



# Make Your Healthier Weigh Successful

Start the 12 weeks off with purpose! Read through lessons that resonate with you, set your personal goals and make sure they are easily attainable. Losing 30 pounds in three months is probably not attainable and definitely not sustainable. The lessons should be a challenge for you to make a change. If not getting enough sleep is impacting your life, set a goal to get your 8 hours in a couple nights, if not every night for a week. Losing weight is a great long term goal; but set short term goals every week to will help get you there. Start your week with a goal and purpose. Make the changes and by 12 weeks, hopefully those small changes become routine.

## Routine

If you are not a morning person, do not plan to get your workout in before you leave for work. Hitting snooze is so much easier than finding motivation to get out of bed and finding energy to exercise. Start slow; maybe try a walk on your lunch break if the weather is nice. If it's cold try a quick HIIT (see exercise lesson) after work. It isn't recommended to exercise right before you plan to go to sleep because when you exercise your heart rate is increased; some adrenaline is going, and your body burned through glucose creating energy. That is the benefit to starting your day with exercise; it helps give you energy to get your body ready for the day. Static stretching, however, right before bed is a wonderful idea. It is great for increasing your flexibility as well as relaxing your body.



## Progress

Motivation often stems from seeing progress, and weight loss tends to be a slow process. To help keep motivation, a fairly quick side effect of consistent exercise and stretching is increased flexibility. It is very important to cool down after a workout through a walk, and some static stretching. Static stretching also reduces soreness and as stated previously is a great way to end the day. You'll notice touching your toes, for example, becomes easier or if you can't quite touch your toes, you'll notice you are getting closer every day. Flexibility has fairly immediate results with a consistent exercise and stretching routine. Identifying small victories such as increased flexibility, a day with no soda, a week of consistent workouts, etc. is great to highlight and recognize the progress!

## Dedication

Dedicate yourself to better health. We all have our temptations and it is a challenge to overcome them. Don't give up all of the unhealthy temptations at once, because that is asking for failure. Slowly wean yourself off of tempting unhealthy habits. If you are a heavy soda drinker limit yourself to two a day, work yourself down to one a day, one every other day, and then one occasionally as a treat! Breaking any bad habit is easier said than done. But try and dedicate yourself to taking steps towards a healthier lifestyle! There is only one person in the world that can improve your health. As mentioned before, keep track of the progress you are making so you notice the small victories along the way.



## **Celebrate**

Take the time to celebrate small victories, big milestones, or maybe just feeling better. A week of consistent sleep, daily purposeful physical activity, or maybe reducing daily sugars like soda calls for celebration. Maybe it's a trip to get ice cream, a new pair of shoes, or getting your car detailed. Self-bribery is welcomed when reaching goals! Keep in mind you don't want to fall back into unhealthy habits but a treat at the end of the week is a great way to still enjoy what you love in moderation. A week with no soda that is celebrated with a soda at the end of the week it great! Kicking bad habits is not easy, so make sure it's fun and reward yourself!



## **Ask for Help**

Whether it is goal setting, dinner ideas or exercise ideas - reach out for help! If your local Extension agent can't help you, they will be a great resource to help find someone who can.

Along those same lines, talk to your friends and family about your goals. When you reach a difficult day or week, they can be a great resource to help keep you motivated. Letting those around you know what your routine is going to be can also be helpful. For example, if you plan to get some exercise in every day after work, your friends and family might need to know in order to respect a new boundary that may be created. Think about who your support group is, and ask them to help you on this journey!

## **Additional Resources:**



- [https://books.google.com/books?hl=en&lr=&id=ycfQYbLiqzQC&oi=fnd&pg=PR1&dq=how+to+maintain+motivation+for+living+a+healthier+lifestyle+&ots=XbOHUYyQFD&sig=WVyYAL1BBVlig\\_ik9iwdP0MvhP8#v=onepage&q&f=false](https://books.google.com/books?hl=en&lr=&id=ycfQYbLiqzQC&oi=fnd&pg=PR1&dq=how+to+maintain+motivation+for+living+a+healthier+lifestyle+&ots=XbOHUYyQFD&sig=WVyYAL1BBVlig_ik9iwdP0MvhP8#v=onepage&q&f=false)
- <https://extension.psu.edu/finding-and-keeping-motivation-for-your-good-health>
- <https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/fitness/in-depth/fitness/art-20047624>



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## AHW Lesson Activities

### “Applying the Lesson”

*Choose one of the following activities to apply what you learned about your health and your healthy goal setting. Write a short response (3 to 5 sentences) to describe what you did and learned from the activity selected. Report your Applying the Lesson results by Online form, email, fax or hard copy to your county Extension Office.*

**Option 1:** Plan out your routine. Start by writing down what your current routine is. Then plan out what you would like to add in the coming weeks. (Adding in another day of exercise per week or 15 minutes of exercise each day of a week.) Once you are done, reflect on how this activity went for you. When you see it all laid out, how does it make you feel? Can you plan ahead for certain time periods being a little more difficult than others?

**Option 2:** Start a journal or spreadsheet to help track the progress you are making and record in it for a week. Record any “mini victories” you have through the week. Was the journal/spreadsheet helpful? How can you use this to help ensure you are staying on track with your goals through the rest of the challenge?

**Option 3:** Identify who your support group is/is going to be and tell them about your goals. Reflect on the conversations you had with others. Do you know who you can call if you are starting to lose motivation? Did you set any new boundaries with your friends and family?