

HO 11.2 Time to Take Out Your Compass

When you lapse or relapse in your healthy eating goals, you want to get back on track as soon as possible. Complete the activity below to practice the steps needed to reset your compass and stay on track!

Task 1: Identify where you are.

Using your HEED compass (the mental compass in your head), describe your thoughts about your lapse. Try to stay calm and think rationally.

Here's an example: "Last night I really blew it. My friends and I went out to dinner and I had the fried chicken. I finished the whole plate! I might as well forget my healthy eating goals."

Next, reword all negative self-talk to make it more positive. For example, "I really overdid it last night. I ate a huge portion of fried chicken! I'm going to have to be more careful the rest of this week to make lower-fat choices and watch my portion sizes."

Task 2: Identify the direction you want to go in.

So, you've had a lapse. Do you really want to forgo all of your healthy eating efforts thus far and give up? Or do you want to get yourself back to where you came from? State the benefits (mental, physical, emotional) that you receive from eating healthy foods.

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Think about the barriers (or high-risk situation) you were faced with.

Could you have avoided, or better dealt with, this barrier or high-risk situation? How?

To get back on track, you must believe that your healthy eating benefits outweigh your healthy eating barriers.

Task 3: Map out your path.

State at least two steps that you can take today to get yourself back on track.

Here are examples: Plan my meals for the rest of the week, replace my midday soft drink with a small carton of low-fat or nonfat milk, use my food log, go to the supermarket and buy fruit, take a brisk walk, have brown rice with dinner, choose a low-fat recipe to try tomorrow.

Task 4: Start walking until you're back on track.

Think of ways you might reward yourself when you get back on track.

There will be times when you cannot avoid high-risk unhealthy eating situations. And there will be times when you lapse into unhealthy eating habits. The key is to recognize when these situations occur. Then you can think back on this advice of identifying where you are, identifying where you want to go, and mapping out your path. Combine these steps with a little motivation and support, and you'll get yourself back on track.