

GUIDED IMAGERY ARTICLES & RESEARCH

SOUND CHANGES™

Six Simple Ways to Achieve Your Healthy Weight

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What do you really want?

Do you want a healthy body, vibrant energy and natural joy? If your answer is yes, are you willing to do what you need to do in order to get what you really want?

When you connect with your natural intuition, your inner wisdom, you will be guided to make choices in alignment with your highest ideals. These choices will be reflected in what you eat, how you eat, how you breathe, how you manage stress, how often and what type of exercise you choose, how you sleep, what you think and how you interact with others.

The 6 components to wellness and maintenance of healthy weight include doing the following:

1. **Healthy food choices.** You are naturally created to make healthy choices. Even as a baby or young child you stopped eating when you felt full and ate only when you felt hungry. It's natural to confuse hunger for food with the need for love, or peace or even novelty. As you look inward and enhance inner awareness the distinction will be increasingly clear. You will remember to stop and FEEL. Remember this acronym to help increase mindfulness of your true needs.
 - "F" is for food – Ask yourself, "Am I truly hungry? Is it food that I really want"?
 - "E" is for energy. If you are tired or fatigued, food will not necessarily give you the boost you seek. Instead, breathe deeply, take a nap if possible or better yet, go grab your shoes and take a brisk walk or do some stretching exercises!
 - "E" is for escape. If you are bored with your surroundings seek another form of entertainment and stimulation rather than mindless eating.
 - "L" is for love. It is natural to want and need love and using food as a substitute for love can certainly create an unwanted habit. Many people and animals needs love so if it is love you seek, reach to those in need, and share.

So the next time you reach for food and you are not really hungry (for food), STOP and F.E.E.L!

2. **Self love.** As you become increasingly aware of the magnificence of your body, then you are more likely to care for it as you would a small child or a beloved pet. Notice how you feel after you make choices. Good feelings result when we follow our higher inner guidance!
3. **Positive thoughts & beliefs.** As you become aware of what does not work you can choose congruent uplifting thoughts, which are in alignment with what you really want. If you consistently focus on what you don't want, (being overweight, feeling unfit and wearing moo-moos) then you are going to get more of that! If you turn your attention to what you truly want & need and entertain images of your ideal outcome, then you will more quickly bring into existence your ideal weight and good health. One of the things we can choose besides our attitude about life is what we put in our mouth!
4. **Stress management = consciousness of your habitual patterns + practicing breathing + mind/body awareness.** Stress is the main reasons so many of us eat when we are not hungry. And prolonged stress not only exacerbates illness and disease, but it contributes to increased cortisol, which has been implicated in maintaining excess fat especially around the belly.

There are many effective stress management techniques and 2 primary aspects of effective stress management include how you are thinking and how you are breathing. Poor breathing causes muscle tension and even pain syndromes. Deep mindful breathing can transform your experience of life! Where are your thoughts? Are you focusing on what is wrong? Or is your awareness on the solution or even on the blessing that is often revealed down the road? Are you turning your wants into needs? When you NEED what you WANT then you create unnecessary stress. Try shifting your needs into preferences, relaxing, breathing and looking at the big picture.

5. **Exercise.** The best strategy for attaining & maintaining your optimal weight is best accomplished with regular exercise. And it's the best way to relieve stress, overcome depression and enhance feelings of well-being. Start with 10 minutes of exercise + 10 minutes of stretching. Find something you enjoy.
6. **Sound Sleep.** Optimal health requires sound sleep. Create a routine for yourself that includes a soothing and calming ritual before bed. Don't take work into your bed, or food and activities that are non-sleep related. Avoid upsetting movies or news before bedtime. Ideally, read a book, meditate or listen to guided meditation or soothing music prior to bedtime. A spray of lavender is a nice addition to a bedtime ritual.

Remember..... You can change your life when you change your mind.

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Ellen Simon is a nationally recognized expert in the field of mind body health. Ellen's unique brands of audio programs are in use in hospitals and health care facilities across the country. Ellen is the author of over 25 titles. This article is adapted from Food for Thought®, a 6 audio CD set. For more information visit www.imadulation.com.