**Day 35**

**Title: Six Strategies to Deal with Special Situations**

Achieving a healthy lifestyle is no cakewalk. It takes resources, time and sacrifice. However, it is worth the effort. What you do on a daily basis dictates overall health. The journey to a healthy lifestyle is full of new experiences that can be challenging at times. Preparing for those obstacles can help you stay on track for the long haul. Push beyond the barriers with these 6 strategies to deal with special situations.

**Situation 1: The daily grind**

Working long hours or in a fast paced environment can lead to meal skipping, missing workouts, and high levels of stress. Stress can lead to poor eating habits. Commence the viscous cycle. Workplace temptations vary from that co-worker who makes delicious brownies to vending machines filled with sweet, chewy, or salty, fat-laden snacks.

Action: Prioritize workplace meals. It’s not only important to fill your stomach to satisfy hunger. Taking regular breaks can help you be more productive and creative at work.

**Situation 2: Traveling for work**

Travel is one of the most disruptive events to a healthy lifestyle. Flight delays, poor food choices at the airport, long work days, and less control over meals at conferences or abroad make maintaining a healthy lifestyle a challenge.

Action: Before your next extended trip, book a hotel with a refrigerator in the room and one that has a fitness center or safe walking/running routes nearby.

**Situation 3: Hitting the road**

There’s nothing like a road trip with friends or family. You have the music going, conversation flowing and the obligatory gas station stop waiting to tempt you. What do you do? Luckily, convenience stores have healthy options these days. Look for a bag of nuts, packet of olives, dried fruit, bottled water, or the fresh fruit near the checkout counter.

Action: Take some healthy snacks with you. It will save you cash and calories.

**Situation 4: Cookouts, parties, and more**

These are made for overeating and drinking. But you don’t have to give in. Survey the food options before you pick up a plate. Eat your vegetables first. Check out the veggie tray, salad, or grilled vegetable kabobs that are almost always available. And go easy on alcohol. Sip slowly and drink water after your first drink instead of going up for another one.

Action:Enjoy the party – maybe even dance a bit. Focus on the people and leave filled with laughter, not stuffed with food regret.

**Situation 5: Emotional eating**

Most of us eat for emotional reasons at one time or another. You may eat because you’re sad, bored, or stressed, and sometimes when you’re happy. Food is so deeply woven into our culture that you’ll see it coming and going. This can be difficult for anyone who seeks comfort with food.

Action: Before you take a bite, take a moment to assess whether or not you are actually hungry. If not, figure out what’s eating you and deal with that before you do the chips.

**Situation 6: Unsupportive people**

Is there a Debbie Downer or Sad Sam in your life who always seems to have something negative to say about your weight or attempts at healthy eating? We all know them. The good news is that other people can’t control what you eat, your progress, or how you feel about yourself unless you let them. It can be especially difficult if the unsupportive person is a family member.

Find people who will support your health goals. Ideally this will be a family member or trusted friend. But if you don’t find success with those closest to you, go outside. There are many support groups online and offline. These communities can be helpful since members can empathize with you. They’ve been there. They can provide you with support that your slim sister may not be able to understand.

Action:Share your goals and ask for accountability from someone who will be in your corner.

**A final word**

This list tackles some of the most common barriers to healthy eating. The reality is sometimes the biggest barrier is you. Be nice to yourself. Celebrate the small daily wins. Did you eat more vegetables today than yesterday? Drink more water or walk an extra 500 steps? Track and review your achievements in a journal or literally give yourself gold stars. Save a dollar for every mini-milestone and treat yourself to a new gadget, spa day, or new pair of shoes!