



## Support

Losing weight and changing your lifestyle is challenging – there is no denying it! Therefore it is absolutely essential when trying to lose weight and establish healthy, long-term food and exercise habits that you build a great network of support. You must develop relationships with people that will motivate and support you to stay on track and achieve your goals.

What you don't need are people that will hold you back and prevent you from obtaining your optimum weight. For example, you might be surrounded by people who are overweight themselves or who hinder your efforts in losing weight in some other way. They might not consciously do it, but they can still be obstacles on your path to success.

Here are some examples of people who might be hindering your weight loss efforts:

- Your mother who lovingly pushes her homemade cookies at you, even though she knows you are trying to lose weight. She uses food to show her love.
- Your friend who tells you "forget about your diet just for one day and come to McDonalds for a BigMac and Chips".
- Your work colleague who says "come on, you just have to try my homemade chocolate cake".
- Your overweight friend who doesn't want you to look better than he/she does and who will make remarks like "you are losing too much weight" or "you are taking this whole weight thing too seriously".
- Your husband/wife who is afraid that you might leave him/her once you lost all the weight and who will try to control you by sabotaging your healthy diet.
- Your mates who you used to drink beer/wine with after work and who now make comments like "you're no fun anymore".
- Your children who are not happy about the healthy meals instead of their fish & chips and who remind you that you failed on your last attempt to lose weight by saying "Why bother again? You put us all through this for nothing".

These are some examples of people in your life who may not be helpful when you are trying to lose weight. However, you still need them on your side. What you need to do is get them on your team. Talk to them about what kind of support you need and how they can help you. Often their input is just a lack of understanding. If you really can't get what you need from those closest to you then you may have to distance yourself temporarily while you focus on achieving your goals.

Think about the people in your life. Identify those who might disrupt your healthy lifestyle goals. Using the table below, record who they are, think about how they may hinder your weight loss efforts, and develop strategies to overcome these obstacles.

Who?	How are they hindering your weight loss efforts?	What strategies could you use to overcome this?

### Building your circle of support

The next step is to surround yourself with people who will support you when you are struggling to maintain motivation. Having a wide circle of support is critical. Don't try to "go it alone". The encouragement you will get from "supporters" will keep you going when things get tough and keep you on track to achieving your goals.

Who should be in your circle of support?

#### Professionals

- This can be personal trainers, nutritionists, support group facilitators, therapists, physicians or anyone who can provide knowledge and guidance.

#### Teammates

- This is someone who is following the same weight loss program as you, with similar goals.

#### Friends or Family members

- This has to be someone who is behind you all the way, who is encouraging and a good listener. It can't be someone who tells you only what you want to hear – this person needs to be able to give you honest and constructive feedback.

Who will be in your circle of support? Write down all the names in the circle below.

