

Introduction to the CurvaMax Program

Setting Goals to Help You Succeed

An important aspect of the CurvaMax Program is the Behavior Modification Lessons, which help you replace problematic behaviors by addressing the beliefs, perceptions and thoughts which underlie your weight problem.

During the CurvaMax Behavior Modification process, you must concentrate on managing your thoughts, feelings and emotions as well as managing your environment. Because most weight problems have taken years to develop, discovering the behavior patterns which led to the condition and changing them takes time. It is unrealistic to expect to reverse these trends overnight. Eventually, gradual behavior change leads to permanent lifestyle change.

The program is characterized by the following steps:

- Identifying problem behaviors
- Discovering how these behaviors were learned
- Learning skills to adapt new behaviors
- Setting goals
- Keeping records
- Improving self-observation
- Evaluating progress

Following is a review of the 26 lessons:

Lesson 1 Changing the Way You Think

Lesson 2 Activity

Lesson 3 Hunger: Friend Or Foe

Lesson 4 Dieting & Deprivation

Lesson 5 Whose Diet Is It Anyway?

Lesson 6 Asserting Your Right To Be Thin

Lesson 7 Working Towards A Healthy Lifestyle

Lesson 8 Internal Dialogues And Behavior

Lesson 9 The Art Of Managing Your Thinking

Lesson 10 Dealing With Emotions

Lesson 11 Self-Image And Self-Esteem

Lesson 12 Beliefs And Attitudes

Lesson 13 Control: What It Is, What It Isn't

Lesson 14 Nutrition 101

Lesson 15 Life Under 30 (% Fat)

Lesson 16 Imagery And Mental Rehearsal

Lesson 17 Heart Disease Prevention

Lesson 18 Smart Shopping

Lesson 19 Behavioral Control 1: Basics Of Change

Lesson 20 Behavioral Control 2: The Environment

Lesson 21 Behavioral Control 3: Altering Responses

Lesson 22 Behavioral Control 4: Special Situations

Lesson 23 Behavioral Control 5: Making It Work

Lesson 24 Integrating Thinking, Feeling And Acting

Lesson 25 Learning To Love Your Body

Lesson 26 Resistance Tactics: Strategies For Change

Conclusion: Putting It All Together

Changing the Way You Think

With CurvaMax, change begins with an exploration of your weight loss beliefs and expectations. When you understand your expectations, you're better able to achieve your goals.

Effective Weight Management Begins with Motivation

You'll learn ways of dealing with both the internal and external forces around you. By viewing these forces together, you can improve your chances for permanent weight management.

Self-Control Begins with Objective Self-Observation

Permanent changes in weight behaviors are not possible without accurate self observation. The CurvaMax program relies heavily on record keeping and self-monitoring techniques that help you gain control of your problem.

Self-Awareness

The phrase "know thyself" is especially pertinent to the overweight patient. In the CurvaMax program, your relationship with food will be explored in order to give you the tools to succeed in weight management.

Separating Fact from Fiction

During the CurvaMax program, you'll learn the truth about the risks of cyclical dieting, the starvation controversy, vitamin therapy, etc. You'll explore the effects of stress and highlight ways to minimize its effect upon your life.

Nutrition Information

You'll be *in the know* with up-to-date information on the latest trends and research on nutrition related topics.

Total Control

CurvaMax Total Control Program Objectives	
Identify and control food cues	Balance caloric intake with exercise
Reduce fat to 30% of total calories	Lower saturated fat to 10% of total calories
Restrict cholesterol to no more than 300 mg per day	

The process of *Total Control* is a permanent lifestyle change which takes many weeks. Your condition established itself over a long period of time. It is unrealistic to expect that it will resolve itself quickly.

Permanent weight management depends on lifestyle change. The modifying of behavior may be difficult and time consuming; however, it is the only sure way to attain **total control**.

Activity

Long term weight loss can't be accomplished by dieting alone. There is only one way to maintain weight loss: decreased calories and increased activity.

The Benefits of Exercise

When you exercise regularly you reduce your risk of heart disease, lower your cholesterol and blood pressure, ease shortness of breath, and relieve stress on joints. Exercise also raises your metabolism. Not only do you burn calories during your workout, but you also use more calories all day long because exercise builds muscle and muscle always uses more calories than fat.

Inactivity can actually be an appetite stimulant. A program of regular, moderate exercise will increase your metabolism, burn excess fat, build lean muscle, and decrease your appetite.

Getting Started

Getting started is easy. At first, you'll increase incidental activity, which means walking down stairs rather than taking the elevator and parking in the farthest space from the store rather than the closest. Next your counselor will help you begin a program of regular walking.

Exercise Facts & Fallacies

No pain, no gain

False. Exercising to the point of discomfort can signal bone, joint and muscle injury.

Drinking liquids while exercising causes cramps

False. The cramping often seen during exercise means you need water!

You can "sweat" the weight off

False. Perspiration loss during exercise can account for some temporary weight loss. Don't be fooled though. It will be "regained" with the first glass of water you drink!

Exercise makes you hungry

False. Moderate activity will not increase your appetite. Exercising fuels feelings of control and accomplishment. Additionally, when you're exercising, you're not near the fridge!

Spot reducing eliminates fat deposits in problem areas

False. Spot reducing can tone and firm an area to make it look thinner, but if there is excess fat in the area, it will never look as firm as you want with spot exercises alone!

Cellulite is not the same as other fat

False. Fat, by any other name is still fat! While it is true that some areas of the body are more resistant to fat loss than others, no manner of creams or massages will reduce or eliminate the dimpled, fatty deposits dubbed cellulite. The only way to shed these fat cells is through the same program of diet and exercise you're using for generalized weight reduction.

Your scale is the best measure of your exercise program

False. When you exercise, heavier, lean muscle tissue increases while lighter, fat is lost. In fact, you may even gain a pound or two when you start to exercise. Measure your success by evaluating the decreases in your body fat instead of just checking on the pounds!

Hunger: Friend or Foe

Responding to Hunger

Hunger isn't the enemy. It's your friend. It lets you know that it really is time to do one of your favorite things—EAT! In fact, hunger is your only truly legitimate cue for eating. And eating when you are legitimately hungry is an exercise in eating without guilt.

Hunger can also be triggered by external situations. If you always have room for dessert or the sight of food on TV sends you foraging glassy-eyed in the fridge, your conditioning is external and you must begin today the process of retraining your response to external food cues.

RELAPSE PREVENTION

Everybody on a diet lapses occasionally. This is not the end of the world! You lost a small skirmish—certainly not the battle, let alone the war. DON'T beat yourself up. Keep the lapse in its correct time frame. You've scaled ten rungs on the *health ladder* and dropped back a rung or two by lapsing. That's no reason to plummet back to ground zero. Use the Lapse Analysis to change your response the next time you are tempted.

CurvaMax Lapse Analysis		
Where did the lapse occur?	Who were you with?	When you gave in, how did you feel?
What were you doing?	What cues set you off?	How can you plan for success next time?

STRATEGIES FOR APPETITE CONTROL

Out of sight, out of mind, out of mouth

You know you're going to eat those cookies if you buy them. Keep them out of the house.

A taste is not the whole cake

It IS better to have a taste than to deny your craving and end up ruining your day with a binge. However, a taste is just a taste. You're not allowed to eat the whole portion! There is a tomorrow. You'll have the opportunity to have another taste then!

Being dateless should not trigger binge eating

Dateless will no longer be accepted as an excuse for a binge. You must take responsibility for your situational eating. Why are you home alone again with the Hagen Daas? Why is the Hagen Daas there in the first place? (Go back to Rule 1—Out of sight, out of mouth).

TV and eating are not inextricably linked

Distracted eating is dangerous. Eating is a conscious act only performed at a table.

Wait for satiety to kick in

Slow it down when you're eating. Put down your fork between bites. Wait twenty minutes before seconds or desserts. Give yourself a chance to experience satiety and react positively to it.

Dieting and Deprivation

Stress is a Normal Component of Your Life

Using food to cope with stress is a behavioral problem which needs modification, not a personality flaw. You simply haven't learned or practiced other skills for coping with stress. Food has been your only tool for managing. If you've become accustomed to using food as the primary coping mechanism in your life, use the following *Coping Exercise* to explore your habits.

The CurvaMax System Coping Exercise		
	Yes	No
Do you eat to level out emotions?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you eat to "take the edge off?"	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you crave the wonderful "numbness" associated with a full stomach?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Does eating make you sleepy, allowing a retreat from the pressures of life?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Does eating relieve all kinds of stress, be it personal, social or work related?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Eating compulsively is often a measure of your anxiety. Food relieves the anxiety. It calms you, removes the stress and helps you cope. Learn to recognize the early signs of stress and remove yourself from the vicinity of food.

Strategies to Shift Your Focus Away From Food

- Plan your eating. Be assertive. Don't be embarrassed or intimidated. Stay in control.
- Don't use food as a significant other. When food's in control, you're a passive eater.
- Many people eat before they think. Eating becomes automatic when emotion triggers pseudo-hunger.

Use the Craving Record to distinguish between real and emotional hunger.

CurvaMax Food Craving Record			
	Date	Time	Comments
Food craved?			
Last meal or food eaten?			
What was your mood?			
Was the hunger real or emotional?			
What was your response?			
How will you cope next time?			

Reduce Food's Influence in Your Life

Just as you are the one who started your relationship with food, you and only you can change it.

Begin today to let food revert to its natural role as fuel for your body. It isn't worthy of being anything more!

Whose Diet Is It Anyway?

While assessing your habits and learning to control them is a difficult task, the rewards of accepting personal responsibility are well worth the effort. Concentrate on developing a positive attitude and keep the value of food in perspective.

Have You Ever Said...

"I have to entertain in my job" or *"I'm big boned"* or *"I don't have time to exercise"*. Blaming outside forces only delays positive solutions to your weight problem by shifting the focus of blame to those uncontrollable factors around you.

"I don't have any will power." Well, if you don't have control, who does? It is highly unlikely that your refrigerator calls you when you're depressed to comfort you with food. Willpower is not an inborn trait, it's a skill that needs development and practice. You have the ability to control your responses to foods; you've just convinced yourself you don't.

"My diets never work." What you're really saying is that you're unworthy of another try. The fact that you've lost and regained hundreds of pounds doesn't mean that you're doomed to failure this time. The CurvaMax program has no place for negativism—we focus only on success and positive experience.

"My counselor will make me lose weight" or *"I need a diet to make me thin"* or *"This supplement is all I really need to drop these extra pounds?"* These rationalizations conveniently remove the responsibility for weight loss from the dieter. As you accept personal responsibility for all of your life, you will recognize these crutches for what they are: impediments to success. Focus on what you **can** do to control your behavior.

Tools For Developing a Sense of Personal Responsibility

STOP. As soon as you feel the urge to eat something decadent, count to twenty. This monetary pause allows you time to exercise your newly learned willpower.

THINK. Give your defenses a chance to kick in. You've learned strategies for handling food cues - now's the time to use them. Try to match a coping strategy with your current situation.

LISTEN. To yourself, not the food. Talk yourself out of it. Even if you've given in to the cue and are on the way to burger heaven, pull the car off the road and tell yourself that this is your diet; you are in control. Determine whether the seduction of this one hamburger is worth the consequences.

ESTABLISH SITUATIONAL CONTROLS. Establishing situational controls means removing the temptation before it becomes too strong to resist. The best situational control is not having your temptress in the house. Once you've discovered your weakness, respect your inability to resist. Don't be a martyr! Be good to yourself.

Asserting Your Right To Be Thin

Identifying the Diet Saboteur

“Have some more lasagna...,” “Split a piece of pie with me....” Have you ever wondered why the people around you become your worst enemies the moment you decide to diet? Why is it that people feel so uncomfortable? Do they wonder if the new you will like the old friend? Don’t be afraid to assert your right to be thin. Help those around you understand how their actions influence you and give them suggestions for being more supportive.

Four Steps to Use When Asking for Help

State the problem areas and situations with which you need help or support.

Explain how you feel about the problem and why you need help with its resolution.

Detail the action you wish your supporter to take.

Results describe to them the results that you expect.

The Politics of Power

Unfortunately, many relationships are based on power and control. When efforts at weight reduction threaten to tip the balance of power in a relationship, sabotage often results. The diet saboteurs are comfortable with your relationship as is and are reluctant to see it change. You need to recognize the wolves in sheep’s clothing and assert your right to be thin.

Overpowering the Diet Saboteur	
When they:	You should:
Bring you gifts of food	Assert your right to be free of temptation. Your needs come first.
Urge you to eat	Guilt is powerful. Your refusal to eat is NOT the problem here.
Eat your favorites in front of you	Refuse to be manipulated by this <i>friend</i> . Get away.
Leave your favorite food out	Tell them you will not tolerate their attempt to sabotage your diet.

TAKE CHARGE OF YOUR LIFE

Being true to yourself means not having to settle for anything. Settling is comfortable. When you’re comfortable, you are less likely to experience rejection. On the other hand, settling inevitably results in a lack of fulfillment.

Weight loss signals control. Weight loss also signals a readiness to come to terms with your personal fears and insecurities. Overcoming obesity is a major feat. As with recovery from other addictive behaviors such as gambling and alcoholism, weight loss is an active process - a long and multifaceted process of change. It will not occur overnight.

Working Towards a Healthy Lifestyle

Affirm Your Right To Be Thin

A person who has been heavy all their life may meet with negative feelings from family members when trying to lose weight. Remember, change can be frightening. Stay focused, get control over your own life and affirm your right to change.

Losing weight for someone else is dangerous both physically and emotionally, you must want it. If you're pressured into weight reduction, the chances are good that you'll gain the weight right back. If you feel that you need to be thin to be loved, it's time to reexamine the relationship. The changes you make in your life must only be for you. Affirm your right to be loved—fat or thin!

Working Together With Your Family

Get out of the kitchen! When possible, ask other members of the family to take a turn at cooking meals. Nothing is more devastating to a diet than “taste as you go” cooking.

Minimize clean-up time. Do the dishes quickly and get on to another activity. Linger over the leftovers will only tempt you to clean the pots by eating what's left in them.

Fill your evenings with people and activities. Do you eat out of boredom? That's easy to cure. Turn on your favorite music and take a hot bath. Ride your exercise bike while watching your favorite sitcom. The end of a productive day deserves some reward, but it doesn't have to be a hot fudge sundae.

Try not to shop for food, but if you must, read the labels and become more aware of the caloric consequences of the choices you make. When eating out, be demanding. Ask for dressings on the side. Request small portions of lean meats. Ask for a doggie bag. If you can't resist the rolls and butter, have them removed.

Out of the house and away from the fridge! Plan evening walks, bicycle rides, sports-related activities and the like. Changing the focal point of your family time from eating to activity will help everyone rethink their habits, and provide you with company as well!

Act positively. Moaning and groaning about having to turn down chocolate cake will not elicit the sought after sympathy from your family. If your family sees that you seem happier, they will be more apt to support you and your new lifestyle.

Listen to your body. Learning to eat when you're hungry is difficult when you were raised to clean your plate. Start by leaving a spoonful of each item untouched at the end of every meal. When food is offered, stop and think. Am I really hungry? Is the item appealing? If the answer to either of these questions is no, then why do I feel pressured to eat?

Health Lifestyles For Future Generations

Remember, all food behaviors are learned. In dealings with our children and grandchildren, we must not fall into the traps of our parents which may present them with obstacles to good nutrition and smart eating habits.

Internal Dialogues and Behavior

Self-Talk

Talking to yourself is a valuable tool - as long as you know which messages to listen to and which ones to ignore! During the program, talking to yourself will be encouraged as a means of talking yourself out of self-destructive behavior.

It is important to establish a strong bond between you and your inner voice. Each time you hear that negative voice in your mind begin to chip away at your resolve, you need to start that dialogue with your inner self.

You can have all the reasons in the world not to achieve your goal or you can accomplish it. It's that simple. You can say, "I'm not thin because I'm big-boned," or you can just make up your mind to become the thin person you want to be—and do it.

Self-Analysis

Once you decide to talk to yourself, listen carefully to what you say. You may be surprised to discover what your beliefs are. You may also be surprised to find out that you don't always behave in a way that supports your beliefs. Complete the following exercise.

CurvaMax Self-Analysis Exercise	
What kind of person are you?	
What are your best qualities?	
What don't you like about yourself?	
Are you kind, caring and warm?	
Do you do things for others?	
Do you do things for yourself?	
Does financial success equal personal success?	
List three attributes of a <i>good person</i> .	

Did your answers surprise you? A careful analysis of your belief system may well lead you to question your behaviors and how they relate to your beliefs.

Creating a New You

Once you clarify exactly what your beliefs are, you need to modify your behavior. The most important gift you can give yourself is a strong concept of who you are. If there are aspects of your life that you are unhappy with, now is the time to identify them and chart out your course for change!

The Art of Managing Your Thinking

Managing Your Thinking

- Feel good about yourself.
- Be positive, patient and realistic.
- Combat negative self-talk. Replace it with positive words of encouragement.
- If you believe in yourself, then others will too. It's just that simple.

Self-Affirmation

When you make an affirmation, you declare that what you are saying is true. You are making a commitment to yourself. It is important to remember that affirmations require hard work. Just making the affirmation is not enough. You need to follow through on the actions that will make that affirmation a reality.

Affirmations can be very powerful tools in attaining long term weight loss. The affirmations you make to yourself are crucial elements to the success of the CurvaMax program. Think carefully and devise several affirmations that you believe in.

You might try, "I deserve to be thin!" or "I have the power to be thin!" Notice that self-affirmations begin with that very important pronoun—I. You alone can create self-affirmations. You alone can live up to them.

Say It Over and Over Again

Once you have several affirmations, the next step is repeating them—over and over and over again. Perhaps you think this is boring, or a waste of time. Perhaps you think if you repeat the same affirmation over and over it will have no meaning. On the contrary, when you repeat something over a course of time, you make it your own.

You will find that, as you repeat a well thought out affirmation time and time again, something exciting and fascinating begins to happen. You find yourself believing it! It is this constant process of repetition that gives affirmations their power to help you as you change for the better.

You will also discover that affirmations you make affect not only your weight management program but other areas of your life as well. You may well find that having the power to control what you eat will help you to find within yourself the power to do many things you've been longing to do.

Start the Process Now!

Say to yourself: "I will follow my affirmations because they make me feel good about myself!"

Dealing with Emotions

Friends and Enemies

Your emotions are your feelings—joy, sorrow, hate, love, guilt, fear, etc. The things you feel are very different from the things you know. Sometimes your emotions are your friends, lifting you up on a cloud of euphoria. Other times they feel like enemies, dragging you into the pit of despair.

When the Going Gets Rough

- Take stock of the feeling
- Validate your feelings
- Analyze its origin
- Act on your feelings
- Permit yourself to experience the emotion

If you're feeling sad, analyze where that feeling is coming from. Are you seeking comfort in the refrigerator? Stop, look & listen...but don't eat, act! Allow yourself to experience the pain you feel, and then use CurvaMax "talking to yourself" skills to begin feeling better.

Eating Responses as Clues To Emotions

Sometimes your response to sadness, joy or fear or any other emotion is inappropriate, even harmful. Keep a food diary for 5 days to analyze your eating patterns and note your emotional state. Notice how often you ate because you were *depressed*, *anxious*, *nervous*, *angry*, or even *happy*.

Ask yourself why you felt the need to eat because you were feeling these emotions. Do you eat when you are depressed because it makes you feel better? Perhaps it does make you feel satisfied and nurtured for a short span of time, but the self-loathing you feel after the food has passed your lips probably lasts far longer than the brief feeling of satisfaction.

Do you find that you have been eating because you are bored? Eating is hardly an appropriate response to boredom. It destroys your feelings of self-worth and undermines your success. And what happens after you eat? Is the boredom gone? No, it's still there, joined by anger and self-hate at succumbing to temptation. If you're bored, find something worthwhile to fill your time.

Breaking the Mood/Food Connection

The mood/food connection is not an easy one to break. It's been long established, and changing the pattern will take time, effort and determination.

The choice is up to you. You can listen to your inner voice or you can give in to your mind when it tries to talk you out of the choice that is right for you—the constructive choice, the one that helps you build yourself up, not tear yourself down.

And, when you triumph over an old eating pattern, you'll experience feelings of self-satisfaction, joy and power that are well worth the struggle that preceded them.

Self-Image and Self-Esteem

Self-image and self-esteem are very closely connected. Your self-esteem—how much you value yourself and who you are—depends to a very large extent on your self-image—what you think about yourself, your talents, capabilities, intelligence, personality, etc.

Developing a Positive Self-Image

Like everything else you're striving to achieve, a positive self-image doesn't just happen overnight. And the way you look does indeed tie in with the way you feel about yourself. People who value themselves have spent a good part of their lives developing that strong positive self-image they carry around inside. They've already spent a substantial amount of time nurturing the greatest gift anyone can give to themselves, the gift of self-esteem.

However, it's never too late to begin. The first step in developing a positive self-image is analyzing the image you already have. Next, use self-affirmations to reinforce your positive qualities. With each affirmation that you repeat and begin to believe you are patting yourself on the back, acknowledging yourself as *good* or *okay* or even *exceptional*.

Believe In Yourself

Once you believe in yourself, others will too. What you believe about yourself will be reflected in the way you behave and in the message the rest of the world gets about you. The person you used to be—the person with a self-effacing or negative self-image—is now becoming more confident, more outgoing, more self-assured.

As your self-confidence builds, your self-esteem also grows. And because you feel like you're worthwhile, others begin to treat you as worthy. You find yourself beginning to speak up for yourself and your needs.

Self-Esteem Brings About Success

There's another thing that accompanies a positive self-image and a sense of self-esteem—success. How can you be successful if you don't believe in yourself or that you're worthy of succeeding? When you believe in yourself and the qualities that you have to share, you feel empowered to share those qualities with others.

Gaining control over your eating patterns is a crucial element in achieving a positive self-image. When you control what you eat that control spills over into many other areas of your life. When you're out of control with your eating notice how other areas of your life are also out of control.

Help Yourself First

You've probably spent the better part of your life helping other people to think positive thoughts about themselves—your children, your spouse, your relatives, your friends. Probably all your life you've put the most important person last, you! Now is the time to put yourself first and pat yourself on the back.

Beliefs and Attitudes

Fighting the Feelings of Hopelessness

“Sometimes I feel that I’ve been dealt a bad hand of cards.” “I am a failure when it comes to will power.” Sound familiar? If you feel that external forces control your life, you eventually give in to feelings of hopelessness. Feelings of hopelessness in turn defeat any attempt at weight control. If you rely on your negative feelings you will never face up to your being overweight. If you can convince yourself that you’ll never be thin, you can convince yourself never to try. Go from negative affirmations to positive.

Put Yourself In Charge

Affirm ownership of your behavior. Your successes and failures are yours and yours alone. If you feel out of control, concentrate your energy on making proper choices. Even a seemingly small decision like choosing an orange over a piece of pie is an example of a positive choice. Choices are positive because they help to prove that you can change. And as you begin to make changes and feel comfortable with them, you will begin to value yourself as a decision maker. Think “I am not on a diet, rather I am choosing what I eat and do.”

Create a Positive Outlook

Clarifying and defining your beliefs and then changing them for a more positive outlook is crucial to your success in the CurvaMax program.

To change any of your beliefs and attitudes you must first clarify them and understand how distorted beliefs have led to your weight problem. The following exercise is helpful in clarifying your beliefs.

CurvaMax Beliefs and Attitudes Exercise	
List your beliefs about weight control:	Rephrase them to be positive statements:

CurvaMax is designed to promote a lifetime of success which requires a complete, healthful shift toward positive thinking, exercise and diet.

Control: What It Is, What It Isn't

The Power of Control

When you're in control of your eating, you feel in control of other areas of your life as well - powerful, focused, full of possibility. When you're out of control in the area of weight management, often other things in your life are out of control too - your relationships, your job, your progression toward important goals.

Being in control means saying to yourself, "I'm responsible for my own life." Notice how good you feel when you assume responsibility for yourself: important, validated, energetic, popular, worthwhile. All good things result from feelings of control: joy, strength, generosity and love. When you feel good about yourself, you bring joy not just to your life but to those around you.

Flexible Thinking

Flexible thinking will help you maintain control. Flexibility is the ability to adapt to new situations, the ability to accept your failures when they happen, the ability to "go with the flow" when you can't have perfection. Allow yourself to make mistakes and then move on.

It's Not About the Blame!

It's easy to put the blame for being overweight on someone else, but this gives them control over you.

"It's not my fault that I'm fat! Everyone in my family is fat—my mother, father sisters, bother. Can I help it if my mother was a great cook? Is it my fault she knows nothing about nutrition? My family is to blame for my poor eating habits. I'm nothing but a victim of circumstances that were beyond my control."

Maybe your parents are overweight. Maybe they love to eat and have no idea at all about which foods or behaviors are good for them. And maybe their parents were fat, also. Can you change that? No! Can you change the way that you are? Yes! You can blame others for the past, but you are responsible to yourself for the future. What happens from now on is up to you.

Make a new affirmation—I'm not perfect, but I'm on my way to being the best I can be!

Nutrition 101

A Balanced Diet

Foods are composed of proteins, fats and carbohydrates, along with vitamins and minerals. Your body depends on all of these essential nutrients for good health. Nutrients are used by the body to produce energy that is measured in calories.

A balanced diet must include all of the essential nutrients but only in the quantities you need for weight maintenance. Weight loss occurs when more calories are used than taken in. Weight gain occurs when more calories are consumed than used.

And remember, all excess calories, regardless of their origin, turn to fat. Although nutrients are not fattening in and of themselves, your body only uses or *burns* what it needs. Excess calories from protein, carbohydrates or fats are stored in the body as fat. This storing of fat is a defense mechanism which your body uses to fend off starvation.

Nutrient Summary

Proteins are the building blocks of the body and are necessary for the growth and repair of tissue. They are generally gathered from beef, fish, fowl, eggs, dairy products and certain nuts and grains.

Fats provide the body with stored energy. They are also useful in lubricating the digestive tract, protecting organs and nerves, and providing insulation for the body. While this is an essential function, only small amounts are needed for this task. Fats are derived from butter, margarine, oil, dairy products, and even some protein sources.

Carbohydrates are used to meet the body's immediate energy needs, especially those of the brain. They also provide energy for numerous body functions and help in the digestion and absorption process.

Vitamins are essential for specific body functions of maintenance and growth. A balanced diet will include all of the needed vitamins. If the diet is deficient in vitamins, a supplement is recommended, however, mega-doses of any vitamin may be dangerous and should not be taken without the advise of a physician.

Minerals support the structures of the body and regulate many body functions. Here again, the balanced diet will contain adequate minerals, however in some cases your physician may recommend a supplement.

Water is essential to all body functions. Without it, the body cannot survive more than a few days.

Life under 30 (% Fat)

Controlling Fat in Your Diet

Adjusting your eating habits to consume less than 30% of your calories from fat is not impossible. Remember that fat in your diet is easy to control once you recognize that many foods contain hidden fat. However, just recognizing the proper foods is not enough. You must then adjust your cooking techniques to effectively control your intake of dietary fat.

Where's the Fat?

Avoiding the following high fat foods will reduce your overall dietary fat intake and get you off to a good start.

- High Fat Cheese
- Whole Milk
- Sour Cream
- Cured Meats
- Nuts and Nut Butters
- Ice Cream
- Cream
- Non-Dairy Creamer
- Fried Foods

Helpful Hints for Reducing Fat in Your Diet

Increase your carbohydrate intake, especially complex carbohydrates. High carbohydrate diets promote satiety, as complex carbohydrates often contain substantial amounts of fiber. Fiber creates a sense of fullness and aids in the control of hunger.

Prepare meats by baking, broiling, roasting or stewing. Use lean meats trimmed of all visible fat.

Be on the lookout for hidden fat saboteurs! For example, the potato is a complex carbohydrate and ideal for this diet at just 90 calories. If, however, you add sour cream or butter you've added calories and a lot of hidden fat!

Stop thinking of a baked potato with sour cream and start picturing a baked potato with diet margarine. Substitute mustard on your sandwiches, instead of high fat mayonnaise. Use fat-free or low-fat salad dressings.

Have an apple 30 minutes before dinner to help curb your appetite. Having soup as a first course prior to dinner will also help fill you up.

Use spices to enhance palatability without adding fat and calories.

Soon this diet will become second nature, and it's worth every effort for how good you will feel.

Imagery and Mental Rehearsal

Psychologists have found that the human capacity for imagery and imagination is a potent tool that anyone can use to make improvements in their lives.

Imagery to Prepare for Difficult Situations

Using your imagination, you can use visualization techniques to help take charge of your eating habits. You can use your imagination to mentally rehearse difficult dieting situations and devise creative solutions to the problems presented. It's a kind of daydreaming with a purpose.

For example, perhaps you have a close friend who has not been tremendously supportive of your diet. Whenever you visit her, she always has something warm and sweet coming out of the oven just as you arrive. Try using imagery to help you deal with the situation before you visit her. See yourself refusing the cake in a way that reaffirms your self esteem and your commitment to your diet without hurting her feelings. By practicing beforehand, you will be able to fortify yourself with diet sustaining thoughts, bits of conversation and behavioral options to see you through all kinds of trying moments.

Imagery to Remove Temptation

Imagery is also a tool you can use on the spot to help you combat the desire to eat the foods in front of you. One way to do this is to change the image of a food that you have encountered into something inedible.

Suppose you are at a party and the hostess has placed a bowl of tempting, colorful M&M's in front of you. You're in the middle of a conversation with another guest, so you can't simply walk away to put them out of reach. Imagine that the candies are actually the plastic pieces of a child's game or brightly painted beads. Concentrate on the inedible image, thinking how unpleasant it would be to bite into a little chunk of plastic or wood. See what other images you can use to render other food inedible.

Imagery as Your Reward or Your Escape

Imagery is an especially powerful tool for self-reward when paired with relaxation, and relaxation is, in itself, a good way to rid yourself of some of the many stresses that pile up on you throughout the day and make you want to eat. Relaxation can be as straightforward as breathing deeply and clearing your mind of anxiety producing thoughts for a few moments.

Try visualizing yourself in very pleasant and calming surroundings—perhaps lying on a beach, soaking up the warmth of the sun on a clear blue day, or lounging in the shade of a tree, listening to a stream trickle by. Imagine the scene in its every detail, the feeling of the sun and the breeze on your skin, the sounds of insects or birds chirping, the smell of the sea or the grass. This place can be one that you've actually visited or one that you've simply made up. Arrange the details of it so that it suits you to a *T*, it is to be your favorite place and nobody else's.

Heart Disease Prevention

Heart disease is commonly caused by “hardening of the arteries”, a process in which cholesterol plays a role in the thickening, hardening and narrowing of the blood vessels. If a blood clot gets “caught”, it may lead to a heart attack.

Good and Bad Cholesterol

High density lipoprotein is called “good cholesterol” because it can actually help rid the body of excess cholesterol. The higher the HDL, the better. Ideally, it should be above 35mg. Smoking and obesity decrease HDL. Aerobic exercise increases HDLs.

Low density lipoprotein is called “bad cholesterol”. The lower the LDL level, the better. It should be below 130mg. LDL cholesterol is most affected by changes in diet. Excess intake of saturated fats and cholesterol increase LDL levels; polyunsaturated and monounsaturated fats tend to reduce LDLs.

Recognizing Genetic Risk Factors

Family History. A history of high blood pressure, high cholesterol levels and heart attack.

Gender. A higher incidence of coronary heart disease in men than women.

Race. A higher incidence of coronary heart disease among African Americans.

Age. A higher incidence of coronary heart disease among the 30 - 55 age group

Recognizing Learned Behaviors As Risk Factors

Obesity. Defined as more than 20% over ideal body weight (IBW).

Smoking. Especially critical for heavy smokers who began smoking at an early age.

Lack of exercise. The result of the generally sedentary lifestyle of most Americans.

Stress. The *work-a-holic* syndrome.

Poor eating habits. A high fat, high sugar, high salt diet and not enough dietary fiber.

Dietary Management in the Prevention of Heart Disease

Reduce total dietary fat to 30% or less of total calories.

Lower saturated fat to less than 10% of total calories

Limit polyunsaturated fat to 10% of total calories.

Restrict cholesterol intake to no more than 250-300mg per day.

Smart Shopping

As with many other CurvaMax experiences, you must make time for calorie-wise conscious shopping. The shopping experience requires planning ahead.

Eat Before You Shop

Never shop on an empty stomach. Whenever you place yourself in a vulnerable position, your defenses weaken. When you first enter the supermarket, notice that baked goods and other tempting foods are often among the first items to meet your eye. The market's strategy of temptation is designed to lower your resistance. On a full stomach, you'll have the strength to come to your senses!

Bring a List

If you have a list with you, your shopping trip will be more focused and efficient. Roaming aimlessly down the aisles allows you too much time to rationalize why you deserve that coconut custard pie at the frozen food section. It's so simple—what you don't take home, you can't eat!

Read the Labels

As we've said before, labels are tricky. Becoming a skeptical consumer and recognizing the potential traps really gives you a head start in the label jungle. Learn not to trust the front of a box just because it says *natural* or *lower in calories*. Question all labels and choose your foods carefully.

Look for low-fat alternatives to your favorite foods.

Steer away from foods with simple carbohydrates and lean towards more complex carbohydrates.

Note amounts of saturated fats listed on the label. Aim for less than ten percent of your fat intake from saturated sources. With a 1500-calorie diet, only 5 grams should be from a saturated fat source.

Always remember that low cholesterol and low-fat differ immensely. A product can be low in cholesterol and high in fat. A product may even be low in saturated fat, but exceed your daily limit of total fat.

Be an Informed Shopper

Take shopping seriously. Conscious and conscientious shopping for food will be an important phase of your CurvaMax weight maintenance program. You'll need to examine labels and choose only foods that are within your CurvaMax maintenance plan.

To make a final choice while shopping, follow your instincts based on your knowledge. If it makes it out of the store, it will inevitable make it into your mouth. Stop the temptation and start to feel the success!

Behavioral Control 1: Basics of Change

The 8 Rules of Eating Lead to Successful Weight Control

Rule 1: Only eat when you're sitting at the table.

No eating on the run, in the car, on the street, at the playground, in the park, or while you're in front of the television. If you're standing up you shouldn't be eating! It's that simple. Simplicity is what makes it easy...but only you can make it work.

Rule 2: Put your fork down between mouthfuls.

Enjoy what you're eating. Relax and give yourself a chance to feel full before your plate is empty.

Rule 3: Teach yourself when to eat.

Structure your life so that you make time for eating healthy meals. Eat while your sitting down and not while you're rushing off to an appointment.

Rule 4: Healthy doesn't have to mean boring.

Don't eat the same meals every day. Vary your menus, adding new spices, new tastes, new textures to your meals. The reality is that healthy, low-calorie, low-fat eating can be just as exciting—and much more energizing—than the high-fat, high-calorie regimen you were used to before.

Rule 5: Be clear about what you want to eat.

If you're craving something ice-cold like ice cream, don't try to talk yourself into a muffin or a slice of toast or anything else that isn't cold. You can treat yourself to a frozen yogurt treat and still feel in control. You will also feel satisfied, which means that you will stop eating after the yogurt, rather than seeking out other foods to fulfill your urges.

Rule 6: Eat on a small plate.

Fill the smaller plate, enjoy your food and never feel a moment's guilt about overeating.

Rule 7: No seconds!

As you eat, tell yourself that whatever is on your plate is going to satisfy you. You don't need any more food.

Rule 8: If you need a taste, take a taste!

Keep urges in perspective. When you are confronted with a high-calorie food that you really want, take a taste—even a small piece. Allow yourself to have the sensation of tasting that delicious homemade apple pie or fudge brownie or chocolate delight. But as soon as you feel that urge to reach for more, say to yourself “there is a tomorrow.” Reminding yourself of this is your way of allowing yourself to have another treat again in the future.

Behavioral Control 2: The Environment

Situational Eating Responses

You know certain situations, foods and emotions are red lights for you, warning you that danger lies ahead. Examine your past behaviors and attitudes toward food. Do you want to eat every time you watch television, talk on the telephone, walk into the kitchen? It's possible that your old behaviors were *linked behaviors*—that is, you linked eating to another behavior. It took time to develop that link and it's going to take some work to make sure that the destructive link doesn't return.

In the Kitchen

When you have to be in the kitchen at meal time, make sure that tempting snacks are out of sight. Remember...OUT OF SIGHT, OUT OF MIND, OUT OF MOUTH! Don't make it easy for yourself to grab potato chips, pretzels, etc. while you're cooking dinner. If it's time for a snack, measure out an ounce of pretzels, sit down at the table and eat. Beware of the urges you will feel while in the kitchen and put away tempting foods.

While you're cooking, beware of tasting as you cook. This can quickly add up to a full portion. And, of course, when dinner time comes you sit down with your family for yet another portion! And don't forget the commitment you made to eat only while you're sitting at a table with a measured portion of food.

The World Around You

There are sights, sounds, smells and seduction from food all around you. And it's so easy to give in to the constant temptations. The world is not going to change for you. It is you who needs to change your attitudes and beliefs about food. The only person who can take care of your needs is **you**! If you give in every time you see a hot fudge sundae, or hear an ad on the radio, or walk into a grocery store, bakery or restaurant, you will quickly discover that you are eating all the time.

The temptations will always be there. It is up to you to learn to use the little word NO, when you are bombarded by temptations. Temptations, seductions—yes—they are everywhere. But you can handle them now because you are in control of yourself and in control of your environment.

Behavioral Control 3: Altering Responses

Think Thin

Healthy choice-making is a process by which you train yourself to think and make choices from a *thin viewpoint*. You already have the knowledge, all you lack is practice. The key to healthy choice-making is how to follow-up on the awareness which you have gained through the CurvaMax program.

Most people are aware that bacon contains a lot of fat. Just knowing this fact, however, will not help your diet if you keep it in the freezer. A follow-up plan not to purchase bacon at all is a sign of healthy choice-making. Sticking to a low-fat diet and maintaining self-control is easier when high-fat foods are eliminated from your cabinets.

Self-control and ideal choice-making are not absolute states. You may take a considerable amount of time developing enough self-control to resist all the temptations of our modern world.

Self-Control and Choice-Making

Don't strive for perfection. Every little choice that is positive is important. As you exercise your choice-making powers, you will gain more confidence. Remember too, that behavioral changes, such as healthier choice-making, do not occur overnight. Years of developing bad habits lead to difficult patterns to break.

Stopping "cold turkey" is not always necessary. Sometimes a slow adjustment to your lifestyle will result in the confidence to continue. Every little choice and admittance of desire to change proves that you are gaining control over your own life.

Not reacting immediately will allow your self-control time to react. And as you develop more self-control, the process of curbing bad habits will become easier. Stop and think before you react. As you reach for a cookie, think about the consequences instead of making one motion from hand to mouth.

Learning to choose is very rewarding. You will feel the true meaning of success as you gain self-control and self-determination in the pursuit of your goals.

Eating for Health and Longevity

Food and eating are a very large part of the social life of most Americans. We like foods that taste good and are easy to eat. Nobody can dispute the fact that a diet high in fat (especially saturated fat) contributes to many diet-related illnesses such as hypertension, obesity, heart disease, gout, and even certain forms of cancer (such as colon cancer). Controlling your diet is a positive step in preventing these diseases.

Behavioral Control 4: Special Situations

What About Home?

Are you a victim of your environment? Or are there ways you can change your environment to adapt to your needs? Obviously there are some things you can't change—at least not right away.

If you live near the best bakery in town, you can't just pick up and move because you have a temptation right around the corner. You can plan your itinerary so that you don't pass by that bakery every day.

If your husband loves to eat ice cream every night, you can't ask him to change his behavior to suit your needs...or can you? You certainly can ask him to eat in another room, or excuse yourself and go to your bedroom while he indulges in his snack.

What About the Workplace?

Treat your office like your home. Designate a place where you can eat—probably at your desk—and make it clear to yourself that this is the only place where eating is allowed. If you're brown-bagging it, plan ahead and make sure you include foods in your lunch that will tide you through the work day.

If you go out for lunch, do some investigating first. Visit the restaurants near your office and examine their menus. Which ones offer low-calorie selections? Beware of *calorie counter* lunches that offer chicken salad, tuna salad or seafood salad that may be loaded with hidden fat.

What About Ordering In?

What if everybody decided to order a pizza and asked you to join in? Well, there are two ways you can handle that situation with ease. First, it's okay to order pizza with your co-workers if you put in your request for plain pizza (or extra veggies). When the pizza arrives, take two pieces of pizza, walk back to your desk and eat them slowly. When the pizza on your plate is finished, your lunch is finished—even if there are leftovers that are offered to you.

If you know you can't handle the pizza challenge, tell your co-workers that you're meeting a friend for lunch and head out the door to one of your usual lunchtime eating places. Then you've removed yourself from the temptation. Make sure that you order something satisfying for lunch, something you really enjoy, so that you don't feel deprived when you return to your office. Tell yourself when you are finished that you are full and that you will not eat pizza when you return to your desk.

On the way back to your office, stop at a fruit stand and buy yourself a fresh orange or apple to munch on at your desk. If your co-workers offer you pizza when you return, you are prepared to give the thin person's answer: "No, thank you. I'm full." And you'll discover it's really true!

Behavioral Control 5: Making It Work

The Behavior Chain

You've probably noticed by now that certain behaviors trigger other behaviors. That is, that there is often a chain of events that leads you to want to eat for reasons other than hunger. The key to handling a behavior chain that may lead you to overeating is first to recognize what is going on. For example, perhaps you know that when you enter the kitchen after you return from work in the evening you want to eat. The chain of events goes like this:

You walk into the kitchen. Immediately you start to think about food.
You see an open bag of potato chips on the counter next to the stove.
You go to the stove, begin cooking dinner, and reach for the chips.
Before you know it the bag is half empty.

Breaking the Chain

Avoid going into the kitchen immediately after work. If you have two entrances to your home, go in through the door that is not in the kitchen. If you must enter through the kitchen, do just that—walk through the kitchen to another room.

Find an activity to keep you occupied for at least ten minutes, even if you're legitimately hungry. Remind yourself that it's okay to feel hungry. You're not going to pass out just because you're feeling some hunger pangs—which you plan to satisfy soon.

You can go to your room and phone a friend or change into sweats and do ten minutes of stretching exercises. Talk to your children. Water the plants. Sit in a chair, close your eyes and relax for ten blissful minutes. The only thing you can't do is step foot into the kitchen—not yet. After 10 minutes, the urge may very well have passed.

Planning for Success

But what if you try to break the chain and it just doesn't work? What if you eat a planned snack at work, walk right through the kitchen, stay out for ten minutes, keep all snacks out of sight and still feel an uncontrollable urge to binge?

First, use self-talk to combat what feels like an overwhelming urge at the moment. Ask yourself what you're doing and why. Remind yourself how you will feel after the deed is done. Do you really want to return to old behaviors? Will that make you feel happy with yourself? The answer, as you know, is a resounding NO! Remind yourself of how hard you've worked to come so far, of the new behaviors you've been working on, and the new approach to eating that you now have.

Integrating Thinking, Feeling and Acting

Some forms of behavior are automatic, like breathing or scratching an itch. Others, like eating are rarely automatic. Eating behaviors are the end result of a continuum or a sequence of events which are influenced by your thoughts, feelings and emotions.

Defining the Continuums

Some input or cues trigger thoughts and feelings that in turn lead to some kind of output or behavior. That continuum looks something like this:

INPUT	FILTER	PROCESSING	OUTPUT
Cue	Beliefs and Attitudes	Thoughts and Feelings	Behavior

Controlling the Continuum

Using the following CurvaMax Continuum Exercise to keep track of your thought/feeling/behavior continuums. Soon, you will start to recognize patterns, certain situations, ideas and feelings that regularly set you off in search of food. And you'll find more and more ways to deflect the continuum away from eating behaviors into more appropriate ones.

CurvaMax Continuum Exercise	
INPUT	What cues are particularly dangerous for me in terms of wanting to eat? What cues might be at work right now?
FILTER	What negative beliefs do I hold that affect me in this situation? How could I rephrase those beliefs to allow for the possibility of success? What information could these beliefs keep me from seeing in this situation?
PROCESSING	What am I thinking about that is making me want to eat? Could I think about something else? Or could I be thinking about this in more constructive ways? How do I feel right now? Bored, anxious, unhappy, angry? What can I do or think about to change these feelings?
OUTPUT	I am going to (a) eat or (b) do something more constructive and appropriate for which I will reward myself with _____

The most important thing for you to know about the thought/feeling/behavior continuum is that you can change the outcome.

Learning To Love Your Body

Everyone carries around an inner view of how he or she looks to the world. This is known as your body image—the way you see your body through your mind’s eye. Depending on whether your body image is positive or negative, it can support you on the road to success or pull you down the path to failure.

What Is Your Body Image?

It’s visual, based on what you see when you look in the mirror. It’s emotional, based on how you feel about the way you look. It’s kinesthetic, based on how you feel about and control your body parts. It’s historical, based on the way people have responded to your appearance throughout your life.

The way you see yourself depends to a large extent on how you think others see you. Most of us see ourselves as a caricature of who we really are. The mind’s eye presents a distorted image of the way you look. There are two common ways you can distort body image; by seeing a particular body part (nose, hips, thighs, etc.) as abnormal or viewing yourself as having the wrong size or shape. Either way you’re doing yourself an injustice.

Understanding Your Body Image

Examine your own feelings by asking yourself a few simple questions:

- Are you often self-conscious about your appearance?
- Do certain body parts tend to dominate your thoughts? If so, which ones?
- Do you often compare your looks to others or to those of models?
- Do some body parts seem dramatically different from one day to the next?
- Do people say you look better than you think you do?

If you answered yes to any of the questions above, you need to set some new goals for yourself. Think about how you feel about your body, and then write down how you would like to feel about it.

Setting Goals For a New Body Image

When you select your goals, keep your list short and manageable.

- I will stop demanding perfection.
- I will stop setting up unrealistic standards for myself of how I *should* look.
- I will stop criticizing my appearance and look for my good points.
- I will learn to love my body and treat it with respect.

Be patient. Remember that it took many years to develop your body image, therefore, don’t expect your self-perception to change overnight.

To succeed at body love, you must first acknowledge that you and your body need to establish a new relationship. Then you need to learn concrete ways to change your body image.

Resistance Tactics: Strategies For Change

Resisting Change

You're likely to resist change because it creates chaos and conflict. Change riles things up, bringing out emotions you're not used to or comfortable with feeling. It also means you're striking out into dangerous territory—the unknown. Your mind may panic at the thought of having to change comfortable patterns of negative behavior to more positive ones. If you take a good, honest look at your behaviors, you will probably discover some common resistance tactics.

Identifying Your Resistance Tactics

Delay. Do you often procrastinate or forget things that you wanted to do so much? “I can’t go to the beach today. I’ll go next week, next month, next summer, when I’m thinner.”

Denial. Do you see problems in everybody except yourself? “*My friend thinks the reason she doesn’t have a boyfriend is because her nose is too big. She really should see a therapist.*”

Blame. Do you always blame either yourself or someone else for keeping you back or stopping you from making positive changes in your life? “My mother never told me I was pretty. It’s her fault I have such a bad self-image.”

Rationalization. Do you tell yourself every reason in the book—except the real reason—why you’re not willing to change? “I can’t wear straight skirts because I need to project a professional image.”

Avoidance. Do you get sick, lose things, arrive late to avoid confrontations that feel threatening? “I forgot to bring my lunch today. There’s nothing low calorie I could buy for lunch, so I may as well splurge and have a pizza.”

Overcoming Resistance

Once you figure out which resistance tactics you’ve been using, it will be easier for you to catch yourself when you’re in the act of resisting. The first step is to admit you’re resisting something. Next, set modest goals that you think you can achieve. Expect that you will succeed, and concentrate on your progress, not your setbacks.

Start to act. Action makes you feel less helpless and more powerful. If you decide that you want to start an exercise class, then do it! You’ll discover that resistance keeps you stuck in one place, but action serves as a catalyst, moving you forward toward more change. If you change old behaviors gradually rather than all at once you’re more likely to succeed. Your mind and your body need time to adapt and adjust to these new changes.

Celebrate the Change

You will notice as you work toward changing your negative body image that it never really mattered how your body looked. What mattered most is the way you viewed it—how you thought others saw it. Whereas before you looked at yourself with self-rejecting eyes, you now view yourself with self-acceptance, with generosity and forgiveness. Look in the mirror and say to yourself, “I like myself just the way I am!” Then celebrate the changes that helped you to realize that you can love your body and yourself.

Putting It All Together

You may be surprised to discover that you've reached the end of the CurvaMax Behavior Modification Program and are now ready to enter maintenance. If that prospect seems overwhelming, take heart, here's what you learned:

- You've developed the technical skills needed for effective weight management.
- You've developed a positive self-image and increased self-esteem.
- You've learned ways of dealing with both the internal and external forces around you.
- You've learned to recognize stress and discovered ways to minimize its effect upon your life.

The Present

Take this opportunity to feel comfortable and confident. Also take time to remember that while the weight loss phase is over, the CurvaMax program is far from finished. Permanent weight control depends on lifestyle change which may take many months to accomplish. While eating habits and behaviors have been modified during the CurvaMax program, it is only the beginning.

We've outlined some of the tools and crutches that you will need to develop healthy attitudes towards eating, but you are the one who has to take responsibility for implementing them in your life. It takes time, practice and the help of some *crutches* before the positive attitudes will function on their own.

At first, these may seem awkward and silly and obvious, like any crutches, but you may need to use them until your positive attitudes are healthy and self-sustaining. Eventually, you will get to know your Achilles Heel (those cues, beliefs and attitudes, and thoughts and feelings that are particularly destructive) well enough so you can counter its effect before it takes control of the situation.

The Future

You have your game plan, now you must execute it. You must continue in maintenance to refine these skills under the supportive care of your CurvaMax team. By continually practicing these skills under their watchful eye (like an athlete preparing throughout the season with his coach for the Superbowl), you'll improve your chances for long-term weight control. In time, you will be able to make your own choices and deal with food cues and behavioral situations wherever you may find them; but for now, listen to your coach.

Remember, you're still in training!