

## **THE SECRET PSYCHOLOGY BEHIND EXERCISE SUCCESS**

Discover the 5 empowering principles you must know for rapid and continuous results!

**NHFA**

NATIONAL HEALTH & FITNESS ACADEMY

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## ABOUT DAVE BURGIS

Dave Burgis is the founder and director of the National Health and Fitness Academy. He has been one of Australia's leading Personal Training and fitness educators for almost a decade. He has educated over 6000 personal trainers, trained hundreds of clients and had the honour of speaking in front of tens of thousands of people on motivation, health, fitness, weight loss, business, success and coaching all types of strategies to help people achieve their goals.



Dave's major passion is educating people to live a happier life. He is well known for taking the complicated subjects and making them simple for everyday people to understand but more importantly implement into their everyday lifestyles.

His other passion is creating and developing outstanding personal trainers, that's why he not only heads all of the academy's programs, but also still teaches the majority of the programs himself. This has been one of the major draw cards and deciding factors for many of the students that have made the decision to complete the program and be trained at the academy. After becoming aware that he would only be able to assist a small number of clients as a PT he realised that to assist more people, he would have to develop his own Academy and produce more great trainers. His teachings focus on the majority of the population and how the trainers can assist more everyday people to live a healthier and happier lifestyle.

Dave created the National Health and Fitness Academy and designed these superior courses to create the industries best personal trainers. The National Health and Fitness Academy is one of the fastest growing fitness educators in the country with their award winning personal

training and health and fitness courses. The industry is speaking for itself with their students being at the very top of the industry assuring success for their clients.

His mission was to create the best value personal training courses in the country and he guarantee's that he has achieved this and continues to do so! Dave also implemented some revolutionary and innovative ideas that dramatically raised the standards within the personal training industry. With the implementation of a 100% money back guarantee that could be taken advantage of at any stage within the programs.

This gave students and potential students total piece of mind when committing to a new career. He also developed the Bamboo Mentor Program, which can only be described by graduating students as life changing! A final progression was also developed by Dave to ensure that students had not only a bright career and future while Personal Training but also for after as well. The Masterclass program that Dave remains tight lipped about is according to students, "extraordinary." Dave is extremely well known for his drive and dedication in ensuring not only his own success but also particularly that of the students on their mission to assisting more people to gain a more healthier and fulfilling lifestyle.

Winner of many awards within the fitness industry, Dave is also a successful entrepreneur, investor, sought after success coach, nationally renowned speaker and leading educator. He is a key-note speaker at various events, as well being a guest contributor to various health and fitness magazines and the author of numerous publications. He is extremely focused on leaving a legacy so that this current generation and the ones to follow have the opportunity, knowledge and skills to be happier and healthier with a higher quality of life.





# PSYCHOLOGY

## Have you attempted to improve your health and wellbeing?



If you are reading this, I'm presuming it was not successful for you. If it was, congratulations, I commend you. You obviously had a great mindset or psychology to begin with and were able to set a successful strategy for yourself. However, when most people attempt to make improvements to their health, in particular their weight, they are unsuccessful. Many people choose the beginning of a new year, 95 per cent of the time January 1, as the start date toward these goals. Yes of course, why not set a New Years' resolution to improve your weight? Is there anything wrong with that? Not at all! But, the challenge with this is that the necessary psychology needed to achieve success is generally never truly there.

Every year, millions of people set out to lose weight, tone up and become healthier. Unfortunately 90-95 per cent of the population that set New Years' resolutions based on weight loss have broken these by mid-January. That's right, at the end of just the second week 90 per cent of people have broken or even quit their resolution. For the very small percentage of people that do lose a few kilos, unfortunately it's generally short-term success. Why? Because the goals or expectations they have given themselves are usually very high and, for most, not achievable long term. Of course, some people will get short term results. But, because of their rigorous training regime and/or stringent eating plan, these results can only be sustained for a certain time. These exercise and eating plans are clearly not what most people are used to and would be challenging to stick with, even for the most disciplined and practiced person.

Many of these extremely driven people, after failing, will attempt their goal once again. This may be in a matter of days, weeks, months or, for some people, years. Once again, they attempt their goal with a similar strategy as the last time. Often with the same vigorous exercise plan and strict eating practices their attempts are in vain. After failing for the second, third, fourth and for however many more attempts made, people start to feel helpless and any hope of ever achieving their ideal bodies quickly fades. After so many attempts to lose weight, and failing, a belief can start to build about being unable to lose weight. That, even with the correct daily food intake and recommended amount of exercise, it just does not work for them. This alone, I believe, is one of the biggest sabotages to most peoples' health and weight loss goals. If you develop the belief that it will not work, it is very hard to convince yourself that it will work for you. Henry Ford once said, "Whether you think you can or you can't, you're right!"

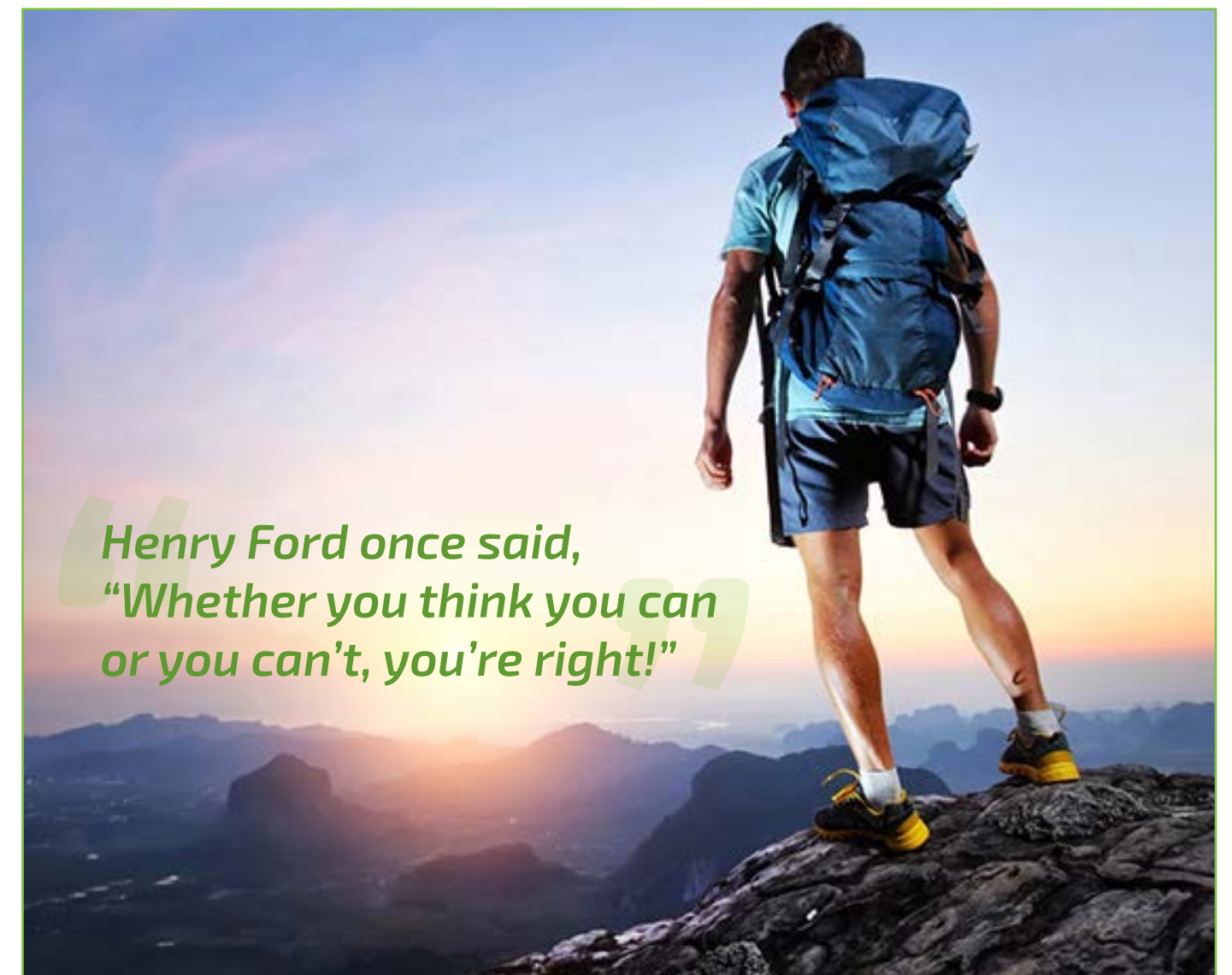
For the majority of people who set New Years' resolutions, the time frame between starting and quitting is just two weeks. For the really committed people, it is often double that, about four weeks. The interesting thing here is that most people will start to see results at about three to six weeks, depending on their weight-loss strategy or "plan of attack" and discipline. The sad thing is that most committed people give up just short of the time they will begin to see results, "90% of people give up within 10% of achieving results!"

90% of people give up within 10% of achieving results!



Let's look at this for a minute. Why do most people either stop doing something, or flat out quit? It's because they are not seeing any progress or results. It is an incredible challenge to keep working really hard at something and continue to give it everything you've got when you cannot see progress. When we begin to see progress, we gain motivation and more importantly, especially for those that have previously attempted without success, belief!

Once we have belief that something is starting to work, we are not only more motivated, but even more committed. The key is to ensure that our psychology is right in order to accept and stick to the weight-loss strategies that will get us to where we want to be. For so many of us, until we learn to change our psychology and our beliefs about losing weight, it may never actually happen. For many of us, if we do start to make any gains we, either consciously or subconsciously, sabotage ourselves due to our belief system.



Henry Ford once said, "Whether you think you can or you can't, you're right!"



## HOW I SEE MYSELF

Maybe you were doomed to fail from the start. Have you ever been in the situation where you really wanted to achieve something, but you didn't really think that you would achieve the success you were craving? Once again, this may be due to your belief system letting you down. Whether you know it or not, you may already have a belief system in place. Think about it, we don't have to necessarily attempt something to think we can't do it. We can start to make our own judgments on whether something could be achievable based on the information that we gather. I'm not just talking weight loss here either.

I find that so many people fail at weight loss because they see themselves as an overweight person. They truly believe that this is who they really are. Their mindset is "I'm an overweight person". Those who have more success believe something completely different. They are still realists. But, they do not think the same way. They believe that they are not an overweight person, but are currently carrying extra kilos. There is a massive difference in the potential for success between two people that have similar genetics, are of a similar age, are at a similar weight and need to lose the same amount.

### PERSON A.

- Has the mindset.... I'm an overweight person. I'm an overweight person wanting to lose some weight.

### PERSON B.

- Has the mindset.... I'm a healthy person. I'm a healthy person that is currently carrying a few extra kilos and want to lose weight.

Until person A can change their mind set, away from believing they are an overweight person, their success will be very limited. Even if they did manage to lose some weight, it may only be a matter of time before they put the weight back on again. Why? Because of their beliefs. If you truly believe something, you will, more often than not, find a way to back up that belief system. If you have managed to lose some weight but, because of the past or because of your self-doubt, you still believe that you are an overweight person, you will more often than not put on the weight to back up your belief about yourself.

We can see in this example that it comes back to what your belief is about yourself. It's your thinking or psychology. So, what is psychology? The Oxford Dictionary defines psychology as "the scientific study of the human mind and its functions". As humans, we all function differently and have different mindsets, but we all have a similar belief system that we measure ourselves by. The only difference between us is the beliefs that we develop and the standards that we measure ourselves by. We all have a set standard or expectation we feel we should be meeting in almost every area of our lives. In some aspects, people will have higher standards or expectations while in others they will have lower standards.

*Psychology: "The scientific study of the human mind and its functions". Oxford Dictionary*

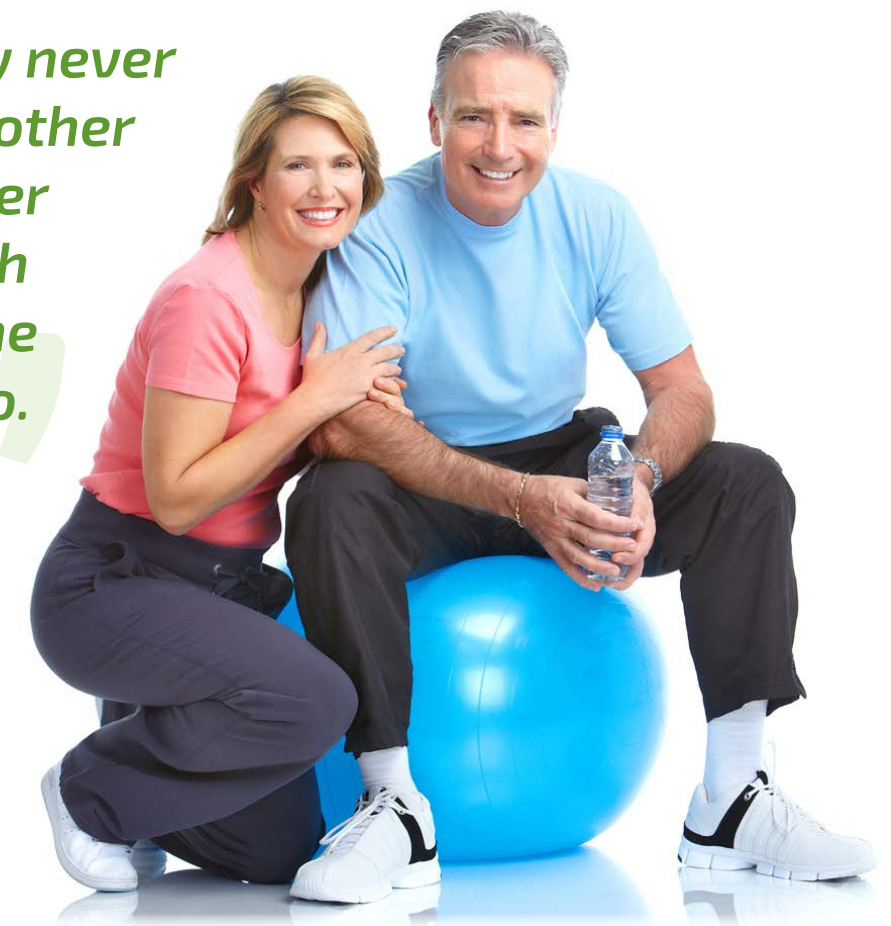


## CONTRAST & STANDARDS

Let's look at an example of a body sculptor. They may have extremely high standards for their physical body, for their training and the nutrition they consume in every single meal. However, they may have very low standards in the area of their career. This person may work just enough to get by and to pay the bills and have very low standards, if any, about career aspirations. Their focus and standards are on their body, not career. Then we may find that a person can have the complete opposite standards in these areas. Maybe a particular person grows up in a family or an environment where career is a huge focus. These people have extremely high standards in this area. This person may take their occupation very seriously, work long hours with the goal of working their way up the corporate ladder and paying little to know attention to the areas of their physical body, health and fitness.

These people may never understand each other or why one another choose to live with expectations in the areas that they do. If the body sculptor saw what the career driven person was eating and drinking on a meal-to-meal basis and the lack of exercise that they were having, they might be disgusted. If the career focused person saw how little the body sculptor worked, and the lack of work ethic and motivation for wanting to achieve more they may also feel extremely frustrated and disgusted. I'm not saying one is right or wrong. I simply wanted to demonstrate how people have completely different standards that create their beliefs about different aspects of life.

*These people may never understand each other or why one another choose to live with expectations in the areas that they do.*





## SELF-EXPECTATIONS

We all have different standards for different areas of our lives. When these expectations of ourselves are not being met, it usually causes us a certain amount of discomfort or pain. When we are meeting the expectation that we have in this area, it gives us a positive or happy feeling or at a minimum a feeling of content. For example, if you have a certain expectation about your body weight and what you really think that it should be (your “self-expectation”) and your bodyweight is that or evenly slightly better than this self-expectation, it will cause you little to no discomfort. In actual fact, you probably find that it will produce positive emotions. You may feel proud, confident, sexy, vibrant, youthful, and athletic or a combination of those and give you a sense of achievement.

However, if your “self-expectation” about your body weight is at odds, even if it is only a small difference, then this will cause you discomfort. If it is nowhere near where your expectations are then this will no longer cause just discomfort but huge amounts of pain. The further away from your self-expectation the more negative emotions a person will experience. You may feel frustrated, angry, embarrassed, hopeless, depressed and lack confidence.

This is not just in weight loss. We can apply this principle to any area of our lives, to our career, finances, family or relationships. There is one more vital part to this that is worse than not having your self-expectations met in one or any area. That is, “losing progress”. Losing progress means that we understand that we are not in the position we want to be in and are not making progress forward, and could be, in actual fact going backward. This will not only perpetuate negative emotions, it will make it extremely difficult for a person to identify a way to turn it around and meet that expectation in the future.



If there is an aspect of life that is important to you but you are nowhere near your self-expectation, this will start to cause pain and discomfort, as mentioned. If you are finding it impossible to visualize achieving your self-expectation or, worse still, are moving away from it, “losing progress”, and the situation is getting worse, it causes massive amounts of pain. For a lot of people, it gets to the “make” or “break” point. Often, people feel as though they are in a position with no way out. This can quickly lead all sorts of negative outcomes, including experiences of depression and anxiety.

Sometimes we are so far away from our self-expectations that it is almost impossible for some people to see a way back. This is often where serious clinical depression can develop in many people.

One of my first mentors shared a story with me about a dog, funnily enough. I’m not sure if he made up this story to demonstrate a very important point to me or if he heard it from someone else and passed it onto me.



***The only way that she was ever going to move was when she felt a large enough amount of pain, far greater than the pain that she was already in.***

He started off by telling me about two neighbours. Let’s call them Sam and Ben. Ben and Sam used to catch up for a beer every Friday afternoon to chat about their week, have a beer and watch the sunset whilst sitting on the veranda. Ben went over to Sam’s place where Sam was relaxing on his favourite comfy chair with his beloved dog, Patsy. The boys cracked a beer and Ben took his normal weekly seat. On sitting Ben asked Sam what was wrong with Patsy. She was lying down and making whimpering noises like she was in pain. Sam replied that he hadn’t taken too much notice; she had lay in the position earlier and had not moved. After about 10 minutes of this, Ben asked Sam again, saying that there must be something wrong with her to be whining like she was. Sam thought that she must have been lying on a nail that was sticking up on the verandah.

Ben thought that this could be a possibility, so he called Patsy to come and sit next to him. Patsy looked up, stopped whining for a second but put her head back down and continued whining. Ben tried this again and again with no success not understanding why she wouldn’t move, if Patsy really was on the nail. Ben changed tact, grabbed a nice soft cushion and attempted to beckon Patsy to come sit on it, still without success. Finally, Sam got up and said there is only one way that we are going to get her to move off this nail. He grabbed his hammer, walked around to the side of the veranda and crouched down. Sam crawled along underneath the verandah until he found that one particular nail. He took his hammer and hit the nail, which shot up through the surface of the veranda. Patsy yelped and shot to her feet. The nail that she had been laying on that had been causing her pain was pushed further into her skin as Sam hit the nail from underneath. Sam came out from underneath the veranda to resume his seat. As he was doing so, Patsy wandered over and lay down on the cushion that was next to Ben.

Ben asked Sam why he did that. Sam explained that Patsy was in pain, caused by the position that she was in, but even with the cushion in sight would still not change her position. The only way that she was ever going to move was when she felt a large enough amount of pain, far greater than the pain that she was already in. He stated that Patsy was in pain, but not enough pain to make any changes. It was painful but still bearable. She would not choose to move to a better place, even though one was in sight, unless the pain got worse and was no longer bearable. Sam knew that if the pain from the nail finally took her to the place that it was no longer bearable then she would have to make the change, and in this case she chose a place that was far better than the one that she was previously in.

My mentor asked if this sounded familiar? I agreed that it did. This story made sense as to why people are often prepared to be in a certain situation they would rather not be in, and yet put up with it and make little to no changes. They just keep putting up with it until finally something happens that makes them have to make a change. That something is usually a large amount of pain.

Pain may be felt at the present time, or if perceptive enough, a person may predict the pain that will be in store for them in the future if they stay in their current position. An example of this is if a person has a serious heart attack and survives. The doctor may tell that person that unless they change their exercise and eating plan it is inevitable that they will have another heart attack and may not be so lucky next time. This future pain along with the scare they just had can often be enough to make this person make the necessary changes to avoid the next heart attack. It’s often said that if you make it through your first heart attack that you may never have one again. This is normally due to the turnaround that these people make to their lifestyle. If they did not have the first heart attack they may have one at a later stage, when they are in even worse physical condition, and may not have survived.



# THOUGHTS

*So what really makes us do what we do?  
Why do we think, act and behave the way we do?*

The hardest thing for most people to control is their mind. It is the most complicated computer in the world. There are no instructions for how to use it. To be able to control our emotions, we have to be able to control our thoughts. This is extremely challenging and requires constant effort. I remember my first experience with yoga. The instructor began the class by telling everyone to leave all their thoughts outside. Ok no problem, consider it done. She then continued by saying leave all your worries behind, leave all your daily duties and all the things that you need to do today aside. At this point, I'd lost it. One minute into the class and I was now, probably due to the fact the instructor brought it up, thinking about all the things I needed to do that day. I was clearly not in control of my thoughts, which caused feelings of anxiety and stress, the opposite of what I was there for.

At this point, I realized how easy it was to allow my mind to wonder and think of things that created negative feelings. Instead of doing the yoga class to relax, I was now anxious about all the things that I had to do. As humans, our thought patterns are easily influenced. We are so easily led into different thoughts. Even when we are aware that we should not be thinking a particular thought, we still do. For example; what if I said do not think of pink elephants. Do not allow yourself to imagine a pink elephant". Even though you are telling yourself not to think of pink elephants, you still do, right? Here's another. Wherever you are now, do not think of all the things around you that are red. Don't think of anything red! You are telling yourself not to but you still do it, right?

Some time ago, I constantly worried about what people thought of me. I had self-doubt in the back of my mind and would automatically think the worst if I thought people were talking about me. This is something that I did on a daily basis, at least several times a day. If I looked over at people and I thought that they were looking at me while they were speaking I automatically thought that they were speaking about me. Not only that but because of my self-doubt I'd always think that it would be negative not positive. Because of this continuous thought pattern, it automatically made me feel down on myself. I realized at some point that I had to take responsibility for my own thoughts. Looking back, I know that people were not talking about me, and if they were it might have been extremely positive. If I had been able to find out exactly what they were talking about, and realized it had nothing to do with me, my thoughts would have been completely different. I would have felt different emotions, which would have given me the exact opposite feelings to the ones that I'd decided to give myself. What I realized was that I was allowing my thoughts to decide how I was feeling at any given time. My negative thoughts were giving me negative feelings. Your thoughts will decide your feelings, positive or negative!!

This example reveals that we must be mindful not only of what we should be thinking but also what we shouldn't. As soon as you start to "not think" of something your brain goes searching for it. Your thoughts at any one time will determine how you feel.

# FEELINGS

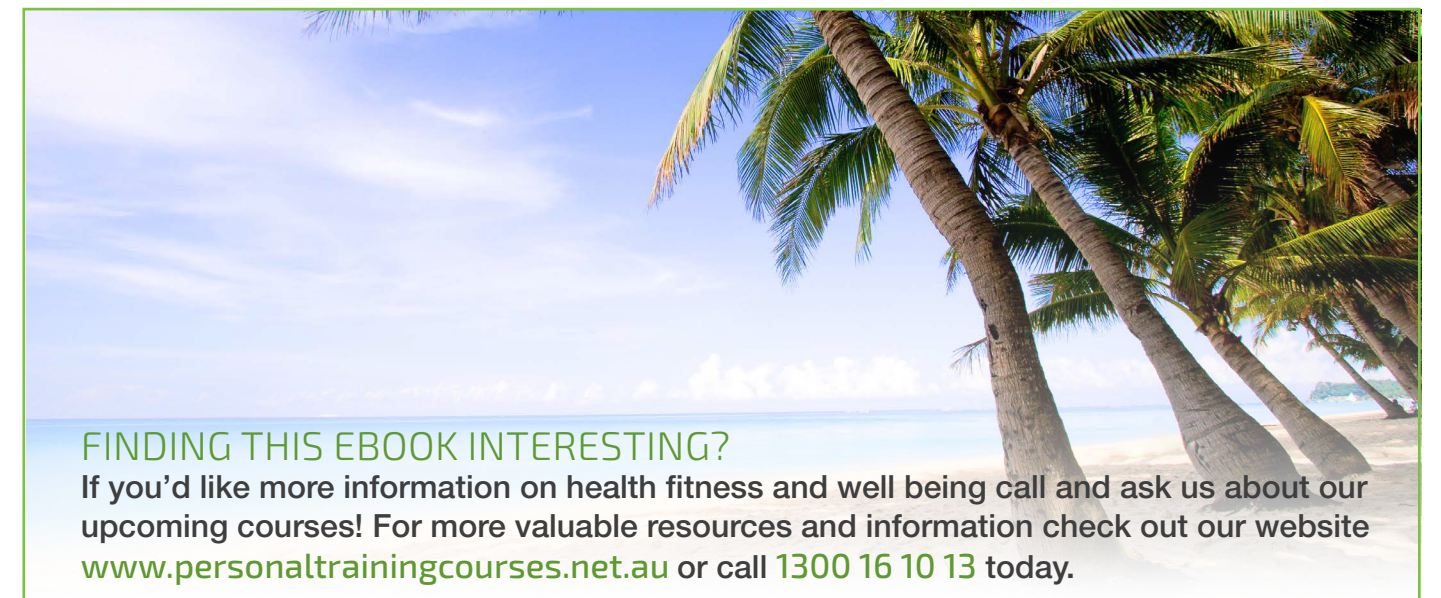


How you perceive your life is the direct result of how you feel. If you are having a great day and feel extremely positive then life is good or for some people, at least "not so bad." If you are having a bad day it's normally because of the way that you feel or the emotions caused by different events that make you feel that way. Our feelings will decide how happy or sad we are. Feelings are constant. We always feel some type of emotion, which causes our state. Hence, the phrase "state of mind". When you are in a certain state you will decide upon different actions.

An example of this, and something that I'll go through in more depth in subsequent chapters, is binge eating. Many of us, whether overweight or not, have a tendency to binge eat or eat certain foods based on certain feelings that we are experiencing. When we feel depressed or stressed, for many of us, we turn to certain food. Why? For two reasons. The first is that our feelings have a trigger or an anchor, after a while we associate a feeling with a food that we have binged on in the past. So when we experience a feeling, we associate a particular food with that feeling straight away.

I once had a personal training client who was very overweight and binged on particular foods. She was aware of the fact that she ate these foods and said it was almost like she was addicted to them. She had two favourites that she ate on a daily basis. After monitoring when and why she binged we worked out that she had a particular anchor. She would feel the need to eat these foods because she had created a habit of doing so when her favourite television show aired. At 2pm every weekday she would eat these foods. It was automatic for her to go to the cupboard and the fridge, grab these items and sit down to watch her favourite show whilst consuming most of her daily intake of calories in one hour. The trigger or anchor was the Oprah Winfrey Show. As soon as the music began, it triggered a habit, which was to grab her snacks and sit down.

After a trial period, we found that if she did not have the television on and did not watch the show the desire for these foods was considerably less. I then observed the same pattern with many of my other clients. It showed how easily habits can be formed based on times of the day, certain music or particular television shows.



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## ACTIONS

Actions are a result of the feelings we experience. In our last example, we looked at the action of eating a certain food such as chocolate. A cause of eating the chocolate may have been because of the emotion or the feeling that we were experiencing at the time. Our actions are often a result of our feelings. If somebody has made us feel extremely negative about our weight as an example, it may lead us to take negative actions. If it is a meal time, a negative state of mind and depressed feelings may cause us to choose foods to alter our emotion and make us feel happy, despite knowing that it's only a short term relief. If, on the other hand, someone complimented us on how much weight we have lost or how great we look, when ordering lunch we will most likely choose a different option. When we feel good and that we are making progress, in other words a positive state of mind, we will probably choose a healthy meal option.

Our actions are based on how we feel at any given time. Our actions can change at any given time. This is due to the fact that our feelings are not stagnate, they are ever changing. We now know, when our feelings change, often so will our actions. Actions are more often than not a result of how we feel.

## RESULTS

The last sentence says it all. Your thoughts have influenced how you feel. The actions that you then take are based on your feelings. It is these actions that will get results. If you cannot control your thoughts, you cannot control your feelings, which means that you will have no control over your actions, which ultimately determines your results. It is a domino effect that begins with your mind.

If we allow ourselves to think in a negative or disempowering way, this will lead to negative feelings. As we know, our feelings more often than not, influence our actions. If we feel positive, we tend to make positive decisions and our actions are positive as a result. If we feel negative it can lead to negative actions. These negative actions, especially on a continuous cycle, will lead to negative results. The outcome of this is the realization that we have to be extremely aware of our thoughts and the domino effect that they have. Power over your mind ultimately is power over your results.

Remember...

### THOUGHTS > FEELINGS > BEHAVIOURS > RESULTS

Our mindset (psychology) and future decisions are pre-determined because of the way we have been programmed through life experiences and through...

1. What we hear
2. What we see
3. What we experience
4. What we surround ourselves with
5. What we say to ourselves



*“If you cannot control your thoughts, you cannot control your feelings, which means that you will have no control over your actions, which ultimately determines your results”.*

### 1. What I may have heard that has subconsciously programmed me.

Throughout our lives we are bombarded with other peoples' opinions. Often these are facts and are very handy pieces of information. At other times this information may start to form our own incorrect opinions and beliefs of certain subjects. Sometimes a saying might actually be correct for example; “money doesn't grow on trees”. Well no, it doesn't, but it's what we are interpreting from that saying that is important. For most, this means money is rare or hard to come by and we should use it sparingly, or something to that effect. As humans, we are constantly searching for meaning to satisfy our brains. We don't just hear a saying; it is human nature to want to put a meaning to it. This meaning more often than not will then form our opinions or belief. We have all heard such sayings about money as “it takes money to make money” or “money is the root of all evil”. Are these sayings necessary true? No! There are many wealthy people that had absolutely no money when they began but still made money. Money is not the root of all evil. As humans, we are the ones in control. If someone with money chooses to do something evil, that's the persons' choice. The money is not holding them hostage and making them do evil deeds, it's plastic!

The same can be applied to our health, in particular our weight loss. You may have heard such phrases as....

- Our family is big boned
- You'll always be a little chubby, it's just our genetics
- With this injury, you'll never be able to run or play sport again
- You have a thyroid problem
- It's so much harder to lose weight when you are older
- Walking is the best way to lose weight

A key point to remember here is sometimes what we are told or the saying is not necessarily incorrect. However, our interpretation may be and that can form a negative misleading and disempowering belief. We have lots of information fed to us by our parents, siblings, teachers, doctors and many other people that we respect. When we respect these people we tend not to question them and believe what we are told. We tend not to analyse this information or think too much about it.

An example of information misinterpretation could be a person who visits their GP about their weight. The client tells the doctor that they feel their health is deteriorating because of their weight and they would like to start an exercise plan.

The doctor responds by saying it is a fantastic idea however, this person will have to take some extreme precautions due to their medical conditions. After a thorough medical examination the doctor finds that this client is heavily overweight and fits into the obese category. The client has expressed soreness in their joints, which may be due to the extra weight. The doctor instructs the client to avoid impact of any type to prevent any extra soreness. The client has extremely high blood pressure and, on top of this, has a shoulder injury and must not put any significant stress on it. Because of these challenges, the doctor then instructs this person to avoid resistance or weight training. He then instructs the client not to do any intense exercise. These instructions are mainly precautions to avoid injury and regulate blood pressure.

To keep things simple, the doctor may say to the client “The best type of exercise for you is to walk, just start off small and get a little further each day.” This sounds like good advice. However, this person may go away with the belief that, due to their physical and health conditions, the best and only type of exercise for them is walking. Sure, walking maybe the most suitable exercise to begin with, but if this person interprets walking as “the only kind of exercise I’ll ever be able to do” then they have quickly developed a limiting self-belief that will slow down their progress in the future. If this person walks on a regular basis and adheres to a healthy and easy meal plan then, without a doubt, their health will improve. Their blood pressure may start to lower and, due to the decrease in body weight, soreness in the joints may diminish or disappear. Now, this persons exercise options have dramatically increased. There are so many new, great ways in which this person could start to exercise and rapidly increase their results.

But, this is only possible if a limiting belief is not formed when this person was initially told how they should exercise. People often hear one thing and hold onto it, either consciously or subconsciously. Sometimes, we just hear what we want to hear. We are prone to taking a little of the truth and then stretching it to suit our thoughts or circumstances. For some people, they really form the belief. For others, this can be their saving excuse for justifying, not just to others but also themselves, why they can’t do something. We have to be very careful. As humans, we love to avoid taking responsibility and instead justify, make excuses and, sometimes, even play the victim. This will be discussed further in subsequent chapters.

## 2. What I may have seen that has secretly programmed me.

Once again, we are always taking in information. What we see shapes our mindset. This could refer to what we saw as examples whilst growing up, mainly our parents and in later years our friends and peers. Our parents are our main mentors. As children, we are like sponges. We absorb and mimic what we see, influenced by our parents. Most parents know if they let one little word slip that they shouldn’t their children will pick up on it and ask questions.

The same applies for the things that mummy and daddy do. If a young boy sees his father doing something often enough he is soon doing the exact same thing. Young girls often want to dress like mummy and may sit on the bed watching her mother get ready and mimic these actions. Parents can all relate to this, with incidences such as going into the bathroom to find



your 5-year-old daughter covered in make-up from head to toe. Depending on your reaction, rage for using all your expense makeup or perhaps fits of laughter or the ultimate photo opportunity. Either way, one thing is certain. If they hadn’t seen mummy doing this at some stage, they would not have attempted to do it. This is purely because they would not have even thought to do this without seeing it first. The thought would not have entered their mind.

There are many things that shape our beliefs, behaviours and our psychology based on what we have seen during our lives. Some of these visuals may have shaped our habits very early. For example; whether our parents exercised or did not exercise when we were growing up, may be a determinant to our current health and fitness levels because of what we observed. Growing up you may have witnessed or noticed...

- That your parents did or did not have a gym membership and went regularly
- That they were active or inactive
- That your brothers, sisters, and/or friends were active or inactive
- That they played sport or had active recreational activities that they would do
- The kinds of exercise they would do for example; weight training, running swimming, or a particular sport
- That they were a healthy weight or overweight
- The kind of food that was eaten regularly at home
- If they ate much takeaway, desserts, lollies or confectionery

These are habits that many people will pick up due to the fact that this was “normal”, it was the example set growing up. An example is if a mother or father plays a certain sport, it’s not uncommon for the children to follow in their footsteps and take up the same sport.

There are now some alarming statistics about overweight parents and the flow on affect that it has on their children. Not all overweight parents have overweight children, of course, but certain habits can easily be passed on. This can quickly become our perception or belief about how things should be. From childhood, these habits, perceptions and beliefs are consistent in our lives unless we confront these and realise that they may be contributing to some of our present challenges. Until we find that some people don’t do the things that I’m doing, only then do we get a contrast any find that there are other and potentially better ways than what we have seen to date. Often we have had great examples from those around us including our parents. For instance, if one or both of your parents were active. When our parents have had such things as gym memberships, been part of sporting cubs, have educated themselves on nutrition and health then it is very often the case that, once again, we will follow their lead.

Many of us are very privileged to have parents that have taught us some fantastic life lessons and given us brilliant education in other areas. But maybe they have not set a good example when it came to health, fitness and wellbeing. This is not necessarily your parent’s fault, or anyone else’s fault for that matter. Maybe they were in the same position with their parents and mentors or maybe they didn’t have any at all. The fact of the matter is that these are the things that you saw or have seen throughout your life and automatically adopted. What you need to recognise is whether these habits, examples and beliefs are serving you in the right ways, and if not, change them.



### 3. What I may have experienced that has secretly programmed me.



From a very early age to the end of our lives we constantly learn from experience. Some say, that as you grow older, you grow wiser. This is very often the case in many different areas. However, this can have a negative effect by forming opinions and beliefs based on one or two experiences. Once we have formed a belief on one negative experience in our lives it is extremely hard to change it. When we experience things we connect emotionally to it. This causes positive or negative feelings. The more intense the positive or negative feeling we experience, the stronger our opinion about the subject forms.

I was once at a seminar and heard a story about circus elephants. The speaker explained that an elephant born within the travelling circus must be taught at a very early age so that it can be controlled. As we know, elephants are huge animals that have massive amounts of strength. If the elephant is not trained at an early age, while still developing and not at full strength, the elephant can quickly become hard to control. The carers work hard to program the elephant as a baby. They will put a large stake into the ground with a very strong chain to secure the elephant and stop it from running around wildly. The baby elephant is nowhere near as strong as it would be as an adult, allowing this stake and chain to hold in place. The elephant, over days and even weeks, will pull and try to break free numerous times. However, fails continuously. As time passes, the elephant will try occasionally to break free before coming to the conclusion that it is just not strong enough to break free.

What's interesting to note is that as the elephant grows older it grows stronger. You would presume that a stronger stake and chain would be required to secure the elephant. But, the handlers realised that the baby elephant would not be able to break free from its chain and from that point on would form the belief that it could not break free. There was no need to increase the size of the stake and chain. At this point, the elephant had been programmed and the limiting belief that it could not break free formed.

Just like the elephant, we are guilty of exactly the same thing. We attempt things without accurate information, the right mindset and appropriate strategy. If we attempt it once or twice and experience failure or what we perceive to be failure in this area, we form a limiting belief about it.

It is, of course, good to learn from experience. Sometimes it may also be challenging to know what we should and shouldn't take away from the experience. What's important now is that we stop and look at the meaning that we are taking away from the experience and whether this meaning is suitable. Often, we take the wrong meaning from the experience rather than learn from it and realize that it may be possible with a different approach or strategy. It is said that Thomas Edison failed over 1500 times before successfully inventing a long-lasting, practical electric light bulb. In these attempts he experienced failure over 1500 times. The difference is, he still believed that there was a way and continuously changed his methodology and strategy. Because of this, he was able to find a way to create success. In doing so, he avoided the limiting belief that it was just not possible like so many of us would have developed even after only a few attempts.

Most people who are unhappy with their health or are not at their ideal body weight have, at some stage, made an effort to change. As mentioned, these attempts often fail due to firstly, mindset or psychology and secondly, the strategy. Remember that nothing shapes our belief systems like experiencing it ourselves. Once we try and fail continuously, many beliefs can quickly creep in, just like it does for the young elephants. The young elephant quickly builds the belief that it will never break free. It doesn't even attempt to as it gets older, not realizing that with one big attempt it would break free easily. Many people build a similar belief around their health and weight loss such as....

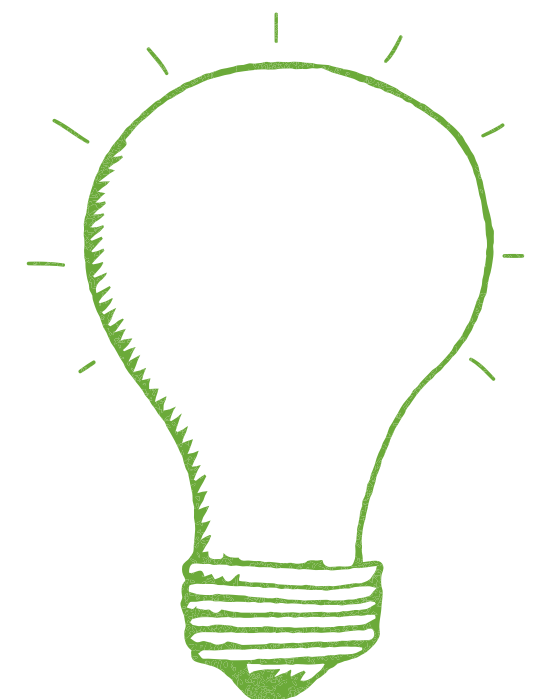
- *Dieting doesn't work for me*
- *Exercise has little to no effect on my weight loss*
- *I just can't run*
- *I get injured all the time*
- *I've tried everything and nothing works*

These are all common experiences that people have had in the past that have led them to believe that certain things are not possible when it comes to their health and fitness plans. We normally fail not because the task or our goal is impossible, it's normally because of two reasons....

1. *Our Mindset/Psychology*
2. *Our Strategy/Method*

We understand how our past experiences may have incorrectly formed our beliefs in certain areas. Now, let's look carefully at why we may have failed in the past and if there is a common theme. This means identifying whether there is a repetition of the way you have approached your weight loss campaign? It could have been your mindset or possibly your strategy or both in all of your previous attempts. The simple, but not necessarily easy, way to move forward towards success is to change one or possibly even both of these things. Sometimes you may have a great strategy but your mindset is not strong and you give in easily. Maybe it's the other way around, or after reading this you may realise that you need to rework and adjust both.

*Thomas Edison failed over 1500 times before successfully inventing a long-lasting, practical electric light bulb.*





### *4. What I have surrounded myself with that has secretly programmed me.*

Our environment influences us, our decision making, our behaviour, our habits and for most people pretty much everything that we do. Our environment or our “circle of influence” will play a major role in determining our success in our health and weight loss goals and our lives for that matter. Our environment will affect what we think and the actions that we are required to take.

What this really means is that we often let our environment set our standards. We will assess the environment around us and decide the appropriate actions. For example; if you are in a work environment where many colleagues are overweight, you may be less likely to take action to change your weight. This is not always the case. But, if we are not aware of our thought patterns, we can start to justify that this is ok, or not so bad, because there are so many others that are more overweight. We start to compare with those around us, and make decisions whether something needs to change or not. Without noticing, we are lowering our standards because of the standards of those in our environment.

If this person was to change work places where health and fitness was a priority for most of the staff and the company encouraged a healthy lifestyle, this overweight person may make changes immediately to fit in. This is just one example of how an environment may change our standards, which then leads to actions. Our environment always gives us contrast. If we fit in and are similar we are more likely to tell ourselves that no change is required. If we are different, this contrast may tell us that a change is required in this situation.

Humans are very similar to animals in some ways. The majority of humans are followers. Their actions are based on fitting in with everyone else. Our major focus is to fit in and be accepted by the group or by the heard for animals. If an animal does not fit in with the heard, it will not be accepted and will quickly be kicked out. Humans are the same. We make decisions to fit in and be accepted in that environment. If the environment has high standards then we will automatically lift to fit in to those standards that have been set by that particular “heard”. If the standards in the group are low and you are new to it, whether you have moved cities or workplace, then you quickly drop your standards to fit in.

This is how poor standards are adopted in the first instance. Let's say that you are quite healthy and exercise 2-3 days after work and drink little to no alcohol during the week. Then you move cities and are working in the central business district, which in most cities have their own unique culture. This culture is often to go for after work drinks upon finishing. Because you are new to this environment, one of your main priorities is to fit into the heard so you start to adopt the same behaviour and habits and join your new colleagues for after work drinks most days.

This is ok to a point. However, if alcohol is present, this can often lead to poor food choices. Combined with a lack of time to exercise, replaced by drinking time, a person can begin to develop poor habits, which lead to a decrease in your health, fitness, body weight and overall well-being. Most people are smart enough to realise what is happening, but because



*“Remember that nothing shapes our belief systems like experiencing it ourselves”*

the desire to fit in is so strong they decide that if they stop they will no longer be accepted. Different behaviour means that the heard will see you as different to them and therefore behave differently around you and possibly no longer accept you. This causes more pain for some people than the extra weight or decrease in well-being does, so they choose to maintain the rut that they have found themselves in.

On the other hand, some people make the change to a different workplace, suburb or city where their new work colleagues, neighbourhood or community have a very high priority in regards to living a healthy active lifestyle. If your work colleagues go to an outdoor boot camp two times per week, have gym memberships and play recreational sport, then many people will adopt these behaviours. Why? To fit into the heard. Fitting into the heard isn't always a bad thing. Remember, most people whether we know it or not, and whether we want to or not are followers. We will follow and often adopt the actions and habits of those around us.

If you feel your environment is poor or not to the standards that you would like, you will have to change it to increase your chances of success. It may be difficult and you may feel very much out of your comfort zone however, the rewards are often just around the corner and will far outweigh being uncomfortable in the short term. Once you make these changes you will often start to attract a different heard or be accepted by a different heard that has higher standards, ones that you have probably already adopted. When this occurs, your chance of success skyrockets because you are now surrounding yourself with like-minded individuals with the same high standards. These people will automatically keep you accountable because of the standards needed to stay in this particular heard!

The key to maintaining high standards is to surround yourself with those that have high standards in those areas...

- If you want to eat healthier, go to lunch with those that you know eat healthily
- If you want to exercise more, surround yourself with those that exercise often
- If you want to run faster, surround yourself with faster runners

It makes sense. Instead we fail to change our environment, which is normally the same environment and the same people that we were surrounded by when we developed these challenges that we are trying to change. To make changes we must raise our standards. If we raise our standards but those around us do not, it makes this process very challenging to overcome.

- It is harder to eat healthier when we choose to eat with the same people that we were before making the changes, especially if these people still choose to eat unhealthy food
- It is hard to make the change, go exercising and stay motivated when everyone around you is doing the exact opposite
- It's hard to run faster if you are choosing to run with slow runners



## RESULTS CONTINUED

Our environment is a major influence. We have to be on-guard and looking for those that want to excel in these areas and spend more time with them. We have to be aware at home, at work, around our friends or in our social groups.

It may be best for you to exercise before leaving work to head home. You may realise that your home environment, whether it's your family, partner or housemates are demotivating. These people may not have the same exercise standards as yourself and if you get home and they are sitting on the couch watching TV, and worst still, encouraging you to do the same it will be very challenging for you to get out and exercise as planned. You may fall into the trap of sitting down with them and lowering your standards.

Environmental influences may not just extend to exercise. You may also notice and understand that the food that is being cooked and eaten is not the healthiest option. You may have to prepare your own healthier meals. However, this will always be challenging when everyone else in your home environment is choosing a different option. Most people who try to remain strong and keep their healthy eating plan may find it hard to maintain due to constant environment circumstances. Because of this, it is just a matter of time before the person breaks and lowers their standards once again.

Our environment influences all our standards, not just in weight loss. If we are around those that speak a certain way or use certain words then often these will start to sneak into our vocabulary. Our environment will often extend further then controlling our standards in health and fitness, but also...

- Our career goals and expectations
- Our relationships
- Money standards and expectations
- Work standards
- Behaviour
- Education
- Business, it's growth and development
- Our motivation and drive
- Discipline etc.

As you can see, our environment and the people that we surround ourselves with play a huge role not only in setting our standards but in keeping us on track or sabotaging us, whether they realise it or not. We have to be constantly aware of the positions that we are putting ourselves in, the environment and even more importantly, the people that we are surrounding ourselves with. Our success in these areas more often than not depends on it!

### EVER THOUGHT ABOUT CHANGING CAREER?

Do you love health and fitness or the thought of making great money doing something you love everyday? Visit our website at [www.personaltrainingcourses.net.au](http://www.personaltrainingcourses.net.au) or call **1300 13 10 16** and find out how you can become a Personal Trainer.

**THIS COULD BE THE DECISION THAT CHANGES THE COURSE OF YOUR LIFE FOREVER!**



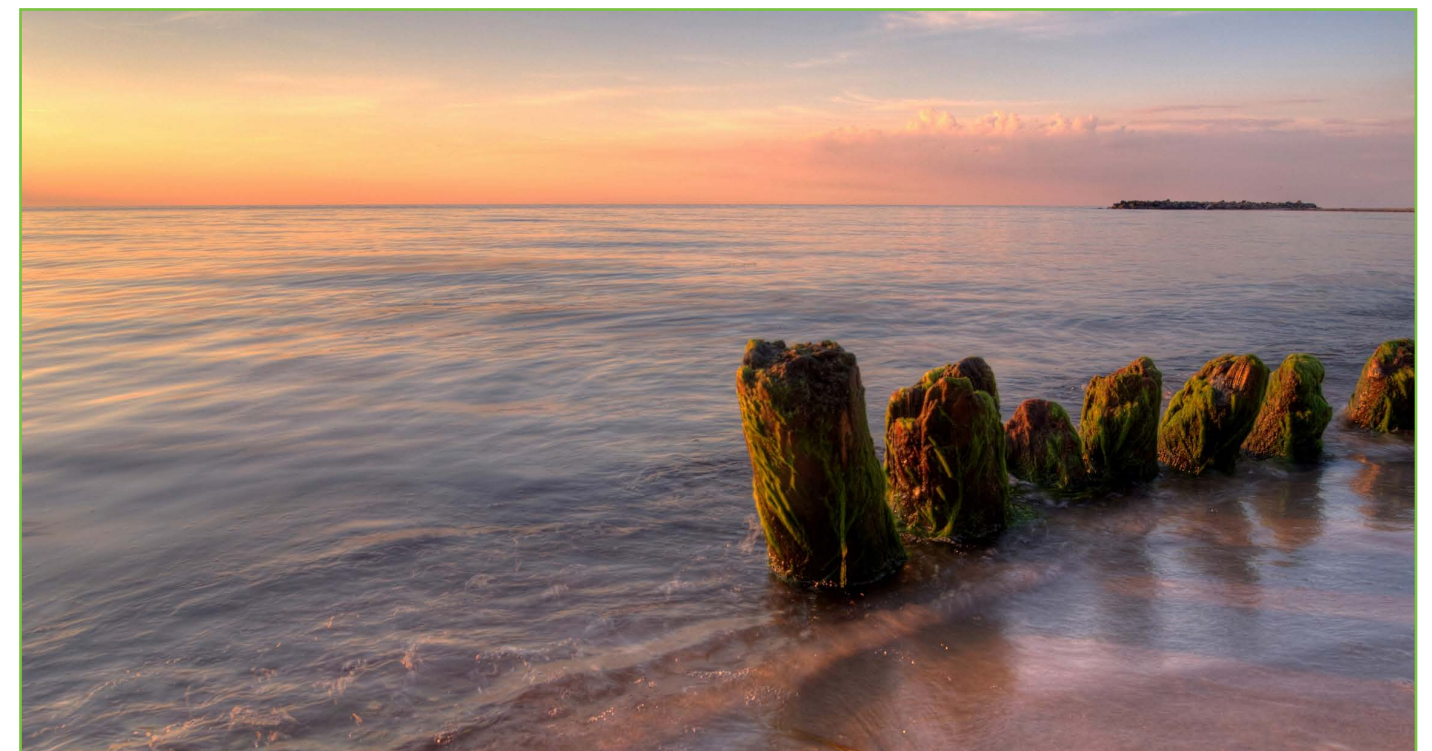
## 5. What we say to ourselves

If you were your own best friend, would you treat yourself any different? Interesting question, but I find that 99 times out of 100 the answer is yes. Let me explain. Let's say that you were not you. You are now your best friend and you are looking at yourself from their point of view. What differences would there be? We often treat those around us, especially our close friends and family, far better than we treat ourselves. It's great to treat everybody well but you have to make yourself a priority and treat yourself as well as you would treat your best friend. Most of us have a completely different set of standards for how we would treat and especially what we would say to our friends compared to ourselves.

Firstly, nothing has a true meaning except for the meaning that we give it. We can act without necessarily putting ourselves down or without giving ourselves a negative meaning. The only challenge is that sometimes we are unaware of the meaning that we are giving to different events and situations. We are unaware of the messages that we are sending to ourselves.

*“Jim Rohn, was a great American entrepreneur, author and motivation speaker helping hundreds of thousands with their personal development.*

*He stated.... “You are the average of the five people you spend the most time with.”*”





## SELF TALK

If you said the things that you say to yourself at times, would you keep yourself as a best friend? Think about it for a second, what is your self-talk like on a daily basis? When you do something that is not quite right, you make a mistake or even if you really mess something up. What do you say to yourself? Seriously, stop for a minute and think about all the common things that you say to yourself when you make a mistake. These might be things like...

- You F\*\$#ing idiot
- How stupid are you
- What a \_\_\_\_\_
- I'm such an \_\_\_\_\_
- Why do I always have to be so \_\_\_\_\_

We are always harder on ourselves than we are on anyone else. We often allow ourselves to be extremely frustrated and, worst still, allow ourselves to talk in a way that we would never allow anyone else to talk to us. Would you ever say those things to your best friend? So why is that you are allowing yourself too? If your best friend said some of those things that you say to yourself, especially if they are much worse than the examples, most people would become highly offended and take a series of actions from a verbal retaliation, to a physical retaliation and anything in between. For most of us, if our best friend said those things to us, because we made a minor mistake, it would seriously damage the relationship. But yet we allow ourselves to do this, either consciously or subconsciously, day in and day out.

Emotions cause us to say things with a lot more emphasis and force. So when people are very emotional, they tend to really speak with fire and venom. For example, if someone strongly dislikes somebody, for whatever reason, it's very rare for that person to sit down on the couch with that particular person and ask for a moment of his or her time. Once they are seated, this person then relaxes and makes themselves nice and comfortable and says very slowly and calmly that there is something that they have been meaning to mention and that something is that "I hate you" in a very soft gentle and controlled manner. I think not. What happens is that person gets to a breaking point and with extreme emotion quickly turns to that person in a very uncontrolled manner and yells "I HATE YOU!!" Whether it's right or wrong, it demonstrates that once emotion comes into it, it really emphasises the words, how we say them and the meaning that we take from it.

Let's bring this back to our health and fitness and in particular weight loss. I find that when people are overweight their self-talk is at a lower standard and is often bordering disgraceful. Being overweight can cause a range of emotions and once again when we are emotional and say things, even to ourselves, we really put some meaning behind what we are saying.



What is your self-talk like? What do you allow yourself to say? Be honest with yourself. I definitely don't condone this one little bit, but I want to give you examples so that you may be able to identify some of the key words or phrases that you often use. Some people are so used to telling themselves the same things over and over that they don't even realise how much they use this language. I have heard such things as...

- I'm nothing but a big fat pig
- I'm just disgusting
- How could anyone even be attracted to me
- I hate my body
- I feel sick
- Look how fat you are you \_\_\_\_\_
- What a \_\_\_\_\_
- I'm such a \_\_\_\_\_
- Why do I always \_\_\_\_\_

What are the key phrases that you use whether it's from time to time or on a constant basis? Write as many as you can think of that you know you use to describe yourself, your weight and as a person making mistakes.

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins or other markings on the paper.



## SELF TALK CONTINUED

If you had someone whether it was a friend, family member or even a stranger that came up to you once a week to several times a day, and told you what you tell yourself as often as you do, how would that make you feel and what effect would this have on you? For most people, this would have a massive effect on self-esteem, self confidence, your self-concept, positivity and happiness in general. If we were in the middle of our weight loss plan it could and probably would cause big mental setbacks. Imagine a person attempting to run a marathon and having to deal with people along the way, for example; every block telling them that they won't make it and that they are fat, too old, too young and that it's too far etc. You would be disgusted in those people saying such hideous things to that person and it would clearly cause some doubt in your mind. But yet for many of us we are doing this very thing to ourselves every day.

The very first step to making changes is to simply be aware of it. Simply noting what you are saying to yourself, at what times and for what reasons. These may often be simple little mistakes that you are making throughout the day, as everyone does, but yet your self-talk may be extremely harsh. Give yourself some contrast when you do it. If your best friend made a minor mistake like you just did, would you react and use the same language, phrase or the words that you just did on yourself? More often than not you wouldn't.

Once you start to identify the common language and phrase patterns you can start to modify the way you are speaking to yourself. This will be an extremely long process for some and a very tough habit to break but with persistence you will get there and the rewards will be astonishing! At first you will be so used to making a mistake, catching a glimpse of yourself in the mirror, changing into clothes and automatically say your normal phrase e.g., you are so \_\_\_\_\_. The key, at this point, is to start to change your thought patterns. For example; I might make a mistake or do something, which I might consider to be quite stupid. Even if I know it's stupid, I DO NOT tell myself that I'm stupid. I may admit that the act was stupid but I never tell myself that I'm stupid.

As an example, say I tripped, walked into a pole or spilt my drink all over myself. What I might do is automatically call myself a “stupid idiot” whilst being extremely embarrassed. If I say that, I immediately correct myself. If it’s something stupid, I don’t try and kid myself. I want to be honest; I’m not trying to trick myself by making out it never happened. But I’m not going to allow myself to be disempowered by the meaning that I’m about to give it. I really don’t think I’m stupid, so I’ll correct myself by saying, “Gee Dave, that was a really stupid thing to do for such an intelligent person.” Once again, I’m not trying to trick myself. I allow myself to admit the event or situation is stupid but not myself. In fact, I do the exact opposite by now giving myself a compliment. This is an example of just noticing your habits and adjusting your self-talk!

*If your best friend just made a minor mistake like you just did, would you react and use the same language and use the phrase or the words that you just did on yourself. More often than not you wouldn't.*



This is the starting point to control negative self-talk that we are all prone to from time to time. Let's now think of the common words and phrases that we use on a regular basis and how we can change it from negative self-talk to positive self-talk. Here is an example...

I'M SUCH AN IDIOT!

**V's**

THAT WAS VERY SILLY ESPECIALLY  
FOR SOMEBODY SO INTELLIGENT!

This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and extend across the width of the page. There is no handwriting or other markings on the paper.

[illegible]

*Imagine a person attempting to run a marathon who has to deal with people along the way, for example every block telling them that they won't make it and that they are fat, too old, too young and that it's too far etc. You would be disgusted at those people saying such hideous things to that person and it would clearly cause some doubt in your mind. Yet, for many of us, we are doing this very thing to ourselves EVERY DAY.*



# SELF TALK CONTINUED

Now we understand the five ways in which most of your psychology, mindset and belief systems have been programmed through your life experiences being...

- 1. What we hear
- 2. What we see
- 3. What we experience
- 4. What we surround ourselves with
- 5. What we say to ourselves

We can now understand that these belief systems may not necessarily be correct and that we may need to start to adjust these. Our mindset is the number one thing that we need to be correct from the very start. Without this, our chances of failure are extremely high, no matter what strategy we choose. The past meanings that we have created are not necessarily true. These are often just the assumptions that we have made. Anthony Robbins says, "Nothing has a meaning except the meaning that you give it!"

## LIMITING BELIEFS

A belief is a permanent way of thinking. Due to certain life experiences, in our mind it becomes fact. This can often be the worst thing that can happen. We often become closed off and no longer have the ability to see certain things for what they really are. Once you have a belief it will always remain that until it can be proved otherwise. Some peoples' beliefs can become so strong that often they cannot be shown anything different. Can you remember a time where you had a certain belief about something that turned out not to be what you originally thought? Some human beliefs held over a substantial amount of time such as, the earth is flat, we will never fly and many more that for us, at this time, just seem ridiculous.



What are some of your limiting beliefs about your health, fitness and weight loss that you can now identify that you have developed over time?

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## A FRESH OUTLOOK

Now that we understand what could have caused our limiting beliefs in the past and how they may have been created it's important to start with a fresh outlook. Without this, it's extremely hard to accept any new ideas or strategies. Working with many people in the past, I have heard "I've tried that, it doesn't work!" Firstly, would someone with an open mind say this? Doing exactly what you did in the past may not work, but a combination of things that you did in the past combined with some new strategies might be just the action plan that will bring those results that you are desperate for. Another phrase that we hear all too often is "I've tried everything!" Well that is a huge statement, I mean come on everything? You've tried absolutely every method on the planet? Really? I think not, so let's not exaggerate any longer!

One thing is for sure, if you haven't read this before then you haven't tried everything. Remember, it may only be one thing missing from your strategy that's preventing you from getting the desired results. Having said that, if you are one of these people suggesting that you have tried everything, perhaps it's your psychology and mindset that's really letting you down. As soon as you start to develop even the smallest doubt in your mind it quickly snowballs and creates a belief. Once you have that belief it is almost impossible to work against it. The key is being open-minded so that you can start to work out what really does and doesn't work effectively for you. Only then can you develop a results driven strategy.

Unfortunately, for a lot of people, old habits are hard to break. Many people battle to reverse the thinking pattern that has developed. If you have thought a certain way for a decade, it will soon become a belief. This makes it almost impossible to be open-minded because you have already developed the belief that it won't work. We often like to be right and, of course, justify why we are in the positions we are in. So when a new strategy or way of doing something is introduced to some people, (not us of course) we often go out of our way to make sure it doesn't work. This allows us to keep justifying it not only to ourselves but also to those around us. You may have heard, "See, I told you it wouldn't work." This applies not only to our weight loss but in all areas of our lives. This may be something that happens either consciously or subconsciously, either way it occurs to back up your belief systems and past behaviours. If you are at the point where you are starting to see that some of these behaviours may have crept in and started to sabotage your mindset you may be asking the question, well how do I start to change it?

Earlier in this chapter we spoke about self-expectations. If we have self-expectations of ourselves or beliefs of how we really should be and we are currently not meeting these, what can we do? Well there is a number of different ways that we can look at it. A lot of the challenges that people actually face aren't what they seem. Have you ever been really upset about something, shared the problem or situation with a friend, and they really didn't see why you were so worked up. You believe that you have this big problem, when it may just be the way that you are looking at it. Because we get emotional, we tend to see things one dimensionally. Once the emotion decreases, we can look at the challenge with perspective. Your problem may not really be your problem; it may just be the way you are looking at it, and the meaning that you're giving it.



Being able to keep your emotions in check is an important skill that must be consciously practiced. Some people love drama or somehow find ways to make their lives seem more exciting. They tend to dramatize what could be classified as small challenges into huge problems. The key is to see the challenges that arise for what they really are. Being able to step away from what's happening and see the real challenge, without being emotional, and immediately search for a solution, rather than basking in the drama of the so called "big challenge". It's being able to see things from a third place point of view and simply seeing it for what it is and not worse than it really is. Being able to ask, why did this/is this happening? In order to find a solution not to play the victim!!

There may be many different ways to look at, or analyse it, but here is a simplified version. Understanding our thinking and thought process is the key to making change in the right direction. How can we see things for what they really are? What are our options?

### *First Choice - Continue your current behaviours.*

As mentioned, most of us have certain things that we hold onto. It helps to justify why we are in the position we are, especially when it's not the position that we really want to be in. Many of us have trouble taking responsibility for the positions that we are in. Therefore, we chose a number of options to justify it such as...

**1. Blame others,** It is much easier to place blame on the people in our lives for why they caused us to be in the position that we are in. We may be able to justify our weight gains based on the fact that our...

- Housemates, partners, family etc. choose to cook food that causes us to put on weight
- Our work colleagues that we have lunch with always choose fast food outlets
- My Partner never wants to exercise with me
- No one will come with me to exercise
- My partner always buys unhealthy food and leaves it in the cupboard

**2. Past events,** It is much easier to place blame on past events and why they have caused us to be in the position that we are in. We may be able to justify our weight gains based on the fact that...

- I had an injury a few months ago when I just really started to get on top of things and then I couldn't train after that
- I had a car accident and was told by a health professional that I needed to take it easy
- I just lost all my motivation when we had all that bad weather
- I got really depressed after I lost my job
- We had friends/relatives staying for a few weeks

“You can be successful or you can make excuses, but you can't do both!”



**3. Situation,** It is much easier to place blame on certain situations for why we are in the position that we are in. We may be able to justify our weight gains based on the fact that our...

- The workload at work is so huge at the moment and I have to stay back every night and don't get time to exercise
- I haven't got enough money for a gym membership
- I'm really stressed at the moment and am not getting enough sleep so there is just no way I could exercise
- It's just not a good time right now, I've just got too much going on
- I've just had such a big day
- I've had such a busy week this week

**4. Be the victim and/or Justify,** Many people find it easier to justify their position. They have so called "good reasons" why they are either in the position that they are in, or they aren't in a position to be able to change things. Before you start to think to yourself, you don't know what it's like for me, I can't just... Ask yourself the question; is this a regular pattern of mine? Do I often think this when speaking to people or even myself? Do I often think if only you knew what it was like for me?

- I'm a single Mum
- I've got a business to run as well you know
- You just don't understand what it's like for me!
- I'd be skinny too if I had your height and genetics
- I would train if I had more time
- You can eat whatever you like and get away with it.
- Until you're in my position, you'll never know how hard it really is.

All these may have some truth especially the last one, however you don't have to worry about anyone else and their position. The only thing you should be worried about is you and improving yours, not remaining in that same position and wasting time and effort justifying it. Other people may never know how hard it really is for you, and if they did then they may or may not think differently but regardless it still doesn't change your circumstances. The fact is that they are not in this position and you are, so what are you prepared to do to make the changes?

Your position may be extremely challenging, to say the least. It may be extremely difficult to make changes or keep up with your health and fitness plan. But we do have to be extremely careful that we do not fall into the trap of playing the victim. This causes us to develop a "poor me attitude," which becomes extremely disempowering, not empowering! It may have been challenging to exercise, it may have been challenging to eat well, it may have been challenging to manage stress, time and even life in general. But if you have an absolute burning desire and have the mindset of "it's a must" or "I'll do whatever it takes" then no matter what, we can find a way. Sure there may have been, and still might be some huge barriers that are preventing



you from having the perfect situation or strategy, but if it's something that you want to change then you must work around these and find a way!

It's always going to be much easier to blame other people, other circumstances or events than to take responsibility ourselves for why we are in the position we are in. This is what one of my mentors once said to me after my attempt to justify why I was in a certain position that I was in at the time....

*"It's pretty simple. If you're fat, you ate it, If you're poor, you spent it, or you put yourself in the position to lose it, If your life is a mess it's because you're a mess, and If you're not where you want to be, it's because of the decisions that you made or you're not doing what you need to be doing to be there."*

This might sound harsh but it is something that I have always remembered and when I attempt to justify something to myself, I always remember this. We are all dealt a certain hand in life. It may or may not be great, but you cannot change what has happened that put you in that position, it is the past.

We can only change the position that we are in with positive steps forward to create what we desire. The past is the past and cannot be changed. The position that you are in right now cannot be changed, you are powerless to change what's already happened. You do, however, have the power to change the future and the position that you will be in.

### **Second Choice- Change your current behaviours.**

Our second choice is rather than holding onto these behaviours that are no longer serving us and have contributed to putting us in a position that we don't want, we need to make some positive steps forward. Our first choice is to stop holding onto the reasons that have put us here and take responsibility for our future. Do something about it, change the situation and yourself and take action. Refuse to play the victim because of others, past events or situations.

*"Your life is a result of the decisions that you made and continue to make!"*



# A FRESH OUTLOOK CONTINUED



**1. Other people. No matter what we do other people will always be around.**

We need to understand that a lot of these people are not going to assist us or even support us on our way to achieving our goals. Know this, accept this and look for those that will. But understand that we are ultimately in control of ourselves and nobody else can influence us unless we allow him or her to. Remember the importance of having a good circle of influence.

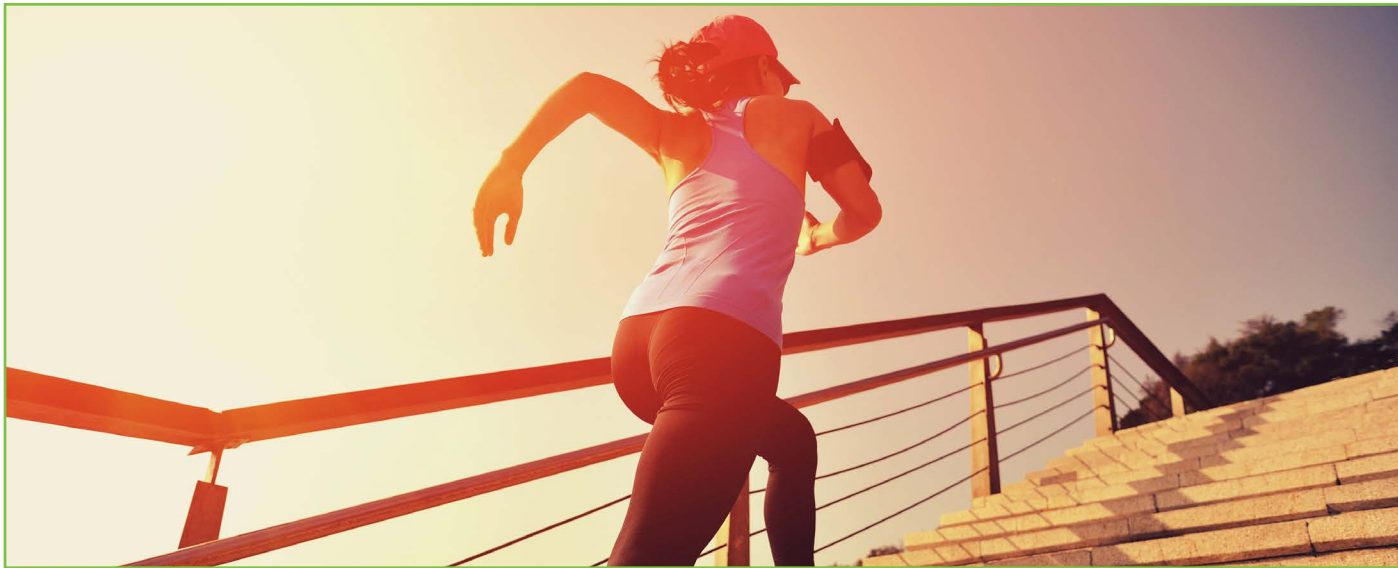
**2. Past Events. Past events are just that, they are in the past.**

They may have been serious or had a very serious effect on you. This may have caused some interruptions and created large challenges to your health and fitness plan. If these really are past events then we need to stop holding on to these challenges and start living in the now. Take any relevant lessons from these and use them to assist you in your future success.

**3. Situation. If we are always waiting for a good time to start our health and fitness plans, that time may never come.**

Many of us are short of time and things are always going to pop up. They do for everyone. It's about making your health and fitness a priority and understanding that if it is to be, it's up to me. If your situation is not ideal, you must make the necessary changes to allow yourself the opportunity for success. You must be in control of your own life and the actions you take in it.

*It's about making it a priority and understanding that if it is to be, it's up to me.*



What are some of the behaviours that you can now identify that you have been holding onto? Think about some of the people that you may have blamed, the past events and the situations that you have been blaming for the position that you are in. Are these assisting you, in any way, shape or form, to get closer to your health, fitness and weight loss goals?

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Are you prepared to take responsibility for the position that you are currently in? If so, what actions will you now choose and how will your behaviour change?

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I hope that you have been able to identify some of the barriers that may have stopped you, or could stop you from achieving your health and weight loss goals in the future. Your mindset is the strongest tool that you have to assist you towards achieving your goals. If you can develop this and have the “I’ll do whatever it takes attitude”, along with the right strategies for you, you’ll be kicking goals in no time at all.

*Best of luck on your health and weight loss journey!*

