



Session 9: The Slippery Slope of Lifestyle Change

Progress Review

Changes you've made to be more active:



Changes you've made to eat less fat (and fewer
calories): _____

Have you reached your weight goal? Yes No

Have you reached your activity goal? Yes No

If not, what will you do to improve your progress?



The Slippery Slope of Lifestyle Change

“Slips” are:

- Times when you don't follow your plans for healthy eating or being active.
- A normal part of lifestyle change.
- To be expected.

Slips don't hurt your progress.

What hurts your progress is the way you react to slips.

What things cause you to slip from healthy eating? _____

What things cause you to slip from being active?

What causes you to slip is learned. It is a habit. The way you react to slips is also a habit.

**You can learn a new way to react to slips
to get back on your feet again.**



What to Do After a Slip

First, remember two things:

1. Slips are normal and to be expected.

99.99% of all people on their way to losing weight and being more active have slips.

2. No one time of eating too much or not being active, no matter how extreme, will ruin everything.

The slip is not the problem. The problem occurs if you don't get back on your feet again and keep going toward your goals.

So after you slip:

1. Talk back to negative thoughts with positive thoughts.

Negative thoughts can be your worst enemy. Talk back. "I'm not a failure because I've slipped. I can get back on my feet again."

2. Ask yourself what happened.

Learn from the slip. Can you avoid it in the future? Manage it better?

3. Regain control the very next time you can.

Do not tell yourself, "Well, I blew it for the day." Make your very next meal a healthy one. Get back on schedule with your activity plan right away.

4. Talk to someone supportive.

Talk with a family member or call a friend. Discuss your new strategy for handling slips. Commit yourself to renewed effort.

5. Focus on all the positive changes you've made.

You are making life-long changes. Slips are just one part of the process.



Self-defeating thoughts

Everyone has negative thoughts at times. Negative thoughts, which include excuses and rationalizations, can lead you to overeat or be inactive. A vicious cycle of self-defeat can result.

Example:

Thought: "I'm tired of working so hard. I'm sick of being in this program. I can never eat what I want."

Result: You eat potato chips.

Thought: "I did it again. I'll never lose weight."

Result: You feel discouraged and eat more.

Some common negative thoughts:

Example(s)

Good or Bad		Example(s)
	Divide the world into: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good or bad foods; • Seeing yourself as a success or failure; • Being on or off the program. 	"Look at what I did. I ate that cake. I'll never be able to succeed in this program."
Excuses	Blame something or someone else for our problems. We don't mean to go off the program, but we "can't help it."	"I don't have the willpower." "I have to buy these cookies just in case company drops in."
Should	Expect perfection. A set-up for disappointment. Lead to anger and resentment.	"I should have eaten less of that dessert."
Not As Good As	Compare ourselves to someone else. Blame ourselves for not measuring up.	"Mary lost two pounds this week, and I only lost one."
Give Up	Defeat ourselves. Often follow the other kinds of negative thoughts.	"This program is too hard. I might as well forget it."



How to Talk Back to a Negative Thought






1. Catch yourself. Think, "I'm doing it to myself."
2. Imagine shouting, "STOP!" to yourself. Picture a huge, red stop sign.
3. Talk back with a positive thought.

Negative thought:	Talk back with a positive thought:
Good or Bad <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "I can never eat dessert again." • "Look at what I did. I ate that cake. I'll never succeed." 	Work toward Balance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "I can eat that dessert and then cut back on something else." • "One slip-up isn't the end of the world. I can get back on track."
Excuses <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "It's too cold to take a walk." • "I don't have the willpower." 	It's Worth a Try <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "I can try going for a walk and stop if it gets too cold." • "It's hard to change old habits, but I'll give it a try and see how it works."
Should <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "I should have eaten less dessert." • "I have to write down everything I eat." 	It's My Choice <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "It was my choice. Next time I can decide not to eat so much." • "I'm writing down everything I eat because it helps me eat better."
Not As Good As <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Mary lost two pounds this week, and I only lost one." 	Everyone's Different <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "It's not a race. Mary and I can lose weight at different rates and both succeed."
Give Up <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "This program is too hard. I might as well forget it." • "I'll never get it right." 	One Step at a Time <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "I've learned something about what's hard for me." • "I'll try something different next time."



Practice:

1. Write examples of negative or self-defeating thoughts below.
2. Say each thought out loud, then say, "Stop!"
3. Talk back, again out loud, with a positive thought. Write it down.

Negative Thought	STOP!	Positive Thought
		
		
		
		
		



Slips from Healthy Eating

Describe one thing that has caused you to slip from healthy eating:

Can you avoid it in the future? If so, how? _____

If not, make a plan for how to get back on your feet the next time you slip:

I will ... _____

When? ... _____

I will do this first ... _____

Roadblocks that might come up

I will handle them by:

I will do this to make my success more likely: _____

How can we help you? _____



Slips from Being Active

Describe one thing that has caused you to slip from being active:

Can you avoid it in the future? If so, how? _____

If not, make a plan for how to get back on your feet the next time you slip:

I will ... _____

When? ... _____

I will do this first ... _____

Roadblocks that might come up

I will handle them by:


I will do this to make my success more likely: _____

How can we help you? _____



To do:

I will:

- Keep track of my weight, eating and activity.
- Catch myself thinking negative or self-defeating thoughts. Write them in my Keeping Track books.
- Practice  -ping them and talking back with positive thoughts.
- Try my two action plans for handling slips.
- Answer these questions:

Did my action plans work? _____

If not, what went wrong? What could I do differently? _____



Mental Gremlins

What are your thoughts when you “slip” in your efforts to make a lifestyle change? The way you talk to yourself can make all the difference.

Do you recognize the voices of any of the “mental gremlins” below?
Example: You worked long hours this week and over-ate fast food on 3 nights.

Mental Gremlins

- **The Scolder** (“You did it again! Stupid! When will you ever learn?”)
- **The Labeler** (“Face it. You’re a fast food junkie.”)
- **The Threat Maker** (“Okay. No food for you tomorrow. ”)
- **The Commander** (“You’ve got a meal plan to follow. So just do it!”)
- **The Lecturer** (“You know better. This always happens. You should’ve brought something low-fat from home.”)
- **Mr. or Ms. Sarcasm** (“Brilliant! Lock you up and throw away the key, and then you might lose weight.”)
- **The Comparer** (“What’s the big deal? Sue can work all night and not eat a thing.”)
- **The Worrier** (“With your bad habits, you’ll never lose weight.”)
- **The Quitter** (“You blew it! Might as well give up trying.”)

Here’s how to talk back to those nasty mental gremlins.

1. First, describe what you did *right*. “On four days this week, I stayed under my fat and calorie goals.”
2. Give information without insult. Instead of describing what you did wrong, point out what still needs to be done. “I need to make a plan for dinner on nights when I work late.”
3. Offer yourself a choice. “Next time I work late, I can get a turkey sandwich around the corner at the sandwich shop. Or plan what I’m going to eat at McDonald’s and use the drive-through so I’m not tempted to overdo it.”
4. Say it with a word or two. Next time you work late, think: “Drive-through.”
5. Describe what you feel, without reference to your character. “I’m disappointed and frustrated that I went back to old habits.”
6. Put it in writing. Put a note on your car’s dashboard: “Drive-through.”
7. Believe in yourself. Keep the faith. Say to yourself with a confident tone of voice, “I can do this.”



Practice

Describe an example "slip" from your own life: _____

What do your "mental gremlins" say? _____

Practice talking back:

1. Describe what you did *right*. _____

2. Give information without insult (point out what still needs to be done). _____

3. Offer yourself a choice. _____

4. Say it with a word or two. _____

5. Describe what you feel (no reference to character).

6. Put it in writing. _____

7. Believe in yourself. Say to yourself in a confident tone, "I can do this." _____
