

THE *PSYCHOLOGICAL* *ADJUSTMENTS* OF LOSING WEIGHT



After finally losing weight, there's a misconception that you should be happier and more confident than ever before— but that isn't always the case.

More often than not, the way you feel about yourself on the inside after losing weight doesn't always reflect with what's on the outside. Unfortunately, harboring negative feelings towards yourself increases your risk of gaining the weight back. To sustain weight loss, keep a positive attitude and body image, consider some of the following tips:

"FAKE IT" UNTIL YOU MAKE IT.

If you've been struggling with weight for years, getting used to the new you may take some time. Don't reinforce old ways of thinking by constantly criticizing the way you look. If you still tell yourself you are fat while looking in the mirror, you are going to see an overweight person, no matter how much weight you lost or what the scale says. Be proud of your transformation, and keep reminding yourself of your healthy accomplishments. Stop focusing on problem areas and instead, focus on making overall health your number one priority. Once you're able to replace "fat talk" with positive reinforcement, you'll be much less likely to emotionally eat, which will keep the pounds at bay.

HAVE A STRONG SUPPORT SYSTEM.

For those times when you can't tell fact from fiction, having a buddy to lean on for support can be very helpful. If you're feeling particularly low about the way you look or feel one day, a friend can snap you back to reality, and help you recognize irrational thoughts and old patterns of negative thinking.

PRACTICE MINDFULNESS.

Research shows that 90% of people who lose weight are at risk for gaining it back. Knowing that there will be days that you slip up, or feel less than enthused about your appearance can help you prepare for days when you may feel tempted to emotionally overeat. Remember, just as you did when you were losing the weight, practice mindfulness, and take each day one at a time. If you slip up one day on your diet, don't berate yourself. Just pick yourself back up the next day — squeeze in some extra cardio, or try a new healthy recipe for dinner. Be wary of slipping back into negative ways of thinking about yourself and your body. This can only foster helplessness, which can impede weight loss overall.

For more information, visit www.northside.com/newstartchallenge