

7 Key Steps to Losing Weight

Weight Watchers.com

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You have to believe in yourself to attain your weight-loss goals. Get strategies on how to stay focused.

When trying to lose weight, believing in your goals and having a positive attitude can be as important as improving your diet and being active. If you have a plan to keep yourself motivated while you're losing weight, you stand a better chance of succeeding.

"People struggling to lose weight often talk about their lack of willpower, as if willpower is something that you are either born with, or not," says Palma Posillico, vice president of training and development for Weight Watchers International. "Losing weight is all about 'wantpower'— about recognizing that you already have all the resources you need to get what you want."

These resources include knowing what you want, knowing how to get it and knowing how to keep yourself motivated along the way. Here are some strategies to help you discover all three and reach your weight-loss goals.

1. Plot out your goals.

It helps to have an action plan to keep you on track. "Storyboarding" is a technique used by movie directors to sketch out a plotline, frame by frame, before they start filming. In a similar way, you can make a blueprint for success by breaking your goal down into parts. Say you've given yourself three months to lose 10 pounds. Make a chart of the timeline and build it up, week by week, with details of shopping strategies, exercise tips and so forth— anything that helps make your goal concrete and achievable.

2. Envision your success.

Athletes mentally rehearse every step of their winning routine to make it feel attainable. In the same way, you can make your own goals as real as possible by visualizing yourself succeeding in particular scenarios, like making the right choices when dining out. Revisit these scenarios often, and think about how good you'll feel about achieving your goals.

3. Don't sabotage yourself.

Many of us unconsciously sabotage ourselves with self-destructive thoughts such as "I'll never lose weight." Whenever you catch yourself thinking this way, try to substitute more constructive statements; for example, "I haven't lost as much weight as I would like, but I can change that. I'm going to start by setting aside time to exercise three times each week."

4. Be your own cheerleader.

Some people believe it's modest to put themselves down. But you wouldn't call a friend "fat" or "ugly," would you? You deserve the same respect, so try becoming your own best friend. Celebrate your progress, and try not to obsess about setbacks.

One way to do this is to make a list of your accomplishments in every area of your life (personal, professional and physical). List the talents and skills that enabled you to achieve them, and look at this list often. Adds Posillico, "Begin a daily journal of everything you did 'right' today." You'll be surprised how quickly it adds up!

5. Avoid being a perfectionist.

Try not to think in all-or-nothing terms— that you've blown your diet, for example, simply because you've overdone it at one meal. "We need to be kinder to ourselves, and learn to regard setbacks as learning opportunities," says Posillico.

6. Follow through with your goals.

Believing you can achieve your weight-loss goals is important, but you have to act too, by changing your eating habits, increasing your physical activity and so on. You can't just think yourself slim, but you can think yourself into the right frame of mind to optimize your prospects.

7. Affirm your self-belief.

Feel your confidence wavering? One way to reinforce your self-belief is with positive affirmations: simple, self-validating statements repeated as often as possible, preferably daily. Try coming up with one or two of your own, and remember to keep them positive. You can— and you will— succeed, as long as you believe you can do it!

Weight Watchers offers a variety of tips to help you get and stay organized while pursuing your weight loss goals. We also provide strategies to help build your confidence. [Learn more about our approach.](#)