

# Set priorities, goals when making lifestyle changes

By Mandy Kendall

**I want to get healthier, I just don't know where to start?**

Start with being honest with yourself. How happy are you with your health at the moment, honestly? The best way is to give yourself a mark out of 10 for different areas of your health. We tend to be more objective when we put a number value to something. For example, you could rate yourself on a scale of 1 to 10 on the following areas ... (10 being totally happy and 1 being I'm beyond unhappy). How happy am I with my weight? How happy am I with my stress levels? How happy am I with the amount of exercise I'm doing? How happy am I with my levels of energy, etc. Once you have a number for each area you can then prioritize which area to start on.

**Then what do I do?**



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Once you have an idea of what area of your health you want to (or need to) start with, you can decide on how you will get there. Chances are the number for your priority area will be fairly low. To make changes a little less daunting it can help to break them down into manageable and achievable steps. If your happiness with your weight is at a 2 out of 10, you might not even be able to imagine being at a 10 out of 10.

Setting a target of 5 out of 10 might seem much more doable. Then imagine where you would need to be with your weight in order to give yourself a 5 out of 10. Maybe it's a weight goal (releasing a certain number of pounds) or maybe it's a dress you would like to fit back into. Try and give yourself a goal you can truly see yourself achieving.

The next step is to set a realistic timeframe to achieve it in. Change takes time and, especially when releasing weight, you should not try to rush things with fad diets that promise a large amount of weight loss in a short period of time.

Next, you need to consider how you will get to this first level. Will it be through more exercise, better diet or both? Will you do it alone or with a friend or maybe join a group of people all trying to achieve the same thing. Research shows that those people who join a group have significantly better results than those who don't.

### **How do I find the right group?**

Try asking friends and family who have succeeded what's worked for them? Check local media for groups in your area, (Meet Up Groups are a great resource for this) and it's a great way to make new friends too. Some people prefer online groups, so you could check with your Facebook friends for recommendations (you can always private message them if you don't want to broadcast it to the world). If you search for specific groups on Facebook, try not to be too swayed by the number of "likes" they have, it is better to go by the "talking about this" number as this indicates how many people are active on the site. Maybe a friend is looking to do the same as you – there's nothing like having an accountability coach to help you over the bumps and hurdles along the way and help you celebrate the successes.

**I've tried all that before and it either doesn't work at all for me or it works for a while and then I go back to square**

## **one or worse ... what am I doing wrong?**

OK, this happens to a lot of us in one way or another. First, it is always worth checking with your doctor to make sure there aren't any medical issues that are hindering your progress. However, much of the time we just get in our own way. We try to change things, with the best of intentions, but something in us prevents us from moving forward. Sometimes we can be our own worst enemy and years of external, or internal, negative talk has convinced us on some level that we are not worthy/capable/deserving/able to change (if you feel like checking all those boxes, don't worry you're not alone).

If you've honestly tried the steps above and you still can't make those changes then chances are you are going to need some more specific help. There are many ways to address these mindset issues and it all depends on your circumstances and your personal preferences as to how you go about resolving these roadblocks to your success. Some holistic practitioners are very experienced in helping you work through emotional and behavioral blockages. Again, you can ask friends and family for recommendations for particular therapies or practitioners. Find out if a prospective therapist is willing to chat with you on the phone for a few minutes to let you know how their treatment works. This will give you a chance of finding out if you resonate with them. Emotional/behavior release therapy is very personal and it helps immensely if you get along with the practitioner as a person. There are also some techniques that you can do on your own.

Emotional Freedom Technique (EFT), or the tapping technique as it's sometimes known, is an extremely effective tool at unblocking and releasing emotional issues.

As with many self help techniques, it is often advisable to find a professional to take you through the basics before you branch out on your own (a bit like having a lesson with a trainer before you try to train on your own in the gym) as it

will help you get the most out of the therapy. You can find out about EFT online. There is also a book that I highly recommend which will walk you through the why and how of this wonderful technique – “The Tapping Solution”.

If you have any questions feel free to email me at [connect@healthconnective.com](mailto:connect@healthconnective.com).

*Mandy Kendall operates Health Connective in South Lake Tahoe, which aligns wellness seekers with their ideal wellness provider. If you have questions, would like some advice, or would like to request some Qwik-e tips on any health and well-being topic, drop her an email at [connect@healthconnective.com](mailto:connect@healthconnective.com) or keep an eye out on Lake Tahoe News for regular Qwik-e tips on how to make healthy changes one Quick and Easy step at a time.*