

Unrealistic expectations can cause failure

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By Caryl Ehrlich

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Weight gain is an evolutionary process. Some people call it creeping weight. The scale turtles inexorably upward - a tight skirt, a belt notch, a can't-zip-up-my-pants inch at a time. Yet you expect the scale to go down as rapidly as a high-speed elevator. This erroneous thought pattern - practiced and perfected as with any bad habit - is an unrealistic expectation. Dangerous to be sure with any endeavor, but deadly when it comes to weight reduction.

I could have, I should have, I didn't, I wanted to, are the loud laments of the perfectionist. Perfectionism is an illusion, however. Since you'll never be perfect, in your mind you don't ever succeed. Then you think: I failed, I blew it, I'm weak, or bad, or whatever you say to beat yourself up, and you stop trying altogether.

Why not acknowledge small incremental improvements, times when you did better at one meal, one day, or one event than you might have? Focus only on what you did, not on what you thought you should have done. The inclination to focus on the negative is part of the all or nothing addict mind. You think that if you can't do it perfectly for an entire week - even though it is unrealistic to think you can - you won't do it at all. It would be more pleasurable to look for the positive and see that list grow.

All-or-nothing thinking is far more destructive to your weight loss goal than a friend baking brownies and leaving them on your desk. Even if you eat one brownie but manage to give the rest to co-workers and friends, you think you've blown it. A better way of thinking would be to realize you only ate one, when in the past you probably would have eaten several, if not all.

Unrealistic expectations give substance, heft, and power to an unrealized goal. They quash the budding crocus of success as it pushes through the thick asphalt of failure. Unrealistic expectations kill the flowering of dreams, because you become so disappointed that you give up hope.

Thomas Edison never stopped trying. "I have not failed 10,000 times," he said. "I have successfully found 10,000 ways that will not work."

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The only reality is where you are today - perhaps 50 pounds and where you were a week ago - perhaps 155 pounds. And even if your weight remains the same, there are other questions to ask: Did you keep a food log? Did you drink the requisite amount of water? Did you do better at an industry function than you might have? Did you eat less than usual at your mother's? Yes? Then you're ahead of the game.

Marcia S, an unrealistic thinker, lost seven pounds in two weeks. The third week she lost one pound. When I asked for a positive story, she said: "Nothing good happened." She was miserable.

"But you lost eight pounds," I reminded her.

"Yeah, but," she continued, "I was so good all week and the scale didn't move."

"You lost one pound this week," I reminded her, "and you didn't gain back the previous seven."

"Yeah but . . ." she repeated. "I lost that pound at the beginning of the week and didn't lose anything the rest of the week." She was unable to acknowledge anything positive. So great were her unrealistic expectations, it was impossible for her to feel joy or satisfaction in what she had accomplished.

By ignoring these fragile buds, by not watering, nurturing, and turning them to sunlight, they turn to dust. You're used to seeking out the imperfect and because you're not yet in the habit of recognizing the fruits of your labor, they dwindle on the vine. What remains are the weeds of destructive, negative, unrealistic thinking. These thoughts can and do take over your mind and your heart. Unrealistic expectations make you believe you'll never succeed, every effort is for naught, you are forever destined to fail.

If you give too much credence to your real or imagined failures and not enough to your attempts, your interim successes, and your accomplishments, you will become the failure you think you are.

Were your parents critical and judgmental? Are you too hard on yourself? You may have internalized their voice.

Create your own positive voice. Think of the reasons you want to reach your weight loss goal (or any goal), not the reasons you don't want to remain at your present weight.

Tell friends how good you feel, rather than reliving your less-than perfect efforts. Give importance to the good stuff. Let everything else go.

Try to monitor your negative, unrealistic thinking. See how many times you give yourself credit for doing something positive - "I only ate when I was hungry the entire week" - only to take it away by adding, ". . . except for Thursday night when I worked late and had three slices of pizza." It is not a good habit of thought to give one evening of pizza the same weight as six days of staying on your program.

Thinking realistically and positively may be tricky at the beginning because you've been thinking

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unrealistically and negatively for a long time. It takes practice and perseverance to change your attitude, but you will succeed. Perhaps not immediately. Perhaps one baby-step at a time. Perhaps 10,000 attempts later. But, as Georgia O'Keefe said, "You musn't even think you won't succeed."

This article is an excerpt from the book *Conquer Your Food Addiction* authored by Caryl Ehrlich. Visit her at

<http://www.ConquerFood.com>

to know more about weight loss and keep it off without diet,

deprivation, props, or pills. Contact her at Caryl@ConquerFood.com or call 212-986-7155.

Failure Is Temporary

By Raymond Johnston Jr

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Would you like me to give you a formula for...success? It's quite simple, really. Double your rate of failure... You're thinking of failure as the enemy of success. But it isn't at all... You can be discouraged by failure – or you can learn from it. So go ahead and make mistakes. Make all you can. Because, remember that's where you'll find success. On the far side of failure.

Thomas J. Watson, Sr.

This is very true in our everyday lives but it especially rings true in the internet marketing world. The people who are making the money are the ones who are willing to fail. So many have such great expectations when they start working on the internet, yet so many can't handle the failure that comes with the territory.

Can you make money on the net? Yes. Are you going to have failures? Yes The question is are you going to fight back when those failures happen. So many get discouraged so fast. Maybe the unrealistic expectations have something to do with it. Dollar signs put wild fantasies in so many minds.

Most everyone who is successful on the internet today has had their times of failure. In fact there are going to be a lot of disappointments along the road to success. This is like any other business, it takes time and effort to make ones dream come true.

The old adage of learn from your mistakes is very true on the road to being successful in the internet marketing world. The only way to learn is to get your feet wet and see what it's like. You can watch and learn, you can study and learn but experience is still the best teacher.

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So many get discouraged and give up the idea of working on the internet. The fact is that it is not going to be easy but if you have the drive and the willingness to learn, you can be successful. You must go in knowing that you are not going to be rich tomorrow. You must realize that failure will be a part of becoming successful.

The answer to becoming a success in the marketing world is pretty much the same as everywhere else. You must be willing to work and you must not let failure get you down. Failure is a temporary situation, learn from it.



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