



Setting Yourself Up for Success Using AIMS

Successful weight loss and weight maintenance requires consistent EFFORT. You either do or don't do the self-monitoring of food intake, water consumption, and exercise, along with some other critical behaviors necessary for weight loss and weight maintenance. In addition, you look into whatever emotional or addiction issues that prevent you from following through with those behaviors.

Hoping you'll lose weight, wishing you'd lose weight, and promising that you'll lose weight won't result in weight loss. Not even making a verbal commitment to losing weight will result in weight loss. The only thing that results in weight loss is DOING the things necessary to lose weight. The only thing that results in staying at a healthy weight is continuing to do those things that keep you at a healthy weight.

Set yourself up for success by doing the things required to get weight off, and keep it off using AIMS. AIMS is a way to back up your verbal commitment to healthy changes and help you engage in doing the behavior modifications previously discussed.

AIMS is an acronym for:

- Accountability
- Immersion
- Mentors
- Self

Let's start by talking about Accountability. Being accountable helps with follow-through. If you have struggled to sustain healthy behavior changes in the past, you are likely to struggle in the present.

Enlist external sources of accountability to monitor your behavior. Additional accountability helps because other people are involved in your process—people with whom you share what you do, (or don't do) to follow through with healthy behaviors! Most people do more of the healthy behaviors when they have others involved in their process.

Examples of additional accountability include:

- Having a mentor in a weight loss program or sponsor in a recovery group
- Hiring a personal trainer for working out
- Scheduling regular appointments with a dietitian
- Having regular meetings with a therapist
- Organizing a walking group or other exercise group that meets regularly

The I in AIMS stands for Immersion. When a person is serious about losing and maintaining weight, it is shown by their being immersed in learning as much about the kinds of things that help in the process.

Week 3 Behavior



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Things you can do to immerse yourself in learning ways to accomplish your goals include:

- Listening to podcasts
- Reading articles
- Spending time online learning about: setting realistic weight loss goals, ways to improve motivation, different forms of exercise and the benefits of each, learning to set boundaries with others, and healthy nutrition.

Participating in organized groups with a proven track record of success is a great form of immersion. Examples of such groups are Overeaters Anonymous, Food Addicts Anonymous, and medical weight loss patient groups.

Taking classes and attending seminars on exercise, nutrition, goal-setting, and motivation are ways of immersing yourself in your health process.

The M in AIMS stands for Mentors. Support is critical in the process of weight loss and in maintaining that weight loss. We all know the journey can be frustrating and requires a lot of effort at times. Having support to provide us with encouragement is critical. Having others to celebrate with us when we reach goals and stay on track is affirming and also encouraging. We need both peer support and professional support in the weight loss process. Be sure to utilize both in order to maximize your odds of long-term success.

The S in AIMS is for Self. I cannot emphasize enough the importance of focusing on this overlooked, critical aspect of successful weight loss maintenance which is a person's relationship with Self.

Until a person believes they are “good enough” in life, it is unlikely they will follow through—for the long haul—in maintaining those behaviors necessary to get and keep weight off. A healthy relationship with Self is necessary to have a healthy relationship with food and to have the healthiest relationships possible with others.

Start with learning to like your Self.

Set yourself up for weight loss success and successful weight loss maintenance using the AIMS:

- Accountability
- Immersion
- Mentors—both personal and professional,
- And learning to love your SELF



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