

## HEALTHY WEIGHT SCRIPT

### SESSION 1:

#### Materials Needed

- Flip chart or whiteboard and markers
- Attendance sheet
- Lifestyle Change Principles Sheet
- Increasing Lifestyle Activity Sheet
- Food Record Form
- Exercise Record Form

#### **I. Introduction (5 min)**

*LEADER: Thanks for joining us. All of you decided to participate in these groups because of your body image concerns – a common concern.*

Introduce self and co-facilitator.

*Let's get to know each other better. Can each of you tell us your name, where you're from and something unique about you?*

Facilitator starts [use to learn peoples' names] by introducing herself and the co-leader to the group. The leader asks the co-leader and group members to introduce themselves. This is an opportunity for the facilitators to break the ice and help participants feel comfortable discussing personal thoughts and experiences.

*This intervention is based on a study performed at the University of Texas which suggested that young women who took a class on how to develop a healthy life-style showed marked improvements in body acceptance and any eating disturbances, and were at a much lower risk for future onset of obesity and weight gain. In that study, the healthy weight intervention produced an 80% reduction in risk for bulimia nervosa onset and a 60% reduction in risk for obesity onset over 3-year follow-up.*

*Although these initial results were promising, this program has not been evaluated in a large-scale study. Our goal is to provide such a definitive test for this intervention.*

#### **II. Voluntary Commitment and Overview (5 min)**

*The idea behind this class is that we can fine-tune our energy balance on a permanent basis and can develop a better relationship with food and our body image. The goal is to reach a balance that will permit you to stop obsessing about food and dieting, and achieve a lasting healthy weight. We will use proven principles to achieve this aim because many people find it difficult to change these behaviors. This will make you feel better about your body and result in improved health. This brief intervention can be easily incorporated into your busy college life.*

*In addition, this intervention is based on the idea that by committing to these healthy lifestyle changes, you gain greater control over body shape, which should also help you feel better about your body.*

*Finally, we deliver this intervention in a group format so that you can provide support for each other regarding body image issues – something that is very important.*

*Are you willing to do this?*

Get public commitment verbally from all participants

*During the four sessions we will:*

- 1. Differentiate the healthy-ideal from the thin-ideal*
- 2. Introduce the concept of reaching an energy balance*
- 3. Work with each of you to fine-tune your energy balance so you can achieve body satisfaction and lasting weight control*
- 4. Help you to generate ideas about how to eat healthfully and incorporate exercise into your daily lives in a way that is sustainable for the long term.*

Orient participants to the intervention: Provide participants with additional information about what to expect from the intervention. Specifically, tell participants that:

*Each week we will ask you to set one or more behavioral goals related to healthy eating or activity, and that each participant will be asked to report their progress in meeting those goals at the next meeting.*

*Experience indicates that people get the most out of these groups if they attend all four meetings, participate verbally, and complete all of the home exercises. Can you commit to this?*

Get public commitment from group as a whole.

*If for some reason you need to miss a session, please let me (or co-facilitator) know as soon as possible. We will need to schedule a make-up session with you before the next regular group session so you will be caught up with everyone else.*

*During this class, some of us may reveal personal details about our lives. Thus, we would like to ask that everything said in our group remains completely confidential.*

### **III. The Healthy-Ideal (10 mins)**

*First, we need to distinguish between the thin-ideal and the healthy-ideal.*

Healthy ideal is a reasonably slender body, but one that has muscles and fat as well. Each is natural and serves important functions. Note that it is possible to be healthy, and yet still not meet our society's ultra-slender ideal.

*Many women have body image concerns that are rooted in a pursuit of the thin-ideal, which is unrealistic and is not healthy.*

*What are some of the advantages of aspiring to a healthy-ideal? Spend most time here.*

Health benefits (longer life, less illness [e.g., cancer], fewer injuries; higher quality of life, able to get around comfortably, easier to get pregnant, fewer birth complications)

Social benefits (more social acceptance, easier to meet new friends; easier to find dates, higher marriage rates, easier to get jobs, higher salaries, higher social class)

Emotional benefits (less obsessing about weight and eating, better able to focus on school and studies; lower rates of depression, higher self-esteem and self-confidence, feeling better in general, more energy, greater productivity)

#### IV. Attaining the Healthy Ideal (10 mins)

*Many people find it difficult to reach the healthy ideal because of an incomplete understanding of the causes of weight gain and because they lack the skills to make lasting behavior change. An improved understanding of these factors will help you achieve a healthier weight, which will give you more energy, self-confidence, and greater body acceptance. This group will help you learn to make these behavioral changes, and will also provide a source of support.*

##### A. Energy balance

*Body weight is a function of caloric intake and output. If you consume more calories than you use, you gain weight; if you consume less than you use, you lose weight. If you want to maintain weight, you need to balance this equation. Thus, healthy weight attainment is simply a function of turning down your intake of the foods highest in fat and turning up your caloric expenditure. The premise of this intervention is on how to fine-tune your energy balance.*

*Some of you may think that your weight is completely determined by genetics. However, genetics play a limited role in determining body weight compared to lifestyle behaviors. You simply need to find an intake and output balance that helps you attain a healthy weight given your genes and metabolism.*

*Thus, we'll spend time examining your caloric intake and output, with the goal of making slight alterations that will allow you to reach and maintain a healthy body weight. It is important to note that these changes will be individualized.*

##### B. Energy balance versus dieting

*Please note that we are not suggesting you diet. Dieting refers to time-limited constraints on caloric intake intended to counteract the effects of overeating. Many diets involve deprivation and people typically go "on" and "off" diets.*

*In contrast, we suggest you make smaller, permanent changes to your caloric intake and output that you maintain for the rest of your life. Thus, this approach represents a lifestyle commitment. This involves making healthy habits a part of day-to-day life. Can you commit to this lifestyle approach?*

*By definition, the energy balance approach ensures that you are not deprived; rather you are simply trying to find a more appropriate level of caloric intake. If you are overweight, you will lose weight even if you eat the number of calories that you need to maintain a healthy body size.*

#### V. Input (15 min)

*A calorie is a measure of energy, which refers to both the energy potential in a food and how much energy your body takes to function.*

*When your basic energy requirements are met, the body stores excess calories as fat.*

##### A. Healthy Dietary Change Principles

*A lot of people find it difficult to redesign their diet and change their eating habits. To make it easier, we highlight four principles that will help you improve your dietary intake.*

Group leader should write down each principle on a flip-chart (or whiteboard) as it is discussed.

##### 1 Substitutions

*Substitution refers to replacing high calorie foods with lower calorie alternatives – foods that still make you feel full and satisfied. For example, you can replace ice cream with frozen yogurt or sorbet. You'll still feel satisfied, but with fewer calories. Choose skim milk instead of whole or 2%, mustard or low fat mayo instead of regular mayo.*

*The more you do this, the more your cravings for high-calorie foods will decrease.*

*Can you name what you suspect is the highest calorie part of your weekly diet and name a lower calorie substitute? I'll start, so we are all disclosing. I enjoy eating...(pick your own examples).*

Group leader should write down example substitutions to help participants remember these ideas. Any misperceptions that participants have should be corrected. For example, many low-fat versions of popular foods (such as cookies) are still highly caloric.

## 2 Start Your Meal Right

*Another aspect of lowering caloric density is to start your meals with foods that have high water content (like fruit, vegetables, salad, or soup). This is a healthy way to feel full faster and will ensure that the calories you are filling up on are healthier. You will be less likely to eat too much of a high-fat meal if you start it with a healthier, but filling food because you will feel full while eating less. Foods with high water content are good for this.*

*What other healthy foods could you start a meal with in order to help you from overeating high calorie foods during mealtimes?*

Group leader should write down these ideas.

## 3. Smaller portion sizes

*The next principle to help change your diet is smaller portion sizes. If you are going to eat something high in calories, eat a smaller portion. This can be hard based on habits of grabbing a large plate or bowl and filling it to capacity. One way to change this habit is to use smaller dishes. For example, instead of a large cereal bowl for ice cream, you could use a coffee-cup. Instead of a pint glass of juice, use a small glass.*

*What are other ways to decrease your portion sizes?*

Group leader should write down these ideas.

More examples:

- Never opt for super size servings
- Start with small servings at meals and get more if not full – people tend to eat everything they are served, even if they feel full without finishing the serving
- Don't eat out of the container, take a small serving instead.
- When eating out at a restaurant that has large portion sizes, ask the server to immediately box up one-half of the meal

## 3. Less variety

*Instead of eating 4 different types of food at a meal (e.g., meat, vegetable, potato, bread), limit it to a couple of things. This will help you reach that full feeling faster and help you refrain from overeating at mealtime. However, it is best to NOT cut out vegetables or fruits. Instead, cut things like starch or carbohydrates (bread, potatoes) or less healthy components.*

*What are things you would be willing to cut from your favorite meals?*

Group leader should write down these ideas.

#### 4. Healthier food environment

*To help you reduce your intake of high calorie foods, don't keep them around. If you don't have cookies in your cupboard when you're looking for something to snack on, you're more likely to settle for something healthier that you do have, or nothing at all if you're not really hungry.*

*This can be tough when vending machines and snack shops are around. We suggest that you select routes around town or campus that do not bring you past tempting snack shops or vending machines. You can also leave your money at home, so you are not tempted by unhealthy snacks. Talk to your roommate/housemates about helping each other keep only healthy foods around.*

*What ways can you give yourself a healthier food environment or avoid the less healthy ones?*

Group leader should write down these ideas.

### **B. Healthy Dietary Change Plan**

*Can each of you pick one way that you will change your diet this week to make it healthier? Use the principles we just talked about for ideas. We are not calling for radical changes – we only want to fine-tune your energy balance. The important point is that YOU get to make the decision of what, and when, you change your eating.*

Note that the best choice for a given individual may depend on the nature of the food and the individual's knowledge of herself. Some options include:

1. Cutting out the food entirely to handle a given situation (e.g., stop bringing cookies back to the dorm room from the cafeteria);
2. Purchasing single-serving sized packages of the food; and
3. Having a low energy density food and then having a limited amount of the high-calorie food, or eating a version of the food that is reduced in energy density (frozen yogurt instead of full fat ice cream).

Go around the room and make sure everyone commits to one healthy change to their diets. Get public commitments. Encourage small changes/improvements if a participant attempts to make a change that you think will be too extreme, and therefore unlikely to be achieved.

*It is particularly important for you to develop healthy habits regarding dietary intake at this point in your life. You are becoming independent adults and have started or will soon start living on your own. For many of you, this will be the first time that you are solely responsible for what you eat. This means that the habits you develop now may be with you for the rest of your life.*

### **VI. Output (10 min)**

*The other side of the energy equation is output – exercise. Exercise can involve lifestyle behaviors, such as biking to school or work and using the stairs. Exercise can also involve more formal exercise such as running, playing volleyball, or aerobics. Not only does regular exercise help balance the energy equation by using more calories, but it also increases your metabolism.*

#### **A. Healthy Exercise Change Principles**

*It can be difficult to increase physical activity, but it's important in order to stay in shape and keep your healthy. It also keeps your caloric intake more in balance with your caloric output (the energy you use*

– through exercise). Just as we did with healthier eating, we have principles that will make it easier to make small, but important changes in your exercise habits.

1. Add exercise to your schedule

*Pick a time of day that you will be most likely to exercise, and pick something that you enjoy...and do it! Scheduling exercise with a friend can help motivate you, but don't give up if your friend can't make it one day.*

*What are some different types of exercise that you would enjoy scheduling into your life?*

Group leader writes ideas on board.

2. Active Living

*Think of exercise that you could work into your daily routine. For example, take the stairs rather than the elevator, ride a bike, parker further from campus/work. All of these things takes just a few minutes more and adds exercise to your day.*

Hand out Increasing Lifestyle Activity Handout

*This 'Lifestyle Activity' sheet that I'm handing out has some suggestions for how to implement some of these principles into your regular routine.*

*What are some examples of active living you can think of that would fit with your daily routines?*

Group leader writes ideas on board.

3. No excuses: Creative Exercising

*Exercise can happen anywhere at any time. If you think you don't have time to exercise because you can't go out and run or make it to the gym, rethink what exercise is. For example, do yard work or house cleaning – these are all things that you have to do, and also involve exercise.*

*What are some activities that you do that would also count as exercise or times when you could exercise rather than sitting around?*

Group leader writes ideas on board.

*Making these changes will require some effort at first, but if you make small steps, they can become part of a new routine.*

**B. Healthy Exercise Change Plan**

*We would like each of you to pick a way to increase physical activity. For some we will recommend beginning regular exercise, whereas for others we may recommend cross-training to minimize the risk of injury.*

*Can each of you commit to one increase in your physical activity that you can maintain? It may be as simple as taking a 20 min walk each day or may be more ambitious such as jogging a few miles every other day. The choice is yours — we are just here to support you in reaching your goals.*

*What will each of you do to exercise more?*

Go around the room getting one alternation from each participant. Get public commitment.

If a participant is already exercising more than 2 hours a day, encourage cross-training or a potential reduction in overall exercise.

*This is an individually tailored program – it all comes down to what will work for you. On this note, it is important to consider your weight gain trajectory of your current input/output level. If you are slowly inching up the scale, only slight alterations are necessary. If you are gaining weight rapidly, more intense alterations are required.*

*It is important to point out that the only way that this approach will work is if you are candid about your eating and exercise. There is no way this group can be helpful if you are not honest regarding your eating and exercise behaviors. We will discuss difficulties that arise in making these changes and help you generate ways to address these problems.*

## **VII. Home Exercises and Conclusion (5 minutes)**

*To reiterate, please make one healthy change to your diet and one healthy change to your physical activity in the coming week.*

*Also, please keep a food record for 2 weekdays and 1 weekend day. Record everything you eat and provide a general index of portion size, as well as the general time of day each was eaten. Try to record after every eating episode, because we forget otherwise. Please record the one healthy change to your diet that you are going to make. Bring these forms next time because we will use them to make further healthy dietary changes.*

Hand out Food Record Form (exercise #1).

*For your second home exercise we would like you to keep an exercise log. Please write down every time you exercise for at least 20 min and record the other lifestyle behaviors in which you engaged. Please also record the one healthy increase to our physical activity that you are going to make. Bring these forms next time because we will use them to make further lifestyle changes.*

Hand out Exercise Record Form (exercise #2).

Remind participants that attendance is very important.

Collect email addresses and phone numbers so that you can remind people about the home exercises and importance of attending each group.

*Thanks again for coming to this first session. We are looking forward to seeing you next week.*

**SESSION 2:****Materials Needed**

- Flip chart or whiteboard and markers
- Tips for Eating Out
- The Usual Suspects handout
- Beverages handout
- Physical Activity Fact Sheet
- Top 10 Reasons to Pursue Healthy-Ideal list
- Food Record Form
- Exercise Record Form

**I. Motivational Enhancement (5 min)**

*Last week we reviewed the benefits of achieving the healthy-ideal. Can any of you remember some of these benefits?*

Health benefits (longer life, less illness [e.g., cancer], fewer injuries, higher quality of life, easier to get pregnant, fewer birth complications)

Social benefits (more acceptance, higher marriage rates, easier to get jobs, higher salaries, higher social class)

Emotional benefits (less obsessions about weight and eating, lower rates of depression, greater self-confidence, feeling better in general, more energy, greater productivity)

*Can each of you voice the most important benefit of achieving the healthy-ideal for you?*

*Again, this intervention is based on the following ideas:*

1. *Using behavioral techniques to fine tune our energy balance through healthy lifestyle changes will result in body acceptance.*
2. *Committing to these healthy lifestyle changes will make you feel more in control of your body, which will make you feel better about it.*
3. *The group will serve as an important source of support for each of you.*

**II. Healthy Dietary Change (15 min)**

*Last week we discussed the importance of making slight decreases in your caloric intake to achieve a better balance between caloric input and output.*

*I want to recap the principles we talked about last week.*

- *We talked about substituting high calorie foods with lower calorie foods that will make you feel just as satisfied.*
- *We talked about starting out right – eating a food with high water content first so that you'll feel full and not eat as much of the foods that are high in calorie.*
- *We talked about using smaller portion sizes to reduce caloric intake.*
- *We talked about having less variety on your plate.*
- *We talked about making a healthier food environment for yourself, but keeping your living environment free of unhealthy foods and by changing how much you are exposed to places that sell or serve unhealthy foods.*



*I would like to hear how each of you did with the change you planed on making to your dietary intake and whether you encountered any problems with the change plan.*

Have each participant discuss how the change plan worked last week. Participants should offer this information on their own but those who don't should be prompted. Ask participants to reference the goal sheet on which they wrote down their goals the week before, so that this check-in process is focused on participants' specific goals. If they did not make the behavior change, briefly assess what happened and brainstorm solutions. Let group members provide input to each other.

Apply principles of behavior modification when possible (e.g., making small, observable changes, doing the behavior change plan before giving yourself an enjoyable activity, reinforcing changes).

*There are a few things you can do to overcome these barriers. Make sure low fat snack foods such as pretzels and fruit are in your backpack, dorm room, or kitchen so you reach for them instead. Limit your time in the cafeteria – leave when you're done eating, and choose another place to hang out with friends. Make sure you have consumed three full healthy meals in the dorms while they are open each day.*

### **III. Food Record Review and Further Healthy Dietary Change (10 min)**

*Based on last week and the patters you identified, what additional healthy improvement to your dietary intake will you make next week? Feel free to use your food record for ideas.*

Go around the room and get a public commitment to one healthy change for each participant.

Remind participants again that in our intervention there are several options for dealing with over-consumption of high-calorie foods. The best choice for a given individual will depend on the nature of the food and the individual's knowledge of herself. Some options include:

1. Cutting out the food entirely to handle a given situation (e.g., stop bringing cookies back to the dorm room from the cafeteria);
2. Purchasing single-serving sized packages of the food; and
3. Having a low energy density food and then having a limited amount of the high-calorie food, or eating a version of the food that is reduced in energy density (frozen yogurt instead of full fat ice cream).

*We want to reiterate that you should not go long periods without eating, as it may trigger overeating. We also want to reiterate that the healthy choices are yours to make — we are just here to support you in reaching your goals.*

*It is also important to note that you should not engage in radical weight control efforts, such as vomiting or laxative use. These behaviors are not effective in producing weight loss, can cause medical problems, and have been found to predict onset of obesity.*

*Smoking tobacco to control weight is also a bad idea, since smoking leads to lasting health problems and makes exercise more difficult. Also, smoking is not a sustainable method of weight control, and many people gain weight when they quit.*

*We also want to encourage you to focus on shape rather than weight. Weight is just a proxy measure of shape and one that does not differentiate increases in muscle (which weighs more) from increases in fat. You may be moving toward a healthy ideal but show slight increases in weight. Use your clothes to provide you with feedback about your shape.*

*Another way to improve your dietary intake is to be more conscious when you're eating out. This is especially important to those who eat at campus dining halls. The "Tips for Eating Out" sheet I'm*

*handing out now has suggestions on how to approach eating out and in dorm cafeterias. It is also important to remember that many beverages add significantly to your daily caloric intake, so the "Beverages" hand out I am giving you will help you choose healthier drink options.*

Hand out "The Usual Suspects" handout.

#### **IV. Healthy Exercise Change (15 min)**

*Last week we also talked about the importance of increasing your exercise to help you achieve a better balance between your intake and output.*

*I want to recap the exercise principles we talked about last week.*

- *We talked about scheduling time to do some exercise that you enjoy.*
- *We talked about increasing your active living (such as walking to school).*
- *We talked about thinking creatively about exercise (such as doing yard work).*

*Were you able to make the planned change to your exercise routine? What did you do? What are some of the things that make these types of changes difficult?*

Have each participant discuss how the change plan worked last week. Participants should offer this information on their own but those who don't should be prompted. Ask participants to reference the goal sheet on which they wrote down their goals the week before, so that this check-in process is focused on participants' specific goals. If they did not make the behavior change, briefly assess what happened and brainstorm solutions. Let group members provide input to each other. Go around the room, trouble shoot as necessary.

Apply principles of behavior modification when possible. For example, make exercise a social event – take a walk with a friend. See if you can get a roommate to commit to doing this on a regular basis with you. Come up with a back-up plan for exercising. For example, if a participant planned on running outside but it is raining that day, have an alternate plan ready, such as attending a pilates class. Make enjoyed activities contingent on exercise (e.g., you can only watch your favorite TV show if you exercised that day).

*We should review some of the benefits of exercise. Do you recall some of the benefits we discussed?*

- heart and lung endurance
- muscular strength and endurance
- increased flexibility
- decreased heart rate and blood pressure
- decreased risk of osteoporosis
- burns calories
- increases metabolic rate
- stress management
- generally increased feeling of well-being
- hormone boost which can improve mood
- mastery of a new skill
- opportunities to meet people (at the gym, jogging partner)

*Increased exercise has additive benefits. Adding 60 minutes a day of light activity such as walking alone will reduce your risk of heart disease. Moderate activity such as biking or dancing for 30*

*minutes or more at least 4 days a week can help reduce elevated blood pressure. Vigorous activity such as running can protect you even more from heart disease. The "Physical Activity Fact Sheet" I'm handing out details these benefits. [Hand out "Physical Activity Fact Sheet" handout.]*

## **V. Exercise Record Review and Further Healthy Exercise Change (10 min)**

*Based on this exercise record, can you identify a way to make a second improvement to your physical activity in the coming week?*

Try to get participants to identify potential changes, but leader can suggest changes if necessary. Get public commitment.

Here are some other ideas regarding ways to exercise more if participants have problems coming up with ways to increase exercise.

- ride a bike to campus vs. driving
- make regular plans to go to the gym at specific times and stick to it
- get an exercise partner to help get you going and keep you motivated
- register for an exercise class through the PE department
- don't view exercise as having to be done in one big chunk; split it up into smaller pieces
- take a 30-minute walk in a pleasant area in the morning or afternoon
- take the stairs to a class that's on a higher floor, or to your dorm room
- take a dance class
- get off the bus a few stops early and walk the rest of the way to campus
- write in your planner when you will work out and what you'll do.
- Give yourself a reward, such as a new CD, if you meet your exercise goals for the week
- identify activities that you like to do and locations that you enjoy. Don't force yourself to work out in a way or place you dislike (e.g., you may not like the gym at the busiest time of day).
- plan ahead for busy times like midterms and final exams, and make a workout schedule that you can maintain during those times.

## **VI. Home Exercises and Conclusion (5 min)**

*To reiterate, please make one additional healthy change to your diet and one additional healthy change to your physical activity in the coming week.*

*We would also like to ask you to keep a food and exercise record over the next week – like you did last week. Be sure to note barriers to making healthy changes.*

Hand out Food Record Form II (exercise #4).

Hand out Exercise Record Form II (exercise #5).

*We would also like you to list 10 reasons to pursue the healthy ideal that are meaningful to you.*

Hand out Top 10 Reasons to Pursue Healthy-Ideal (exercise #3).

*Next meeting, we will continue to develop our tailored healthy lifestyle change plan that seeks to balance your energy equation.*

Get email addresses and phone numbers you are missing.

*Thanks again for coming today. We are looking forward to seeing you next week.*

**SESSION 3:****Materials Needed**

- Flip chart or whiteboard and markers
- Fruits and Vegetables – Benefits by Color handout
- Exercise and Caloric Expenditure Fact Sheet
- Food Record Form
- Exercise Record Form

**I. Motivational Enhancement (5 min)**

*We have discussed the benefits of attaining a healthy ideal, which includes longer life, decreased injury and illness, greater social acceptance, improved employment options, higher salary, elevated marriage rates, and greater self-confidence.*

*Are people willing to read the top two personal reasons for pursuing the healthy ideal that they generated for home exercise assignment?*

*Have people begun to notice any improvements in your own life? Do you feel better about your relationship with food and your body? Do you feel more self-assured and better about your bodies?*

**II. Healthy Dietary Change (15 min)**

*Last week we discussed the importance of making slight decreases in your caloric intake to achieve a better balance between caloric input and output.*

*We also discussed several principles for changing dietary intake, including substituting lower calorie foods for higher calorie foods, starting meals with food that is high in water content, using smaller portion sizes, limiting food variety, and changing your food environment.*

*Were you able to make the planned adjustment to your intake? Which principles did you use? What are some of the things that make these types of changes difficult? How did you overcome them (or if you didn't, how could you overcome them in the future)?*

Have each participant discuss how the change plan worked last week. Prompt participants who do not offer this information on their own. Ask participants to reference the goal sheet on which they wrote down their goals the week before, so that this check-in process focuses on participants' specific goals. If they did not make the behavior change, briefly assess what happened and brainstorm solutions. Let group members provide input to each other.

Apply principles of behavior modification when possible (e.g., making small, observable changes, doing the behavior change plan before giving yourself an enjoyable activity, reinforcing changes).

**III. Food Record Review and Further Healthy Dietary Change (10 min)**

*We asked you to keep a food record so that we can see how we might best balance your energy equation. Based on your food records, can you identify another change you can make to improve your diet in the coming week?*

Go around the room and get a public commitment to one healthy change for each participant.

*One great way to decrease your caloric intake and add lots of vitamins, minerals, and fiber to your diet is by eating plenty of fruits and vegetables. The American Dietetic Association recommends 5-9*

*servings of fruits and vegetables per day. It's easy to replace less-healthy foods with fruits and vegetables. For example, instead of having cookies or candy as a snack or for dessert, try having fruit and yogurt or granola. Have a salad or vegetable soup or extra veggies with meals to help you to feel full and to add nutrients. Can anyone think of other ways to incorporate more fruits and vegetables into your own diet?*

Hand out "Fruits and Vegetables – Benefits by Color"

*This handout that lists over 100 different fruits and vegetables. Changing your eating habits might mean introducing new foods into your diet that you've never tried. A new, healthy food might turn out to be a good substitute for an unhealthy food.*

*Notice that the fruits and vegetables are categorized into different color categories and that each category has specific health benefits. Let's go through these benefits.*

Review the health benefits listed on the handout.

*Some of you may be eating in response to emotions. For instance, you may be eating because you are stressed by your classes or are feeling lonely because you are just starting college. It will be important for you to identify healthier responses to these emotional triggers. For example, rather than going out for ice cream when you are feeling lonely, perhaps you could visit a new friend or call an old friend or a family member.*

*We encourage you to recognize all of the positive facets of yourself in addition to your physical health, including your humor, wit, intelligence, and talents. We hope this will make you more willing to take care of yourself by making healthy lifestyle changes. Can each of you share two non-body-related qualities that you like about yourself?*

*Remember to appreciate your efforts. You're doing something very important for yourself by attending these classes and making these changes. Sometimes it is difficult to remember the progress we've made when we're focused on moving toward our goals. One way to appreciate your efforts is to reward yourself for your accomplishments. What are some small non-food rewards that you can give yourself for achieving your healthy dietary and exercise change goals? (write on white board)*

Sample rewards:

- Take a long bath
- Go see some live music
- Buy a new CD
- Treat yourself to a favorite magazine
- Watch a favorite television show
- Purchase some new exercise clothing
- Get a massage

#### **IV. Healthy Exercise Change (15 min)**

*Last week we also talked about the importance of increasing your exercise level to help you achieve a better balance between your intake and output.*

*We also discussed principles that may help you increase your physical activity, including scheduling time for exercise, selecting exercise that you enjoy, engaging in incidental exercise, and thinking flexibly about ways to exercise.*

*Were you able to make the planned changes to your exercise routine? How did it go?*

Have each participant discuss how the change plan worked last week. Ask participants to reference the goal sheet on which they wrote down their goals the week before, so that this check-in process focuses on participants' specific goals. If they did not make the behavior change, briefly assess what happened and brainstorm solutions. Let group members provide input to each other. Go around the room, trouble shoot as necessary.

Apply principles of behavior modification when possible.

*I want to talk a little more about exercise. Sometimes people get bored with their exercise programs because they only do one type of exercise or they select a type of exercise that they don't enjoy. These are major reasons that people stop exercising.*

*Let's brainstorm as many types of exercise as we can think of. I'll write them down on the board, and I'd like you to write them down to keep as a reference. You can look at this list when you want more variety in your exercise routine. [Get suggestions and write on board.]*

*I'd also like to handout this "Exercise and Caloric Expenditure Fact Sheet" so that you can have an idea of how many calories you are burning while you are doing these activities. This list may contain some activities we normally wouldn't think of as exercise, but as this sheet demonstrates, are activities that burn lots of calories. [Hand out "Exercise and Caloric Expenditure" handout.]*

*It's also important to have a balance between cardiovascular exercise, strength training, and flexibility. These are three important components of fitness that should be balanced in an exercise routine. Each contributes to overall health in its own unique way, and all are equally important. Let's go through this list that we've generated and classify each exercise as cardio, strength, or flexibility.*

Go through list and let participants classify each; help as necessary.

#### **V. Exercise Record Review and Further Healthy Exercise Change (10 min)**

*We asked you to keep an exercise log so that we can take a closer look at your output to see how we might best help balance your energy equation.*

*Looking at your exercise record, can you see which of the three components of exercise you should add – cardiovascular, strength training, and flexibility exercise?*

*For the next week, can each of you identify one way you can improve your exercise routine? You might consider adding the exercise component that is not well represented in your routine currently.*

Go around the room and ask each participant how they plan to improve their exercise routine. Try to get participants to make the suggestion changes to their exercise plan, but leader can do it if necessary. Get public commitment.

#### **IV. Home Exercises and Conclusion (5 min)**

*To reiterate, please make one additional healthy change to your diet and one additional healthy change to your physical activity in the coming week.*

*We would also like to ask you to keep a food and exercise record over the next week – like you did last week. Be sure to note barriers to making healthy changes.*

Hand out Food Record Form II (exercise #6).  
Hand out Exercise Record Form II (exercise #7).

*Next meeting, we will continue to develop our tailored healthy lifestyle development plan intended to balance your energy equation. We will also discuss how best to respond to future barriers to maintaining this healthy lifestyle that we can anticipate.*

*Thanks again for coming today. We are looking forward to seeing you next week.*

**SESSION 4:**

## Materials Needed

- Flip chart or whiteboard and markers

**I. Motivational Enhancement (5 min)**

*We have discussed the benefits of attaining a healthy ideal, which includes longer life, decreased injury and illness, greater social acceptance, improved employment options, higher salary, elevated marriage rates, and greater self-confidence.*

*Now that you've been working on this for 3 weeks and have experienced some success making changes, can you think of new ways that this lifestyle is beneficial? Have people begun to notice any improvements in your own life? Do you feel better about your relationship with food and your body? Do you feel more self-assured? Do you feel better about your bodies? Are you more optimistic about your ability to control your weight in the future?*

**II. Healthy Dietary Change and Future Dietary Change (15 min)**

*We have discussed the importance of making slight decreases in your caloric intake to achieve a better balance between caloric input and output.*

*We also discussed several principles for changing dietary intake, including substituting lower calorie foods for higher calorie foods, starting meals with food that is high in water content, using smaller portion sizes, and changing your food environment.*

*Were you able to make the planned adjustment to your intake? How did it go this week?*

Have each participant discuss how the change plan worked last week. Ask participants to reference the goal sheet on which they wrote down their goals the week before, so that this check-in process focuses on participants' specific goals. If they did not make the behavior change, briefly assess what happened and brainstorm solutions. Let group members provide input to each other.

Apply principles of behavior modification when possible.

*Can each of you identify one additional way that you can make your diet healthier? Please review your food record and the handouts you have for ideas.*

Go around the room so that each participant can say one additional healthy change to their diet. Continue to encourage small, achievable changes. Again, let group members provide support for each other with regard to future changes.

*Are each of you willing to continue these changes in intake for the next 6 months?*

Go around the room to get a verbal commitment to maintaining these changes.

**III. Healthy Exercise Change and Future Exercise Change (15 min)**

*We also talked about the importance of increasing your exercise level to help you achieve a better balance between your intake and output.*



*We also discussed principles that may help you increase your physical activity, including scheduling time for exercise, selected exercise that you enjoy, engaging in incidental exercise, and thinking flexibly about ways to exercise.*

*Were you able to make the planned changes to your exercise routine? How did it go?*

Have each participant discuss how the change plan worked last week. Ask participants to reference the goal sheet on which they wrote down their goals the week before, so that this check-in process focuses on participants' specific goals. If they did not make the behavior change, briefly assess what happened and brainstorm solutions. Let group members provide input to each other. Go around the room, trouble shoot as necessary.

Apply principles of behavior modification when possible.

*Can each of you identify one additional way that you can make your exercise routine healthier? Please review your exercise record and the handouts you have for ideas.*

Go around the room so that each participant can say one additional healthy change to their exercise routine. Get verbal commitment. Again, let group members provide support for each other with regard to future changes.

*Are each of you willing to continue these changes in intake for the next 6 months? If you don't see a benefit by then, you can desist, but I suspect you will be very happy with the changes!*

#### **IV. Relapse prevention (10 min)**

*Can you anticipate things that will make it difficult to continue these healthy behaviors? Think about things that have made past behavior change plans fail. For example, have scheduling difficulties resulting from changing classes from one quarter to the next caused problems? For many people, finals are a particularly stressful time when eating and exercise patterns get dropped (and sometimes never picked up again!). Romantic breakups are also stressful. In the future, pregnancy and becoming a parent may be times when it is difficult to continue the healthy new eating and exercise changes you've made.*

*Thinking ahead, can you come up with ways to respond to these challenges? [Go around the room so that everyone talks.]*

*We should note that sometimes people "slip" and eat something high in fat or blow-off a planned workout. Often people use this as an excuse to go back to their old, unhealthy lifestyle. Don't do it!*

*One skill that people who maintain a healthy weight have is that they "get back on the horse if they fall off." Slips are inevitable—no one is perfect. The trick is to not let the slip talk you into stopping all of the improvements you are making in your life and for yourself.*

*Also, if you have a slip, don't punish yourself (e.g., if your plan is that you want to walk 20 minutes everyday and you miss two days, don't try to make yourself walk 60 minutes on the third day; just get back to doing the 20 minutes you are committed to. Or, if you eat more high cal/high fat food than you wanted to on a certain day, don't starve yourself the next day. Just go back to your healthy eating habits the next day. If you stop working out for two weeks during finals, don't be too hard on yourself, just start up again as soon as you can.)*

*Stay committed to a healthy lifestyle and realize that sometimes you will slip – but the important thing is to view these slips as opportunities to learn how to not slip next time. If you view it as a life-*

*long process, you can see that one slip-up is not complete failure.*

#### **V. Reasons for Signing Up for this Class? (10 min)**

*As we come to the end of our sessions, it may be helpful to share the reasons you were interested in this group and get some input from the group. Are any of you willing to share what made you sign up for this body acceptance class, other than for the money?*

Have group members share as much as they are comfortable with.

*Have the changes you have made helped you feel better about your body?*

Lead this discussion into ways that they can further improve their diet and exercise to approximate their goals.

#### **VI. Exit Homework and Conclusion (5 min)**

*We would like to ask you to email us in 1-week to tell us how your lifestyle alteration is going. Are each of you willing to do this?*

Get public commitment.

Send them an email message reminding them to do the exit homework.

*Thank you very much for participating in this group. I have been very impressed with your thoughtful comments and participation. It is wonderful that you have been willing to make healthy lifestyle changes to help you achieve a healthier body size and great body acceptance.*

*We would like to schedule the post-intervention assessments immediately after this group. Remember that we need to complete these assessments for each of you within the next week in order for you to be eligible for the \$30 compensation.*

Have them sign up for assessment slots over the next week using the form with possible 1-long slots.

*In addition to the post-intervention assessment, you will be asked to complete 3 additional time points (6, 12, and 24 months after the group ends). You will be paid \$30 for each assessment. In addition, you will be given an additional \$30 upon completion of all assessments at the end of the study, for a total of \$180 over the course of two years.*

Get emails and phone numbers you are missing. Ask people if they are planning on moving in the next 3 months – if so, get a permanent address.

*Once again, thanks again for participating in this group.*

Make sure that all participants have completed a Participant Contact sheet and that you have all the participants' current addresses, phone numbers, and emails in order to contact them, as well as the addresses and phone numbers of 2 people who will always know where they are.











# HEALTHY WEIGHT

## Top 10 Reasons to Pursue a Healthy Lifestyle

Please come up with your top 10 reasons for pursuing a healthy lifestyle. You can use some of the reasons we discussed in the group (such as decreased risk for disease), and also come up with some of your own.

1)

2)

3)

4)

5)

6)

7)

8)

9)

10)





















## Healthy Weight: Qualitative Interview Questions

1. What aspects of the group did you find most valuable?
2. What aspects of the group did you find less valuable?
3. What motivated you to attend group?
4. How could we have motivated you better to do the homework assignments?
5. How helpful were the group facilitators?
6. Were there any unique or particular aspects of the group that made it work either better or worse for you personally?
7. How could we make the groups more interesting and enjoyable for future participants?