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Congratulations to the Putnam County Biggest Loser participants. You are creeping up on 400 pounds total weight loss!!

For week ending Monday, February 9:

- Total pounds lost to date: 396.3
- Current number of participants: 93
- Female division weekly winner: Lori Ray- 2.12% weight loss
- Male division weekly winner: Bryce Stanley- 4.12% weight loss
- Under 19 weekly winner: Emily Robbins- .43% weight loss
- Weekly challenge winner: Janie Durbin

This week's challenge asked participants to participate in some self-reflection and evaluate their way of thinking. In our negative society, we are bombarded with negative information every day. It is easy to fall into self doubt when thinking negatively. The bottom line is if we can change our "negative self talk" we can succeed at anything in our lives.

Participants were asked to think about the following things and make a conscious effort to replace their negative thoughts with positive ones.

Take a moment to think about your thoughts and actions. Are you a pessimist or an optimist? Are your thoughts about yourself degrading? Are your opinions of yourself sabotaging your weight loss?

1. Take a few quiet moments each day with no interruptions and visualize yourself shedding weight, healthy, and feeling well. Visualize yourself consuming water, fruits, veggies & lean meats. Also visualize that you listen to your body and eat only when hungry and stop eating when your body tells you that your stomach is full.
2. When you catch yourself thinking negatively or speaking negatively, stop. Think about what you have said or thought. Make up a positive reinforcement statement like this "I am doing great. I feel better and as I continue to eat healthier and exercise my skin will be clearer, my clothes will fit better and I will feel more confident and energetic. Use positive words like "am, will, do". DO NOT use negative words such as "no, not, don't, won't, can't, try".
3. Don't dramatize obstacles. Evaluate and ask yourself "Does it really matter? How does this really affect me?" If it isn't a big deal, don't inflate it. After all, drama equals stress and that leads to more eating or binge eating (or no eating at all depending on your personality). Keep things in perspective and your weight loss will become easier.
4. Remember that everyone's body is different. Your weight loss will be different than anyone else's. People who are struggling with weight issues have their own problems they are dealing with also. It isn't easy for anyone.
5. Surround yourself with positive people. It makes life a lot easier when you have friends who are optimistic!

More information may be obtained on positive thinking, along with serving size information at the Putnam County Health Department, 103 N 18th St, Unionville.