



Secrets of Keeping Off the Weight You Lose

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New research on 3,000 long-term participants in the National Weight Control Registry gives insight into successful maintenance of weight loss. The dieters originally weighed an average of 224 pounds before they used these weight maintenance strategies:

- Eating breakfast regularly.
- Walking about an hour a day, or burning an equivalent amount of calories by engaging in other activities.
- Weighing yourself at least weekly.
- Tracking food intake.
- Counting calories and fat grams or using commercial weight-loss software to track intake.
- Limiting eating out to an average of three times a week including all meals, while consuming fast food less than once a week.
- Limiting food variety, mostly eating similar foods from week to week, and not splurging much on holidays and special occasions.
- Watching fewer than 10 hours a week of TV.

The successful dieters averaged about 1,800 calories a day, with less than 30% of those calories from fats.

National Weight Control Registry, 196 Richmond St., Providence, RI 02903, (800) 606-NWCR (6927), tmnwcr@lifespan.org, www.nwcr.ws.

If you regain the weight...

from "I Gained it All Back", www.fudiet.com by Dr. Sherry Pagoto

Try the 3 P's for starters....**Perspective**, **Post-Mortem**, and a **Plan**.

Perspective

1. Try your very hardest to *limit* your feelings of frustration, shame, and guilt. I'm not saying "don't have these feelings!" I'm saying have them for a short time, and then open a window and let them go. Yes, it is frustrating, BUT long-term habits are hard to create. Lapses are to be expected. Smokers try to quit an average of 7 or more times before they quit for good.
2. Recognize that regaining is PART of the process, and eventually will get smaller and smaller. You must keep pushing forward.
3. Think about all behaviors you changed during your weight loss effort. Even if you regained the weight, it is unlikely that your lifestyle has completely reverted to what it once was. You *have* made progress. Acknowledge the progress in your diet and physical activity that you have made and sustained.
4. Brush yourself off. Take a deep breath. It's going to be ok.



Post-Mortem

Ok, Dr. Phil, we're ready for our autopsy. Put on your rubber gloves, this might get messy. What happened? Answer these questions:

1. What happened in objective terms? ("I am lazy and I have no will power" is not objective). Give the who, what, where, when, and how. Leave out the judgments and adjectives, stick to the facts. Judgments lead to negative feelings, and negative feelings are lousy motivators.
2. Which of your lifestyle changes started to slip away? And over what period of time?
3. What life events coincided with the changes? How did they affect you?
4. Why was it difficult, what were the challenges to keeping up your diet and exercise?
5. How did you handle the challenges? What did you do well? What did you wish you did better?

Plan

What is the plan? A good post-mortem (no judgments!) really lends to a plan. A good plan will involve:

1. **Re-engaging your supports.** Who was helpful to you before? How can you get support from those people again? Never had very supportive people? Might be time to find a buddy.
2. **Avoid judgmental people.** It is hard enough not to judge yourself, being around judgmental people only makes matters worse. While you have the window open, throw these people out of it.
3. **Start Somewhere, Anywhere, Just Start.** What is the *first thing* you can do to get back on track? To get started, pick something that you feel is relatively easy to do, and build it up from there.
4. **Dig up old diet diaries** to reacquaint yourself with how you used to eat when you were in the zone.
5. **Start keeping a diet diary** as soon as possible. This is a great way to reign yourself in. You may not be as far off as you think.
6. **Know Your Weaknesses.** They will find you! Jot down your top 3 challenges and keep that list somewhere you can see it. The only way to get a different outcome is to not be overcome by the same challenges.
7. **Move Forward. Always.** The key is to always keep moving. Don't stop. Keep pushing forward, you will get there.

There is no time like **right now** to dust off that treadmill and get back on track....