



Weight Loss and the Mind

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Many people struggle with their weight and find it difficult to shed those unwanted pounds. They change their diet, join weight-loss clubs and get the most mileage out of their gym membership. These people seem to be doing all the right things in order to lose weight but the weight just does not seem to budge. They often ask if they are missing something.

Many people have been educated in the scientific theory of weight gain—“**calories in equals calories burned.**” We have been bombarded with this scientific way of thinking that informs us that our weight is purely a mathematical equation—you are either eating too much or not exercising enough. This rather limited view of weight gain makes us want to step up our “work outs” and limit our calories even more.

Unfortunately this mechanistic approach does not take into account the power of the mind to control your weight. The mind is a vast resource of beliefs that determine your body’s outcome. **Despite a serious commitment to all the external activities, many people do not lose weight because they do not want to lose weight.** They have made a decision early on that there is a benefit to weight gain. This belief has been buried deep beneath the surface and they might not even realize that it is still active.

The mind becomes the driving force in our lives. From financial security to financial failure, dynamic health to debilitating illness, the mind is the source of much of our successes or failures. We have often been told that we are the victim of our biology or that our finances are determined by how well the economy is doing. This “**victim conscious way of thinking**” only sets us up for failure. Most people do not realize that there are many people who thrive in a “down economy” and many people are able to cure themselves from an “incurable disease” just by changing their mind. Your mind is controlling your outcome and not necessarily outside influences.

The following are several examples of how the mind keeps one attached to excess body weight.

Example One

Sally “works out” regularly and has a well-balanced regimen with her food. She counts her calories, limits her snacks and monitors her proteins, carbohydrates and fats. Sally continues to hold on to an excess amount of weight. She feels frustrated and loses hope at times.

Most people do not take into account the fact that while Sally is participating in all the outer activities to lose weight her mind is still in charge. She has perceived a benefit to being over-weight. Sally sees excess weight as a protection from any advances from men. She does not have to look or dress “sexy” because she believes that no one would want to be attracted to her. Extra weight is a layer of protection so that she will not have to say “No” to any romantic advances.

Example Two

In another example, Jack too has trouble losing weight. He “works out” and eats well but he just never can seem to lose those extra twenty pounds. Despite his outer activities, Jack still perceives a benefit to weight gain. Jack is punishing his mother by being over-weight. He grew up in the perfect household where everyone had to look and act perfectly. By being over-weight, Jack is really telling his mother “No” for the first time in his life through his body language. Jack is saying that he is going to “let himself go” a bit so that his mother will suffer (or so he perceives it to be).

Example Three

Betty was sexually molested as a young girl by her grandfather. She felt ashamed and dirty after the incident. She felt vulnerable and alone. Soon after this event took place, Betty began to gain weight. She continued to gain weight into her teenage years and kept the weight on as an adult.

Betty monitors her food intake and “works out” three times per week. Betty continues to struggle with her weight. Little does she realize, Betty has built a wall of armor around her to protect herself from feeling the feelings associated with the molestation. She believes deep down inside that if she walls herself off from the world, all of her pain will go away. Since Betty has repressed all of these memories, this behavior is unconscious. No matter how much she alters her diet or “works out,” Betty’s weight will not change until she decides that she is ready and willing to let go of the stored emotions inside.

Example Four

Robert was married at an early age. While in his late twenties his wife discovered that she had developed cancer. After several years of struggling with this disease she finally died. Robert was devastated when she died. However, Robert showed no emotion at her funeral and for the years that followed.

Robert struggled with his weight for many years after his wife’s death. He “worked out,” joined Weight Watchers™ and went on many diets. His weight continued to barely budge. He began to experience health issues associated with weight gain (high blood pressure, high cholesterol and diabetes).

It was not until Robert began to explore the feelings around his wife’s death that his weight began to change. Robert first tried traditional psychotherapy. Here he had some success. He then progressed to several alternative treatments to explore deeper into his beliefs. Robert found a practitioner of NET (Neuro Emotional Technique). This experience was instrumental in Robert’s effort to lose weight. By releasing the belief that he needed excess weight to protect himself from feeling his grief, Robert was quickly able to reduce his weight and the health issues began to subside.

Example Five

Steve is obese and chooses obesity over fitness. Steve grew up with the belief that he would not let anyone tell him what to do. From his parents to his teachers, doctors to nutritionists, many have been telling Steve that his excess weight is harming his health. Steve does not care. The beliefs in his mind are still active. He is still rebelling by not allowing anyone to tell him what to do. Steve would rather be comfortable than fit.

Example Six

Lucy is a “control-freak” and feels the need to control every aspect of her life. She controls her emotions, her relationships, her animals and her entire environment around her. She feels such intense pressure to always be in control that over-eating and “losing control” with food is her only sense of relief.

While Lucy continues to preach the benefits of a nice fit body, her mind is attached to her weight as a way to find relief. Every time that she overindulges with food she feels the control in her life subside. While she might continue to exercise and eat appropriately in public, her private life is spent being “out of control.” Lucy benefits with her weight gain as this is a time of deep relaxation for her where she can let go of control.

Example Seven

Jennifer was always in good shape and athletic growing up. She received compliments frequently on her “cute figure” and was seen as a healthy person. Jennifer’s sister, Kathleen, grew up struggling with her weight. She would always compare herself to Jennifer and could never match Jennifer’s good looks. Jennifer always received the most attention and Kathleen always felt like the “second fiddle.”

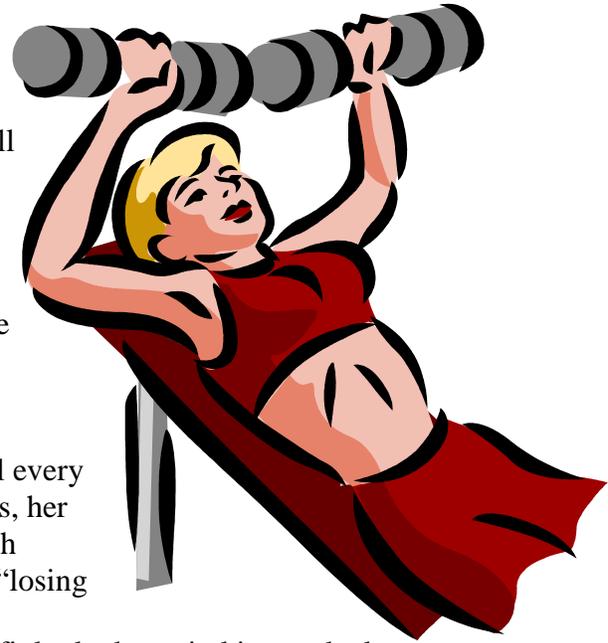
Jennifer sensed this uneasiness with her sister and began to develop a belief that in order to win her sister’s affection it would be important for Jennifer to put on weight. Jennifer was not consciously aware of this new belief. Jennifer slowly began to sabotage her shapely figure and began to gain weight. She believed that her sister would be more comfortable this way and would not feel like she was competing for attention.

Perceived Benefit

As crazy as it sounds, we do not do anything unless there is a perceived benefit to us. If someone exercises it is because they perceive a benefit. If someone invests money it is because they perceive a benefit to it.

Weight gain is no different. There is a perceived benefit to weight gain. The key word here is “perceived.” There might not be any actual benefit but the mind “perceives” a benefit. As demonstrated in the preceding examples, each person somehow believes deep down inside that weight gain would benefit them. It might provide protection, layers of armor from feeling or just demonstrate that someone was not willing to conform.

What often happens is that we become stuck in frozen realities. Reality is only as real as how we choose to see it. While weight gain might have been helpful as a protection earlier



on, it is no longer serving someone. The beliefs have not been updated. Just as most of us wore diapers as a young toddler, we updated our beliefs when we were potty trained and no longer believed that diapers were necessary. Updating our beliefs around weight becomes just as important. We remind ourselves that while weight gain might have been beneficial at one time, it is no longer necessary.

Counting Calories

The scientific way of thinking has led us to believe that weight gain is all about calories. We are shamed if we eat too many or the wrong kind of calories. We are reminded that we are going to develop some horrible disease if we over-consume. Counting calories has become an obsession for many.

As we have seen, weight-gain is not just about calories. Two people could eat the identical amount of calories and “work out” exactly the same and have two different results. One could lose several pounds while another might gain several pounds. Often the body is responding to the beliefs in one’s head. One person might believe that having a slim figure is beneficial while another person believes that being over-weight is beneficial (protection, armor, etc). While someone might not be aware of how they are sabotaging their body, the beliefs are very much alive and active. **While counting calories might be helpful for some, the key ingredient to weight loss is to recognize if you really want to lose weight.** You can perform all the external activities (diet, exercise etc.), but if you do not want to lose weight, you won’t.



Resistance

There are two primary forces in the Universe—resisting and allowing. Allowing is the art of setting your goals and creating your dreams. Resistance is sabotaging your goals and disallowing your dreams. **We all have a sabotage part of ourselves.** For some this sabotage part is large and a primary part of our lives. For others their sabotage aspect is small and held in check.

Often when we are resisting looking good and being the ideal weight it is because we have been feeding the sabotage aspect of ourselves. We still believe that we are benefitting from being over-weight. We are choosing to hold on to weight and not let it go. Despite our strong verbal desires that proclaim how we wish to be our ideal weight, the sabotage mind is still very much alive and activated.

When you are in a state of resistance, no matter what is happening on the outside, you may not be able to achieve your desired goals. Resistance is a vibration of withholding something. Resistance is a fear of letting something come to fruition. Resistance is like driving your car speedily downhill only to keep one foot pressing on the brake at all times. Just because someone is doing all the outside beneficial activities (watching one’s diet, exercising etc.), it does not necessarily mean that they have removed their resistance.

Mind Power

The mind controls your biology. Despite decades in advances in scientific research, the reality is that your mind will always be in charge of your cells. **Mind comes first; biology will follow.** The cells of your body are responding to the beliefs in your mind.

A shock to many, the belief that the mind controls the body is not new. This concept has been around since the age of time. This is the belief in natural wisdom or the modern way to describe this phenomenon is called “quantum physics.” Through quantum physics, energy controls the physical. Unfortunately, the last four hundred years or so has led us to believe primarily in a “mechanistic” approach to life where we are the victim of our biology.

As the mind becomes in tune with its desires the body will demonstrate its results. The physical body will show what is happening in the mind. For instance, when someone remains frozen in fear (stress), the body perceives this as a life-threatening event and often will slow down digestion and hold on to excess weight. **In other words, a “stressed out” person will have more difficulty losing weight because the mind is perceiving a danger and turns off or slows down most of the non-vital bodily systems (like digestion).**

Reducing weight can be as simple as learning to relax. As the mind relaxes and lets go of the stress response, the relaxation response kicks in and the bodily systems begin to function again.

Conclusion

For many, the key to weight-loss is to begin to examine the beliefs one has created in one’s mind. Simplistic scientific formulas do not always work because the mind is much stronger than your biology. Your mind has the power to turn your biology “on” or “off.” Dieting and exercise might not be enough. **Losing weight might be as simple as learning how to “change your mind.”**

Exercises

Sit quietly for a few minutes. Try to clear your mind. Ask yourself these simple questions to begin to unravel any sabotage going on.

- 1. How is excess weight benefitting you?
(protection, rebelling against authority, armoring, losing control)**
- 2. What is your stress level like?
(very high, high, medium, constant, low, not sure)**
- 3. Can you see a benefit to being your ideal weight?
(If you achieved your ideal weight, what might that feel like?)**
- 4. Would you rather be comfortable or fit?**
- 5. Have you put on weight for someone else’s benefit?**

Resources

NET (Neuro Emotional Technique) NetMindBody.com

Emotional Weight, Colleen A. Sundermeyer

If I'm So Smart, Why Can't I Lose Weight?: Tools to Get it Done,

Brooke Castillo

EFT for Weight Loss, Gary Craig

Mind Over Weight, Martyn Dawes

The Biology of Belief, Bruce Lipton

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