

Session 12 Leader Guide: Ways to Stay Motivated

Objectives

In this session, the participants will:

- Review their progress since Session 9, and if not at goal, develop a plan to improve.
- Discuss the importance of motivation and ways to stay motivated.
- Discuss how to prevent stress and cope with unavoidable stress.
- Learn how to set new goals and determine ways to reward themselves for reaching goals.
- Discuss how Group Lifestyle Balance can be a source of stress and how to manage that stress.
- Make a plan for continuing to reach and maintain lifestyle goals as they transition to the next phase of Group Lifestyle Balance.
- Understand that although the frequency of GLB meetings is reduced, they will have continued contact and support.

To Do Before the Session:

- If providing Food and Activity books; give two per participant.
- Review Food and Activity records from last session; add comments.
- Prepare Session 12 handout for participant notebook.

Available in the GLB Providers Portal:

<https://www.diabetesprevention.pitt.edu/my/login.aspx>

- **Guidelines for Reviewing Food and Activity Records**

Group Sharing Time (allow at least 5 minutes)

The last session was “Make Social Cues Work for You.”

- Did you follow your actions plans for changing a problem social cue and adding a positive social cue? What went well? What could you do differently?
- Did you talk with anyone about how to give you the support you need? How did it go?

Let’s take a few minutes to talk about your experiences this past week. *[Choose only a few of the following prompts to guide discussion.]*

- Overall, how did it go last week? What went well? What problems did you have? What could you do differently?

- Were you able to stay close to your calorie and fat gram goals? Follow your plan for physical activity, including lifestyle activity? *[Remind participants to graph their activity if they have not yet done so.]*
- Did you wear your pedometer? Did you add steps in your day? How?

[Problem solve with the participants to address any barriers.]

[Praise all efforts to self-monitor and to change eating and activity behaviors. Be positive and nonjudgmental. Encourage group discussion.]

Progress Review (page 1)

In GLB we will sometimes pause and give you a chance to think about the changes you have made so far in your eating and activity behaviors. This allows you to celebrate the positive lifestyle changes you have made. It also allows you to think about your focus for the upcoming month.

First, let's take some time to review your progress since Session 9, which is the last time we formally looked at how you were doing.

First, **what changes have you made to be more active?** We've talked about increasing both structured/planned activity, the kind you've been recording, and spontaneous/unstructured activity, like taking the stairs instead of an elevator, that add more total movement to your day.

[Give the participants some time to briefly record on page 1 some of the changes they've made. Ask volunteers to share, if they feel comfortable doing so. Praise and encourage the maintenance of these changes.]

Now let's talk about the **changes you have made in your eating pattern.** Think about changes you have made to eat fewer calories and to make healthier food choices. *[Again, have participants briefly record some of the changes they've made. Ask volunteers to share, if they feel comfortable doing so. Praise and encourage the maintenance of these changes.]*

Now let's look at whether the scale is reflecting your healthy eating and activity behavior changes.

Look at your **Weekly Record.** Have you reached the GLB 7% weight loss goal? Check yes or no.

Are you on track with your personal weight loss goal? We talked about this in Session 9. Some people have the goal of losing 7% while others would like to continue losing until they reach a personal weight loss goal. We also talking about having a 5 pound range as your weight goal.

Now let's look at your physical activity. [*Participants should refer to the **How am I Doing?** graph.*]

- Have you reached the goal of 150 minutes of physical activity per week?
- Some people have the own personal activity goal. Are you on track with this goal? [*Ask for volunteers to share, if they feel comfortable doing so.*]

[*Emphasize that it's important for the participants to focus on their accomplishments so far, no matter how small. Express your confidence in the participants' potential for future success.*]

Lifestyle change is a process. Look at you progress toward reaching your goals. Do not expect perfection.

[*Be encouraging. Praise all small steps the participants have made so far.*]

Ways to Stay Motivated (pages 2-4)

Today we're going to talk about ways to stay motivated for the long term, to make healthy eating and being active last for a lifetime.

In programs like GLB, **motivation is crucial to maintaining healthy eating and physical activity for the long term.** But how to stay motivated is **one of the biggest problems people face.** It is normal for your healthy lifestyle motivation to ebb and flow. [*Note: Feel free to use your own analogies or metaphors for describing motivation. For example, "How you choose to divide your energy pie" or "Motivation is like a ball of energy that may get bigger or smaller depending on how well you are taking care of yourself."*]

One reason it's difficult to stay motivated is the fact that many people do well. This sounds ironic--your progress itself makes it hard to *maintain* that progress. But think back to when you first joined GLB. [*Tailor the following examples to the participants' experiences thus far in the program.*] You may have felt tired when you walked up stairs and that motivated you to become more active. Now that you're more active, you can climb stairs without difficulty. So that source of motivation (feeling tired when you climbed stairs) has decreased.

It's the same for weight. When you first came into GLB, your clothes may have been tight and that motivated you to lose weight. If your clothes are looser on you now, you may no longer have tight-fitting clothes as a source of motivation.

However, it *is* possible to stay motivated for the long term. There are several strategies that others have found helpful for staying positive, motivated, and willing to work on their healthy lifestyle behaviors. [*Review pages 2-4 and include the following:*]

1. Stay aware of the benefits you've achieved and hope to achieve.

Again, think back to when you first joined GLB. What did you hope to achieve?

[Ask participants to record their answers. Refer the participants back to Session 1, page 4, “Remember Your Purpose”, and ask them to review their answers. Ask volunteers to share.]

Have you reached these goals?

Have you received any benefits that you didn't expect?

What would you like to achieve during the next few months? Let's make a list and then you can review these when you need motivation. *[Give participants time to record their answers. Ask volunteers to share.]*

2. Recognize your successes.

- What changes in your eating and activity habits do you feel proudest of?
- What has been easier than you thought it would be?
- What has been harder than you thought it would be?

When you are feeling low on motivation, think about all of these positive changes and give yourself credit for them. Try not to lose the momentum you have gained so far.

3. Keep visible signs of your progress. Here are some options to consider. Think about which ones might work best for you.

- **Keep weight and physical activity graphs where you can see them.** Not only will it keep you aware of your progress, but others may take note and congratulate you for your movement in the right direction.
- **Mark your activity milestones on a map toward a particular goal.** For example, create a simple map of the number of miles it would take to walk to a favorite vacation spot or a favorite city. Mark milestones along the way. For example, the halfway point, cities you pass, etc.
- **Measure yourself at monthly intervals.** Keep track of your progress in terms of specific measurements (for example, waist circumference or the number of holes on your belt).
- What are some other concrete ways that would help to keep you motivated?

4. Do you need to vary your routine?

We've talked before about how to “jump start” your activity plan.

- Have you added some variety to keep from being bored with staying active?
- Have you noticed any difference in how you feel about being active?

The same thing may be true with eating. If you have grown tired of using the same low calorie salad dressing every night, experiment with some new products. Consider trying new recipes and restaurants. If you are the kind of person who has a desire to be more creative there are many magazines and websites that provide an outlet to explore new, healthy meals.

On the other hand, if you are the kind of person who is comfortable with “routine eating” and simply do not require that much variation in your breakfast, lunch and dinner, that is perfectly fine too. Some people report doing better, over time, with structured meals and minimal variety, others do not. What is important is to get to know who you are and plan accordingly.

Are there meals, snacks, or particular foods that you are feeling the need to add variety?

[Ask participants to record their ideas on page 3 and to share their responses. Choose a few examples from the box below to prompt discussion.]

- Make one night a week an “ethnic night,” “soup night,” or “vegetarian night.”
- If you eat out often, plan more meals at home.
- If you eat at home often, plan more meals out. (Have you stopped eating out because you’re trying to lose weight? Has this left you feeling restricted and deprived? Have you stopped inviting friends over to eat or accepting invitations to eat at their homes? Don’t deny yourself the pleasure of social eating. Instead, make a plan for how to handle these times, then try your plan, and see how it works. You may make a few mistakes at first, but it’s important to know that you **can** eat out and still eat healthy, as we discussed in Session 10.)
- Share food preparation and dining with others as a way to relax. Invite people over to prepare dinner together. Cook with your children and spouse.
- Plan potluck dinners around a certain theme and share the best recipes as a group.
- You may want to subscribe to a magazine that includes healthy recipes.
- Or take a class to learn how to cook, at least the basics.

[If participants express interest in learning more about a specific topic such as ethnic cooking or vegetarian eating, address it briefly here and if possible, direct them to where to find books and/or courses on these topics. They may also ask about healthy meal kit home delivery services. Encourage discussion.]

[Emphasize the “bottom line” message at the bottom of the page.]

5. Create some friendly competition (page 4)

Ask a friend or relative to enter into a friendly competition with you. This should be the **kind of competition in which you both win**. Example: If you and your friend both meet your activity goal every week for a month, at the end of the month how will you reward yourselves?

Or compete with yourself. See how many days in a row you can be active for at least 10-15 minutes. Try to beat yourself. For example, if last month you were active for seven days in a row, see if you can do more days this month.

6. Use others to help you stay motivated.

If you notice that your motivation is dropping, talk with someone who is supportive. Has anyone done this? How did it go?

Everyone has trouble staying motivated sometimes, and we can encourage each other through the tough times. How can you use the group to stay motivated?

We're going to talk in more detail about the last two ways to stay motivated: manage stress and set new goals.

Manage Stress (page 5)

[Review page 5 and include the following:]

Stress is a natural part of living. Most people can manage to live a healthy lifestyle even with some amount of stress.

Any change, good or bad, big or small, can cause stress. Big changes or events in our life can cause stress such as getting married, a serious illness, or changing jobs. Small events like losing your keys, having a birthday, having a flat tire, or needing to get your errands done before picking up your children can also cause stress.

Why are we talking about stress in GLB? Because **many people react to stress by making unhealthy changes in their eating and activity habits.** Some people eat and drink too much as a way to deal with stress. Others may stop eating. Some people become very inactive and withdrawn.

Please take a few minutes and jot down your answers to the three questions at the top of the page. *[Give participants time to record their answers. Ask volunteers to share.]*

Discuss one or two situations that are common to the group (such as being under a deadline at work, being faced with unexpected responsibilities such as a sick child or car repair). Ask how the participants feel or react in such situations. Based on the responses, point out any physical and emotional symptoms (headache or muscle tension) and behavioral changes that might affect eating and activity.

- Do you get physical symptoms like a headache, stomach ache, or muscle tension?
- Do you change your behaviors when you feel stressed?
- Do you eat more when you are stressed?
- Do you change the kinds of food you eat?
- Do you change how active you are or the kind of physical activities you do?

An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure, and this is certainly true when it comes

to stress. The best approach is to **prevent stressful situations whenever you can**. Here are some ideas to help prevent or manage stress:

- **Practice saying, “No.”**

Practice saying “No” when someone else asks you to do something you don’t want to do. Say “Yes” only when it is important to you.

Saying “No” can be hard. It causes some tension or stress. But that stress is usually short-lived. If you say “Yes,” you may have hours, weeks, or months stress as you do whatever you agreed to do.

- **Share some of your work with others.**

This is important to do both at home and at work. Delegate what you can to someone else. For example, your spouse and children might be able to help clean the house, cut the lawn, shop for food, prepare meals, and do laundry. A co-worker might be able to help you with an overwhelming project at work.

Sharing work doesn’t mean you’re being irresponsible. Giving responsibility to others, even if they aren’t as experienced as you, gives them a chance to learn, participate, and gain experience. One warning: Don’t expect them to be perfect. Criticizing the efforts of others who are trying to help can be another source of stress. Instead, support them for their efforts and be patient as they gain skills.

- **Set goals you can reach.**

Sometimes we create our own stress by trying to be perfect. If you set reasonable goals, you are more likely to succeed. When you succeed, you are less likely to feel stressed. Remember, we talked about this when we discussed negative thoughts--if you try to be perfect, you probably won’t succeed.

Periodically, take a good look at the demands you are placing on yourself. Ask yourself, “Am I expecting myself to do more than anyone could possibly do?”

- **Take charge of your time.**

Make schedules with the real world in mind. Don’t try to accomplish in 30 minutes what realistically will take an hour. Take a good look at your to-do list, eliminate what isn’t essential, and give yourself a realistic amount of time to accomplish the rest.

Get organized. Chaos is very stressful. It’s also inefficient. Devote some time every day to getting organized, and you will save time and stress in the long run.

- **Use the steps for solving problems.**

If changing your eating and activity habits is causing stress, take action. Use the steps to solving a problem that we discussed in an earlier session. Discuss it with your family or friends if they are involved.

Continue the problem-solving process until you find a solution. Sitting on problems can cause even more stress. Solve them instead and move on.

- **Plan ahead.**

Think about what kind of situations are stressful for you. These are times when you are at high risk, so plan ahead for how to handle them or work around them.

For example, are holidays especially stressful for you? If so, plan some ways to make your life easier during the holidays. Examples: Buy frozen meals to have on hand for busy days. Decide what parts of decorating the house are not essential to you and spend that time relaxing instead.

- **Keep things in perspective. Remember your purpose.** Maintain a positive attitude.

- **Reach out to people.**

At our last group meeting we talked about social support and that research shows that people are better able to reach their eating and activity goals if they have some type of social support in place.

Think about who you can turn to for support. **Ask supportive people to help** when you are overwhelmed or need someone to encourage you.

- **Be physically active.**

Many people find that being active helps them cope with stress and feel more relaxed and able to manage stressful situations more smoothly. Have you noticed that being physically active helps you manage stress? [*Ask participants to share their experiences. Encourage group discussion.*]

Do you see how stress management builds on all the behavior change ideas you have been learning so far?

When You Can't Avoid Stress (page 6)

What about the times when you can't avoid stress? [*Review page 6 and include the following:*]

First, catch yourself feeling stressed as early as you can.

We talked before about action or behavior chains and that it's important to try to break them as early as possible. The same is true of stress. If you learn to recognize the signs of stress and catch yourself early in the process, you may have a chance to avoid some of the harmful consequences such as overeating or being inactive.

Do you have any signs when you are getting stressed? When you first notice the signs you are getting stressed...

Take a 10-minute "time out."

Develop a new habit of responding to stress with a “time out”--stop what you are doing and take a few minutes for **yourself**. Do whatever you find helpful that doesn’t involve food. Examples:

- **Move those muscles.** Research has shown that being active relieves tension, reduces anxiety, and counters depression. So, when you notice yourself feeling stressed, make yourself go out for a 10 or 15-minute brisk walk. Or get on your exercise bike and pump for 10 minutes. The distraction and breathing can do a lot to make you feel better.
- **Pamper yourself.** Take a bath. Manicure your nails. Massage your feet. Read a magazine or watch sports. **Just take out 10 minutes for YOURSELF.**
- **Breathe.** Our breathing may become when we are under stress, which creates more tension in the body and mind. So, when you catch yourself feeling stressed, try this:
Take a full, deep breath. Count to five. Then let go of your breath slowly. Let the muscles in your face, arms, legs, and body go completely loose.

We understand that **GLB and the lifestyle changes we recommend may cause stress**. Changing your behaviors and helping your family to make related changes can create pressure and tension.

Here are some possible ways GLB may cause stress and some examples of how to manage that stress.

[Note that some of the possible sources of stress may not apply to every participant. For example, a participant’s family may enjoy low-calorie foods. Do not allow the discussion to become negative. The goal is to help participants feel able to cope in the face of stress.]

Set New Goals for Yourself (page 7)

The final suggestion for ways to manage stress is to **Set new goals for yourself, and find ways to reward yourself when you meet each goal.**

The **goal** should be **specific and short-term** (“I will not eat any potato chips this week”). It should also be something that’s not too easy or too hard (something that will present **“just enough” of a challenge** for you that you will be able to do it and will also feel that you’ve accomplished something).

The **reward** should be **something that you will do or buy if and only if you reach your goal**. The reward doesn’t need to be fancy or cost a lot of money. It can be something that you normally enjoy doing (like reading the paper or taking a hot bath) with the difference being that you will do it *only if* you reach your goal. For example, “After I finish this walk, I’ll call my friend and chat.” Then, if you need a boost to keep you going during your walk, you can think about what you’ll talk about on the phone with your friend.

What are some non-food ways you can reward yourself for reaching a goal?

[Ask participants to record their ideas, such as: Buy myself fresh flowers, treat myself to a manicure or massage, get tickets to a sporting event, set money aside for something special you want to buy or do. Ask volunteers to share.]

What's Your Pleasure? (pages 8-10)

When you feel discouraged... Remember, it takes time to change. You deserve to be good to yourself for all of the efforts you make.

What are three things you enjoy doing but rarely do? Choose things that aren't related to food and that are within the realm of possibility. See pages 9 and 10 for ideas.

Try and schedule the pleasures you've chosen into your life. Make appointments with yourself. Follow through with your plan...no matter how odd it feels.

Treat your appointments with yourself as seriously as you would those with someone else you care about.

What is Your Purpose Now? (pages 11-13)

You have been making changes in your eating and activity behaviors for about three months. You deserve credit for the changes you have made, no matter how small. It's a challenge to change eating and activity habits, and every step along the way is a reason to celebrate.

First, you will need to keep in mind **why reaching and staying at a healthy weight and being active are important to you.** *[Ask participants to write their answer and to share, if comfortable doing do.]*

Is your purpose the same as when you started GLB? Has it grown or changed in any way? *[Ask participants to write their answer and to share, if comfortable doing do.]*

Our sessions will be less frequent but ongoing. It is important to consider your longer term goals for activity, weight, and self-monitoring. This is a good time to revisit and recommit to your lifestyle goals.

[Review pages 11-12 and include the following:]

My Weight Goal

[Allow time for participants to select their weight goal and if their focus will be on weight loss or weight loss maintenance.]

[Encourage participants to continue to weigh themselves at least once a week.]

My Physical Activity Goals (page 12)

[Allow time for participants to select their physical activity goal and if their focus for the next month. Encourage participants to continue to strive to reach and maintain at least 150 minutes per week of moderate physical activity. Also encourage them to wear their pedometer daily and to find ways to add more steps.]

My Self-Monitoring Goals

Research demonstrates that it's important to **keep track of your weight, eating and activity.**

It's common to "drift" away from new habits. You may gradually make small changes in your eating and activity over a long period of time, and not even be aware that you are slowly going back to your old habits. The best way to prevent this and stay in control is to continue to self-monitor. Keeping track will help you catch changes before they sneak up on you.

*[Review page 13, **How I Will Keep Track**. Participants should choose and commit to the Gold, Silver, or Bronze level of self-monitoring.]*

Some of you may enjoy tracking your weight, activity minutes, and steps in a way that lets you see the month as a whole. The **Group Lifestyle Balance™ Monthly Calendar**, on page 16, is an option for self-monitoring. *[Announce that you will provide additional copies of this calendar at each session.]*

To Do (page 14)

Turn to page 14 and let's focus on what you can do between now and the next session.

Please continue to keep track of your weight, eating, activity minutes, and steps. Come as close as you can to your calorie, fat gram, activity, and step goals.

New things to practice:

- Try one way to stay motivated that you think would be most helpful to you right now (see pages 2-4). Choose something that is very likely to work and that you can do.
- Take steps to connect with others who support your lifestyle goals. *[Ask participants to share their "first step", if comfortable doing so.]*
Try three things you enjoy but rarely do. Schedule these pleasures and do them. You can share your experience/feedback next week.
- Remember your purpose. Commit to following your lifestyle goals for weight, activity, and self-monitoring.

[Announce the day, time, and place for the next session. Ask participants to wear comfortable clothes because we will be doing some exercises.]

[Review the schedule of classes for the remainder of the year with the participants. Emphasize the importance of continuing to attend the GLB sessions.]

You have gained important self-management strategies that will serve you well. Your motivation may ebb and flow, but the learning tools will help you each time you pick them up. As we continue in GLB, we will be revisiting these basic strategies and learning new ones to help keep everyone on track over the long run. I look forward to seeing you soon!

After the session:

- Weigh participants who did not do so prior to the group meeting.
- Complete data forms and documentation required in your setting.
- Follow your program's protocol for managing absences.
- Review the self-monitoring records from the previous week. Write brief comments. Be positive and nonjudgmental.
 - Praise all efforts to self-monitor and to change eating and activity behaviors.
 - Highlight especially any positive changes made that relate to the session topic of the week before the records were collected: making social cues work for them, adding steps, coming close to their calorie, fat gram, activity, and step goals.
 - Refer to **Guidelines for Reviewing Food and Activity Records** available in the GLB Providers Portal.