

Ready, Set...Slow!

By Debi Silber, MS, RD, WHC The Mojo Coach®

When it comes to lasting weight loss, slow and steady wins the race. Although many people take on the latest diet program, quick fix or promise of immediate results, most only find themselves right back where they started in a relatively short period of time. In fact, most people not only gain back what they lost, but gain the weight plus more leaving them more discouraged and frustrated with each attempt. Why do we continue to put our time, effort and energy into the “quick fix” and why doesn’t it work?

Dieting doesn’t work for many reasons. The first reason is that anything drastic is temporary. If we can’t comfortably work it into our day, our routine, our lifestyles and our lives whatever we take on isn’t likely to continue. We may be able to commit to an overhaul in food choices or eating behaviors for a while but when confronted with something that triggers us to overeat or abandon our best efforts, we will immediately go back to what is familiar and comfortable.

What is familiar and comfortable? Our habits, whether they’re good or bad they’re what we’re comfortable with. That’s why when we want to lose weight those habits, which caused the weight gain, must be changed. We’ve all heard the saying “habits are hard to break” and because that’s true, we need to break the ones that don’t work for us slowly and steadily. So how do we break the habits which lead us to gain weight?

One thing we need to look at is our “diet mentality.” For many moms, we’re either on or off a diet at any given time. If we have that “all or nothing” or “black or white” behavior when it comes to weight loss, there’s no room for error and no way to recover from simply falling off track. If the only road to weight loss doesn’t allow for some imperfection, we may need to consider just how realistic it is. Life throws us some curveballs from time to time, that’s a given. How we handle those curveballs may require some adjustments to our eating plan. If our eating plan doesn’t allow for those adjustments, where does that leave us?

It takes us right off our diet. Angry, frustrated and discouraged, we revert right back to what is so deeply ingrained within us. For many moms, here’s where the negative self talk takes us even further away from believing weight loss success is possible as we berate ourselves with every bite of foods we’ve sworn off for good. So, if this sounds so familiar and you’ve had enough of “yo-yo dieting”, weight cycling and diet behavior, what can you do?

The first thing to do is to understand that each time you diet, you chip away at your confidence and belief in your ability that you can lose weight. The more you chip away at that confidence, the less you trust yourself and the more powerless you become. The next concept to understand that although it doesn't sound as appealing as a "miracle cure" or "immediate solution", weight loss is a journey. The more you discover why you gained the weight as well as understanding that habits can and need to be changed, the more weight loss success you'll have.

The third concept to focus on is that each habit you change serves as a stepping-stone to greater confidence, trust and belief in yourself. When we isolate a habit we want to change, put our efforts into finding a solution to turn that habit into one that better suits us, we feel proud and happy with our ability to take control of our eating and our behavior. That simply feels good and enables us to see that our choices and decisions are within our control. It brings about a feeling of strength and empowerment as well as increases our confidence and self esteem.

When we feel confident, strong and empowered, we're proud of ourselves and realize that anything is within our grasp. While it may be more exciting to believe that huge efforts bring huge results, when it comes to weight loss, the greatest results are found by making the most minimal...but consistent changes.



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