

Celebrate Health at Every Size

ENJOY LIVING ACTIVELY

- Be active your way, every day
- Move for the sheer joy and power of it; moving feels good
- Celebrate activity as a natural part of your life, for good times spent with nature, family and friends
- Your body regulates better with daily activity — hunger and fullness send clear signals
- Enjoy the benefits — improve health; increase energy, strength, endurance, bone mass and resistance to illness; sleep better; relieve stress
- Take time to care for yourself — add years to your life and life to your years
- Fitness not weight is the key to longevity
- Be creative — enjoy movement through the day
- Share the benefits; share the fun!

ENJOY EATING WELL

- Take pleasure in eating; think of food as a friend — celebrate, enjoy, taste, savor
- Normalize eating with a stable, diet-free lifestyle
- Eat at regular times (typically three meals and one or two snacks to satisfy hunger)
- Listen to your body — tune in to internal cues of appetite, hunger and fullness
- Meet your body's nutrient and energy needs; enjoy all five food groups — grains, fruits, vegetables, meat and alternates, milk
- Enjoy variety; learn to like new foods
- Tailor your taste toward foods moderate in fat, sugars, salt; however, all foods can fit
- Enjoy home cooking and meals with family and friends

RESPECT YOURSELF AND OTHERS

Celebrate and enjoy your unique self * Relax and relieve stress in your life * Take time for yourself every day * Identify and build on your strengths, talents, special traits and interests * Make peace with your genetic blueprint * Accept your appearance, size and shape * Like yourself and others regardless of what's not perfect * Think critically of media messages that portray unrealistic standards or suggest that happiness is based on appearance * Celebrate diversity for yourself and others * Size prejudice hurts us all * Beauty, health and strength come in all sizes

Be flexible, go with the flow * Trust your ability to make choices for better health * Make lifestyle changes one step at a time, small changes you can live with * Take what works for you, leave the rest * Nurture yourself and experience enhanced self-esteem * Wear clothes you like that fit comfortably and look good now * Live in tune with your body * Use positive language: think of *joy, self-discovery, respect, appreciation, healing, adventure, freedom, fun, celebration* * Focus on the big picture of health and well-being

"I can if I choose"

Adapted from *Children and Teens Afraid to Eat: Helping Youth in Today's Weight-Obsessed World* and *Women Afraid to Eat: Breaking Free in Today's Weight-Obsessed World*, by Frances M. Berg. Copyright 2006, 2000. All rights reserved. The author permits use of this feature as a handout or in nonprofit newsletters for educational purposes, provided it is reproduced *in its entirety* with this citation. Written permission is required for use in books or publications for sale. Healthy Weight Network, 402 South 14th Street, Hettinger, ND 58639 (701-567-2646; fax 701-567-2602), www.healthyweight.net



*... a health centered approach
for the 21st century*

Reject the Weight-Centered Paradigm

EXERCISE PRESCRIBED

- Exercise as work; no pain, no gain
- Reliance on numbers — target heart rate, timed effort, intensity, keeping records
- Exercise for purpose of burning calories, or only when dieting
- Daily weighing; weight affects mood for the day
- Competition; comparing self to others
- High drop-out rates; feelings of failure
- Living the “hectic couch potato lifestyle” — *too busy* during work day or leisure to be active

LOW SELF ESTEEM

- Body-hatred, body bashing; “*When I’m thinner/prettier/almost-perfect, then I can like and respect myself*”
- Unrealistic goals for body size and shape
- Obsession with weight; focus on so-called *ideal weight*; setting weight goals
- Unrealistic goals for body size and shape
- Self-centered, self-absorbed, anxious, irritable
- Endorse media images of women and men, and strive to measure up
- Body image fears; “*I won’t look good in swimsuit or shorts, so I can’t swim or play tennis*”

EATING RESTRICTED

- Restricting food; eat less than you want
- Skipping meals, fasting, bingeing
- “*Good food/bad food*” thinking
- Food is the enemy; willpower is needed
- Dieting, counting calories/fat grams
- Weight cycling — yo-yoing weight
- Dysfunctional and disordered eating
- Eating disorders
- Rules, rigidity, control, stress about eating
- Eating in secret; shame/guilt over food
- Diet books, diet foods, diet pills, scales
- False hopes, failure

NEGATIVE ATTITUDES

- Feelings of deprivation, guilt, shame
- Perfectionist
- All or nothing
- Acceptance of self and others only if weight loss and other goals are achieved
- Intolerance; criticism; size prejudice
- Language of negatives, criticism and control: *should, ought, must, judging, prescribe, compliance, labeling, forbidden foods, failure, “too” talk — as in “too short/big/fat/tall”*

The weight-centered paradigm has dominated our culture and health community for the last two or three decades, with intense pressures to be extremely thin. It’s a weight-obsessed philosophy with features that lead to restriction, rigidity and unhappiness, as well as increased eating and weight problems. Shifting to the *Health at Every Size* approach opens up positive behaviors and attitudes that support total health and well-being. The *Health at Every Size* paradigm, also known as *Health at Any Size*, encompasses active living and normal eating, emotional and spiritual well-being, and positive relationships.