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Goal Setting Exercise

First I want you to think about what your ultimate weight goal is. List it here: _____

Next, think about the kind of lifestyle you will be required to lead to get to and maintain this weight. For instance, if your ultimate weight goal is 140 pounds, are you willing to exercise aerobically five times per week and eat 1800 calories per day for the rest of your life to maintain that weight, or would the lifestyle associated with a weight of 150 pounds be more acceptable to you?

Next decide on a realistic time frame for reaching this goal. (Remember a weight loss of 1-2 pounds per week is reasonable.)

Fill in the following: I would like to reach my ultimate weight goal of _____ pounds by _____. (This is a general time frame, because you do not have direct control over the pounds you lose - only the behaviors that lead to weight loss.)

Really put some thought into what will be required of you to accomplish this goal. Think about how your life will need to change to set yourself up for long term weight loss success and weight maintenance.

Once you have a solid goal in mind and a realistic time frame, put this goal in writing, and sign your name on it. It may even be helpful to have someone else co-sign it.

Finally, decide on a plan of action, and establish some specific behavioral goals. For example, if you realize that you want to lose 1 pound per week and meet the calorie goal that I have calculated for you, you will need specific goals for behavior change. Some examples of behavioral goals that might help you stay within your desired calorie level include keeping washed, sliced veggies such as carrots, celery, and cucumber in the refrigerator at all times for snacks; walking at least 5 days a week for 30 minutes each time; making healthier, lower calorie choices when eating out; not buying unhealthy snacks and sweets from the grocery store; and developing five lower calorie lunch and dinner menus for dining at home.

Now, what are some of your behavioral goals?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

Putting these goals in writing will help you remember your game plan. Post them in a visible place to remind you of the strategies you have developed.