



## **Session 20: Balance Your Thoughts**

Changing your old lifestyle habits is hard. However, you have already learned that it is possible. In addition, many of you comment on all the positive things that have come from simply learning about yourself as you change eating and activity behaviors.

Let's take some time to reflect on what you have learned about yourself so far in GLB.

### **Eating behaviors**

- I am most proud of these changes in my eating behavior:

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- Here are the positive things I have noticed:

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### **Physical activity behaviors**

- I am most proud of these changes in my activity behavior:

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- Here are the positive things I have noticed:

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What impact has making these healthy lifestyle changes had on your life, family, friends or community?

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## My Reasons for Behavior Change

What are the top 5 reasons for making healthy changes that are most important to you right now.

<b>Why I want to keep working on my healthy lifestyle behavior changes</b>	
I want to look in the mirror and feel OK.	
I want to look better to others.	
I want to be able to wear a smaller size.	
I want to be able to shop for clothes with ease.	
I want to stop dwelling on how others view me.	
I want to hear compliments on my appearance.	
I want to prevent physical illness and disease.	
I want to be comfortably active.	
I want to live longer.	
I want to have more energy.	
I want to be fit.	
I want to wake up in the morning and feel healthier.	
I want to like myself more.	
I want to feel more in charge of my life.	
I want to feel as if I've accomplished something important.	
I want to feel self-confident.	
I want to stop saying negative things to myself.	
I want to feel happier in social situations.	
I want to do more and different kinds of activities.	
I want my family to be proud of me.	
I want to be able to be more assertive.	
I want to eat with others and feel comfortable.	
I want to stop being nagged about my weight.	
Other reasons:	



## **Do Your Thinking Patterns Help or Hurt Your Lifestyle Progress?**

Earlier in GLB we asked you to “listen” to the kinds of things you say to yourself as you work on building healthier habits.

We hope some of these self-statements are positive. We want you to give yourself credit for small changes in the right direction.

### **What are some positive self-statements you make about your:**

Eating behaviors

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Activity behaviors

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Weight

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Overall, have you noticed any changes in your thinking about healthy eating, physical activity, and weight management?

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Self-defeating thoughts are also a normal part of lifestyle change, but they get in the way of your lifestyle progress. Do you struggle with self-defeating thoughts? What are they?

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Here are some common self-defeating thoughts with helpful ways you can respond to them and move toward lifestyle balance:

<b>Self-Defeating Thoughts</b>	<b>Example</b>	<b>Helpful Response</b>
All-or-nothing thinking	<i>Either I'm perfect on my eating and activity plan or I've completely failed.</i>	Making a mistake is definitely not the same as failure.
Jumping to conclusions	<i>Since I ate chocolate today, reaching my healthy eating goal is impossible.</i>	I don't have to be perfect. I make healthy food choices most of the time.
Negative fortune-telling	<i>I won't be able to resist the desserts at the party.</i>	No one will force me to eat. I need to prepare myself in advance.
Discounting the positive	<i>I only walked for 100 minutes this week. I deserve credit only if I reach my activity goal.</i>	I deserve credit for every positive action that I take.
Emotional reasoning	<i>Since I feel so hopeless about reaching my goals, it really must be hopeless.</i>	Everyone gets discouraged from time to time. My goals are unreachable <u>only</u> if I decide to give up.
Labeling	<i>I'm a failure for overeating or skipping my walk today.</i>	Of course I'm not a failure. I reach my goals most weeks.
Mythologizing	<i>If I eat standing up, it doesn't count.</i>	A calorie is a calorie, no matter how I consume it.
Excuses & Rationalizations	<i>It's okay to sit and stare at the TV all night because I'm so stressed out.</i>	I need to find healthier ways to cope with my problems.
Exaggeration	<i>I'm totally out of control with my eating and lack of activity.</i>	I may have strayed from my plan, but I can start following my program again right away.



## Excuses and Rationalizations

Some thoughts give you permission to steer away from your healthy lifestyle goals and plans. These thoughts often have a kernel of truth to them at the time. They also give you permission to stray.

Have you heard yourself saying any of these things?

### It's okay to stray because...

- \_\_\_ It's just one little piece.
- \_\_\_ It's not *that* fattening.
- \_\_\_ I'll just eat less later today.
- \_\_\_ It won't matter in the long run.
- \_\_\_ It'll go to waste if I don't eat it.
- \_\_\_ I'll disappoint someone if I don't eat it.
- \_\_\_ Everyone else is eating it too.
- \_\_\_ I worked out today.
- \_\_\_ I'm tired and deserve to rest.
- \_\_\_ No one will see me eating it.
- \_\_\_ It's free.
- \_\_\_ It's a special occasion.
- \_\_\_ I'm upset, and I just don't care.
- \_\_\_ I'm craving it.
- \_\_\_ I'll probably just eat it eventually.
- \_\_\_ I want to get my money's worth.
- \_\_\_ I'll exercise tomorrow.
- \_\_\_ People are depending on me right now.

Your own excuses:

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A healthier response:

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What are the specific situations in which you are most likely to give yourself permission to stray from your healthy eating or physical activity plans?

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What is going through your mind?

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Your goal is to keep working towards balance with a new, healthier self-statement. Examples:

“Even though I had a bad day and crave a sweet, I will eat an apple instead of this candy bar because I want to stay on track to reach my goals”.

“Yes, I am tired but I will feel so much better after I take a walk”.

When you give yourself permission to stray  
you strengthen your old habits.

This makes its more likely that you will give in again in the future.

**However....**

When you respond in a healthier way,  
you break your old negative cycle.

You also strengthen your new habit of self-control.



## Do You Give Yourself Credit?

Do you tend to think mostly about the things you have done wrong with your lifestyle program rather than everything you did well?

Do you ever pat yourself on the back for the healthy lifestyle behaviors you did well? Focusing only on your mistakes, without paying attention to your successes, may cause you to feel weak or hopeless when you “slip”.

To counter feeling discouraged or defeated, it is important to **give yourself credit for everything you do right.**

### **Give Yourself Credit:**

Starting today, record 1 or 2 healthy behaviors you do **right** each day.

List your credit-worthy behaviors and write down positive words or phrases to give yourself a pat on the back.

#### ***For example:***

I didn't take a second helping at the party. I'm in control.  
I walked for 30 minutes today. I feel terrific.  
I weighed myself today.

When you begin to give yourself credit every time you do something right, you get better at seeing that slips are just today's mistakes. They are not the end of your healthy lifestyle goals and plans.

**By giving yourself credit, you will reinforce your self-confidence and begin to realize that you are strong and in control.**

**The more you practice healthy restraint, the easier it becomes.**



## To Do:

**Check the boxes when you complete each item:**

### **The Basics:**

- Keep track of your weight.
- Record what you eat and drink using your preferred method. Come as close as you can to your calorie and fat gram goals.
- Record your physical activity using your preferred method. Come as close as you can to your activity goals.
  - Be physically active for at least 150 minutes per week.
  - Aim for an average of at least 50,000 steps per week.
  - Include resistance training at least 2 times per week.
- Sit less. Be aware of long periods of sitting and break them up. Keep moving throughout the day Keep moving throughout the day.

### **What's New:**

- Find the situations where you are most likely to give yourself permission to stray.
- Practice replacing self-defeating thoughts with positive ones.
- Give yourself credit. Write down 1 or 2 healthy lifestyle behaviors you do right each day.