



AHW Weeks 11 & 12

Planning for Success

Have you ever thought about how your social environment affects your journey towards healthy lifestyle goals? Our surroundings, family, friends, coworkers and even pets have a much greater influence than we realize.



Successfully changing and sustaining behavior change becomes much more challenging when you are not supported by the people closest to you. Positive influences are people who are supportive and willing to do what they can to make your journey easier. They also include role models – people who always find time to be active or prioritize mindful eating. A negative influence on the other hand is someone who is critical or not interested in your efforts towards a healthy lifestyle. Other people are not responsible for your choices; and some may test your convictions.

In addition to people, other aspects of our social environment can have bearing on our success too. Do your coworkers usually bring tempting treats to share in the break room? Does your spouse normally find a reason to talk you out of taking a walk together? Do the church potlucks tempt you with all of the creamy salads and chocolate desserts? Do you have good intentions of ordering something healthy for lunch until you notice the daily special or can't stop thinking about your favorite menu item? It's easy to fall back to our old habits and throw the healthy lifestyle changes we've made out the window. The best step to success is planning ahead!

Plan your physical activity time, weekly meals, snacks, groceries and choices when eating out.

Physical activity is often the hardest element to schedule. Brainstorm ways you can incorporate it into your day. It might include waking up 15 minutes earlier for a brisk walk, doing an exercise video before dinner, stretching during TV commercials, or doing wall sits during short breaks at work. Meeting a friend to walk or exercising at a set time each day can help keep you on track with your fitness plans.

THIS WEEK'S GOAL :

Lose 1 percent of my weight

How I'll accomplish this:

- 3 early bootcamp classes
- 80 oz water per day
- No late night snacking - except veggies!

TUESDAY

- Smoothie for breakfast
- Pack lunch for work
- 80 oz of water
- 3 mile run during lunch break
- Bring healthy dish to work club!
- carrot sticks if snack at night

MONDAY

- Bootcamp class 6AM
- Pack lunch for work
- 80 oz of water
- Veggie satisfying for dinner
- carrot sticks if snack at night

WEDNESDAY

- Bootcamp class 6AM
- Pack lunch for work
- 80 oz of water
- Salmon & quinoa for dinner
- carrot sticks if snack at night

Meal planning can be very challenging in today's hectic society. However, once it becomes a habit, it can make life so much easier and helps insure you and your family are including foods from each food group on a daily basis. Planning meals and snacks ahead of time also helps you not splurge when you are hungry or at the grocery store.

- Start by brainstorming ideas for your meals. Plan them around the weekly sales items.
- Keep a grocery list and stick to it!
- Serve fresh vegetables and fruit early in the week, then use them in mixed dishes as they become riper.
- Minimize convenience foods. They are much more expensive than making meals from scratch and tend to have more sodium, preservatives, and additives.
- Skip soda, juice drinks, and bottled water.
- Avoid shopping when hungry if possible.

Create routines. Try to eat meals and snacks at consistent times. Schedule your exercise at the same time every day. If you make meals and activity a priority and plan for it, it's harder for "life" to get in the way.

You can eat out and still stick to your healthy eating plan. The key is to plan ahead and choose carefully. Eat a lighter breakfast and lunch if you are going out for dinner. Split an entrée with a friend or spouse. Ask for simple calorie saving requests like sauces or dressings on the side, baked potato versus fries, or mustard versus mayo. Ask for extra spoons so everyone can share that mouth-watering decadent dessert. If you are on the road, pack a healthy snack rather than buying grab-and-go food. Bring a healthy option for a potluck or party and make nutritious food choices available when you entertain as well.

Don't keep unhealthy foods and beverages in your home. If you do, store them out of sight in a difficult place to reduce your urge to automatically grab them. If you gravitate to food or shopping when you're bored, stressed, or depressed, switch your attention to another activity - go for a walk, do some stretches, clean the car, sort laundry, play hop scotch with the kids.

You have worked hard to make lifestyle changes that have a positive influence on your health. That takes a great deal of motivation and planning ahead. Preparing for the possibilities and preplanning ways of dealing with them will keep you on track and create a win-win situation no matter the circumstance!



To Learn More:

www.sparkpeople.com

www.go4life.nia.nih.gov/tip-sheets/fitting-exercise-and-physical-activity-your-day

www.nutritionstudies.org/benefits-social-support-healthy-lifestyle

2017 A Healthier Weigh

Putting It into Action

Weeks 11 and 12

Choose one of the following activities to apply what you learned about your health and your healthy goal setting. Write a short paragraph (3 to 5 sentences) to describe what you did and learned from the activity selected. Report your Putting It Into Action results by email, fax or hard copy to your county Extension Office. Each team member who completes this by the deadline will earn 25 bonus points for the team.

Option 1: Positive Influences - Make a list of people you spend the most time with and who influence your lifestyle choices. Which are positive and which are negative? What specific action steps can you take to increase the positive influences? What specific action steps can you take to decrease/over-ride the negative influences? Pick one reoccurring social or work situation and brainstorm ways to make positive choices for you and other like-minded people in the group. (For example, if you and coworkers have a lunch meeting every week perhaps you could suggest a place that serves healthier food options.)

Option 2: Physical Activity - You have been dedicated to fitting physical activity into your day during this challenge. Be mindful of continuing with this commitment by 1) making it a priority; 2) make it a convenient part of your day; 3) make it social by having an “exercise buddy”; 4) make it fun by doing things you enjoy; and 5) make it happen by being active in many places and in many ways. List three ways your social environment or people around you can help support your efforts.

Option 3: Meal Planning - Plan your meals for 4 days. Write a grocery list that includes everything you need for your planned meals. What did you discover about foods you eat: 1) do you tend to eat similar things each day; 2) could you add variety of foods; 3) what changes do you want to make in your planned meals?