 2014

Perseverance- The Road To Success

Losing weight is a journey.... a journey that you may have started many months ago. Or maybe a journey you started when you were twelve when someone first told you "you're fat." The pain of remembering some of the negative names you were called has stayed with you for some time. Many of my patients insulate themselves with food and continue to grow in their obesity to comfort themselves from past hurts and failures.

You may not be where you want to be today, but you're a lot closer than you were yesterday. So don't get side tracked by your past hurts or even mistakes; focus on what's ahead of you. I like what the apostle Paul says: "Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already arrived at my goal, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me. Brothers and sisters, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus." Pressing on even when you've been hurt or have made a mistake is perseverance. You must pick yourself back up and continue on your journey.

Perseverance is a chemical synapse in neuroscience that separates winners from losers in both life and sports and at work and in school. Dopamine is the neurochemistry that keeps people motivated to achieve a goal and persevere. The good news is that you have the power to increase the production of dopamine levels in your brain! Let me explain.

Scientists have identified higher levels of dopamine as the reward center or the reward molecule. Recently neuroscience has discovered that a receptor links dopamine directly to the formation of good and bad habits. (We are headed back to the pleasure center again!) A study released back in 2012 found that the receptors for dopamine are like gateways that essentially enable us to form habits. Dopamine neurons regulate circuits all over the brain, but they need to be regulated themselves. Neuroscience says that this discovery opens the door to speeding up the process of forming good habits and the possibility of removing many of our bad habits such as drug and alcohol addiction and smoking since the same circuits are seemingly involved in both pathways.

Physical activity is the most effective way to begin a hardwired habit of perseverance. For example, whenever you make the bed and tuck in the sheets to make it look nice you get a reward---that positive feeling that comes from achieving. The military figured this out a long time ago. We shine our boots; we polish buttons on our uniforms; we march 13 to 15 miles. When we do the physical activity, when we learn to do it the military way and we do it correctly for a period of time, we get promoted. Learning to stay on track with our eating and exercising to lose our weight is very similar in that there are rewards to be had!

To produce more dopamine we must get in the habit of setting ourselves a few deadlines and goals that we can complete in a timely manner. This would include creating a daily schedule that includes deadlines that we need to stick to. Recall that I once told you to use a Weigh Station calendar. Partner with a like-minded friend with similar goals and make a pact that you will hold one another accountable to stay on deadline. This is where Sharing The Journey meetings and the Weigh Station Winners website come in handy for making connections with others on a journey similar to yours.

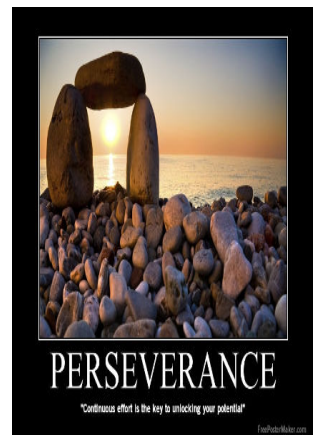
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Structure your big challenges into many small ones that are self-imposed deadlines so you that will release a steady flow of dopamine through your brain. Let's say you walk for 30 minutes a day every day for a month. You then move it to 45 minutes and so on. First you achieved a micro goal for walking every day for 30 minutes! As you continued you created a macro goal because you were walking for almost an hour.

One of the largest keys to the success of weight loss is overcoming the obstacles in life that seem determined to stop your progress. These are mounds that you must break down into little doable doses, tackling each one as a small insignificant obstacle. An effective way to get the feeling of dopamine rushing through your body is the process of tackling the major goal by breaking it up into small challenges. Concentrate on losing two pounds per week. Cheer yourself on when you accomplish this. Anyone can lose two pounds in seven days. If you think about it, how many of you had even better success than that? And yet, so often we hear, "How come I did not lose this week?" As we then analyze what you've done, we find that you have not followed what you said you would do, and that is why you didn't get your desired reward.

A very wealthy lady who visits us decided to go to Florida to a weight loss center. This center is very famous, many movie stars and highly paid athletes go there to lose weight. She went down to the spa center with the intent of losing 20 pounds in two weeks. Now let me tell you how much it cost her: She paid over \$5000 for one week not including her airfare. While there, she had her meals cooked for her and she exercised three times a day. Her exercise included cardio for 30 minutes, lifting with bands for 30 minutes and long walks while listening to positive affirmation tapes. Then her group would come back and eat lunch. That afternoon they would go for a massage; they would listen to lectures for an hour and a half on how to stay healthy. Then they would exercise again for another 30 minutes and lift using bands for 30 minutes. By the end of the first week, she had lost six pounds. She was quite happy. (Note: On the first week she came here, she lost seven pounds.)

The next week they repeated this same scenario but this time ramped up her walking to 45 minutes; and increased her bands to 45 minutes. Her afternoon walks went up to 45 minutes as well with their positive affirmation tapes blasting in her ears. At the end of that week, she lost five pounds for a total of 11 pounds in 14 days. Okay, let's now do the math, she spent \$909.09 per pound!!

She brought me back a lot of information on the program and looked at me and said, "I did better here for a lot less. Why don't you raise your prices and maybe more people would come". Think about it for a minute. Do you really get the idea that some people think the higher the price, the greater the reward? That may be true with cars, homes, and cruises, but not when it comes losing weight. The reward of losing weight is your health forever. Learning how to lose it correctly is once again your reward. Learning to persevere through all of life's challenges is a reward you can't put a price tag on! Can you feel your brain firing up now saying "You can do this"?

No one else cares if you accomplish 99% of your goals that you're striving for in your life. Be your own cheering squad. Don't place your feelings of self-worth on the praise and kudos of all the other people around you. Understanding the power of perseverance will help you more than anything else. Former President Calvin Coolidge once said, "Nothing in the world can take the place of persistence. Talent will not: nothing is more common than the unusual men with talent. Genius will not: unrewarded genius is almost a proverb. Education will not: the world is full of educated derelicts. Persistence and determination alone are omnipotent".

Often it is difficult to determine whether the course you have chosen is the right one, whether you should continue, adjust, or abandon a certain direction or decision point. Persistence means to continue steadily in some state, purpose, or course of action in spite of the opposition against you. Opposition! Perseverance means never give up! Failure is what happens to you when you quit, not when you continue.

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The road to success is paved with lots of parking lots filled with the cars of failure, those who were not willing to get up and try again. It's been said that difficult goals and incredible dreams take time, and impossible ones take a lot longer. You may have to expect resistance from your family and friends as you travel the new road of success. This is especially true from those people who don't understand or from those who might be embarrassed by your success. Remember the girl who gave her best friend who had successfully lost weight the 10 pound chocolate bar. Misery loves company.

Stay clear of the pessimist and intentionally try to stay as close to positive people as possible. Their messages are strong and they have uplifting themes that feed your heart, mind, soul and body. Stay focused! Your mental attitude that pulls you through has got to be on track. Of course you'll need to adjust the sails for your boat as you go down the winds of change, but make sure you know what your goal is and don't lose focus! Don't lose interest in what you're doing and don't lose your drive because if you do, you will come to a screeching halt! And last but not least learn from the best.

If your goal is to climb the Peaks of Otter, seek out a climber that has already scaled the peak and reached the summit. The best advice comes from those people who have similar goals in mind and have successfully completed them. There are many unique challenges in our lives you need help and guidance from those people that have persevered and triumphed. In all of their challenges those with perseverance never let go of their focus, they never quit. Seek out these people on program and ask them for guidance.

So, as you can see, Sharing the Journey meetings, Weigh Station Winners website, and weekly visits to the Weigh Station all add up to your weight loss success.

Blessings to all
Chuck Shaffer M.D.

Recipe of the Month: Stuffed Mushrooms

INGREDIENTS

- 18-24 button mushrooms, cleaned, stems separated from caps
- 1 Tbsp butter
- 2 small shallots, minced, about 2 Tbsp
- 1 large garlic clove, minced
- Salt to taste
- 2 Tbsp chopped parsley
- 1 teaspoon dried thyme
- 2 Tbsp chicken stock
- 2 Tbsp olive oil
- 2 Tbsp grated parmesan cheese x2



Directions: Preheat oven to 375 degrees. Chop the mushroom stems finely. Heat 1 tbsp butter in a small pan over medium high heat. Sauté the chopped mushroom stems and the shallots for 4-5 minutes, stirring often. Add the garlic and sprinkle with salt. Stir well and sauté 2 more minutes. Turn off heat and add the parsley and 2 tbsp parmesan cheese. Pour the stock into a food processor or blender, then the rest of the filling. Pulse several times to get a fine mixture, almost a paste. Toss the mushroom caps with olive oil. Fill each mushroom with the stuffing. Sprinkle the last 2 tbsp of parmesan cheese over each mushroom and bake for 20-25 minutes, or until the cheese browns slightly. Allow to cool for 5 minutes before serving.

*Recipe adapted from Simplyrecipes.com

Lifestyle versus Diet Mentality

Lately I've been popping in with patients during their weekly visits to see how they are doing with the program. While I've really enjoyed meeting many of our patients, it has occurred to me that the ones who think of this program as a diet tend to struggle more while the ones who adopt it as a change in the way they live do better (note the word live, not eat).

So I've started asking; are you enjoying the program? If the answer is no, then why? What I typically hear is that they are struggling due to having no time to cook or exercise; being too stressed out, having family members bring junk food home; being bored with the choices or they feel hungry all the time. The secret to long term success is to find ways around these issues! It may have nothing to do with the actual food you're eating! Our staff wants nothing more for our patients to be successful long term. If you are bored, it's not okay. You need to ENJOY this program. This means finding ways of cooking and preparing the foods on the list in a way that is pleasing to you so that it's no longer a diet. If you are limited on time, find short cuts- using the crock pot or buying things pre-cooked or frozen can help. If your family members are sabotaging you, practice the out of site out of mind mentality and designate a cupboard in the kitchen that is just yours so you don't have to look at the junk food that others bring home. Approaches are going to be different for everyone but our job is to help you through this process. I challenge you to be creative and keep an open mind you will be surprised of how many problems you can overcome!

Attitude is 90% of this battle. A recent study from the Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA) looked at several different diets to find which one was best at maintaining a healthy weight and warding off chronic diseases? Was it a low-carb diet, a high-carb diet, an all-vegetable diet, a no-vegetable diet? What they found was that you'd be better off just forgetting the word diet!

According to the study:

"What does matter is 'how' to eat, as well as other things in lifestyle interventions, such as physical activity and supportive behaviors that help people stay on track [in the] long term."

The researchers cite numerous studies that demonstrated only moderate success with various types of diet that focus on macronutrients: protein, fat or carbohydrates; but regardless of diet, without a lifestyle change, the weight comes back.

Conversely, several large and recent studies found lower weight and lower incidence of diabetes among study participants many years after the study's initial completion because the subjects were taught *how to lose weight* through lifestyle interventions.

Researchers described lifestyle interventions as three-prong: dietary counseling (how to control portions, reduce high-calorie foods and navigate restaurants), exercise counseling (how to set goals, target heart rate and exercise safely), and behavioral modification (how to self-monitor, problem solve, stay motivated and understand hunger)."

At The Weigh Station all three prongs are addressed. During your weekly visits our staff constantly asks about exercise, we teach you how to self-monitor (weighing and measuring your food) and we help motivate you! On top of all of this my job is to assist you in problem solving, help you navigate through restaurants if needed and help provide recipe ideas.

Why diets go wrong (according to the article):

"Indeed, the authors wrote that the only consistent fact in all the diet studies is that adherence is the element most strongly associated with weight loss and disease risk reduction.

Pagoto described five challenges to any diet that she sees with her patients: having no time to cook or exercise; being too stressed out, having family members bring junk food home; not having anyone to exercise with, or feeling awkward exercising; and feel hungry all the time."

Sound familiar? These are real challenges but they can be overcome. Let our staff help you through these struggles and develop a lifestyle that you can stick to!

-Tricia Foley, MS, RD, CLT

Source: <http://www.livescience.com/39032-lifestyle-changes-trump-diet-losing-weight.html>