



PYT Weekly Training & Support

Lesson #8 How to Stay On Track

by Jim Katsoulis

Welcome to this week's lesson, and what we're going to talk about today are mental tricks for staying on track. This is probably the thing I hear the most when I'm working with people; they can start off pretty well but they have trouble maintaining it.

And what I want to do is I want to go through it again. I'm going to give some specific techniques you can use to stay on track to motivate yourself and to stay focused. But before I get into that, we want to talk about how we're approaching it.

A lot of what you're going to learn is that the perception that we have of losing weight needs to be shifted and changed in order to get the results you want. So, when we talk about staying on track, the biggest mistake I see people making is they try and make really, really extreme changes in their diet and their exercise too quickly.

And what ends up happening is it becomes very uncomfortable because they're not used to it. Physically, if they've had so much exercise, they can hurt themselves or they become very sore, and their body begins to fight against those changes.

So, the way around that is to begin to move into the changes a little bit slower. Now, we've talked about in the past of setting up a long-term goal, setting up a long-term plan. And if you start thinking long term ... that extreme plan you followed to get instant results, that doesn't really work so when you start following a longer-term plan, you can ease into it.

And that, in and of itself, is going to make it easier to stay on track. So, I know it's a challenge. I know people want these instant results but you can shift your mindset to think about permanent results; and so maybe, you'd get the results you wanted in three months; and maybe with a longer-term plan, maybe it'd take six months; but it'd be a more comfortable and easy way to do it, and it'd be done in a way where you could do it long, long term for the rest of your life.

So, that's what we want to look at.

Now, the other thing I want to say about when you fall off track is that ... you know, there's a saying they have in politics that it wasn't the crime, it was the cover up. And when it comes to weight loss and being in a plan, a lot of times, it's not falling off the plan that's the problem, it's what you say to yourself once you've fallen off the plan.

So, say you've been eating well for a week or two, and you then you have a day where you just blow it. You just overeat and you don't exercise or do anything. One of the problems that happen is the next morning when the person wakes up, he says, "Oh, I blew it so what's the point? Who cares? I screwed up yesterday so who cares about today?"

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And that will happen for the next week, or two weeks, or a couple of months, and then they get [inaudible] **02:37** get back on track. But then, they get off track and then they're off again for a while.

So, what I want to suggest to you is that if you do get off track, if you have an off day, let it go. Just accept that you ate too much that day, and you didn't exercise, and you didn't do whatever, and then, get back on track quickly. Let it go.

One day does not mean anything. So, if you average two weeks on track eating well and exercising, and if you have one day out of that two weeks where you blow it, you eat too many calories and you don't exercise, that is not going to affect your weight as much as when you fall off that day and then you say, "Oh, screw it. I fell off the bandwagon. I'm off. I'm going to have to get back on."

So, that's what I'm saying. The next thing I want to say is that we want to get off this mentality that you're off or on because that's not really what you want permanently. You always want to be constantly shifting to eating better and better as often as you can.

And so, another thing you do is break it down so it's not even days but it becomes meals. So, if you overeat at dinner, the next morning when you wake up, you can make up for it. So, you want to think about almost balancing yourself out.

And this is a very, very effective technique to use, and I use this myself because sometimes, you get in a situation where maybe you were just too hungry and you overate, or maybe you went out socially and you just got caught up and overate.

That's fine. You can make it up with the next meal or consequently, if you know you're going to go to a place where there's a good chance you're going to overeat or you want to eat more, you can make it up before that; maybe have a small breakfast or lunch, eat a little bit less or a little bit better during those meals or exercise a little bit longer.

But if you start breaking it down instead of just days and instead of just weeks, and you start looking at each meal, breaking it down into a smaller viewpoint so that if you do overeat, you make it up right away. And you keep that in your mind; you can keep yourself balanced that way instead of having these really extreme ups and downs that can last weeks or months or years. This is very, very helpful.

So, how do we stay on track? You're doing well, you're eating well, you're exercising and you're feeling good. How do you stay on track?

Now, this is going to depend on the work you've already done; and the most important thing you can do is clearly articulate the reason why you want to accomplish this goal. Ultimately and simplistically, our behaviors are dependent upon pain and pleasure;

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and that pain and pleasure is highly perceived. It's a perception, not necessarily the truth.

So, the way that we perceive maybe junk foods, or sweets, or fattening foods is going to influence how easily we can avoid them or limit their intake. And that's up to us; that's up to you.

You can influence and manipulate your perceptions; and the way you do that is you intentionally tie the pain and the pleasure to the foods and to the behaviors that you want.

So, again, I'm going to assume that you know what weight, what body size, and what physical goal you want to achieve. You want to lose a certain amount of weight and weigh a certain amount, be a certain size, have a certain level of health, mobility, flexibility, energy, these things. You need to know that. You need to be specific in your mind about what you want to accomplish. Our brains are servomechanisms. They need to have a goal in mind to operate at peak efficiency.

And the next thing is, we go into the emotions. Why is this goal important to you? What does it mean to you in your life?

Now, you need to tie your weight and your eating well and your energy and your health to the most important areas of your life. For a lot of people, that is relationships; if you have children, if you have a spouse, family, friends, tie it to that.

If you don't get to the weight that you want, if you don't have the body you want, how does that affect you emotionally? Are you more depressed? Are you more tired? Are you not as much fun? Are you missing out on things? So, focus on the pain of not sticking with the plan, of not getting the results you want.

And the flipside is kind of the extra motivation. What's the pleasure? What will you get if you do stick to this plan? When you eat a salad for lunch as opposed to a cheeseburger and fries, how does your life change? When you accumulate those meals together, how does your day change? When you eat that salad, how are you the rest of the day? Do you have more energy? Do you feel better? Are you happy? Are you more fun to be around? Are you more productive at work?

You need to make the food not just about "Oh, I can't eat that. I want to eat that but I can't eat that." It's very superficial and it's very difficult to stay motivated on that level. You need to tap into the emotional reasons that you're doing this for.

And the beauty is this, you have the truth on your side. The truth is when you do eat well, when you do have that salad instead of the cheeseburger, you do feel better. This isn't propaganda. You feel better.

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And maybe when you're eating it, it doesn't taste quite as good as the cheeseburger; that may be true. But you will feel better afterwards. You'll feel lighter, you'll feel healthier.

And when you start accumulating those decisions after a period of time, and you choose the salad, you choose the fruit, you choose to eat more appropriately over and over and over again, your body begins to reflect that and you start to slim down. Your clothes get to be more what you want them to be. You feel better.

And so, the secret is this. You need to be able to say, "I am eating this way because of this ..." I give you my reasons. I can go on and on and on but a lot of people cannot. They can't articulate why they want to eat well. They say, "Oh, I have to go on a diet. I have to lose weight."

That's not going to do it long term. "I want to eat well because I want to feel alive. I want to feel good about my body. I want to look in the mirror and know that I look the way that I want to. It makes me feel good.

Any time of the day I can think about how I feel and how I look and it makes me feel good about myself. I like feeling good about myself. That feeling is better than any taste in the world. As good as taste can be, it's fleeting and it's temporary; and I like feeling alive.

I like having the energy to play with my daughter. I like having the energy to put into my relationship with my wife, to be able to produce in my job so that we can go into fun things and the way I eat directly impacts those things absolutely.

And if I overate and I start gaining a bunch of weight, I would feel depressed. I would start to get very lethargic. My energy level would go down. My income would go down because of that. The fun that I have in my life, my quality of life would go down if I overate and ate foods that make me feel bad."

So, I can go on and on and on. But I wasn't always able to do this. So, what I'm suggesting to you is when you're thinking about how to stay on track, it's not about staying on track so that you're eating well. That's very vague.

That's almost like there's this definition of eating well and you have to live up to it, and it's not your definition. You need to make "eating well" tied directly to the things that are most important to you in your life.

And the way you find that out is what do you do day in and day out? Who are the people that you're around? What are the things that you actually do?

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You go to work. If you work at home, if you're a housewife or a house husband, you keep the house clean, you take care of the kids, what things are important to you? What are you doing day in and day out, and how would eating well influence that? How would it change it?

And that's how you want to define this process. And when you can articulate it, when you can articulate the reasons, the emotional reasons why eating well and exercising is so important to you, the entire thing changes. It's not about getting off track.

It's like work, for example. If you have a job, maybe you miss a day, but it's not about getting off track, it's something you have to do. And of course, you have to do it or you feel like you have to do it because you want to do it because you want the things that money's going to give you.

And of course, you don't have to do it. There are plenty of people who don't work at all. They're homeless, or they live on the street, or they really downsize their lives; and they don't work much or they don't have much income coming in and they live that way.

So, it is a choice, perhaps. But you need to make this "eating well" beyond the realm of "Well, I really should lose some weight." Notice how small that is. You need to make this bigger. And it's true because the better you eat, the better you feel, the better these different areas of your life are going to become. And you know that for a fact; you just need to keep reminding yourself of that.

And when you begin to define it this way, it's very difficult to get off track. Again, if you miss a day of work, you won't get off track and not be able to get in the next day. You may not want to get in the next day but you get yourself to do it because in your mind, that job is so important to you in your life because it allows you to have your home or have the things that you have in your life, to support the people who are in your life.

So, you want to get eating well on that same level. So, this is a little different than some of the motivation tricks you might have learned but this is amazingly powerful.

I'm going to give you one last one to stay on track, a mental trick; and this is really a mental and physiological trick. Say you want to exercise and you want to get yourself to exercise, sometimes, people will lie on the sofa and say, "Oh, I really got to exercise." You know, they'll slouch, and they're kind of like just sitting on a lazy chair, and they always watch TV, and they're trying to talk themselves into exercising or stop eating the chips in front of them.

When you want to get yourself to do something, don't even start thinking about doing that thing until you change your body. So, it's like if you want to go and get yourself to

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exercise and you sit on the sofa like this, just stop the conversation and stand up, shake your body up, and get some energy in your body.

As soon as you do that, you completely change the quality of your thought. Actually, you literally change your thoughts. So, it's very difficult to overcome your body sometimes if you're slouching, tired, feeling lazy, and lethargic.

You can instantly change that just by kind of jumping up and down a little bit, just by shaking your body out ... nothing crazy, just bringing some energy into your body.

And now, think about what you want to do. Now, think about getting yourself to go to the gym or making a salad or getting that piece of fruit because that will be very, very powerful.

It's difficult to overcome your physiology. I want you to become aware of this, to become aware of your physiology. We're going to go into this much, much more in another lesson but right now, I want you to recognize it.

If you're feeling kind of down, lethargic, and all the rest of it, that's fine; but if you want to feel and do these energetic things, you need to get your body in that place first, and you can do that by will. You can get yourself to stand up.

You can even shake your arms like that; even that brings more energy into your body. So, use that technique because it's going to instantly change the way you're thinking and you'll be amazed at it; and you'll also be amazed at how many times you were trying to get yourself motivated and fired up when you're totally lethargic and just kind of sitting on the lazy boy or just feeling really down or really worn out. And you could change that in an instant.

I do that when I'm working in front of the computer. I'll find myself kind of slouching. I wonder why I'm not getting anything done. Well, instead of just keep having that conversation with me and wondering why I'm not getting it done, as soon as I catch it, I'll sit up, I'll stand up, shake my arms out, take a few deep breaths, and my work becomes different.

So, you're going to do the same thing when it comes to the weight loss. When you want to exercise, when you want to eat better, pay attention to where your state is, where your physiology is, where your mindset is, and influence it.

You can control this and practice it. The more you practice it, the easier it becomes to do. And the other thing is, the more natural you'll do it. You can do it automatically.

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So, have fun with this and remember, the ultimate thing here in this lesson is to be able to articulate why you want to accomplish this, why you want to eat well, and why you want to exercise and not just to lose weight.

That's one reason. You need to go deeper than that. How is it going to influence the most important things in your life? And when you can think about that and when you can articulate it and just rattle off all the reasons why, you're going to be amazed at how easily you automatically want to eat well.

I'll talk to you all next week. Have a great week.

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