

Fitwell Lifestyles

Your Healthy Lifestyle and Weight Management Newsletter

October 2009

Welcome to Fitwell Lifestyles - Your Certified Weight Management Expert

How to Help Others Help Themselves

Many of our friends and family struggle with weight issues or don't follow a healthy lifestyle. It is natural to want to help them, especially if you have learned how much better you feel eating the right foods and exercising regularly.

Nobody wants to be unhealthy and overweight. Everybody would prefer to look better, feel better and be as healthy as possible. When someone isn't motivated to make healthy changes, it is more complex than that that she is lazy, lacks self discipline or doesn't want the benefits of an improved lifestyle.

The real reason people hold back from change is usually fear of losing something important or exposing themselves to danger. They benefit in some way from their current behaviors and, consciously or unconsciously, are afraid of losing those benefits if they make big changes in their life. These blocks to success are as different as each person's preferences, habits and circumstances. Perhaps it is the simple pleasure of something that they enjoy such as snacking while watching TV. It could be a deep psychological need to stay overweight in order to avoid the risks of being socially or sexually active. Maybe the person doesn't want to give up a certain style of cooking because it provides an important feeling of emotional connection with the family.

Whatever the reasons are, change isn't likely to happen until the person feels like he's got some other realistic options for meeting these needs and desires.

You Can Help

You can help your friend or loved one by helping them try to figure out what she is getting out of her unhealthy behaviors and how to get those same benefits without paying the price of obesity and higher health risks.



Start by listening more than you talk. Most of us don't like to talk or even think about these things. The person may not even realize what the block is. Sometimes talking about how you've dealt with the same types of issues in your own journey can help the other person open up.

Your job is not to persuade, correct, or preach. People who practice unhealthy behaviors probably already know what they need to change and the information is readily available if they need to learn how to lose weight or to improve their health. Your job is to listen and show empathy.

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What do you do when people you care about doesn't seem to want to change unhealthy lifestyle or lose weight even though it puts their lives at risk?

You Can't Make Them Change.

- ✓You can't provide them with a good reason to get healthy.
- ✓You can't persuade them to do it by the sheer brilliance of your logic and persuasive techniques.
- ✓You can't convince them by the persistence of your nagging, suggestions, bribes, threats, predictions of disaster, or other manipulative devices.

Acting this way will only cause frustration and resentment for both parties. A person is not going to change his behavior just because he wants to but also when he is ready and willing to do what has to be done. The desire and readiness have to come from within to be effective.

While you can't motivate someone else you can inspire with your own good example, inform when someone asks, and support when going gets tough.

You may be tempted to point it out when the person denies the obvious, invents rationalizations, comes up with excuses, only sees obstacles, or ignores the opportunities. Unfortunately, when you argue you are just making it that much harder for her to start talking about the real issues. Understand that people are far more likely to talk themselves out of these unhelpful thoughts than to be talked out of them by you.

Your best argument is to let him see how being healthy has helped you have a better life. Talk about what you've learned about yourself. Share the mental and physical benefits that you found with your new lifestyle.

People are motivated to seek pleasure and avoid pain. Unfortunately, most people will seek the instant gratification of immediate pleasure even though that will bring a lot of pain later. Instead of trying to convince someone of the virtues of delayed gratification or heroic self-discipline, make healthy choices fun and enjoyable.

With a little imagination, you can find ways to have healthy fun. Meet your friends before or after work for a walk. Try a new restaurant with something you've never had before. Have a contest with your family to see how can come up with the tastiest and healthiest snack. Have a potluck dinner party where everyone contributes a healthy dish. Encourage your kids to try different physical activities to find something they like. And then do it with them!

The good news is that a healthy lifestyle is something that most people will find pleasant and rewarding once they give it a chance. You can't convince someone else to be healthy or make changes when they don't want to, but with a little persistence and imagination you can make a difference.

Next Issue: *How to help someone stay motivated and achieve their goals*

Kansas City Fitness Magazine
Read Deirdre's Articles in
Kansas City Fitness Magazine.
<http://www.kcfitmag.com/>

Current Articles:

Contributors

The Calorie Burn

Do Alcoholic Drinks have a Place in a Healthy Eating Plan?

Future Articles:

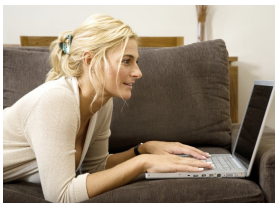
Hypertension and Exercise

Surviving the Holidays

Healthitude is a family owned website dedicated to supporting positive attitudes, approaches to, and understanding of health and fitness. We are hoping that as a family, living in the 21st century, we can help you, our global neighbors, live happier and healthier lives, with honest, comprehensible discussions of health topics, while offering advice on various programs to increase your fitness, both physically and fiscally. <http://www.healthitude.com/>



Wanted: Professional web site development in exchange for weight-loss assistance, nutrition consulting and/or (proximity permitting) personal training. If interested in this exchange, contact Deirdre at deirdre@fitwell-lifestyles.com.



Let's blog!

Fitwell is looking for topics to blog about. What subjects interest you? What answers are you not finding when you search the Internet? Email suggestions to deirdre@fitwell-lifestyles.com.

Volunteers needed to test a new e-book program on healthy eating and/or weight loss.

In addition to the book, you would receive - for free - one month of feedback on daily food journals and a weekly motivating email. **ADDITIONALLY**, you will get a one year subscription to the new Fitwell members' only site which includes recipes, helpful hints, a chat room, etc. In return, you will provide feedback and testimonials on the program.

Email deirdre@fitwell-lifestyles.com for consideration with this project. Open spots are limited and not everyone will qualify for this program.