

## **Mindset for Weight Loss Manual**

“I want to lose fifteen pounds. I want to be able to fit into my old swimsuit. I want to be ready for the upcoming family reunion. I want to be able to fit into my wedding dress. I want to feel confident with my body around my friends this summer. I need to lose weight, so I can be happier.”

These are all desires I have heard numerous times throughout my career as a personal trainer. There is always this nagging inclination to lose weight, to look better, and to feel confident when we look in the mirror.

I get that. I experience that daily, we just have to discover how to turn our “wants” into actions and results.

### **Why is this such a common struggle?**

Life has many struggles and distractions that slow us down, but I believe that with some proper self-control, we can overcome these issues.

I want to give you a few tips that I believe will help you achieve your desired body... or be confident with the one you have.

### **Developing a Purpose Statement (Your “Why”):**

As a trainer, it is expected that I am in “shape”. I must look the part. I developed my “why” years ago, which has helped me stay consistent and focused with my health and in turn help with this expectation. Without my purpose statement, my dedication to my health would not be as strong. Think of your purpose statement as a mental signpost that keeps you going down the path towards the health and self-image you have always fantasized about.

I dream of having children. And when that time comes, I want to be physically fit enough to be active with my children. As I get older, I do not want to be the father that has to make excuses regarding why I cannot play basketball or soccer with my kids. This requires a proactive approach to my physical well-being. This is my PURPOSE STATEMENT!

Developing a purpose statement will greatly benefit you along your weight loss journey. It should be written down, shared with your spouse, your family, or a close friend. It should be looked upon daily. It will be what pushes you when the last thing you want to do is exercise.

This purpose statement is something that should MOTIVATE and INSPIRE you!

Look beyond the number on the scale and dig deep. Why do you REALLY want this?

Maybe you were bullied as a child or you don't want to follow in the unhealthy steps of your parents. It could be that you want to set an example of healthy living for your family or prove to yourself that you are capable of achieving your fitness goals that have been nagging at you.

Whatever it is, does it give you strength when your energy is low, when you are craving junk food, when you don't want to do another rep or set foot in the gym? Your purpose statement will keep you focused and grounded, giving you the motivation that you need to push past the numerous obstacles that will try to hold you back.

Once you have discovered your purpose statement, then you are ready to start your weight loss journey!

### **Setting Up Realistic Goals/Habits:**

People tend to set very high expectations for themselves, and when they fail to live up to those expectations they experience defeat and discouragement.

Ask yourselves, what are some realistic goals for your weight loss journey?

If you set a goal to lose twenty pounds in a month, do you believe that is realistic for you? Or, if you set a goal to completely give up your favorite dessert indefinitely, do you think it will be difficult to grapple with the notion you may never have your favorite ice cream again? That sounds borderline torturous to me.

Setting realistic goals and achieving them is going to increase your self-confidence and help you develop consistency and ultimately, obtain the confidence and health you are seeking.

For example, set a goal to drink a gallon of water each day. Focus on that goal- being specific is essential to making progress. Once you feel confident with that goal and it becomes a habit, add another.

“One day at a time” is a phrase I have been telling myself for years now and it has helped me develop realistic goals/habits that I stay consistent with. Knowing that the finish line is near gives me the motivation to persevere through the temptations.

Remember that you may not always reach that goal, but keep it in mind that failure is merely a setback. Did you improve? Did you beat your previous mile time? Did you resist eating junk food for one day longer?

You may not lose the exact number you were planning on, but do you feel better? Do you move with less pain? Are you stronger? More confident? Are you finding that the daily tasks that occupy most days suddenly easier?

As your trainer, my focus is ensuring that you are moving towards fulfilling your purpose statement. If we are progressing, we are succeeding.

### **Being Accountable:**

Accountability will be vital as you move along your weight loss journey. Some of us are capable

of being accountable to ourselves and for those who can do that, congrats! That is truly a gift that many of us do not have.

Those of us that struggle with personal accountability should involve others. Share your journey with others and let them know what your goals are. Knowing that you let down your spouse or best friend can oftentimes be enough motivation to override any temptations that might be distracting you from your purpose statement.

Knowing that my wife is aware of my goals helps me make healthier food choices. Seeing her give me that “look” when I am contemplating ordering something that could derail my dietary goals is always a helpful reminder to stay on track. I also try my best to help her with her food choices as well. This creates a mutual support system that can be extremely beneficial during times of self-doubt and discouragement.

Although, having a support system can be a great way to create consistency, our ultimate goal is to develop personal accountability. As I’m sure you already know, you will often find yourself facing temptation or discouragement by yourself.

When you are without your support system, remind yourself of your purpose statement. Understand that your present self is accountable to your future self. This will keep you grounded and focused on what you are trying to accomplish and why you are doing it. That “why” tends to be the question I answer most frequently, especially when I am experiencing discouragement or distraction.

### **Being Consistent:**

Consistency is ultimately the main component of your weight loss journey. Without it, this journey will be far longer and harder than necessary.

Being consistent is extremely difficult. Believe me when I tell you this. I have struggled with consistency for years, as I am sure most of you have. But making it a priority to stay consistent with your “realistic goals” will lead to your overall improvement.

About a year ago, I made a realistic goal to weigh less than 180 pounds. I made this goal because for the better part of the last 10 years I have weighed between 200-210 pounds.

Now, I did not care too much about my weight for a long time. I was lifting weights often and I was eating whatever I wanted, so it was a win win for me.

It was not until recently that it became apparent to me that I needed to change my lifestyle. I was living the “all in or all out” approach.

“I will start eating better Monday,” I often told myself. I would do well for a week or two and then I would eat poorly and disregard my goals for a few days. This was an unhealthy habit and when I finally developed a purpose statement- my “why”-this all started to change.

When I made this goal, I was tired of the low back pain I had developed (partly because of the weight) as well as not being confident with myself. I knew what my purpose statement was, I knew what I had to do to achieve this, and I had people holding me accountable.

I have not reached this goal yet, but I am close. I am more confident with the choices I make, I have gotten a lot stronger, and my low back pain has decreased.

Being consistent is not about being perfect. It is about picking yourself up quickly after you are not consistent. It is about not letting your indulgences take over your weekend- one meal is okay, not the entire weekend.

Consistency will become easier as the habits become ingrained in your daily activities. This will lead to increased confidence in your self-control.

### **Foundation Strength + Conditioning is here for you!**

Remember that life is a journey and that developing the correct lifestyle habits right now will lead to a healthier life later. Your future self will thank you.

And in the end if you do not reach your specific weight loss goals, pay attention to how you feel and how things have changed.

My challenge to you all of you: “Believe in yourself, do your best to stay consistently optimistic, and fall in love with your perfectly imperfect body!”