

Fit & Lean in 2014

3.7: Preparing for Maintenance

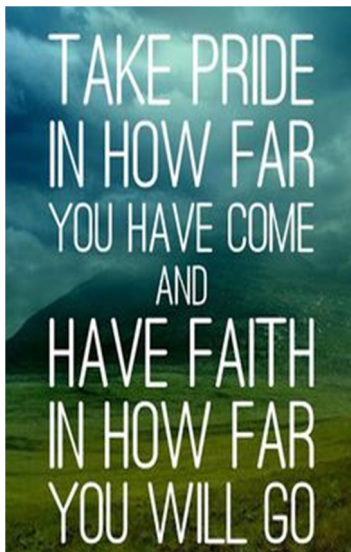
Maybe you've reached your goal by the end of this program or maybe you still have more to accomplish. Either way, it is important to realize that this road doesn't end once you have achieved your goals. Many people who have achieved weight loss struggle to keep it off as time goes on. Let's talk about the best ways to maintain what you have achieved so far...

Know your caloric target for weight maintenance.

Use the formula we provided (handout 1.4) to re-calculate your BMR and then try and stay within that target. Keep in mind that you may need to work to that number gradually to figure out what your metabolism will tolerate. Try adding 150-200 calories at a time and see what effect that has on your weight.

Exercise, Exercise, Exercise!

Not only will you need to maintain the activity level you were at during the loss phase but you will actually need to work to increase it over time. This is because your caloric intake will be a little higher to maintain your weight than it was during the loss phase. If you enjoy what you are doing, you won't mind increasing the intensity or length of your workouts!



The Habits of the Fit & Healthy

They eat breakfast. This characteristic is almost universally common in those who successfully lost weight and kept it off for over a year.

They drink water. Drinking enough water assists your body in almost every aspect of functioning. Aim to drink six to eight 8oz glasses of water daily - more if you are exercising.

They eat small and often. Eating small meals more often reduces cortisol levels. Cortisol is a stress hormone that signals the body to store fat in the abdominal region. Eating smaller meals more often also keeps your blood sugar levels steady and keeps you from getting too hungry.

Embrace the outdoors. Studies show that working out in nature boosts a person's mood and lowers tension, anxiety and stress levels.

Increase your intensity slowly. Slowly building up to more intense workouts gives your body the time it needs to adjust and can help reduce strain and injury. Your goals should be dynamic and include gradual increase of both the length and intensity of your workouts.

Track your workouts. The most consistent exercisers log their daily activity. This can be done with a plain pen and paper or by using online programs or smartphone apps. This helps track progress, which can be incredibly motivating and inspire you to beat your personal best!

Remember, this isn't a diet, this is a new lifestyle that you can keep up for the rest of your life! It isn't always easy but it is so very worthwhile and YOU are WORTH the effort!