

How Are You Doing?



By Bob Wilson BS, DTR

Throughout *Balanced Weight Management* you will find a variety of self-evaluation tools. As you explore and **USE** these tools, you will become more expert at the skill of self-management. You will come to know yourself. You will learn how to guide yourself step-by-step into success!

After several weeks of effort, it can be useful to reflect upon your progress in each of the skill areas. An honest appraisal may help identify some areas to improve. However, since making changes takes time, don't be too hard on yourself.

Your changes may have been so small and gradual that you may not have noticed how much headway you've made. It can be encouraging to appreciate your efforts and focus on the benefits you have experienced. As you continue to develop skills in each area, you will move closer toward reaching your health and fitness goals. Life is a journey, not a race. Honor each step that you take.

I suggest you take this evaluation once a month and date it. It is very insightful to notice trends.

You can see if you're stuck in some unhealthy patterns that you planned to change, but haven't changed yet. I did an evaluation similar to this one in my outpatient alcohol treatment in 1985. I found that after two years I had NOT changed many of my unhealthy patterns, and found that I was still using alcohol to help me manage my lifestyle stresses. Seeing my own dated plan for lifestyle change triggered me to make immediate plans to change my life. I'm SO glad that I kept the dated evaluation to provide honest personal feedback.

Use the *Stages Of Change* suggestions on how to move forward.

Cultivate a Self-Affirming Inner Awareness

Celebrate the Positive! Use the evaluation below each month to notice your progress.

- ❖ Notice the one thing you did this last week to help you be more fit and healthy. Yay, whoppy!
- ❖ Don't waste one breath on negative self-talk or inner put down! Most of us are already very skilled at noticing "what we do poorly." Use this process to cultivate a loving, aware, self-affirming, inner voice for you. So remember, what did you do well? What did you learn about yourself? From what you learned, what will you do differently next time?
- ❖ Did you meet your goals? If you did, what helped you to do it?
- ❖ Did you not meet your goals? What can you learn from the experience? What interfered with you reaching your goal? Was your week more stressful than you had anticipated? Did you identify a challenging barrier? Were your goals realistic considering all that you had to deal with? What might you do differently next time?
- ❖ Make your comments and inner evaluations positive. Focus on the skill of positive self talk.
- ❖ Specifically, how do you feel differently after having practiced your new lifestyle choices?
- ❖ If you DIDN'T keep any goals: Don't give up! A lot of people who had a difficult week wouldn't keep going. They would just throw in the towel. Congratulations! Just begin again! Check out the links below for ideas of where to begin. Invest in yourself and you WILL be successful!
- ❖ There is no such thing as failure—it's all learning and self-discovery!
- ❖ How will you take time this week (each day) to acknowledge your efforts and *celebrate you*?
- ❖ This process helps you restore balance to your life as you meet your needs of mind, body, and spirit.

Circle the number in the answer column that best matches your level of agreement with each statement (1 = a strong Yes; 5 = a strong No). Evaluate your score below.

Self Management Learn about you and how to manage your life.	YES	yes	?	no	NO
1. Do you have an inspiring purpose that helps you maintain your level of motivation to become more fit and healthy?	1	2	3	4	5
2. Do you take time each week to write down realistic, specific goals, including plans to overcome your typical barriers?	1	2	3	4	5
3. Do you accept full responsibility to make changes in your habits to achieve your fitness goals?	1	2	3	4	5
4. Do you believe you will achieve your fitness goals?	1	2	3	4	5
5. Are you regularly keeping records of your physical activities and food choices?	1	2	3	4	5
6. From your records, have you identified what does and does not work and used this information to plan for better success?	1	2	3	4	5
7. Are you substituting new, positive, enjoyable behaviors for less healthy behaviors?	1	2	3	4	5
8. Do you appreciate and acknowledge your efforts in non-food ways?	1	2	3	4	5
9. Are you taking time for fun and enjoyment in your life?	1	2	3	4	5
Physical Activity Give your tush a push. Get vertical!					
1. Do you get at least seven to eight hours sleep so you have energy to do physical activity regularly?	1	2	3	4	5
2. Are you finding ways to overcome your barriers to creating a more active style of living?	1	2	3	4	5
3. Have you found some type of physical activity you enjoy (or at least don't hate)?	1	2	3	4	5
4. Does your physical activity plan fit your lifestyle, abilities, and values?	1	2	3	4	5
5. Are you noticing some benefits when you are more physically active?	1	2	3	4	5
6. Is physical activity a regular, natural part of your daily routine?	1	2	3	4	5
Healthy Eating Explore your various environments.					
1. Are you reading food labels and selecting foods more wisely when shopping?	1	2	3	4	5
2. Do you write menus for simple, healthy meals and snacks?	1	2	3	4	5
3. Are you limiting saturated fat and sugar, and including more vegetables and fresh fruits and moderate portions of whole grains and lean proteins?	1	2	3	4	5
4. Are you limiting excess calories by watching your food choices and portion sizes, both at home and in restaurants?	1	2	3	4	5
5. Do you eat when you are hungry, rather than because you are bored, stressed, tired, or just because the food is there?	1	2	3	4	5
6. Do you eat your food slowly, noticing the effect of the food in your body?	1	2	3	4	5
7. Do you avoid skipping meals and have regular meals and snacks or bring food with you so you avoid becoming overly hungry?	1	2	3	4	5

8. Have you set up your kitchen for success by stocking healthy foods and snacks and limiting problem foods?	1	2	3	4	5
Support and encouragement from yourself and others					
1. Have you identified at least one person with similar fitness goals who can support your efforts?	1	2	3	4	5
2. Have you asked people to support your efforts in specific ways that help you maintain your focus on your goals?	1	2	3	4	5
3. Are you spending time with supportive people?	1	2	3	4	5
4. Are you physically active and eating healthfully even it it causes conflicts with others? Standing up for your needs?	1	2	3	4	5
4. Have you learned ways to act as your own support person, by using positive self-talk, visualizations, or affirmations?	1	2	3	4	5
Self-esteem Honor yourself and be kind to you with your choices.					
1. Are you using positive self-talk or affirmations to overturn negative thoughts?	1	2	3	4	5
2. Are you fully committed to making it a top priority to take care of your health and fitness?	1	2	3	4	5
3. Are you less hard on yourself when you have a setback?	1	2	3	4	5
4. Can you imagine yourself fit and trim?	1	2	3	4	5
5. Do you appreciate the body you have now?	1	2	3	4	5

Congratulations on your efforts!

Total your score:

- 34 –50 Outstanding! Wild horses can't stop you!
- 51 –80 Great effort! Keep it up!
- 81 – 110 Good job! Appreciate areas of strength and note ways to address barriers.
- 111 – 140 You've got a fair start, but need more planning. Take small steps to move yourself in a more positive direction.
- 141 – 170 Don't give up. Take time to refocus. Examine the pros and cons of changing or staying the same.

Adapted from Kaiser Permanente Northwest Health Education Services, *Freedom From Diets Curriculum*

Self-Exploration Questions:

What changes do you feel good about? What did you do to get there?

In what skill areas are you the most confident? What would a best friend tell you about what you have done?

What lifestyle skill areas will be important for you to focus on for success now?

What is your plan to overcome your challenges to reach your goals? Who will help?

What will be your first step? When will you take it? How will you reward yourself?