

PROGRAM – THINKING OUTSIDE THE BOX
TO REACH RESIST TEMPTATION AND REACH YOUR GOALS
by Joy Turner

MATERIALS NEEDED: Pencils Handout Sheets Play food Tape to attach labels to actors

Copies of Plays – Actor Signs – Scene Signs - 2 signs (possible, accept)

HELEN WEEK 1 Post-it with : Nap Tell Yourself "Later" Have Protein at **Every** Meal Eliminate sweeteners at breakfast
Small box for Helen to put post-its either inside or outside box

BEFORE MEETING: Ask people to do handout sheets

Before skit – Narrator"

Well, here we are in the 3rd week of January. How many of you who made resolutions are keeping them so far? Hopefully, in the program that follows, everyone will find something to either get them motivated or keep them motivated to reach the goals they are trying to achieve.

Does everyone have the sheet of paper with a box on it?
Does everyone have something to write with?

Whether you have started to fill the sheet out or not, please stop and listen to the meeting. If you weren't here before the meeting , or if you didn't get finished, you can do the exercise at home. During the program, I'd like you to continue to use the sheet to jot notes.

Now, let's look at the sheet

What I'd like you to do is: During the program, I'd like you to jot a word of anything that's mentioned that you have tried **Inside the Box**.

In the area **Outside the box** jot a word of anything you have **NOT** tried.

On the blank side: Make a short note of anything in the program that might inspire you.

ANY QUESTIONS?

Please keep your notes short so that you don't miss out on anything said in the program that might offer help. Just write a word or two to jog your memory. If you can't remember what your note means you can either call or e-mail me during the week or catch me after the meeting to see if I can help you with it. My meeting notes are extensive.

Okay – let's get started with – MAKE THE IMPOSSIBLE POSSIBLE! (Bottom of box)

WORKSHEET TO START FILLING OUT BEFORE THE MEETING

This sheet is for YOU. Add items to the list below to personalize it. Also, add things from the program if helpful.

INSTRUCTIONS:

From the list below:

Please write things you've tried **inside** the box.
Things you have NOT tried go **outside** the box.

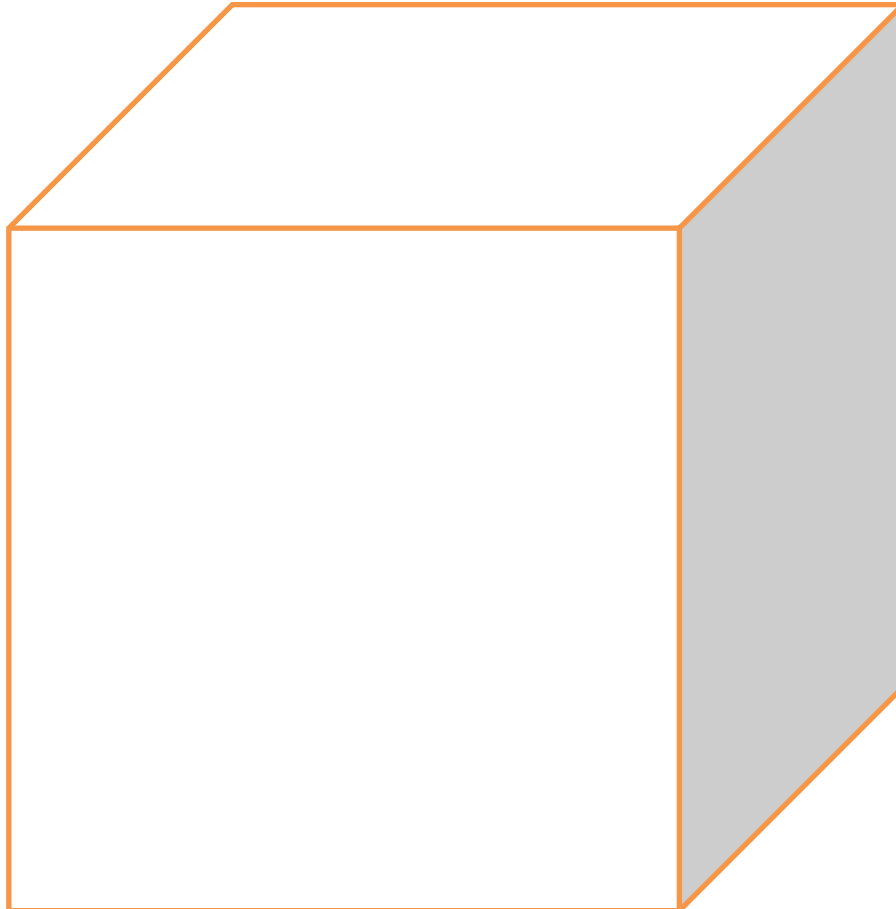
Next:

Put a **star** by each item that might be helpful to you.
Put an **"x"** by the things that you don't feel will help.

Have a specific goal
Write the goal down
Write down the steps you'll take
If I bite it, write it
Plan *(NO PLAN IS A PLAN TO FAIL)*
Write *the steps I plan to take*
Get rid of temptation
Eat slowly
Put fork down between each bite

Eat mindfully
Back on immediately if I "slip".
Know I won't do it perfectly
Manage Stress
Exercise
Visualize
Meditate
Breathe
Use affirmations

Hang up a motivating quote
Avoid negative self-talk
Small changes *A Man Can't
move a Mountain without first
removing one small stone.*
Get Support (family, friends, etc.)
Drink Water throughout the day
Drink Water before a meal
Make 1-week pacts with a friend



Ask for a volunteer the week before this program to try the following exercise and report at the meeting their results.

Thank you, (volunteer), for agreeing to help me with this week's program. I sent Helen a short list of "ideas" to try during the week. Some were inside her box already and others were outside. (Have the four ideas written and folded and ask the volunteer to draw one at a time and tell if it was beneficial to them when they tried using it during the week before the meeting.) I'm going to have her draw some of these ideas and tell us whether it was inside or outside of her box and if she tried it, whether or not it was helpful. Then I will share some research published in an article in Shape Magazine - Dec. 2014 . If you're interested in more specifics about the research, it can be found on-line.

HELEN WEEK 1

Tell Yourself "Later"

Eliminate sweeteners at breakfast

Have Protein at Every Meal

Nap

Take a Nap

Just taking a short break – a quick power nap – can break the lure of food. If you absolutely can't shut your eyes for even 5 mins. – remember to take a few deep cleansing breaths and get some oxygen to your brain to help you think more clearly.

Tell Yourself "Later"

It's not a "no," so it won't shift your body and brain into defiant mode. Postponing your indulgence can diffuse the intensity of the moment, and research shows that you're not likely to end up treating yourself after the situation has passed.

Have Protein at Every Meal

In a study at a University in the Netherlands researcher found: When exposed to food cues, people low on protein had stronger cravings. "Scans showed that the areas of the brain responsible for reward had increased activity when protein-deprived people were shown pictures of, and smelled, savory foods, even when they ate as many calories as the control group."

Eliminate Sweeteners at Breakfast

According to recent research in the American Journal of Clinical Nutrition , the foods women go bonkers for the most are sweet ones. That's because when you eat sugar and carbs, your brain releases hormones like serotonin and endorphins, which make you calm and relaxed—for a little while. But then what happens? (Wait for answers) Your insulin levels spike, causing you to crash. That makes you hanker for more sugar...and so starts the candy roller coaster. When you start the morning with sweetened coffee, sweetened cereal, toast spreads or other sweet items, you're setting yourself up for a sugar-and-carb-frenzied day.

I'm going to give the box to Helen and ask her for this week to place it somewhere at home that will remind her of her goals. She can replace the post-its with whatever she feels would be most helpful. Next week she can report to us whether it was helpful or not. She's agreed to come back and participate again. Thanks, Helen.

If anyone else is willing to try this, I'd love to hear from you whether or not it was a helpful tool. I'd suggest keeping it simple with only a few items at a time to try. Then you can switch them off with other items if some of them aren't effective. Of course, you also have your worksheet that could be hung somewhere as a visual reminder of what works for you, what doesn't and some things you could try, to help you with what you're trying to accomplish.

Has anyone ever started to read a book, put it down and just not be able to get into it? Then, months later pick it up and love it? That's happened to me. It can be that way with things that you've tried in the past that haven't worked for you when trying to lose or maintain weight. It may just not have been the right time. Consider giving those things another try.

We have a couple of skits to present tonight. But before we do, I'd like to take a few minutes for feedback I'd especially like to hear from those who usually don't share. I'm just going to take a few minutes for this so we're sure to have time for the skits. Then we'll use the remaining time for sharing.

Has anyone ever just used the word STOP to end an unhealthy action?

Here's how that could work.

We've prepared a skit showing various scenarios that we all encounter. The skit portrays Cathy confronting situations that can be hard to resist. The other characters in the skit represent parts of Cathy's brain which would like to help her attain her goal! Cathy gets to either listen to them and accept their help – or choose to continue with habits that lure her away from achieving her dreams of health and vitality.

Remember, if you hear anything during the skit that would be helpful to you, write a memory jogger either inside or outside of your personal box or on the reverse side of the sheet.

2 SKITS GO HERE

AFTER 2ND SKIT, IF TIME, OPEN FOR DISCUSSION ASKING FOR PEOPLE WHO RARELY SHARE THEIR THOUGHTS TO PLEASE GIVE SOME FEEDBACK .

2nd week (Handout)

BEFORE MEETING:

Please think about this question and then discuss it with others before the meeting.

QUESTION: What are you looking for from “binge foods” (or even food in general). It may be hard to answer this question – but think about it. Sometimes we have unconscious reasons for eating. Sometimes we’d be embarrassed to write down why we do it because we know it’s not rational. BUT – Please give this some thought over the coming days until you can figure out some answers. Example: I think chocolate will help relieve my stress and make me happy. OR: I’m mad at my _____ (husband, children, friend, myself) I’ll show _____ (him/her/them) if I eat this bag of chips it will _____ (?) Strange thing about this sentence is that for me sometimes I seem to feel I’m going to make that person pay by eating. I know it isn’t rational, but somehow in that moment of anger, it seems to make some kind of crazy sense to me. I wonder if that happens to anyone else? It can help to know what we’re expecting when we eat things we wish we hadn’t eaten!

Sometimes I’m feeling bored or tired and thinking food might offer a pick-me-up . That may or may not be true depending on when and what I last ate. Eating more food often makes us even more tired. If we know what we’re expecting when we want to grab something not on our plan, it may help to ask “What do I expect this food to do for me?” If we know what we’re looking for from our food, we can better assess if our expectations will be met or not.

Even if you can’t answer this question yourself tonight – talk with others before the meeting. The discussion may help you to make discoveries about your own expectations from food.

You may want to jot some answers below.

NOTE: MAKE THE FOLLOWING POST-ITS AND HAVE VOLUNTEER BRING BACK SAME BOX TO ADD TO

Go to Bed

Use a Scent Memory

Ride It Out

Give yourself a non-food reward

Go to Bed

As anyone who's raided the fridge while watching late-night TV knows, you're at prime risk for furious snacking at night. "It's the work of your circadian system, which amps up cravings come sundown, telling you to keep eating in order to store energy until the next meal. Your food urges peak at 8 p.m. and stay high until midnight. Basically, the later you stay up, the more food you're likely to eat." Not getting enough sleep also triggers the release of hormones that are linked to hunger, which can spark more cravings the next day.

Ride It Out

Acknowledge in the moment that you want a cupcake, or chips, or whatever your kryptonite may be, and just be Zen with it. Don't try to push the feeling away, or ignore it, or punish yourself for it—just coexist with the feeling. "It's a technique called urge surfing," explains Forman. "It's like being in the ocean: If you fight the waves, you'll struggle, panic, and eventually go under. But if you just surf them, you stay calm and in control. It takes practice, but pretty soon you'll learn that not fighting the craving, while also not giving in, is a perfectly okay state."

Give yourself a non-food reward

Put a quarter in a jar every day that you meet your health plan goals.

Put another quarter in the jar every time you resist a food temptation (Remember, any food you would have eaten would surely cost more than a quarter!)

That money can be used for a non-food reward you wouldn't otherwise have bought:

An article of clothing, a magazine (tell about Anita in checkout line), a day trip, a piece of jewelry, something you wanted to get for a grandchild but thought you couldn't afford.

THOUGHT: Even though we're otherwise frugal, somehow we are able to rationalize the money we spend for the food we want. So let's spend it on rewards rather than foods that deter us from reaching our personal goals.

Use a Scent Memory

“Imagining a scent, like freshly cut grass or gasoline, takes over the place in your brain occupied by a craving,” “Focus on the smell for a few minutes and it can dissipate the strength of your urge.”

Here’s another hint about using mint gum or actually eating a mint:

Because of mint’s strong scent, it naturally suppresses your appetite.

That’s exactly what psychologists at the University of West Virginia found when they gave people mints to sniff throughout the day. The results of the study showed that people who inhaled mint, ate 3,000 fewer calories over the week. Your sense of smell is a big part of your experience of food, so by controlling your scent you can somewhat control your appetite.

Do you suppose that’s why they sometimes have mints available in restaurants?

HAND OUT MINT TEABAGS, MINT LIFESAVERS AND MINT CANDIES.

Teabags (peppermint leaves or peppermint leaves, spearmint leaves, rose hips, lemon peel, hibiscus)

Lifesavers – Use as a symbol of TOPS SUPPORT. THEY CONTAIN: SUGAR, CORN SYRUP, ARTIFICIAL FLAVOR, STEARIC ACID) **TOPS FRIENDS CAN BE LIFESAVERS REACH OUT TO THEM**

Starlight Mints with real peppermint oil - BUT sugar is the first ingredient, then corn syrup, and next natural peppermint!

For me, that little bit of peppermint does the trick – BUT IF SUGAR AND CORN SYRUP set you up to crave sugar, it may not be a deterrent for you. Only you can experiment and know.

WORK SOMEWHERE IN THE PROGRAM TO TRY EATING WITH NON-DOMINANT HAND AS IT WILL CAUSE YOU TO SLOW DOWN AND REALLY THINK ABOUT THE FACT THAT YOU’RE EATING.

BRING UP THE RESEARCH ON HOW EACH TIME YOU SAY “NO” TO SOMETHING YOU ARE MAKING A NEW TRACK IN YOUR BRAIN THAT GETS DEEPER AND DEEPER AND BECOMES MORE A PART OF YOUR AUTOMATIC RESPONSE SYSTEM. (THAT WOULD BE THE SAME AS USING THE WORD “STOP” AND COULD BE A LEAD IN TO THE SKIT.)
CLOSE WITH SKIT AND DISCUSSION AS TIME ALLOWS.

MORE MATERIAL IF TIME – IF NOT SUGGEST DOING FOLLOW-UP PROGRAM WHEN YOU RETURN!

How many of you have tried to train an animal – or teach your child multiplication tables – or even learn something new yourself like dancing or a new language? What did it take to do that? REPETITION, REPETITION, REPETITION! Then, after a while, your animal, your child, or even you, responded automatically.

Did you ever stop to think that you are really retraining the brain?

What other ways can you -
RETRAIN YOUR BRAIN?

Right! Use your imagination.

You can build new neural pathways not only with new behaviors, but through the imagination. Just imagine the new behaviors over and over and over. Keep repeating that in your mind so you build new pathways. Focus your mind and retrain your brain.

Change your environment. People have the most success in changing a habit when they are on vacation. Then continue the new behavior in the new seat. How can you change your environment without leaving your house? If you snack while watching TV, change that seat and NEVER eat there. Create “no eating zones” in your home, car or other places you eat unhealthily in.

Sit in a different seat at the table – or change from dining room to kitchen or vice versa

EAT WITH NON-DOMINANT HAND

For things I can't avoid, can I do something differently that would be healthier? Obviously, you can't avoid all situations that trigger your unhealthy eating habits, like staff meetings at work. In these situations, evaluate your options. Could you suggest or bring healthier snacks or beverages? Could you offer to take notes to distract your attention? Could you sit farther away from the food so it won't be as easy to grab something? Could you plan ahead and eat a healthy snack before the meeting?

Unfortunately, the brain mechanisms that develop habits cannot learn not to do something. No matter how many times you successfully avoid checking your email, your habit learning system will still prod you to check it again when you are in the situation where you normally check your email.

So, negative goals are doomed to fail, because they do not create a desirable set of habits.

7. Replace unhealthy habits with new, healthy ones. For example, in reflecting upon your eating habits, you may realize that you eat too fast when you eat alone. So, make a commitment to share a lunch each week with a colleague, or have a neighbor over for dinner one night a week. Other strategies might include putting your fork down between bites or minimizing other distractions (i.e. watching the news during dinner) that might keep you from paying attention to how quickly — and how much — you're eating.

Here are more ideas to help you replace unhealthy habits:

- Eat more slowly. If you eat too quickly, you may “clean your plate” instead of paying attention to whether your hunger is satisfied.

- Eat only when you're truly hungry instead of when you are tired, anxious, or feeling an emotion besides hunger. If you find yourself eating when you are experiencing an emotion besides hunger, such as boredom or anxiety, try to find a non-eating activity to do instead. You may find a quick walk or phone call with a friend helps you feel better.

3. Shift your focus.

This is very important. To create a new neural pathway, you take the focus off the old habit, and then that old habit eventually falls away. Don't pay attention to the donuts and cakes. Take your awareness and focus it on good, wholesome, healthy delicious foods.