

ARE YOUR THOUGHTS HINDERING YOUR WEIGHT LOSS?

“The key to your hottest metabolism is not to push yourself, and it’s not to make yourself crazy. It’s to breathe, it’s to be aware, it’s to relax, it’s to slow down, and that’s where, paradoxically, our fullest, healthiest metabolism comes through.” –Mark David, Mind Body Nutrition

Stress is any real (like running away from a lion) or imagined threat and our body’s response to that threat.

Right from Mark David’s “Mind Body Nutrition”, here is what happens when we eat under stress.

- Nutrient absorption decreases under stress. In other words, there’s less oxygenation to your gut, there’s less blood flow, less enzymatic production.
- Nutrient excretion increases. In other words, your body literally eliminates, through the urine, of calcium, magnesium, zinc, chromium, selenium, all the micro minerals. You will see increased nutrient deficiencies in terms of the vitamins, the water-soluble ones, B and C.
- Cholesterol levels go up. Stress is one of the most underrated but powerful instigators of high blood cholesterol.
- Triglyceride levels increase. Within seconds your triglyceride level shoots through the roof during stress.
- Blood platelets get sticky. That’s a major risk factor for heart disease.
- Salt retention increases.
- Cortisol is produced. Cortisol signals your body to store weight as fat and to not build muscle.
- The gut flora population decreases. Gut flora are the healthy bacteria that are inside your digestive tract.
- The amount of growth hormone in your body decreases. Growth hormone is the hormone that helps you grow and heal and build muscle.
- Thyroid hormone levels decrease. Thyroid hormone literally revs up the metabolic rate of just about every cell in the body.
- Inflammation in the body increases.

Some of our stresses in life are chosen, and much of the chosen stress begins with our thoughts. For example, words like “I’m fat” “I need to lose weight” or “I’m a failure” put the body into a stress state.

Today I want you to pay attention to your self-dialogue. When you see yourself in the mirror, what thoughts come to your mind? Often we say to ourselves things that we would NEVER say to someone else- because it would be just plain mean!

I want you to say to yourself “I need to lose weight”. How does it make you feel? Do you feel like getting up and going for a run? Or does it make you feel defeated, hopeless and a bit

I AM *enough*

discouraged? Now I want you to say, "I am strong, healthy and beautiful". Seriously. Say it aloud. Do you feel a little bit better? Do you feel hopeful and expansive?

Self-talk is very powerful. When you say the same thoughts over and over, your mind starts to believe them as truths. By repeating the same thoughts over and over, the mind actually comes to believe they're true. Then we act in ways that are in line with our beliefs. For example, if you tell yourself every day that losing weight is hopeless, it will be. If you tell yourself that positive self-talk is silly and doesn't work, it won't. However, if you fill your mind with positive dialogue, you will move toward your goals.

I don't expect your inner dialogue to change overnight, and neither should you. I do want you to start positive self-talk each day. It can be as simple as "I can do this", or "Fitness is an investment in myself, and I am worth it!"

Personally, I write down my positive affirmations and say them daily. At first I felt a bit silly, and would say them aloud when no one was around to hear. Then I started to get comfortable, and I started experiencing the positive results. I was surprised though when my four-year-old son Jacob could recite my affirmations by heart! I'm not so shy anymore- and I'm going to share my daily self-talk with you.

Sample affirmations/ mantras

I am strong, lean, beautiful and healthy.

I fuel my body with healthy, nourishing foods so that I can thrive.

I love how I look and feel in my clothes.

I focus on being healthy!

I am capable.

I love challenges.

I have the power to choose.

One of your tasks this week is to engage in positive self-dialogue daily (you can choose from the sample affirmations if you like) and to take time to accept and appreciate where you are right now. The way you are RIGHT NOW is good enough.

Now, I know you're probably not full of positive energy each day. I certainly am not. I have days where I feel like I can take on the world, and other days when I feel 'off'.

On the 'off' days, saying positive things to myself, or doing something pleasurable can be a bit more challenging; but I know this is when I need it the most. Hmm... who said there would be challenges? On the 'off' days, I may say things like "I am healthy" or I will remind myself all the positive things that are going on in my life. I will connect with my husband, or read a good book, or go for a walk. No matter how you're feeling do *something*. Remember, we're building lifelong habits and life is full of ups and downs. And that's OK.

Take action:

Write down a list of negative thoughts that often linger in your mind. The thoughts can be

surrounding food (this food is bad for me; I have no control over my eating; I have no willpower), body image (I don't deserve to feel good when I'm fat; I'll be happy when).

For each negative thought, write a 'counter thought'. For example, "I have no will power" can turn into "I am in charge of my body and my diet". "I hate my thighs" can turn into "I have strong, powerful legs and they allow me to run". "I need to go to the gym to burn off last night's dinner" to "I am grateful for the opportunity to go to the gym so that I can feel strong and healthy".

Like I said, we NEVER expect perfection. But, each time you notice negative-self talk, pause, identify it and replace it. No matter what you ate yesterday, or how much you weigh, you deserve to feel good.