

Participant Guide

Get Back on Track

Getting back on track with your eating and fitness goals can help prevent or delay type 2 diabetes.

Tips:

- ▶ There may be times when you fall short of your goals for a week or two. This is called a lapse, and it's very normal.
- ▶ Remember: A lapse is a big deal only if you let it become one. Whatever you do, don't give up!

Kofi's Story

Kofi is at risk for type 2 diabetes. So he's trying to live a healthy lifestyle. For two months, Kofi does great with his eating and fitness goals. As a result, he loses 15 pounds.

But on Friday, some of Kofi's coworkers are laid off. He's worried that he will be next. So he decides to prove himself to his boss by working extra hard.

On Monday, Kofi comes into work early. That means he doesn't have time to pack his lunch in the morning. So he gets a candy bar from the vending machine instead of having a healthy lunch.

To impress his boss, Kofi sits at his desk and works through lunch. As a result, he skips his usual lunchtime walk. So he doesn't get enough activity that day. Kofi does the same thing each day that week.

By the weekend, Kofi is mad at himself for getting off track with his eating and fitness goals. He's gained two pounds. He feels like a failure. He feels like giving up.

Kofi decides to take action to get back on track and prevent similar lapses in the future. He stays positive. And he uses the five steps of problem solving.

Kofi Uses the 5 Steps of Problem Solving

First, Kofi clearly describes his problems. And he tries to figure out what caused them.

He realizes he has two problems:

Problem 1: He doesn't have a healthy lunch each day.

Cause: Kofi is worried about losing his job, so he comes to work early. That means he doesn't have time to pack his lunch in the morning. So he gets a candy bar from the vending machine instead of having a healthy lunch each day.

Problem 2: He doesn't get enough activity each day.

Cause: Kofi is worried about losing his job. So he sits at his desk and works through lunch.

As a result, he doesn't take his usual lunchtime walk. So he doesn't get enough activity each day.

Kofi realizes that both of these problems have the same root cause: He's worried about losing his job. Instead of dealing with these worries by coming in early and working through lunch, he could:

- ▶ Ask his boss if his job is really in danger. He may be worrying for no reason.
- ▶ Ask his boss what he can do to protect his job instead of coming in early and working through lunch

Kofi Uses the 5 Steps of Problem Solving

Next, Kofi brainstorms some ways to cope with his problems. To make sure he eats a healthy lunch each day, he could:

- ▶ Pack his lunch the night before, or on the weekend
- ▶ Keep a stash of healthy snacks at work
- ▶ Ask a friend or family member to pack his lunch for him
- ▶ Shop for items that he can pack quickly, such as fruit and yogurt

To make sure he gets enough activity each day, he could:

- ▶ Walk outside or in his office while he works, instead of sitting at his desk (phone calls, meetings)
- ▶ Be more active during evenings and weekends
- ▶ Take the stairs instead of the elevator at work
- ▶ Ride his bike to work if he lives close to work and it's safe
- ▶ Park in a distant part of the lot at work
- ▶ Use a stand-up desk

After Kofi comes up with these options, he chooses the best options, makes an action plan, and tries it.

5 Steps of Problem Solving

1. Describe your problems.
2. Come up with options.
3. Choose the best options.
4. Make an action plan.
5. Try it.

Get Back on Track

Think about issues that have caused—or may cause—you to get off track with your eating and fitness goals. Choose one of these problems. Then stay positive and use the five steps of problem solving.

Five Steps of Problem Solving

1. Clearly describe your problem. What do you think caused it?

2. Come up with options. What are some ways to solve your problem?

3. Pick the best options. Which of those options would work best to solve your problem?

4. Make an action plan. (Use a blank action plan from your Action Plan Journal.) How will you put those choices into practice?

5. Try it. See how it goes!

