

## “Don’t Fall Off the Wagon!”

What are some of the reasons that we “fall off the wagon” after working so hard for a week or two? It could be that most of us are not paying attention to the emotions that are attached to our eating habits and our weight loss goals. Knowing what causes you to check out what’s in the cupboards when you are not even hungry, or realizing that one trigger that can change your motivation to indulgence may be the secret to your success. Here are some great insights that will help to keep you on track.....

1. **Begin a journal.** Whether you are just beginning your program or have been on it awhile, it is never too late to start journaling. In my years of coaching, the most successful clients are those who have kept a journal. It helps you to get connected with yourself. Write down your feelings for the day and what you eat and when. The first pages should be full of your hopes and goals, your strategies to reach them, when you will exercise, how often you will weigh in and check in with your health advisor. Write happy and not-so-happy occurrences, but mostly keep it upbeat. For example...if you had a night out with friends and ended up having a margarita and tacos, sending you out of your fat burning stage and probably making you feel sorry that you succumbed to your friends coaxing. Make sure you write all of that down, but then finish the excerpt with strategies for the next time you go out with those friends...what would you do differently, what would you have to eat instead? The next time you go out, you will be ready and prepared to stand strong for your conviction.
2. **Write down your reasons.** Think about the REAL reasons that you are on the Take shape program... to fit in those favorite pants, shorts, or bathing suit. Maybe it’s a reunion, or your doctor told you that you need to lose 40 pounds to be healthier, your cholesterol high, or want to play sports with your children, maybe you are just sick and tired of being sick and tired!! Whatever the reasons...write them all down on an index card and laminate it if you have the resources. Then keep it in your pocket and look at it often.

3. **Stick with your decision.** Make sure that you keep a positive “I CAN do it!” attitude with you all the time. Don’t let a friend or co-worker burst your bubble and steal your dreams!!! So, be prepared to “fight”. Have scripts prepared when friends or co-workers or family are persistent in offering you something.
4. **Never miss a meal.** It is so important to eat every 3 hours from the time you awake until you go to bed. Think of it as fuel for your body.
5. **Give yourself an “instead” list.** Your list will be full of activities that you can do *instead* of eating. The activities or chores only need to take 15 minutes because that is about how long a craving will last. Some examples could be clean the garage, take a walk or bicycle ride, sweep the floor, clean out your closet. The list can be very helpful and many ways!
6. **Congratulate yourself often.** Your decision to get healthy is the best action that you can do for yourself. So many people out there have not been able to gather up enough courage to make the positive changes that you are making. Be proud of your daily and weekly and monthly accomplishments. Every hour you are that much closer to reaching your goal.