

FITNESS FORUM

You've reached the top, now what?

Congratulations!!! Through tireless toil and single-minded dedication, you have achieved your goal. Whether it was being able to confidently put on that bikini this summer, running your first 5k or reducing your daily regiment of medication due to weight and health related issues, you've done it! So now what?

Your next move can often be unclear and in many cases appear daunting. Having arrived at your fitness destination, fear of being able to maintain previously achieved progress can leave you paralyzed and unable to envision yourself moving forward. At best, this fear leaves you at a standstill and at worst, finds you engaged in self sabotaging behavior designed to protect you from success.

Unfortunately, these behaviors are all too common in the world of health and fitness where pounds are often gained and lost like chips in Vegas. Many of us head into the weekend down from the previous week only to "do it up" on Saturday and Sunday resulting in our coming out one to two pounds (the equivalent of 3,500 to 7,000 calories) heavier than when we started. If the feeling of losing ground and regaining inches is so bad, why do we subject ourselves to these games of frustration and self defeat? I had an incident with a member who helped me understand.

It transpired during one of our weight loss programs/competitions designed to help our members lose weight and get into better shape. About half way into the 8 week program, a leader had clearly been established amongst the contestants. She had dramatically increased the intensity of her workouts and had fully embraced all aspects of the program. She lost 16 pounds in 4 weeks!

After that weeks meeting, I approached her to congratulate her on yet another successful week. As she looked at me, I could see tears in her eyes and a pained expression on her face. "I don't know if I can keep this up. I still have so much weight to lose." I was completely taken aback by what she said as I

thought her cumulative 16 pound loss would serve as all the motivation she needed. "You don't understand...I've been here before. I can't tell you how many times I've lost 20 pounds only to gain them back... and more."

As we continued, I could tell that she had already begun to let herself off the hook, creating excuses as to why she couldn't possibly continue to lose the weight. She spoke of functions and parties that were approaching as well as the notion of having to "keep this up" forever. I explained to her that her biggest issue lay in how she viewed the situation. She viewed her current weight loss goal as a destination. A place that when reached would make her happy and change the rest of her life for the better.

I explained to her that her weight loss was a journey and her mindset and approach throughout the trip was most important. It's undeniable that the idea of her having to lose another 50 pounds might have seemed impossible at the time, but what about a steady 5 pound loss over 10 months? Not so bad, right? The key for any seemingly impossible task is to embrace it one day at a time. Know that you're going to fall off the wagon every now and then, that's life. However, when you do stumble, don't simply throw up your hands and ask for more butter and mayo in your meal. Salvage what you can from the situation and take note of why you went astray.

As for the member, she handily won the competition losing 30 pounds in the 8 weeks. She still struggles with her weight loss; however, she has learned to take it one pound at a time...over 60 times now. It's a good thing she's stubborn. For more information visit us online at www.ptsprinceton.com.

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