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
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

**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

**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”

**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.

This handout was developed by Frances M. Berg, MS, LN, with adaptations from *Vitality* of Health Canada, the HUGS program, her other writings, and credits to dietitians Ellyn Satter, Linda Omichinski, Karin Kratina, Dayle Hayes, Nancy King and Gail Marchessault. Copyright 2006, 2000, by Frances M. Berg. 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