

Maintaining your momentum – keep up the good work!

Remember *The Little Engine That Could*? The words 'I think I can' helped a little train engine push herself to climb a mountain. When it seems too difficult to keep trying to complete a task or reach a goal, try these tips.

Be positive. Picture yourself reaching your goal, whether it is walking two miles at a time, eating a healthy salad every day, or fitting into an old pair of jeans. A mental image of what you want to accomplish can help give you the energy you need to succeed.

Keep it interesting. Are you tired of eating the same things (even though they are healthy)? Try something new! Step Ahead offers new recipes each week, and all the recipes are posted at www.stepaheadprogram.com. If you are bored with your walk or exercise routine, do something different. Your body will thank you.

Move ahead. When you have a weekend when you are too busy to exercise, or a meal where the chocolate cake is too tempting to pass up, just put it behind you and move on. Don't think of it as a setback. Maybe there is something you can learn from the experience that will help you the next time.

Do it together. Find someone to join you on walks, runs, or at the gym. Enjoy the company of your walking

buddy. Walk right past the desserts in the cafeteria with a friend! Be supportive of others as they work to reach their goals, and ask for their help in reaching yours. Support and companionship are proven ways to succeed.

Reward yourself. Celebrate when you reach your small goals on the way to your larger goals. Do something that's special to you: a day trip to a new or favorite spot, making time to catch up with a good friend, or even spending some time alone!

Learn from your experience. The more you do, be it exercise, healthier cooking, or monitoring your habits, the more you can learn and understand. Discover which tactics work well for you and which ones don't, and focus on what is effective.

Use the power of momentum. Momentum builds quickly and can lead to great results. Start a personal streak: How many weeks in a row can you complete three workouts? How many days can you weigh yourself and keep from gaining? How many days in a row can you substitute zero- or low-calorie beverages for soda or high-calorie drinks? Your streak can help carry you to your goal!

Some material by Zach Van Hart at www.sparkpeople.com

Recipe of the Week – Slow Cooker Barbecue Pulled Chicken Sandwich

Makes 8 Sandwiches – adapted from eatingwell.com

Save this and all the January recipes for your play-off parties!

- 1 8-ounce can reduced-sodium tomato sauce
- 1 4-ounce can chopped green chilies, drained
- 3 Tablespoons cider vinegar
- 2 Tablespoons honey
- 1 Tablespoon sweet or smoked paprika
- 1 Tablespoon tomato paste
- 1 Tablespoon Worcestershire sauce
- 2 teaspoons dry mustard
- 1 teaspoon ground chipotle chile (or Tabasco)
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 2 ½ pounds boneless, skinless chicken thighs, trimmed of fat
- 1 small onion, finely chopped
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 8 whole wheat hamburger buns

- Combine tomato sauce, chilies, vinegar, honey, paprika, tomato paste, Worcestershire sauce, mustard, ground chipotle and salt in a 6-quart slow cooker until smooth. Add chicken, onion and garlic, and stir.
- Put the lid on and cook on low till chicken can be pulled apart, about 5 hours. If desired, cook uncovered 15-20 minutes more, to reduce sauce volume.
- Transfer chicken to a cutting board and shred with a fork. Return chicken to sauce, stir well. Serve on whole wheat buns.

Nutrition Information (per sandwich):

Calories: 330	Fat: 9g
Saturated Fat: 3g	Carbohydrates: 27g
Fiber: 4g	Protein: 30g

Tip of the Week Play in the snow for fun and a good workout too. Make snow angels (214 calories burned per hour on average), have a snowball fight (319 calories burned per hour), or build a snowman (285 calories burned per hour).
-- From www.sparkpeople.com