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Stop! Right where you are!
Thursday, February 20, 2014

That's something you might hear from a police officer who suspects you of wrongdoing. But I'm thinking of it in a different context.

It's the advice I just gave my daughter who blogged that she now weighs what she did when 7 months pregnant. I can relate to that. I remember getting on the scale at age 40 and realizing that I weighed the same as the day I gave birth for the 3rd time, 12 years earlier.

So I understand not wanting to face reality and the excuses that are so easily made for the weight gain. From my years on SP I also understand the search for an easy solution. A magazine just promised me a bikini body in 6 weeks.

Maybe there should be an intermediate step before trying to lose weight. What if we just stabilize where we are? Just stop for as long as it takes to determine what our body needs to do not to gain any more pounds.

How much food/exercise will keep us right where we are? There are formulas to help with this, but we know that one formula doesn't fit everyone. We have to figure it out for ourselves.

After all, everyone who wants to lose a LOT of weight at some point only had 10, 20, or 40 pounds to lose. Obviously, the sooner you come to terms with the situation, the less difficult the journey to goal. There are valid personal reasons for wanting to lose unneeded weight that have nothing to do with vanity or society's expectations.

So many people decide to lose weight and give up quickly either because they're being too restrictive or not seeing results quickly enough.

What if the first step is just not to gain any more? Just maintain in place. Stop right where you are and come to terms with what your body needs, right here, right now.

Come to think of it, that's what successful maintainers do. Find a comfortable, sustainable goal weight and resolve not to gain anymore.

It's like finding a plateau you can live with. Stop right there. It's not a failure. Take in the view and when you're ready to proceed you'll have the experience and energy to go further.

What do you think? Does this make sense?

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LINDAKAY228
I think it makes a lot of sense!
2667 days ago

CD12146214
Yes that makes sense....My husband calls it "chasing technology" when people are buying HRM, endless watches, the latest sports gadget to make them go faster, etc.
2669 days ago

TRAVELGRRL
I think it makes a TON of sense. I always lose weight in "chunks" -- I've lost 47 pounds but it's taken me 3 years. I lose 10, stabilize for a long time, lose 10 more, etc. It just is important for me to feel "normal" at the new weight before I'm ready to lose more.

Hugs to your daughter; I hope she listens to her very wise mom!
2669 days ago

MARYJEANSL
I think you're on to something here. I recently read an article somewhere, possibly on SP, which referenced research showing that people do better at losing weight and keeping it off if they work on maintaining their current weight for a period of time before they actually start attempting to lose.
2669 days ago

GINIEMIE
I'm thinking that this would be easier for your daughter to swallow than "you need to cut out..." . Yes stop gaining, try to figure out what's going on, then proceed sounds like super advice. Good going mom. A honey, I've been there, I hate to see you struggle like I did, why don't you try to just maintain for a while.. is gentler than some alternatives my mother dished out.
Elaine thanks for being compassionate and gentle with your daughter. I appreciate what you are trying to do, I hope she will too.

2669 days ago

ONEKIDSMOM
It makes a LOT of sense! What if, for example, we determined what our base metabolic rate would be right where we are, and ate at that level? What I found is that even doing that much causes a slow, gradual loss.

I called it "refusing to feed the excess pounds"... set my calorie range at maintenance level for my desired weight... not dieting, exactly, just "cutting back". My son called it "guy dieting".

Surprise! It works. So just start by not feeding the excess, start with the goal to maintain... and it

happens. Different skill set, different mind set... lots less self-condemnation!
2669 days ago

DOVESEYES
It makes good sense thanks for your views.
2669 days ago

MWWENSIN
Great idea - maintaining is good. However, it is better to eat healthier too to lower fat, reduce blood pressure and also to exercise. But yes it is great when you are in a hole (obese or overweight) to stop digging. Maintaining when you are at goal is a different situation. You're probably already eating better. Slow changes over along time is what seems to work for me. Jerk the reins too fast and the horse will buck. Any changes in diet are good if they are continued for a long time. If you're starting from a diet of fast food - it is good to lower the number of nights eating out at first. It is hard to figure out why we need to loose weight and exercise. The birth of a child did that for me and the opportunity of a weight loss contest with a financial incentive motivated me. Once you start exercising and eating better you don't want to go backwards. I like running and eating better and it also helped me to qualify for life insurance at age 45. So there are alot of positives to eating better.
2670 days ago

KANSASROSE67

This is excellent advice! It's what I did (though not intentionally) when I lost 12 pounds at age 35. I put the brakes on before it got any worse, and stayed there for a few years until I found Spark and everything clicked for me to lose the rest.

Well Said!

2670 days ago

_LINDA

Well Said! GREAT! idea!! Stopping it before it gets out of control -perfect sense!

2670 days ago

DR1939

Well Said!

2670 days ago

LEWILL1982

Great advice! (This is why SP reached out to you to be a success story, you've got this all figured out!)

2670 days ago

HAYBURNER1969

This is very good advice! Once I started tracking again (this week) on SparkPeople, I realized just how much I was overeating. Holy moly, it's a wonder I didn't gain 20 pounds. I must still have a fast metabolism for my age.

2670 days ago

MISCHAKEO

I think that makes sense. Stop where you are and maintain until you are ready to take the steps to lose weight if needed. Being stable is better than being unhappy and always going up and down on the scale. I also gained the same number of pounds of my pregnancy and I had twins..I am glad that weight is gone.

2670 days ago

CELIAMINER

Oh my, do I need this today.

2670 days ago

PHOENIX1949

Well Said! THANK YOU! for this perspective.

2670 days ago

TERI-RIFIC

Well Said! For many years i was either losing weight or gaining weight - on a diet or off a diet - never actually maintaining any weight or knowing whatt it was like to just eat normally and stay the same. Well I'm still losing weight, but I weathered a plateau and am currently dealing with losing VERY slowly. But this time, I'm staying balanced. I totally agree with what you said. I just don't know why it is so hard to get yourself to think that way.

2670 days ago

CANNINGNANNY

Yes, Yes, Yes !!!
What a Great Thought !!!

2670 days ago

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