



## COIN Weight Loss Program

### Can We Talk?: Building Your Support Team

#### Week 8

This week you will:

- ✓ Start thinking about health management beyond healthy eating and physical activity
- ✓ Learn the benefits of a strong support team
- ✓ Consider ways to communicate effectively to build and strengthen your support team

#### **Broadening the Concept of Health**

This week we are going to broaden the concept of health to include **social support**. Most people find that healthy eating and exercise are more achievable when they feel supported. Research also supports this. As you are reading today's materials, think about ways to build your support team.

#### **Benefits of a Support Team**

We all need support, particularly when we are going through a big life change or taking on a challenge, like changing our lifestyle. Weight loss requires several lifestyle changes (and keeping it off requires long-term lifestyle modification); therefore the **COIN** Program introduces a great opportunity to think about the support you receive from others.

Your support team is made up of your closest family and friends. In some cases, it also includes co-workers, church/community members, and other individuals who are also trying to lose weight and manage their health. Your Coach is a part of your support team.

Below are a few of the benefits of a strong support team:

- Accountability to someone other than yourself
- Ideas for new things to try or ways to look at things differently
- Opportunities to vent and manage stress
- Assistance with household chores, 'to-do's', and other responsibilities that get in the way
- Companionship along the way to better health
- Cheerleading and reminders that you can do this!

## **Identify – Inform – Ask – Give**

The key to building and strengthening your support is to:

- Identify: Know what you need, when you need it, and who to ask.
- Inform: Be honest about what your health goals are and how you are doing.
- Ask: For help!
- Give: Feedback to help encourage (or modify) the support.

Remember, it is best to identify strengths of certain support team members and to be specific in your request. Here are some examples of how your team can help you in a more “hands on” way.

- Ask your partner not to bring processed snacks and desserts into the house.
- Ask your children to take a walk with you twice a week.
- Ask a friend to check in with you once a week to see how you are doing and to provide encouragement.
- Ask a co-worker to bring healthy snacks in for the snack jar instead of candy or to move it away from your desk.
- Ask your partner to pick your child up from school or make dinner for him/her while you exercise.
- Ask a family member to cut up your favorite fresh veggies/fruits while they are making lunch so you have them for snacks at work.
- Join an online support group for others trying to lose weight.
- Remind your Coach about a certain challenge that you are facing.

Please also read the following supplemental materials:

- MOVE!: What If My Partner or Spouse Isn't Helpful
- MOVE!: Involve Others in Your Weight Control Program