

Peer Support Whole Health & Resiliency, 12-Week Participant Manual for UIC Study (based on WHAM)

Weekly Group Meetings

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Welcome to Whole Health!

You're part of an important research study that's looking at how people set and meet their health goals.

We'll meet once a week as a group over the next 12 weeks. You'll also meet 12 times individually with a certified peer specialist to work on your personal health goal.

The purpose of this class is to help you set and meet at least one health goal.

By being in the Whole Health Program, you will:

- 1) Learn the 10 areas of whole health, and how each one affects your physical and mental health
- 2) Learn the Five Keys to Success
- 3) Set a personal health goal
- 4) Strive for and meet your health goal
- 5) Monitor your health goal and keep up your motivation for it
- 6) Receive peer support on your goal in group and individual settings
- 7) Learn more about mental health recovery and well-being

This binder has all the worksheets and forms you will need for our class. Please bring it with you to all of the group meetings and individual sessions.

Enjoy your journey to better health!

Whole Health Program Worksheets

Handout:
My Health Issue and Reasons to Live Healthy

- A. What health issue do you want to work on in our class? It can be something like a medical condition (such as diabetes or high blood pressure), or it can be something that is a barrier to good health (like being overweight, not exercising regularly, or not sleeping well.)

The health issue I want to work on in this class is:

- B. Now, write down your **top 5 reasons for wanting to improve this health issue**. Why might you be motivated to live healthier? *Put a star by your number one reason.*

1).

2).

3).

4).

5).

The 10 Domains of a Healthy Life

Here are the areas that make up a healthy life.

- 1) Healthy Eating
- 2) Physical Activity
- 3) Restful Sleep

- 4) Stress Management
- 5) Service to Others
- 6) Having a Support Network
- 7) Optimism Based on Your Positive Expectations
- 8) Skills to Avoid Negative Thinking
- 9) Spiritual Beliefs and Practices
- 10) A Sense of Meaning and Purpose

The Science of Stress

Stress can be found throughout our society. Some 60 to 80% of all visits to health care providers in the U.S. are said to be related to stress and its bad effects (Lee, R. *The SuperStress Solution*, Random House, 2010). The prevention and treatment of the harmful effects of stress are vital to our very survival as humans.

Dr. Roberta Lee, in her book, *The SuperStress Solution*, states that today's stress is of such a magnitude – it's so big – that it can only be called SuperStress. SuperStress is layers and layers of stress piled on top of one another. Sometimes, it's so subtle we don't even notice what is happening. Our stress is so extreme and persistent that we've stopped noticing how stressed out we are!

When we explore the history of stress, we learn some interesting facts. The stressors that our ancestors faced long, long ago – like starvation, injury, or severe weather – were physical. To cope with this type of physical emergency, their bodies responded in key ways. First, something called their adrenal glands sent a hormone – or a chemical – throughout their bodies. This hormone is called *cortisol*. When they were under attack or threat, cortisol helped to level out blood sugar and bring nutrients to our ancestors' vital organs, such as their hearts and kidneys. When they were coping with these physical threats, cortisol acted like a “good cop” because it helped the body make the energy it needed to either run away or fight for their survival.

Today's stressors, however, are not always physical. Instead, we often face the psychological effects of problems like a bad marriage, a troubled home life, financial problems, stigma, or unemployment. Remember, our brains do not know the difference between acute or immediate stress and chronic or ongoing stress. So, whether we face immediate or ongoing stress, our brain responds the way it always has – by sending out more and more cortisol into our bodies.

But, when it's continually high in our bodies, cortisol becomes a “bad cop.” If persistently high, cortisol can destroy healthy muscle and bone. It can delay healing and normal cell growth. It can harm our digestion, our metabolism or energy levels, and our mental functioning. High levels of cortisol also can weaken our immune systems.

High levels of cortisol also produce high levels of blood fats and blood sugar, which are related to many disorders, including diabetes, heart disease, and chronic swelling of joints and tissues.

Dr. Gregory Fricchione, director of the Benson-Henry Institute for Mind-Body Medicine (BHI) at Massachusetts General Hospital, states that, because of cortisol, psychological stress damages the cells in our bodies. He calls this “cellular stress.” Besides hurting our bodies, cellular stress also can trigger any tendencies we may have in our genes to develop certain kinds of diseases and illnesses.

First Lady Rosalynn Carter, in her new book, Within Our Reach, pushes Dr. Fricchione’s insight further by saying,

“When a person is under severe stress, the brain has to work very hard to maintain normal blood pressure, heart rate, and temperature, among other things. If a person experiences multiple, continuous stressors, he starts losing the battle. If the stress remains overwhelming or persistent, it will take its toll on a person’s health – either physically, mentally, or both. Damage will occur in parts of the body that may be genetically susceptible to illness. When placed in situations of unrelenting stress, a person who is born with a genetic propensity to bipolar disorder, depression, or schizophrenia may in fact develop that disease. The same is true for those who are susceptible to asthma, heart disease, or cancer.”
(Carter, R. Within Our Reach: Ending the Mental Health Crisis, Rodale, Inc., 2010)

Not only does stress lead to physical illness, ongoing stress often leads to relapse or setbacks, both in mental illness and in addiction. The ability to reduce and counter the negative impact of stress is very important in recovery from mental illness, addiction, and physical health conditions.

The Stress Response

Research shows that ongoing stress has a negative effect on people's health.

In order to fully understand this, we need to learn about three things. The first is our metabolism or energy levels. The second is our stressors. And, the third is the stress response itself. Let's review some simple descriptions of a very complex process.

First, metabolism is a chemical process of breaking down food into nutrients and energy that the body then uses. If your body breaks down food as it should, you will have a consistent level of energy through the day. You will burn off fat as needed, and you will be less likely to be over-weight.

Second, stressors are anything that communicates danger to your safety or security. Stressors can also be threats to your overall sense of well-being. They can communicate to you that you are or are becoming out of control.

Finally, the Stress Response, also known as the "Flight or Fight Response," is the body preparing you to deal with a danger or a stressor. When this happens, several things go on inside the body:

- Your metabolism increases, breaking down your food at a more rapid rate
- Your breathing speeds up; you breathe more quickly when stressed
- Your heart beats faster; many times you can even feel it
- Your blood vessels constrict or become narrow, so your heart has to pump harder to get the blood throughout your body
- Your blood pressure increases, which can make you feel anxious
- Your stress hormones, like cortisol, increase, and we already talked about the good and bad things this leads to in your body

All of these things happen in order to send more energy to the large muscles and vital organs of your body, in order to cope with the stressor you are facing.

So, let's think about how all of this would work, using the example of one of our long-ago ancestors. Let's say this ancestor was facing the threat of a Saber Tooth Tiger. He would either run away to safety or fight to victory. In either case, the danger would pass. When either fighting or fleeing, he would have burned most, if not all, of the energy that his body produced when under threat. This would've eventually allowed his body to go back into a relaxation mode.

Specifically, as he moved into relaxation, his:

- Metabolism would've gone down
- His breathing would've slowed down
- His heartbeat would've slowed down
- His blood pressure would've gone down
- His blood vessels would've opened back up
- And his stress hormones, like cortisol, would've gone back down

But, what if the stressor is not an external threat like a Saber Tooth Tiger? What if the stressor is an internal, psychological threat like worry, fear, negative thoughts, or a sense of not having control over your life? Unfortunately, our stress sensors do not know the difference between an external threat like the tiger or an internal threat like worry or loss of control. Stress sensors simply experience threat.

What happens then?

The body continues to produce extra energy, expecting you to burn the energy up in either flight or fight. However, not only is the energy not burned off because we don't fight and we don't run away from everyday stress, but our body craves food full of energy because it thinks we need that extra energy to run or to fight. But, we usually aren't doing either of those things when the stress is internal or psychological. So, what happens, then, to all of that energy we're not burning off by either running away or fighting the stress?

Well, much of it is held in the hormone called cortisol, which deposits fat deep into the abdomen or stomach. This is known as visceral fat or the non-pinchable "belly fat." According to Marilyn Glenville, author of Mastering Cortisol – Stop Your Body's Stress Hormone From Making You Fat Around The Middle,

"Belly fat has more to do with the action of stress hormones on your body than diet or lack of exercise. Belly fat comes mainly from the action of a stress hormone called cortisol, triggered by the flight-or-fight response crucial to the survival of all animals."

More and more research shows that belly fat linked to stress can be dangerous. It is associated with higher risk for heart disease, diabetes, and some forms of cancer. It also affects the functioning of the liver and weakens the immune system.

The Relaxation Response

The Relaxation Response is a physical state of deep rest. The Relaxation Response changes our physical and emotional responses to stress by lowering our heart rate, blood pressure, rate of breathing, and muscle tension. When the Relaxation Response is used:

- Metabolism goes down
- Breathing slows down
- Heartbeat slows down
- Blood pressure goes down
- Blood vessels open up
- And stress hormones go back down

If practiced regularly, the Relaxation Response can have lasting effects.

The founder of the Benson-Henry Institute is Dr. Herbert Benson, a Harvard Medical School trained cardiologist or heart doctor. His work started in the late 1960's and pioneered mind/body medicine by linking stress to physical health. He noticed that his patients had higher blood pressure during regular check-ups with their doctor. Dr. Benson's research found that by changing thoughts, people had lower metabolism, rate of breathing and heart rate, and slower brain waves. These changes appeared to be the opposite of the "fight or flight" response we just talked about.

So, Dr. Benson labeled it the "Relaxation Response." How is the Relaxation Response used? There are two main steps:

- The first is repeating a word, sound, phrase, or muscular activity, in order to control those body processes we just talked about.
- The second step is calmly ignoring the distractions and everyday thoughts that come into your mind when you're repeating your calming word or activity. When distracted, you just notice it and then return to repeating your word, sound, phrase, or muscular activity.

The Relaxation Response

Here is how to prompt the relaxation response.

1. Focus on repeating a word, sound, phrase, or muscular activity. Here are some examples:
 - Repeating the word “calm” or “relax,” or making a humming sound
 - Deep, slow breathing (or breathing while thinking of a calming word or phrase)
 - Doing yoga (or doing yoga while repeating a calming word or phrase)
 - Taking a silent walk
 - Knitting, crafting, or wood working
 - Reading

The word or activity can be whatever you choose that is calming. But avoid watching TV or a computer screen or listening to music or the radio. You want the silence of your own calming thoughts for this exercise.

2. As your thoughts wander away from your word or activity, become aware that this is happening and simply return to repeating your word or activity.

Try not to judge yourself when wandering away from your word or activity, no matter how many times that happens. It is very common to be distracted by other thoughts during this exercise, especially when you’re first learning it. Simply become aware that you are distracted, and return to repeating your word or action.

Start out doing this for only a few minutes at a time. As you become more comfortable, you can go up to 10 minutes or more. But, even a mini-relaxation response (1-2 minutes) helps. Some people do the relaxation response both in the morning and evening. Do whatever is comfortable for you.

It helps to do this exercise in a quiet place. Some people like to shut their eyes, and sit up with hands and feet uncrossed. Some like paying attention to their breathing and thinking of a word or number when they breathe in and out. For example, on the “in breath,” think of the word “deep” and on the “out breath,” think of the word “slow.” While you do this, breathe in and out a bit deeper and slower each time.

You can also use “biodot” skin thermometers while doing this exercise. Biodots are made of heat-sensitive material that changes color when your skin temperature changes. They stick to the backs of your hands. When you’re stressed or tense, less blood flows to your skin. When this happens, your biodot will turn yellow or green. When you relax, more blood flows to your skin and your biodot will turn blue or violet. Using biodots can help you see the connection between calmer thoughts and the state of your body. They can be purchased affordably on-line.

Stress Management

These are some causes of stress in my life:

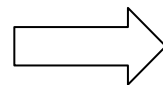
These are my favorite activities for relaxing or having fun:

I do these things on a regular basis to take care of myself:

When I am feeling stressed out, I like to do these things to take care of myself:

Make a list of 3 to 5 things you MIGHT start doing on a regular basis to reduce your stress as a way to address your health issue.

Remember, you aren't committing to doing these things right now. You are just brainstorming positive, new things that you MIGHT try if you eventually choose this as your goal.



Reviewing and Planning for My Health Goal

1A - If I decide that I could improve my health issue by reducing my stress or by practicing new stress management skills, I could do these things:

NOTE: Make sure these are things that you are not doing right now. They should be NEW things that you CAN do and you would ENJOY doing to manage your stress as a way to improve your health issue.

1B - The benefit to me of managing my stress to improve my health issue is:

2A - If I decide that I could improve my health issue by creating healthier eating habits, I could do these things:

NOTE: Make sure these are things that you are not doing right now. They should be NEW things that you CAN do and you would ENJOY doing to improve your eating habits as a way to address your health issue.

2B - The benefit to me of improving my eating habits to address my health issue is:

3A - If I decide that I could improve my health issue by becoming more physically active, I could do these things:

NOTE: Make sure these are things that you are not doing right now. They should be NEW things that you CAN do and you would ENJOY doing to be more physically active as a way to address your health issue.

3B - The benefit to me of increasing my physical activity to address my health issue is:

Reviewing and Planning for My Health Goal

4A - If I decide that I could improve my health issue by getting more restful sleep, I could do these things:

NOTE: Make sure these are things that you are not doing right now. They should be NEW things that you CAN do and you would ENJOY doing to get more sleep as a way to address your health issue.

4B - The benefit to me of getting more restful sleep to address my health issue is:

5A - If I decide that I could improve my health issue by becoming more involved in service to others, I could do these things:

NOTE: Make sure these are things that you are not doing right now. They should be NEW things that you CAN do and you would ENJOY doing to get more involved in service to others as a way to address your health issue.

5B - The benefit getting more involved in service to others to address my health issue is:

6A - If I decide that I could improve my health issue by strengthening my support network, I could do these things:

NOTE: Make sure these are things that you are not doing right now. They should be NEW things that you CAN do and you would ENJOY doing to strengthen your support network as a way to address your health issue.

Reviewing and Planning for My Health Goal

6B - The benefit of strengthening my support network to address my health issue is:

7A - If I decide that I can improve my health issue by developing a more optimistic attitude toward the future, I could do these things:

NOTE: Make sure these are things that you are not doing right now. They should be NEW things that you CAN do and you would ENJOY doing to work on a more optimistic attitude as a way to address your health issue.

7B - The benefit to me of working on a more optimistic attitude to address my health issue is:

8A - If I decide that I can improve my health issue by strengthening my skills to avoid negative thinking, I could do these things:

NOTE: Make sure these are things that you are not doing right now. They should be NEW things that you CAN do and you would ENJOY doing to strengthen your skills to avoid negative thinking as a way to address your health issue.

8B - The benefit to me of avoiding negative thinking to address my health issue is:

Reviewing and Planning for My Health Goal

9A - If I decide that I could improve my health issue by strengthening my spiritual beliefs and practices, I could do these things:

NOTE: Make sure these are things that you are not doing right now. They should be NEW things that you CAN do and you would ENJOY doing to strengthen your spiritual beliefs/practices as a way to address your health issue.

9B - The benefit to me of strengthening my spiritual practices to address my health issue is:

10A - If I decide that I can improve my health issue by creating more meaning and purpose in life, I could do these things:

NOTE: Make sure these are things that you are not doing right now. They should be NEW things that you CAN do and you would ENJOY doing to add more meaning and purpose in life as a way to address your health issue.

10B - The benefit to me of creating more meaning and purpose in life to address my health issue is:

Healthy Eating

Even though we don't always eat right, most of us know what foods are considered healthy – fruits, vegetables, fish, chicken, lean meats, whole grains, wild and brown rice, and skim or 1% milk, to name a few. Also, many of us know that baked and broiled foods are healthier to eat than fried foods. We've probably also heard that, if we use oil at all, it should be vegetable or olive oil.

What are some other healthy eating habits?

- Because our bodies are made up almost entirely of water, it's important to drink 6 to 8 glasses of un-carbonated water every day.
- We should avoid too many caffeinated drinks like coffee, soft drinks, or energy drinks.
- It's important to avoid processed or prepared foods, like frozen or boxed meals.
- It's also good to shop around the perimeter -- or outer aisles -- of the grocery store to find the healthiest options.

Another important part of healthy eating is taking reasonable portions for breakfast, lunch, and dinner, with a small snack in the morning and one in the afternoon. The American tradition of eating 3 large meals with snacks in between is no longer considered a healthy diet, since most of us are not farming from sun up to sun down.

The basics of healthy eating are shown in something called the “Nutrition Plate.” You'll see that it is split into four sections of what we should eat at lunch and dinner. One section is for fruit and vegetables, one is for whole grains, and one is for protein. A smaller circle sits beside the plate to show the small amount of dairy products we should drink or eat daily. You can search ChooseMyPlate.gov on the computer learn more about the Nutrition Plate. It's a very helpful tool to see how much food should be on your plate at lunch or dinner in order to be your healthiest.



6 Tips for Successful Weight Management

Add breakfast



Breakfast is the most important meal. It boosts your energy which is needed for weight management. As a healthy action step, try adding 0% fat Greek yogurt, multigrain cereal with no-fat milk, egg whites and 2 veggie sausages, or a waffle with 1 tablespoon of low-fat nut butter at breakfast. Eating a small amount of lean protein at each meal is a good strategy as well.

Drink water often



6-8 glasses of water a day is best. Being hungry is often confused with being thirsty. As a healthy action step, try adding a glass of water before you eat a snack. If you're still hungry 10 minutes later, you may need a healthy snack. Try a glass of water before a meal, too. This may help you control portions.

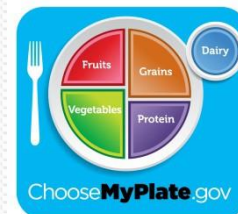


Plan Your Meals

Healthy meal planning is a great tool. It starts with making a shopping list that you can stick to. It helps to shop only after eating and when rested. Some people prepare snack bags at the start of each week to make it easy to grab a healthy snack right when they're hungry. One of these meal planning tools could be a healthy action step towards your goal.

Take Smaller Portions

Choosing healthy portion sizes is key for weight management. If your goal is to lose weight, talk with your provider about whether eating fewer calories is safe for you. If it is, you might add measurement of your portion sizes as a healthy action step towards your physical health goal.



Keep a food diary

Tracking what you eat works. People use a notebook or free computer apps to log what they eat. Seeing on paper (or the screen) what you eat, how much, and the calories is powerfully motivating for healthier eating. You might want to try a food diary as a healthy action step towards your health goal.



Move Your Body

Physical activity is important for your heart, muscles, and bones. Exercise alone, without healthier eating, will not lead to major weight loss. But, it is key for toning your body, conditioning your heart, strengthening your muscles and bones, and managing stress. If your provider says it's safe for you, adding more physical activity to your day might be your health goal.



The secret to serving size is in your hand.



A fist or cupped hand = 1 cup

1 cup = 1-2 servings of fruit juice
 1 oz. of cold cereal
 2 oz. of cooked cereal, rice or pasta
 8 oz. of milk or yogurt

A thumb = 1 oz. of cheese

Consuming low-fat cheese helps you meet the required servings from the milk, yogurt and cheese group.
 1 oz. of low-fat cheese counts as
 8 oz. of milk or yogurt.



Handful = 1-2 oz. of snack food

Snacking can add up.
 Remember, 1 handful equals
 1 oz. of nuts and small candies.
 For chips and pretzels,
 2 handfuls equal 1 oz.



Palm = 3 oz. of meat

Choose lean poultry, fish and beef. One palm size portion equals 3 oz. for an adult and 1 1/2 oz. for a child under 5.

Thumb tip = 1 teaspoon

Keep high-fat foods, such as peanut butter and mayonnaise, at a minimum. One teaspoon is equal to the end of your thumb, from the knuckle up. Three teaspoons equals 1 tablespoon.



A tennis ball = 1/2 cup of fruit and vegetables

Healthy diets include a variety of colorful fruits and vegetables every day.

14 of the best vegetables



arugula
1 cal/leaf

high in protein, fiber, calcium, iron, magnesium, potassium, and vitamins a, c, e, k, b6

eat in salads, in sandwiches and wraps



spinach
2 cal/leaf

high in fiber, protein, calcium, magnesium, potassium, and vitamins a, c, e, k, b6

high in sodium

eat it raw in salads, stir-fried, or cooked



mushrooms
2 cal/mushroom

eat them stir-fried, sauteed, or roasted



broccoli
3 cal/floret

high in protein, calcium, iron, magnesium, potassium, and vitamins a, c, b6

eat steamed, roasted, and in salads



cauliflower
3 cal/floret

high in protein, magnesium, fiber, potassium, and vitamin c

high in sugar

eat it steamed, roasted, or in salads



tomatoes
22 cal/tomato

high in magnesium, fiber, potassium, and vitamins a, c, k

high in sugar

eat them raw, in salads, or in sandwiches



cucumbers
24 cal/cucumber

high in magnesium, potassium, and vitamin c

high in sugar

eat it raw or in salads



red bell pepper
30 cal/pepper

high in fiber, potassium, and vitamins a, c, k, e, b6

high in sugar

eat it raw, in salads, roasted, or stir-fried



zucchini
31 cal/zucchini

high in fiber, protein, iron, magnesium, potassium, and vitamins a, c, b6

eat it roasted, sauteed, stir-fried, or in salads



yellow pepper
40 cal/pepper

high in fiber, potassium, and vitamins c and b6

eat them raw, stir-fried, in salads, or roasted



red onions
44 cal/onion

high in fiber, potassium, and vitamins c and b6

high in sugar

eat roasted, sauteed, stir-fried, or in salads



bean sprouts
54 cal/12 oz

high in fiber

high in sugar

eat them in sandwiches, in salads, or stir-fried



eggplant
110 cal/eggplant

high in magnesium, fiber, potassium, and vitamins c, k, b6

high in sugar

eat them roasted, in salads, or stir-fried



bok choy
2 cal/leaf

high in fiber, protein, iron, calcium, and vitamins a and c

eat in soups, in salads, or stir-fried

My Eating Habits

These are some foods or snacks that I tend to eat or drink on a regular basis:

These are some of my favorite foods:

I think these are some healthy foods:

I think these are some unhealthy foods:

These are some of the healthy foods that I like:

Make a list of 3 to 5 things you MIGHT start doing on a regular basis to create healthier eating habits, as a way to address your health issue:

Remember, you aren't committing to doing these things right now. You are just brainstorming positive, new things that you MIGHT try if you eventually choose this as your goal.

Physical Activity

More and more research is showing the importance of physical activity to a healthy life. It's also a known fact that many Americans lack enough physical activity in their daily lives. The hard truth is that too many of us are "couch potatoes."

With all this focus on physical activity, it seems like a new exercise program is made every day. We're also seeing more and more about the importance of walking, walking groups, and using pedometers to count our daily steps. In fact, the Mayo Clinic and other medical experts now state that walking is the perfect, low-impact exercise with many health benefits (Mayoclinic.com/health/walking/HQ01612).

Take a minute to think about the role of physical activity in your own life. Do you do much? Do you think it means having to go to a gym? Well, the fact is that there are many simple ways to increase your activity during the day without having to suit-up and go to the gym.

- You can take your dog for a daily walk.
- You can rake your lawn.
- You can walk to the corner or around the block or through your apartment complex whenever you check your mailbox.
- You can march or jog in place every time a commercial comes on during your favorite TV programs.
- You can get involved in fun and active recreational activities like hiking, ice skating, bike riding, gardening, bowling, or dancing.

What are some other easy ways to add physical activity to your life?

- You can walk around your home whenever you talk on your mobile phone.
- When you go places, you can take the stairs instead of the elevator.
- If you use public transportation, you can get off at the stop before yours, and walk the rest of the way. And then, do the same on the way home.
- If you drive somewhere, you can park farther away in the parking lot to increase your steps.
- You might want to start using a pedometer to count your steps and try to increase the number each week.

My Physical Activity

The following are or have been some of my favorite physical activities:

I currently enjoy the following physical activities with other people:

I currently enjoy doing the following physical activities by myself:

After doing these activities, I feel:

Make a list of 3 to 5 things you MIGHT start doing on a regular basis to increase activity and exercise, as a way to address your health issue.

Remember, you aren't committing to doing these things right now. You are just brainstorming positive, new things that you MIGHT try if you eventually choose this as your goal.

Restful Sleep

Even if they can't or don't do it, many people know the basics of healthier eating and physical activity. However, many Americans don't know how to get better, more restful sleep. And worse still, it can be a negative cycle because, in general, the less we sleep, the less we sleep.

Many new articles and reports point to sleep deprivation as being on the rise in our country. Sleep deprivation means not getting enough sleep, or good sleep, or any sleep at all.

According to expert Dr. Michael Breus, not getting enough sleep and not sleeping well each night are very serious. Sleep deprivation, for whatever reason, significantly and negatively affects our health. In fact, long-term, untreated sleep deprivation is connected to many illnesses like high blood pressure, heart attack, stroke, obesity, and psychiatric problems (webmd.com/sleepdisorders).

My Sleep Habits

I usually get ____ hours of sleep each night.

I usually wake up about ____ times during the night.

I think I need ____ hours of sleep to function well.

On a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being “restless” and 5 being “restful,” I would rate the quality of my own sleep as:

Restless 1 2 3 4 5 Restful

I know that I am not getting enough sleep when these things happen:

I have learned that I sleep better when I do these things before I go to bed:

I have learned that I usually do not sleep well if I do these things before I go to bed, or if these things happen before I go to bed:

Make a list of 3 to 5 things you MIGHT start doing on a regular basis to improve sleep habits as a way to address your health issue.

Remember, you aren't committing to doing these things right now. You are just brainstorming positive, new things that you MIGHT try if you eventually choose this as your goal.

The Power of Human Connections

You've probably heard of "Service to Others" and having a "Support Network." Both are about the importance of having human connections for a high quality life. You also remember our discussion from last week about resiliency, or the ability to recover readily from illnesses, mental health issues, or the hard things in life.

Dr. Fricchione, an expert on resiliency, speaks of "service to others" and a "support network" as being flip sides of the same coin. He states that, as we have evolved, humans have become a species that relies heavily on love to survive. Therefore, if we need to receive love as a species, we also need to be able to give love. Thus, the giving and receiving of love and support is not only a human quality, it is seen as crucial to our overall health and well-being. This is because there is a healing power in knowing that you are not alone. Many people talk about this as part of their mental health and addiction recovery, too.

Let's think about this some more. Dr. Dean Ornish is a heart doctor who places a lot of importance on the healing power of loving relationships. In his best-selling book, Love and Intimacy, he states,

"...anything that promotes feelings of love and intimacy is healing; anything that promotes isolation, separation, loneliness, loss, hostility, anger, cynicism, depression, alienation, and related feelings often leads to suffering, disease, and premature death from all causes. When you feel loved, nurtured, cared for, supported, and intimate, you are much more likely to be happier and healthier. You have a much lower risk of getting sick and, if you do [get sick], a much greater chance of surviving."

In his book, Dr. Ornish shares research showing that people with the strongest social ties have dramatically lower rates of disease and early death than those who feel isolated and alone. He also shares that those who don't regularly participate in organized social groups are four times more likely to die six months after open-heart surgery than those who are highly connected to social groups.

Quoting Dr. Roberta Lee on human connection, she says,

"Whoever said 'a problem shared is a problem halved,' knew what they spoke."

Living in isolation, without the support of family or friends, not only increases wear and tear on our body's cells, it is a super highway to the SuperStress we talked about last week.

We all need a supportive person or two to share our good times and bad times. People need people. Being able to ventilate, cry, laugh, or just have someone listen to you is often enough to help you put a stressful situation into perspective. In fact, most scientific studies cite social support as the number one source for how people handle stress. Walk into any surgical waiting room and you'll probably find several "waiters" for every patient being operated on. Belonging to a community – whether it's a knitting circle, a sports league, a cat fancier's club, or a monthly dinner group with friends – is an important part of handling stress.

It's a known fact that the brain cannot process two opposite feelings at the same time. Think about it: you can't be both happy and unhappy in the exact same moment. So, if you're in the company of friends and loved ones, you may have stress, but it's guaranteed to go down by leaps and bounds from what you'd feel when stressed out and alone. Indeed, support groups and service to others have played a major role in starting and sustaining recovery for people with mental health and addiction issues.

Service to Others

These are some of the things that I have done or I am currently doing that I would define as “service to others”:

Helping others has the following impact on me:

The following are some possible places to volunteer in my community:

Make a list of 3 to 5 things you MIGHT start doing on a regular basis to give service to others as a way to address your health issue.

Remember, you aren't committing to doing these things right now. You are just brainstorming positive, new things that you MIGHT try if you eventually choose this as your goal.

My Support Network

I can trust the following people to always be there for me:

These are friends that I enjoy doing things with:

Some people in my support network are:

If I attend a support group or organized social activity on a regular basis, it benefits me in these ways:

If I don't attend a support group or organized social activity, I get support from other people in these other ways:

Create a list of 3 to 5 things you MIGHT start doing on a regular basis to strengthen your support network, as a way to address your health issue.

Remember, you aren't committing to doing these things right now. You are just brainstorming positive, new things that you MIGHT try if you eventually choose this as your goal.

Maintaining a Positive Attitude

Our next two health areas are: “Optimism Based on Positive Expectations” and “Cognitive Skills to Avoid Negative Thinking.” Both of these areas have to do with a person’s attitude. Optimism has to do with your attitude toward the future. The ability to avoid negative thinking has to do with your attitude towards yourself.

Let’s talk first about optimism. A key part of strengths-based, mental health recovery is a sense of personal hope that life can be better. This is what we mean by hope for the future, or optimism. Hope involves a positive attitude and research shows the positive impact of hope on whole health. As one example, in a Duke University study of 2,800 heart patients, those with optimistic expectations about their recovery were 30% less likely to die over the next 15 years than patients with less optimistic expectations. This was true no matter how severe their heart disease (Barefoot, et al., Recovery Expectations and Long-Term Prognosis of Patients with Coronary Heart Disease, Archives of Internal Medicine, May 28, 2011).

Charles Swindoll, in his article on attitude states,

“The longer I live, the more I realize the impact of attitude on life. Attitude, to me, is more important than facts. It is more important than the past, than education, than money, than circumstances, than failures, than successes, than what other people say or do. It is more important than appearances, giftedness, or skills. It will make or break a company...a church...a home... I am convinced that life is 10% what happens to me and 90% how I react to it.” (ThinkExist.com)

These days, it’s hard to escape hearing quotes like, “Attitude is everything.” “Your attitude determines your altitude.” Or, Henry Ford’s famous one, “Whether you think you can or can’t, you are probably right.” These sentiments refer to humans’ ability to be purposely hopeful or optimistic about the future. This kind of hope helps people avoid negative thinking about themselves and their situations. It also helps people to stop negative thinking when they slip into it. As Martha Beck, a health consultant and writer, states,

“Your situation may endanger your life and limbs, but only your thoughts can endanger your happiness” (Finding Your Own North Star, Three Rivers Press, 2001).

Happiness involves having gratitude for the past, enjoying the present, and having hope for the future. Telling yourself a miserable story about your situation creates suffering. Telling yourself a positive and grateful story increases happiness.

My Optimism Based on Positive Expectations

First, on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being “not optimistic at all” and 5 being “very optimistic,” I would rate how optimistic I usually am about the future as:

Not optimistic at all 1 2 3 4 5 Very optimistic

I do these things to help me stay positive:

When I am becoming pessimistic or negative about the future, doing these things helps me become more optimistic:

List 3 to 5 things you MIGHT start doing on a regular basis to develop a more optimistic attitude to help you with your health issue:

Remember, you aren't committing to doing these things right now. You are just brainstorming positive, new things that you MIGHT try if you eventually choose this as your goal.

Skills to Avoid Negative Thinking

Carol's Story (adapted from Lori Ashcraft's paper, "Self-Esteem & Self-Talk")

Carol awoke and realized she had overslept, "Oh, no! I'm going to be late for work! I said I wanted to get up every morning and go for a walk. I should have known that I wasn't serious. I always have great plans, but I never follow through. When am I going to grow up and start taking some responsibility for my life? I am such a failure!"

As Carol went to the kitchen, she caught a glimpse of herself in the hall mirror. "I shouldn't wear this skirt. It is tight across my butt. If I bend over, I will burst the seams. I have really put on a lot of weight lately. I am so fat and ugly."

As Carol was opening the door of the refrigerator, she said to herself, "What am I doing? I shouldn't eat breakfast. I really need to skip a few meals; then my clothes may fit a little better. I probably need to not eat for a week! Aw, forget it! Why don't I eat everything in the fridge? I am a great example of a person who doesn't care how fat and ugly she gets. I am really hopeless."

Carol left the house almost in tears. She got on the bus for work. When she sat in her seat, she looked at her reflection in the window. She realized that she had forgotten to comb her hair. "My hair looks horrible. I am so ugly. I ought to shave my head and wear a wig. Nobody could ever like a person who looks like me!"

When Carol got to work, she remembered that she had not finished a report that was due that day. As she sat at her computer and got to work, her boss walked by. Carol said to herself, "He is going to think that I just started working on this report, and it is due today. He won't expect it to be very good. I am sure that he will give it to someone more capable to rewrite. I am probably not going to have this job much longer. He will probably fire me soon. What will I do then? I am such a fat, ugly failure that no one could ever like. I wish I was dead!"

This story shows how our self-talk is often started by something that's happening outside of us. There are four events that "jump-started" Carol's self-talk that turned negative.

- 1) She over slept.
- 2) She saw in the mirror that her skirt was tight.
- 3) She forgot to comb her hair.
- 4) She had not finished a report that was due that day.

Each time, her self-talk quickly moved from stating the facts to telling herself a story that was not based on facts. For example,

“I over slept” became “I am such a failure.”

“My skirt is too tight” became “I am fat and ugly.”

“I forgot to comb my hair” became “Nobody could ever like a person who looks like me.”

“I haven’t finished the report” became “I will be fired soon.”

Some, if not all, of Carol's story rings true for most of us. That's because:

- Everyone has negative thoughts and/or negative self-talk.
- Negative thoughts and self-talk are not the problem.
- The problem is when negative self-talk spirals downward, and we end up defining ourselves in absolute and permanently negative language.

Catch it! Check it! Change it!

- 1) “Catch it” means that we need to catch what is happening early on before it goes too far. We want to catch ourselves right away when moving from the facts of a situation to telling a negative story about ourselves instead.
- 2) “Check it” means comparing the negative self-story you’re telling against what is actually going on. It is crucial to stick with the facts, rather than turning facts into fiction or stories.
- 3) “Change it” means stopping the story-telling and using self-talk that more appropriately reflects the reality of what’s happening.

Where could Carol have **caught** herself in moving from fact to story?

- How could she have **checked** her self-talk, so that it was based on facts?
- What could she have **changed** in her self-talk, so that it more appropriately reflected the reality of her situation?
- If she had done this, how might her day have been different?

List five actions you have found helpful in catching, checking, and changing your own negative self-talk.

List 3 to 5 things you MIGHT start doing on a regular basis to avoid negative thinking as a way to address your health issue:

Remember, you aren't committing to doing these things right now. You are just brainstorming positive, new things that you MIGHT try if you eventually choose this as your goal.

Connecting with Something More Than Self

Okay, our next 2 health areas are called, “Spiritual Beliefs and Practices” and “A Sense of Meaning and Purpose.” These both involve being connected with something that is more than just oneself. Spirituality is often defined as a sense of connection with God, or an energy larger than ourselves that unites the parts into a greater whole. For many people, spirituality and meaning and purpose cannot be separated. For them, spirituality is the road to meaning and purpose in life.

Spirituality may be belief in a power that created and controls all of life. It may be belief in the way all living creatures are connected or dependent on one another. It may be a feeling of unity or connection with nature.

For some, spirituality and spiritual beliefs may be clear and concrete, with religious rites, rituals, and ceremonies. For others, spirituality and spiritual beliefs may be more vague or mysterious. These people might describe their spirituality much like this: “...I realized I was not alone. My pain was the same pain that everyone else in the room had experienced. My shame was their shame. Their shame was my shame. My anger was their anger. Their anger was my anger. I was not alone. And whatever had seen me through all of this had seen them through, also. Whatever had sustained me had sustained them.”

As you might know, spirituality plays a major role in Alcoholics Anonymous. For example, Step 11 is “Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understood Him, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out.” Spirituality also is reflected in Step 12 which talks about “having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these 12 steps.”

However we define spiritual beliefs and practices, and a sense of meaning and purpose, they often help people weather the storms of life. There are many stories, plays, and movies to bear this out.

My Spiritual Beliefs and Practices

On a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being “not important at all” and 5 being “very important,” I would rate the importance of spiritual or religious beliefs in my life as:

Not important at all 1 2 3 4 5 Very important

These are the spiritual or religious beliefs that help see me through the dark and difficult times:

I find these spiritual or religious practices to be very important and sustaining in my life:

List 3 to 5 things you MIGHT start doing on a regular basis to strengthen spiritual beliefs or practices as a way to your address health issue.

Remember, you aren't committing to doing these things right now. You are just brainstorming positive, new things that you MIGHT try if you eventually choose this as your goal

A Sense of Meaning and Purpose

On a scale of 1-5, with 1 being "very little" and 5 being "a great deal," I would rate the amount of meaning and purpose in my life as:

Very little 1 2 3 4 5 A great deal

These relationships give my life meaning and purpose:

These activities give my life meaning and purpose:

These experiences give my life meaning and purpose:

List 3 to 5 things you MIGHT start doing on a regular basis to create more meaning or purpose in life as a way to manage your health issue.

Remember, you aren't committing to doing these things right now. You are just brainstorming positive, new things that you MIGHT try if you eventually choose this as your goal

Setting and Clarifying My Whole Health Goal

Check those that are true for you. Put a question mark by any items you don't know.

General Health Strengths

- ☐ My blood pressure is within the normal range.
- ☐ My blood sugar level is within the normal range.
- ☐ My cholesterol level is within the normal range.
- ☐ My body weight is within the normal range.
- ☐ I have a physical examination on a regular basis.
- ☐ I have a primary care doctor that I trust and can work with.
- ☐ I do not have any chronic illnesses.
- ☐ I have a chronic illness, but I have learned how to control it.
- ☐ My medications and coping skills have my psychiatric illness basically under control.
- ☐ I am able to maintain my sobriety and/or clean time.
- ☐ I know what areas of my health that I want to improve.

I could use these GENERAL HEALTH STRENGTHS to improve my health and resiliency:

Health and Resiliency Lifestyle

- ☐ I know what causes stress in my life.
- ☐ I know some things I could do to make my life less stressful.
- ☐ I know what foods are healthy and unhealthy.
- ☐ I know some healthy foods that I like and could add to my diet.
- ☐ I understand the value of physical exercise.
- ☐ I know some physical activities that I enjoy and could add to my life.
- ☐ I regularly get an adequate amount of sleep.
- ☐ I know some things I could do to improve the quality of my sleep.
- ☐ I know that when I help others I feel better about myself.
- ☐ I know some things I could do to help others and that I would enjoy doing.
- ☐ I have people in my life who I enjoy being with.
- ☐ I know some things that I could do to increase my support network.
- ☐ I think of myself as an optimistic person in relation to the future.
- ☐ I know some things I could do to become more optimistic in relation to the future.
- ☐ I have some cognitive skills to help avoid negative thinking.
- ☐ I know some things that I can do to improve my cognitive skills to avoid negative thinking.
- ☐ I have spiritual beliefs and practices that sustain me during the difficult times.
- ☐ I know some things that I can do to strengthen my spiritual life.
- ☐ I have a strong sense of meaning and purpose in my life.
- ☐ I know some things that I can do to increase my sense of meaning and purpose.
- ☐ I know some things I could do to improve my health and resiliency
- ☐ I am ready to work on improving my health and resiliency.

My current LIFESTYLE IS HEALTHY AND RESILIENT in the following ways:

What's My Motivation?

Thinking back on what I've learned so far, I want to work on the following physical health area to address my health issue (**circle only one**):

1) Healthy Eating

2) Physical Activity

3) Restful Sleep

I choose this area as a way to address my health issue because:

Improving in this area will help me to:

I think I might be ready to improve in this area because:

Underline any of the following areas that might help you to work on your new physical health goal. While you won't set a goal in one of the below areas, they might help you with motivation or purpose.

Stress Management

Service to Others

Having a Support Network

Optimism Based on Positive Expectations

Skills to Avoid Negative Thinking

Spiritual Beliefs and Practices

Sense of Meaning and Purpose

HOW TO WRITE A GOAL TO IMPACT HEALTH:

I



IMPROVE

WILL YOUR HEALTH IMPROVE?

M



MEASURABLE

DO YOU KNOW HOW MUCH AND HOW OFTEN WILL YOU WORK ON YOUR GOAL?

P



POSITIVELY STATED

IS THIS SOMETHING NEW YOU WANT IN YOUR LIFE?

A



ACHIEVABLE

IN YOUR CURRENT SITUATION AND ABILITIES CAN YOU WORK ON THIS GOAL?

C



CALLS FORTH ACTION

ARE THERE ACTIONS YOU CAN TAKE ON A REGULAR BASIS TO MEET YOUR GOAL?

T



TIME-LIMITED

WILL YOU BE ABLE TO ACCOMPLISH YOUR GOAL IN 8 WEEKS?

Try writing a goal:

WHY - In order to (explains why I want to achieve this goal or what I see as the potential benefits):

WHEN - By 8 weeks from now (we are using 8 weeks to match the group meetings)

WHAT - My whole health and resiliency goal is (explains what I want to do on a regular basis to create a new, healthy habit. Include how much and how often you will perform this activity.):

Does my goal have IMPACT?

Looking at the goal you just wrote, answer the following 6 questions.

1. **Improve** – Would reaching my goal **improve** the quality of my health?

This criterion is usually easy to meet because we've been talking for a couple of weeks about how to improve health.

To answer yes to this, you must be able to see exactly how your health would get better if you meet your goal.

Look at your own goal. Will it clearly improve your health or well-being?

YES

NO

UNSURE

2. **Measurable** - Is my goal objectively **measurable**, meaning that I know how much and how often I will work on tasks to meet it?

How do we measure a goal? Usually, we have to state it with amounts. Does your goal set how much or how often you'll do things to meet it?

Look again at your goal. Is it stated with amounts that you can measure?

YES

NO

UNSURE

3. **Positively Stated** - Is my goal **positively stated** as something new I want in my life?

It is more motivating to work on getting something you want. A goal that focuses on something you don't want, or you wish to change, or get rid of, or avoid is hard to keep up with.

What about your goal? Is it positively stated as something new you want?

YES

NO

UNSURE

4. **Achievable** - Is my goal **achievable** in my present situation and with my current abilities?

You may have to ask yourself some tough questions for this one. Is your goal something you've been saying you'll do for a long time, but haven't ever achieved? Is it something you wish you could do, but know in your heart of hearts you probably won't do (especially if you've set it before)?

If you do not think your goal is achievable, you can usually fix that by lowering the amount (do less of it) or changing the time frame (give yourself more time to reach it). Or, sometimes you may need to choose something more personally enjoyable (like walking rather than jogging).

What about your goal? Is it truly achievable for you?

YES

NO

UNSURE

5. **Call Forth Actions** - Does my goal **call forth actions** that I can do on a regular basis to create healthy habits or a healthier lifestyle?"

This is a tricky one! Many people think they can answer yes, but find out they really can't. If your goal doesn't build up over time, then it doesn't really call forth actions you can do on a regular basis. In other words, to answer "yes" to this one, your goal must be stated as something you'll work up to. This will lead you to actions you can take each week to achieve your larger goal.

How about yours? As stated right now, could you build up to it over time, with a series of steps that take you to your larger goal?

YES

NO

UNSURE

6. **Time-limited** - Is my goal **time-limited** in terms of by when I plan to accomplish it?

The goal needs to be stated so that you know by when you plan to accomplish it. For our purposes, you should set a goal you can reach by the end of our class, or in 8 weeks from now.

How about your goal as stated right now? Is it time-limited?

YES

NO

UNSURE

Try writing a goal:

WHY - In order to (explains why I want to achieve this goal or what I see as the potential benefits):

WHEN - By 8 weeks from now (we are using 8 weeks to match the group meetings)

WHAT - My whole health and resiliency goal is (explains what I want to do on a regular basis to create a new, healthy habit. Include how much and how often you will perform this activity.):

Writing a Goal to Have IMPACT

If you answered “no” or “unsure” to any of the 6 questions, you’re not alone! We’re going to review guidelines and do role-plays to help you write a new goal with IMPACT. Even if you answered “yes” to all 6 questions, this will help you refine your goal to have even more IMPACT for you.

A goal is something we want. It is something we are willing to work for. We do the work because we want the benefits that come from accomplishing the goal. **It is the potential benefits that motivate us to act.** Therefore, *the closer you can get your goal statement to incorporate its potential benefits, the more IMPACT it will have on your motivation to accomplish it.*

We have found that 3 of the IMPACT criteria are usually the most difficult to meet. These are Measurable, Positively Stated, and Call Forth Actions. Let’s look at each of these to learn how to write a goal with IMPACT.

A Measurable and Positively Stated Goal

Here are goal statements that are too **hard to measure**:

“I want to feel better.”

“I want to eat less fast food.”

These statements do not contain anything you can objectively measure. Nor do they say what “better” or “less” would involve or look like. Words like better, less, more, or regularly are not objectively measurable.

Here are goal statements that are **not positively stated**:

“I want to quit smoking.”

“I want to lose weight.”

These are very common goal statements, but they focus on what a person does not want – smoking and weight. It is more motivating when the goal statement focuses on what you do want. In this case, what the person probably wants is the benefits of not smoking or of losing weight.

So, to write a goal statement that is clearly measurable and positively stated, we try to get directly to its benefits.

To do this, we ask the following questions –

- Why do you want this goal?
- What will get better or be the benefits?
- How will your life be different, if you accomplish this goal?
- If you accomplish this goal, what will you be able to do that you can’t or aren’t doing now?

Goal Setting Role Plays

Let's try a role-play using these questions. Pair up with someone in your class. Read the examples together, taking turns being the person asking the questions and the person setting a goal.

GETTING TO A MEASUREABLE GOAL

I have asthma, and my goal is to feel better. (This is not a measureable goal.)

Why do you want to feel better?

If I felt better, I think I would get out more often.

What would be the benefits of getting out more often?

I wouldn't isolate so much. I wouldn't sit around feeling sorry for myself all the time.

How would your health or life be different if you didn't isolate so much?

Well, I might meet up with a friend to take walks.

Okay, makes sense. So, what would you like to do in this area that you aren't doing already?

I would like to see a friend to take walks.

Then maybe walking with a friend might be your new health goal. What do you think?

Yes, I would like that goal.

In eight weeks, how often would you like to be walking with a friend?

I don't know, maybe twice a week.

What if we made your goal about walking with a friend twice a week?

Well, that is really what I want to do.

Would you like me to try to rephrase the goal for you?

That would be great.

Let's see if this works.

In order to – feel better living with asthma

By - 8 weeks from now,

My whole health goal is - to be walking with a friend twice a week.

Does that sound like something that would improve your health issue?

Goal Setting Role Plays

GETTING TO A POSTIVELY STATED GOAL

This same process can be used when the goal is **not positively stated**.

I want to quit smoking. (This goal is not positively stated.)

Why?

I think it would improve my health.

What would be other benefits?

I would feel better. I might have more energy.

How would your life or health be better if you felt better or had more energy?

I would be able to do more things.

What would you be able to do that you can't or aren't doing now?

I would be able to take long walks with my friends.

Why don't you try writing your goal statement around what you want -- like being able to go on long walks with your friends? In eight weeks, what would you like to be doing with your friends?

I would like to reduce my cigarettes so I can walk a couple times a week with my friends.

Could that be your eight-week goal? That may be more motivating to work on than quitting smoking only.

Goal Setting Role Plays

GETTING TO A GOAL THAT CALLS FORTH ACTIONS

The process is a little different, if the goal statement does **not call forth actions**. Here, you need to help move focus away from what they want now, to what they want eight weeks from now.

My goal is to lose 45 pounds to help my diabetes. (This goal does not call forth actions.)

Ok. Do you think you'll be able to start working on that next week?

Well, I do have a lot of appointments next week. And, I'm not sure how to get started with weight loss. I've failed at diets so many times.

Sounds like new eating habits could improve your health issue. But, maybe there are some things you need to figure out and work on before you can get started.

Yes, I suppose you're right.

Could maybe trying to eat 4 healthy dinners each week be your eight-week goal? That would give you time to prepare and build up to something to help with weight management over the next few weeks.

Let's go with that.

Okay, so your goal would be:

In order to – better manage my diabetes

By - 8 weeks from now,

My whole health goal is – eat 4 healthier dinners each week

My Final Goal Statement

Take turns asking each other these questions about your own goal statements. This will help you figure out the direct benefits of your goal.

-Why do you want this goal?

-What will get better or be the benefits?

-How will your life be different, if you accomplish this goal?

-If you accomplish this goal, what will you be able to do that you can't or aren't doing now?

Here are some questions you can use if you need help writing a stronger goal:

Have you ever been able to do this activity before?

Have you known anyone to reach this goal in 8 weeks, starting from where you are right now?

If you were a betting person, would you be willing to bet \$100 that you'll meet this goal in the next 8 weeks?

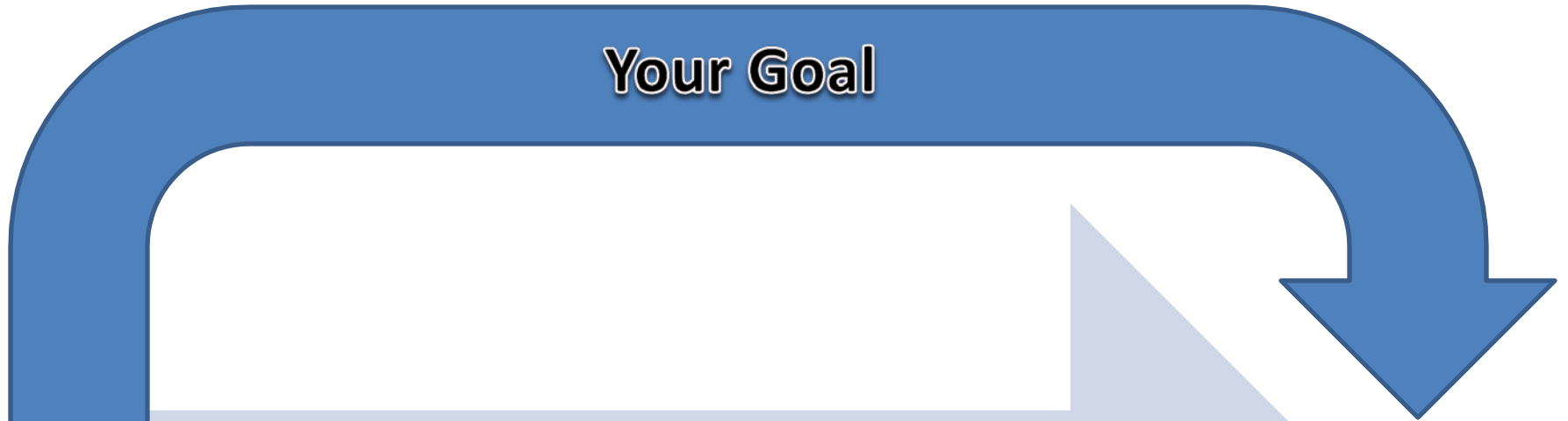
Try re-writing your goal statement to reflect all 6 IMPACT criteria.

WHY - In order to (explains why I want to achieve this goal or what I see as the potential benefits):

WHEN - By 8 weeks from now (we are using 8 weeks to match the group meetings)

WHAT - My whole health and resiliency goal is (explains what I want to do on a regular basis to create a new, healthy habit. Include how much and how often you will perform this activity.):

Your Goal



Achieved

Weekly Action Plan Steps

Start

Week
1

Week
2

Week
3

Week
4

Week
5

Week
6

Week
7

Week
8

Creating a Weekly Action Plan

A **weekly action plan** will help you accomplish your goal. It is crucial to your success. Your actions need to be healthy behaviors that you can do multiple times during a given week to work on your goal. Complete the following statement to help you think of different tasks you might do in case of barriers to your weekly action plans. Some of the things I could possibly do each week to accomplish my goal are:

1)

2)

3)

4)

5)

6)

7)

8)

Creating a Weekly Action Plan (continued)

Using your whole health goal, use this handout to practice creating a Weekly Action Plan.

To be most successful, every week your action plan must answer the following questions.

- 1) What will you do?
- 2) How much will you do?
- 3) How often will you do it?
- 4) When will you do it?

Example Action-Oriented Goals

Stress Management:

- 1) What will you do? **I will do the Relaxation Response**
- 2) How much will you do? **10 minutes**
- 3) How often will you do it? **Four days this week**
- 4) When will you do it? **Before I go to work**

Healthy Eating:

- 1) What will you do? **I will eat fruits and vegetables**
- 2) How much will you do? **Three servings of fruits and/or vegetables**
- 3) How often will you do it? **Three different days this week**
- 4) When will you do it? **At lunch and/or dinner**

Physical Activity:

- 1) What will you do? **I will walk**
- 2) How much will you do? **One-half mile**
- 3) How often will you do it? **Three times this week**
- 4) When will you do it? **After work and before dinner**

Restful Sleep:

- 1) What will you do? **Turn off the TV and take a warm bath**
- 2) How much will you do? **For 20 minutes**
- 3) How often will you do it? **Three times this week**
- 4) When will you do it? **At 10:00pm**

Creating a Weekly Action Plan (continued)

Example Action-Oriented Goals

Service to Others:

- 1) What will you do? **Volunteer tutoring**
- 2) How much will you do? **One hour**
- 3) How often will you do it? **Twice this week**
- 4) When will you do it? **After school**

Support Network:

- 1) What will you do? **Attend a support group**
- 2) How much will you do? **For one hour**
- 3) How often will you do it? **Once a week**
- 4) When will you do it? **In the evening**

Optimism Based on Positive Expectations:

- 1) What will you do? **Positive Affirmations**
- 2) How much will you do? **One affirmation repeated three times**
- 3) How often will you do it? **Three days**
- 4) When will you do it? **Early morning and before bed**

Cognitive Skills to Avoid Negative Thinking:

- 1) What will you do? **Note my negative words**
- 2) How much will you do? **As much as possible**
- 3) How often will you do it? **As often as possible**
- 4) When will you do it? **When I catch myself**

Spiritual Beliefs and Practices:

- 1) What will you do? **Morning devotion**
- 2) How much will you do? **15 minutes**
- 3) How often will you do it? **Three days**
- 4) When will you do it? **Early morning**

A Sense of Meaning and Purpose:

- 1) What will you do? **Read an inspirational autobiography**
- 2) How much will you do? **30 minutes**
- 3) How often will you do it? **Four days**
- 4) When will you do it? **Before going to bed**

Weekly Action Plan

One of the most important self-management skills is goal setting. Breaking down a goal into “doable” steps and creating an action plan, can help you accomplish it. Remember, your action plan is what you want to do, can do, and enjoy doing each week to build towards meeting your goal.

What will you do?	Date/Week _____
How much will you do it?	
How often will you do it?	
When will you do it?	
How confident are you that you can meet your action plan this week?	
0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	
no confidence	total confidence
*If you rated less than 7, try changing how much, how often, or when you will work on your action plan. Or, see if you need more support or can work on removing barriers to success so you can rate 7 or more.	
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Daily Log Sheet

Date/Week: _____

Action Plan, or WHAT you are doing:

DAY	WHAT I DID	TIME/AMOUNT	WHAT HELPED OR DIDN'T HELP WITH ACTION
Monday			
Tuesday			
Wednesday			
Thursday			
Friday			
Saturday			
Sunday			

I participated in the *Peer Support Whole Health & Resiliency Group* this week: Yes No

On a scale of 1 to 7, circle the number that best shows your progress in reaching this action plan:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
No progress			Moderate progress			Met action plan completely

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News Briefs

June 2010

There is something about a shared experience that brings people together.

The experience can be just about anything – from a trip to the lake to getting swallowed up by the orange barrels during the morning commute. Shared experiences can form a bond between strangers in a matter of minutes because someone else knows what you are talking about, believes your story, and understands how you feel. That powerful connection spawned by the shared experience is at the very heart of the Peer Support Specialist movement.

People who have received mental health services are in a unique position to share their experiences – successes and failures – with others who are receiving mental health services. That experience is proving to be an invaluable component of our mental health services and supports.

Since 2006, the Michigan Department of Community Health has trained and certified 736 consumers to work as Peer Support Specialists in Michigan. In fact, Michigan's program has gained national acclaim and serves as a model for other states as they develop their own Peer Support Specialist programs.

Peer Support Specialists serve as mentors, guides, and key support personnel for our consumers. They are able to draw from their own experiences to help others navigate the mental health system, enhance their productivity, and increase their independence as they advance their journey of recovery. Because Peers have “been there, done that,” they have a unique ability to reach consumers and gain their trust – they have a shared experience. For consumers, being able to learn from someone who has gone before them, negotiated the human services system, and directed their own path to recovery is simply invaluable. It is also comforting and inspiring.

The Peer Support Specialist Program has been a collaborative effort between our department, consumers, Prepaid Inpatient Health Plans, and Community Mental Health Services Programs, as well as other stakeholders. Now, all across the state, Peer Support Specialists are helping guide mental health consumers. They have greatly strengthened the system of support we are able to offer, and they are helping lead the way when it comes to transforming our mental health system into one that is self-directed and recovery-based.

Our Peer Support Specialist program has been so successful, it has inspired a peer movement among people with developmental disabilities here in Michigan. In January, members of that pilot program gathered for their inaugural training session. They, too, are eager to help their peers and lead a transformation in services available for our citizens with developmental disabilities.

As we embrace a mental health system that is self-directed and focused on recovery, our consumers will play an integral role in its ongoing transformation, and our Peer Support Specialists will be at the forefront of these efforts. Their input and their leadership will benefit an entire state for generations to come.

There is no doubt that the Peer Support Specialist program is a success story, and it serves as just one example of the many successes – small and large – we help orchestrate every day.

~Janet Olszewski

Handout:
Getting Ready to See Your Doctor

Preparing for a visit with your doctor or health provider can help make the most of it.

<p>Bring with you to the doctor:</p>	<p>This form Your medical history (past surgeries, diagnoses, allergies) A list of your current medications (or bring the meds with you) Any X-rays or recent test results Your insurance card/information A pencil and paper to take notes An audio recorder or supportive person to take notes</p>
<p>Example questions to open the dialogue:</p> <p>You don't have to ask all (or any) of these questions! They are examples of questions that doctors say they'd like their patients to ask when discussing a medical condition, surgery, or treatment. You may have additional or completely different questions.</p>	<p>Do I have any medical conditions? How long will they last? Do I need any other tests? What is the treatment you're recommending? Why? Are there other or alternative therapies? What over-the-counter medications would be helpful? What prescription medications would be helpful? What are the side effects? Will my present medications interfere with new medications?</p> <p>Should my diet change? Are there certain foods that I should eat or avoid? What lifestyle changes should I make?</p> <p>Should I schedule a follow-up visit? How long should I wait before seeing you again? Where can I get more information?</p>
<p>My top 3 questions for the doctor:</p> <p>Write what the doctor says on the back of this sheet. If you have lots of questions or instructions, ask your doctor if you can record your conversation.</p>	<p>1.</p> <p>2.</p> <p>3.</p>

Taking Care of Oneself – Fourteen Ways

1. ***Do something special for yourself.*** Have your hair done, go out for dinner or a movie, or buy yourself a gift.
2. ***Do something that gives you space from the tensions and stress of life.*** Go for a ride, take a walk, window shop.
3. ***Do something that engages your creativity or talents.*** Work in a garden, play the piano, write a poem.
4. ***Do something that you enjoy or that relaxes you.*** Listen to music, take a hot bath, read a book.
5. ***Do something that takes some of the chaos out of your life and gives you a sense of control.*** Organize your day, create a “to do” list, clean your house.
6. ***Do something that cuts your negative self-talk.*** Practice reality checks, create a Wall of Accomplishments, restate the actual situation (versus negative self-talk about it).
7. ***Do something that connects you with other people.*** Go to a support group, phone a friend, join a club.
8. ***Do something that connects you with your Higher Power.*** Go to a place of worship, meditate, pray, talk a walk in nature.
9. ***Do something that symbolizes a new decision you’ve made about how you are going to live.*** Take care of your personal hygiene each morning, dress nicely for the day, make a healthy food choice.
10. ***Do something to help someone else.*** Help in a soup kitchen, share with another person how you deal with difficulties, visit a shut-in.
11. ***Do something that prevents your old, unhealthy patterns from setting in.*** Schedule things you must do (so you don’t blow them off), keep busy, ask a friend to help you.
12. ***Do something that challenges your thinking.*** Read a book, go to a seminar, take a course.
13. ***Do something that helps you reflect regularly on your life.*** Write in a journal, keep a daily gratitude list, note your week’s accomplishments.
14. ***Do something that keeps you healthy.*** Exercise 30 minutes a day (or whatever your health or medical condition allows), start or keep a healthy diet, get adequate sleep.

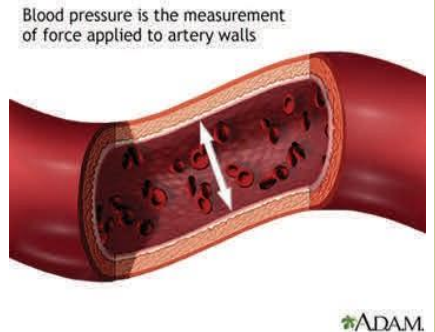
Blood Pressure

What is Blood Pressure?

Each time the heart beats, blood is carried throughout the body to deliver oxygen to our organs. Blood pressure is the force of the blood as it pushes against the walls of our blood vessels.

Your blood pressure is read as two numbers, such as "116 over 80." The top number is your systolic pressure, which measures the pressure of your blood in your arteries when your heart is pumping. The bottom number is your diastolic pressure, which measures the pressure of your blood while your heart is resting between beats.

Normal blood pressure is 120/80. At this level, your blood is flowing normally and is not causing undue stress on your heart.



What is High Blood Pressure?

Blood pressure goes up and down naturally throughout the day. It is lowest when you sleep and it rises when you get up. It also can go up when you get nervous, stressed, active, or excited. It also may rise when you have caffeine or nicotine.

Blood pressure readings are interpreted like this:

Normal = less than 120/80

Pre-hypertensive = 120-139/80-89

High blood pressure = 140/90+



When it goes up and stays high, it's called high blood pressure. When this happens, your heart has to pump harder than it should to move blood around your body. The medical term for high blood pressure is hypertension. Hypertension does not mean being overly nervous or excitable. In fact, you can have hypertension and not even know it. It's important to manage high blood pressure to avoid serious complications.

To learn more about blood pressure and a heart healthy lifestyle, visit:

http://www.heart.org/HEARTORG/GettingHealthy/GettingHealthy_UCM_001078_SubHomePage.jsp

Managing High Blood Pressure

Most of the salt people eat comes from processed & restaurant foods. Try to eat at home more often.

Start by cutting the amount of salt you put on your food in half. Work up to no salt.

Do not add any salt when cooking.

Salt (called sodium) raises your blood pressure. Take heart! You can still eat tasty foods.

Green Light Foods



- ⇒ Fresh fish, fresh lean meat, and fresh poultry
- ⇒ Fresh or frozen vegetables
- ⇒ Low-sodium canned veggies (but try not to eat these often)
- ⇒ Herbs, spices, lemon, lime, or vinegar instead of salt
- ⇒ Flavorful, no-salt spices at the grocery store (like lemon pepper)
- ⇒ Low-sodium barbeque sauce, mustard, and ketchup (but only in small portions)
- ⇒ Low-sodium breakfast cereals, non-microwavable popcorn, and pretzels (in small portions)

Red Light Foods



- ⇒ Soda, including diet soda
- ⇒ Frozen dinners and packaged dinners
- ⇒ Instant or flavored rice or pasta kits
- ⇒ Canned soup or canned broth
- ⇒ “Cured” foods like bacon or ham
- ⇒ Canned, smoked, or processed meats (like hot dogs or lunch meat)
- ⇒ Foods packed in brine like pickles, pickled vegetables, and olives
- ⇒ Soy sauce and teriyaki sauce (even low-sodium brands)

Limit your salt to 1500 mg a day.

Tips for Cutting Salt

Salt can raise your blood pressure.

You should eat only 1/4 teaspoon of salt each day.

That's the same as 1,500 mg each day.

Fresh foods usually have less salt

Cook at home

Restaurants add a lot of salt to their food. But, you can skip the salt when cooking for yourself.

Fill up on vegetables

Skip the salt

Use spices, herbs, vinegar, or lemon instead of salt when cooking.

Read food labels

You'll be surprised at how much salt is in prepared foods, including cereal and crackers.

Pay attention to flavorings

Avoid soy sauce, ketchup, salad dressing, and seasoning packets. If you need to use salted flavorings, use only a sprinkling instead of the whole thing.

Choose low-sodium dairy and protein foods

Deli and lunch meats, sausages, and canned meat are very high in salt.

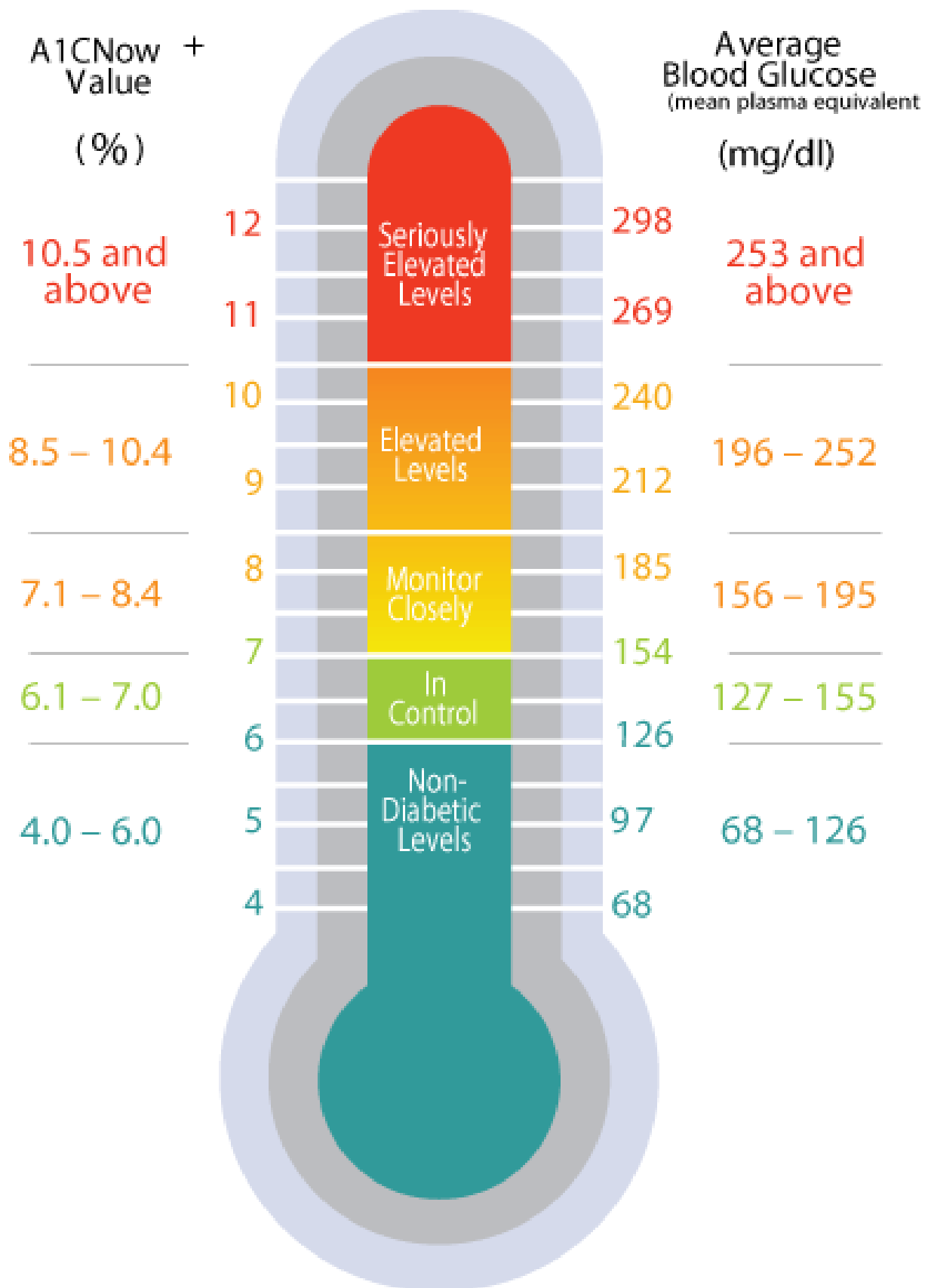
Cut back over time

Cut back little by little. You'll get used to less salt.

Boost your potassium

Potassium may help lower your blood pressure. Try a small banana, tomatoes, sweet potatoes, beans, or low-fat milk.

Understanding A1c and Blood Glucose Values



Diabetes Super Foods

*Worried
about the
expense of
fresh food
and fish?*

*~Buy fruits and
veggies frozen*

~Buy in season

*~Buy canned
or frozen fish*

*~Beans &
brown rice are
affordable and
healthy*

Here are the 10 best foods for people with diabetes.

1. Beans, dry or canned. Rinse canned beans before eating them.
2. Green, leafy vegetables like spinach, kale, and collards
3. Citrus fruit, like oranges, grapefruit, and lemons
4. Sweet potatoes
5. Berries
6. Tomatoes
7. Whole grains, like 100% whole wheat, rye, or spelt. Avoid white or enriched flours.
8. Nuts, especially walnuts and almonds
9. Baked fish
10. Fat-free dairy products

These 10 choices are low in sugar and fat.
They also are high in fiber.

What are Carbohydrates?

Good Carbs come from whole-grain cereals, oatmeal, brown rice, whole-grain bread, fruit, vegetables, and low-fat dairy.

Bad Carbs come from white sugar, white bread, white rice, soda or pop, alcohol, and candy.

Carbohydrates are an important source of energy for our bodies. Good carbs are part of a healthy diet.

Good carbs

- ⇒ Are used up more slowly in the body, like whole-grain breads or vegetables
- ⇒ Are higher in fiber and vitamins
- ⇒ Are better for your diabetes, since they make your blood sugar go up more slowly
- ⇒ Give you more energy for longer periods

Bad carbs

- ⇒ Are quickly used up by the body, like white flour and white rice
- ⇒ Cause blood sugar levels to rise quickly
- ⇒ Can make your diabetes worse
- ⇒ Give you energy fast, but then make you crash

Not all carbs are bad for you!

- ⇒ It's important to choose good carbs as often as possible
- ⇒ This will help keep your blood sugar stable

Avoid soda or sweetened drinks, alcohol, candy, donuts, & fast or processed foods.

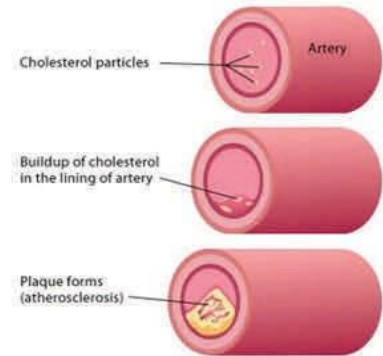
Cholesterol Facts

What is Cholesterol?

Cholesterol is a kind of fat in your blood. Among other things, it helps produce hormones and acids to digest fat in your body. Cholesterol is also found in certain foods like meat, dairy products, and eggs. We all need some cholesterol for our bodies to work well.

What is High Cholesterol?

High cholesterol means having more of it than is needed in the bloodstream. This happens either because our bodies make too much cholesterol or because we're eating foods that contain a lot of it (or both). Too much cholesterol builds up inside the arteries, slowing blood flow from the heart to the organs. Too much cholesterol in the arteries can lead to a stroke or heart attack.



There are two kinds of chemicals that carry cholesterol in the blood: LDL and HDL. LDL is "bad" cholesterol because it's the one that builds up in your arteries. HDL is "good" cholesterol because it helps flush cholesterol out of the body.

Related to cholesterol are triglycerides, or a type of fat in your blood. Your body uses triglycerides for energy, so you need some of them to be healthy. But having high triglycerides also can raise your risk of heart disease and may be a sign of metabolic syndrome.

Cholesterol is determined by a simple blood test:

Less than 200 mg/dL = Healthy
201-239 mg/dL = Borderline high
240 mg/dL and above = High

For best health, total cholesterol should be less than 200 mg/dL. HDL levels should be 60 or higher, LDL levels should be less than 100, and triglycerides should be less than 150.

Learn more about preventing or managing high cholesterol by visiting: <http://www.webmd.com/cholesterol-management/guide/cholesterol-management-overview>

Healthy vs. Unhealthy Fats

*Your body
needs good
fats!*

*Fat-free does
not always
mean healthy
for you. Many
“low or fat-free”
foods are high in
sugar, bad
carbs, calories,
and chemicals!*

Ever wonder about what is a good vs. bad fat?

Try adding these to your diet:

Good fats: Omega-3s (Do not fry the fish!)

- Salmon
- Trout , Catfish, Mackerel
- Flaxseed
- Walnuts
- Fish oil pills (Take with food, and make sure they contain both DHA and EPA.)

Good fats: Mono-saturated (A couple of handfuls of nuts will do!)

- Avocados
- Hazelnuts, Almonds, Brazil nuts, Cashews
- Sesame seeds
- Pumpkin seeds
- Tofu
- Olive, vegetable, and peanut oils

Limit or cut these from your diet:

Bad fats: Saturated fats

- High-fat cuts of meat (beef, lamb, and pork)
- Chicken with the skin
- High-fat dairy products (such as whole milk and soft cheeses)
- Coconut oil, Palm oil

Very bad fats: Trans fatty acids

- Fried foods
- Store-bought baked goods and cookies
- Store-bought icings and frostings
- Packaged snack foods and crackers
- Microwave popcorn
- Stick margarines and shortening
- Store-bought salad dressing

Tips for Cutting Fats

Omega-3s are a super food!

They can:

- ⇒ *boost your mood*
- ⇒ *protect against memory loss*
- ⇒ *reduce the risk of heart disease, stroke, & cancer*
- ⇒ *ease arthritis, joint pain, & inflammatory skin conditions*

You need healthy fats in your diet.

Essential (good) fats keep your skin soft and give you energy. You need 10% of your daily calories from good fats like Omega-3s.

Saturated fats raise your blood cholesterol.

Trans fats are even worse!

They raise your bad LDL cholesterol and also lower your good HDL cholesterol!

Choose healthy, low-fat options.

Try whole grains, fruits, vegetables, and beans.

Choose skim or low-fat dairy products.

Cook with small amounts of olive oil or vegetable oil.

Check your flavorings.

Replace high-fat sauces with vinegars, mustards, and lemon juice. Make your own salad dressing or use olive oil on salads.

Read food labels.

Watch out for “partially hydrogenated oil” in the ingredients. Even if the food says it is “trans fat free,” if it contains partially hydrogenated oil, it’s bad for you!

Be wise when eating out.

Skip all fried foods, high fat meats, dishes with cheese, dishes with butter or cream sauces, sour cream, biscuits, and baked goods.

Signs of Recovery

I know that I am moving forward in my recovery when...

...I find myself questioning people who say I will not recover.

...I become more aware of those things that I am good at.

...I know what I can handle and what I need to share with the professionals.

...I am able to set up safeguards for myself.

...I learn from my peers and get support from them.

...I see trouble coming before it arrives.

...I think I may have a chance.

...I know who and what are not good for me.

...I realize what sets me off and stresses me out.

...I know how to work the system.

...I know when my behavior is appropriate and inappropriate.

...I am able to hear “hope” from my peers - “Hang in, it’s not forever.”

...I know the difference between symptoms and stigma, and am developing coping skills for each.

...I believe I can recover.

...I know when to leave a situation because it has given me all it can.

...I realize that my past life has value.

...I know when I need a special kind of help and seek it out.

...I know that sharing with peers helps put things in perspective.

Extra Weekly Action Plans and Daily Logs

Weekly Action Plan

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<p>What will you do?</p> <p>How much will you do it?</p> <p>How often will you do it?</p> <p>When will you do it?</p> <p>How confident are you that you can meet your action plan this week?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10</p> <p style="text-align: center;">no confidence total confidence</p> <p><small>*If you rated less than 7, try changing how much, how often, or when you will work on your action plan. Or, see if you need more support or can work on removing barriers to success so you can rate 7 or more.</small></p>	<p>Date/Week _____</p>
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Daily Log Sheet

Date/Week: _____

Action Plan, or WHAT you are doing:

DAY	WHAT I DID	TIME/AMOUNT	WHAT HELPED OR DIDN'T HELP WITH ACTION
Monday			
Tuesday			
Wednesday			
Thursday			
Friday			
Saturday			
Sunday			

I participated in the *Peer Support Whole Health & Resiliency Group* this week: Yes No

On a scale of 1 to 7, circle the number that best shows your progress in reaching this action plan:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
No progress			Moderate progress			Met action plan completely

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