



Expanding Potentials, LLC
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Slimming Secrets: Slim Down & Keep Your After - Naturally!

By Holly Stokes, “The Brain Trainer,” NLP Coach

Have you struggled to lose weight? Losing a few pounds only to gain the same weight back again and even more? Weight can be a complicated issue. Here are the top 5 reasons for gaining extra weight.

1. Eating the Wrong Foods
2. Lack of Regular Exercise
3. Stress & Hormones
4. Habits of the Mind
5. Unconscious “Programs”

1. Eating the Wrong Foods – The problem with counting calories is that it tells you nothing about your nutrition. When most people think of weight loss, they think, “If I only eat less, I can lose weight.” True, our portion size has increased over the last 20 years, but even more important than portion size is the quality of foods we are choosing.

Eat better, not less. Better choices are not always clear. Our food has changed so much in the last 20 years, with preservatives, additives, artificial colors, artificial flavors, and more. Where do you start at even knowing what choices are better?

Eat the Way our Ancestors did. Our food has changed in the last 50 years. Never before have such high sugar and high fat foods been so available. The major diseases we are seeing now are excesses of high fat and sugar foods, obesity, heart disease, and diabetes. Simplify your food. The less fooled around with - the better! Making the switch to whole foods eating will increase your nutrition, your energy, your health, and help your body release the extra weight. Most whole foods are low glycemic with the exception of potatoes, popcorn, and a few fruits.

Avoid The Big White Five. Avoid processed foods and refined foods. Processed and refined foods have much of the bran and fiber removed, along with natural vitamins and minerals. A good key is to avoid white foods: white flour, white sugar, white rice, potatoes, and popcorn. Although potatoes are not refined, they are mostly starch. These high starch and refined foods turn to sugar quickly in your body, causing a spike in blood sugar. Your body responds by releasing insulin (the carrier molecule that takes sugar into your cells), now the body has more sugar in the cells than it can use, so – it stores it for later as fat!

2. Lack of Regular Exercise – With advances in technology, our conveniences have exploded. At the push of a button, we can order a book, communicate across the world, change the channel, open the garage door, and even have our groceries delivered. Our bodies need movement and exercise to be fit and

healthy. Although, we are finding more convenience with technology, its also requiring us to be more sedentary, spending our time sitting in front of computers instead of walking and moving.

Create a Regular Fitness Plan! One of the best things you can do is to have regular fitness time in your schedule. Pick activities that are fun and engaging. Include your friends and family which increases your motivation, and your social health network. Start with activities that are a good fit for you, walking, stretching, biking, and work your way up to more intense activities.

3. Stress & Hormones– When we are stressed, our body engages the fight or flight response. It increases blood flow to the muscles (and away from the brain), increases heart rate and blood pressure, and releases hormones adrenaline and cortisol. Your nervous system prepares the body to fight off a threat or run away. Our body’s natural response is physical activity, however, in our culture, getting physical is rarely an appropriate reaction to stress. So, we sit at our desk, swimming in our chemical stress soup. Elevated levels of Cortisol have been found to actually cause us to gain weight.

Physical Exercise helps the body recycle the stress hormones, return to normal levels, decrease stress, and even mentally feel more balanced and clear. Taking breaks during the day, like walking during your lunch break, is a great way to help relieve stress, get in more movement, and even boost your metabolism.

Most of the stressors we experience now are imagined or perceived threat rather than physical and immediate danger. One way to decrease the stress you are experiencing is to teach your brain to respond differently in stressful situations. This can include breathing exercises, and NLP can be very useful in training your brain to respond calmly, rather than activating the fight or flight response. You can find more resources at: www.ExpandingPotentials.net/stress.html

4. Habits of the Mind – Your brain is always picking up and storing messages. We have a whole history of messages regarding food, health, and our body. Depending on your history, your food associations and meanings, your past can interfere with your daily choices and your ability to stay on track.

One way our history can interfere is found in the meanings we’ve connected to foods. This is illustrated through the work of Pavlov, a psychology researcher who would ring a bell before he brought his dogs food. He noticed that the dogs began to salivate when he rang the bell, even before he brought them food. The dogs created an association, bell = food. We all have many food associations in our history. For instance, when we were rewarded as kids, we usually had sugar, candy and sweets. So now, in our mind, when we have done a good job, we feel it natural to reward ourselves with something sweet.

If you were part of the Clean Plate Club, that’s another association you may have in your history. The cue to stop eating was overridden by the need to clean your plate, and over time, this becomes a habit, to where you may feel full, but don’t feel you can stop eating until your plate is clean.

5. Unconscious “Programs” - Another less obvious way our mind may interfere with our goals is through unconscious beliefs or programs that are responsible for self-sabotage. Whenever we try to

make a change, it's as if one part of us wants to change and another part of us doesn't. We then experience struggling against ourselves, fighting old patterns and impulses.

Sometimes the unconscious mind has ulterior motives for continuing old patterns and behaviors. We call these "programs." If you learned through your past history that there was a benefit in carrying extra weight, the brain will run that program as a default pattern. For instance, one colleague was picked on as a child by older kids, at the time, he thought, "If only I were bigger, they couldn't push me around." His mind then began a program for being bigger, which translated into gaining extra weight.

Each of us is unique in our experiences, and our thoughts about those experiences, but here are just a few "programs" my clients found working against them, until we changed them through NLP (Neuro-Linguistic Programming). NLP is simply training the brain to create new associations, patterns, and update old programs.

- If I lose weight, I won't be able to handle the extra attention (safety program)
- If I lose weight, I won't be like my family and I won't belong anymore (belonging program)
- If I lose weight, I won't be as cuddly and loveable (love program)

There is no end to the variety of "programs" that might be running. Because the mind is so varied in what hidden reasons it may have for running a "weight program," I created the audio, Release Your Reasons, part of the Lighten Up! Mind Body Weight Loss Audio course. Using imagery and metaphor, the language of the unconscious mind, helps you let go of the old reasons at even the unconscious level. It's not enough to know that we shouldn't be doing or thinking something, our brain needs to know what to do instead. Hypnosis and NLP (Neuro-Linguistic Programming) are amazing tools for training the brain to learn new patterns, and quickly create new habits and programs.

By helping the mind to create new associations and habits, making changes becomes even easier. These top 5 Reasons are what most people need to address in order to lose weight and keep it off. By changing our mental habits and patterns, we reduce the struggle, find it easier to stay on track, and get the results we want. It's time to stop struggling – it's time to befriend your mind, and train it to work for you rather than against you, with the tools of NLP, and Hypnosis, it's easier than ever before!

This article was written by Holly Stokes, Master NLP Health Coach, and "Brain Trainer". She works with clients all across the U.S., helping busy professionals create effective and lasting change, achieve their goals in life, health, and business! You'll find more tools and resources for Weight Loss at:

www.Lightenup.me or check the main website for more mind body results:

www.ExpandingPotentials.net