

THE 28-DAY

SIZE DOWN

CHALLENGE™

Self-Reflection Week 1

The following Self Reflection worksheets will help you think your way to success each week of the 28-Day Size Down Challenge and beyond!

The Process of Change

We all know changing your lifestyle doesn't happen overnight. Rather, it's a process that occurs gradually over time. Throughout the 28 days of this program, you may feel differently about this process of change. Initially, you may be preoccupied with the program, talking and thinking about it, and filled with anxious anticipation. Next, you may feel awkward and somewhat panic stricken. Your life may feel chaotic as you let go of old "anchors" or ways of doing things (*example: eating high fat lunches at the deli*) and begin executing new healthy behaviors (*taking a 10-minute walk at lunch*). Finally, once you integrate the new behaviors into your life, you'll likely feel a growing sense of stability and calm.

Common Strategies for Resisting Change

During the change process, you may find there are times when you feel unable to embrace the new challenges - it's too stressful! Don't worry, you are not alone. Some common tactics we all use to resist changing follow. Most people have used these tactics at one time or another in their lives. Read each tactic and identify those strategies you have used in the past to resist changing, for example, your eating habits.

- **Delay:**

You procrastinate or forget the things you “really wanted to do.” For example, *“I really do want to take the low fat cooking class. I know it’ll help, but I just don’t have time. I’ll sign up next time.”*

- **Denial:**

You refuse to acknowledge an actual event or personal experience that is apparent to others. For example, *“I don’t eat a lot of desserts.” (You say as you finish your daily éclair at lunch.)*

- **Rationalizing:**

You conceal your feelings, thoughts, and actions by creating a set of reassuring or self-serving but incorrect explanations. For example, *“I can eat double dessert since I had a salad for lunch.”*

- **Avoidance:**

You behave in ways that prevent you from situations or people you experience as threatening. For example, *“I’m just too late for my office visit today. I’m not going to go.”*

Strategies for Overcoming Resistance

Negative, Pessimistic, Anxious Thoughts

Sometimes, people harbor negative, pessimistic, or anxious thoughts about the changes they are about to undertake. For example, *“This will be another fruitless attempt to manage my weight ... and I’m scared.”* For most people, talking about fears and concerns to a trusted person can help reduce the intensity of the fear and foster a more realistic perspective about the change process. Social support and aid from helpful others are powerful allies for overcoming negative, pessimistic, and anxious thoughts. Feel free to share yours others.

Lacking Necessary Skills or Knowledge

Deep down, some people believe that they don't have the needed skills or knowledge to change. For example, *"I don't know how to exercise ... I'll never be able to do this program."* Seeking out needed information and acquiring necessary skills can help you to face this challenge. The 28-Day Size Down Challenge program is designed to provide you with both the knowledge and skills necessary for successful weight management.

Payoffs for Unhealthy Behaviors

Sometimes, people maintain unhealthy behaviors because there are powerful rewards for doing so - like attention from others, immediate gratification of needs, or avoidance of work or stress. For example, eating large amounts of chocolate may fulfill the need to be treated special and takes away stressful feelings. Taking an honest look at what you gain from your unhealthy behavior can help you identify your needs and create healthier ways of meeting these needs.

(more, next page)

Your Assignment – Week 1

First, identify the resistance strategies you use. Using the information above, identify what triggers your resistance tactic. Next, use one of the strategies listed to overcome your resistance. Set small goals that you can achieve to launch yourself into action.

Trigger:

Goals:

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Self-Reflection Week 2

More About Change

As you know from Week 1, behavior modification is a process used for changing behavior. First, the behaviors you want to change are clearly identified as are the circumstances that support their continued occurrences. Second, a plan to change these circumstances is created and put into action.

Here's an activity to help you get started.

Getting Started

1. Identify a behavior you would like to change. *Example: I eat a donut every time I pick up my dry cleaning.*

2. Record what events and circumstances happen before or lead up to the behavior. *Example: I take a special route so the donut shop is on my way.*

3. Examine the consequences of the behavior to help you understand why you keep doing the behavior. *Example: When I eat the donut, my hunger goes away and it tastes good. I enjoy visiting with friends who are also at the donut shop.*

4. State your goals in a clear and precise manner. *Example: I don't want to stop to eat a donut at the donut shop every time I go to the dry cleaners.*

5. Develop an action plan by reviewing the tactics for changing the events and circumstances that typically precede the behavior (refer to number two) and identify strategies for change. This is called breaking the behavior "chain of events." *Example: I'll take a different route to the dry cleaners.*

6. Finally, after the change tactic has been successfully executed, identify and administer a non-food reward to congratulate yourself. *Example: a bubble bath, a new sweater, etc.*

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Self-Reflection Week 3

Self-Directed Change

With professional athletes, practice and good coaching help players master the “skills of the trade.” And the same is true for you. Making changes in your behavior requires practice and coaching, too. In this program, you’ll learn the skills of self-directed change. With these skills, you’ll be able to continue modifying and changing your behavior even after you’ve completed the 28-Day Size Down Challenge. There are three basic skills of self-directed change and you continue to cycle through these three stages until you achieve your goals.

1. Self-Monitoring

Self-monitoring is an activity where you observe those behaviors that you want to change. The behavior can be one that you currently do in excess and want to decrease (such as eating ice cream when you watch television). Or it can be one you currently aren’t doing frequently enough (such as exercising). To effectively self-monitor a behavior, it is important to record its frequency and duration.

2. Self-Evaluation

The process of self-evaluation involves comparing the results of your self-monitoring process to the goals that you would like to achieve.

3. Self-Reinforcement and Action Planning

Self-reinforcement is the process of reacting to the results of your self-evaluation.

Activity:

In the space below, list a behavior you want to change AND how you would like to change it. The behavior can be one you are doing too frequently (*Example: eating donuts every day at breakfast*) or not enough (*Example: "I'm not exercising enough ... I'd like to take a 15-minute walk at lunch."*)

Behavior:

Goal:

Step 1. Self-monitoring

Determine how you will monitor the behavior listed above. *(Example: in the case of eating too many donuts, you might choose to write down what you eat every morning.)*

Step 2. Self-evaluation

In the space below, note how frequently you executed the behavior and how this observation compared with your goal. *(Example: “I usually eat donuts five days out of the week. My goal is to take a walk instead of having a donut.”)*

Step 3. Self-reinforcement

Choose a non-food reward if you have reached your goal. If you did not achieve your initial goal, don't worry! Instead, apply the problem-solving process to develop a revised action plan.

Rewards:

Revised Action Plan:

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Self-Reflection Week 4

Problem Solving

During the 28-Day Size Down Challenge, you've probably run into situations that you wish you could have handled differently. Maybe you've been unable to keep from overeating when you've gone out to dinner. By using problem-solving skills, you may be able to meet this challenge.

The Problem-Solving Process

Attitude is a key to successful problem solving - instead of being overwhelmed by problems, embrace them as challenges and opportunities. The three basic steps of the problem solving process are described below along with an example. Under each step, additional space is provided so you can use the problem solving process to resolve or manage a problem you are having with your weight management efforts.

Problem-Solving Steps

1. Define the problem. *Example: "I consume too many calories when I go out to eat."*

2. Brainstorm a variety of solutions; select the best strategy. *Example: "I could ask for sauces/dressings to be on the side."*

3. Evaluate results and fine-tune the plan. *Example: "I'll keep a list of my favorite healthy dishes per restaurant in my purse for easy reference."*

4. Are you satisfied with your outcome? If not, go back to step two and select an alternative strategy.
