

Natural Healing Express Weekly

Column Volume 28 Weigh Loss Program Week Seven

Well, congratulations you all! You have made it to the home stretch. One more week of class and then welcome to a lifelong of health and wellness by your own design. That's saying something. So proud of each and every one of you. There have been so many victories within our class. Wonderful work!!

We'll jump right into this week's topic which is dealing with challenges and plateaus. Firstly, we all know what a challenge means as everyone has been dealing with their own specific BIO-Individualistic "weak shots" and conscientiously working to improve upon them. In previous columns we have discussed overcoming challenges from not being hungry in the morning to dealing with negativity or those energy "vampires" around you. Challenges are challenges and there are easier to "break through" than plateaus. Plateaus are when no matter what you do or how you do it, you just can't seem to lift one more pound off the scale. Nothing budges. Kind of like your mother in law and that same old perm.

Well, we'll just jump right in. Bear in mind that ALL change takes energy – and your body typically wants to CONSERVE energy versus wanting to expend it, so rest assured, this is your body's natural adaptation to your environment. It wants to conserve just in case something happens. Don't feel bad if you feel a little tired. It's natural. With that said, know your body will ALWAYS, ALWAYS, ALWAYS go for self-preservation first which is another reason why those pounds at plateaus are harder to move. It LIKES them. It doesn't want you to starve to death over a long, cold winter and it doesn't want you to do anything stupid. So, your body just might trick you. Since it seems we are moving straight from winter to summer these days, it may also be confused. Not blonde in a purse shop confused, more like Chinese arithmetic confused. Like REALLY confused.

Firstly, make sure you are truly at a plateau. You may not be. It may just look like one on your scale. If you are judging your results specifically and entirely by your scale, then simply measure another way to make sure. One solid suggestion is to measure body fat percentage. You may actually weigh the same, but be healthier in the long run because you are converting fat to muscle. Muscle weighs more than fat. This phenomenon happens a lot and typically early in a workout program. Please do not let this frustration stop you- you've come too far. Simple go back and measure by real world standards such as: Do your clothes fit differently? Do you FEEL healthier? Is your standing heart rate better than when you started? Are you taking seconds off your lap times? Are you sleeping better with more energy? Any or all of these are great measurements can help you to decide if you are truly at a plateau. If you aren't, keep doing what you are doing.

But now, let's say all of these newly suggested measurements are the same and you have correctly assessed yourself as holding steady on a plateau. This first thing to do is re-calculate your necessary calorie intake. If you now weigh less, your body requires fewer calories. However, if you have picked up more muscle mass, you may indeed be underfeeding yourself. To solve this riddle, learn to calculate lean body mass (LBM). There are several different ways to do this but one of the best is at www.livestrong.com.

Secondly, pay more attention to the details which means journaling your food and workouts. There are now great apps on your smart phone called my fitness pal and foodukate (what will they think of next? I wish they had an app that cleaned the house!) Also, many websites like www.calorieking.com help.

Third, pay more attention to your work outs and begin to vary and increase them. It may simply be getting too easy for your body. Another great way to push through plateaus is to add more cardio and work on circuit training which is a shorter duration, higher impact way of increasing cardio and muscle tone at the same time. For our muscle builders and boys wanting to build those eye catching shoulders and abs, do more weight training. Ladies, it's all about the resistance for toning up. And who the heck invented those nasty lunges across the room? SMACK!

And of course to really break through plateaus keep the metabolism revved up by eating several small meals a day and hydrating frequently.

Another proven method is to adjust your calorie intake daily. On a day of rest, less calorie intake is necessary. And for those professional athletes (or anyone that depends solely on their body for a living), we look to macro nutrition which is almost a science of varying proteins, fats and carbs according to the physical demand. And with our "macros" we are looking to see at least 70% raw food consumption. Haven't you have always wondered why those linebackers got paid so much?

The last variable in breaking through a plateau is to check your intellectual commitment. Yes, sometimes your brain is just tired and needs to be re-energized. We ask that you work at "working out" with the same moderation as anything else. Push yourself when necessary, but no when to say when and rest. If you become completely engaged and this represents an addiction, well, Houston, we have a problem. And take my word for it after living in LA for ten years. There is nothing more annoying than a certifiable work out freak gone wrong. Insert your own mental picture here.

Breaking through plateaus is all part of putting health first and foremost in your life. And really, if you don't have your health, what do you have? Your body will be grateful in the long run. If you need assistance working through any of this, please feel free to make an appointment with us. At Natural Healing Express, we are here to meet you wherever you are on your health journey and gently guide you to the next level.

Here's yet another great Lisa Hanson recipes. Enjoy.

Grilled Chicken & Strawberry Walnut Salad (Serves 4)

2 boneless skinless chicken breasts

1 pound container fresh strawberries

1/2 cup chopped red onion

1 cup chopped walnuts

Salad greens of your choice (I like to use a 50/50 mix of greens and fresh spinach)

Vinaigrette Dressing~

1/4 cup red wine vinegar

3 tablespoons agave nectar

1 teaspoon ground flax seed

2 tablespoons olive oil

1 teaspoon fresh chopped mint

Grill chicken and season with your choice of seasonings. I use a little sea salt, pepper and garlic salt. You can chill the chicken for later use or use them right away. I cut these into bite sized pieces.

Chop the strawberries into bite sized pieces. Place salad greens of your choice into a large bowl. Sprinkle with strawberries, onions and walnuts. Place chicken on top.

Combine the dressing ingredients and pour over salad. Toss lightly to combine.

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