

Make Your Weight-Loss Goals a Reality

Best-selling author Dr. Don Colbert says when it comes to losing weight, people fight against their own brain and body chemistry. This conflict prevents them from shedding the pounds and keeping them off.

In his new book, Dr. Colbert's "I Can Do This" Diet, he offers a lifestyle plan that works with the body and enables those who follow it to lose excess weight and keep it off. 

Colbert addresses all the factors that affect weight—emotions, behavior, mental state, diet, hormones, body chemicals and lifestyle. In addition, he offers an interactive survey at to help individuals identify what is preventing them from losing weight.

"As a medical doctor, I deal every day with getting results—verifiable results—that prove a patient is on his way to long-term health, not just fixing an immediate problem," Colbert explains. "And that is what this book is about."

The Buzz offers an excerpt from Dr. Colbert's "I can Do This" Diet. (Click here to purchase this book.)

You Have a Choice

Dieting has a way of turning life into a roller-coaster ride. You lose weight only to gain it back—or you gain even *more* weight—and after a while it becomes difficult to find yet another reason why you should even bother. In more than 25 years of practicing medicine, I have met countless former dieters stuck in this self-defeating mental attitude, and it was sabotaging whatever hope they once had of losing weight.

The truth is, your biggest obstacle for weight loss is your

thinking. If you want to lose weight but have been on this yo-yo dieting adventure I am referring to, I'm sure you could come up with 101 different excuses for not dieting. After all, who wants to be on a boring, rigid, tasteless diet? It is never fun to deprive yourself. And yet none of us want to be overweight or obese. We want to look good, feel good, and live a healthy life.

It's Your Life

Take a look at the top 10 excuses for not dieting:

"I just can't resist my favorite foods."

"My social life is just too crazy."

"I don't have time to lose weight or plan meals."

"My family and friends won't support me."

"I don't have anyone to hold me accountable."

"It's too confusing to find which diet works for me."

"I travel too much."

"Dieting is too restrictive."

"It's too expensive to diet."

Do you see the potential for a downward spiral when you start this type of thinking? It is a self-propelling trap in which so many dieters are caught. They become virtual excuse makers, first blaming circumstances and then themselves for their failures. Most reach a culminating point where they either give in to complete resignation or go see a doctor like me for some last-resort help.

The common problem I see among repeat dieters is that they do not focus on the simple lifestyle and dietary changes that are needed, but instead they focus on their weight. When their weight does not budge, they then get discouraged and many times stop the program all together. And on the other extreme, when they do hit their target weight, they abandon all reason and quickly slide back into their old eating patterns—the same ones that got them on the diet in the first place!

Why Do You Really Want to Lose Weight?

It's great to set your mind to something and to accept responsibility for your actions, both past and future. Yet such a radical shift in perspective can easily become just another mental pep talk that eventually fizzles out. What must accompany this change of heart is an underlying reason—one that, in fact, comes straight from the heart. To switch to a “can do” kind of lifestyle, you need something that compels you from deep within.

I have found over the years that if your motive for losing weight is for any person other than for yourself, chances are high that you will fail. You should be doing this for *you*, to make *you* healthy, and not to please someone else. Unfortunately, too many women are tempted to lose weight for their spouses or boyfriends. Inevitably, these are the women who find themselves back in the blame-shame-guilt cycle after that person ends up walking out of their lives. I hate to sound cynical, but I have seen too many women do this and wind up gradually gaining all their weight back.

Many obese people are the same way. They have heard plenty of reasons from others why they should lose weight, yet they lack a personal driving force for why they should do it. If you are overweight and have never identified this reason, I urge you to do what I suggest to my obese patients: disrobe in front of a full-length mirror at home and analyze yourself from the front and back. While looking at yourself in the mirror, ask yourself what the main things are that concern or bother you about being overweight. Is it the size of your hips, thighs, waist, or buttocks? Is it the way your clothes fit? Is it the way people treat or mistreat you? Is it the embarrassing comments people make about you? Is it the rejection from family members, friends or co-workers that affects you? Is it being passed over for promotion because of your weight? Is it because your health is being affected by your weight?

For some people these questions are answered more easily by

writing in a journal. If that is true for you, take the time to do it. These are important thoughts that, if you are completely honest, may change your life. As you come to grips with why you—and only you—want to lose weight and have made the decision to do so, you are ready to take responsibility for controlling your weight. Most individuals who have lost weight and kept it off simply took responsibility for their weight loss. It was their choice, and this empowered them to lose weight by developing new healthy habits. You may have unique reasons that only come by looking in the mirror, but the important thing is that you arrive in a new place of hope, determination and purpose.

Visualizing a New You

As part of securing yourself in this new place, try performing a simple mental exercise involving visualization. Picture yourself at a healthy weight, and then ask yourself a few questions: Will weighing a healthy weight affect your relationships with your family, spouse, friends and co-workers? You bet it will! Many people never think about this and are shocked when close friends become jealous, or your spouse is intimidated by your weight loss. Family members and in-laws may try to tempt you with your favorite cake, pie or comfort food. As difficult as it is to imagine, it's possible that some of your close friends or relatives actually don't want you to lose weight. They may be envious and try to sabotage your weight loss. After all, they have gotten accustomed to you being overweight, and when you lose weight, you will be forcing them to come to grips with their own weight problems.

Will your weight loss improve your marriage? You would think that the obvious answer is yes; however, I have treated many overweight couples and often find this not to be the case. When one spouse loses weight and the other one does not lose weight, many times the spouse who has lost weight begins to

get much more attention from the opposite sex at work, while shopping and while running errands. Some men and women have simply never had attention from the opposite sex, and when they lose weight and start looking great in their clothes, the sudden attention is not only flattering but also enticing. Are you and your spouse prepared for these possible feelings of jealousy, intimidation and flattery? On the other extreme, some people have subconsciously gained weight to protect themselves from the pain of being rejected or from going through another painful relationship or breakup. Have you thought through how these issues affect your current and future health?

Also, will you be ready in a few months to purchase a new wardrobe? While the very thought of shopping makes many women excited, some men get physically ill at the notion that they will have to buy expensive new suits. And are you prepared for the possibility of promotion or demotion at work? Yes, a leaner and trimmer image may be all you need for that promotion, or it may spark jealousy in your boss who may move you to another department. Understand that by losing weight, people will see you differently and treat you differently.

My point in asking these questions is not to plant fear or worry in your mind but to help you realize that things will change when you lose weight—often drastically. I want you to be prepared to deal with these changes. Some patients with a large amount of weight to lose need psychological counseling to deal with these issues. To me, that is a wonderful sign that they are accepting the drastic change and allowing others to help them walk through it. If you feel you need such guidance, don't hesitate to seek it out before you start losing. The important thing is that you ask yourself these questions now so that you will not sabotage your weight loss later with wrong thoughts.

Timing

This often gets overlooked when people decide to embark on a

life-changing journey such as the “I Can Do This” program. It is important that you make sure the timing is right for you and that you have counted the cost before you start this program. In this chapter we have talked a lot about excuses, and the truth is, you only need one real excuse not to do this program. Understand, however, that the very fact that you picked up this book is reason to believe that you are indeed ready for a change. If you are in the midst of a major stressful time in your life such as a divorce, a life-threatening illness, a serious accident, a lawsuit, an IRS audit, a move, a job change, or some other major life event, then this program is *definitely* for you.

Before you question my sanity, hear me out on this. I realize that most diet books would tell you to forgo the diet until the major stress passes. First, you’ll soon learn how truly different the “Can Do” mindset is. Second, this is not only a lifestyle that is easily adaptable, but it is also a lifestyle that can easily bring sanity, peace, assurance and hope in the midst of a chaotic time of your life. I have found over the years that when these simple dietary and lifestyle principles are practiced regularly, they help you to manage stress and prevent stress eating—not further it. Finally, this is the healthiest program you can be on during such a stressful, up-in-the-air time of your life. I do not want you to follow it during pregnancy, but it can be followed safely for people with heart disease, cancer, Type 2 diabetes, Type 1 diabetes, and almost any other disease. To top it off, it stabilizes the blood sugar, decreases inflammation in the body, controls hunger and includes a diversity of tasty foods.

Weight-Gain Mentality

In the early pages of this chapter I stated that your biggest obstacle for weight loss is your thinking. Most of my overweight and obese patients are stuck in what I call weight-gain mentality. They unknowingly have their mental channel set

on the weight-gain channel, and as a result, they continue to attract more weight to themselves. I often tell patients dealing with this that their autopilot is stuck on weight gain. You may have the same thing happening, and it is important to remember that the ultimate success of any weight-loss program depends not on how much you eat but what you think and believe.

The Bible repeatedly makes mention of this, often as the law of seedtime and harvest. The book of Galatians states, "Whatever a man sows, that he will also reap" (Gal. 6:7, NKJV). In other words, if a farmer plants wheat, he will reap a harvest of wheat; if he plants corn, he will reap a harvest of corn. Elsewhere, Proverbs 23:7 says of a person that "as he thinks in his heart, so is he." This simply means that whatever you think about most, you will eventually become. Similarly, Jesus says in Mark 11:24, "'Whatever things you ask when you pray, believe that you receive them, and you will have them.'"

This means that what you consistently visualize and confess, you will eventually become. This is why it is so important to get a photograph of yourself at or near a healthy or desired weight and place it in different areas of your home, such as on the mirror in your bathroom, on your refrigerator, or as a screensaver on your computers at home and in your office. Some people even tape a copy of the picture to their car's steering wheel or dashboard. Regardless of how many places you want to put your healthy or desired weight photo, it is important to put it in your food journal. As you carry your food journal with you throughout the day and look at the picture frequently, visualize yourself becoming that ideal weight again.

It is also important to speak affirmations of your desired weight, pants size, or dress size aloud throughout the day. Even if you weigh 250 pounds, you can state aloud that you see yourself weighing 140 pounds or wearing a size 8, or whatever

pant size or dress size you desire. The Bible defines faith in Hebrews 11:1 as “the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.” Romans 4:17 speaks of calling those things that are not as though they are. So if you hope to weigh 140 pounds or wear a size 8 pair of jeans, start visualizing yourself at that weight and speak it aloud a few times a day.

Do not say, “I have to lose 100 pounds,” or you will probably always have that many pounds to lose. Likewise, don’t get in the habit of saying, “I’m planning on losing 50 pounds” or you’ll forever be planning on doing it. Simply look at the picture of you at your desired weight and speak your desired weight aloud: “I see myself weighing _____ pounds” or “I weigh _____ pounds.” (You fill in the blank.) Make that affirmation throughout the day, and as you follow through with your weight-loss program, you will naturally be attracted toward that desired weight, size or image.

I’ve had patients who had struggled with their weight for years do this, and they turned around and told me that losing weight became one of the easiest things they’ve ever done! I believe you will be making the same statement when you reach your ideal weight. This is not difficult. Start by making the decision to lose weight for yourself and no one else. Understand that you are the only one responsible for being overweight. Once you have accepted this and are set in your decision, it is time to take the next step: making a commitment. Decisions come easy, as does lip service. Yet when we make a commitment, we enter into a different arena of long-term planning—one that includes you keeping the pounds off.

(Click here to purchase this book.)