

Tempting Thoughts Technique

One of the primary difficulties with changing our diet and exercise routines is that we usually have plenty of tempting beliefs that draw us to maintain our old habits. Practicing techniques for best dealing with your tempting thoughts can help you improve your whole body health. This handout reviews the concept of tempting thoughts and shares strategies to help you address negative beliefs related to diet and exercise.

Impact of Negative Thoughts

Use this table to identify a few negative thoughts you might have as you change your lifestyle. Consider what you feel when you have that thought and what behaviors might result from your thoughts and feelings.

Negative Thoughts	Feelings	Behaviors
I'm never going to lose weight.	Discouraged, sad, hopeless, frustrated, and angry.	Avoid the gym, give up on nutrition, not reach out for support

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Anna's Story

Anna is at risk for high blood pressure. So she tries to eat well and be active. Most days, Anna walks for 30 minutes around the park, but on Tuesday, it's raining. Anna thinks, "The weather is lousy, and I can't possibly exercise when it's raining."

What tempting thoughts did Anna experience?



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My Tempting Thoughts

What are your five most tempting thoughts that creep into your mind when you are feeling enticed, craving foods, or contemplating not exercising?

Example 1: "The weather is lousy! I can't possibly exercise when it's raining!"

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____



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My Healthy Responses

Find a friend, family member, coach, or therapist to help you with this exercise. Starting with your first tempting thought from above, ask your partner to read it out loud and give you the opportunity to come up with a healthy response. Spend some time talking about the issue and provide a reasonable response that will help defeat this tempting perspective. Write out several healthy responses necessary to defeat the tempting thought. Remember, if you struggle to come up with a healthy response now, you most certainly will cave when faced with tempting beliefs outside of this activity.

Tempting Thought Number	My Healthy Responses
Example 1: The weather is lousy, I couldn't possibly exercise outdoors.	Just because the weather is bad doesn't mean I can't exercise. I could walk around the mall or practice in-home exercises I learned from a fitness YouTube channel.