

Welcome! In this section you are going to see the one thing that study after study has shown will not only improve your odds of losing weight but will also dramatically improve your odds of keeping it off for good.

You are also going to discover how a simple three minute daily ritual can help you love yourself more, which turns out to be a master key to easily making better choices for your health. The best part is that neither one of these almost miraculous weight loss methods involve cutting anything out of your diet, and they definitely don't involve pills, potions or wild exercise programs. Instead, both of the amazing tools you are going to learn about work so well because they are based on the power of a loving community and the simple but potent act of being grateful. They work together almost magically to positively shape your best future. Alright, enough teasing, if you're curious let's dive right in!

First, let's talk about why the right kind of support group is without a doubt one of the most powerful tools you can use to support lasting weight loss. A study from the european journal of clinical nutrition found that:

“Social support is important to achieve beneficial changes in risk factors for disease, such as overweight and obesity.” Another study published in the international journal of medicine showed that, specifically online support groups, were especially effective at allowing participants to reach their goal weight and to maintain that weight longer than those who did not have the benefit of support. Besides increasing the overall level of participants weight loss, the studies also found three other key areas where online support communities provided tangible benefits for the members. First, online support groups offer encouragement and motivation that is hard to find outside of a structured program. Individuals report that being part of a family-like online community is a great way to receive encouragement and motivation to stick with changes that can be hard to stick with when you are alone. The support of like-minded individuals also allowed members to recover from mistakes and overcome barriers more easily. Also, while you may not love technology all the time, I'd imagine that you would agree that being able to get loving support and help anytime and anywhere--rather than just once a week after spending an hour in the car driving to a meeting--is a big benefit of being part of a loving *online* community. For me at least, a group saying “we're here to support you...but only from 4pm to 6pm on Tuesdays if you can get here and can also find childcare” isn't something many of us can count on when we need it.

1

Now, the Second key area the study explored was that sharing experiences was critical in many members finding success. Members who discuss and share common goals, struggles, and experiences found it easier to stick with their plans. Consistent sharing with other members leads to not feeling alone, feeling like they were part of something bigger and more meaningful, and it also helped with accountability. Individuals often describe a feeling of belonging to a team or being with family.

Lastly, the study showed that: Community members report that the social support helped them cope with the challenges of trying to lose weight and that their involvement directly helped them lose extra weight.

Now before we go too far, we have to be careful here. There are some major pitfalls about “getting support” that you do need to be aware of before getting started. Not all forms of support are created equal and certain groups can have as many negatives as positives if you don’t choose carefully.

As one of my favorite authors the late Stephen Covey said, I’m paraphrasing here, Even a gang of criminals have shared values and support each other. The issue is that their values are harmful and their support only furthers that harm. You don’t just need support. You need the RIGHT form of support. In fact, if you’ve tried “support groups” in the past and they let you down... it’s not because support groups are bad or that you are bad... it’s very likely because the support group you tried wasn’t right for you. The good news is that will never happen again as you are about to discover how to pick the perfect form of support to meet your unique needs and challenges. See, because there is so much emotion around weight loss; not to mention wildly inaccurate and obsolete information, sometimes “support” can turn into a debate, a shame session, or simply a counterproductive and scientifically wrong lecture. We *must* to make sure that you have access to a support system that is available for you whenever and wherever your need it--super important--and also, a group that is curated by a loving, caring, scientifically accurate, and professionally trained coaching staff. They will be there to keep all communication positive, keep disagreements to a minimum, prevent any shaming, and keep all advice rooted in proven modern science vs. fads or personal anecdotes.

A professionally moderated and scientifically modern group will also protect you from poisonous personality types that can bring the entire community down. These include complainers, those who focus on the negative and try to

bring everyone else down with them, as well as people who pretend to be perfect. You will also want to make sure that everyone shares the same mission and are following the same guidelines. In other words, you don't want to be in a group where every conversation is about why one diet is better than another. It's most helpful to have all members and the moderators on the same page...and for the page to be based on genuine love and proven science... two terms that you may not have previously heard put in the same sentence... but as you continue to go SANE... you will see all over the place... we are all about genuine love combined with proven science! Now, please understand that the only way to enjoy this type of saner support is in a group that has at least an online component--because what good is it if it's not there for you whenever and wherever you need it--and that is selective with who joins. This is why your social networks and even your family may not work for what we're discussing here. You don't have much control over who is in these groups, so you will often need to find a new group that ensures you are only ever exposed to genuine love and proven science.

Also, be wary of "calorie counting" and "pounds lost" focused groups. The point of an effective group is not to compete, or show off. Remember process vs. results goals from our earlier sections. Your ideal support system is about motivation, accountability and encouragement to reach YOUR personal goals, not to feel bad because you aren't as "good" as someone else, or because a "better" member lost half a pound more than you for the week. That's simply insane, counterproductive, and please protect yourself against it at all costs. If you take nothing else away from this, if someone who says they are "supporting" you asks you to weigh in in front of other people--or is part of an institution that used to make people do this--please immediately leave. Shame isn't support. It's the opposite of support. It's insane and you deserve better.

Alright, I bet you can see how being part of the right kind of loving support group can help you get lasting results. You have also seen what makes the right kind of group so effective, a few types of groups to avoid, and with that, why maybe some previous groups didn't help you. The issue isn't you, it's also not with the idea of support groups...it's with the shame-based groups you may have been exposed to in the past.

Here's how to enjoy all the benefits of proper support moving forward. First, as you may have heard in high school and college: get involved! In a large study, researchers looked at about 5,400 people who participated in an online support program for at least six months and who posted at least twice during

the study period in the online forum. The researchers found the most significant factor that increased a participant's weight loss was a person's level of engagement within the online group. After six months, individuals who were most deeply involved lost more than twice as much weight than those who were least involved in the online support group.

That's a dramatic increase in weight loss and the only difference was the level of love and support they got and gave in a sane online support group! No starvation. No endless hours at the gym. They literally loved their way to weight loss! So the moral of the story is pretty simple: If you are serious about losing weight long-term, I highly recommend you immediately get serious about finding a program with a strong online community of genuinely loving and scientifically qualified members and coaches. Of course here at SANE we offer one of the most active and passionate online communities in the world, and you can learn more about it in our free masterclass...but let's not forget about the second most important way to get the most out of the group. That tactic is to participate OPENLY and HONESTLY. You will get the most benefit out of the group by allowing yourself to open up and be truthful about your hopes and fears, as well as your success and setbacks. You never have to pretend to be perfect you just need to show up and share openly.

4

And last, but not least, when it comes to support groups or anything in life, remember that one of the best ways to learn anything new, and to supercharge your results, is to teach and help others. If you want to enrich your life and get even better results, be sure to continuously and genuinely help other members in the group. Not only does helping others make you feel great, it also allows you to really solidify the commitment to change in your own mind and to manifest those changes in your life.

Hopefully you are seeing that there is a lot of goodness to you available here, so your next step is simple...put this information into action in the right online support group for you. How do you do this? Well, let's look back to our previous sections to help you separate effective online groups from ineffective online groups:

First, does the group encourage "perfection" ...aka strict adherence to specific counts, plans, lists, and methods...or are they there to help you make continuous sustainable and enjoyable progress?

Second, do they focus you on some fictional far off goal...or, do they help you take the simple next action needed to keep you headed in the right direction?

Third, do they make you feel like “you” are the problem when things get off track, or do they help you love your way to weight loss?

Forth, do they focus on what NOT to do, or, do they help you focus on what to DO and help you make saner substitutions rather than will your way through deprivation?

Fifth, do they reward and celebrate individual short term results, or long-term gradual progress and helping others?

That last one really is really big. Just as an example, in our SANE support group, our number one goal is that every member treats every other member with love and respect. Everyone in a group is there to create happier, healthier lives, so be sure that you and everyone else are supportive and leave any negativity at the door. As I mentioned before, when you visit most wellness communities you'll see that they often become “debate groups” and “bragging groups” ... not “support groups.” Help to keep spirits high by leaving debates at the door. Nobody should ever feel the need to defend themselves in a group designed to SUPPORT them. I know that sounds obvious, but I bet you have found or will find--depending on where you look for support--that it is extremely uncommon and I want to make sure you enjoy LONG TERM success this time.

5

Alright, now that you know how powerful online social groups can be to lose weight, let's move on to the second part of the almost magical weight loss equation we covered earlier and talk about why gratitude is so important to practice every single day... even if sometimes it might be hard to feel grateful.

The research that shows why gratitude is so important to express is astonishing, especially how it relates to your overall health.

Two psychologists, Dr. Robert A. Emmons of the University of California, Davis, and Dr. Michael E. McCullough of the University of Miami, have done much of the research on gratitude. In one study, they asked all participants to write a few sentences each week. One group wrote about things they were grateful for that had occurred during the week. A second group wrote about daily irritations or things that had displeased them, and the third wrote about events that had affected them (with no emphasis on them being positive or negative).

After 10 weeks, those who wrote about gratitude were more optimistic and felt better about their lives. Even better, they also exercised more and had fewer visits to physicians than those who focused on sources of aggravation.

Some other facts that might surprise you about being grateful: Grateful people have 10% fewer stress related illnesses, are more physically fit, and have 12% lower blood pressure. They have stronger relationships, are better liked by others and have stronger community ties. They even make more money. Up to 20% more per hour and their incomes are roughly 7% higher than the average. And this last one is my favorite: being grateful can add up to 7 years to your life!

With all those benefits let me ask you: Have you been grateful or thankful today? If so that's great! If not, no worries because we are about turn your gratitude up to 10 with today's worksheet!

Now that you know why gratitude is so important let's print out today's worksheet and really look for some areas of your life that you can be thankful for. Talking about gratitude is great, but writing it down, and really FEELING grateful, is the best way for it to have an impact on your life, your health, and your happiness.

If you haven't already, go ahead and pause this and print out the worksheet. And remember, feel free to pause this so you have some extra time to really think about what and who you are thankful for. One more tip before we begin; don't be afraid of being grateful for the little things in life. Small pebbles of gratitude can quickly turn into large castles of happiness and joy.

To start, let's tie this back to the critical elements of support and community and pick 5 people that you are grateful for right now. This can be family, friends, or maybe someone you haven't seen in awhile, or a passed relative. Heck, it can even be someone you don't know personally...such as a favorite author or musician. Personally, in addition to my family, friends, and the SANE Family, I am grateful for a lot of authors as I love to read :) So pick 5 people that you just want to thank for being who they are. Got it? Write them down and draw a little smiley face next to them.

OK next, and this one is really important, go ahead and write down 5 positive things you like about your health and body. This can be as simple as: "I am grateful for my 20/20 vision," or more specific such as "I love how my eyes light up when I smile." Think about all aspects of your health and body...not

just what glossy magazines and daytime tv tell you to focus on. You'll notice that both of the examples I gave involve your eyes... or what some people call... the window to your soul. You're here to express things more related to what your soul says rather than what the scale says. Get those five gratitudes written down as this question can be a really potent way to start feeling great about yourself and your body. Remember, only by loving who you ARE can you become who you want to BE. Love and caring always beat shame and guilt.

Next, write down 5 things you have done in the last week that made you proud of yourself. This can be anything from the smallest gesture of kindness to a stranger such as holding the door for someone, or something that you did to show love to yourself...such as taking a ten minute walk to enjoy the sun. Go ahead and write those down now. No matter how big or how small. Again, pause this if you need to. Got it? Great!

Now this one might be a little easier, write down the best part of your day so far. Your hot cup of coffee or tea, that cute little bird you saw outside of your window, or even opening up your heart and mind for this exercise. This isn't about the 5 "right" answers...it's about simply writing down any five answers.

For some people writing out what they are thankful for is second nature and comes easily. For others it can feel like a struggle. No matter where you are with your gratitude skills, I want you to promise yourself that you will create a new three minute habit of writing at least 3 things you are grateful for everyday in your SANE journal. And please remember, these don't need to be "big" things. Here are some helpful prompts you may want to use: What have you done to take care of yourself today? | Was there a beautiful part of nature you saw today? | What put a smile on your face today?

Alright, how did that feel? Do you feel a little lighter, a little more joy flowing through your body? Excellent! Now, your final homework is to go out and find a support group that will help you reach your goals whenever you need help and wherever you are. Of course I am biased, but SANE offers one of the most loving, caring, evidence based, and effective online groups in our Ignite program. You can learn all about it and learn even more about SANE eating during our free masterclass that you can attend anytime that is convenient for you. It's the same content we offer in our live half day seminars and you will even start your own personalized SANE eating plan. Plus, you get to use our patented online calculator where you can see exactly when you will reach your

goal weight by eating SANE. Pretty exciting stuff! But I digress. The point is that I deeply hope that you will give yourself permission to enjoy the genuinely loving and scientifically accurate support that you deserve...and that is proven to help you reach your goals. And when it comes to gratitude, I am so grateful that YOU have shared your time with me here and to a more SANE approach to eating, thinking, and living

You have truly committed yourself to success and given more smart effort than 99% of the people who want to change their lives but never take action. So please, pat yourself on the back and do something nice for yourself as a reward, you really do deserve it. Thank you for thanking *you* and I look forward to seeing you again soon!