

5 Ways to Succeed at Maintaining Weight Loss



By Alice Greene

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Introduction

You've Worked Hard to Lose the Weight You Want to Fully Enjoy It

Not everyone gets to enjoy the reward of losing weight. In fact very few get to enjoy it for long, because too often they regain the weight just as fast as they took it off. Many sadly end up even heavier than before they started their weight loss efforts.

The more often you lose weight only to regain it, the harder it becomes to lose it the next time.

It doesn't have to be this way. You can successfully lose weight and enjoy how good that feels when you understand the reasons why weight loss seldom lasts and what really works to lose the weight for the long-term.

Understand why:

- Those with the fastest weight loss are more likely to gain it back,
- The more you deprive yourself the more likely you will lose control,
- Once you reach your goal, easing off to enjoy the results backfires,
- The program that worked once won't always work again, and
- Once you are thin, your life doesn't change the way you expect.

And then learn what you can do to keep off the weight you have lost, stay in control, enjoy the results, get a routine that keeps you slim and have the life you really want for yourself.

What you are going to read is based on years of helping and watching people become weight loss success stories. What really works is the opposite of what most people believe it takes, and that shouldn't be a big surprise. Few people succeed at long-term weight loss, so clearly what is being promoted as the solution doesn't work.

Instead those who are success stories have learned the secret, and they are as excited now about healthy eating and fitness as they were when they lost weight. In the process they changed their bodies and their minds, and so can you. It is much easier than you might think.

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Understanding #1

Those Who Have the Fastest Weight Loss Are More Likely to Gain it Back

You may believe that rapid weight loss is a sign of success and that you should have immediate changes in your weight when you start eating better or becoming more active. But the truth is that a rapid drop in your weight is a warning sign that your body is undergoing a drastic drop in metabolism and struggling to get the energy it needs, which is primarily a stored form of carbohydrates called glucose or glycogen, to perform basic cellular, brain and muscle functions. This is exactly what you do not want.

When you don't get enough to eat, because you are restricting calories and skipping meals, the body becomes severely stressed. Chemically, the body does a number of things to deal with this severe shortage of energy and stress.

The body:

- slows down its metabolism to conserve energy,
- attempts to extract glucose and glycogen from tissue and muscle, which creates a significant release of water and fluids (our bodies are 70% water),
- stops releasing fat and begins to hoard it, and
- releases the stress hormone, cortisol, which further accelerates fat storage.

The weight that is lost in the first week of severe calorie restrictions is about 90-95% water and 5-10% muscle. In the second and third week, there is greater percent of muscle lost along with more fluid. By the fourth week, the body is desperate to find the energy it needs and begins to convert fat into a type of usable glucose through ketosis.

The use of fat as fuel through ketosis is a further warning sign. When the body resorts to ketosis, the bio-chemical messengers have fully switched the body over to fat storage and turned off the ability for fat releasing under

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Understanding #1 (continued)

normal conditions. Fat releasing through ketosis is very different than fat releasing through normal metabolic functioning.

This means that after a diet ends, the body will not easily revert back to its prior ability to release fat. This situation is worsened by the fact that the metabolism does not quickly or easily return to its normal state either. So when you stop restricting foods and go back to eating larger quantities, the additional calories will primarily be stored as fat because the body has a lower metabolic rate and is in an active fat storing mode. At this point there will be no need for ketosis, so none of the stored fat will be converted for fuel.

The secret to weight loss success that lasts is to accelerate your fat releasing and fat burning while increasing your metabolic rate. This is done by increasing your level of activity at moderate enough levels to be in a fat burning zone, which in turn increases your fat releasing bio-chemicals. It also occurs by increases the amount of muscle you have, which burns more energy than other tissues in the body and increases your metabolism. And it is done by increasing the amount of healthy food you eat to fuel your activities and eating more frequently.

Optimal calories to fuel metabolism is determined by eating when you are hungry and eating enough to be satisfied and not full. It can also be determined by tracking calories burned and eating 200-500 calories less each day. Restricting any further can signal a need for fat storing.

In summary:

- Focusing on diet as the mechanism for weight loss creates greater fat storing and depresses the metabolism.
- Turning to aerobic and strengthening activities creates greater fat releasing and increases your metabolism.
- Eating food to fuel greater activity more frequently during the day further increases metabolic rates.

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Understanding #2

The More You Deprive Yourself The More Likely You Will Lose Control

Most programs designed to help you lose weight have one thing in common: a list of forbidden foods. You have been told again and again that the secret to weight loss is to avoid certain foods, and over time you have a long list in your head of what you can and cannot have.

To ensure you don't eat these things, you have an inner parental or authoritative voice that works to enforce these beliefs. It is the voice you can often hear as you reach for your favorite cookies, candy and desserts or when you want something you know you shouldn't have.

Sometimes the voice keeps you in check, but inevitably you rebel against it and stop caring what it says. At that point, you are out of control and eating as much of the forbidden food as you can while you can. Afterwards you are sick and disgusted with yourself. You know you can be good, so it can be very confusing and discouraging when you think you've been bad.

Three things are going on that set you up for overeating or bingeing on forbidden foods.

- You are denying a need you have to enjoy a favorite food and to be satisfied by your experience of eating. When you are deprived, you only want the food and experience more, and you turn your power of control over to the forbidden foods.
- You are judging foods as good or bad, which creates harsh self-criticism when the forbidden food rules aren't followed and you believe you are doing something bad. The more your inner critic tries to enforce your beliefs, the more the other part of you with needs rebels against this force.

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Understanding #2 (continued)

- You are judging yourself as good or bad. This leads to punishing yourself when you believe you are bad through more deprivation as well as emotional eating when you feel guilty and ashamed of your behavior

I call this restricted rebellion. It is also called deprivation backlash. And this rebellion and overeating of forbidden foods is to be expected whenever you deprive yourself of something you want.

This rebellion often occurs while you are being restricted from certain foods, which is why it is inevitable most people can't stay on a diet. It also typically happens after a diet ends, in an attempt to make up for what wasn't allowed. And it frequently happens just before a diet starts, in anticipation of being restricted.

This insatiable need to have certain foods or enough food, believe it or not, can just as easily happen because of a restriction in your childhood or at a time when food was in limited supply. Many people are emotionally trying to make up for what they couldn't have or were denied many years ago.

The compulsion to overeat can also occur when you eat a food you know you probably shouldn't have and tell yourself "just this once, or just one more". This creates a future deprivation and drives you to eat as much as you can now since you aren't sure when you will get it again.

The same idea applies to holidays, Girl Scout cookies or other one-time only events that involve food. Emotionally you fear that you won't get the food or meal again for a long time, so you overeat without getting to enjoy this food you don't want to miss out on.

The solution is to:

- Avoid labeling foods as good or bad. Instead focus on balance and all things in moderation.
- Give yourself permission to have any food you want it with some structure in place, so you don't fear being deprived or over doing it.

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Understanding #3

Once You Reach Your Goal Weight Easing Off to Enjoy the Results Backfires

How often have you stepped on the scale to discover you had lost a few pounds, which created the mindset you deserved a treat or could ease off on your diet or exercise?

This is what most people think and do, until they get back on the scale only to see it has gone back up. Then they typically go back to restricting themselves, punishing themselves with excess exercise, or feeling so emotional about being heavier they go on a food binge and resist exercising.

This type of mentality creates an emotional and behavioral roller coaster everytime you get on the scale, not knowing whether the numbers will be up or down, and then letting it affect your emotions, decisions and attitude. It also creates a win/lose or lose/lose relationship with your weight and the scale.

The same thing happens when you do a diet or participate in a fitness program with a singular goal to lose a specific number of pounds and walk away at a certain weight.

When you reach that weight, it feels like a major victory and that all the hard work and restrictions are behind you. Now you can live the fairy tale life of living happily ever after at your new weight. You can now relax the rules, eat what you want and exercise when or if you want to. And so it seems for about two weeks.

Losing the weight is only half the equation, and that half is very rewarding because you see so many changes in your body that encourages you to keep going.

Once you get to your target weight, you have to keep up the same pace of fitness activities and healthy eating choices. While it is called maintenance, what it takes to maintain your fit, slim and healthy body is no different than

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Understanding #3 (continued)

what you did to get back into shape and reclaim your figure and healthier weight.

It's common to believe that you don't have to keep up the routines to reach the goal if the goal has been met, yet to maintain the goal you have to keep doing just as much as you did to lose the weight in the first place.

It is a mindset shift from starting and stopping programs to lose weight to one of living a healthier and fit lifestyle to maintain a strong and great body.

Weight loss isn't a fixed end point. It isn't even the real goal. The real goal is to feel good about your body and yourself, as well as to achieve a healthier weight from living a healthier and more fit lifestyle.

What nearly everyone who becomes a weight loss success story learns, to their surprise, is that what they are most excited about isn't about losing weight. It is discovering all the things they can now do in their lives that they couldn't do before. They discover how wonderful they feel, how much they can do, and how much more they are living life because nothing stops them. They gain enthusiasm to follow their dreams, discover passions for things they never thought possible and delight in their new found self-confidence and self-esteem.

In summary, an easier approach to long-term sustainable weight loss is to:

- create a healthier and fit lifestyle you enjoy as a way of living,
- be motivated by what a great body will give you in your life,
- let your weight take care of itself (and stop focusing on it),
- enjoy how good it feels to be active and eat for satisfaction, and
- look for ways to gain greater self-confidence and self-esteem.

In the meantime, notice how you react and the choices you make when you step on the scale or reach your goal weight. Then notice if you like the way that runs your life or your lifestyle choices.

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Understanding #4

The Program or Routine That Worked Once Won't Always Work Again

Everyone who has succeeded in losing weight believes they have finally found the answer. There are countless dieting, fitness and weight loss books written by people who had success and believe their answer is right for everyone else. Not only is their solution probably not right for others, it may not even work the second time around.

Here are a few reasons why their programs may not be right for you.

- Following someone else's rules creates the belief that they are right and you don't know enough to make your own rules or know what is best for your body. The truth is no one knows your body better than you.
- Everyone's metabolism, hormones and chemistry is a bit different, and what works for one person doesn't mean it will work the same way for you.
- What one person enjoys and finds a positive experience may not be so pleasant for you, and if you don't enjoy it you won't stick with it. For example, the gal who wrote a book about eating dinner for breakfast and breakfast for dinner, because that's how she lost weight. Few people want to do that, and for many it wouldn't work.

Here's why their programs might not work well twice.

- If it is a diet, the body will recognize it as additional evidence that you are at risk of starving and will further work to store additional fat. The more often you restrict food, the more the body works to ensure its survival.
- The more you diet, the more weight you will gain after the fact. There is growing consensus that dieting leads to obesity in many people.
- If it is exercise that you start and stop, new research is finding that it gets

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Understanding #4 (continued)

harder to lose weight from exercising after a period of non-activity. Consistency is the key to losing and keeping weight off.

- If it is hard core exercise that you don't really enjoy, you will have a mental and emotional resistance to doing it again. This resistance creates stress in the body, which increases cortisol and fat-storing. It also makes you more likely to skip sessions, to perform the exercises without good form which sets you up for an injury, or to give up and quit before the program ends.

Okay, so you may be wondering what does work. The answer is actually fairly simple because it is based on what you think sounds most appealing, is something that feels good to your body, and leaves you wanting to see what more you can do.

Here's how to apply this to fitness.

- Think of an aerobic, fitness or mind-body activity that really sounds like fun, such as dancing, yoga, Tai Chi, hiking, rowing or tennis.
- Start off with easy goals you can meet and at a pace you can maintain. When you have success, notice how good it feels and how much more you want to do or what new things you want to try.
- Then increase your goals by about 5-10% for duration or intensity.
- Add in bursts of higher intensity to increase your fitness level.
- Mix up your activities, frequency, duration, intensity for greater enjoyment and to avoid having your body plateau.
- Periodically try a fitness program that appeals to you as part of your routine to stretch yourself further and get new insights, but don't make it the central activity. Add it into other things you still enjoy doing.

You can also apply this to food.

- Pay attention to what feels good to your body and what doesn't, without judgment about what you should or shouldn't be eating.
- Choose foods that are both satisfying and leave you feeling good, and you'll find you gravitate to healthier choices without overeating.
- The healthier you eat, the more you'll want to try other healthy foods and perhaps even start to cook.

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Understanding #5

Once You Are Thin Your Life Doesn't Change the Way You Expect

It is so easy to believe that being thin is the ticket to being lovable, getting the perfect man and job, having a great life and feeling good about yourself. But it doesn't work that way for very many people.

In fact, being thin can

- take a while to get used to,
- feel threatening and uncomfortable,
- disrupt relationships,
- attract unwanted attention, and
- create insecurities.

Many people will tell you, and I am one of them, that it takes a long time to settle into a thinner body. You won't recognize yourself as thin right away and you will likely carry the fat girl and her insecurities around with you for a while.

You may even find being thinner somewhat uncomfortable because it isn't as easy to hide. You'll be encouraged to wear tighter clothes and show your new figure off. You'll start getting noticed and compliments that may feel unnerving.

Those around you won't love you more, as you may have expected, because you are thinner, in fact some may become threatened or jealous by your weight loss. You may lose some friends who no longer feel comfortable around you or you may have issues with a mate who worries you'll leave for someone better.

When you focus on being thin for getting the love or life you deserve and for increasing your self-esteem, you fail to see how wonderful you already are. Instead you become highly critical of yourself, finding many reasons to hate your body instead of embracing its many special gifts. This won't change when you lose the weight. You will still look in the mirror and see the flaws

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Understanding #5 (continued)

if you haven't come to love yourself first. Even celebrities and models, who appear perfect, can struggle with their imperfections.

The solution is to gain self-confidence and self-love whether you are losing weight or not, and to lose the weight slowly and steadily over time so you can adjust to your body's changes.

Ways to gain self-confidence:

- Set totally realistic activity goals you know with 100% certainty you can achieve, so you can gain confidence in yourself.
- Always created goals that set you up for success, instead of setting goals you may not be able to reach.
- With each success, stretch yourself a tiny bit so you can see yourself make an improvement and you can feel good about it.
- Don't judge yourself if you don't fully reach the new goal. Instead acknowledge what you did accomplish and consider what really interfered with your ability to meet the goal you initially set.
- Set new goals using your insight about the challenges and making sure the goals are designed for you to succeed.

Ways to gain self-love:

- Find five things you like about yourself, and include at least two things about your body.
- Identify one part of your body you don't like and acknowledge how that part has served you over the years. Then ask that part what it needs from you.
- Listen to your self-talk and see if you think what you are saying to yourself is really true or fair. Then notice where these words are really coming from and who used to say them in the past.
- You have the power to change the self-talk and self-criticism by challenging the judgment and changing your beliefs.
- Know that there is nothing you need to fix about yourself. You only need to accept and love yourself for who you are. By doing that you will find this mirrored back to you by the people in your life.

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About Alice Greene

America's Healthy Lifestyle Coach

Hi, I am America's Healthy Lifestyle Coach and president of Feel Your Personal Best.

My mission is to change people's attitude about healthy eating, fitness and wellbeing and to show them an easier and more enjoyable way to make healthy and fit choices that feel so good and satisfying they don't want to stop their new lifestyle behaviors.

I do this by combining the power of coaching techniques with the principles of personal training, physical therapy, nutrition, intuitive eating, and emotional eating.

It was my own journey to creating a healthy lifestyle, after burning out on a high-tech career and putting my health and fitness last for more than twenty years, that gave me insights about what was missing from all the diet and fitness programs. I discovered that the key to being a fitness and weight loss success story (now for 8 years) was not by adhering strictly to specific programs but by focusing on a positive vision, giving myself permission to choose activities and foods I enjoyed, setting more achievable goals at a moderate pace, being gentle and forgiving with myself, and focusing on how good I felt with each passing month rather than a number on the scale. In the process I became a success story and changed my attitude and perspective about healthy eating, exercise, my body and myself.

I am the author of the soon to be released book *Inspired to Feel Good: Making healthy and fit choices so rewarding and liberating you never want to stop* and co-author of the bestseller *Wake Up Women: Be Happy, Healthy and Wealthy*.

I also authored a series of healthy lifestyle coaching guidebooks for organizations. And I am the former co-host of the talk radio show, *Live Your Personal Best*, which featured women sharing their healthy lifestyle success stories.

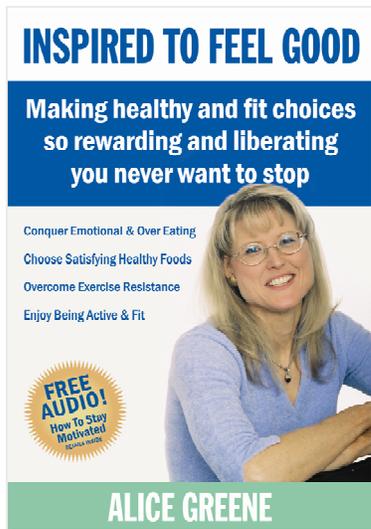
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Next Steps

Additional Resources

Continue to learn more tips and insights about how to succeed at living a fit and healthy lifestyle to lose weight by subscribing to my e-newsletter at www.feelyourpersonalbest.com/free_report.asp

You will also be notified of upcoming tele-events, tele-classes, programs and any new e-books.



Feel Your Personal Best™ *Healthy Living*

A Personal Connection

I had to laugh at myself this week, because I did just what I tell others not to do. I got caught up in what the "experts" in fitness are promoting now for greater fitness and physique results. Actually it isn't all that new, but it sounded better and more enticing to me this time around.

The recommendations were essentially to over train by doing one of two things. One is intense cardio intervals where the bulk of the time is spent above the anaerobic threshold (85-95% of your heart rate max) with short recovery times. This is the opposite of interval training where you have longer recovery times after high exertion.

And the other is to replace aerobic cardio with endurance strength training, where your heart rate stays above 85% of your max the entire time. Normally when you do strength training your heart rate is above that threshold, and that is fine because you take time to rest between sets. With endurance training you don't generally take rest stops unless you are getting winded. The more you do this type of training the more accustomed you get to it and your heart rate will come down and fluctuate in and out of the aerobic zone (between 50-85% of your max heart rate).

I've been doing endurance training for a while, but the idea of replacing my aerobic cardio with this was a novel idea to me. So I decided to try a combination of this with the anaerobic intervals. I am fit enough to try this, but you might have to wonder about my mental state. If you listen to the "experts" they will tell you this will accelerate your metabolism, but it can also have the opposite effect and drop it like a stone. You have to eat enough to support a rising metabolism or it will go the other way. I knew all this, and I knew that it wasn't as easy as the "experts" like to make it all sound.

What I got was fatter around my waist and a short lived migraine about an hour after my sessions. As one of my colleagues reminded me when I told her, I should have known better. I did this once before by mistake and got the same results. Fortunately the results will be gone as fast as they came and I'll just be left with my smaller perimenopausal muffin top by this weekend.

So now I will get back to walking my talk, and striving for a mix of intensities and doing things in moderation.

To feeling your personal best,
Alice

In This Issue

A Personal Connection
Upcoming Events
Radio Show weekly update
Is Your Dr. Part of the Problem?

Upcoming Events

How to Series on Living Your Personal Best Tele-Programs Live with me

Join me: Tuesday
March 25th at 8pm (ET)

How to Increase Metabolism

- Who has low metabolisms
- How metabolism really works
- What impacts metabolic rate
- What revs up metabolism
- Why it takes time to change it
- What approaches will work to increase your metabolism

Do you really understand how your metabolism works? Few people do. Which means you may be making decisions that make it tougher to lose weight or improve your energy.

Register for the call and receive dial in details.

For those that don't make the call, we will make the recording available to you.

Get an autographed copy of my latest book on how to succeed at having a healthy and fit lifestyle that is easy to stick with, so you can reach your ideal weight and maintain it. Visit www.inspiredtofeelgood.com/book Also available at bookstores or online retailers.

Connect to me through my blog at www.feelyourpersonalbest.com/blog, Facebook, Linked In or Twitter. I look forward to hearing from you and learning about your own weight loss success journey.