

G

etting back in the Game

after Significant Weight-loss

By Patrece Snow, LPN, CLC, CSGL

Where are you in the game of life?

Are you out there on the field actively participating, or do you find yourself sitting in the stands watching, wishing you could be in the game too? For many of us, our obesity has been a roadblock to living our lives to the fullest for a very long time. Now that you have lost a significant amount of weight and are experiencing this life-changing transformation, consider extending the transformation process into all areas of your life!

Could it be we were embarrassed by our weight and chose to stay in the background? Maybe, it was due to obesity-related health issues that physically prevented us from participating.

You worked very hard to get to where you are! You deserve to reward yourself with the joy and personal fulfillment. Whatever it may be that has held you back, it is now time to let go of it, and move forward.

Learning to get back in the game of life after significant weight-loss is not always easy. There are many factors that can negatively affect our ability to live fully and with satisfaction. But, we all have the choice to work through these obstacles and to enjoy the wonderful experiences that life offers.

So, What is Holding You back?

For many of us, we continue to entertain our self-limiting beliefs that we developed years ago. Our basic belief system is "programmed" by age six. These beliefs have become our way of viewing ourselves and where we belong or what we deserve in life. The problem is that many of our beliefs are inaccurate and unfair to us.



Self Image

Self image is another big issue that can keep us from moving forward and embracing the life we truly desire. Many people, especially if they have been obese for all or most of their lives, still see themselves as that obese person, even though they may no longer be so.

Relationships

The relationships we are in can also contribute to our inability to move forward. Some of the people that have a significant role in our lives can actually feel threatened by our weight-loss success. Spouses may fear we will want to move on to someone better, friends may feel that they are losing their connection with us as we adopt new lifestyle habits that were not a part of how we related with them in the past.

Some may be jealous of our success and resent our efforts to continue to improve our life. You may find that those who were once close to you distance themselves or try to sabotage your efforts due to the insecurity that your success creates for them.

Other factors that can hold us back include self doubt, difficulty or inability to identify what we truly want in our lives and lack of direction in how to achieve these things we desire.

You Have the Power to Overcome Your Challenges

You truly do have the power and ability to break through your barriers and embrace the life you have always wanted! You have already proven this to yourself. Look at how far you have come in your weight-loss. No, it wasn't always easy to do what you had to do to achieve this, but YOU did it! You can do this too. Your decision to get back in the game of life can be put into action today.

As you begin to move forward and learn to embrace life and all it has to offer, you will find that some of the obstacles will take time, effort and sheer determination to overcome. Some will be easier to break through. As you progress, you will experience an awesome sense of personal empowerment. This empowerment will help you work through the more difficult challenges with more confidence and success.

Breaking through the Barriers

The first and most critical aspect of learning to live life fully is being able to identify the barriers and challenges standing between you and how you want to experience life. Without having a clear idea of what

Key Actions for Getting back in the Game



Be Spontaneous!

When you are presented with an opportunity to enjoy yourself and experience the fun things in life, just do it. Do not evaluate it or try to think of all the reasons you should not or could not participate. Allow yourself to engage in it. Live fully in the moment. Give yourself permission to experience it. You ARE deserving of it!

Do Not Allow Others to Hold You back

There comes a time in our lives when we must be true to ourselves. That time is now. If you have relationships with people that foster negativity and self doubt within you, you must not allow this to continue. This is not to say that you have to break off these relationships, but it may be time to set new ground rules and boundaries within these relationships.

It can be quite possible that some of these people that foster the negativity in us are not even aware they are doing so. So, now is the time to be open and honest with them. Make them aware of your position. Let them know what you need and expect from them and what you cannot accept. Those who truly care for you would want nothing less for you and will want to honor your request.

Recognize How Far You Have Come

Give yourself credit for all that you have achieved. Know that you are strong and worthy and have the power to continue to achieve all that you desire. Sure, you may have had some slip ups along the way, but who hasn't? When you do slip up, don't beat yourself up over it. Simply acknowledge it, accept responsibility for it and move forward, knowing that next time you have more awareness and have the opportunity to choose to do it differently.

Silence that Internal Naysayer

Just as with our relationships with others, we may need to set new boundaries and guidelines in our relationship with ourselves. Many who struggle with or have struggled with obesity have learned to view themselves in a negative light. Self doubt, poor self image and fear have become strong saboteurs in our ability to grow and incorporate new and positive changes into our lives. It is time to slay those demons. They no longer have a place in our lives.

it is that keeps you back, it will be impossible to make the changes that must be made to facilitate the achievement of your desires and goals.

To successfully identify what holds you back, you need to do some deep soul searching. You need to ask yourself what it truly is you want to experience and achieve. This may not be easy to do, as our self limiting beliefs can cause us to dismiss many of our goals and desires as being impossible to achieve, farfetched or even unrealistic. But the truth is they are likely very achievable and realistic, we just may not believe they can happen for us.

So, when you begin to explore what it is you truly want to experience, do not allow yourself to dismiss anything that comes to mind. Once you have completed your list of goals or things you would like to experience or achieve, it is time to take the next step.

Consider each goal with an open mind. Next to each goal, define what it is that you feel holds you back from attaining it. Every roadblock or barrier to your desired outcome, no matter how big or small it seems, should be included. Remember, identifying the obstacles is the primary key to enable you to begin the process of breaking through them.

The next step is to begin to identify ways in which you can conquer these barriers. Even if you begin with very small but positive actions and mindsets, write down everything for each challenge that you can do to begin moving toward successfully breaking through each barrier. As you begin to identify ways to accomplish this, it may be helpful to ask others that you trust for ideas they may have as well. It is important to allow yourself to think “outside the box” and be creative in this process.

Make it Work

Once you have your basic list in place, it is time to begin to implement some of these new actions and mindsets. Do not try to tackle them all at once. It will be far too overwhelming. Start small and move forward as you feel ready. The process of incorporating these new thoughts and actions into your life may not feel comfortable at first. But as you continue to practice them, they will become easier to do. Eventually, they will become a new habit for you, and it will seem almost effortless.

If you find you are struggling with this process, there are places you can get support to assist you in successfully executing this process. You may consider:

- Seeking advice or suggestions from a support group you are involved with
- Seeking counseling if needed
- Asking trusted loved ones or friends to encourage and assist you
- Considering hiring a life coach that is knowledgeable and personally experienced in the issue of obesity and significant weight-loss

Conclusion

As you begin this new leg of your journey, know that you must go outside of your comfort zone to reach new destinations. To experience what you never have, you must do what you have never done. Even the smallest steps into new and unexplored actions and opportunities will result in very powerful and positive results.

About the Author:

Patrece Snow, LPN, CLC, CSGL, is the owner of Bariatric Buddy and has been a Licensed Practical Nurse for more than 18 years. She is also a Certified Life Coach, specializing in working with the bariatric, weight-loss and obese population. Patrece is an OAC member.



OAC Membership

Building a Coalition of those Affected

The OAC is the **ONLY** non profit organization whose sole focus is helping those affected by obesity. The OAC is a great place to turn if you are looking for a way to get involved and give back to the cause of obesity.

There are a variety of ways that you can make a difference, but the first-step is to become an OAC Member. The great thing about OAC Membership is that you can be as involved as you would like. Simply being a member contributes to the cause of obesity.

Why YOU Should Become an OAC Member

Quite simply, because the voice of those affected needs to be built! The OAC not only provides valuable public education on obesity, but we also conduct a variety of advocacy efforts. With advocacy, our voice must be strong. And, membership is what gives the OAC its strong voice.

**JOIN
NOW**

Complete the below application now!
For more information, visit the OAC Web site at www.obesityaction.org.

Membership Categories and Benefits

The OAC wants **YOU** to be a part of what we do. No matter how you're impacted, having individuals join our efforts who believe in making a difference is essential. That's why the OAC offers various member categories, so you can get involved at your desired level.

Several valuable benefits also accompany your OAC membership. Each membership category offers something different. Here are some of the core benefits to membership:

- Official welcome letter and membership card
- Annual subscription to the OAC's magazine
- Subscription to the OAC's members-only monthly electronic newsletter
- Periodic member alerts informing you of issues that need action/attention
- Ability to lend your voice to the cause
- Representation through advocacy

Membership Application

Yes! I would like to join the OAC's efforts. I would like to join as a/an:

- Individual Member: \$20/year
- Professional Member: \$50/year
- Physician Member: \$150/year
- Institutional Member: \$500/year
- Chairman's Council: \$1,000 and up/year

Mail to: OAC
4511 North Himes Ave., Ste. 250
Tampa, FL 33614

Or Fax to: (813) 873-7838

Name: _____

Company: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Payment Information

Enclosed is my check (payable to the OAC) for \$ _____.

Please charge my credit card for my membership fee:

Discover® MasterCard® Visa® Amex®

Credit Card Number: _____

Expiration Date: _____ Billing Zip Code: _____