

DIET EXTREMIST

You tend to have an ‘all or nothing’ approach to weight management, and might feel like you are always ‘on’ or ‘off’ a diet or exercise plan. You may also believe you need to follow a strict set of rules when it comes to what, how much and when you can or cannot eat, as well as how much, how intensely and how frequently you should exercise.

GOAL:
Practise moderation and focus on a more balanced, flexible approach.

THINKING MODERATELY

When it comes to weight loss, it's about long-term lifestyle change. This is different from a diet that promises a quick fix, but doesn't give long-term sustainable results. Lifestyle, not dieting works in the long term.

Take a look at the lists below.

How have you approached weight loss in the past?

DIET APPROACH:

- Self-control
- Deprivation
- Willpower
- Perfection
- Radical change

VS

LIFESTYLE APPROACH:

- Self-awareness
- Moderation
- Behaviour change
- Self-acceptance
- Realistic steps

Challenge Extreme Thinking

Do you have extreme thoughts about eating, activity and the weight loss process? Think about the beliefs and thoughts you have. How can you re-frame them to be more moderate?

Use the examples below. Listen for and challenge your own 'extreme' self-talk. Ask yourself, 'what evidence is there to support this belief?' 'What other belief will support my long-term goals?'

'I can't eat chocolate and my other favourite foods.'

Is it necessary to eliminate certain foods? Jenny's foods such as the Beef Pie, Banana Bread and Chocolate Mousse challenge the notion of 'good' and 'bad' foods.

'If I want to lose weight I can never dine out.'

Is it realistic to never dine out again? Instead, choose wisely, limit how often you dine out and refer to the dining out tips and strategies in the online Dining Out Guide.

'I lapsed, so I am giving up on weight loss for now.'

Is your lapse the end of your weight loss or an isolated event? It's normal to have 'bumps' along the way. The key is to learn from your challenges and continue on with your goals.

Think of any extreme 'diet' belief you hold regarding your weight loss efforts:

How could you re-frame the thought to fit the 'lifestyle' approach?

CREATING REASONABLE GOALS

When it comes to setting goals, be realistic. Your life may never be perfectly balanced, and unrealistic goals cannot be maintained in the long run. Some days you'll eat more healthily than others, other days you'll be more active than others. And some days you'll manage life's little crises better than others. But that's ok – it's about progress, not perfection.

Remember to set SMART goals. The goals you set should be specific, achievable and realistic. If you set unrealistic goals, you may be setting yourself up for disappointment, which may sabotage your efforts. By creating reasonable goals, you are setting yourself up for long-term success.

How can you re-state these goals to be more reasonable?

1. I will exercise every day → I will walk for 20 minutes on this Monday, Wednesday and Thursday
2. I will not dine out at all this month → I will limit my dining out to once a week during the next month
3. I will not eat chocolate again →

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Check your short and long-term goals to make sure they are specific, achievable and realistic. Your Consultant can help you with setting SMART goals.

PREVENTING OVEREATING

As a diet extremist, you may have developed a habit of dieting strictly, breaking the restrictive diet and then overeating, then beginning again. Deprivation often leads to an extreme desire to do (or eat) whatever it is that is deprived. A better way is to continue to move toward moderation.

One aspect of preventing overeating is to stay in touch with your physical and emotional needs. Another aspect is to plan your week with multiple rewards to help prevent the need to break out with overeating.

There are a variety of ways to reward yourself on a regular basis – here are some ideas for some inspiration:

Treat yourself to a:

Facial, manicure or pedicure, massage or new DVD

Spend time to:

Potter in the garden, read a book, take a walk along the beach or local walking track

Expand your horizons with:

A private yoga class, picking up a new hobby such as a photography class