

CHAPTER NINE

TROUBLE SHOOTING

This chapter deals with the basics of troubleshooting. There are two components to this chapter. The first is the medical assessment. Doctors have a range of procedure that can be applied for clients who are high risk. These techniques include behaviour therapy, pharmacotherapy or surgery. As with most medical options, there can be some associated risks. Doctors assess its suitability by determining if the benefits outweigh the risks. Before doctors will permit certain therapies, the client generally needs to be deemed ‘at risk’ with all other attempts failing. These options can be discussed with your doctor when you first see him, and he can discuss their suitability for you.

The first thing to do, if you believe medical options may be required, is to seek the advice of your doctor. This can be done at the initial stages of preparation (as listed in step 3 of ‘Preparing Your Plan’ in chapter 8). Here you can also discuss the medical options that may be available to you – they will let you know if medical options are viable. Discuss your plan with your doctor. If you are low risk they may offer some advice to supplement or alter your plan. If you are high risk, they may wish to put you on a clinically controlled program where they assess the techniques used and your response to those techniques. They may then make a determination as to the suitability of other treatments. A basic overview of some of these treatments is listed below.

Diet therapy and physical activity: This is basically a controlled diet as prescribed by the doctor or dietician, accompanied by physical activity requirements. The doctor will then make an assessment of your condition and prescribe the appropriate treatment.

Behaviour therapy: When the doctor identifies compliance to be an issue, behaviour therapy may be recommended. As described in ‘Understanding Your Psychology’ the health professional will attempt to identify the Psychology behind non compliance. Self monitoring, stimulus control, problem solving, contingency management, cognitive restructuring and social support may be applied in an attempt to promote compliance.

Pharmacotherapy: Doctors may recommend certain drugs to be used in conjunction with physical activity, diet therapy and behaviour therapy. A variety of drugs can decrease energy intake or increase energy expenditure, of both. Pharmacotherapy may have some associated side effects.

Surgery: Treatments of a surgical nature are designed to produce a reduced energy intake, various degrees of malabsorption of nutrients, or both. These treatments also have

associated risks and treatment is usually only recommended for well informed and motivated patients who have been assessed clinically with severe obesity.

FIT AUSSIE GUIDE

The ‘Fit Aussie Guide’ is an attempt at providing all with a modified form of form of physical activity, diet therapy and behavioural therapy as used in the above programs. (But for those who are not deemed as high risk via clinical assessments.

Our guide hopes to give you an insight into some of the basics used to create a greater understanding of balance and appropriate behaviours. If self monitoring isn’t sufficient, a network of professionals is there to help, much like the professionals doctors use.

TROUBLE SHOOTING TIPS

The second part of this chapter relates to the variety of techniques used around the industry. Self monitoring and personal compliance can be a difficult job. Some of these tips may be valid, some may be ‘old wives tales’, some may have no credibility at all – but if they are used around the ‘traps’ we will list them for your information. As the ‘Fit Aussie forum’ grows so will our grapevine where users will, no doubt, offer their views as to anecdotal success of these techniques. As our site grows, so will the grave-vine. As more tips come in, we will put some of the more respectable ones for your viewing.

Be aware, many of these suggestions or beliefs are simply talk. It is the responsibility of each trainer to discuss these options with their associated professional to determine if they can aid compliance. Although many will look to solve their own problems, the reality is that our professional services have far more productive knowledge and ability than the average person. The reality is this, the more failed attempts you have, the bigger the problem becomes. If you note a problem, get it assessed by a professional, and get some quality advice as to the best way to overcome it.

OPTIONS FOR BEHAVIOURAL COMPLIANCE

Commit yourself to a goal: various programs use this technique. As listed in Ciardini’s book ‘Influence, the Psychology of Persuasion’ studies indicate there is a higher chance that an individual will stick to a goal if they have made some sort of agreement. A variable of this commitment could be a written statement which is used in many diet therapies.

Public commitment: Ciardini also identifies increased levels of compliance when individuals make their intentions and their pursuit’s public. Without going to extremes, this may be as simple as putting your training chart on the fridge with green highlights for good sessions or good eating, and red highlights for missed sessions or unexpected ‘outs’.

Like minded people: Identify your friends and associates who have similar goals. Identify those friends or acquaintances with bad habits. Work out their time tables and avoid those who are forcing bad habits on you – when they do it. Make a point of hanging with your friends that have good habits, when they do them. Eg: avoid the banquet by meeting your friends at the gym, then turn up late - after all the food is eaten.

Concentrate on positives, not negatives: Identify your positive and negative traits. Don't let your inability to control a negative get to you, and don't dwell on it. Try using your positives, or strengths, to overcome your negatives. If in doubt, find the professional appropriate to your weakness, chances are the solution may be a simple one.

Success breeds success: If your goal is distant it may seem unachievable - this is likely to generate some negative thoughts. Break down your overall objective with milestones. Make them easier at the start, then back them up one after another. Nothing breeds success more than success itself.

Failure breeds failure: As with the above statement about success, failure can have a similar impact. If you set yourself an objective and fail at it, develop a protocol for handling it – in fact, plan for it because it is most likely going to happen. When a failure occurs, write a method into your routine to ensure you get straight back on track. Eg: A note on the roof above your bed – ‘today is another step in the right direction’.

OPTIONS FOR PHYSICAL ACTIVITY COMPLIANCE

Plan your day: If you have a busy schedule, write your training times into your planner. Establish a regular training time, and days, and make it a habit.

The breaky session: To help with fitting extra activity into your day, try the early start. Waking up 20 minutes earlier for an early morning session followed by a healthy breakfast - it will change your whole outlook on life. You feel more energised and just feel healthier (once you have established the habit). Alternatively if you go to work earlier, you can beat peak hour traffic, fit in a quick session then shower (if available) and have breakfast at work. The time saved in avoiding peak hour can be used training.

Moral support: Let those close to you know of your intentions and that you will appreciate their support in encouraging your to stay active – or even their company. This could come from a partner, parent, child, friend, local council programs, health services or other professionals.

Get a training partner: Knowing you have to be there to meet your friend will make it harder to avoid. Both of you can push each other into regular training. Don't stop there, get a group together, walk the dog or get the family involved. Start making reasons to train.

Join a gym or instructed class: This will provide you with some qualified help as well as providing you with a group of like minded trainers.

Join a club or team: This will provide you with a commitment to sport and activity. There are sporting teams, running / walking clubs, dance groups, the list is endless – get involved.

Get a personal trainer: You pay some-one to make you train – you're going to train!

Reward yourself for compliance: when you achieve good results, reward yourself for good work. Don't however make this a negative such as unhealthy foods, try a movie without the visit to the kiosk.

OPTIONS FOR DIETARY COMPLIANCE

The blitz: Blitzing is a technique I use with my clients. When you are dealing with an established habit, often the best way to overcome it is to go 'cold turkey', then re-introduce an acceptable pattern. The blitz I recommend is basically clean eating for 7 days before applying a balanced diet. This means unsugared cereals, lowfat milk, plain fruit, healthy bread, steamed rice, boiled pasta, stripped meat etc. It also means no fat, no sauces, no sweets, no alcohol, no sugar, no chocolate, no ice cream - you get the message. The goal is basically a perfect diet to teach the mind that this goal, and clean eating, is achievable. From there a balanced diet begins - applying the extras you used to have, in a controlled manner.

Drink 8 glasses of water each day: You will note this listed in the 'Fit Aussie Guide'. Most will have heard this a million times. Most agreed and then ignore it altogether. Water has zero calories, will help flush toxins and control your appetite.

Remove temptation: If your compliance issue is based on temptation whilst shopping, eat before you go, take a list and only purchase the items on the list. Don't permit bad foods in your fridge, throw them out or give them away. If your family demand those items, only buy enough for them and store them separately. If the temptation is the canteen at work, create ways of avoiding like the suggested planning of meals and taking your own lunch - then there is no need to go there at all.

Meal replacements: If you struggle with certain meal options, the answer is simple – always have cereals or a soup as a safety net. A healthy cereal has a great mix of nutrients, and just because it is custom to eat it in the morning, it doesn't mean you can't eat it at other times of the day. Soups are a great saviour. They are warm enjoyable and if you get a water based product and watch the ingredients, it can be very low in calories and very satisfying. This can be a great replacement for any meal and should be a must in everyone's dietary arsenal.

Eat slowly: For those who have a habit of overeating, this technique may help to keep your mind in touch with your intake. Some articles suggest that it takes 20 minutes for the stomach to tell the brain it is full.

Don't reward good eating with junk food: Instead of saying “I have done well I deserve an ice cream feast”, try rewarding yourself with a movie (and sneak your healthy snack in – don't go to the cinema kiosk).

Healthy replacements for unhealthy foods: If you crave chocolates, try replacing them with dates. If you crave ice cream, try replacing it with the low fat, iced yogurt alternative.

STAY TUNED I HAVE ONLY JUST BEGAN LISTING THESE OPTIONS. THIS LIST WILL BE CONSTANTLY UPDATED! IF YOU HAVE ANY SUGGESTIONS WITH STICKING POINTS, PUT YOUR VIEWS FORWARD IN OUR FIT AUSSIE FORUM.