

What to Do When Your Excuses Sabotage Your Health

How should we deal with excuses, especially our own? People send me all sorts of questions. One of the ones I'm most often asked is, "Why can't I lose weight?" This usually comes after sharing a long list of weight-loss excuses.

Excuses

I totally understand every excuse they give me. I've had every one of them myself, and I've given every one of them to well-meaning dietitians, doctors, counselors and friends.

With tears in her eyes, one of my friends said to me after I'd lost 250 pounds, "I saw what you were doing to yourself by eating candy by the bagful. I asked my mom if I should say something to you. She told me I should, but I wonder, would you have listened?"

I thought about it awhile and said, "No it wouldn't have listened. I knew what I was doing was bad for me, I just felt I couldn't help myself. I would have just given you about 10 excuses why it was OK for me to be doing what I shouldn't be doing."

"What could I have done?"

What Can You Do?

That's a question that has haunted me for the last few years. When someone near to you confronts the failure you already know you have, you can do one of two things: agree with them and be honest or give them an excuse about why you are doing what you are doing and tell them you don't need any help. I would have done the latter. The one who helped me the most was a rude cardiac surgeon who told me I had congestive heart

failure and would die in five years if I didn't lose weight and keep it off. This was tough truth, but it came from a professional, so I couldn't excuse it away.

Because of the surgeon's honesty, I sought out a coach I knew could help me. And because I paid him, I listened to him. But I also listened because he didn't allow me to make excuses.

He didn't say, "OK, you get a pass. You just need to stay where you are. There's no hope for you." He did just the opposite. He challenged me by asking me questions that made me search for my own answers. Advice is a dime a dozen. I can get it from anyone, but the patience to allow me to discover my own answers only comes from a coach who has walked in my shoes.

Own Your Answers

The truth is until we find our answers and own them, we won't go forward. In my coaching programs, I am well aware of this. I help members discover, with God's help, what works for them. Of course, I give some advice about what worked for me, but I never tell them what to eat or not eat. To me the more important thing for them to discover is why they continue eating past the point where they need more fuel.

It's my conviction that we all know what we are supposed to do, we just don't do it. This was certainly true in my case. My coaches led me to dig deep to uncover the hidden roots that precluded me from success. These were things that were keeping me from owning that I could even be victorious. They were emotional excuses that were still driving my bus into the ditch every time I attempted a weight loss program.

It felt like everything was against me, but that was just because I was working against myself. On some level, I didn't want to lose weight if it meant giving up the foods I loved and craved.

Sabotaging Ourselves

Probably the greatest breakthrough came when I began processing why I always sabotaged my weight loss. I'm not alone in this tendency. That's the way the weight loss industry stays in business through repeat customers. Most people who have been morbidly obese and lose weight will gain it back when triggered.

The triggers are usually some family tragedy such as death, divorce or illness. It could be a job loss, a church split, the waywardness of a grown child or grandchild. Or something as seemingly insignificant as having a bad day.

We may say, "Well that's bound to happen. They need comfort during these hard times of stress." We all do, but we must figure out why we use food, alcohol, drugs, sex, pornography, smutty romance novels, spending money we don't have and other means to comfort us.

The Issue Is the Why

We think the problem lies in whatever is happening in our lives at the moment, like a job loss. We think if we can just find a job, we will settle down and lose weight. The issue isn't the job loss. The issue is why we react to the job loss by overeating.

When I began to see the truth that my underlying issues began way back in childhood setting up emotional roadblocks in my life, it made all the difference in the world.

I chose food, especially things made with sugar and flour, as my comfort back there. Through freedom principles, I worked through those issues and reconnected with the only One who could really give me comfort—God Himself.

Understand: I was a Christian, but there was an obvious disconnect in my behaviors. "For the good I desire to do, I do

not do, but the evil I do not want is what I do" (Rom. 7:19).

Extreme Issues

I kept my perceptions, attitudes and issues in a deep, dark cellar. When they would try to break out and ruin everyone's day with anger, frustration, depression, bitterness or fear, I would throw food at them to keep quiet and hidden so no one would know the real me. One look at my before picture and you can tell, I had a lot I was trying to keep hidden.

Freedom principles helped me uncover the reasons I was destroying my own attempts to lose weight. They helped me confront my fears and replace them with faith. They helped me accept that my anger is there for a reason and embrace it as part of who I am. They helped me let go of the frustration of trying to do everything perfectly or just trying to do everything on my list period.

Freedom principles helped me lose more than 250 pounds and keep it off. They literally helped save my life.

I no longer need excuses. I have owned my issues. I am a sugar addict, saved by God's grace and mercy. I walk in truth each day. If I am pulled to eat what I have made a covenant with God and myself that I won't eat, I own my decision. It's in owning it that I throw away the excuses. They only put me back in bondage, and I will not go back there. God has set me free, not partially free, but wonderfully and completely free. I will always cherish this truth and stubbornly refuse to go back to the bondage of my past (Gal 5:1). {eoa}

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