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Introduction

People with serious mental illnesses such as major depression, bipolar disorder, and schizophrenia spectrum disorders are greatly underserved in the medical and mental health systems. They are at greatly increased risk of obesity, metabolic syndrome, diabetes, and subsequent early mortality, primarily due to cardiovascular disease. The causes of these cardiometabolic risks include factors such as poor access to medical care, poor nutrition, sedentary lifestyle, and smoking but they are also amplified by antipsychotic agents prescribed to treat these mental conditions.

Evidence suggests that lifestyle interventions, particularly those that are longer than three months in duration and combine education and interactive activities focused on dietary changes and promoting physical activity, are effective and feasible to implement among individuals with mental illnesses who desire to lose weight and improve their overall health.

The STRIDE program is based on the National Heart, Lung, Blood Institute funded PREMIER lifestyle intervention Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension (DASH) diet arm. The program is designed to promote weight loss and reduce obesity-related risks, including diabetes risk, through dietary changes, moderate calorie reduction, and increased energy expenditure. Intervention targets are based on current clinical practice guidelines established for obesity treatment and for individuals at increased risk for cardiovascular disease (CVD). The intervention builds upon prior research, behavior change theories, and motivational theory to enhance self-efficacy and promote long-term behavior change. It begins with a six-month intensive counseling phase followed by a six-month, less-intensive maintenance phase.

Part One of this facilitator manual provides STRIDE program facilitators with the necessary background and rationale for the intervention, a broad overview of the intervention, and guidelines for facilitator training and supervision. This section briefly reviews the basic principles of behavior modification, motivational interviewing, and other overarching elements of the STRIDE program.

Part Two provides the general outline for each session, as well as an overview of the topics that are covered in the curriculum.
Part One

Background and Rationale for the STRIDE Program

Why are individuals with serious mental illnesses at greater risk of earlier cardiovascular-related death?

People with serious mental illnesses are at heightened risk for health issues associated with cardiovascular disease, including obesity, impaired glucose tolerance, metabolic syndrome, and Type II diabetes mellitus. Although interest in excess weight and cardiovascular risks in this population initially arose with the realization that antipsychotic agents and other mental health medications result in weight gain, increased risk of diabetes, and metabolic syndrome, findings now suggest that serious mental illnesses alone, irrespective of treatment, are associated with increased risk of obesity and diabetes. The prevalence of Type II diabetes among individuals with bipolar disorder or schizophrenia appears to be 2-4 times that of the general population.

Efforts to identify the underlying factors that result in increased risk for obesity and diabetes among individuals with serious mental illness suggest several possible mechanisms. For people with bipolar disorder, these include having a greater number of manic and depressive episodes, more depressive symptoms, and shorter time between recurrence of depressive episodes, as well as excessive carbohydrate consumption and reduced activity levels. People with bipolar disorder also have more viscerally distributed fat and glucose handling disturbances than those without the disorder.

Individuals with schizophrenia spectrum disorders may have a genetic predisposition to appetite dysregulation, insulin resistance, and endocrine imbalance involving gonadal steroids. Genetic factors may also interact with environmental factors to produce differences in risk of weight gain in response to antipsychotic agents. Compared to healthy controls, drug-naïve individuals with schizophrenia have been shown to have more of the intra-abdominal fat associated with metabolic syndrome, higher levels of plasma cortisol (affecting glucose levels and insulin secretion), and impaired fasting glucose tolerance.

How do antipsychotic medications further increase risks of obesity and diabetes?

Antipsychotics, both conventional and atypical, are typically prescribed for long-term use. They cause significant short- and long-term weight gain. As an indicator of their impact, average gains in weight following 10 weeks of treatment have been shown to range from .39 kg to 3.19 kg among conventional agents, and 0.04 kg to 4.45 kg among atypical agents.

Antipsychotic agents affect weight by stimulating appetite (which results from an interaction with neuronal dopamine, 5-HT [serotonin receptors], and histamine receptors and thirst (which results from anticholinergic effects). Increased thirst can cause weight increases when individuals consume beverages that contain calories. Antipsychotics may also disrupt metabolic-endocrine weight regulation by inducing hyperprolactinemia (affecting gonadal-adrenal steroids and insulin sensitivity). Moreover, some atypical agents have been shown to stimulate increases in central body fat deposition and insulin and triglyceride levels, suggesting that they may be instrumental in producing insulin resistance. Although glucose dysregulation and problems in lipid metabolism were reported in connection with use of conventional antipsychotics as early as the 1950s, reports of these problems have been increasing since the development of atypical antipsychotics.
Why is weight management important for people diagnosed with serious mental illnesses or taking antipsychotics?

Compared to other risk factors for obesity and diabetes, mental disorders begin early, with onset of three-fourths of cases before age 24. Consequently, individuals with these conditions are at greater risk for obesity and diabetes for longer periods than are those who do not have mental health problems. Furthermore, like obesity, mental illnesses are stigmatizing, and people with both conditions are likely to be at greater risk for experiencing the compounded negative consequences of these stigmas. Such experiences may explain why obesity and distress about weight gain cause individuals to stop taking antipsychotic medications, negatively affecting their health.

How can a lifestyle intervention help?

Risks for obesity, dyslipidemia, Type II diabetes, hypertension, and coronary heart disease are closely related to dietary and activity patterns. Results of the National Diabetes Prevention Program and other strong evidence indicate that lifestyle interventions are effective in producing weight loss and reducing diabetes risk, and to a lesser extent, in helping patients to maintain weight loss.

In the context of mental health problems, behavioral approaches to weight control have particular appeal. First, clinicians and clients confront a dilemma in considering the best medications to treat a mental health problem because of the likelihood of weight gain. Behavioral adjuncts to treatment can balance this equation. Behavioral interventions often are more attractive than additional pharmacotherapies among individuals already taking medications. In addition, individuals with mental health problems are often socially isolated. Given the importance of social support in facilitating behavior change, the social support developed as part of the group intervention may be particularly helpful for those with mental illness.

STRIDE Lifestyle Intervention

The STRIDE intervention is based on the intervention developed and used in PREMIER’s Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension (DASH) diet arm. The PREMIER lifestyle intervention with DASH diet effectively reduces weight and blood pressure, while the DASH diet alone reduces blood pressure, blood lipids, and other features of metabolic syndrome. In combination with the PREMIER lifestyle intervention, the DASH diet has been shown to enhance insulin sensitivity.

The core of this intervention program is a series of weekly group meetings that encourage participants to lose weight by reducing total energy intake and increasing moderate-intensity physical activity. We include one session (not included in PREMIER) facilitated by guest staff from the local food bank’s nutrition education program. This session, entitled Eating Healthfully on a Budget, provides instruction for healthy low-cost shopping and meal preparation. It includes demonstrations and tastings of several low-cost dishes, and provides participants with recipes for several low-cost healthy meals. We believe this session is particularly important for participants on limited budgets.

Implementation strategies are consistent with NHLBI’s clinical guidelines for treatment of overweight and obese individuals, and include: frequent contacts, participant-centered group and individual facilitation approaches, and individual contacts that tailor the intervention to the participants’ preferences (as components of group meetings and separately, when needed). The intervention also target participants’ readiness to change, encourages group interactions that facilitate social support and problem solving, provides support for appropriate goal setting.
and self-negotiation, and facilitates the acquisition of new information and skills for behavior change. Group facilitators present examples of new behavioral options and decision-making approaches, and are expected to pay close attention to the cultural appropriateness of the program for minority participants.

**Primary Behavioral Targets**

The STRIDE intervention is designed to achieve a minimum weight loss of 4.5-6.8 kg over 6 months resulting from moderate calorie reduction, dietary change, and increased energy expenditure. This degree of weight loss is associated with significant improvements in cardiovascular disease risk factors, including diabetes risk. Other targets include engaging in 180 minutes per week of moderate physical activity (primarily walking), and following a healthy dietary pattern (the DASH diet). The targets are based on current clinical practice guidelines established for obesity treatment and for individuals at increased risk for CVD, including those with high blood pressure and elevated serum cholesterol. The intervention is therefore appropriate for individuals with elevated CVD risk.

The program promotes the following strategies for achieving changes in behavior, activity level, and weight loss: 1) self-monitoring of diet and physical activity; 2) developing personalized dietary and physical activity plans; 3) reducing calories moderately; 4) reducing portion sizes, substituting alternative foods, and modifying original items so that they are lower in calories and fat (e.g., using low-fat dairy products); 5) focusing on fruits and vegetables and increased fiber intake; 6) increasing physical activity; 7) identifying problematic situations for undesired behavior, and developing and rehearsing specific plans of action to deal with those situations; and 8) graphing individual weight and behavioral progress.

Participants routinely monitor food intake, calories, and physical activity; set reasonable short-term goals; formulate specific plans of action to achieve those goals; and develop reinforcement and social support for carrying out each major element of the plan. They keep records of minutes exercised each day; food, beverages, and calories consumed; servings of fruits and vegetables; servings of low-fat dairy products; and sodium and fat intake, then use these self-management records to assess their progress. Group facilitators regularly work with participants to evaluate and modify their plans using the records. Because this program places major emphasis on increasing moderate-intensity physical activity, group facilitators help participants determine how best to fit physical activity into their daily lives, taking into account each participant’s initial motivation, activity patterns, and weekly progress.

Our experience has shown that willingness to change behavior shifts frequently during long-term weight loss intervention programs. Recognizing this reality, interventionists help participants tailor their weekly goals and action plans to their current stage of change. Although group facilitators provide general guidelines for intervention components (daily self-monitoring of caloric intake, five or more days per week of physical activity, etc.), participants are encouraged to adjust their personal goals and action plans each week to their immediate situation. That is, participants set their own short-term goals each week in consultation with the facilitators.

Participants with no interest in physical activity are not forced to set an exercise goal, although those who decline to set a physical activity goal for several consecutive weeks are encouraged to meet with one of the facilitators for a brief counseling session using motivational interviewing techniques. The objective of this counseling session is to foster reflection on long-term goals and hopefully increase motivation to engage in more physical activity. Participants who are injured are encouraged to find alternative forms of exercise that accommodate their injury (for example, seated arm exercises with an exercise band).
DASH Diet

Compared to the average American diet, the DASH eating plan focuses on increased intake of:

- Fruits and vegetables
- Fat-free or low-fat milk and milk products
- Whole grains
- Fish and poultry
- Beans, seeds, and nuts

The DASH eating plan also focuses on decreased intake of:

- Salt and sodium
- Sweets, added sugars, and sugar-containing beverages
- Saturated fat, trans fat, and cholesterol
- Red meats

Although developed to reduce hypertension, the DASH diet\textsuperscript{92} can be modified to support weight loss goals. The DASH eating plan does not require any special foods, and easy-to-follow recipes are readily available. The plan calls for a certain number of daily servings from different food groups. The number of servings depends on the number of calories “allotted” for each day, based upon weight loss/maintenance goals, age, and activity level. STRIDE group facilitators work with participants in group and individual sessions to help them determine the appropriate number of calories and servings.

Physical Activity

STRIDE sets a target of 20-30 minutes daily of moderate physical activity (~180 minutes per week). Combined with moderate reductions in calorie intake, this level of physical activity can contribute to effective weight loss/maintenance. Each group session incorporates 20-30 minutes of group physical activity—typically, walking. Facilitators review the physical activity pyramid in at least one group session and encourage participants to develop individualized plans for increased physical activity—including activities of daily living, cardiovascular exercise, weight bearing exercise, and flexibility exercise—as well as decreased sedentary behaviors such as screen time. Leaders also ask participants to record daily physical activity in their weekly diaries and review progress at each group and individual contact.
Principles of Behavioral Modification

Seven basic principles of behavior modification (Martin & Pear, 2007) can be readily applied to the STRIDE program:

1. **There is a strong emphasis on defining problems in terms of behavior that can be measured in some way.** In the STRIDE program, participants are encouraged to set SMART goals and are taught the steps of problem solving when needed.

2. **Treatment techniques are seen as ways of altering an individual’s current environment to help that individual function more fully.** STRIDE provides education about meal planning, shopping for healthy foods, and developing a support network.

3. **The methods and rationales for treatment techniques can be described precisely.** STRIDE provides a clear rationale for self-monitoring as an effective weight loss tool.

4. **The techniques are often applied in everyday life.** In STRIDE, participants are educated about healthy cooking on a budget and provided tips on choosing healthier meals when eating out.

5. **The techniques are based largely on principles of learning.** STRIDE interventionists offer positive reinforcement for small steps toward short- and long-term goals during weekly check-ins.

6. **There is a strong emphasis on scientific demonstration that a particular technique was responsible for a particular behavior change.** Self-monitoring is implemented throughout the STRIDE program and used as a tool for weight loss success.

7. **There is a strong emphasis on accountability for everyone involved in a behavior modification program.** Interventionists set clear expectations for regular attendance, weekly weigh-ins, weekly “public” check-ins, and weekly “public” goal-setting and help participants see the value of these accountability measures for their success.

Principles of Motivational Interviewing/Motivational Enhancement

Ambivalence about behavioral change is common and to be expected among individuals participating in a lifestyle intervention. STRIDE group facilitators should avoid assuming that because someone has indicated interest in the program, he or she is ready or even wants to change. Facilitators are instead encouraged to ask open-ended questions about individuals’ motivation for change, listen reflectively, and be affirming and collaborative, honoring individual autonomy and choice. This may be particularly important among those with serious mental illnesses who may have experienced coercion. Using motivational interviewing techniques, group facilitators draw out individual participants’ feelings about change and help them work through their own resistance. Resources and training in the motivational interviewing approach are available online.

Balancing “Small Steps” vs. “Lifestyle Overhaul”

In one study that examined Medicaid claims data of a representative sample of people with serious mental illness, 74% of the study sample had been given a diagnosis of at least one chronic health problem, and 50% had been given a diagnosis of two or more. When health problems and detrimental health behaviors are stacking up, it can be difficult to decide where to begin and how much to take on. We are often asked whether one should focus on a few, simple, relatively small steps to improve their health or attempt to make drastic, wholesale changes across the board in a “lifestyle overhaul.” Our answer is yes! Our experience has taught us that different approaches work best for different people.
Multiple health behavior change can be produced either sequentially or simultaneously, and the order and magnitude of change in which individual behaviors ought to be addressed is unclear. In the absence of evidence to guide these treatment decisions, we take a personalized approach working with people to examine their goals as well as their resources, strengths, and limitations.

For example, if an individual in the STRIDE program feels tentative about making behavioral changes or lacks adequate support for large-scale changes, our recommendation is to start small with specific, measurable goals that can provide a foundation for future success. Sometimes these goals are as small as keeping a food log for a few days or parking farther away and taking the stairs.

On the other hand, if a person is motivated and ready to make broad, sweeping behavioral changes we don’t discourage them, but rather help them to make the necessary preparations that will set them up for success. This might include identifying an accountability partner or “support buddy” outside the program or planning a phone session during the week to check in individually with a facilitator. People in our program have experienced success with both approaches; therefore, we do not recommend one approach as superior to the other.

**Empowerment**

Personal empowerment can be thought of as possessing a sense of value and self-worth, the belief that one can assert a degree of control over one’s future, optimism about the effectiveness and power of one’s actions, and the ability and willingness to act. STRIDE is meant to empower individuals to make informed choices about their health behavior by providing access to information, resources (including supportive facilitators), and a range of options, each to be personally considered for adoption by users of the program.

Autonomy and meaningful choice are program values, as is hopefulness. When individuals are given the opportunity to learn things they want to learn, rather than being told what they ought to learn, we have seen that they engage more readily and take greater ownership. Therefore, STRIDE facilitators can be assured that their task lies in promoting confidence and positive expectation, creating an environment that fosters connection to others working toward similar health goals, and inspiring a change process that enables action so that users of the program can meet their desired goals and outcomes.

**Facilitator Training and Supervision**

The groups are designed to be led by two interventionists with complementary backgrounds: one who is trained as a mental health counselor, and one with a background in nutrition (this person does not need to be a registered dietician). They should have experience conducting behavioral interventions and using motivational interviewing techniques. Additionally, they should be comfortable using strategies for presenting materials in a group setting to people with mental illnesses who might have cognitive or executive functioning deficits.

For example, to help participants get the most out of their group experience, facilitators should make efforts to: use clear, concise sentences and concrete examples; repeat statements and suggestions; confirm accurate interpretation by asking participants to reiterate what they have been told; liberally employ visual aids; employ interactive learning techniques (e.g., role plays, home practice assignments) rather than didactic instruction whenever possible; and split information and tasks into smaller components when necessary. Also, sessions are purposefully structured to present new information at the beginning of the group session, to break for a walk around the surrounding campus, and then to conclude with a discussion meant to consolidate learning.
We recommend weekly interventionist supervision to discuss any challenging cases. Our interventionists also have benefited from a supervisor intermittently observing the intervention sessions and rating their adherence to the facilitator manual and session outlines, then providing them with feedback for improving the sessions. We also found this helpful in preventing “drift” from the evidence-based program.
Part Two

General Session Outline

Before each session, group facilitators should assemble materials, including a scale, nametags/name tents, handouts, pens/pencils, blank food records, calculators, and any supplies needed for the specific session (e.g., food models).

At least 30 minutes before the session begins, group facilitators should set up the meeting room accordingly, write the agenda on the board/flipchart, and place the scale in a somewhat private area.

As participants arrive and get settled, they should be weighed by one of the group facilitators.

Each session follows a general outline:

1. Check-In (15-30 minutes)
   - Review last session’s topic and address any questions
   - Participants share challenges and/or successes since last session
   - Participants respond to a question that leads into the current session’s topic

2. Session Content (30-60 minutes)
   - Use session outline to deliver appropriate topic

3. Physical Activity (15-30 minutes)
   - Typically this activity consists of a walk outdoors. In the event of darkness or severe weather, group facilitators may opt to lead some stretching or other indoor exercises, or play an exercise DVD

4. Goal Setting (10 minutes)
   - Participants set a goal for the upcoming week
Overview of Group Sessions

Session 1: Welcome and Introduction to STRIDE
Group leaders introduce themselves, briefly describe their role in STRIDE, and explain the purpose and benefits of the program. Participants introduce themselves and briefly share what brought them to the group. Participants are asked to establish their own group norms, which a facilitator writes on a poster to be displayed each session. Leaders discuss lifestyle guidelines, focusing on the importance of making small changes that can be sustained over a long period of time, and introduce food records.

Session 2: Portion Control
Group facilitators teach the difference between portion size and serving size. They work with participants to brainstorm strategies for estimating portion size to help manage calories.

Session 3: Introduction to Energy Balance and Goal Setting
Facilitators introduce the concept of energy balance. They discuss “energy in” in terms of food choices and calories and “energy out” in terms of physical activity. SMART goals are introduced, and group members practice setting a goal.

Session 4: Breakfast and Regular Meals
Facilitators teach the role of breakfast in weight management and the value of eating regularly throughout the day. They guide participants in identifying times to fit in physical activity.

Session 5: Working Toward a Healthier Diet
Leaders review the importance of fruits and vegetables as part of a healthy diet, including healthy versus unhealthy fats, the impact of sugar, and the role of fiber in a healthy diet.

Session 6: Eating Healthfully on a Budget
This session is typically presented by a local food bank and focuses on how to incorporate healthy food choices on a fixed or limited income.

Session 7: Progress Check
Group leaders provide individual progress checks to each participant based on weight and data from their food records. Challenges, concerns, and successes are shared.

Session 8: Planning ahead for Meals
In this session the group is led through brainstorming strategies for planning meals/menus, grocery shopping, and food preparation.

Session 9: Social Systems and Social Support
Group facilitators describe the impact of support systems on helping participants make lifestyle changes. They introduce the cognitive model (i.e., the relationship between thoughts, behaviors and emotions).

Session 10: Medication Side Effects and Weight Gain
Group leaders discuss common side effects of antipsychotic medications and reinforce the importance of discussing concerns with health care providers. They provide tips for preparing for appointments and talking with providers.
Session 11: Stress Management and Sleep
Group facilitators discuss the ways that stress interferes with diet, exercise, and sleep. The group brainstorms strategies for reducing stress and creating good sleep habits.

Session 12: Progress Check and Reframing Negative Self-Talk
Group facilitators provide individual progress reports to each participant based on weight and data from their food records. Challenges, concerns, and successes are shared. Participants are assisted in identifying patterns of negative thinking and encouraged to generate realistic, positive alternatives to distorted thoughts.

Session 13: Conscious Eating
The concept of mindfulness around eating meals and snacks is introduced. Facilitators lead participants in an eating awareness activity.

Session 14: Overeating, Emotional Eating, and Binge Eating
Group facilitators define binge eating is defined and discuss the disadvantages of unhealthy weight loss methods. They ask participants to identify situations that may cause them to overeat. Participants brainstorm strategies to avoid overeating.

Session 15: Dining Out
Participants identify strategies for making healthy choices and maintaining changes while eating out.

Session 16: Importance of Physical Activity
Group facilitators reinforce the importance of regular physical activity. They describe the benefits of different types of exercises. Participants are encouraged to identify barriers and solutions for developing an exercise routine.

Session 17: Revisiting Meal Planning and Portion Control
The group shares challenges and successes with meal planning and managing portions. Participants discuss strategies that have been helpful in planning meals and snacks ahead of time.

Session 18: Progress Check and Motivation
Group facilitators provide progress reports to each participant based on weight and data from their food records. The group shares challenges, concerns, and successes. Participants explore what they can do when motivation starts to wane.

Session 19: Planning for Future Social Support
Facilitators lead the group in a discussion of ways to use their social support network to help them continue to make healthy choices. Participants are encouraged to brainstorm ideas to increase and maintain their current network.

Session 20: Beyond Triggers
Group facilitators define the stages of a lapse. Group members share examples of risky situations that could lead to a lapse and discuss strategies.

Session 21: Managing Plateaus
Facilitators define weight loss plateaus and brainstorm with the group ideas for managing them.
Session 22: Exercising to Maintain Weight Loss
Group facilitators share current data from the National Weight Control Registry. The group discussed the role of exercise in maintaining weight loss.

Session 23: Planning for Changes in Mental Health Status
Participants identify possible barriers to maintaining diet and exercise changes while struggling with changes in mental health status. Participants are encouraged to plan ahead for these events and brainstorm solutions.

Session 24: Celebrating Accomplishments
In this session group members reflect on the progress they have made. They are encouraged to share future goals and discuss concerns for the maintenance phase.

Sessions 25-30: Monthly Maintenance Sessions
During the check-in, participants share challenges and success from the past month. They then collaboratively set the agenda for the remainder of the group session based on current needs of the members who are present. Topics from the 24 weekly sessions are reviewed as needed. At the conclusion of the group session goals are set for the upcoming month.
Individual Maintenance Contacts

The maintenance intervention is based on factors associated with sustained weight loss (accountability, frequent contacts, self-monitoring, and physical activity) and counseling methods (motivational interviewing) designed to enhance sustained involvement in the program and sustained weight maintenance. Facilitators maintain monthly contact outside of the group with all participants by employing brief motivational interviewing techniques via the telephone (about 15 minutes) and email (3-5 exchanges).

With the telephone maintenance contacts, following a brief check-in, the facilitator and participant collaboratively review the participant’s diet and activity efforts for the previous month and identify barriers or difficulties encountered during that time. The participant then selects a specific barrier for discussion, and the facilitator guides the participant through problem-solving techniques to address the specified barrier. Email contact is generally limited to encouragement and support to meet specified goals or stay engaged with the group.
Session 1: Welcome and Introduction to STRIDE

1. Welcome and Introductions
   - Leaders introduce themselves and share some personal facts (e.g., professional role, role in this group, etc.)
   - Provide an outline of the group sessions
   - Participant introductions
   - Establish group guidelines

2. Orientation to Basic Intervention Goals
   - Distribute suggested intervention guidelines
   - Introduce the importance of focusing on small changes that can be maintained over time

3. Food and Fitness Record
   - Discuss importance of keeping food records
   - Show examples of how to use the diary
   - Discuss strategies for successfully keeping food records

4. Goals for Next Week
   - Write down everything you eat and drink this week
   - Hand out physical activity worksheet

Handouts for this session
- Suggested Intervention Guidelines
- Food and Fitness Record
- Food and Fitness Diary Instructions
At least 30 minutes before session begins:

⇒ Write the agenda on board or flipchart
⇒ Write any additional notes with agenda – such as upcoming holidays, room changes, announcements, etc.
⇒ Set up tables and chairs so that they are arranged in small groups of 3-5 and facing the facilitator
⇒ Set out nametags
⇒ **Optional:** It may also be useful to write on board the topics coming up next week, and the facilitators’ names and contact information.

**What you will need for this session:**

- Pens
- Nametags
- Markers for writing on board and flipchart
- Flipchart
- Large display version of the food diary
- Handouts for this session

**FACILITATOR NOTES**

1. Provide a 5-minute break sometime during the session.
2. Before dismissing participants at the end of every session, affirm that everyone has weighed.
3. Call to check on anyone who did not attend (and had not already informed you of his or her absence).
WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS (40 MINUTES)

Leaders introduce themselves and provide some personal facts to share

- Thank everyone for coming and emphasize the importance of attendance for success. The people who came most often to groups in our study generally lost more weight and got more exercise than those whose attendance was sporadic.
- Leaders introduce themselves by providing some basic information. Examples:
  - Role at this organization
  - Role in this intervention
  - Professional background
  - Interests of hobbies outside work
  - One reason for wanting to be involved in this intervention

- Explain to participants that today we will:
  - Get to know each other
  - Talk about what to expect at group sessions and the general structure of sessions
  - Talk about personal goals and study targets
  - Come up with group guidelines that we can all agree on
  - Introduce an important intervention tool (your personal food and fitness diary)

Provide outline of study and sessions to participants

- STRIDE is based on a study that was successful in helping participants on mental health medications to lose weight
- Hand out calendar with dates and times of group sessions
- Introduce participants to the basic structure of each session:
  - Upon arrival and before class begins, brief individual weigh-in
  - 30 minutes of group check-in
  - 50 minutes of education/discussion/learning activities+5-minute break
  - 20-minute walk
  - 15 minutes on goals and plans for next week
Participant introductions

- Give each participant a 3x5 index card. Instruct participants to write their name and one thing they hope to learn from this intervention on the card and the reasons why they want to lose weight or improve their health.
- Break into small groups of 3-5. Have participants introduce themselves to others in the small group. For example:
  - Name
  - City or state where you grew up
  - How long they have lived in the area
  - The one thing they hope to learn from this intervention.
  - The reasons they want to improve their health.
- In large group, have participants quickly go around the room to share name and the one thing they want to learn in this study.
- Have one facilitator write on a flipchart (if available) the reasons participants want to lose weight and or improve health.
- Collect the cards for future reference.

Establish group guidelines

- Engage participants in developing group guidelines (or norms) they would like to see used in this group. Write them on a flipchart. After they come up with a list they can agree on, save the guidelines to display each week.
- Important guidelines are:
  - Maintain confidentiality
  - Practice respectful cell phone etiquette
  - Come every week
  - Arrive on time

Suggested questions

- What is the value of doing this weight management program in groups instead of individually?
- What are some important ground rules that you would like to see followed in our time together?
ORIENTATION TO BASIC INTERVENTION GOALS (25 MINUTES)

Distribute suggested intervention guidelines.

- Hand out suggested intervention guidelines and briefly discuss each guideline.
- Provide a short explanation for each item. Remind participants that we'll focus on these principles each week.
- Discuss with participants the importance of weekly attendance for success in making the lifestyle changes recommended in STRIDE.

Introduce the importance of focusing on small changes that can be maintained over time.

- Discuss the idea of making small sustainable changes to diet and exercise. Over time these small changes can lead to big health benefits (weight loss, better sleep, and better overall health).

Suggested questions

- Have any of you ever tried to overhaul your life? Or even overhaul your diet or exercise routine?
- What happened? Were you successful?

Sample discussion approach

“It can be difficult to make major changes to diet and exercise all at once. It may also be difficult to maintain those changes over time. If you can incorporate a few strategic changes and make them an integral part of your everyday life, you will experience a more lasting success.”
FOOD AND FITNESS RECORD (30 MINUTES)

Suggested guidelines from the STRIDE study

Record what you eat and how much you exercise: An essential component for many weight loss interventions is keeping consistent food records. Keeping track of what you eat will allow you to realistically evaluate your diet and make informed decisions about what to change.

- Why would keeping track of what you eat help you lose weight?

Reducing caloric intake: For many people, reducing caloric intake by 500 calories per day (or burning 500 calories through exercise) will result in the 1 to 2 pounds of weight loss per week.

- Why would we recommend such modest weight loss?

Increasing fruit and vegetable intake: Fruits and vegetables are loaded with water and allow you to feel fuller longer. When you’re satisfied, you’re more likely to make better choices about what you eat. Plus there are many health benefits like aiding in digestion and preventing cancer.

- What’s all the hype about fruits and vegetables?

Working toward averaging 180 minutes of moderate activity a week: Adequate physical activity (at least 30 minutes of moderate activity) is important for maintaining weight loss over time.

- What is moderate activity?
- Why would we recommend being more active every day?

Finding ways to get more active in your everyday life: Move more, lose more. It’s that simple. Found exercise is a good way to make small changes that can be sustained ever time.
Discuss importance of keeping food records

**Sample discussion approach**

“As we mentioned while discussing the suggested intervention guidelines, keeping food records are an essential component to weight loss and weight management. Participants that have kept food diaries in these groups often say it is both the best and worst part of the intervention. Some days it will be a real challenge to keep track of the things you eat and drink, but it helps the weight loss effort.”

“Keeping a food and fitness diary will be a new behavior for many of you. Don’t get discouraged if you don’t record every meal this week. Bring back what you did record next week and build on that success for the following week.”

**Suggested questions**

- Have any of you have kept food records in the past?
- Did it help? Did you like doing it?
- What can you see are some positives for keeping daily records of what you eat?
- What are some of the negatives you might encounter?

**Show examples of how to use the diary**

- Hand out copies of the Food and Fitness diary.
- On the board/flipchart, display an enlarged version of the food diary. Have already written in the display a few sample meals (one breakfast, lunch, snack, etc.). Show each meal in sample basic format that participants should follow. For example, small salad, 1 chicken breast, and mashed potatoes.
- Encourage participants to begin this week by simply recording what they eat at each meal. Emphasize that it is important to get in the habit first, and then analyze meals.
- Inform participants that their food and fitness diaries will be kept confidential and only the facilitators will see them. The facilitators will collect them each week, make a copy and return them the next week with feedback.

**Suggested questions**

β Why is it important to write things down immediately?
β Where will you keep your diary so it accessible this week?
Discuss strategies for successfully keeping food records

- Getting into the habit of writing down your meals close to the time you ate them is very helpful in keeping accurate food records.
- Think about when and where you eat most of your meals each week. This may help you plan on where it’s best to keep your diary.
- Display on the flipchart an example of the fitness portion of diary filled out for one week.

GOALS FOR NEXT WEEK (20 MINUTES)

Write down everything you eat and drink this week

- Setting goals and making plans for accomplishing goals is a key strategy for behavior change. This is a time for the participant to really reflect on what they need to do as far as behavior change to accomplish their weight loss goal. The actual work of changing behaviors will happen outside of the group session, but writing down a plan will solidify commitment.
- Give the group 3-5 minutes to think about personal goals for the following week. Encourage writing the goals in the Food and Fitness diary.
- Remind participants to bring comfortable clothes and walking shoes to session 2.
Session 2: Portion Control

1. Check-In
   - Discuss concerns, questions and progress from the previous week.

2. Servings and Portions
   - Define a serving size and a portion size and highlight the difference.
   - Lead activity to demonstrate the differences.
   - Hand out “Making Sense of Portion Sizes”

3. Portion Control
   - Lead a discussion highlighting the difference between planning what goes on your plate as opposed to simply filling your plate.

4. Goals for next week
   - Focus on portion control through closer attention to serving sizes.

Handouts for this session
Two Meals Example
Guide to Using the Nutrition Facts Label
Portion Control Primer
Setting Your Plate
At least 30 minutes **BEFORE** session begins:

- Write the agenda on board or flipchart at the beginning of each session.
- Write any additional notes with agenda – such as upcoming holidays, room changes, announcements, etc.
- Set up tables and chairs so that they are arranged in small groups of 3-5 and facing the facilitator.
- Set out nametags and reviewed food records from previous session for participants to pick up when arriving.
- Post “Group Guidelines” developed in Session 1.
- Have blank food records available for participants to pick up at end of session.
- **Optional:** Place 1-2 calculators at each small group setting so that participants that arrive early may calculate calories.
- **Optional:** It may also be useful to write on board the topics coming up next week, and the facilitators name and contact information.

**What you will need for this session:**

- Pens
- Blank food records
- Nametags
- Markers for writing on board and flipchart
- Container for collecting food records (to be reviewed by facilitator and returned following week)
- Flipchart
- Calculators
- Handouts for this session

**Options for Demonstration Activity**

- Glass (or clear cereal bowls) and box of cereal
- One medium or large baked chicken breast
- One large dinner plate
- Baseball
- Deck of cards
- Tennis ball
- Measuring cups and spoons
- Food samples based on “Two Meals” worksheet
FACILITATOR NOTES

1. Provide a 5-minute break sometime during the session
2. Include a 30-minute Physical Activity Session at beginning or end of group meeting
3. Before dismissing participants at the end of every session, affirm that everyone has been weighed.
4. Call any participant who did not attend (and had not already informed you of his or her absence).
CHECK-IN (30 MINUTES)
Discuss concerns, questions and progress from the previous week.

- Write check-in questions for all to see when they arrive.
- Discuss questions in small groups first, about 5-10 minutes.
- Ask for volunteers to share answers in large group.
- Acknowledge group responses, successes and challenges/barriers. Explain that “check-in” is an opportunity to share in confidence with the group. Allow other participants to contribute strategies for overcoming the barriers. Give positive reinforcement for the successes.

**Suggested questions for check-in**

- What was your experience with record keeping this week?
- How did recording calories for the week go?
- What worked? What didn’t work?
- What were some of the barriers?
- What did recording calories show you about your current diet?

BRIEF INTRODUCTION TO READING FOOD LABELS

**Distribute “Nutrition Facts Label” handout**

- The Nutrition Facts food label lists information about which nutrients are in the food and is printed on the outside of packaged food. Although not common, prepackaged fresh food sometimes has nutrition facts as well.
- The most important item on the label is the serving size of the food. Knowing this helps to determine calories and nutritional content more accurately.
- *Show participants where to find information regarding serving size on food labels.*

**Sample discussion approach**

“When making changes toward healthier eating, it’s important to be aware of the calories and nutritional content of the foods we eat. Being familiar with the Nutritional Facts label can help you to learn about the food and the nutrition it contains. Labeling is required on packaged and processed foods and includes serving size as well as information about the essential nutrients contained in the food. *When determining the calorie content of foods, it is important to know what counts as a serving.*”
THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A SERVING SIZE AND A PORTION (15 MINUTES)

Define a serving size and a portion size

Suggested questions to initiate discussion

What is a serving?
What is a portion?
What is the difference between a portion and a serving?

- **Definition of a serving**
  - A serving is a **standardized** amount of food that can help you compare the nutritional and calorie content of similar foods (for example, how does a ½ cup of Cheerios compare to ½ cup of Cocoa Puffs).

- **Definition of a portion**
  - A portion is the actual amount of food that is eaten during your meal. A portion may be smaller or larger than the standardized serving size.

- **Lead a demonstration or hand-on activity to visualize the differences**
  - Pour a one-half cup of cereal into a large clear cereal bowl to demonstrate 1 serving of cereal per nutrition information on the box.
  - Ask participants to pour the amount of cereal they normally eat into a bowl. Then measure the amount to demonstrate their individual portion.
  - Give participants the number of calories in a serving of the selected cereal and have them calculate how many calories are in this portion of cereal.

Sample discussion approach

“Let’s take a look at the difference between a serving size and a portion. A serving is a **standardized** amount of food that can help you compare the nutritional and calorie content of similar foods. For example, a standard serving of cereal for most cereals is one-half cup. This is roughly the equivalent of your fist or a baseball.”

*Demo: (Pour a serving of cereal into a large clear cereal bowl.)*

“This is one serving of cereal and equal to the amount listed on the nutrition label on the cereal box. How does this compare to how much you normally eat for breakfast? If you eat more than this for breakfast, is it still a serving of cereal?”
Suggested questions to initiate discussion

- How many servings are in this portion of cereal?
- Does the difference between serving size and portion size make sense?
- How could making a distinction between servings and portions help you in keeping your food records?

Activity to demonstrate the difference between a serving size and a portion

1. Place 1 whole baked chicken breast on a dinner plate. (Actual cooked or food model) This is another example of a portion that one might eat during a meal.

   **Ask:**
   - Does this portion seem like too much food? Too little? Just right?
   - Is this portion smaller or larger than what most people eat in a given meal?
   - How many servings do you think are in this portion of chicken?

   **Note to facilitator:** Be sure to have pre-weighed the chicken breast before the class demonstration.

2. Show participants a deck of cards. One serving of chicken is 3 ounces or roughly the size of a deck or cards or cassette tape or the palm of your hand. (refer to “Making Sense of Portion Sizes” handout)

3. Use the deck of cards as a reference measure and cut one serving (equal to the deck of cards) from the chicken breast.

   **Ask:**
   - How many servings do you think are in the whole chicken breast?
   - How many calories are in one serving size of chicken (use calorie guide)?
   - How many calories are in the whole breast of chicken?
   - How would paying closer attention to portion size (using serving size as a guide) help you reduce the amount of calories eaten in a meal?


   **Ask:**
   - How would good estimates of portions of food help in keeping accurate food records?
Suggested discussion approach

“Estimating the number of servings in a portion of food will take some practice. However, knowing the amount of food you are eating will help you better track the number of calories. This, in turn, can help you better strategize how to reduce calorie consumption.”

(Refer participants to previous discussion of energy balance and its significance to weight loss.)

PORTION CONTROL (30 MINUTES)

Activities to demonstrate portion control

1. Hand out “Two Meals” (page 1 only). This is what some might consider a typical meal. It is meant to illustrate the common practice of just filling a plate with food (show sample dinner plate using items listed on worksheet).

2. Divide participants into groups of 4-5 and have each group estimate the number of calories for each food item in the dinner example (page 1).

3. Hand out page 2 of “Two Meals” (Note to facilitator: This meal is approximately 920 calories. Be sure to prepare amount and calorie calculations beforehand.)

**Ask:**
- What do you think of the total calories for this one meal?
- Based on your calculations last week, what is the average number of calories you eat in one day?

4. Hand out page 3 of the “Two Meals.” This is an example of a similar meal using measured serving sizes as a guide to reach approximately 546 calories. Planning ahead and measuring portion sizes can be a useful tool in managing the number of calories consumed at each meal.

**Ask:**
- What are your observations about the servings of food in this example?
- What are some things you could add to the meal #1 that would increase the amount of food without largely affecting the number of calories?
- What could you change or modify in meal example #2?
- How would putting smaller portions on your plate to start your dinner lead to reduced calorie intake?
- What are some other ways to reduce portion sizes? (write answers on flipchart)

5. Handout “Setting your plate.” This is a good visual example of planning balanced meals. Use half your plate for vegetables, a quarter of your plate for protein, and a quarter of your plate for starch/bread.
Sample discussion approach

“If you begin your meal with smaller portions and take your time, you may be able to reduce your calorie intake at a meal without still feeling hungry. In addition to controlling portion size by monitoring serving size, what are some other ways to reduce portion sizes?

Here are some examples of additional ways to reduce portion size:

- Use smaller plates and bowls at home meals
- Eat slower and savor your meals
- At restaurants cut your entrée in half and take the second half home to eat as leftovers.
- Avoid “upsizing” fast food meals
- Pay attention to package size of snack foods (for example, one snack sized bag of chips may contain more than one serving)
- Fill half your plate with fruit or vegetables. *This can help keep portion sizes of higher calorie foods such as meats and starches within reason.*

GOALS FOR NEXT WEEK (15 MINUTES)

Decide on goals for next week

- Setting goals and making plans for accomplishing goals is a key strategy for behavior change. This is a time for the participant to really reflect on what they need to do as far as behavior change to accomplish their weight loss goal. The actual work of changing behaviors will happen outside of the group session, but writing down a plan will solidify commitment.

- Lead a discussion on practicing portion estimation in the coming week.
- Pick at least one meal a day this week and attempt to get an exact amount of servings for each food and write it in your food and fitness diary. This will also help you estimate how many calories you consumed in those meals.
- As you get better at recording your calorie consumption at each meal, you will be able to plan healthier meals. We will discuss meal planning in a few weeks.

- Give group 3-5 minutes to think about personal goals for the following week. Encourage writing the goals in the FFR.

- Each person can have more than one goal. At least one goal should relate to the energy balance concept of “Calories In” and “Calories Out.”
Share one goal with small group

- Divide into small groups and ask each person to share one goal with the rest of the group.
- This is called a public goal or public challenge to help us be accountable to sticking to our goals.
- If time allows, ask for volunteers to share one goal with the entire group.

30-minute Physical Activity Session (if not included at beginning of group meeting)
Making Sense of Portion Sizes

Bread, Cereal, Rice, and Pasta
1 cup of potatoes, rice, pasta...................... is a tennis ball, ice cream scoop
1 pancake........................................ is a compact disc (CD)
½ cup cooked rice.................................. is a cupcake wrapper full
1 piece of cornbread................................ is a bar of soap
1 slice of bread...................................... is a CD jewel case
1 cup of pasta, spaghetti, cereal.................. is a fist
2 cups of cooked pasta............................. is a full outstretched hand

Vegetables
1 cup green salad.................................... is a baseball or a fist
1 medium baked potato............................. is a fist
¾ cup juice........................................... is a small Styrofoam cup
½ cup cooked broccoli............................. is a scoop of ice cream or a light bulb
½ cup serving......................................... is 6 asparagus spears; 7 baby carrots; 1 ear of corn

Fruits
½ cup of grapes (15 grapes)......................... is a light bulb
½ cup of fresh fruit.................................. is 7 cotton balls
1 medium size fruit.................................. is a tennis ball or a fist
1 cup of cut-up fruit.................................. is a fist
¼ cup raisins........................................... is one large egg

Milk, Yogurt, and Cheese
1 ½ ounces cheese................................... is a 9-volt battery, 3 dominoes or your index and middle fingers
1 cup of ice cream................................... is a large scoop the size of a baseball
Meat, Chicken, Turkey, Fish, Dry Beans, Eggs, and Nuts
2 tablespoons peanut butter is a Ping-Pong ball
1 teaspoon peanut butter is a fingertip
1 tablespoon peanut butter is a thumb tip
3 ounces cooked meat, fish, poultry is the palm of hand, deck of cards or a cassette tape
3 ounces grilled or baked fish is a checkbook
3 ounces cooked chicken is a leg and thigh or a breast

Fats, Oils and Sweets
1 teaspoon butter, margarine is the size of a stamp or the thickness of your finger
2 tablespoons salad dressing is a Ping-Pong ball

Snack Foods
1 ounce of nuts or small candies is one handful
1 ounce of chips or pretzels is two handfuls
½ cup of potato chips, crackers or popcorn is one man’s handful
1/3 cup of potato chips, crackers or popcorn is one woman’s handful

Serving Dishes/Utensils
½ cup is a small fruit bowl, a custard cup
1½ cups is a large cereal or soup bowl
1½ cups of pasta, noodles is a dinner plate, not heaped
½ cup of pasta, noodles is a cafeteria vegetable dish

You might want to know that...
• 1 cupped hand holds 2 tablespoons of liquid if you don’t have measuring spoons
• 1 slice of bread is one ounce or 1 serving; some rolls or bagels weigh 3 to 5 ounces or more, making them equal to 3 to 5 servings of bread

Compiled by Ellen Schuster, MS, RD, Oregon State University Extension Service, 3/97
Oregon State University Extension Home Economics
Two Meals

Meal One

1 whole boneless chicken breast (8 ounces) ........... ___ calories
1 cup of packaged rice pilaf ................................... ___ calories
Small mixed salad (1 cup) ........................................... ___ calories
2 tbsp of light-ranch dressing ................................... ___ calories
1 small dinner roll (with 1 tsp fat-free margarine) ...... ___ calories
1 glass of 1% milk (12 ounces) ................................. ___ calories
Calories per Item

- 1 whole boneless chicken breast (8 ounces) .......... 284 calories
- 1 cup of packaged rice pilaf .............................. 310 calories
- Small mixed salad (1 cup) ................................ 9 calories
- 2 tbsp of lite-ranch dressing ............................... 80 calories
- 1 small dinner roll (with 1 tsp fat-free margarine) .... 84 calories
- 1 glass of 1% milk (12 ounces) .......................... 153 calories
Meal Two

- 1 3-ounce serving of fish (baked).............................. 150 calories
- 1 medium baked potato (with ½ tbsp margarine)........ 190 calories
- 1 cup frozen mixed vegetables............................... 27 calories
- 1 slice of sourdough bread (with ½ tbsp margarine).... 88 calories
- 1 8-ounce glass of skim milk................................. 91 calories
Session 3: Introduction to Energy Balance and Goal Setting

1. Check-In
   - Discuss concerns, questions and progress from the previous week.

1. Introduction to Energy Balance
   - Define and describe the concept of energy balance.

2. Energy in (Calories)
   - Distribute and review the calorie guide.
   - Lead discussion and activity that uses calorie guide and reinforces self-monitoring by calculating calories.
   - Explain and help participants complete the self-monitoring data summary information.

4. Energy out (physical activity)
   - Hand out “Perceived Level of Exertion.”
   - Define and discuss moderate intensity levels of physical activity.

5. Introduction to SMART Goals
   - Review the details of SMART goals.
   - Decide on goals for next week and walk through the process of writing SMART goals.
   - Share one goal with small group.

Handouts for this session
“The Calorie King” Guides
Energy Balance & Calories Burned in PA per Minute
Steps to Action Planning
Practice Setting SMART Goals
Perceived Level of Exertion
Determining How Many Calories You Need (optional)
At least 30 minutes **BEFORE** session begins:

- Write the agenda on board or flipchart at the beginning of each session.
- Write any additional notes with agenda – such as upcoming holidays, room changes, announcements, etc.
- Set up tables and chairs so that they are arranged in small groups of 3-5 and facing the facilitator.
- Set out nametags and reviewed food records from previous session for participants to pick up when arriving.
- Post “Group Guidelines” developed in Session 1.
- Post “The one thing they hope to learn in this group” developed in Session 1.
- Place 1-2 calculators for each small group table setting.
- Have blank food records available for participants to pick up at end of session.
- **Optional:** It may also be useful to write on board the topics coming up next week, and the facilitators’ names and contact information.

**What you will need for this session:**

- Pens
- Blank food records
- Nametags
- Markers for writing on board and flipchart
- Container for collecting food records (to be reviewed by facilitator and returned following week)
- Flipchart
- Calculators
- Handouts for this session

**FACILITATOR NOTES**

1. Provide a 5-minute break sometime during the classroom session.

2. **Include a 30-minute Physical Activity Session** at beginning or end of group meeting.

3. Before dismissing participants at the end of every session, affirm that EVERYONE has weighed.

4. Call any participant who did not attend (and had not already informed you of his or her absence).
CHECK-IN (20 MINUTES)

Discuss concerns, questions and progress from the previous week.

- Write check-in questions for all to see when they arrive.
- Discuss questions in small groups first, about 5 minutes.
- Ask for volunteers to share answers in large group.
- Acknowledge group responses, successes and challenges/barriers. Explain that “check-in” is an opportunity to share in confidence with the group. Whenever possible, allow other participants to contribute strategies for overcoming the barriers. Give positive reinforcement for the successes.

Suggested questions for check-in

- What was your experience with record keeping?
- What got in the way of keeping records?
- What seemed to help you most when keeping records?
- What are some other ideas to help you remember to fill out your records?
- What worked? What didn’t work?
- What was your experience with portion sizes?
- What did you do this week to eat smaller portions?
- How did you do with increasing physical activity?
- What worked? What didn’t work?

Sample discussion approach

“Last week we discussed portion sizes and serving sizes. How did that go? What did you notice? What did you learn as you kept food records this week?”
INTRODUCTION TO ENERGY BALANCE (5 MINUTES)

Define and describe the concept of energy balance

- Energy balance refers to the balance between the energy you take in (in the form of calories in food) and the energy you burn (in the form of physical activity).
- Two sides to energy balance: Calories In (food) AND Calories Out (exercise).
  - If you eat more calories from food than you burn through exercise, you gain weight.
  - If you burn more calories through exercise than those you consume from food, you lose weight.
  - And, if you eat about the same amount of calories as you burn through exercise, you maintain.
- It is recommended to change both eating and activity levels to lose weight.
- It is especially important to get good sleep when you are trying to make important life changes like the ones recommended in this program.
- Discuss how the concept of energy balance relates to calculating calories.

Sample discussion approach

“Today we are going to discuss the concept of energy balance. In theory, weight loss should be easy—burn more calories than you consume by eating less and moving more. However, the reality of doing this in a society that revolves around food, serves large portions and promotes sedentary behaviors can be challenging. There are two sides to energy balance—calories in (food) and calories out (exercise).

This is why we recommend both changes in eating and activity levels to lose weight. We also recommend working toward good sleep habits. Without good sleep, it is hard to have the energy to exercise, plan meals, and keep food records. Over the next few weeks, we will be focusing mostly on the food side. Today we will take a look at how much we are eating to help get an idea of calories in.”
CALCULATING CALORIES (30 MINUTES)

Distribute and review the calorie guide (if available)

- Introduce and pass out the calorie guides.
- Orient participants with the guide; explain the layout and format of the book. Suggested items to point out are:
  - Supplemental weight loss and nutrition information in the back of the book
  - Organization of categories
  - Restaurant chain calorie section

Lead discussion and activity that uses the calorie guide and reinforces self-monitoring by calculating calories and recording physical activity.

- Demonstrate how to “look up” foods.
- Lead group activity that involves all participants in calculating calories.
- Reinforce the behavior of keeping records by using participant’s completed records and the calorie guide during the session.
- Have participants reflect on the foods that contributed the most calories to their totals.
- Ask participants to think about other choices they could make in place of some of the higher calorie foods. Use the “Calorie King” guide to get ideas for better options. Ask participants to share examples with the group and, if necessary, help them to explore simple options.
- Summarize process.

**Note to facilitator: If a calorie book is not available bring food labels for a variety of different food items as way to practice looking for calorie content**

Sample discussion approach

“We are going to take the next several minutes to use the calorie guide with your food diaries. Today, we’ll do the calculations during the group session so you can get a feel for the process. For future sessions, we would like you to do your own calculations each week before the group session. We will use your food diaries each week, so please bring them with you to each group session.

We recommend using the calorie guide each week to calculate the calories for each of the foods listed. This may seem time consuming at first, so we’ll spend plenty of time today to get a feel for using this book, it will be easier with time. Feel free to work in small groups or partners and if you run into any questions, just let me know.”
Suggested activities for looking up calories and to introduce the calorie guide. Complete one or more of these activities, depending on time constraints:

1. Work in small groups. Give small groups the same food to look up, but give each group a different portion size to calculate. Have groups write their findings on the board.

2. Have everyone try to find the highest (or lowest) calorie item in a certain section or page, they can yell out the answers while the leader writes up the foods and calories on the board.

3. Form small groups and have the group work together to look up one or two foods to find the calories. Add to the “competition” by having a group member write the findings up on the board. (Give all groups the same food and check to see that all numbers on the board are the same, or give the groups different foods to keep them guessing)

4. Form small groups and have each group work together to find the calories of a sample meal. Before each group shares their findings, have the other groups guess the calories. Then reveal the calories based on data in the calorie guide.

5. Participants pick 1 weekday and 1 weekend day from their completed FFR to use for this activity. Participants use calorie guide to look up the calories for the foods from the days selected. (Be sure to provide calculators.)

Suggested questions to initiate discussion

- What was difficult? What was a surprise for you?
- What foods do you notice contribute the most calories? Were there any surprises? What do you notice about beverages?
- What are some foods that are higher in calories than expected?
- Based on what you know now, what would you eat differently this week?
Explain and help participants complete the self-monitoring data summary information.

- Help participants complete the weekly summary and the FFR data fields for:
  - Total days a food record was kept
  - Total minutes of moderate exercise
  - Quality of food (fruit, vegetable, low-fat dairy, etc.)
  - Sleep record
- If not already collected – collect data for #food records and # min. exercise on group data form before participant leaves.

MODERATE PHYSICAL ACTIVITY (10 MINUTES)

Hand out “Perceived Level of Exertion” worksheet

- Review worksheet with participants

Define and discuss moderate intensity levels of physical activity

- Discuss the range of “level of exertion” and how this translates to moderate intensity physical activity.
- The more moderate physical activity you get the more energy you will expend. When you combine reduced calorie consumption with increased activity your body will lose weight.
- Benefits of moderate intensity physical activity include more energy, weight loss, stronger and healthier heart, better sleep.

Suggested questions to initiate discussion

- Can anyone describe what it is like to be in the range of moderate physical activity?
- How can you tell if you are exercising too hard?
- How can you tell if you are not exercising hard enough?

Sample discussion approach

“Remember when we talked about energy balance? The more moderate physical activity you get the more energy you will expend. When you combine reduced calorie consumption with increased activity, your body will lose weight. Moderate physical activity is good for you in a number of ways, more energy, weight loss, stronger healthier heart, and better sleep. But one of the most important benefits of increase physical activity (as it relates to this program) is in maintaining weight loss achieved through diet change. If you can practice getting more moderate physical activity now, it will help you maintain your weight loss.”
INTRODUCTION TO SMART GOALS (15 MINUTES)

Review the details of SMART goals

- Review the “SMART goals” worksheets
- Emphasize that setting goals and making plans for accomplishing goals is a key strategy for behavior change.
- Remind participants that this is a time to really reflect on what they need to do as far as behavior change to accomplish their weight loss goal.
- Acknowledge that the actual work of changing behaviors will happen outside of the group session, but writing down a plan will solidify commitment.

Sample discussion approach

“Before you leave today, I’d like to spend some time thinking about your goals for the week. Goal setting is extremely important in long-term success with changing any behavior—including behaviors associated with weight loss. Learning how to set goals and evaluate your progress are skills in and of themselves.”

Decide on goals for next week and walk through the process of writing SMART goals

- SMART goals are Specific, Measurable, Action-oriented, Realistic, and Timely.
- Give group 3-5 minutes to think about personal goals for the following week.
- Encourage writing the goals on the SMART goals practice worksheet first. In the future weeks, goals can be written directly in the FFR.
- Each person can have more than one goal, as long as they are SMART. At least one goal should relate to the energy balance concept of ‘Calories In’ and ‘Calories Out’

Sample discussion approach

“When you are setting goals it is important to be specific about the goal. For example, if someone never eats breakfast, instead of setting a goal “to eat breakfast,” it is better to set a goal “to eat breakfast 2 days this week.” In this way, they can clearly evaluate their progress at the end of the week, and it becomes easier to judge what a reasonable goal for the next week would be. Another thing that is important is to keep goals focused on the short term. In other words, rather than setting unrealistic goals that are difficult or impossible to achieve in the short term, it helps to break long-term goals into small steps. It is also important to create goals around specific behaviors rather than around outcomes. We recommend setting a goal for a behavior that will help you lose weight. So a goal to lose weight might be “I will eat fast food only once this week” or “I will walk the dog for 30 minutes 3 times this week.”

Share one goal with small group
• Break into small groups and ask each person to share one goal with the rest of the group.
• This is called a public goal or challenge to help us be accountable to sticking to our goals.
• If time allows, ask for volunteers to share one goal with the entire group.
• Ask each volunteer to rate the likelihood of achieving their goal from 0-10 (0=not likely to succeed). If <7, encourage participant to revise goal appropriately. Emphasize the importance of planning for success.

30-minute Physical Activity Session (if not included at beginning of group meeting)
Session 4: Breakfast and Regular Meals

1. Check-In (30 minutes)
   - Discuss concerns, questions and progress from the previous week

2. Breakfast and Regular Meals (30 minutes)
   - Value of Eating Breakfast in Weight Loss
   - Metabolic and Regulatory Benefits of Breakfast
   - Importance of eating small, frequent meals in weight loss
   - Lead group in an activity on quality breakfasts

3. Finding Time for Physical Activity (15 minutes)
   - Distribute the worksheet “Finding Time for Physical Activity”
   - Encourage participants to create a plan based on this discussion for the next week

4. Goals for next week (15 minutes)
   - Decide on goals for next week
   - Share one goal with small group (“Public Goals” or “Public Challenge”)

Handouts for this session
- Light, quick breakfast ideas
- Lunch-box ideas
- Finding Time for Physical Activity
- Pyramid Power – Activity for a Lifetime
At least 30 minutes **BEFORE** session begins:

- Write the agenda on board or flipchart at the beginning of each session.
- Write any additional notes with agenda – such as upcoming holidays, room changes, announcements, etc.
- Set up tables and chairs so that they are arranged in small groups of 3-5 and facing the facilitator.
- Set out nametags and reviewed food records from previous session for participants to pick up when arriving.
- Post “Group Guidelines” developed in Session 1.
- Place 1-2 calculators for each small group table setting.
- Have blank food records available for participants to pick up at end of session.
- **Optional:** It may also be useful to write on board the topics coming up next week, and the facilitators name and contact information.

**What you will need for this session:**

- Pens
- Blank food records
- Nametags
- Markers for writing on board and flipchart
- Container for collecting food records (to be reviewed by facilitator and returned following week)
- Flipchart
- Calculators
- Handouts for this session

**FACILITATOR NOTES**

1. Provide a 5-minute break sometime during the classroom session.
2. **Include a 30-minute Physical Activity Session** at beginning or end of group meeting
3. Before dismissing participants at the end of every session, affirm that everyone has been weighed.
4. Call any participant who did not attend (and had not already informed you of his or her absence).
CHECK-IN (30 MINUTES)
Discuss concerns, questions and progress from the previous week.

- Write check-in questions for all to see when they arrive.
- Discuss questions in small groups first, about 5 minutes.
- Ask for volunteers to share answers in large group.
- Acknowledge group responses, successes and challenges/barriers. Explain that “check-in” is an opportunity to share in confidence with the group. Allow other participants to contribute strategies for overcoming the barriers. Give positive reinforcement for the successes.

Suggested questions for check-in

- What was your experience with record keeping this week?
- How did recording calories for the week go?
- What worked?
- What didn’t work?
- What were some of the barriers?
- What did recording calories show you about your current diet?

Sample discussion approach

“Two weeks ago we talked about portions vs. servings and how to use portion control to reduce calories. What did you notice about portions this past week? How did that go? What else?” “Did counting the calories of certain foods change the way you think about portions and serving sizes?”
BREAKFAST AND REGULAR MEALS (30 MINUTES)

Value of Eating Breakfast in Weight Loss

- Research has shown that people who skip breakfast are more likely to be overweight.
- Regular breakfast eating is one of the few things that have been shown to be related to successful weight loss maintenance (others include self-monitoring, weighing yourself regularly and regular exercise).

Suggested questions to initiate discussion

- Why do you think breakfast is the “most important meal of the day?”
- How often do you currently eat breakfast? What are some of your reasons for not eating breakfast more often?
- What have you noticed (about your eating behavior, energy levels, mood, etc.) on the days you eat breakfast vs. days you don't eat breakfast?
- Why do you think that people who eat breakfast are less likely to be overweight?

Sample discussion approach

"Eating breakfast every day is the single most important step you can take to help yourself lose or maintain weight. Research has shown that people who do not eat breakfast are more likely to be overweight. In fact, regular breakfast eating is one of the few habits that is related to successful weight loss (other habits include self-monitoring such as keeping food records, weighing yourself regularly and regular exercise)."
Metabolic and Regulatory Benefits of Breakfast

- Breakfast literally means, “breaking the fast.”
- Metabolic benefits: It is important to eat some form of breakfast (within 2 hours of waking) in order to jump start (reactivate) your body’s metabolism and get it running at a higher level than what you need during sleep.
- In order to burn calories, a person needs to eat regularly, starting with breakfast every day.
- Some people complain that eating breakfast seems to make them hungrier throughout the day. This is actually a good sign! Hunger is a sign that your metabolism is “revved up”. If you get hungry within 2-3 hours after having breakfast, that means that your body is burning more fuel (calories), and you are more likely to lose weight.
- Eating breakfast helps you get a good start on regulating your hunger, energy levels, and the amounts (or portions) that you eat during the day. That is, eating breakfast and eating regular meals throughout the day will work hand-in-hand to help you lose weight.

Suggested questions to initiate discussion

- How many eat breakfast every day? 3-4 times a week?
- Is there a difference or observed any differences on the days you eat breakfast vs. days you don’t eat breakfast?
- Why is eating breakfast so important?
- What do you think of this recommendation?

Sample discussion approach

"There are many reasons why breakfast is important. One is how it relates to the body’s metabolism. When we sleep our bodies slow down and we burn fewer calories. It is a biological process that allows our body to rejuvenate and rest. In the morning, it is important to eat some form of breakfast (within 2 hours of waking) in order to jump start your metabolism and get it running at a higher level again. Many people aren’t aware of this. They believe that if they don’t eat, it will help them lose weight. When in fact, in order to burn calories, a person needs to eat regularly, starting with breakfast every day.

Often people will worry that eating breakfast will make them eat more because they get hungrier earlier. What is really going on is that your hunger is a sign that your metabolism has been turned on or activated. So it is actually a good sign when you get hungry within 2-3 hours after having breakfast. That means that your body is burning more fuel (calories), and you are more likely to be able to lose weight.

In addition to getting your metabolism going, eating breakfast helps you get a good start on regulating the amounts that you eat throughout the day. In other words, if you eat a moderate amount for breakfast, you will be appropriately hungry for the next snack or meal. It will then be easier to eat an average or moderate portion at that snack or meal so that it will carry you over to the next time you eat. In this way you benefit from the sense of stability—both in terms of hunger and energy level—that regular eating provides. We encourage you to eat regular meals to avoid getting overly hungry.”
Importance of eating small, frequent meals in weight loss

- Research has shown that people who skip meals are more likely to be overweight. Skipping meals tells the body that food is not available, so our bodies “hold on” to everything we have to get us by.
- Define “regular meals” as avoiding long stretches of time (more than 2-3 hours) between meals and snacks.
- Explore possible barriers to eating regular meals and snacks throughout the day (e.g., friends and family with different habits, lack of time at school or work) and brainstorm ways of overcoming these barriers.

Suggested questions to initiate discussion

- What does it mean to eat regular meals?
- How many of you eat regular meals and snacks throughout the day?
- What happens when you skip meals?
- What gets in the way of eating regular meals?
- What ideas do you have for dealing with these barriers? (make a list on flipchart)

Sample discussion approach

“One of the most useful habits that we suggest for people who are trying to lose weight is to eat regular meals and snacks. A common weight loss strategy is skipping meals. However, skipping meals tells your body that food is not available, so your body “holds on” to body stores to help keep you going. This means your body goes into ‘survival mode’ and ends up storing energy in the form of calories. This survival mode is helpful if you are really in danger of starvation, but is not helpful if you are trying to lose or maintain weight.

What we mean by regular eating is eating a meal or snack every 2-3 hours. This may sound like a lot of food to those of you who are used to eating less often. Sometimes people worry that if they eat more often they will gain weight. However, as I said before, you will be better able to limit the amounts that you eat by eating more frequently and keeping a regular pattern of eating. As a result, you will actually end up eating less total food at the end of the day.”

Distribute “Light, quick breakfast ideas” and “Lunch-box ideas”

- Remind participants that preparing regular healthy meals and snacks doesn’t have to take up too much time.
- Encourage participants to add their own ideas to these lists and to be creative.
Lead group in an activity on quality breakfasts

Suggested activities for planning a healthy breakfast

1. Ask participants to look at typical breakfast patterns over past week in their Food Diary. Then ask them to think about what they might do to make their breakfast healthier (change the type of cereal, add fruit, etc.).

2. Discuss what foods could be eaten in the morning. What are some healthy breakfast choices?

3. Ask them to create three standard breakfast menus for themselves. Have participants share their breakfast meals.

4. Discuss how to incorporate breakfast into a daily meal plan. For participants considering starting to eat breakfast, how might they begin to do this? (Changing the morning routine to find time for breakfast, preparing something the evening before, eating at work, etc.)
FINDING TIME FOR PHYSICAL ACTIVITY (15 MINUTES)

Distribute “Pyramid Power – Activity for a Lifetime”

- This handout encourages participants to consider different ways to be physically active every day.
- Participating in a variety of activities can make exercise enjoyable and easier to incorporate into a daily routine.
- Remind participants of the study guideline to aim for 180 minutes of moderate exercise each week.

Sample discussion approach

“This handout offers some good ideas of how to fit physical activity into our weekly routine. We should aim to be active everyday with our lifestyle activities such as gardening and walking the dog, this is the ‘base’ of the pyramid. Look for ways to incorporate moderate physical activity - brisk walking, sports, biking - several days each week since this is most helpful with weight management. Participating in strength training and stretching a couple of days each week will help with muscle strength and flexibility. The tip of the pyramid are activities to consider cutting down on.”

Distribute the worksheet “Finding Time for Physical Activity”

- Walk participants through the worksheet based on their typical day.
  - Instruct them to complete only first two columns (”Time” and “Usual Daily Activities”)
  - Then, based on “Usual Daily Activities” complete the “Physical activities I can do” columns to determine what time of day and what specific physical activity they can add to their day.

Suggested questions to initiate discussion

- What did you discover by planning out exercise in this format?
- What activities did you come up with?
- What are some ways you can fit exercise into your schedule?
- What are some of the barriers to exercise?
- Where can you make time for 30 minutes (or several smaller intervals) of exercise in addition to your normal routine?
- What will motivate you?
Sample discussion approach

“Adding exercise every day may be easier than you think. Use this worksheet to consider how much time you spend at your regular daily activities. Include the activities you can’t change, such as work or travel time, and the activities you can change such as watching TV or using the computer at home. How much of that time could be spent on moving your body instead? There are many things that you can do without going to a gym or needing special shoes or clothing.

Next, think about how you might add more activity to your usual activities. What did you come up with? Some examples to get in more movement might be taking the stairs instead of the elevator, parking farther away in the parking lot, take walking meetings. Also think about where or how you can make time for 30 minutes (or several smaller intervals) of exercise above your normal routine.”

Encourage participants to create a plan based on this discussion for the next week.

- Consider having participants discuss their plan with a partner.
- Summarize the group activity and discuss remaining questions and/or concerns.

GOALS FOR NEXT WEEK (15 MINUTES)

Decide on goals for next week

- Setting goals and making plans for accomplishing goals is a key strategy for behavior change. Allow time for participants to reflect on what they need to do as far as behavior change to accomplish their weight loss goal.
- The actual work of changing behaviors will happen outside of the group session, but writing down a plan will solidify commitment.
- Give group 3-5 minutes to think about personal goals for the following week. Encourage writing the goals in the FFR.
- Each person can have more than one goal. At least one goal should relate to eating breakfast, eating regular meals, or increasing physical activity.

Share one goal with small group

- Divide into small groups and ask each person to share one goal with the rest of the group.
- This is called a public goal or public challenge to help us be accountable to sticking to our goals.
- If time allows, ask for volunteers to share one goal with the entire group.

30-minute Physical Activity Session (if not included at beginning of group meeting)
Session 5: Working Toward a Healthier Diet

1. Check-In (30 minutes)
   - Discuss concerns, questions and progress from the previous week.

2. Evaluating Food Records and Our Diets (45 minutes)
   - Review food records for fruits and vegetables, high fats, high sugars
   - Define and explain unsaturated fats vs. saturated/trans fats
   - Lead group in activity to estimate calories in fats
     - Explain and demonstrate the teaspoon to gram equivalents of fats.
   - Review food journals for possible changes in foods we eat
   - Discuss the importance of fiber in our diet

3. Goals for next week (15 minutes)
   - Decide on goals for next week
   - Share one goal with small group (“Public Goals” or “Public Challenge”)
   - Food Bank will be presenting at the next session

Handouts for this session
Healthier fats, risky fats
Use the Nutrition Facts Label to Eat Healthier
What’s in that drink?
Why is fiber important?
At least 30 minutes **BEFORE** session begins:

- Write the agenda on board or flipchart at the beginning of each session.
- Write any additional notes with agenda – such as upcoming holidays, room changes, announcements, etc.
- Set up tables and chairs so that they are arranged in small groups of 3-5 and facing the facilitator.
- Set out nametags and reviewed food records from previous session for participants to pick up when arriving.
- Post “Group Guidelines” developed in Session 1.
- Place 1-2 calculators for each small group table setting.
- Have blank food records available for participants to pick up at end of session.
- **Optional:** It may also be useful to write on board the topics coming up next week, and the facilitators name and contact information.

**What you will need for this session:**

- Pens
- Blank food records
- Nametags
- Markers for writing on board and flipchart
- Container for collecting food records (to be reviewed by facilitator and returned following week)
- Flipchart
- Calculators
- Handouts for this session

**Materials specific to this session:**

- 2 colors of highlighter pens
  
  **Fat Demonstration**
  
- Teaspoon
- Can of shortening or lard
- Napkins/wipes
- Small paper plates
FACILITATOR NOTES

1. Provide a 5-minute break sometime during the classroom session.

2. **Include a 30-minute Physical Activity Session** at beginning or end of group meeting.

3. Before dismissing participants at the end of every session, affirm that everyone has been weighed.

4. Call any participant who did not attend (and had not already informed you of his or her absence).
CHECK-IN (30 MINUTES)
Discuss concerns, questions and progress from the previous week.

- Write check-in questions for all to see when they arrive.
- Discuss questions in small groups first, about 5 minutes.
- Ask for volunteers to share answers in large group.
- Acknowledge group responses, successes, and challenges/barriers. Explain that “check-in” is an opportunity to share in confidence with the group. Allow other participants to contribute strategies for overcoming the barriers. Give positive reinforcement for the successes.

Suggested questions to initiate discussion
- Who tried eating more regular meals last week? If you focused on this area last week, what were your experiences and observations?
- If you normally skip breakfast, who tried to include breakfast? What was your experience?
- What worked? What didn’t work?

Sample discussion approach
“Last week we discussed Eating Breakfast and Eating Regular Meals. For some of you this may be a new practice. Let’s take about 5 minutes to share in our groups how we did last week. Then, we will come together and share as a large group.”
EVALUATING FOOD RECORDS AND OUR DIETS (45 Minutes)

Review Food Records for Specific Food Items (5 Minutes)

- Take about 5 minutes to go through your most recent food journal.
- Mark high-fat foods (to your best guess) in one color.
- Mark high sugar foods (to your best guess) in a different color.
- If you haven’t done so already, total the number of fruits and vegetables you ate each day.
- This will be referred to at the end of the session.

FACILITATOR NOTES

- For consistency, it is recommended that the facilitator designate a specific color for a specific food item.
- Optional: Instruct participants to complete this activity while they wait for class to start and after they have weighed in.

Sample discussion approach

“Today let’s spend some time looking at the foods we eat. I have provided two different colors of highlighters. Take the next 5 minutes to go through your food record to find high fat foods, high sugar foods, and total fruits and vegetables per day. Use the “yellow” highlighter to mark foods that you think are high in fat (to your best guess). Use the “green” highlighter to mark foods that you think are high in sugar (to your best guess). Finally, if you haven’t done so already, total the number of fruits and vegetables you ate each day. We will come back to this information later in the class.”
Define and Explain Unsaturated Fats Vs. Saturated/Trans Fats (5 MINUTES)

Distribute “Healthier fats, risky fats” and “Use the Nutrition Facts Label to Eat Healthier”

- Fat is an important nutrient in your daily diet that, along with carbohydrates and protein, provides energy to your body.
- Because fat is so calorie dense at 9 calories per gram, fat can quickly pile on calories. Carbohydrates and protein contain only 4 calories per gram. For weight management, all calories need to be controlled, but restriction of fat is particularly important because it is so calorie-dense.
- A good rule of thumb is to multiply the number of fat grams by 10 to determine about how many calories per serving are from fat.
- Excess fat in the diet, especially if it is saturated or trans fat, can contribute to chronic diseases such as heart disease, diabetes, hypertension (high blood pressure), and stroke.
- A heart-healthy diet is a diet that has between 25 and 35 percent of the calories coming from fat, and most of that fat source should be from unsaturated fats.
- Unsaturated fats are monounsaturated or polyunsaturated fats and are thought of as “healthier.” Monounsaturated fat is typical in the Mediterranean diet and may protect the heart. One special type of polyunsaturated fat is Omega-3 fat, which is found in fish. Omega-3 fat may protect the heart and other parts of the body.
- Riskier fats are saturated or trans-fats as they have been directly linked with heart disease.
- Unsaturated fats may help lower your blood-cholesterol level when you use them in place of the saturated/trans fats. Total fat grams and source of fats (4 types) is information that can be found on nutrition labels.
- Refer participant to pages 271-275 in their 2009 “The Calorie King” books for additional information on Fats & Cholesterol.

Suggested questions to initiate discussion

- Are all fats bad?
- Why is it important to consider the fat you are eating?
- Why should you be concerned about the saturated or trans fat content of food?
- How might decreasing fat help you lose weight?
Sample discussion approach

“Fat is an important nutrient in our daily diet that, along with carbohydrates and protein provide energy to your body. However, these days, people are eating unhealthy amounts of fat, and a high fat diet often also means a high calorie diet. For every 1 gram of fat, there are 9 calories. This is more than twice the calories in a gram of protein or carbohydrate, which is equal to only 4 calories per gram. The Nutrition Facts label lists the fat content of a food. A quick way to determine how many calories from fat are in a serving, you could just multiply the grams of fat by ten. For example, if a food has 250 calories and 12 grams of fat per serving, approximately 120 calories (12 x 10) are from fat.”

“Excess fat in the diet, especially if it is saturated or trans fat can contribute to chronic diseases such as heart disease, diabetes, hypertension (high blood pressure), and stroke, almost any chronic disease that is diet related. A heart-healthy diet (or low fat diet) is one that is between 25 and 35 percent fat, with most of that fat coming from unsaturated fat sources.”

“You may have also heard these referred to as good fats and bad fats, or healthier fats and riskier fats. Whatever description you’ve heard, the idea is the same and very simple: Out with the bad and in with the good. As much as possible, avoid saturated fats and trans-fats. Replacing saturated fats with unsaturated fats can make a big difference in protecting you against heart disease and can help lower your blood-cholesterol level.”

Lead group in activity to evaluate calories in fat (25 minutes)

- Have prepared and on display (use food models or real foods) 4-5 high fat content foods.
- Ask participants to estimate the calories only for each item on the worksheet. As a group we will complete the rest of the worksheet.
- At the facilitator’s discretion, it may be helpful to have 1 teaspoon of fat (shortening).
- Suggested food items are: Starbucks’s scone, slice of pepperoni pizza, McDonald’s meal (French fries, cheeseburger, quarter-pounder, etc.), apple juice, regular soda, serving of ice cream, candy bar.
- Once participants have had enough time to estimate the calories, go through the worksheet item by item. Ask for estimates of calories, then, reveal the true numbers (either one at a time or all at once).
- Ask participants or groups to volunteer or take turns measuring the grams of fat into teaspoons.
- Remind participants that nutrition labels list the amount of fat in grams, type of fat, in grams.
Sample discussion approach

"You’ve had several weeks now of practice estimating serving sizes and calories. Now let’s take some time to show off your calorie estimating skills and begin to take a look at the role of fats in your diet."

“Let’s start with the first item. What were your guesses for the total calories? (allow time for several guesses) The actual calories for this item are ______. This item also has X grams of fat. Before we go on to the rest of the items, let’s take a few minutes to translate grams of fat to teaspoons of fat.”

Explain and demonstrate the teaspoon to gram equivalents of fats.

- Five grams of fat equals 1 teaspoon.
- One gram of fat is equal to 9 calories (compared to 4 calories per gram in carbohydrates and proteins). Remember, sugar is also a carbohydrate.
- Formula: [ # of Servings X Total Fat Grams ÷ 5 = Teaspoons of Fat ]
  1. Multiply the number of grams of total fat by the number of servings per container.
  2. Then divide by 5 to get the number of teaspoons of fat.

Fun Quiz: Translating Fat and Sugar Calories to Exercise

- How long would you need to walk briskly to burn off the calories in a 20 ounce bottle of cola? (Answer: 1 hour).
- How long would you need to dance actively to burn off the calories in a double cheeseburger and fries? (Answer: 2½ hours.)

Discuss fiber in the diet (5 MINUTES)

Distribute “Why is fiber important?”

- Fiber is found in plant foods, it is not digested but is vital to our health.
- Fiber offers better control of diabetes and cholesterol, and promotes intestinal health, and may help prevent colon cancer.
- Due to their bulk, fiber can assist in weight loss by satisfying our appetite sooner than lower fiber foods
- Fiber is slower to digest, which can provide a feeling of fullness or satiety.
- Fiber also requires more chewing which may help to slow down our eating speed and help us feel fuller sooner.
- A desirable fiber intake for adults is 25-35 grams per day.
- The fiber content of foods is listed in the nutrition facts label.
- Refer participant to pages 276-281 in their 2009 “The Calorie King” books for additional information on fiber.
Suggested questions to initiate discussion
- What have you heard about high fiber foods?
- How might increasing dietary fiber help with weight management?
- What are some high fiber foods?

Sample discussion approach
“Fiber an important part of a healthy diet. It is only found in plant foods and cannot be digested. The recommended fiber intake for adults is 25-35 grams per day, however most Americans only get about 15 grams of fiber per day. High fiber foods tend to be more nutritious and can help with maintaining a healthy digestive tract, as well as lowering the risk of heart disease and diabetes.”

“Fiber can help with weight management in a many ways. Foods high in fiber tend to contain few calories considering their large volume. It takes up space in our stomach, which can give us a prolonged sense of fullness. In addition, because fiber usually requires more chewing, it may help us to eat more slowly, satisfying our appetite sooner. For example, which would tend to fill us up more – a whole apple or a glass of apple juice?”

“A small apple contains about 80 calories and has 3.6 grams of fiber. A 6 ounce glass of apple juice has the same amount of calories, but only 0.2 grams of fiber. [refer participants to page 277 in the 2009 “The Calorie King” book] You can see the benefits of having fresh fruit instead of fruit juice.”

Ask participants to identify food groups that are high in fiber.
If needed, remind them that fiber is found in plant foods. List should include fruits, vegetables, nuts, legumes, and whole grains.

Optional: It may also be useful to write the list on the board

Review food journals for changes in foods we eat (5 minutes)
- After fat and sugar demonstrations, encourage participants to reflect on the foods they highlighted at the beginning of the session.
- As time permits, write on board or flipchart participants’ ideas of what they might consider changing (encourage them to be specific – replace high fat desserts with fresh fruit, drink low-calorie beverage instead of soda). Revisit these ideas when it’s time for weekly goal-setting.
- Optional activity: provide a non-food prize for the top 3-5 participants with the most fruits and vegetables.
Suggested questions to initiate discussion

- What was new information? What surprised you?
- Looking at your own food record, are there patterns in highlighted food items and total daily calories. What do you notice?
- Is there anything you would do differently? Would you now mark a food as high fat you didn’t do at the beginning of class? Looking back, how could you have made a different choice?

FACTS AND FIGURES

- About 300,000 Americans die each year from complications of obesity—nearly 1,000 every day, one every 90 seconds.
- The average American consumes almost 17,000 teaspoons of added sugars each year.
- Corn syrup consumption increased from a yearly average of 1.5 pounds in 1970, to 63 pounds in 2000, an increase of more than 4,000%.
- One in three children born in the United States in 2000 will become diabetic unless they start eating less and exercising more. The odds are worse for African American and Latino youngsters—nearly half of them are likely to develop the disease.
GOALS FOR NEXT WEEK (15 MINUTES)

Decide on goals for next week

- Setting goals and making plans for accomplishing goals is a key strategy for behavior change. Use this time for the participant to reflect on what they need to do as far as behavior change to accomplish their weight loss goal.
- The actual work of changing behaviors will happen outside of the group session, but writing down a plan will solidify commitment.
- Give group 3-5 minutes to think about personal goals for the following week. Encourage writing the goals in the FFR.
- Each person can have more than one goal. At least one goal should relate to today’s topic.

Share one goal with small group

- Divide into small groups and ask each person to share one goal with the rest of the group.
- This is called a public goal or public challenge to help us be accountable to sticking to our goals.
- If time allows, ask for volunteers to share one goal with the entire group.

Inform participants about Food Bank presentation

- Staff from the food bank will be joining us at the next week to present a session on how to eat healthfully on a budget.
- Their presentation will take the full 2-hour session, so we will not be including physical activity

30-minute Physical Activity Session (if not included at beginning of group meeting)

Bibliography

2. Cultivating Health: Weight Management Kit, Kaiser Permanente
3. Alameda County Public Health Department, Nutrition Services, Oakland, CA; [http://www.acphd.org/nutritionservices/resources.htm](http://www.acphd.org/nutritionservices/resources.htm)
Session 6: Eating Healthfully on a Budget

1. Check-In (15 minutes)
   - Discuss concerns, questions and progress from the previous week.

2. Review and Discuss Food Bank Materials (45 minutes)
   - Eating Healthfully on a Budget

3. Goals for Next Week (15 minutes)
   - Decide on and write goals for next week
   - Share at least 1 goal with small group

Handouts for this session (to be provided by food bank)
- Eating Healthfully on a Budget
- Recipes
- Reference Materials
At least 30 minutes **BEFORE** session begins:

- Write the agenda on board or flipchart at the beginning of each session.
- Write any additional notes with agenda – such as upcoming holidays, room changes, announcements, etc.
- Set up tables and chairs so that they are arranged in small groups of 3-5 and facing the facilitator.
- Set out nametags and reviewed food records from previous session for participants to pick up when arriving.
- Post “Group Guidelines” developed in Session 1.
- Place 1-2 calculators for each small group table setting.
- Have blank food records available for participants to pick up at end of session.
- **Optional:** It may also be useful to write on board the topics coming up next week, and the facilitators name and contact information.

**What you will need for this session:**

- Pens
- Blank food records
- Nametags
- Markers for writing on board and flipchart
- Container for collecting food records (to be reviewed by facilitator and returned following week)
- Flipchart
- Calculators
- Handouts for this session

**FACILITATOR NOTES**

1. Provide a 5-minute break sometime during the session
2. Before dismissing participants at the end of every session, affirm that EVERYONE has weighed.
3. Call any participant who did not attend (and had not already informed you of his or her absence).
CHECK-IN (30 MINUTES)

Discuss concerns, questions and progress from the previous week.

- Write check-in questions for all to see when they arrive.
- Discuss questions in small groups first, about 5 minutes.
- Ask for volunteers to share answers in large group.
- Acknowledge group responses, successes and challenges/barriers. Explain that “check-in” is an opportunity to share in confidence with the group. Allow other participants to contribute strategies for overcoming the barriers. Give positive reinforcement for the successes.

Suggested questions

- What changes or observations did you notice this past week in choosing low fat foods?
- Did you try, and if so, how did you do with eating more fruits and vegetables?
- Did you try, and if so, how did you do with balancing your plate differently?
- How was your week of physical activity?
- What worked? What didn’t work?

Sample discussion approach

“Last week talked about fats and measured the fat content of common fast foods. Did you find yourself making different choices this past week? Did you notice anything differently in how you ate or prepared meals at home? What did you notice? What else?”

FACILITATOR NOTE

This session was originally presented by representatives of the Oregon Food Bank. They presented the materials included in the handouts and gave a cooking demonstration for each recipe. For this session we recommend reviewing the recipes and materials and discussing them. All materials for this session are included in the handouts.
GOALS FOR NEXT WEEK (15 MINUTES)

Decide on goals for next week

- Setting goals and making plans for accomplishing goals is a key strategy for behavior change. Use this time for the participant to reflect on what they need to do as far as behavior change to accomplish their weight loss goal.
- The actual work of changing behaviors will happen outside of the group session, but writing down a plan will solidify commitment.
- Give group 3-5 minutes to think about personal goals for the following week. Encourage writing the goals in the FFR.
- Each person can have more than one goal. At least one goal should relate to the increasing physical activity.

Share one goal with small group

- Divide into small groups and ask each person to share one goal with the rest of the group.
- This is called a public goal or public challenge to help us be accountable to sticking to our goals.
- If time allows, ask for volunteers to share one goal with the entire group.

30-minute Physical Activity Session (if not included at beginning of group meeting)
Session 7: Are You on Target? Progress Check

1. Progress Check (35 minutes)
   - Discuss concerns, questions and progress from the previous week.
   - Share the group’s overall progress data.
   - Give participants time to share their individual progress, challenges and successes from Session 1 until now.
   - Provide 5-10 minute break

2. Evaluating Food Records and Our Diets, continued from Session 5 (25 minutes)
   - Review food records for fruits and vegetables, high fats, high sugars
   - Review content from Session 5 on fats and fiber.
   - Discuss impact of sugar in our diets
   - Lead group in activity to estimate calories in sugar
   - Explain and demonstrate the teaspoon to gram equivalents of sugar.

3. Goals for Next Week (15 minutes)
   - Decide on and write goals for next week
   - Share at least 1 goal with small group

Handouts for this session
How do I feel about my progress today?
Steps to Problem Solving
At least 30 minutes **BEFORE** session begins:

- Write the agenda on board or flipchart at the beginning of each session.
- Write any additional notes with agenda – such as upcoming holidays, room changes, announcements, etc.
- Set up tables and chairs so that they are arranged in small groups of 3-5 and facing the facilitator.
- Set out nametags and reviewed food records from previous session for participants to pick up when arriving.
- Post “Group Guidelines” developed in session 1.
- Place 1-2 calculators for each small group table setting.
- Have blank food records available for participants to pick up at end of session.
- **Optional:** It may also be useful to write on board the topics coming up next week, and the facilitators name and contact information.

**What you will need for this session:**

- Pens
- Blank Food records
- Nametags
- Markers for writing on board and flipchart
- Container for collecting food records (to be reviewed by facilitator and returned following week)
- Flipchart
- Calculators
- Handouts for this session

**Sugar Demonstration**

- Teaspoon
- Box/bag of sugar
- Small Paper Plates

**FACILITATOR NOTES**

1. Provide a 5-minute break sometime during the session
2. **Include a 30-minute Physical Activity Session** at beginning or end of group meeting
3. Before dismissing participants at the end of every session, affirm that EVERYONE has weighed.
4. Call any participant who did not attend (and had not already informed you of his or her absence).
PROGRESS CHECK (35 MINUTES)

Note to facilitator:
The purpose of this session is to give participants the opportunity to reflect on their successes and progress, as well as begin to share challenges with the group. It will also encourage participants to routinely assess and monitor their personal progress over the course of the weight loss sessions.

Discuss concerns, questions and progress from the previous week.

- Before breaking into small groups, ask if there are any questions about the previous week’s materials.

  Sample discussion approach
  “Before we get started with today’s topic, are there any questions about last week’s session with the food bank?”
  “What did you learn? What will be helpful for you?”
  “How will you use the information provided by the food bank in your own life?”

Share the group’s overall progress data

- Share any group data results collected through Session 6, such as mean averages in attendance, weight loss, days per week of food records kept, minutes of exercise, and average hours slept. Provide group level data only. (This refers to summaries of the weekly data collected from food records.)
- Emphasize that individual level data will be kept confidential, unless the participant decides to share that with the larger group.
- Explain that progress data will be shared as a progress check for the group approximately every 6 weeks.

  Sample discussion approach:
  “We have been meeting for over 6 weeks now (1/4 of the program) and we want to take some time to check-in on your progress as a group and individually. We will repeat this activity every 6 weeks or so until the end of the program. Here is a summary of the information we have collected from this group so far. What do you make of that? What surprises you, if anything, about the numbers?”

FACILITATOR NOTE

Optional: In the interest of time, the following activity may be introduced by writing instructions at front of classroom so that participants can complete while waiting for class to begin.
Evaluating Personal Progress

Distribute and review instructions to worksheet, “How do I feel about my progress today?”

- Each participant should rate her/his progress from 0-10 with the score that best represents how they feel about their personal progress from session 1 until now. Take some time to think about this then share with small group.

- Ask participants to share and discuss in small groups for about 10-15 minutes.

- With large group, facilitate a discussion about what score participants assigned to themselves and why. (For example, ask participants to self-identify their score within a range such as 0-3, 4-6, or 7-10. Then ask participants to volunteer to share why they scored themselves in that range.) Do this for each of the five areas.

- Acknowledge group responses, successes and challenges/barriers. Allow other participants to contribute strategies for overcoming the barriers. Give positive reinforcement for the successes.

- As appropriate, discuss weight loss and physical activity goals.

- Use motivational interviewing strategies to reflect on behavior changes.

**Suggested questions to facilitate discussion**

- What is working?
- What isn’t working?
- What is getting in the way?
- What might you do differently this week?

**Sample discussion approach**

“If you recall, in Session 5 we discussed fats and the calorie content of fat. Today we will talk a little about the calorie content of sugar.”
Discuss sugar in the diet (25 MINUTES)

Distribute “What’s in that drink?”

- Sugar consumption has steadily increased over the past several years.
- Sugar is a carbohydrate. While carbohydrates provide energy, excess sugar adds calories to our diet with no nutritional benefit.
- Food products that are advertised as “fat free” often times have additional sugars added to them.
- Ingredients ending in “ose” (fructose, sucrose) are forms of sugar.
- Sweetened beverages are a big source of added sugars in our diets.
- Drinking water or lowfat milk is a better option than sweetened beverages.
- Highly processed foods contain a lot of sugar and contribute to a higher calorie intake.

Suggested questions to initiate discussion

- What are some “sugary” foods or drinks?
- How might decreasing sugar help you lose weight?

Sample discussion approach

“Americans have steadily increased their intake of sugar over the past several years. Sugar contributes calories to our diet with very little nutritional benefit. Food manufacturers often add sugar to their products to make them more appealing. A lot of ‘fat free’ foods have added sugars in them to replace the fat content. The sugar content of foods are listed on the nutrition label, under the CARBOHYDRATE section. Sugar will also appear in the ingredients list. Also, look for ingredients that end in ‘ose’ such as fructose or sucrose. These are different forms of sugar that may be added to foods, or may occur naturally as in fruit. Processed foods such as fast foods, candy, and breakfast cereals also contain a lot of added sugars.”

“Sweetened beverages such as sodas, coffee drinks, and fruit drinks are high in calories due to their sugar content. “Drinking our calories” increases our caloric intake without doing much to satisfy our hunger. Drinking plenty of water throughout the day helps to keep us well-hydrated, prevent fatigue, and regulate our appetite. All for zero calories! Low fat or nonfat milk would also be better options instead of sugary drinks.”
Explain and demonstrate the teaspoon to gram equivalents of sugars (use teaspoon and sugar to demonstrate)

- Four grams of sugar equals 1 teaspoon.
- Sugar is a carbohydrate so 1 gram of sugar is equal to 4 calories.

Formula: [ \# of Servings \times \text{total Sugar Grams} ÷ 4 = \text{Teaspoons of Sugar} ]

1. Multiply the number of grams of sugar by the number of servings per container.
2. Then divide by 4 to get the number of teaspoons of sugar.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fun Quiz: Translating Fat and Sugar Calories to Exercise</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- How long would you need to walk briskly to burn off the calories in a 20-ounce bottle of cola? (Answer: 1 hour).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- How long would you need to dance actively to burn off the calories in a double cheeseburger and fries? (Answer: 2½ hours.)</td>
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</tbody>
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INTRODUCTION TO PROBLEM SOLVING (15 MINUTES)

- Review the steps of problem solving (worksheet X).
- Using a “problem” from today’s discussion, brainstorm with participant’s ways to overcome the barriers.
- Follow the problem solving steps as a group (you may want to mention, however, that a good solution for one person may not be quite right for another person – each member will need to select a solution that seems best for them).
- Explain that these steps can be helpful in thinking about other kinds of problems, whether their activity-related, food-related, or a problem outside of the program.
- Encourage participants to think about these problem solving steps this week and how they might apply the five-step process in writing weekly goals.

Suggested questions to facilitate discussion

How will you stay motivated?
What will help you stick with your plan?
How can you turn your steps into an action plan or goal for the following week?

GOALS FOR NEXT WEEK (15 MINUTES)

Decide on goals for next week

- Setting goals and making plans for accomplishing goals is a key strategy for behavior change. Use this time for the participant to reflect on what they need to do as far as behavior change to accomplish their weight loss goal.
- The actual work of changing behaviors will happen outside of the group session, but writing down a plan will solidify commitment.
- Give group 3-5 minutes to think about personal goals for the following week. Encourage writing the goals in the FFR.
- Each person can have more than one goal. At least one goal should relate to problem solving.

Share one goal with small group

- Divide into small groups and ask each person to share one goal with the rest of the group.
- This is called a public goal or public challenge to help us be accountable to sticking to our goals.
- If time allows, ask for volunteers to share one goal with the entire group.

30-minute Physical Activity Session (if not included at beginning of group meeting)
Session 8: Planning Ahead for Meals

1. Check-In (30 minutes)
   - Discuss concerns, questions and progress from the previous week.
   - Share at least one success.

2. Managing Mealtimes (45 minutes)
   - Small group brainstorming (3 groups, 1 topic per group)
   - Share, review and discuss in large group
   - Putting it into practice with a sample scenario

3. Goals for Next Week (15 minutes)
   - Decide on and write goals for next week
   - Group challenge or goal

Handouts for this session
Planning Ahead, What does it mean to you?
Purchasing Your Food, What does it mean to you?
Preparing Your Food, What does it mean to you?
Suggestions for Managing Mealtimes
Plan a Better Menu
Optional
Tips for Recipe Modification
At least 30 minutes **BEFORE** session begins:

- Write the agenda on board or flipchart at the beginning of each session.
- Write any additional notes with agenda – such as upcoming holidays, room changes, announcements, etc.
- Set up tables and chairs so that they are arranged in small groups of 3-5 and facing the facilitator.
- Set out nametags and reviewed food records from previous session for participants to pick up when arriving.
- Post “Group Guidelines” developed in Session 1.
- Place 1-2 calculators for each small group table setting.
- Have blank food records available for participants to pick up at end of session.
  
- **Optional:** It may also be useful to write on board the topics coming up next week, and the facilitator’s name and contact information.

**What you will need for this session:**

- Pens
- Blank Food records
- Nametags
- Markers for writing on board and flipchart
- Container for collecting food records (to be reviewed by facilitator and returned following week)
- Flipchart
- Calculators
- Handouts for this session

**FACILITATOR NOTES**

1. Provide a 5-minute break sometime during the session
2. **Include a 30-minute Physical Activity Session** at beginning or end of group meeting
3. Before dismissing participants at the end of every session, affirm that everyone has weighed.
4. Call any participant who did not attend (and had not already informed you of his or her absence).
CHECK-IN (30 MINUTES)
Discuss concerns, questions and progress from the previous week.
Share at least one success

- Ask each participant to share at least one success with exercise or eating well (either in the past week or since starting)
- Ask each participant to share at least one struggle or challenge encountered this last week.
- Discuss in small groups first, about 5 minutes.
- Ask for volunteers to share answers in large group.
- Acknowledge group responses, successes and challenges/barriers. Explain that “check-in” is an opportunity to share in confidence with the group. Give positive reinforcement for the successes.

Sample discussion approach

“This week we are going to start with our successes as a reminder of how far you all have come so far. In small groups, please share at least one success that you've had with exercise or eating well. You can have more than one success, but everyone should have at least one that they can share. We also want to acknowledge how challenging it can be to make some of these changes. So share at least 1 challenge you have encountered in the last week as well.”
MANAGING MEALTIMES

Small group brainstorming (15 minutes)

- Divide large group into 3 smaller groups. Each group will create a list of ideas to share with the others. Encourage one person in each small group to be the recorder and one person to present. (Optional: Provide a handout to each person in small group for the respective topic for personal notes.)

- **Group 1: Planning Ahead for healthy eating—what does this mean to you?**
  Brainstorm and create a list of ways one could plan ahead to be sure that meals and snacks are healthy and help you meet your goals.

- **Group 2: Purchasing your food for healthy eating—what does this mean to you?**
  Brainstorm and create a list of ways one could change how they purchase their food to be sure that meals and snacks are healthy and help you meet your goals.

- **Group 3: Preparing your food for healthy eating—what does this mean to you?**
  Brainstorm and create a list of ways one could prepare food differently to be sure that meals and snacks are healthy, and help you meet your goals.

- Allow 10-15 minutes for small group discussion.

Sample discussion approach

“Today we will be discussing three steps to better and healthier mealtimes and how these can help people meet weight loss goals. These steps are 1) planning ahead, 2) purchasing your food, and 3) preparing your food. In your groups, come up with ideas or ways in which you would apply one of these strategies to be sure that meals and snacks are healthy and helpful to meeting your goals.”

Share, review and discuss in large group (15 minutes)

- Allow 15-20 minutes to review and discuss as a group. Have each group share their ideas in order while facilitator writes these on a white board or flipchart. Also distribute handouts for participants to add their own notes and ideas.

- This is intended to be a very participative and interactive discussion session. The suggested questions below should be used to facilitate the discussion among participants and not all questions need to be asked.
Facilitator’s Guide ~ Examples of Strategies

Planning ahead for meals
Examples of Planning Ahead: making and taking lists to grocery store, thinking about what you want to eat, writing down menus, anticipating schedule and how it affects meals, scheduling in physical activity

Purchasing food
Example of Purchasing Your Food: deciding where to buy your food, making decisions about what to buy, how much to buy,
reading labels

Preparing your food
Example of preparing your food for better meal management: reducing fat in recipes, broiling instead of frying, switching to lower calorie ingredients
* Use “Tips for Recipe Modification” to support strategies.
Suggested questions

- What can happen when you do not plan your meals ahead of time?
- What is your experience with meal preparation?
- What makes preparing your own food challenging?
- Who does the cooking in your home?
- What can go wrong or right when you purchase your food?
- How could your family help with food purchasing strategies?
- What ideas do you have for better shopping?
- How can strategies to purchasing your food be applied beyond the grocery store? (such as restaurants or vending machines)
- How might breakfasts or snacks factor in?
- What are some things you can do to modify recipes?
- What are some of your ideas for planning and preparing meals for large households? What about for just one or two people?
- What are some changes that you've made to your meal-planning routine?
- How have your changes influenced your household members?
- What can you do when you are not involved in the meal planning/preparing process? (i.e., group home)

Sample discussion approaches

“Why do we go to the store to get a few things and end up with a cart full? Or we come home with several less-than-good-for-us items that we really had no intention of buying at the time? Supermarkets are essentially designed to encourage us to buy more. Everything from the color of the packages to the height the foods are located on the shelves has been carefully planned. So, how can we get in the store, get what we need, and get out in good shape?”

“What can go wrong or right when you purchase your food? This is not just going to the grocery store but can include restaurants and even vending machines.”

“How could your family help with food purchasing strategies?”

“If you live with others, healthier eating habits can benefit those other people as well. What changes have you noticed in people you live with?”

“What about situations when you are not able to be involved in the meal planning and preparation? What are your ideas for making healthy choices?”
Putting it into practice (15 minutes)

- Read a situation and ask for ideas as to how participants might apply planning, purchasing and preparing strategies to stay on track to meet the goal. List ideas.
- This may also be an opportunity to review and model SMART goals.

Example Situation

Kay’s goal for next week is to eat five servings of fruits and vegetables every day next week (for 7 days).

What are some strategies to use to meet her goal?

She also has the following events next week.

- She has an appointment on Monday for which she has to travel by bus. She’ll be on the bus during her usual breakfast and lunch times.
- She has a group meeting Wednesday evening for 2 hours.
- She is invited to a good friend’s birthday party Sunday afternoon.

GOALS FOR NEXT WEEK (15 MINUTES)

Decide on goals for next week

- Setting goals and making plans for accomplishing goals is a key strategy for behavior change. Use this time for the participant to reflect on what they need to do as far as behavior change to accomplish their weight loss goal.
- The actual work of changing behaviors will happen outside of the group session, but writing down a plan will solidify commitment.
- Give group 3-5 minutes to think about personal goals for the following week. Encourage writing the goals in the FFR.
- Each person can have more than one goal. At least one goal should relate to meal planning, shopping, or preparation.

Group challenge or goal

- Encourage participants to set a goal of reducing the calories for one day next week but using one or several strategies discussed today (i.e. choosing different foods when eating out, modifying a recipe, trying a new food, not buying a high calorie food that you normally buy, etc.)
- If time allows, ask for volunteers to share their goal with the entire group.

30-minute Physical Activity Session (if not included at beginning of group meeting)
Session 9: Social Systems and Social Support

1. Check-In (30 minutes)
   - Discuss concerns, questions and progress from the previous week.
   - Share personal successes and challenges
   - Progress check on sleep and physical activity

2. Support Systems (30 minutes)
   - Discuss the impact of participants’ lifestyle changes on support systems.
   - Share how the weight loss experience and increased physical activity has affected them.

3. Thoughts, Behaviors and Emotions (15 minutes)
   - Distribute “Thoughts, Behaviors and Emotions triangle” worksheet. Review and discuss the model with participants.
   - Describe how thoughts, behaviors and emotions are inter-related and how they can change or shift by the environment around us.

4. Goals for Next Week (15 minutes)
   - Decide on and write goals for next week
   - Share at least 1 goal with small group

Handouts for this session:
My Support Systems
Thought, Feelings, Behaviors
At least 30 minutes **BEFORE** session begins:

- Write the agenda on board or flipchart at the beginning of each session.
- Write any additional notes with agenda – such as upcoming holidays, room changes, announcements, etc.
- Set up tables and chairs so that they are arranged in small groups of 3-5 and facing the facilitator.
- Set out nametags and reviewed food records from previous session for participants to pick up when arriving.
- Post “Group Guidelines” developed in Session 1.
- Place 1-2 calculators for each small group table setting.
- Have blank food records available for participants to pick up at end of session.
- **Optional:** It may also be useful to write on board the topics coming up next week, and the facilitator’s name and contact information.

**What you will need for this session:**

- Pens
- Blank Food records
- Nametags
- Markers for writing on board and flipchart
- Container for collecting food records (to be reviewed by facilitator and returned following week)
- Flipchart
- Calculators
- Handouts for this session

**FACILITATOR NOTES:**

1. Provide a 5-minute break sometime during the session
2. **Include a 30-minute Physical Activity Session** at beginning or end of group meeting
3. Before dismissing participants at the end of every session, affirm that everyone has weighed.
4. Call any participant who did not attend (and had not already informed you of his or her absence).
CHECK-IN (30 MINUTES)

- Discuss concerns, questions and progress from the previous week.
- Share personal successes and challenges.
- Personal progress check on sleep and physical activity.

- Write check-in questions for all to see when they arrive.
- Discuss questions in small groups first, about 5-10 minutes.
- Ask for volunteers to share answers in large group.
- Acknowledge group responses, successes and challenges/barriers. Explain that “check-in” is an opportunity to share in confidence with the group. Allow other participants to contribute strategies for overcoming the barriers. Give positive reinforcement for the successes.

Suggested questions to facilitate discussion

- What was your experience with meal planning/preparation?
- What did you notice?
- What did you practice? What were the results?
- What types of physical activity did you do this week? How much?
- Has anyone noticed changes in sleep patterns?
- What worked? What didn’t work?
- What are your successes? What are your challenges?

Sample discussion approach

“Last week we discussed conscious eating habits and how these habits can contribute to reducing calories. I would like to hear about your experiences or personal observations with eating more consciously this past week. What kinds of things did you notice? What did you practice this past week and what were the results?”

“I would also like to hear your successes and challenges. Would someone like to share a success from this past week? Does someone have a challenge, or something they are struggling with, that they would like to share with the group?”

“How are you feeling about changes or your progress with sleep and physical activity?”
SUPPORT SYSTEMS AND IMPACT OF CHANGES TO SOCIAL SITUATIONS

Discuss the impact of participants' lifestyle changes on support systems. (30 min)

- Add small group discussion
- Facilitate an open discussion on the impact of support systems on their weight loss experience and how weight loss experience has affected them.
- Use “My Support System” worksheet as a discussion starter.
  - Ask participants to share items from their worksheet.
  - Group can offer support and problem solving for one another.

FACILITATOR NOTE

The worksheet should be distributed prior to the discussion for this session. Suggestions for distribution are: at the end of previous session as “homework,” to complete while waiting for class, or allow 5-10 minutes during check-in to complete worksheet.

Sample discussion approach

“Some of you may have felt resistance or conflict from friends or family related to the changes you have been making to your daily habits. Or, perhaps there is someone in your life that you feel is unsupportive and others may have felt as if a friend or family member is actively sabotaging your efforts. We have encouraged you to make changes to your diet and exercise, and at the same time we know that harmony in family and social life is very important. Let’s use this time today to explore ways that you can encourage friends and family to be more supportive of the changes you are trying to make and why they are so important.”

Suggested questions to facilitate discussion

- How has your support system reacted to any changes in your appearance?
- How does your family or others at home manage during the times you are here or exercising?
- Who has been most supportive?
- How do your family and friends support you?
- Who has been unhappy by the changes you've made?
- How have you reacted when you felt someone was unhappy with changes you have made?
- What changes have been most difficult for your family and/or friends to make?
- What changes have you noticed in yourself?
Thoughts, Behaviors and Emotions (15 minutes)

Distribute “Thoughts, Behaviors and Emotions triangle” worksheet. Review and discuss the triangle with participants.

- Describe how thoughts, behaviors and emotions are inter-related and how they can change or shift by the environment around us.

Suggested discussion approach

“This handout shows a concept that we will be using in the coming weeks. It can be very helpful in understanding the connection between our thoughts, feelings, and emotions and how they can change or shift by the environment around us. Our thoughts, emotions and behaviors all interact and affect one another.”

Example for describing the “Thoughts, Behaviors and Emotions Triangle”

Cindy has been trying hard to lose weight. Cindy is invited to a birthday party. Most of the foods available are snack foods and desserts. There are a couple of healthy options such as a vegetable tray. Cindy eats snack foods throughout the party and has more than one dessert. These are: Cindy’s behaviors.

When she leaves the party she begins to think “I ate way too much.” “I am a total failure.” “I’ll never lose weight.” “Why even bother trying.” These are: Cindy’s thoughts.

As Cindy reflects on these thoughts she begins to feel guilty, sad, and frustrated. By the time she gets home she is feeling really depressed. These are: Cindy’s feelings

What started out as “eating more than intended at a social event” (the behavior), quickly turned into negative thoughts about herself, then lead to feeling bad.

The thoughts and feelings she had could lead to more behaviors that she has been trying to avoid. After thinking, “Why bother?” and feeling discouraged she might decide to eat the foods she has been trying to avoid, since she currently feels that her efforts to change don’t matter.
Suggested discussion approach

“In this example, if Cindy had been able to resist eating more than she intended at the party, her thoughts may have been, “I did really well at the party.” “I was really tempted to overeat but I didn’t.” “I am definitely going to be able to lose weight.” As a result, she may have left the party in a good mood and felt hopeful about losing weight.

How could she have changed her thoughts so she didn’t end up feeling so bad? What could she have said to herself instead? Even if Cindy feels down when she gets home, what are some behavioral changes she can do to feel better (such as going for a walk, talking to a friend about the situation)?

“What are some ways that Cindy could have responded differently to eating too much high calorie food at the party? “I have been doing pretty well and this was first time I have gone to a party since I have been trying to lose weight. Next time I will be more prepared for that kind of situation.”

“How could Cindy have prepared for the party so she would have had a better chance of feeling successful after leaving the party?”

GOALS FOR NEXT WEEK (15 MINUTES)

Decide on goals for next week

- Setting goals and making plans for accomplishing goals is a key strategy for behavior change. Use this time for the participant to reflect on what they need to do as far as behavior change to accomplish their weight loss goal.

- The actual work of changing behaviors will happen outside of the group session, but writing down a plan will solidify commitment.

- Give group 3-5 minutes to think about personal goals for the following week. Encourage writing the goals in the FFR. Each person can have more than 1 goal.

Suggested discussion approach

“In thinking about this next week, how can you encourage friends or family to be supportive of changes you are trying to make? How can you plan ahead and be prepared? Work these ideas into your weekly goals. What do you see as the challenges? What do you see as your strengths in the situation?”

Share one goal with small group

- Divide into small groups and ask each person to share one goal with the rest of the group.

- This is called a public goal or public challenge to help us be accountable to sticking to our goals.

- If time allows, ask for volunteers to share 1 goal with the entire group.

30-minute Physical Activity Session (if not included at beginning of group meeting)
Session 10: Medication Side Effects and Weight Gain

1. Check-In (30 minutes)
   - Discuss concerns, questions and progress from the previous week.
   - Share personal successes and challenges.
   - Progress check on sleep and physical activity.

2. Discuss Mental Health, Medications and Weight Gain (45 minutes)
   - Discuss the side effects of antipsychotic medications.
   - Discuss importance of communicating concerns about medication related weight gain with providers.
   - Provide tips for talking to providers about medications concerns and important questions to ask regarding their medications.
   - Remind participants that they can still lose weight when on antipsychotic medications.

4. Goals for Next Week (15 minutes)
   - Decide on and write goals for next week.
   - Share at least 1 goal with small group.

Handouts for this session
Helpful Questions for Evaluating My Prescriber
Preparing for an encounter with my provider
Good questions to ask your prescribing provider about your medications.
At least 30 minutes **BEFORE** session begins:

⇒ Write the agenda on board or flipchart at the beginning of each session.
⇒ Write any additional notes with agenda – such as upcoming holidays, room changes, announcements, etc.
⇒ Set up tables and chairs so that they are arranged in small groups of 3-5 and facing the facilitator.
⇒ Set out name tags and reviewed food records from previous session for participants to pick up when arriving.
⇒ Post “Group Guidelines” developed in Session 1.
⇒ Place 1-2 calculators for each small group table setting.
⇒ Have blank food records available for participants to pick up at end of session.
⇒ **Optional:** It may also be useful to write on board the topics coming up next week, and the facilitator’s name and contact information.

### What you will need for this session:

- Pens
- Blank food records
- Nametags
- Markers for writing on board and flipchart
- Container for collecting food records (to be reviewed by facilitator and returned following week)
- Flipchart
- Calculators
- Handouts for this session

### FACILITATOR NOTES

1. Provide a 5-minute break sometime during the session
2. **Include a 30-minute Physical Activity Session** at beginning or end of group meeting
3. Before dismissing participants at the end of every session, affirm that EVERYONE has weighed.
4. Call any participant who did not attend (and had not already informed you of his or her absence).
CHECK-IN (30 MINUTES)
Discuss concerns, questions and progress from the previous week.

- Ask each participant to share at least one success with exercise or eating well (either in the past week or since starting)
- Discuss in small groups first, about 5 minutes.
- Ask for volunteers to share answers in large group.
- Acknowledge group responses, successes and challenges/barriers. Explain that “check-in” is an opportunity to share in confidence with the group. Give positive reinforcement for the successes.

Mental Health, Medications and Weight Gain

Suggested questions to initiate discussion

- How many of you have had concerns about medication-related weight gain either now or in the past?
- Could any of you share those concerns?
- Have any of you ever stopped (or thought about stopping) taking your mental health medications because of your concerns about weight gain?

- Anti-psychotic medications can make people feel sleepy. This feeling of sleepiness or low energy can lead to reduced energy output (remember our discussions on energy balance?).
  - Anti-psychotic medications can also increase feelings of hunger and reduce your ability to feel satisfied when you eat (leading to eating more—increased energy input).
  - Antipsychotic medications can also cause dry mouth. If you drink sugary drinks to make your mouth feel better this can lead to weight gain too.
    - Increases in energy input with decreases in energy output leads to weight gain.
- BUT, these side effects are not the same for all people or all medications.
- We suggest that you talk to your doctor if you have any concerns about your medications.
- And, be sure to talk with your doctor BEFORE making any changes.
Activity:

Have participants break into groups of 4-5 and discuss the following questions.

### Questions for small group discussion

- Have any of you experienced any of these side effects with your current medications? What about past medications?
- Have you discussed these side effects with your doctor?
- How did the discussions go? Were they productive?
- How many of you feel comfortable expressing concerns about your medications to your provider?

While participants are still in small groups, hand out “questions for evaluating my prescriber”

- Does my prescriber treat me with dignity and respect?
- Do I feel that my prescriber has hope for me to have the kind of life I want to have?
- Does my prescriber talk to me like I’m an important part of my treatment team?
- Do I trust the prescriber to safeguard my confidentiality?
- Does my prescriber give me the information I need so that I can make an informed choice about my treatment?
- Does my prescriber respect my decisions when I say no?
- Does my prescriber help me problem solve when I’m having difficulty staying safe?
- Do I feel okay asking my prescriber questions if I don’t understand something about my medication/treatment?

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Here are some good questions for evaluating your current prescribing provider and whether the two of you have a collaborative relationship.

Have group members discuss the points from the handout that are most important for them to have from a prescribing provider.

**Suggested discussion approach**

“For those of you that might be nervous about talking to your provider or are unsure of what to say, ask the other members of the group for some advice on what to say or how to raise the subject with their provider. Consider practicing how to talk with your doctor about medications.”

Hand out “Preparing for an encounter with my provider.”
Here are some good tips on how to prepare for an encounter with your prescribing provider where you plan to bring up concerns about your current treatments.

- Write down questions
- Practice with someone you trust
- Practice in front of a mirror
- Plan for anxiety and how to manage it
- Self-test
- Think of medications in the context of OTHER coping skills too

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Once back in the larger group ask participants to share the following:

- Positive experiences in talking about weight gain concerns with a medication prescriber.
- More challenging experiences with a prescriber (try not to let this part become a general discussion about provider “horror stories”).
- Have participants discuss successful strategies for talking to healthcare providers about medication concerns. (Write up the strategies or tips on a flipchart.)

Hand out “Questions to ask your provider”

Here are some good questions to ask your prescribing provider about your medications.

- How are medications helping/not helping
- Specific side effects (sex life, weight gain)
- Diagnoses and how medications relate
- Interactions among medications
- Recent symptoms – both physical and mental

*Reproduced with permission from Beckie Child, MSW*

Once back in the larger group ask participants to share the following:

- Positive experiences in talking about weight gain concerns with a medication prescriber.
- More challenging experiences with a prescriber (try not to let this part become a general discussion about provider “horror stories”).
- Have participants discuss successful strategies for talking to healthcare providers about medication concerns. (Write up the strategies or tips on a flipchart.)
**Important Points**

1. **It is very important that you talk with your doctor before making any changes in your medications.**
   - We encourage you to work together with your doctor to make informed decisions about your treatments.
   - Be sure to tell your clinician about any concerns you have about your medications.
   - Ask your clinicians about other options.
   - Most clinicians will be happy that you are interested in improving your health—don’t be afraid to ask!

2. **You and your doctor may decide that the medications you are taking are the best for you right now.**

3. **Experiencing these kinds of side effects does NOT mean that you can’t lose weight or avoid gaining additional weight.** You can!

Here are some tips:

1) If your medications make you feel sleepy, getting regular moderate exercise (as recommended in this group) is even more important for you!

2) If you have trouble feeling full or often feel hungry…
   a. Keep food records and plan to be successful!
   b. Eat larger portions of low calorie foods so you will feel full (like a large salad with many veggies)

**Do:** Use the skills and techniques from this group to help you lose weight.

**Don’t:** Let yourself focus on your medication or feel powerless over side effects. You CAN lose weight and improve your health.

What is one thing you could do differently this week to help you better manage medication related weight gain? (Keep this idea in mind for your goal-setting later in the session).

- Next week we will discuss stress management and the importance of sleep for overall health.
- So be thinking about your current level of stress (and things that cause you stress) and spend some time looking at your sleep reports for the past 9 weeks.
- **30-minute Physical Activity Session** (if not included at beginning of group meeting)
Session 11: Stress Management and Sleep

1. Check-In (30 minutes)
   - Discuss concerns, questions and progress from the previous week.
   - Share personal successes and challenges
   - Progress Check on sleep and physical activity

2. Stress Management (25 minutes)
   - Discuss definitions of stress and have participants discuss what they experience when they are stressed.
   - Explore ways that stress affects diet, exercise and sleep.
   - Hand out “Thoughts, Behaviors and Feelings” activity and discuss stress management techniques.
   - The Importance of Sleep (20 minutes)
   - Discuss the impact that poor sleep has on overall health.
   - Discuss the benefits of good regulars sleep
   - Hand out “Helpful Tips for Restful Sleep” and discuss.

4. Goals for Next Week (15 minutes)
   - Decide on and write goals for next week
   - Share at least one goal with small group

Handouts for this session
Thoughts, Behaviors and Emotions Triangle
Helpful Tips for Restful Sleep
At least 30 minutes **BEFORE** session begins:

- Write the agenda on board or flipchart at the beginning of each session.
- Write any additional notes with agenda – such as upcoming holidays, room changes, announcements, etc.
- Set up tables and chairs so that they are arranged in small groups of 3-5 and facing the facilitator.
- Set out nametags and reviewed food records from previous session for participants to pick up when arriving.
- Post “Group Guidelines” developed in Session 1.
- Place 1-2 calculators for each small group table setting.
- Have blank food records available for participants to pick up at end of session.
- **Optional:** It may also be useful to write on board the topics coming up next week, and the facilitators name and contact information.

**What you will need for this session:**

- Pens
- Blank food records
- Nametags
- Markers for writing on board and flipchart
- Container for collecting food records (to be reviewed by facilitator and returned following week)
- Flipchart
- Calculators
- Handouts for this session

**FACILITATOR NOTES**

1. Provide a 5-minute break sometime during the session.
2. **Include a 30-minute Physical Activity Session** at beginning or end of group meeting.
3. Before dismissing participants at the end of every session, affirm that everyone has weighed.
4. Call any participant who did not attend (and had not already informed you of his or her absence).
CHECK-IN (30 MINUTES)
Discuss concerns, questions and progress from the previous week.
Share at least one success

- Ask each participant to share at least one success with exercise or eating well (either in the past week or since starting)
- Discuss in small groups first, about 5 minutes.
- Ask for volunteers to share answers in large group.
- Acknowledge group responses, successes and challenges/barriers. Explain that “check-in” is an opportunity to share in confidence with the group. Give positive reinforcement for the successes.

Stress Management
Today we are going to spend some time talking about stress, what it means and how it can affect our health.

Suggested questions to initiate discussion
(Write answers on flipchart)
- How would you define stress?
- How do you feel physically when you are stressed?
- How do you feel mentally and emotionally when you are stressed?
- What are some common everyday things that cause you stress?

Hand out fact sheet on stress
- Basically stress is the bodily changes that occur in response to events (stressors) in life that can be positive (e.g., birth of a child, new job) or negative (e.g., job loss, divorce).
- We all have stressors in life and we all experience some of the physical responses to those events. (anxiety, increased heart rate, sore muscles, headaches, sleeplessness etc.)
- The problem is that stress can build up and when not well managed and have negative effects on our physical and emotional well-being.

Suggested questions to initiate discussion
- What happens to your eating habits when you are really stressed?
- Do you eat more? Do eat higher calorie foods?
- What happens to your physical activity when you are really stressed?
Do you exercise less? Or do you actually exercise more?

When we experience even moderate amounts of stress we can feel exhausted and overwhelmed.

This in turn can lead to poor diet choices. When we feel overwhelmed it can be easy to eat comfort or convenience foods which are often high in calories (as we have said before those kinds of foods are okay in moderation but if you're chronically stressed you may be making those choices more often than is healthy for you).

When we feel overly stressed we also may feel like we have less energy to plan out our meals ahead of time (eat breakfast, bring a healthy lunch to work etc.)

Also when we are overly stressed we often feel as though we have no energy left exercise or take care of ourselves physically.

So stress can lead us to increase our energy intake while decreasing our energy output. As in our previous discussions about energy balance this imbalance can lead to weight gain.

How to deal more effectively with stress

Stressors are a fact of life and so is our natural response to stressful stimuli. But there are things we can do to reduce the amount of stress we experience in our daily lives.

One important factor in stress management is learning to identify negative stressors in our lives and eliminate them if possible.

For stressors we can’t eliminate there are two important ways that we can reduce the stress we experience from them.

Hand out “Thoughts, Behaviors and Emotions Triangle”

1. One is to change the way we think about a stressor or minimize how much time we spend dwelling on it. (Refer to “Thoughts” in the handout).
   a. When we spend a lot of time “talking up” the negatives of a particular life event it can increase the intensity or duration of our stress response to that event.
   b. For example- If you had a really bad week at work and then you spend all weekend thinking about it, how do you think you will be feeling about your job by the time Monday rolls around? What if you spent most of your weekend enjoying some fun activities, and a little of the time problem-solving ways to deal with your work stress? How do you think you would feel at the end of the weekend? (Work may still be challenging, but you may feel more refreshed and able to deal with it).
   c. As we discussed before in session 9, when you make a change to the way you think about a situation it can (refer to triangle diagram) change the way you are feeling. If you can reduce the amount of negative thoughts you have about a situation it can help reduce the feelings of stress and anxiety you experience.
2. Another way to deal with stress is to physically relax your body (refer to the behavior part of the handout). When you relax your body, your breathing slows down, your heart rate slows down, and your muscles relax. There are many different kinds of relaxation techniques (guided imagery, progressive muscle relaxation etc.) but it can be as simple as spending 5 minutes taking slow deep breaths.

3. Physical activity is also an excellent way to reduce stress. Exercise releases chemicals in our brains (endorphins) that can improve our mood and reduce stress and anxiety.

**Activity**- Have participants break into groups of 4-5 to answer and discuss the questions listed on the “Thoughts, Behaviors, and Emotions Triangle” handout.

Once back in the larger group, ask each group to share some of their results and allow time for group discussion.

**Optional Activity** (if there is time).

Hand out “progressive muscle relaxation exercise” and lead participants through the relaxation exercise.

**Importance of Sleep**

**Suggested questions to initiate discussion**

- What are some of the negative effects of poor sleep? (write on flipchart).
- What are some of benefits of good sleep? (Write on flipchart)
- Getting good regular healthy sleep is one of the most important aspects of maintaining good health.
- Sleep (or a lack of it) can affect nearly every area of our life.
- Poor sleep can negatively affect energy level, concentration, your body’s immune response, mental health, diet, exercise, ability to handle stress etc.
- It is especially important to get good sleep when you are trying to make important life changes like the ones recommended in this program.
- Without good sleep it is hard to have the energy to exercise, plan meals, and keep food records.

**Here are some tips to help you sleep better.**

- Hand out “Helpful Tips for Restful Sleep.”
• Discuss each point in the handout and allow time for discussion and questions.
  • The two most important behaviors listed in the handout are keeping a regular sleep schedule and practicing stimulus control. Keeping a regular schedule and avoiding stimulating activities before bed help you to feel sleepy at bed time.
  • If you are already doing these things (or don’t have trouble with sleep) that is great!
  • For those of you who are currently having trouble with sleep, which one or two of these ideas do you think you could reasonably incorporate into your life this week? Don’t try and do all the things listed in the handout at once just try one or two at a time.

GOALS FOR NEXT WEEK (15 MINUTES)

Decide on goals for next week

• Setting goals and making plans for accomplishing goals is a key strategy for behavior change. Use this time for the participant to reflect on what they need to do as far as behavior change to accomplish their weight loss goal.

• The actual work of changing behaviors will happen outside of the group session, but writing down a plan will solidify commitment.

• Give group 3-5 minutes to think about personal goals for the following week. Encourage writing the goals in the FFR.

• Each person can have more than one goal. At least one goal should relate to the increasing physical activity.

30-minute Physical Activity Session (if not included at beginning of group meeting)
Session 12: Are You on Target? Progress Check, Reframing Negative Self-Talk

1. Progress Check (45 minutes)
   - Discuss concerns, questions and progress from the previous week.
   - Share the group’s overall progress data.
   - Give participants time to share their individual progress, challenges and successes from Session 1 until now.

2. Reframing Negative Self-Talk (20 minutes)
   - Introduce topic by asking open questions on negative thinking and negative thinking spirals.
   - Read examples of distorted thinking and ask participants to describe the negative thinking that may result.
   - Encourage participants to generate realistic, positive alternatives to distorted thoughts.

3. Using Positive Affirmations (10 Minutes)
   - Review the thoughts, feelings, behavior triangle and how it applies to negative and positive thinking spirals.
   - Encourage participants to create positive affirmations.

3. Goals for Next Week (15 minutes)
   - Decide on and write goals for next week
   - Share at least one goal with small group

Handouts for this session
How do I feel about my progress?
How to challenge negative thoughts
Downward and upward spirals
At least 30 minutes **BEFORE** session begins:

- Write the agenda on board or flipchart at the beginning of each session.
- Write any additional notes with agenda – such as upcoming holidays, room changes, announcements, etc.
- Set up tables and chairs so that they are arranged in small groups of 3-5 and facing the facilitator.
- Set out nametags and reviewed food records from previous session for participants to pick up when arriving.
- Post “Group Guidelines” developed in Session 1.
- Place 1-2 calculators for each small group table setting.
- Have blank food records available for participants to pick up at end of session.
- **Optional:** It may also be useful to write on board the topics coming up next week, and the facilitators name and contact information.

**What you will need for this session:**

- Pens
- Blank food records
- Nametags
- Markers for writing on board and flipchart
- Container for collecting food records (to be reviewed by facilitator and returned following week)
- Flipchart
- Calculators
- Handouts for this session

**FACILITATOR NOTES**

1. Provide a 5-minute break sometime during the session
2. **Include a 30-minute Physical Activity Session** at beginning or end of group meeting
3. Before dismissing participants at the end of every session, affirm that EVERYONE has weighed.
4. Call any participant who did not attend (and had not already informed you of his or her absence).
PROGRESS CHECK (45 MINUTES)

Note to facilitator:
This session should give participants the opportunity to reflect on their successes and progress, as well as to share challenges with the group. The objective of this progress check is to help participants identify their successes, develop goals for remaining sessions, and continue to stay motivated with their weight loss goals.

Discuss concerns, questions and progress from the previous week.

- Before breaking into small groups, ask if there are any questions about the previous week’s materials.

  Sample discussion approach
  “Before we get started with today’s topic, are there any questions about last week’s session? What did you learn? What will be helpful for you?”

Share the group’s overall progress data

- Share any group data results collected through Session 12, such as mean averages in attendance, weight loss, days per week of food records kept, minutes of exercise, and average hours slept. Provide group level data only. (This refers to summaries of the weekly data collected from food records.)

- Emphasize that individual level data will be kept confidential, unless the participant decides to share that with the larger group.

- Explain that this is the mid-point progress check and will help participants to celebrate their successes, develop goals, and stay motivated while adopting new habits.

  Sample discussion approach
  “We have been meeting for 12 weeks now (1/2 of the program, excluding maintenance sessions) and we want to take some time to check-in on your progress as a group and individually. This is the second of three progress checks. Let’s use it as a time to celebrate successes and to stay on track with your goals. Here is a summary of the information we have collected from this group so far. What do you make of that? What surprises you, if anything, about the numbers? What relationship do you notice between group [attendance or other factors] to group [specify behavior change or weight loss]”
Evaluating Personal Progress

Distribute and review instructions to worksheet, “How do I feel about my progress today?”

- Each participant should rate her/his progress from 0-10 with the score that best represents how they feel about their personal progress from Session 1 until now. Take some time to think about this then share with small group.
- Ask participants to share and discuss in small groups for about 10-15 minutes.
- With large group, facilitate a discussion about what score participants assigned to themselves and why. (For example, ask participants to self-identify their score within a range such as 0-3, 4-6, or 7-10. Then ask participants to volunteer to share why she/he scored themselves in that range.) Do this for each of the five areas.
- Acknowledge group responses, successes and challenges/barriers. Allow other participants to contribute strategies for overcoming the barriers. Give positive reinforcement for the successes.
- As appropriate, discuss weight loss and physical activity goals.
- Use motivational interviewing strategies to reflect on behavior changes (refer to introduction of facilitator’s manual for details).

Suggested questions to facilitate discussion

- What has changed about the way you eat or exercise as a result of STRIDE?
- What was the most difficult or easy part to change?
- What change have you made that you are most excited about?
- What is working or not working for you right now?
- What is getting in the way?
- How close are you to your (initial and/or long-term) weight loss goals?

Sample discussion approach

“We are at the halfway point (week 12) of the Stride program. This is a good time to check in with each other and yourselves as to how you feel you’re doing. Let’s start with the progress check worksheet. Try to do this worksheet without looking at your progress check from Session 7. You can compare this week’s version with Session 7 later. …”

“As you look over the worksheet and see where you are right now, what do you think about your progress?”
Optional Activities for Progress Check 2

1. Have the participants pair up and interview each other about their progress and report to group at large. Some suggested questions you might have on a flipchart might be:
   • What helped you keep to your plan?
   • What role did your food records play?
   • What were some of your barriers and how did you overcome them?
   • How do you plan to keep (or get back) on track?
REFRAMING NEGATIVE SELF-TALK (20 MINUTES)

- Introduce topic discussion by asking open questions on negative thinking and negative thinking spirals. List ideas on board at front of classroom.

- Possible descriptions for negative thinking may be: “Stinking Thinking”, worries, expectations that things won’t work, distorted logic or unrealistic thinking.

- Persistent negative thinking can slow down the progress of behavior change. Results may be decreased motivation, lead to negative moods, or increase barriers to reaching goals in healthy diet and physical activity.

- By reframing our negative thoughts, we can minimize the impact it will have to reach goals in healthy diet and physical activity.

Suggested questions to facilitate discussion

- What is negative thinking?
- How would you define negative thinking?
- How do negative thoughts affect your mood? Your eating habits? Your exercise habits? Your sleep?
- What are some negative things you have said to yourself when you don’t exercise or make the best food choices? Does negative self-talk make it less likely or more likely to make better choices in the future (i.e., Does it help you or hurt you)?

Sample discussion approach

“Today we’re going to talk about negative thoughts. Everyone has negative thoughts at times. How would you define negative thinking? How do negative thoughts affect your mood? Your eating habits? Your exercise habits?

Negative thoughts can affect your moods and can also lead you to overeat or be inactive. Then afterwards you may feel even worse about yourself. This can lead to a “downward spiral” of even more negative thoughts and make you feel defeated. For example, suppose you came home after a hard day at work. You think to yourself, “I’m tired of working so hard. I’m sick of being in this program. I can never eat what I want.” This negative thought might lead you to eat some potato chips. And then you think, “I did it again. I’ll never lose weight.” Next, you’re discouraged and go on to eat more of them. What might happen next? Has this happened to you? What did you do?

Sometimes we aren’t even aware we are having negative thoughts because they have become so automatic. Negative thinking becomes such a habit for most of us that we tend to believe and act on our negative thoughts without challenging them. The goal of this session is to help you become more aware of your negative thoughts and teach you to replace your negative thoughts with thoughts that are more positive or realistic.
Read examples of distorted thinking and ask participants to describe the negative thinking that may result, what could happen (to their mood and/or behavior), and how they might turn the negative thinking into a more positive approach. Read and discuss as many examples as appropriate or as time allows.

**Sample discussion approach**

“Everyone has negative thoughts at times. When they continue for too long, these thoughts prolong negative moods. Negative thoughts can also dampen motivation or hamper efforts to achieve goals such as following a diet or physical activity plan.

Persistent negative thoughts typically contain what we call “thinking errors” or distortions.

I am going to read a few common examples that may lead to negative thinking. Think about the example, what is the error or distortion in thinking, and how might it be changed.

Example 1: ‘I had potato chips at lunch so I failed my diet.’

What might be the distorted thinking in this example? How could this become a negative spiral? How could you challenge these thoughts to prevent it from becoming a negative spiral?”
# Facilitator Guide to Negative Thinking

## Examples of Errors or Distortions in Thinking

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Common Errors/Distortions</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All or None Thinking</td>
<td>Look at things as absolute, “black or white, no grays.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“I had a few potato chips at lunch so I may as well eat the whole bag now.”</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“I don’t have time to walk for an hour, so I may as well not walk at all.”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Should Statements</td>
<td>You criticize yourself or others with “shoulds, musts and should nots.”</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“I should have lost more weight.”</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“I shouldn’t have gone back for seconds.”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Discounting the Positive</td>
<td>Dwell on negatives and ignore the positive.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“I did not make time for walking two days last week.”</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“I only ate 2 servings of vegetables today.”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thinking the Worst</td>
<td>Blowing things out of proportion.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“If I make another mistake I’m going to lose my job.”</td>
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<td></td>
<td>“I missed the last group session, so people won’t want me to come back this week.”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Labeling</td>
<td>You view a single negative event as a lifelong pattern.</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>“I said the wrong thing in the meeting; I’ll always be an idiot.”</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“I’m a failure at (my diet, my exercise program).”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jumping to Conclusions</td>
<td>Assume the worst based on little or no information.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>“My neighbor did not speak to me this morning because he is angry with me.”</td>
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<td></td>
<td>“My group leader didn’t give me any positive feedback today, so I must not be getting any better.”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Emotional Reasoning</td>
<td>Feeling bad about something makes it true.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“She hurt my feelings, so she must be out to get me.”</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“I feel discouraged, so I must be a failure.”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Optional activity for reviewing negative thinking
(This can also assist in setting goals for next week.)

- Distribute the Negative Mood Log.
- Have participants think about negative things they have said to themselves in the past when they are disappointed with their progress. Write these on the log in the first column.
- Have participants identify their errors or distortions and create more realistic statements (positive self-talk) to counter their distortions.
- Encourage participants to pay attention to their negative thoughts and counter them with the more realistic statements created today.
USING POSITIVE AFFIRMATIONS (10 minutes)

- Review the thoughts, feelings, behavior triangle and how it applies to negative and positive thinking spirals.
- Encourage participants to create positive affirmations. If class time permits, have the group generate a list of positive affirmations (“I feel good when I exercise,” “I can do this,” “I can exercise more,” etc.) and write these on the board.

Sample discussion approach

“In earlier sessions we discussed the connection between thoughts, feelings, and behaviors. That is, changing one can impact, both positively and negatively, the other two. We've talked about this with negative thinking. When someone is feeling down or discouraged about herself, thoughts, feelings and behavior can work together in a downward spiral.

For example, when you come in and get weighed at group, you find out you didn't lose any weight, you feel down and discouraged, think you're a failure, and stop exercising and paying attention to the food you eat (a behavior).

The good news is that change is possible. We can turn a “downward spiral” into an “upward spiral” by changing the way we behave or the way we think about something. It is best to try to stop the downward spiral early on – doing something different or thinking more positively – to interrupt the downward spiral BEFORE it gets out of control.

To stay with the same example, you may come in to get weighed and find out that you didn't lose any weight. You feel down and discouraged at first. However, if you think you could do better next time, begin to actively prepare for the next weigh in. You can’t change what has already happened, but you can begin to take positive actions for what’s ahead. Soon the negative emotion goes away, and the spiral turns around. It becomes an ‘upward spiral.’ ”
GOALS FOR NEXT WEEK (15 MINUTES)

Decide on goals for next week

- Setting goals and making plans for accomplishing goals is a key strategy for behavior change. Use this time for the participant to reflect on what they need to do as far as behavior change to accomplish their weight loss goal.
- The actual work of changing behaviors will happen outside of the group session, but writing down a plan will solidify commitment.
- Give group 3-5 minutes to think about personal goals for the following week.
- Encourage participants to choose or create positive affirmations that they can repeat to themselves during difficult times. (For example, three positive statements you can repeat to yourself when you are feeling down.)

Share one goal with small group

- Divide into small groups and ask each person to share one goal with the rest of the group.
- This is called a public goal or public challenge to help us be accountable to sticking to our goals.
- If time allows, ask for volunteers to share one goal with the entire group.

30-minute Physical Activity Session (if not included at beginning of group meeting)
Session 13: Conscious Eating

1. Check-In (30 minutes)
   - Discuss concerns, questions and progress from the previous week.

2. Eating Awareness/ Conscious Eating (45 minutes)
   - Have participants share their experiences, patterns, and feelings around snacks
   - Review current snacking patterns and discuss healthy snacking
   - Define conscious eating and explore ways to practice eating awareness
   - Lead activity in eating awareness

3. Goals for Next Week (15 minutes)
   - Decide and write goals for next week

Handouts for this session
Satisfying Snacks
Tips for Conscious Eating
At least 30 minutes **BEFORE** session begins:

- Write the agenda on board or flipchart at the beginning of each session.
- Write any additional notes with agenda – such as upcoming holidays, room changes, announcements, etc.
- Set up tables and chairs so that they are arranged in small groups of 3-5 and facing the facilitator.
- Set out nametags and reviewed food records from previous session for participants to pick up when arriving.
- Post “Group Guidelines” developed in Session 1.
- Place 1-2 calculators for each small group table setting.
- Have blank food records available for participants to pick up at end of session.
- **Optional:** It may also be useful to write on board the topics coming up next week, and the facilitators name and contact information.

**What you will need for this session:**

- Pens
- Blank food records
- Nametags
- Markers for writing on board and flipchart
- Container for collecting food records (to be reviewed by facilitator and returned following week)
- Flipchart
- Calculators
- Handouts for this session
- Napkins or plates for food sample
- 4 food samples such as: dried cranberries, raisins, nuts, dark chocolate candy kisses, tortilla chips, cherry or grape tomatoes

**FACILITATOR NOTES**

1. Provide a 5-minute break sometime during the classroom session.
2. **Include a 30-minute Physical Activity Session** at beginning or end of group meeting
3. Before dismissing participants at the end of every session, affirm that everyone has been weighed.
4. Call any participant who did not attend (and had not already informed you of his or her absence).
CHECK-IN (30 MINUTES)
Discuss concerns, questions and progress from the previous week.

- Write check-in questions for all to see when they arrive.
- Discuss questions in small groups first.
- Ask for volunteers to share check-in responses in large group.
- Acknowledge group responses, successes and challenges/barriers. Explain that “check-in” is an opportunity to share in confidence with the group. Allow other participants to contribute strategies for overcoming the barriers. Give positive reinforcement for the successes.
- Remind participants that it’s important to be aware of what works and what doesn’t work when developing new patterns and habits.

**Suggested questions to facilitate discussion**

- What kinds of negative self-talk did you notice last week?
- How about positive self-talk? (list on board to emphasize positive thoughts for the larger group)
- How did your self-talk (negative or positive) affect your weight loss efforts?
- What did you learn?

**Sample discussion approach**

“Last week, we introduced the concept of negative self-talk. What kinds of negative self-talk did you notice over the past week? How did your negative thinking affect your feelings? Your actions (in particular, behaviors related to weight loss, such as eating and exercise behaviors). What kinds of positive statements did you use to turn things around? How did that go?”
Discuss current snacking patterns and how to eat healthy snacks (15 minutes)

- Begin discussion by asking participants to share their experiences, patterns, and feelings around snacks.

Suggested questions to facilitate discussion

- Why do you snack?
- What types of foods are you most likely to snack on?
- Where are you most likely to snack?
- When are you most likely to snack?
- What feelings do you associate with snacking?
- Do you think snacking is a healthy or unhealthy approach to eating?
- What is the difference between “snacking” (often unplanned) and “regular eating (planned meals and snacks)”?
- How can you incorporate snacks into your meal plan and meet your goals?
- What would you have to do?

Sample discussion approach

“For many people, snacks are a big part of their daily food intake. Sometimes snacks can be healthy and planned while other times snacks may be eaten for other reasons such as emotional (for example, feeling stressed) or unconscious eating (for example, eating chips while watching TV and losing track how many chips you are eating). What are some of your common reasons for snacking? Are your snacks planned at a specific time?”
Optional activity

This exercise is designed to help participants understand their snacking habits and to help them plan healthier snacks.

- Hand out a highlighter to each participant.
- Ask participants to review their food record and highlight all the snacks they ate last week. Allow participants to define what a snack means to them for this activity as each person has unique habits.
- Ask participants to total one day’s calories for all snacks.
- Debrief. Ask a few participants to share their findings.
  - How many calories did you get from snacks? Does this seem too low, too high, or just about right?
  - If too high, what might you do to improve your snacks?
  - If too high, how might you lower your calories from snacks?

Sample discussion approach

Over the past several weeks you have been looking at your eating patterns. Part of that pattern is "snacking." Because snacks can contribute a lot of calories in a day, let’s take a look at your snacking pattern. Look at the foods you recorded in your food record this week. Take your highlighter and highlight all the snacks you ate this week. Since we all have different habits, each person may define “snacks” differently. Highlight the foods that you define as a snack for yourself. After you do that, total the calories for all the snacks you ate in one day.
Facilitate discussion on healthy snacking patterns and write answers on flipchart or white board.

- What is a healthy snack?
- What might prevent you from making healthy snack choices?
- What would make it easier for you to make healthy snack choices?
- What changes can you make to improve your snack habits?

Possible answers to assist the facilitator in leading the discussion

**What is a healthy snack?**
- An opportunity to include servings of fruits, vegetables, and other nutrient dense foods
- Low in calories and fat
- Satisfies hunger

**Common barriers to healthy snacking:**
- Social situations
- Time
- Availability/convenience
- Stress/emotions/feelings
- Habits/patterns

**Changing snacking behavior:**
- Become aware of your personal snacking patterns
- Identify strategies for dealing with snacking patterns

**How to snack healthily:**
- Keep snacks in convenient locations
- Develop personal strategies for making good snacking choices.
- Select foods low in calories and fat.
- Fruits and vegetables make great snacks
- Low-fat dairy products like yogurt can be satisfying.
- Control portion sizes.
Define conscious eating and lead activity in eating awareness (30 minutes)

Suggested questions

- What does the term “conscious eating” mean to you?
- (If participants seem unsure, facilitator may want to get them started):
  - Eating with purpose
  - Eating to nourish the body
  - Thinking about where the food comes from, how it gets to your plate, how it is prepared, and what it does for your body
  - Eating when you are hungry and stopping when you are full
  - Other ideas?
- How might you become more aware of what’s on your plate and your eating patterns?

Eating Awareness Exercise

- Set up tasting items prior to beginning class.
- Ask each participant to select any two items from the choices.
- **Important**: Ask them not to eat them until you say so.

**TOUCH, TEXTURE, COLOR**

- Start with one item. Have the participants hold the item in their fingers.
  - “Pay attention to the feel of the item. How does it feel? Notice the texture and color. What else do you notice?”

**TEXTURE**

- Next, allow participants put the item in their mouth to taste. **DO NOT CHEW THE ITEM.**
  - “Now pay attention to the feel of the item in your mouth. Do not begin chewing yet and spend 10-15 seconds moving it around your mouth. How does it feel? Notice the texture on your tongue. Does it have any flavor yet? If you want to, you can close your eyes.”
CHEW IT SLOWLY

- After approximately 10-15 seconds of moving the food around in their mouth, tell the participants to begin chewing the food slowly.
  - Now begin to chew your item slowly. What do you notice? Pay attention to the flavors on your tongue. How has the texture changed now that you are chewing it? Try to chew the food at least 10 times before swallowing.

- Allow participants to share their initial reactions but limit the discussion to a few minutes. Explain that we will be doing this one more time and will take more time to share their observations.

- Repeat the activity with the next food item.

Suggested questions to facilitate discussion

- What did you think about this activity?
- What did you notice as you were eating each food?
- How does this activity relate to satisfaction with food? When you eat food this way, do you think you will be less satisfied or more satisfied with your food?
- How does becoming aware of your eating pattern help you break impulsive snacking?
- How does becoming more attentive to what you are eating help you change snacking habits or other eating behaviors?
- What are some things you can do to eat with more awareness? (examples: plan meals and snacks, eat more slowly, notice the flavors in food, keeping food records)
- At what times do you think conscious eating will be most useful to you? (examples; Holidays, dining out, snacks)
- How has keeping food records helped you become more aware of what and why you eat?

- Have participants discuss ways to reduce the frequency of automatic or unconscious eating. Discuss how food records support conscious eating.
GOALS FOR NEXT WEEK (15 MINUTES)

Set goals for next week

- Setting goals and making plans for accomplishing goals is a key strategy for behavior change. Use this time for the participant to reflect on what they need to do as far as behavior change to accomplish their weight loss goal.
- The actual work of changing behaviors will happen outside of the group session, but writing down a plan will solidify commitment and sharing it with others often helps people stick to their plan.
- Give group 3-5 minutes to think about personal goals for the following week.
- Each person can have more than one goal. Be sure the goals are SMART goals as discussed in session 2. At least one goal should relate to adding conscious eating strategies into their lifestyle.

Share one goal with small group

- Divide group members into small groups and ask each person to share one goal with the rest of their small group.
- This is called a public goal or public challenge to help us be accountable to sticking to our goals. It also gives group members a chance to learn from and support each other.
- If time allows, ask for volunteers to share one of their goals with the entire group.

30-minute Physical Activity Session (if not included at beginning of group meeting)
Session 14: Overeating, Emotional Eating, and Binge Eating

1. Check-in (30 minutes)
   - Discuss concerns, questions and progress from the previous week.
   - Share at least one success.

2. Overeating and Emotional Eating (25 minutes)
   - Discuss overeating and have participants list out things that they feel lead them to overeat.
   - Discuss emotional eating and strategies to avoid overeating.
   - Discuss overeating in social situations.

3. Binge Eating (20 minutes)
   - Define and discuss binge eating.
   - Discuss unhealthy weight loss methods often associated with binge eating.

3. Goals for Next Week (15 minutes)
   - Decide on and write goals for next week
   - Group challenge or goal

There are no handouts for this session
At least 30 minutes **BEFORE** session begins:

- Write the agenda on board or flipchart at the beginning of each session.
- Write any additional notes with agenda – such as upcoming holidays, room changes, announcements, etc.
- Set up tables and chairs so that they are arranged in small groups of 3-5 and facing the facilitator.
- Set out nametags and reviewed food records from previous session for participants to pick up when arriving.
- Post “Group Guidelines” developed in Session 1.
- Place 1-2 calculators for each small group table setting.
- Have blank food records available for participants to pick up at end of session.
- **Optional:** It may also be useful to write on board the topics coming up next week, and the facilitators name and contact information.

**What you will need for this session:**

- Pens
- Blank food records
- Nametags
- Markers for writing on board and flipchart
- Container for collecting food records (to be reviewed by facilitator and returned following week)
- Flipchart
- Calculators

**FACILITATOR NOTES**

1. Provide a 5-minute break sometime during the session
2. **Include a 30-minute Physical Activity Session** at beginning or end of group meeting
3. Before dismissing participants at the end of every session, affirm that everyone has weighed.
4. Call any participant who did not attend (and had not already informed you of his or her absence).
CHECK-IN (30 MINUTES)
Discuss concerns, questions and progress from the previous week.
Share at least one success

- Ask each participant to share at least one success (and/or challenge) with exercise or eating well (either in the past week or since starting).
- Discuss in small groups first, about 5 minutes.
- Ask for volunteers to share answers in large group.
- Acknowledge group responses, successes and challenges/barriers. Explain that “check-in” is an opportunity to share in confidence with the group. Give positive reinforcement for the successes.

Sample questions for discussion

- Last week we discussed social eating and dining out.
- Please share some examples from this past week when you were successful making healthy food choices in a social setting? How about while dining out? What were some of your successes and challenges?

Overeating

We’ve been working hard at developing healthy eating habits to manage weight. We’ve talked about calorie and portion control and how eating larger portions can lead to excess caloric input. Similarly, today we’re going to spend a little more time talking about how habitually overeating at meals can lead to excess weight gain.

Suggested questions to initiate discussion

- What are some things that allow or cause people to overeat?
- Write on the flipchart triggers for overeating (If not listed add-physical hunger, emotions, time of day, social situations, activities associated with food, boredom).

There are numerous things that can trigger us to feel hungry and potentially overeat throughout the day. As you can see from our list, we associate eating with a number of things including comfort when we’re experiencing a strong emotion, social situations, stress, time of day, etc. Let’s focus on a few of these things that make us vulnerable to overeating.
**Emotional Eating:** What is Emotional Eating?

- Emotional eating is a way to soothe feelings such as sadness, depression, anxiety and stress.
- Many of us find it comforting to eat when we are angry or sad or having other intense feelings.
- Many of us were comforted or rewarded with food growing up. It feels good to eat.
- Over time, eating in response to strong emotions can cause those strong emotions to become a cue for us to feel hungry.

**Suggested questions to initiate discussion**

- How many of you do what is commonly called “emotional eating?”
- How have you tried to stop emotional eating?
- What worked? What didn’t?

Here are some techniques that can be helpful in reducing emotional eating. Write these on a flipchart and discuss each item.

1. **Write down everything you eat and drink as you have done in your food diary.**
   - Why is this important? (Encourage group to respond & generate ideas).
   - Monitoring your eating helps you to recognize what you’ve already eaten so you can keep track of your calories.
   - Monitoring your eating helps you identify if there are particular times of day or places or situations that you are more vulnerable to making poor choices or overeating.
   - Monitoring helps you stay on track with your goals for healthy eating.

2. **Eat regularly during the day with planned meals and snacks.**
   - Why is this important? (Encourage group to respond & generate ideas).
   - Eating regularly gives your body consistent energy and fuel.
   - Eating regularly helps you avoid getting too hungry and being vulnerable to poor choices or overeating.
   - Eating planned meals and snacks helps you stay on track with your goals for healthy eating.

*For example* (Read out loud to group) - Winfred had never eaten breakfast before joining this program because he wasn’t hungry in the morning (note that this is normal because metabolism is slower in the morning after a night of rest). After learning how important it is to eat breakfast, he began eating a small amount of cereal with skim milk every morning. He began to feel hungry in the mornings and became less likely to skip breakfast. He also found that when he ate breakfast, he felt less hungry at lunch and was able to make healthier food choices throughout the day. He also reported that eating breakfast helped him concentrate at work and gave him more energy for the day.
For example (Read out loud to group) - Carly wanted to finish her degree so she returned to school and picked up a waitressing jobs so she could pay her bills and work around her school schedule. Carly is around food nearly all day but she doesn’t have much of an appetite while she’s working. She nibbles here and there when she has a break but she never really slows down long enough to eat a real meal. When she’s not working she’s either at school, busy with homework, or sleeping. Carly rarely buys groceries anymore because they always seem to go bad before she can eat them. She’s noticed that more and more she just has the line chef make her something from the restaurant to take “to go” before she leaves work. She’s friends with the chef and he always makes her something good and gives her very generous portions. Carly has put on some weight recently. She feels guilty about it and she suspects it’s because of her late night dinners. She knows she should do a better job of portion control but she figures since she hasn’t eaten all day she’s probably okay overeating at night.

- Why is Carly overeating at night?
- How might depriving herself during the day maintain this pattern of overeating?
- What could Carly do differently?

3. Be mindful of your hunger and fullness.
- How do you know when you are hungry? What happens in your body? What happens to your mood, energy, focus? How do you know when you’ve had enough to eat?
- Pay attention to how hungry and full you are and rate it on a scale of 1 to 5 with 1= You have not eaten in a while, you are very hungry, faint, dizzy, and having trouble concentrating and 5= The food you’ve eaten is bulging in your stomach, you’re stuffed and wish you hadn’t eaten so much, you’re in pain. What do 2, 3, and 4 look like for you? Try eating when you’re at a 2 and stopping at a 3 or 4.
- Ask yourself these questions when you’re tempted to eat off-plan:
  - How do I feel? What do I need? Am I physically hungry? At what level? Do I just need a healthy snack? Do I really want to splurge? What feelings do I have? How can I fill empty feelings that are not hunger? Am I eating in response to fatigue or stress? What else could I do to meet my needs?

4. Eat only in certain designated areas where you can focus on eating.
- Why is this important? (Encourage group to respond & generate ideas).
- Eating in front of the TV or computer, or in the car, can distract us from how much we are eating. This can lead to overeating.
  - It can also prevent us from experiencing the pleasure of eating.
- If we only eat in certain places, kitchen, lunchroom, etc., we can pay closer attention to how much we are eating.
- The places you eat can also cue you to be hungry or to eat, even if you aren’t hungry. For example:
If you often eat while watching TV, in time this activity itself can make you feel hungry.

Eating and watching TV can be so closely linked that if you may feel you are missing something if you are not eating when watching TV.

- Some of us have activities or places (besides the kitchen, restaurant etc.) that we strongly associate with food and eating. These triggers can cause us to associate these cues with hunger hungry because of their close association with eating.

Questions to generate discussion (Write answers on a flipchart)

- What are some activities that trigger you to feel hungry?
- What are some places that trigger hunger in you?
- Lead a discussion on activities or places that trigger them to feel hungry and how this may have developed in each case

For example (Read out loud to group) - Anne loves to watch movies at home and for years would buy snacks at the store to eat while she watched movies. After a while she began to feel as if something were missing if she didn't eat snacks throughout the movie. Anne is now trying to make some changes to her diet and lose some weight. She has had considerable trouble not snacking on high calorie foods during the movies. Watching movies is one of her favorite activities and she does not want to give it up.

- What are some things Anne could do to practice healthy eating patterns and still regularly enjoy watching movies at home?

For example (Read out loud to group) - Dan is very busy. He is a single dad and works long hours. Dan doesn’t have time to pack a lunch for himself in the morning and when he does he often forgets it. Because he’s on the run so often, Dan usually just goes through the drive-up for fast food that he can eat while going from one location to the next. Dan has noticed that when he’s out running errands with his kids on the weekend he often feels like he needs a treat and stops at fast food restaurants for something quick. Dan says he gets “sucked in” to the value meals at these restaurants and often ends up eating more than he needs. He also feels like he’s distracted when he’s driving and doesn't really enjoy his food. He thinks he eats faster when he’s in a hurry to get somewhere. Dan would like to make healthier choices and stop eating in the car but he isn’t sure how to make it work with his schedule.
Suggested questions

- Given his circumstances, what changes could Dan make to practice healthy eating patterns and avoid overeating?

5. Make a plan that includes alternative enjoyable activities to do when you feel tempted to eat because of your emotions.

This can keep you occupied until the urge to eat emotionally has passed. Consider options that would make it difficult to eat at the same time, such as:

- Going for a walk
- Calling a friend
- Cleaning the house (if you enjoy that sort of thing)

Does anybody have any other suggestions for additional strategies to avoid emotional eating?

What are some other situations or triggers that can make us more vulnerable to overeating? (Write answers on flipchart)
Eating in Social Situations

- Sometimes when we are not taking good care of ourselves we can confuse other sensations with hunger.
- For example, when you aren’t getting enough liquids sometimes the feeling of thirst can be confused with hunger.
- For many people when they are fatigued and have low energy rather than resting to restore energy many people misinterpret the signals the body is sending to mean they need fuel from food.
- Often times in social situations (especially ones that revolve around food) there is an expectation that everyone is going to overeat. This social pressure can lead a person to overeat even if they have been trying to lose weight and eat less.

- What is it about social situations that make us vulnerable to overeating?
  - In social situations sometimes others push food upon you or encourage you to eat more than you need or foods you might not otherwise choose.
- In some social situations you feel you should eat to be polite.
- In social situations that involve food it is easy to lose track of what and how much you are eating because you are focused on socializing or the event itself.
- In some social situations you might be anxious or nervous and food might be calming or having food in your hand or mouth might be a way to avoid participating in conversations you’re not comfortable in.
- In some social situations drinking alcohol is an expectation and people generally overeat when their inhibitions are decreased due to drinking alcohol.

- Are there social situations that can be a trigger for some of you to overeat? (Write out those situations on a flipchart)

- Pick a couple of situations from the flipchart and use them as examples for group discussion. Then lead a discussion on the situations and ask the following-
  - What are some ways that each situation can lead to overeating? Why?
  - What are some strategies that could be used in each situation to avoid overeating?
GOALS FOR NEXT WEEK (15 MINUTES)

Set goals for next week

- Setting goals and making plans for accomplishing goals is a key strategy for behavior change. Use this time for the participant to reflect on what they need to do as far as behavior change to accomplish their weight loss goal.

- The actual work of changing behaviors will happen outside of the group session, but writing down a plan will solidify commitment and sharing it with others often helps people stick to their plan.

- Give group 3-5 minutes to think about personal goals for the following week. Each person can have more than one goal. Be sure the goals are SMART goals as discussed in session 2.

Share one goal with small group

- Divide group members into small groups and ask each person to share one goal with the rest of their small group.

- This is called a public goal or public challenge to help us be accountable to sticking to our goals. It also gives group members a chance to learn from and support each other.

- If time allows, ask for volunteers to share one of their goals with the entire group.

30-minute Physical Activity Session (if not included at beginning of group meeting)
Session 15: Dining Out

1. Check-In (30 minutes)
   - Discuss concerns, questions and progress from the previous week.

2. Dining Out and Weight Loss (45 minutes)
   - Facilitate discussion on dining out.
   - Lead activity to practice making healthy choices when eating out.
   - Discuss strategies for dining out and for modifying meals.
   - Distribute the “Guide for Dining Out” handout.

3. Goals for Next Week (15 minutes)
   - Decide on and write goals for next week

Handouts for this session
Guide for Dining Out
Nutrition in the Fast Lane (brochure)
Restaurant Menus (optional)
At least 30 minutes BEFORE session begins:

- Write the agenda on board or flipchart at the beginning of each session.
- Write any additional notes with agenda – such as upcoming holidays, room changes, announcements, etc.
- Set up tables and chairs so that they are arranged in small groups of 3-5 and facing the facilitator.
- Set out nametags and reviewed food records from previous session for participants to pick up when arriving.
- Post “Group Guidelines” developed in Session 1.
- Place 1-2 calculators for each small group table setting.
- Have blank food records available for participants to pick up at end of session.
- **Optional:** It may also be useful to write on board the topics coming up next week, and the facilitator's name and contact information.

**What you will need for this session:**

- Pens
- Blank food records
- Nametags
- Markers for writing on board and flipchart
- Container for collecting food records (to be reviewed by facilitator and returned following week)
- Flipchart
- Calculators
- Handouts for this session

**FACILITATOR NOTES**

1. Provide a 10-minute break sometime during the session
2. **Include a 30-minute Physical Activity Session** at beginning or end of group meeting
3. Before dismissing participants at the end of every session, affirm that everyone has weighed.
4. Call any participant who did not attend (and had not already informed you of his or her absence).
CHECK-IN (30 MINUTES)
Discuss concerns, questions and progress from the previous week.

- Write check-in questions for all to see when they arrive.
- Discuss questions in small groups first, about 5 minutes.
- Ask for volunteers to share answers in large group.
- Acknowledge group responses, successes and challenges/barriers. Explain that “check-in” is an opportunity to share in confidence with the group. Allow other participants to contribute strategies for overcoming the barriers. Give positive reinforcement for the successes.

Suggested questions
- What are your observations or thoughts around last week’s discussion on overeating & emotional eating?
- When are you most likely to overeat? What kinds of strategies can you use to prevent this in the future (write ideas on board for everyone to benefit)
- When are you most likely to engage in emotional eating? What kinds of emotions are hardest for you? What can you do besides eat?

Sample discussion approach
“Last week we started the discussion on overeating, emotional eating, and binge eating? Most people have experienced one or more of these problems at some point in their life. Once we are able to identify the situations in which we are most likely to overeat, or eat in response to tough feelings, we can also come up with some other ways of dealing with these situations. What did you notice over the past week?”
DINING OUT AND WEIGHT LOSS (30 minutes)

- Facilitate a brief discussion about eating out.
- Summarize the discussion and highlight the key points. Examples should include:
  - Fast foods tend to be very high in calories.
  - Choose restaurants that provide a wide variety of foods can make ordering easier, especially when trying to include foods that meet the study guidelines and your goals.
- Distribute the “Guide for Dining Out” handout and “Nutrition in the Fast Lane” brochure. Use at any time to further facilitate a group discussion.
- Refer participants to pages 182-270 of their “2009 The Calorie King” guide
- Introduce an activity to practice making healthy dining out choices (choose one from the suggestions below). Debrief discussions.

Suggested questions to initiate discussion

- What makes eating out challenging when you are trying to eat fewer calories?
- How have your perceptions or experiences in dining out changed since starting this program?
- What changes have you made since starting this program?

Sample discussion approach

“For many people, eating out is a big part of our regular food intake and sometimes difficult to avoid. Social gatherings often include food, and take out and fast food restaurants are very convenient on busy days. What makes eating out challenging when you are trying to eat fewer calories? How have your perceptions or experiences in dining out changed since starting this program?”
Suggested activities for this session

A. Food record activity:
   1. Have participants find any restaurant meals or fast food meals in their completed food record and total the calories for the meals. If they have not eaten out this past week, have them calculate the calories of a typical meal that they would eat out using their calorie guides (pages 182-270).
   2. Have a few participants share their findings.
   3. Ask participants to reflect on their findings. What surprised you? What was challenging?

B. Menu activity:
   1. Divide participants in four groups. Pass out menus from local restaurants or fast food restaurants.
   2. Ask each group to identify all possible healthy options available to order (if any). Healthier options should include fruits and vegetables, grilled, baked or steamed items, whole grains, high fiber foods.
   3. Ask each group member to select a meal they would typically order.
   4. Have groups discuss (or present to other groups) ways to modify or alter the selected items to increase healthier foods and reduce the calories and fat.
   5. If time permits: Groups could use their calorie counting guide to look up the calories in the original and modified selections.
   6. Encourage participants to practice how to make requests when ordering.
   7. Debrief: Have each group summarize their original meals and the changes they made with the larger group. Ideas for changes include:
      - Add a tossed salad
      - Small fruit juice, fat-free milk, sparkling water with lemon, coffee, tea, or diet beverage
      - Fruit salad for dessert
      - Baked potato, limit the toppings
      - Request a specific preparation method (e.g., baked, steamed, grilled)
      - Eat half of portion, ask for a take-home box
      - Share a meal with a friend or spouse
      - Eat a salad with fat-free dressing
      - Request added fats and sauces be served on the side
      - Ask that breads and chips not be brought to the table
   8. (If time permits) Record ideas generated by participants on a flipchart or overhead (or provide them with extra paper for notes in their binders).
C. Situational Examples:

1. Divide participants into 4 small groups
2. Provide each group with one of the scenarios below.
3. Allow time for group discussion and consensus.
4. Have each small group share the problem and solution with the larger group.

1. Dining at a Buffet: You volunteer with a community group (local sport team, church group, service club, etc.) and a dinner meeting is planned to be held at the local buffet joint. What is your strategy to make healthier choices when dining out?

2. Meals on the go: Your day is much busier than you planned when you left the house this morning. You don't have time for a leisurely lunch or dinner. Instead you only have enough time between activities to grab something and eat on the run. What is your strategy to make healthier choices when eating on the go?

3. Family/Friend Gatherings: You have a large “family” celebration to attend this weekend. Cake, ice cream, and the traditional food will be offered, just as it is every year. The menu: fried chicken, potato salad, dinner rolls, green beans, raw vegetables with ranch dressing, Jello salad. PLUS, chocolate cake, vanilla ice cream. What is your strategy to make healthier choices when at a family gathering?

4. Eating away from home: You are away from home, on a mini-vacation for the weekend and staying with friends. You haven't seen each other in over a year and they don't know about your new eating habits. The weekend involves some eating out, cocktails, and the hosts cooking for you. What is your strategy to make healthier choices when on vacation or away from home?
GOALS FOR NEXT WEEK (15 MINUTES)

Set goals for next week

- Setting goals and making plans for accomplishing goals is a key strategy for behavior change. Use this time for the participant to reflect on what they need to do as far as behavior change to accomplish their weight loss goal.
- The actual work of changing behaviors will happen outside of the group session, but writing down a plan will solidify commitment and sharing it with others often helps people stick to their plan.
- Give group 3-5 minutes to think about personal goals for the following week.
- Each person can have more than one goal. Be sure the goals are SMART goals as discussed in session 2. At least one goal should relate to making healthier choices when dining out or eating in social situations.

Share one goal with small group

- Divide group members into small groups and ask each person to share one goal with the rest of their small group.
- This is called a public goal or public challenge to help us be accountable to sticking to our goals. It also gives group members a chance to learn from and support each other.
- If time allows, ask for volunteers to share one of their goals with the entire group.

30-minute Physical Activity Session (if not included at beginning of group meeting)
1. Dining at a buffet: You volunteer with a community group (local sport team, church group, service club, etc.) and a dinner meeting is planned to be held at the local buffet joint. What is your strategy to make healthier choices when dining out?

2. Meals on the go: Your day is much busier than you planned when you left the house this morning. You don't have time for a leisurely lunch or dinner. Instead you only have enough time between meetings or activities to grab something and eat in transit. What is your strategy to make healthier choices when eating on the go?

3. Family/friend gatherings: You have a large “family” celebration to attend this weekend. Cake, ice cream, and the traditional food will be offered, just as it is every year. The menu: fried chicken, potato salad, dinner rolls, green beans, raw vegetables with ranch dressing, Jello salad. PLUS, chocolate cake, vanilla ice cream. What is your strategy to make healthier choices when at a family gathering?

4. Eating away from home: You are away from home, on a mini-vacation for the weekend and staying with friends. You haven't seen each other in over a year and they don't know about your new eating habits. The weekend involves some eating out, cocktails, and the hosts cooking for you. What is your strategy to make healthier choices when on vacation or away from home?
Sample Buffet Menu
(Items you might find at your local buffet)

- Macaroni and Cheese
- Fried Chicken
- Fried Fish
- Baked Chicken
- Baked Fish
- Mashed Potatoes
- Baked Beans
- Cooked Green Beans
- Short Cobs of Corn
- Cooked Mixed Vegetables of Cauliflower, Broccoli, Carrots
- Cornbread Dressing
- French Fries
- Cream Soup
- Other/Non-Cream Soup
- Garlic Butter Bread
- Dinner Rolls
- Create your own salad bar: vegetable salad ingredients, Jello salad, potato salad, macaroni salad, Waldorf salad, etc.
- Unlimited soda bar, coffee service and hot tea
- Dessert bar: carrot cake, chocolate cupcakes, Jello, chocolate pudding, soft serve ice cream, 3 choices of ice cream sauces.
Session 16: Importance of Physical Activity

1. Check-In (30 minutes)
   - Discuss concerns, questions and progress from the previous week.
   - Encourage participants to break into small groups and share with one another

2. Importance of Physical Activity (45 minutes)
   - Discuss the importance of regular physical activity
   - Explore different types of exercise (cardio, strength, flexibility) and their benefits
   - Identify barriers and strategies for developing an exercise routine

3. Goals for Next Week (15 minutes)
   - Set goals for the following week
   - Encourage participants to share at least one goal with other participants

Handouts for this session
Benefits of Exercise
Physical Activity Pyramid (also used in Session 4)
Exercising Safely
Resistance bands for each participant (optional)
At least 30 minutes **BEFORE** session begins:

- Write the agenda on board or flipchart.
- Write any additional notes with agenda – such as upcoming holidays, room changes, announcements, etc.
- Set up tables and chairs so that they are arranged in small groups of 3-5 and facing the facilitator.
- Set out nametags and reviewed food records from previous session for participants to pick up when arriving.
- Post “Group Guidelines” developed in session 1.
- Place 1-2 calculators for each small group table setting.
- Have blank food records available for participants to pick up at end of session.
- **Optional:** It may also be useful to write on board the topics coming up next week, and the facilitators name and contact information.

**What you will need for this session:**

- Pens
- Blank food records
- Nametags
- Markers for writing on board and flipchart
- Container for collecting food records (to be reviewed by facilitator and returned following week)
- Flipchart
- Calculators
- Handouts for this session
- Exercise resistance bands if available.

**FACILITATOR NOTES**

1. Provide a 10-minute break sometime during the session
2. **Include a 30-minute Physical Activity Session** at beginning or end of group meeting
3. Before dismissing participants at the end of every session, affirm that everyone has weighed in.
4. Call any participant who did not attend (and had not already informed you of his or her absence).
CHECK-IN (30 MINUTES)
Discuss concerns, questions and progress from the previous week.
Share challenges and successes.

- Write check-in questions on board or flipchart before participants arrive.
- Share and discuss check-in questions in small groups first, about 5 minutes.
- Ask for volunteers to share answers in large group.
- Acknowledge group responses, successes and challenges/barriers. Remind participants that “check-in” is an opportunity to share in confidence with the group.
- Allow other participants to contribute strategies for overcoming the barriers.
- Give positive reinforcement for the successes.

Suggested questions
- Did anyone make changes in the way they eat out?
- What challenges did you run into while eating out?
- What worked well?

Sample discussion approach
“Last week we talked about eating out and some of the problems that come up at restaurants and fast food places. We also came up with several strategies that could help. What did you observe this past week while dining out?”
IMPORTANCE OF PHYSICAL ACTIVITY (45 MINUTES)

Discuss the importance of regular physical activity

- Physical activity is a key component in weight management and good health
- Regular physical activity can reduce the risk of heart disease, cancer, diabetes, and bone density.
- Regular exercise can also relieve stress, improve sleep, increase confidence, and improve coordination.
- Moderate intensity exercise burns calories

Suggested questions to initiate discussion
Why is important to get regular exercise?
What do you notice about yourself after you exercise?
How do you feel?

Distribute “Benefits of Exercise”

Sample discussion approach
“Regular physical activity is plays a key role in leading a healthy lifestyle. Getting regular exercise reduces the risk of some diseases as well as helps us to feel good about ourselves. Physical activity is also important in helping with weight management. Getting regular moderate activity most days of the week helps to burn calories. Along with a healthy diet, exercise helps us to maintain ‘energy balance’. ”

Explore different types of exercise and their benefits

- Everyday activities can help us to burn calories by being less sedentary.
- Aerobic (or moderate intensity or cardio) activity is important for heart/lung capacity and burns the most calories.
- Strength (or weight) training helps to increase lean body mass (muscle) as well as increase metabolism.
- Flexibility exercises are key in maintaining supple muscles, better range of motion and balance.
- A combination of all types of exercises allows us to get all the benefits and to lead healthy “fit” lifestyle.
Suggested questions to initiate discussion
What are the different categories or types of physical activity?
What types of exercises or activities fit these categories?

May want to write these on a flipchart, for example:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Everyday activity</th>
<th>Aerobic</th>
<th>Strength</th>
<th>Flexibility</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Walking the dog</td>
<td>Brisk walking</td>
<td>Free weights</td>
<td>Stretching</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Washing the car</td>
<td>Biking</td>
<td>Weight machines</td>
<td>Yoga</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taking the stairs</td>
<td>Swimming</td>
<td>Calisthenics (crunches,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>pushups, lunges)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Distribute “Physical Activity Pyramid”

Sample discussion approach
“It is important to get a variety of exercises into our routine. This physical activity pyramid is a tool for helping us create a weekly exercise plan. One of the best things we can do is to simply add ‘movement’ into our daily life. This is the ‘base’ of the pyramid and helps to prevent us from spending too much time being sedentary, such as at working at a computer or watching TV.”

“Getting regular aerobic, or moderate intensity, activity helps our heart and lungs to function better. This type of exercise also burns the most calories. We should aim for at least 30 minutes most days, or 180 minutes a week. Remember that this can be broken down into a few 10-minute segments throughout the day.”

“Strength training is also an important part of an exercise routine. This is sometimes called weight training or resistance training. This type of exercise is useful in increasing lean body mass, or muscle. Since muscle burns more calories than fat, strength training can be helpful with weight management. Two or three days of strength training each week can help us to maintain strong muscles and lean body mass.”

“Flexibility exercises, or stretching, helps our muscles to remain supple. This allows us to have a greater range of motion which means being able to lift our arms over our head or to bend forward to reach toward our toes. Having good flexibility can prevent muscle soreness as well as help to maintain balance and coordination. This is important in preventing falls or injuries. As we age, flexibility tends to decrease, so adding stretching to our exercise routine will help to keep muscles pliable. Stretching is a great way to relax and can be done daily.”

Distribute “Exercising Safely”
Sample discussion approach
“When it comes to exercising, people sometimes make the mistake of taking on too much, too soon. It is important to listen to your body and to increase your exercise little by little. Some mild muscle soreness or slight discomfort may be OK, but you should not experience pain. If you feel any discomfort, discontinue what you are doing and allow yourself to recover. Remember to be patient and allow yourself to gradually build up strength and endurance.”

Identify barriers and strategies for developing an exercise routine

Suggested questions to initiate discussion:
What are some of the challenges to getting into an exercise routine? (Write on board or flipchart.)
What are some ideas for overcoming these challenges? (Write on board or flipchart next to the appropriate barrier.)

Example:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>It’s boring</th>
<th>Find activities that you enjoy; Play music</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bad weather</td>
<td>Walk at the mall; Dress for the weather</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Too tired</td>
<td>Exercise can give you more energy, try just 5 minutes of stretching</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sample discussion approach
“It’s easy to see how important regular exercise is, but it can sometimes be difficult to find a way to make it a part of our routine. Remember that every effort counts, some exercise is better than no exercise. With a little sweat and consistency, physical activity will soon be part of your day-to-day experience and you’ll be on your way to a fit, active lifestyle. Take a few minutes to fill out your physical activity pyramid, creating an exercise plan that will work for you.”

Distribute resistance bands and exercise instructions, one per participant

Sample discussion approach
“A few minutes ago we talked about the importance of strength training. You don’t necessarily need a lot of equipment to tone and strengthen your muscles. Using a resistance band like the one you now have, is a tool for exercising our muscles. These are lightweight and portable and overall pretty ‘user friendly’. The instruction sheet gives you an idea of some basic exercises you can do with these bands. Be sure to keep the band away from sharp objects and avoid overstretching it beyond three times its length. When you’re not using your band, store it somewhere that is not too hot or too cold, and out of direct sunlight. This will help the band to remain elastic and last longer.”

GOALS FOR NEXT WEEK (15 MINUTES)
Decide on goals for next week
• Setting goals and making plans for accomplishing goals is a key strategy for behavior change. Use this time for the participant to reflect on what they need to do as far as behavior change to accomplish their weight loss goal.

• The actual work of changing behaviors will happen outside of the group session. Writing down a plan and sharing with others can help to solidify commitment.

• Give participants 3-5 minutes to think about their personal goals for the following week. Encourage writing the goals in the FFR.

• Each person can have more than one goal as long as they are SMART (as discussed in Session 2).

• At least one goal should relate to today’s session topic.

**Share one goal with small group**

• Divide participants into small groups and ask each person to share one goal with the rest of the small group.

• This is called a public goal or public challenge to help us be accountable to sticking to our goals. It also gives members a chance to learn from and support one another.

• If time allows, ask for volunteers to share one goal with the entire group.

**30-minute Physical Activity Session** (use this time to instruct participants in using resistance bands and allowing them to try some of the suggested exercises)
Session 17: Revisiting Meal Planning and Portion Control

1. Check-In (30 minutes)
   - Discuss concerns, questions and progress from the previous week.
   - Share at least one success and/or challenge.

2. Revisiting Meal Planning (20 minutes)
   - Review meal planning from session 8
   - Have group members discuss the importance of meal planning for maintaining a healthy diet.
   - Allow group to share successes and struggles with meal planning.
   - Have group members share strategies they have found helpful in being able to consistently plan meals ahead of time.

3. Revisiting Portion Control (25 minutes)
   - Review concepts of portion size and serving size
   - Discuss importance of portion control for reducing the number of calories eaten at meals (refer to Session 3 manual)
   - Have group members share successes and challenges in controlling their portions.
   - Small group exercise to practice modifying calorie content of meals through changing portion sizes.

4. Goals for Next Week (10 minutes)
   - Decide on and write goals for next week
   - Group challenge or goal

Handouts for this session
Refer to handouts from Sessions 3 & 8
At least 30 minutes **BEFORE** session begins:

⇒ Write the agenda on board or flipchart at the beginning of each session.
⇒ Write any additional notes with agenda – such as upcoming holidays, room changes, announcements, etc.
⇒ Set up tables and chairs so that they are arranged in small groups of 3-5 and facing the facilitator.
⇒ Set out nametags and reviewed food records from previous session for participants to pick up when arriving.
⇒ Post “Group Guidelines” developed in Session 1.
⇒ Have blank food records available for participants to pick up at end of session.
⇒ **Optional:** Place 1-2 calculators at each small group setting so that participants that arrive early may calculate calories.
⇒ **Optional:** It may also be useful to write on board the topics coming up next week, and the facilitators name and contact information.

**What you will need for this session:**

- Pens
- Blank food records
- Nametags
- Markers for writing on board and flipchart
- Container for collecting food records (to be reviewed by facilitator and returned following week)
- Flipchart
- Calculators
- Handouts for this session
- **Intervention Manuals for Sessions 3 and 8**

**FACILITATOR NOTES**

1. Provide a 5-minute break sometime during the session
2. **Include a 30-minute Physical Activity Session** at beginning or end of group meeting
3. Before dismissing participants at the end of every session, affirm that everyone has been weighed.
4. Call any participant who did not attend (and had not already informed you of his or her absence).

**CHECK-IN (30 MINUTES)**
Discuss concerns, questions and progress from the previous week.

- Write check-in questions for all to see when they arrive.
- Discuss questions in small groups first, about 5-10 minutes.
- Ask for volunteers to share answers in large group.
- Acknowledge group responses, successes and challenges/barriers. Explain that “check-in” is an opportunity to share in confidence with the group. Allow other participants to contribute strategies for overcoming the barriers. Give positive reinforcement for the successes.

Suggested questions for check-in

- Last week, we talked about the importance of exercise. What did you notice about your physical activity over the past week?
- What kinds of activities are you doing?
- How do you feel after you’ve exercised?

Revisiting Meal Planning (20 minutes)

*Have Session 8 manual available for reference.*

We spent some time early in the group sessions on the importance of meal planning for improving eating habits. Today we will revisit that concept and check in with how each of you has been doing with planning your meals on a regular basis.

Suggested questions to generate discussion

- What are some of the benefits of planning most of your meals ahead of time?(write answers on a flipchart)
- Could any of you provide some successes you have had with meal planning and how it affected your diet?
- Could any of you provide some examples of challenges you have had with meal planning (time, motivation, etc.)?
- What are some of the benefits of planning all your snacks ahead of time as well?
- Could any of you share successes you have had with planning your snacks ahead of time?
- Could any of you share some challenges with planning your snacks?

- Important benefits of meal planning to mention if not brought up by group member during the discussion
Planning meals ahead of time can help you to make better food choices by avoiding eating decisions that are made in the moment (often when you are hungry).

Planning your meals and snacks ahead can help you avoid skipping meals or getting too hungry during the day, which can lead to overeating.

Planning your meals ahead can allow you to include more fruits and vegetables in your diet (which often requires more planning if it is something new for you).

Revisiting Portion Size and Portion Control (25 minutes)

Have Session 3 Manual available for reference.

Before we begin our discussion on portion size let’s revisit the definition of both portion size and serving size.

- Definition of a serving: A serving is a **standardized** amount of food that can help you compare the nutritional and calorie content of similar foods (for example, ½ cup of Cheerios as compared to ½ cup of Cocoa Puffs).
- Definition of a portion: A portion is the **actual** amount of food that is eaten during your meal. A portion may be smaller or larger than the standardized serving size.

Questions to generate discussion

- What successes have you had in estimating the number of servings in the portions you eat?
- What are the challenges in estimating the number of servings in a portion?
- What are the benefits of learning to estimate the number of servings that are in a portion of food?
- How has paying attention to the distinction of portion size and serving size helped you in meal planning?
- How has paying attention to portion size and serving size helped you reduce the amount of food you have been eating at meals? What is most helpful about paying close attention to portion size?
- How has keeping daily food records helped you in portion control?

Allow time for discussion
Small Group Exercise

Have group members get out their most recent food and fitness diary. Instruct them to pick out two meals where they thought they ate too much or too many calories. Then have them write on a blank sheet of paper ways they could have reduced the calorie content of each meal by changing portion sizes of the foods they ate (for example increase the portion size of a vegetable eaten and decrease the portion size of a meat).

Have members break into groups of 4-5 to discuss the previous exercise.

Instruct group members to each share a meal (if they feel comfortable) they felt was too high in calories and the way they would have reduced the caloric content of that meal through changes in portion sizes. Encourage group members to ask others for suggestions in modifying the meal they shared if they are having trouble.

Once back in the larger group (if there is time) ask for a volunteer to share with the whole group the meal they identified in the exercise and how they would have modified it. Allow time for discussion.

GOALS FOR NEXT WEEK (10 minutes)

Set goals for next week

- Setting goals and making plans for accomplishing goals is a key strategy for behavior change. Use this time for the participant to reflect on what they need to do as far as behavior change to accomplish their weight loss goal.
- The actual work of changing behaviors will happen outside of the group session, but writing down a plan will solidify commitment and sharing it with others often helps people stick to their plan.
- Give group 3-5 minutes to think about personal goals for the following week. Each person can have more than one goal. Be sure the goals are SMART goals as discussed in Session 2.

Share one goal with small group

- Divide group members into small groups and ask each person to share one goal with the rest of their small group.
- This is called a public goal or public challenge to help us be accountable to sticking to our goals. It also gives group members a chance to learn from and support each other.
- If time allows, ask for volunteers to share one of their goals with the entire group.

30-minute Physical Activity Session (use this time to instruct participants in using resistance bands and allowing them to try some of the suggested exercises)
Session 18: Are You on Target? Progress Check, Motivation and Problem Solving

1. Progress Check (30 minutes)
   - Discuss concerns, questions and progress from the previous week.
   - Share the group’s overall progress data.
   - Give participants time to share their individual progress, challenges and successes from Session 1 until now.

2. Assessing Motivation (30 minutes)
   - Explore with participants what they can do when your motivation starts to slip.
   - Have participants write down an action plan regarding their eating and/or exercise habit.

3. Problem Solving (15 minutes)

4. Goals for Next Week (15 minutes)
   - Decide on and write goals for next week

Handouts for this session
How do I feel about my progress today?
How have I done? (optional)
Problem-solving worksheet(s)
At least 30 minutes **BEFORE** session begins:

- Write the agenda on board or flipchart at the beginning of each session.
- Write any additional notes with agenda – such as upcoming holidays, room changes, announcements, etc.
- Set up tables and chairs so that they are arranged in small groups of 3-5 and facing the facilitator.
- Set out nametags and reviewed food records from previous session for participants to pick up when arriving.
- Post “Group Guidelines” developed in Session 1.
- Place 1-2 calculators for each small group table setting.
- Have blank food records available for participants to pick up at end of session.
- **Optional**: It may also be useful to write on board the topics coming up next week, and the facilitators name and contact information.

**What you will need for this session:**

- Pens
- Blank food records
- Nametags
- Markers for writing on board and flipchart
- Container for collecting food records (to be reviewed by facilitator and returned following week)
- Flipchart
- Calculators
- Handouts for this session

**FACILITATOR NOTES**

1. Provide a 5-minute break sometime during the session
2. **Include a 30-minute Physical Activity Session** at beginning or end of group meeting
3. Before dismissing participants at the end of every session, affirm that EVERYONE has weighed.
4. Call any participant who did not attend (and had not already informed you of his or her absence).
PROGRESS CHECK (30 MINUTES)

Additional note to facilitator:
The purpose of this session is to give participants the opportunity to reflect on their successes and progress, as well as begin to share challenges with the group. The objective of this progress check is to help participants identify their successes, to develop goals for remaining sessions, and to prepare for maintaining healthy behaviors when program ends.

Discuss concerns, questions and progress from the previous week.

- Before breaking into small groups, ask if there are any questions about the previous week’s materials.

Sample discussion approach

“Before we get started with today’s topic, are there any questions about last week’s session? What did you learn? What will be helpful for you? What are you still finding difficult (can use for problem-solving discussion later)”

Share the group’s overall progress data

- Share any group data results collected through Session 18, such as averages in attendance, weight loss, days per week of food records kept, minutes of exercise, and average hours slept. Provide group level data only. (This refers to summaries of the weekly data collected from food records.)
- As appropriate, reinforce relationships between data points (for example, regular attendance with greater weight loss).
- Emphasize that individual level data will be kept confidential, unless the participant decides to share that with the larger group.
- Explain that this is the final progress check and will help participants to celebrate their successes, develop future goals, and prepare for maintaining healthy behaviors when the program ends.

Sample discussion approach

“We have been meeting for over 18 weeks now (3/4 of the program) and we want to take some time to check-in on your progress as a group and individually. This is the last of three progress checks. Let’s use it as a time to celebrate successes and plan for how to maintain the new healthy behaviors when the program ends. Here is a summary of the information we have collected from this group so far. What do you make of that? What surprises you, if anything, about the numbers?”

Evaluating Personal Progress
Distribute and review instructions to worksheet, “How do I feel about my progress today?”

- Each participant should rate her/his progress from 0-10 with the score that best represents how they feel about their personal progress from Session 1 until now. Encourage each participant to take some time to think about their progress and then share their progress with their small group.

- Ask participants to share and discuss in small groups for about 10-15 minutes.

- With large group, facilitate a discussion about what score participants assigned to themselves and why. (For example, ask participants to self-identify their score within a range such as 0-3, 4-6, or 7-10. Then ask participants to volunteer to share why she/he scored themselves in that range.) Do this for each of the five areas.

- Acknowledge group responses, successes and challenges/barriers. Allow other participants to contribute strategies for overcoming the barriers. Give positive reinforcement for the successes.

- As appropriate, discuss weight loss and physical activity goals.

- Use motivational interviewing strategies to reflect on behavior changes.

Suggested questions to facilitate discussion

- What has changed about the way you eat or exercise as a result of STRIDE?
- What was the most difficult or easy part to change?
- What change have you made that you are most excited about?
- What is working or not working for you right now?
- What is getting in the way?
- How close are you to the weight loss goal?

Sample discussion approach

“We are getting fairly close to the end of the weekly STRIDE program. This might be a good time to see how you are doing. Let’s start with the progress check worksheet. Try to do this worksheet without looking at progress checks from previous session. You can compare this week’s version with sessions 7 and 12 later. “As you look over the worksheet and see where you are right now, what do you think about your progress?”
Optional Activities for Progress Check 3

2. Have participants pair up and interview each other about their progress and report to group at large. Some suggested questions you might have on a flipchart might be:
   - What helped you keep to your plan?
   - What role did your food records play?
   - What were some of your barriers and how did you overcome them?
   - How do you plan to keep on track?

3. Use the “How Have I Done?” worksheet to measure progress in place of the “Progress Check” worksheet.
   a. Ask the participants how they think they are doing based on their answers from the worksheet.
   b. Open it up for discussion:
      - What surprised you?
      - What has changed about the way you eat or exercise?
      - What was the most difficult or easy part to change?
      - What change have you made that you are most excited about?
      - What is working or not working for you right now?
      - How close are you to the weight loss goal?
ASSESSING MOTIVATION (30 MINUTES)

- Explore with participants what they can do when your motivation starts to slip.
- Have participants write down an action plan regarding their eating and/or exercise habit. Have them share their plans with the group.

**Suggested questions to initiate discussion**

- What does “motivation” mean to you?
- What are you doing to prevent slipping into old habits?
- What keeps you on track?
- What tools do you find useful to keep you on track? (food records, exercise, social support, etc.)
- What role does goal setting or action plans play in your efforts?
- If you don’t make a plan, what happens?
- What progress do you want to make by next week, next month, next year? How do you plan to get there? How will you stay motivated?

**Sample discussion approach**

“Motivation refers to our needs, wants, and interests – whatever moves us in a particular direction. What does “motivation” mean to you? (List key words defining motivation.)

How do you stay motivated? Where do you see yourself next week, next month, or next year? How can you turn your steps into an action plan or goal for the following week?”

REVIEW STEPS TO PROBLEM SOLVING (15 MINUTES)

- Review the steps of problem solving discussed in Session 7.
- Using a “problem” from today’s discussion, brainstorm with participant’s ways to overcome the barriers.
- Follow the problem solving steps as a group (you may want to mention, however, that a good solution for one person may not be quite right for another person – each member will need to select a solution that seems best for them).
- Remind participants that these steps can be helpful in thinking about other kinds of problems, whether their activity-related, food-related, or a problem outside of the program.
GOALS FOR NEXT WEEK (15 MINUTES)

Set goals for next week
- Setting goals and making plans for accomplishing goals is a key strategy for behavior change. Use this time for the participant to reflect on what they need to do as far as behavior change to accomplish their weight loss goal.
- The actual work of changing behaviors will happen outside of the group session, but writing down a plan will solidify commitment and sharing it with others often helps people stick to their plan.
- Give group 3-5 minutes to think about personal goals for the following week.
- Each person can have more than one goal. Be sure the goals are SMART goals as discussed in Session 2. Consider choosing one goal that addresses a “problem” (or an area that is still a challenge) as discussed earlier today.

Share one goal with small group
- Divide group members into small groups and ask each person to share one goal with the rest of their small group.
- This is called a public goal or public challenge to help us be accountable to sticking to our goals. It also gives group members a chance to learn from and support each other.
- If time allows, ask for volunteers to share one of their goals with the entire group.

30-minute Physical Activity Session (if not included at beginning of group meeting)
Session 19: Planning for Future Social Support

1. Check-In (30 minutes)
   - Discuss concerns, questions and progress from the previous week.
   - Share challenges and successes to staying on track.

2. Planning for Social Support (30 minutes)
   - Discuss ways participants use their current social support network and the characteristics of a good support network.
   - Brainstorm, list ideas, and discuss ways to increase and maintain current network.

3. Seeking an Exercise Buddy (15 minutes)
   - Discuss activities the participants like to do or would like to begin doing.

4. Goals for Next Week (15 minutes)
   - Set goals for next week
   - Share at least one goal for planning for future social support

Handouts for this session
Planning for Social Support
At least 30 minutes **BEFORE** session begins:

- Write the agenda on board or flipchart at the beginning of each session.
- Write any additional notes with agenda – such as upcoming holidays, room changes, announcements, etc.
- Set up tables and chairs so that they are arranged in small groups of 3-5 and facing the facilitator.
- Set out nametags and reviewed food records from previous session for participants to pick up when arriving.
- Post “Group Guidelines” developed in Session 1.
- Place 1-2 calculators for each small group table setting.
- Have blank food records available for participants to pick up at end of session.
- **Optional:** It may also be useful to write on board the topics coming up next week, and the facilitators name and contact information.

**What you will need for this session:**

- Pens
- Blank Food records
- Nametags
- Markers for writing on board and flipchart
- Container for collecting food records (to be reviewed by facilitator and returned following week)
- Flipchart
- Calculators
- Handouts for this session

**FACILITATOR NOTES**

1. Provide a 10-minute break sometime during the session
2. **Include a 30-minute Physical Activity Session** at beginning or end of group meeting
3. Before dismissing participants at the end of every session, affirm that EVERYONE has weighed.
4. Call any participant who did not attend (and had not already informed you of his or her absence).
CHECK-IN (30 MINUTES)
Discuss concerns, questions and progress from the previous week.
Share challenges and successes.

- Ask each participant to share at least one success and one challenge with exercise or eating well (either in the past week or since starting)
- Share and discuss in small groups first, about 5 minutes.
- Ask for volunteers to share with large group.
- Acknowledge group responses, successes and challenges/barriers. Remind participants that “check-in” is an opportunity to share in confidence with the group. Give positive reinforcement for the successes.

Suggested questions
- Last week, we reviewed the steps to problem solving. How did this process work for you over the last week?
- Let’s take a few minutes to walk through a couple of examples (ask 2-3 group members to volunteer their “problems” over the past week).

FACILITATOR NOTE
Building social support can be very helpful for participants. The objective of this session is to help participants identify their current social support network and/or make a plan for building a network beyond current group sessions.
PLANNING FOR SOCIAL SUPPORT (30 MINUTES)

- Discuss ways participants use their current social support network and the characteristics of a good support network.
- Brainstorm, list ideas, and discuss ways to increase and maintain current network.
- Brainstorm, list ideas, and discuss lifestyle activities that support people can be involved in (i.e. non-food activities that can be shared with others).
- Encourage all participants to share.

Suggested Activities:
- Break participants into smaller groups to discuss and list ideas, then share with the larger group.
- Facilitate discussion with all participants and write ideas on flipchart or white board at front of classroom.
- Encourage participants to complete the worksheet “Planning for Social Support” to identify people who could be part of their network of support.

Sample discussion approach

“People often benefit from some type of social support when they are trying to make changes. In fact, research has shown that social support makes a huge difference in helping people successfully lose weight. (Another key strategy is self-monitoring (or tracking what you eat) which you have also been doing over the last several months.) This week, let’s explore what makes a good social support system and start thinking about how you can maintain your social support systems once this group ends. How have support systems or people helped and encouraged you in your weight loss efforts? What specifically has been most helpful? What do you want or need in a support person to continue with your weight loss or maintenance goals?

Suggested questions to initiate discussion

- What does “social support” mean to you?
- How many of you use some kind of social support to help you with your goals?
- How have support people encouraged and helped you to problem solve?
- What situations caused you to seek social support?
- What kind of support do you need/use?
- What kind of characteristics would you look for in a support person?
- How could you increase and maintain your current support network?
- How might you discuss your goals with the people in your life?
- What are some lifestyle activities that a support person could be involved in?
- How can you get your friends and family involved in your weight loss efforts?
SEEKING AN EXERCISE BUDDY (15 MINUTES)

- Discuss activities the participants like to do or would like to begin doing.
- Ask participants look at the Social Support worksheet to identify someone on their list that they would be comfortable asking to be their exercise buddy.
- Discuss options for exercising in a group.

Sample answers to some of the suggested questions.

- What kind of characteristics would you look for in a support person?
  - Someone who is emotionally supportive (for example, someone you can talk to when you are discouraged).
  - Someone who encourages positive lifestyle behaviors (for example, someone who will walk with you or prepare a healthy meal for you).
  - Someone who is a good listener.
  - Someone who will be nonjudgmental (for example, someone who supports you for the changes you are trying to make, even if they are just small changes, instead of criticizing you or putting you down).
  - Any other characteristics they deem appropriate.

- How can you get your friends and family involved in your weight loss efforts?
  - Plan times to call or see support people.
  - Complement and thank them; appreciate them and be there for them if needed.
  - Involve support people in lifestyle change behavior e.g. meal planning, exercise partner, food shopping buddy, etc.
  - Ask for support when needed.
  - Any other suggestions mentioned.

- What are some lifestyle activities that a support person could be involved in?
  - Exercise together.
  - Plan meals together.
  - Food shop together.
  - Listen to or read progressive relaxation tapes/scripts.
  - “Play” together (go to a play or movie together instead of eating).
Suggested questions to initiate discussion

- What are the benefits of exercising with someone else? (Encouragement and motivation to stick to plan, social time, time goes by more quickly, etc.)
- How many of you like to exercise with a buddy?
- How many of you like to exercise in a group?

Sample discussion approach

"Some people have an easier time if they have a friend or buddy to exercise with or join an exercise group. How many of you like to exercise with a friend or buddy? What do you like about exercising with someone?

As you look at your list of people you have identified for social support, which one(s) could you ask to be your exercise “buddy”? Some of you may also prefer to join an exercise group. Who can share their experience with a group or give us some suggestions as to where people might start looking for a group to join?"
GOALS FOR NEXT WEEK (15 MINUTES)

Set goals for next week

- Setting goals and making plans for accomplishing goals is a key strategy for behavior change. Use this time for the participant to reflect on what they need to do as far as behavior change to accomplish their weight loss goal.
- The actual work of changing behaviors will happen outside of the group session, but writing down a plan will solidify commitment and sharing it with others often helps people stick to their plan.
- Give group 3-5 minutes to think about personal goals for the following week. Each person can have more than one goal. Be sure the goals are SMART goals as discussed in Session 2.
- Ask participants to consider the following areas:
  - One thing that you will do to be sure that social support continues after the group ends
  - One thing that you will do this week in planning ahead for social support
  - One thing you will do to maintain support in exercise

Share one goal with small group

- Divide group members into small groups and ask each person to share one goal with the rest of their small group.
- This is called a public goal or public challenge to help us be accountable to sticking to our goals. It also gives group members a chance to learn from and support each other.
- If time allows, ask for volunteers to share one of their goals with the entire group.

30-minute Physical Activity Session (if not included at beginning of group meeting)
Session 20: Beyond Triggers

1. Check-In (30 minutes)
   - Discuss concerns, questions and progress from the previous week.
   - Share at least one success.

2. Beyond Triggers and Managing Slips (30 minutes)
   - Introduce topic.
   - Define and discuss the stages of a lapse.
   - Share examples that demonstrate potentially risky habits and ask participants to identify potentially risky habits for themselves.

3. Exercising During Busy Times (15 minutes)
   - Facilitate a discussion on what participants can do to ensure that their exercise gets done.
   - Encourage participants to identify the best days and times for exercise, and to make an exercise appointment for themselves.

4. Goals for Next Week (15 minutes)
   - Set goals for next week
   - Share at least one goal with small group

Handouts for this session
Identifying My High-Risk Situations
My Personal Rules and Boundaries
At least 30 minutes **BEFORE** session begins:

- Write the agenda on board or flipchart at the beginning of each session.
- Write any additional notes with agenda – such as upcoming holidays, room changes, announcements, etc.
- Set up tables and chairs so that they are arranged in small groups of 3-5 and facing the facilitator.
- Set out nametags and reviewed food records from previous session for participants to pick up when arriving.
- Post “Group Guidelines” developed in Session 1.
- Place 1-2 calculators for each small group table setting.
- Have blank food records available for participants to pick up at end of session.
- **Optional:** It may also be useful to write on board the topics coming up next week, and the facilitators name and contact information.

**What you will need for this session:**

- Pens
- Blank Food records
- Nametags
- Markers for writing on board and flipchart
- Container for collecting food records (to be reviewed by facilitator and returned following week)
- Flipchart
- Calculators
- Handouts for this session

**FACILITATOR NOTES**

1. Provide a 5-minute break sometime during the session
2. **Include a 30-minute Physical Activity Session** at beginning or end of group meeting
3. Before dismissing participants at the end of every session, affirm that EVERYONE has weighed.
4. Call any participant who did not attend (and had not already informed you of his or her absence).
CHECK-IN (30 MINUTES)
Discuss concerns, questions and progress from the previous week.
Share at least one success

- Ask each participant to share at least one success with exercise or eating well (either in the past week or since starting)
- Share and discuss in small groups first, about 5 minutes.
- Ask for volunteers to share with large group.
- Acknowledge group responses, successes and challenges/barriers. Remind participants that “check-in” is an opportunity to share in confidence with the group. Give positive reinforcement for the successes.

Suggested questions to facilitate discussion:
- Last week we talked about planning for future social support.
- Who are some people of groups that could support you in your continued effort to lose weight (or maintain weight loss)?
- How could these people best help you? (e.g., help you with meal planning, go to the grocery store, exercise buddies etc.)?
- How can you ask for help? (or how do you feel about asking for help?) What are some things that could get in the way of asking for help?
BEYOND TRIGGERS (30 MINUTES)

• Introduce topic. Key points are:
  o Successful weight loss maintenance is to continue practicing the new behaviors which resulted in weight loss, such as self-monitoring (keeping food records, tracking sleep, etc.), staying active, and managing challenges in new ways.
  o It is important to know your high-risk situations and create a plan for handling them (urge control, distractions).
  o Slips are normal, and anticipating them can help participants handle high-risk situations when they arise.

• Define and discuss the stages of a lapse.
  - **Lapse**: small or insignificant slip (eating one piece of chocolate)
  - **Relapse**: series of lapses in which there is a return to old patterns of eating behavior (eating a piece of chocolate every day)
  - **Collapse**: when there is a total relapse with little hope of returning to healthy behavior.

• Share example that demonstrates potentially risky habits – that is when people slowly go back to the old habits that brought about an unhealthy weight in the first place. Ask participants to identify potentially risky habits for themselves.

Sample discussion approach

“...”

The people most likely to make successful long-term lifestyle changes are those who have the skills and confidence to do so. Maintenance is staying with all the factors that brought you success – like keeping food records, continuing to exercise, managing challenges in new ways, etc. Weight re-gain occurs when people slowly go back to the old habits that brought about an unhealthy weight in the first place. This is why it is important to create some boundaries and check-in systems to help you manage your eating habits. Unless we anticipate our high-risk areas and create some strategies for dealing with them, it is likely that we could slip back into old patterns. Let’s start with an example.”
Examples of high-risk situations, or falling back into the old habits that brought about an unhealthy weight.

1. You are in the habit of eating only half of a sandwich for lunch. One day at a group meeting, you are served a full sandwich and decide to eat it all. The next time you make your sandwich for lunch you get out two pieces of bread and make a whole sandwich. A few weeks go by and you are making a whole sandwich every day for lunch.

2. You’ve given up fast food while on your eating plan for weight loss. It has been months since you have stopped at a McDonald’s or Burger King, but you are on a road trip with your family and you decide that fast food is the easiest place for dinner. Before you know it, fast food is being consumed more regularly than before.

3. While losing weight, you allowed yourself one doughnut a week. You’ve had your doughnut for the week and walk into a meeting and decide that you can have another doughnut because you have been so good and your weight has been stable. The next thing you know, you are eating doughnuts several mornings a week and you notice that your clothes are getting tighter and harder to get on.

Suggested questions to facilitate discussion

- How many of you can relate to the situations we just reviewed?
- What are some of your own scenarios?
- What do you think are the major causes of a lapse? (Answers may be: life stressors, competing priorities, environmental influences, etc.)
- What might be a lapse for you? Relapse? Collapse?
- What might you do to prevent a relapse?
- What personal rules or boundaries have you created while losing weight?

“… I have always found that plans are useless, but planning is indispensable.” Dwight D. Eisenhower
OPTIONAL ACTIVITY, AS TIME PERMITS

Worksheet 1: Identifying My High-Risk Situations

1. Distribute and introduce worksheet.
2. In the first column, list old behaviors, habits or triggers that you think might creep back into your lifestyle. Participants may use food records to help identify high-risk foods and/or situations. They should think about certain times of day, convenience, places, moods/emotional states, and social situations.
3. In the second column, list strategies you have used in the past to deal with these triggers, habits or behaviors.
4. Circle one or two habits you are most concerned about resurfacing in the future.
5. In the last column, write down new strategies you will use to manage these behaviors.
6. Debrief as a group. Have three or four people summarize their plans. Make sure to highlight their strategies for prevention.

Worksheet 2: My Personal Rules and Boundaries for Lifelong Success

The purpose of this worksheet is to help us develop our rules or boundaries for the identified situations or foods, or to simply keep us on track.

1. Have participants complete the form and share it in their small groups.
2. Debrief: Have a few participants share one rule or boundary they’ve set for themselves.
3. Summarize and encourage participants to post their rules up somewhere they will be seen often.
EXERCISING DURING BUSY TIMES (15 MINUTES)

- Facilitate a discussion on what participants can do to ensure that their exercise gets done.
- Encourage participants to identify the best days and times for exercise, and to make an exercise appointment for themselves.

Sample discussion approach

“We’ve talked a lot about strategies for managing slips in your eating habits. One strategy you may use to keep yourself on track is exercise. Planning when you are going to exercise in advance really helps make sure it gets done. Just like making a doctor’s appointment, scheduling your exercise can help you take the time to actually do it.”

Suggested questions to facilitate discussion

- Why is it so important to get your exercise during these times? (burn more calories, keep up with your routine, helps you stay on track, etc.)
- What challenges might make exercise more difficult? (holidays or special events are a busy time, etc.)
- What can you do during busy times to make sure you meet your exercise goals? (plan ahead, schedule their exercise, walk with a friend, etc.)
GOALS FOR NEXT WEEK (15 MINUTES)

Decide on goals for next week

- Setting goals and making plans for accomplishing goals is a key strategy for behavior change. Use this time for the participant to reflect on what they need to do as far as behavior change to maintain their weight loss.
- Writing down a plan and sharing with others can help to solidify the commitment. Give group members 3-5 minutes to think about their personal goals for the upcoming week. Encourage writing the goals in the FFR.
- Each person can have more than one goal, as long as they are SMART. At least one goal should relate to creating a plan to minimize high-risk situations, or setting personal boundaries for maintenance.

Share one goal with small group

- Divide group members into small groups and ask each person to share one goal with the rest of their small group.
- This is called a public goal or public challenge to help us be accountable to sticking to our goals. It also gives group members a chance to learn from and support each other.
- If time allows, ask for volunteers to share one of their goals with the entire group.

30-minute Physical Activity Session (if not included at beginning of group meeting)
Session 21: Managing Plateaus

1. Check-in (30 minutes)
   - Discuss concerns, questions and progress from the previous week.

2. Managing Plateaus (45 minutes)
   - Define “plateau.” How do you know if you’ve reached a plateau?
   - Discuss the emotional, physical, and behavioral effects of a plateau.
   - Brainstorm and discuss strategies for managing plateaus.
   - Review the steps of problem solving

3. Goals for Next Week (15 minutes)
   - Set goals for next week

Handouts for this session
Determining basic calorie needs
Problem solving (review)
At least 30 minutes **BEFORE** session begins:

- Write the agenda on board or flipchart at the beginning of each session.
- Write any additional notes with agenda – such as upcoming holidays, room changes, announcements, etc.
- Set up tables and chairs so that they are arranged in small groups of 3-5 and facing the facilitator.
- Set out nametags and reviewed food records from previous session for participants to pick up when arriving.
- Post “Group Guidelines” developed in Session 1.
- Place 1-2 calculators for each small group table setting.
- Have blank food records available for participants to pick up at end of session.
- **Optional:** It may also be useful to write on board the topics coming up next week, and the facilitators name and contact information.

**What you will need for this session:**

- Pens
- Blank food records
- Nametags
- Markers for writing on board and flipchart
- Container for collecting food records (to be reviewed by facilitator and returned following week)
- Flipchart
- Calculators
- Handouts for this session

**FACILITATOR NOTES**

1. Provide a 5-minute break sometime during the session.
2. **Include a 30-minute Physical Activity Session** at beginning or end of group meeting.
3. Before dismissing participants at the end of every session, affirm that everyone has weighed.
4. Call any participant who did not attend (and had not already informed you of his or her absence).
CHECK-IN (30 MINUTES)
Discuss concerns, questions and progress from the previous week.

- Allow the discussion to be a time to ask questions or share concerns about participant’s individual progress, and challenges or successes from the previous week.
- Ask each participant to share at least one success with exercise or eating well (either in the past week or since starting)
- (optional) Share and discuss in small groups first, about 5 minutes.
- Ask for volunteers to share with large group.
- Acknowledge group responses, successes and challenges/barriers. Remind participants that “check-in” is an opportunity to share in confidence with the group. Give positive reinforcement for the successes.

Suggested questions to facilitate discussion
- What questions do you have about last week’s session about triggers?
- What kinds of triggers did you notice over the past week?
- What did you do about them?
- How can you plan for future triggers?

MANAGING PLATEAUS (45 MINUTES)
Define a “plateau” and discuss the characteristics that define a plateau.

- A “plateau” is defined as a period of time (more than 3 weeks) in which you have not lost or gained weight, AND you are making an “active attempt” to lose weight through calorie reduction and/or exercise.
  - If you are continuing to lose small amounts of weight (such as ½ pound or so per week), then you are not in a plateau even though your weight loss may be slower than before.
  - An “active attempt” to weight loss means cutting 500 calories a day from your daily basic needs by eating less and/or exercising more.
Suggested questions to initiate discussion

- What do you think is a plateau in weight loss?
- How would you define a plateau?
- How many of you feel like you are currently in (or have recently experienced) a plateau?

Sample discussion approach

“It's not unusual, after several months of hard work on a weight loss and exercise plan, to get “stuck” at a certain weight for several weeks. How many of you feel like you are currently in (or have recently experienced) a plateau? How do (did) you know?

A plateau is usually defined as going for several weeks without a change in your weight (loss or gain), even though you are still actively trying to lose weight. As you may have already noticed, no one has the exact same results or weight loss journey as another person because our bodies and experiences are unique. And, as we talk about plateaus, there's no clear prediction as to if or when it might happen. Yet, the strategies for changing a plateau can be useful advice to everyone.”

The challenges and/or effects of a plateau

- Hitting a plateau can be very discouraging and may decrease your motivation when you no longer see weight changes even though you continue to work at your diet and exercise.
- Losing motivation may result in relapse or returning to old behaviors because you no longer see your new behaviors working.
- So, if you find yourself in a plateau, what can you do?
Strategies for changing a plateau

- Reassess your calorie needs. As your body weight decreases, so do your calorie needs. A lower weight needs fewer calories to run the machine. [refer to handout on determining caloric needs]

- Review your weight loss goals (both short-term and long-term).
  - Do you need to lose more weight or have you already reached your “maintenance” weight?
  - If you need to lose more weight, are your weight loss goals realistic?
  - Is the timeframe for achieving your goals realistic?
  - Why or why not?

- Create a deficit of 500 calories below your maintenance calories to keep the body’s metabolism running efficiently while also providing for basic energy needs.

- Do not drop your daily calories below your basic energy needs. When this occurs, the body goes into “starvation reflex” resulting in the metabolism working less efficiently because the body will hold onto every calorie to keep the body running.

- The basic rule to change a plateau is to change your routine. Make a change to your current routine, both in eating and physical activity, so that your body will have to work a little harder to readapt.

Sample discussion approach

“When you find yourself in a plateau what should you do? Any ideas or thoughts?

An important idea to keep in mind is that as you lose weight, your calorie needs may also decrease because a smaller body weight needs fewer calories than a larger body weight. We will take some time in a moment to calculate an estimate of how many calories you may need to maintain your current weight. If you want to continue to lose pounds, then try to create a deficit of 500 calories per day below your maintenance calories. It is important to not let your daily calorie intake drop too low.

However, in changing the plateau effect, the rule of thumb is to change your routine. If you have been doing the same thing for weeks because it worked before, then change your routine and encourage your body to work a little hard to readapt. For example, if you always eat 1 cup of oatmeal for breakfast, try eating ¾ c. If you always walk 30 minutes in the morning, try walking 20 minutes in the morning and 20 minutes in the evening (40 minutes total).
Examples of Strategies or Changes That One Can Make

1. **Exercise**
   As you exercise regularly, you get in better shape and may need to boost your routine to burn more calories.
   - Pick up the pace - increase the intensity of your exercise.
   - Add more minutes - exercise a bit longer.
   - Break up your single daily exercise episode into two daily workouts.
   - Add strength training a few times a week.
   - Change your routine – If you walk a lot, try jogging or swimming.

2. **Calories**
   - Zig-Zag Calorie Intake: Zig-zagging, or calorie cycling, is the process of varying daily calorie intake while maintaining the same weekly intake (or average daily intake. Instead of consuming exactly 1500 calories per day, vary from day to day. Eat 1400 calories one day, and 1600 the next.
   - Confirm that your calories are at a desirable level for gradual weight loss.
   - Change meal frequency. If you are eating three large meals a day, start eating three smaller meals and add a couple light snacks in between.

3. **Body Composition**
   - Since muscle weighs more than fat, building a lot of muscle through exercise could cause an occasional person to stop losing weight and even gain some weight. Keep track of body inches as well as scale weight. You will get a much more accurate picture of your progress.
   - Stay active to help build up your lean, mean, calorie-burning muscles.
   - Different types of physical activities may help you develop different muscle groups.

4. **Motivation**
   The enthusiasm, motivation, and momentum of the honeymoon period of losing weight often lulls, and unknowingly, we let down our guard over time. Keep your motivation going by:
   - Reviewing your accomplishments.
   - Renewing your commitment to weight loss and improved health.
   - Reaffirming what motivated you to start this program.
   - Rewarding yourself regularly for how far you’ve come.

5. **Medical Problems/Medications**
   Although rare and unlikely, medical problems, such as glandular disorders, and certain medications, such as corticosteroids can affect weight. See your health care provider if
you suspect a medication or a medical condition is interfering with your weight management progress.

GOALS FOR NEXT WEEK (15 MINUTES)

Decide on goals for next week

- Setting goals and making plans for accomplishing goals is a key strategy for behavior change. Encourage participants to use this time to reflect on what behaviors they want to change to continue (or maintain) their weight loss.

- Writing down goals and sharing them with others can help to solidify the commitment. Give group members 3-5 minutes to think about their personal goals for the upcoming week.

- Each person can have more than one goal, as long as they are SMART.

- Encourage participants to develop at least one strategy that they will use in the event of a plateau. These strategies are also very useful in turning a predictable routine into a more interesting practice.

Share your goals

- Ask participants to volunteer to share one of their goals with the larger group.

- This is called a public goal or public challenge to help us be accountable to sticking to our goals. It also gives group members a chance to learn from and support each other.

30-minute Physical Activity Session (if not included at beginning of group meeting)
Session 22: Exercising to Maintain Weight Loss

1. Check-In (30 minutes)
   - Discuss concerns, questions and progress from the previous week.

2. Exercising to Maintain Weight Loss (45 minutes)
   - Introduce National Weight Control Registry
   - Discuss the recommendations of the Weight Control Registry
   - Lead a discussion about maintaining an exercise routine when the group sessions come to an end
   - Discuss calendars as a planning tool for exercise

3. Goals for Next Week (15 minutes)
   - Decide and write goals for next week

Handouts for this session

National Weight Control Registry Facts
(This gets updated periodically, be sure to have the most current info,
www.nwcr.ws/Research/default.htm)
At least 30 minutes **BEFORE** session begins:

- Write the agenda on board or flipchart at the beginning of each session.
- Write any additional notes with agenda – such as upcoming holidays, room changes, announcements, etc.
- Set up tables and chairs so that they are arranged in small groups of 3-5 and facing the facilitator.
- Set out nametags and reviewed food records from previous session for participants to pick up when arriving.
- Post “Group Guidelines” developed in Session 1.
- Place 1-2 calculators for each small group table setting.
- Have blank food records available for participants to pick up at end of session.
- **Optional:** It may also be useful to write on board the topics coming up next week, and the facilitators name and contact information.

**What you will need for this session:**

- Pens
- Blank food records
- Nametags
- Markers for writing on board and flipchart
- Container for collecting food records (to be reviewed by facilitator and returned following week)
- Flipchart
- Calculators
- Handouts for this session

**FACILITATOR NOTES**

1. Provide a 5-minute break sometime during the classroom session.
2. **Include a 30-minute Physical Activity Session** at beginning or end of group meeting
3. Before dismissing participants at the end of every session, affirm that EVERYONE has been weighed.
4. Call any participant who did not attend (and had not already informed you of his or her absence).

**CHECK-IN (30 MINUTES)**

Discuss concerns, questions and progress from the previous week.
• Write check-in questions for all to see when they arrive.
• Discuss questions in small groups first.
• Ask for volunteers to share check-in responses in large group.
• Acknowledge group responses, successes and challenges/barriers. Explain that “check-in” is an opportunity to share in confidence with the group. Allow other participants to contribute strategies for overcoming the barriers. Give positive reinforcement for the successes.
• Remind participants that it’s important to be aware of what works and what doesn’t work when developing new patterns and habits.

**Exercising to maintain weight loss 20 minutes**

Exercise is an essential component in maintaining weight loss and in avoiding regaining weight in the future. Many people who successfully lose weight and keep it off use a combination of diet and exercise.

Handout “The National Weight Control Registry” and discuss it with the group.

The National Weight Control Registry (NWCR) was created when scientists decided to look at weight loss from a different angle by studying characteristics of people who had successfully lost weight (at least 30 pounds) and maintained their weight loss for over a year.
NWCR Fast Facts:

- Successful weight losers (n=6000) report making substantial changes in eating and exercise habits to lose weight and maintain their losses. Approximately 90% use diet AND exercise.

- The average registrant has lost approximately 70 pounds and has maintained that loss for roughly 6 years. One-eighth of them have kept the weight off for 10 years.

- Two-thirds of these successful weight losers were overweight as children and 60% report a family history of obesity.

- Over 90% of participants tried to lose weight at least once before their successful attempt.

- More than half of the participants did it on their own.

- Walking is the most frequently cited physical activity performed by NWCR members.

The recommendations below are based on the findings from the NWCR.

1. Eat a low-calorie, low-fat diet.

2. Eat a consistent diet from day to day.

3. Eat breakfast and small frequent meals (4-5 times per day).

4. Be physically active on a regular basis: 60 minutes per day or 11,000 to 12,000 steps on a pedometer daily.

5. Weigh regularly – once a week.

6. Limit TV to less than 10 hours per week.

7. If a small amount of weight is regained, it stops there. People go back to the basics - food records, increased activity, social support, etc.
As you can see for those who have been successful in maintaining weight loss, eating a healthy diet and exercising regularly are very important.

Questions to initiate discussion

- Based on what you have learned in this program what do you think of the seven recommendations from the weight loss control registry?
- Do they seem reasonable and achievable?
- What items on the list seem like they might be challenging to maintain?
- What items do you think be easier for each of you to maintain?

Number 7 is especially important because it reminds us that if we start regaining weight we can go back to the basic elements that helped us lose weight in this group.

1. Use social support and accountability. You may not be in this group any longer but you can utilize the support of friends and family in a similar way.
2. If you stopped keeping food records, go back to it. Keeping track of what and how much you eat will help you get back on track.
3. Regular exercise as we have discussed before can aid you in many areas of your life better sleep, more energy, better cardiovascular health in addition to helping you lose weight.

Allow time for group discussion on the findings and suggestions of the National Weight Control Registry.
Lead a discussion about maintaining an exercise routine when the group sessions come to an end (10-15 minutes).

1. First ask: During the past few months, what has helped you meet your exercise goals? Planning ahead, walking with a friend, etc. Summarize.

2. On a blank flipchart, draw a line down the center to create two columns.

3. Ask participants: “Now, when you think about maintaining your exercise routine, what are some things in your life that you feel might get in the way? What are potential barriers for you? In the past, what has gotten in the way?” Busy schedule, lack of time, family obligations, weather, boredom, etc.

4. List participant barriers in the first column on the flipchart.

5. Identify prevention strategies and solutions for overcoming barriers.
   a. As a group, go through each identified barrier and brainstorm solutions and prevention strategies.
   b. List potential strategies and solutions for each barrier in the second column.

6. Summarize the discussion so far.

7. Ask: What are some safeguards to ensure you get your exercise? What are some rules or boundaries you can create for yourself regarding your exercise? (Participant action plan.
   a. Participants pick two barriers pertinent to them and create their own plan for dealing with these situations.
   b. Have participants pair up and discuss their plans.
   c. Debrief as a group – have two to three people discuss their plans.
   d. Encourage participants to find activities that they enjoy.

Calendars as a planning tool (10-15 minutes)

1. Introduce activity
   “Looking at your schedule in advance and anticipating days when exercise might be challenging can help us make sure we do exercise on the less hectic days. We are providing you with several months’ worth of calendars so you can plan your exercise around your schedule. We don’t expect you to be able to plan six months out, but it is possible to look at the next few weeks and begin creating your plan to exercise at least 180 minutes each week.”

2. Distribute calendars

3. Use ____’s (month) calendar for our activity today.

4. Using your personal calendar, transfer any meetings, appointments, late work days, travel plans, special events, etc., onto the planning calendar we provided.

5. Now, looking at your schedule, which days will work best for exercise? What time? Begin to write in your exercise plans like you would any other appointment in your
schedule. If you prefer to use your smart phone or personal calendar, I encourage you to transfer your scheduled exercise times into that calendar.


Goals for Next Week (15 minutes)

Set goals for next week
- Setting goals and making plans for accomplishing goals is a key strategy for behavior change. Use this time for the participant to reflect on what they need to do as far as behavior change to accomplish their weight loss goal.
- The actual work of changing behaviors will happen outside of the group session, but writing down a plan will solidify commitment and sharing it with others often helps people stick to their plan.
- Give group 3-5 minutes to think about personal goals for the following week.
- Each person can have more than one goal. Be sure the goals are SMART goals as discussed in Session 2. At least one goal should relate to adding conscious eating strategies into their lifestyle.

Share one goal with small group
- Divide group members into small groups and ask each person to share one goal with the rest of their small group.
- This is called a public goal or public challenge to help us be accountable to sticking to our goals. It also gives group members a chance to learn from and support each other.
- If time allows, ask for volunteers to share one of their goals with the entire group.

30-minute Physical Activity Session (if not included at beginning of group meeting)
Session 23: Planning for Changes in Mental Health Status

1. Check-In (30 minutes)
   - Discuss concerns, questions and progress from the previous week.

2. Planning for Changes in Mental Health Status (45 minutes)
   - Have participants discuss possible barriers to maintaining diet and exercise changes while struggling with changes in mental health status.
   - Hand out “Planning Ahead for Changes in Mental Health Status” and allow time for discussion.
   - Hand out “My Plan for Maintaining Physical Health During Changes in Mental Health Status” and allow time for discussion.

3. Goals for Next Week (15 minutes)
   - Decide and write goals for next week

Handouts for this session
My Plan for Maintaining Physical Health during Changes in Mental Health Status
Planning Ahead for Changes in Mental Health Status
At least 30 minutes **BEFORE** session begins:

⇒ Write the agenda on board or flipchart at the beginning of each session.

⇒ Write any additional notes with agenda – such as upcoming holidays, room changes, announcements, etc.

⇒ Set up tables and chairs so that they are arranged in small groups of 3-5 and facing the facilitator.

⇒ Set out nametags and reviewed food records from previous session for participants to pick up when arriving.

⇒ Post “Group Guidelines” developed in Session 1.

⇒ Place 1-2 calculators for each small group table setting.

⇒ Have blank food records available for participants to pick up at end of session.

⇒ **Optional:** It may also be useful to write on board the topics coming up next week, and the facilitators name and contact information.

**What you will need for this session:**

- Pens
- Blank food records
- Nametags
- Markers for writing on board and flipchart
- Container for collecting food records (to be reviewed by facilitator and returned following week)
- Flipchart
- Calculators
- Handouts for this session

**FACILITATOR NOTES**

1. Provide a 5-minute break sometime during the classroom session.

2. **Include a 30-minute Physical Activity Session** at beginning or end of group meeting

3. Before dismissing participants at the end of every session, affirm that EVERYONE has been weighed.

4. Call any participant who did not attend (and had not already informed you of his or her absence).
CHECK-IN (30 MINUTES)
Discuss concerns, questions and progress from the previous week.

- Write check-in questions for all to see when they arrive.
- Discuss questions in small groups first.
- Ask for volunteers to share check-in responses in large group.
- Acknowledge group responses, successes and challenges/barriers. Explain that “check-in” is an opportunity to share in confidence with the group. Allow other participants to contribute strategies for overcoming the barriers. Give positive reinforcement for the successes.
- Remind participants that it’s important to be aware of what works and what doesn’t work when developing new patterns and habits.

Planning ahead for possible changes in mental health status
NOTE TO THERAPIST: By design, the content of this session is less than previous sessions. Rather than being primarily psycho-educational in nature, this session is designed to be a process session. This session is meant to help participants anticipate barriers to maintaining healthy changes in diet and exercise during episodes of mental illness or recovery and create solutions for such situations.

Changes in mental health status can be very stressful and recovery can take a lot of effort and time. Today we would like to spend some time planning ahead for possible changes in your mental health status and creating strategies to help you maintain healthier eating and exercise patterns during these periods.

Let’s begin by identifying some of the benefits of having a plan and staying on track with healthy diet and physical activity throughout episodes of mental illness.

Generate list of benefits on flipchart. (Possible benefits to generate ideas are: feel physically healthier, have more energy when depressed, not as hard as getting back on track later, etc.)

So there appear to be a number of benefits to maintaining your diet and exercise even during tough times.

What are some of the barriers to maintaining healthy eating and physical fitness when you’re not feeling mentally fit?

Generate list of barriers on flipchart. (Possible barriers to generate ideas are: requires more energy, don’t feel like it, not organized enough, etc.)

*The goal of this exercise is to acknowledge and honor these very realistic barriers. Many people will have had failed experiences of trying to take better care of themselves during mental illness. Group leaders should allow sufficient time for participants to process the frustration that accompanies these failures without feeling the need to address these barriers.*
So there appear to be a number of reasons it’s tough to be healthy when you’re in an episode of mental illness. These are very real. Despite these barriers we all agree that the benefits of accomplishing this are also very real.

*It is essential to end this exercise by summarizing the benefits rather than ending on the reasons participants might fail at maintenance during times when mental health symptoms could interfere with changes they have made.*

To be successful in maintaining changes to your diet and exercise it is important to plan ahead for situations that might make maintenance more difficult.

**Questions to initiate discussion**

1. Would anyone be willing to share changes they have seen in their eating habits that occur during periods when they have experienced difficulties due to their mental illness?
2. How do your eating habits change specifically?
   a. Do you eat larger portions? More comfort foods?
   b. Do you skip meals, and then overeat later?
   c. Do you eat more meals than usual?
3. What happens to your activity level?
   a. Do you exercise or move your body less?

**Hand out “Planning Ahead for Changes in Mental Health Status”**

Allow participants some time to complete the questions on the handout. ~10 minutes

Have participants split up into groups of 4-5. Ask participants to share their answers on the handout with each other (only if they feel comfortable doing so). Allow 10-15 for small group discussion.

Once back in the larger group ask if them if they noticed some common patterns in their discussions. Write up any common or recurring themes on a flipchart. Have group members brainstorm solutions for maintaining diet and exercise patterns during a change in mental health status. List solutions on a flipchart. Allow time for group discussion.

**Hand out “My Plan for Maintaining Physical Health During Changes in Mental Health Status”**

Here is an exercise to help you plan ahead for times when your mental health could present a challenge to maintaining healthy eating and exercise habits.

Ask participants to spend some time completing a custom plan that they can access during a change in mental health status. They may not have enough time to complete this handout in session.
GOALS FOR NEXT WEEK (15 MINUTES)

Set goals for next week

- Setting goals and making plans for accomplishing goals is a key strategy for behavior change. Use this time for the participant to reflect on what they need to do as far as behavior change to accomplish their weight loss goal.

- The actual work of changing behaviors will happen outside of the group session, but writing down a plan will solidify commitment and sharing it with others often helps people stick to their plan.

- Give group 3-5 minutes to think about personal goals for the following week.

- Each person can have more than one goal. Be sure the goals are SMART goals as discussed in Session 2. At least one goal should relate to adding conscious eating strategies into their lifestyle.

Share one goal with small group

- Divide group members into small groups and ask each person to share one goal with the rest of their small group.

- This is called a public goal or public challenge to help us be accountable to sticking to our goals. It also gives group members a chance to learn from and support each other.

- If time allows, ask for volunteers to share one of their goals with the entire group.

30-minute Physical Activity Session (use this time to instruct participants in using resistance bands and allowing them to try some of the suggested exercises)
Session 24: Celebrating Accomplishments

Agenda

Note: This final session of the STRIDE program may be tailored based on the optional activities chosen by the participants (see options listed in Session 23). The purpose of this session is to celebrate accomplishments, share future goals, and discuss any concerns for the maintenance phase.

1. Open (15 minutes)
   - Refreshments and socializing, if potluck included

2. Celebrating Accomplishments (45 minutes)
   - Discuss concerns, questions and progress from the previous week.
   - Share the group’s overall progress data
   - Reflections on program experience
   - Shared activity to recognize achievements during the past 6 months

3. Next Steps (30 minutes)
   - Reflections on final weekly meeting
   - Planning for support for your weight maintenance (or management) plan
At least 30 minutes **BEFORE** session begins:

- Write the agenda on board or flipchart at the beginning of each session.
- Write any additional notes with agenda – such as upcoming holidays, room changes, announcements, etc.
- Set up tables and chairs so that they are arranged in small groups of 3-5 and facing the facilitator.
- Set out nametags and reviewed food records from previous session for participants to pick up when arriving.
- Place 1-2 calculators for each small group table setting.
- Have blank food records available for participants to pick up at end of session.

**What you will need for this session:**

- Pens
- Nametags
- Markers for writing on board and flipchart
- Flipchart
- Calculators
- Handouts or items needed for optional activities

**FACILITATOR NOTES**

1. Provide a 5-minute break sometime during the session
2. **Include a 30-minute Physical Activity Session** at beginning or end of group meeting
3. Before dismissing participants at the end of every session, affirm that EVERYONE has weighed.
4. Call any participant who did not attend (and had not already informed you of his or her absence).
Open Gathering (15 minutes)
- Refreshments (optional) and socializing
- Prepare for selected closure activity or activities

Celebrate Accomplishments (45 minutes)
- Discuss concerns, questions and progress from the previous week.
- Share the group's overall progress data.
- Reflections on program experience
- Shared activity to recognize achievements during the past 6 months (See list of possible activities in Session 23)

Sample discussion approach
“This is our last weekly session together and it may feel bittersweet. This is a common sentiment and made up of our individual and collective experiences over the last 6 months. Let’s start by taking some time to reflect on this 24-session journey together. We’ll talk about how you felt when you joined the study, your experience to this point, any next steps, and saying goodbye.”

Suggested questions
- How are you feeling today (about our last session)?
- Are there any questions from last week’s topic?
- What is one change that you’ve made in the past 6 months for the positive?
- What worked? What didn’t work?

Reflections on the beginning
1. ASK: Where were you when you started STRIDE? How did you feel? What were you thinking? Why did you join? What was going on in your life at the time? What was that first meeting/first few meetings like?
2. Write a list on flipchart or dry erase board
3. Review List. What do you think about this list? What comments stand out?
Reflections on the process

1. ASK: What has the process and weekly sessions been like for you? What came up along the way? What has changed? What did you learn about yourself?
2. Write a list on flipchart or dry erase board
3. Review List. What do you think about this list? What comments stand out?

Next Steps (30 minutes)

- Reflections on final weekly meeting
- Planning for support for your weight maintenance (or management) plan
- Ask each person to share one thing that they will take with them into the next 6 months or year.

Suggested questions

- How are you feeling about this part of the program coming to a close?
- How did you feel about coming to this last session?
- What do you want to make sure to take with you into your next steps?
- What's your plan for continuing/maintaining your progress?
- What has worked for you that you want to continue doing, and how are you going to make sure that happens?
- What problems do you anticipate? How will you deal with these? Who can support you?
Monthly Maintenance Sessions 25-30

Agenda

1. Check-In (30 minutes)
   - Discuss concerns, questions and progress from the previous week.

2. Establish an agenda for remainder of meeting
   - Using cues from the check-in, determine what topics to review from Sessions 1-24

3. Session Topic(s) (45 minutes)
   - Review materials and handouts from Sessions 1-24 according to participant needs

4. Goals for Next Month (15 minutes)
   - Decide and write goals for next month
   - Encourage participants to share at least one goal with the other participants

5. Group Physical Activity

Handouts for this session
Refer to handouts from previous sessions as appropriate
At least 30 minutes **BEFORE** session begins:

- Write the agenda on board or flip chart.
- Write any additional notes with agenda – such as upcoming holidays, room changes, announcements, etc.
- Set up tables and chairs so that they are arranged in small groups of 3-5, and facing the facilitator.
- Post “Group Guidelines” developed in session 1.
- **Optional:** It may also be useful to write the facilitators name and contact information on the board.

**What you will need for this session:**

- Pens
- Blank Food records (OPTIONAL for participants during maintenance)
- Nametags
- Markers for writing on board and flip chart
- Flip Chart

**FACILITATOR NOTES:**

5. Provide a 10 minute break sometime during the session
6. Before dismissing participants at the end of every session, affirm that EVERYONE has weighed in.
7. Call any participant who did not attend (and had not already informed you of their absence.)

**CHECK-IN/PROGRESS CHECK**

- Allow each participant an opportunity to check-in with the group.
- Since maintenance sessions only meet monthly, be sure to allow ample time for group members to share how things have been over the past month.
- Acknowledge group responses (both successes/progress and challenges/barriers).
- Offer positive reinforcement for the successes.
- Allow other participants to contribute strategies for overcoming the barriers.

**Sample discussion approach:**

“Since it has been a month since we last met, let’s spend some time checking in and talking about how things have gone for you. What are the things that have gone well? How about the things you found most challenging? Were you able to stay motivated? What helped you stay focused? What got in the way?”
MAINTENANCE SESSION TOPICS

The following is a suggested outline of session content for the maintenance sessions (the interventionist will refer to prior sessions for specific content):

- **Session 25** – Review and Discussion of Problem Solving and SMART Goals (Sessions 2 and 7)
- **Session 26** – Review and Discussion of Portion Control (Sessions 3 and 14)
- **Session 27** – Review and Practice of Reading Food Labels and Dining Out (Sessions 16 and 17)
- **Session 28** – Review of Physical Activity (Sessions 1 and 22)
- **Session 29** – Review and Discussion of Support Systems for Weight Loss Maintenance (Sessions 9 and 19)
- **Session 30** – Relapse Prevention (Triggers and Plateaus: Sessions 20 and 21) and Final Reflections (Session 24)

However, the interventionists are highly encouraged to substitute appropriate session content/handouts from any prior session, based upon the following:

- The needs and interests of the group (as determined by check-in)
- Seasonally relevant topics (planning for the holidays, maintaining physical activity during adverse weather, etc.)

GOALS FOR NEXT MONTH (15 MINUTES)

Decide on goals for next week

- Setting goals and making plans for accomplishing goals is a key strategy for behavior change. Use this time for the participant to reflect on what they need to do as far as behavior change to accomplish their weight maintenance goal.
- The actual work of changing behaviors will happen outside of the group session. Writing down a plan and sharing with others can help to solidify commitment.
- Give participants 3-5 minutes to think about their personal goals for the following week.
- Each person can have more than 1 goal as long as they are SMART (as discussed in session 2).
- At least one goal should relate to today’s session topic.

Share 1 goal with small group

- Divide participants into small groups and ask each person to share one goal with the rest of the small group.
- This is called a public goal or public challenge to help us be accountable to sticking to our goals. It also gives members a chance to learn from and support one another.
- If time allows, ask for volunteers to share 1 goal with the entire group.
- The interventionist may want to record a summary of participants’ goals for use in follow-up email/telephone individual sessions.

30 minute Physical Activity Session (if not included at beginning of group meeting)
Monthly Phone Maintenance Sessions

Maintenance Session phone calls are intended to be a brief check-in to ask group members how things are going with goals they may have set at the last group meeting, and how they feel they are doing more generally with weight loss, food records, and exercise changes. Ideally monthly phone contact sessions would come midway between each monthly session.

Suggested questions for phone maintenance sessions with members who have had past success but are having a difficult time with weight or other lifestyle changes

- How have things been going since your last group meeting?
- Where are you at with your weight loss goals? Are you currently gaining weight? Losing weight? Or just maintaining?
- Have you had any successes since our last meeting? With exercise, portion control, food records, increased fruits and vegetables even if you haven’t seen any weight loss?
- Are there any tools or strategies that have worked for at some point in this program to lose weight or improve your diet, or get more exercise? What are the current barriers to restarting that strategy?
- Do you have a goal that you would like to achieve between now and our next monthly meeting?

Suggested questions for members who have lost weight and are maintaining or even losing weight

- Where are you at with your weight loss goal right now? Are you maintaining your weight? Still losing weight? Or have you noticed some weight gain since our last meeting?
- What are currently doing to lose weight or maintain your weight?
- If you have noticed some weight gain, what do you think has changed since our last meeting that may be contributing to the increased weight? Are there strategies you have stopped using that worked in the past?
- Do you have a goal that you would like to achieve between now and our next monthly meeting?
Suggested questions for members who have had little or no success thus far in losing weight, getting more exercise or making dietary changes

- How have things been going since our last group meeting with goals you set for yourself in this program?
  - “You have learned a lot of tools and strategies in this program for losing weight and improving health. Sometimes we learn lots of information about making lifestyle changes but we just weren’t in a place where we can put it into practice. You may find that there will come a time during the program or even after, where you feel better or have more motivation or more time to put toward making lifestyle changes. You will then be able to use the skills and knowledge that you learn in this program to lose weight and improve your health.”

- Are there any tools or strategies from this program that you think you could start or restart using this month? Things like focusing on portion control or keeping food records (even very simple ones), or eating a good breakfast every day or increasing the amount of fruits, vegetables and fiber you eat etc.?

- Do you have a goal that you would like to achieve between now and our next monthly meeting?
References


