

A Personal Trainer's Checklist For Successful Weight Loss

By: Kathy Duncan

Personal Trainers use a variety of motivational methods to encourage people to lose weight. One Trainer on a popular TV show uses humiliation. While there are a variety of methods, I prefer to motivate weight loss clients by encouraging them to visualize what they want, then pledging to be fully committed to making it happen.

There is no place for disturbed emotions in your quest to improve yourself. For example, to want to be thin because your X Husband's new girlfriend is thin, is centered around too much negative emotion. You should be passionate about your success, but not vindictive.

In my experience as a Personal Trainer, I have worked with numerous populations including youth, military, celebrity, pro athlete, geriatric, and a bit of everything else. I have found that there are behaviors to be encouraged, and some to be avoided in order for living beings to achieve success, and there appears to be uniformity across populations. People need encouragement and they enjoy rewards. Rewards come in how you feel when you achieve success, not in cupcakes.

Some of my suggestions may make people think that I am too easy on clients, however, I believe that each individual needs to find whatever positive method of thinking, eating, and self care that they can live with, and will ultimately lead to success. We each have individualized stressors that have caused us to become over weight and out of shape. We need to deal with or remove those stressors to back out of the excess weight the same way that we gained it. It helps to set realistic goals, and then examine the requirements to achieve those goals. Here are some suggestions;

Do what you can to get your head into it. Whatever you can do to visualize the joy that you will feel when you find success, try to picture that joy. Again, don't do it so that you will look better than your X's new partner, do it so that you will feel proud of yourself while becoming healthier. Many people carry extra weight specifically because of emotional relationships, so you must make this journey about yourself and your body, about your personal joy and success, and not about hurt feelings. Surround yourself with positive and supportive people. You will share great joy as you pass each milestone. This personal joy feels better than pie tastes. Believe it.

Pretend as though this is the first time that you have attempted to improve your life through better nutrition and a more active lifestyle. Leave all past attempts behind, and try to avoid the words "diet" and "failure." Find a new eating plan. If you have never counted calories, I recommend that you try it at this time. Choose something that you believe will work for you. Of course, you must maintain a nutritional balance. You cannot be healthy and successful by going on a ridiculous diet. Eating only pineapples, or ice cream, or peanut butter might shock your body into dropping a few pounds, but when you "cheat" and have some bacon or butter along

with it, you're in worse shape than if you had stayed on the bad track that you were already on! I recommend the standard food pyramid, ... Easy on the grains.

Find new ways to love, comfort, and reward yourself. When you lose any small amount of weight that affects how your clothes look on you, buy something new. If you plan on losing a lot of weight, shop at the thrift store, and consign your new items when you outgrow them. You won't spend much, and you will always have a new look including positive changes.

Learn about exercise. Be sure to check with your doctor and any medications that you are taking before you start an exercise program. Consult with a Personal Trainer, or find whatever you feel comfortable doing. If you feel more comfortable keeping your body under cover until you lose the first several pounds, that is okay. A large number of people who try to lose weight, drop out before they reach their goal, so you should focus on success, however you can make it work. There are many FitTV programs, DVD's, or public classes. Whatever you do, find something that works for you. Walking, any speed, any distance is always better than nothing.

Make a deal with yourself that you will park farther away from the store and walk a part of the way. There are many occasions during the day where you can use your body rather than your car. Yes, you have the time. No, it's not too windy to walk. These are the excuses that you use, but they're not valid. Rather than treat them as hassles and excuses, use them as reasons to celebrate successes. You can purchase a pedometer for only a few dollars, and you might be shocked at what a difference you can make in your calorie expenditure. This small change will surely change your body size.

If it is your choice to buy a bike or treadmill to use in the privacy of your own home, I would suggest doing that. Remember, this time it is about success, so you must not buy a piece of equipment only to let it die in the garage. This is why I recommend consulting with a Personal Trainer before you begin. An experienced Trainer can help you to try out the different cardio machines and how comfortable that you are on each one. Certain back problems or knee problems can determine if you will be more comfortable on a treadmill or stationary bike, which could affect if you stay with it or not.

Ultimately, weight loss comes from more calories burned than consumed. If certain foods are a problem for you, count calories and become accountable for them. You will be amazed at how many calories you might consume in pasta or nuts that you are assuming are "good for you." You will also witness how quickly one piece of pepperoni pizza can consume your daily calorie allotment.

Avoid events or people that are emotionally upsetting. If you have the choice, and can avoid a holiday with the relatives, do it. In the long haul, you will need to learn that these people are only triggers that cause YOU to behave irrationally by over eating, but they cannot control your

behavior. Again, that is an excuse that you use. This is about your own health, not how other people act.

As you begin to feel stronger, push harder, raise the bar, and achieve even better results! Think positively. Picture how great you will look in your new clothes. Feel joyful about your good health. This is about how you feel, and now is the time for you to get started.