



**Nourished**<sup>Rx</sup>

# Feed Your Health Weekly Lessons

**A Guide to Better Health: Part 5**





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# Lesson 22

# The Basics of

# Plant-Powered

# Nutrition





# What is Plant-Based Nutrition?

Plant-Based Nutrition is when you focus on foods from plant sources and avoid or limit animal protein and products in your diet.

Here is what a balanced plant-based meal looks like:

- Half of your plate is vegetables, focusing on non-starchy vegetables
- A quarter of your plate is whole grains (whole wheat bread, brown rice, etc.)
- A quarter of your plate is plant-based proteins (beans, lentils, tofu, etc.)





# Different Types of Plant-Based Diets

People may choose these diets based on health reasons, religious beliefs, environmental concerns, or animal rights. Poultry, red meat, and seafood are generally avoided in a plant-based diet. Below is a list of different kinds of plant-based diets people may follow:

- Vegetarians eat plant-based foods and may include animal byproducts such as eggs and dairy.
  - Lacto-vegetarians include dairy.
  - Ovo-vegetarians include eggs.
  - Lacto-ovo-vegetarians include eggs and dairy.
  - Pescatarians include fish and seafood.
- Vegans only eat plant-based foods.
  - Raw vegans eat only raw plant-based foods 75-100% of the time.
- Flexitarians enjoy plant-based foods most of the time and occasionally have meat, fish, eggs, and dairy.



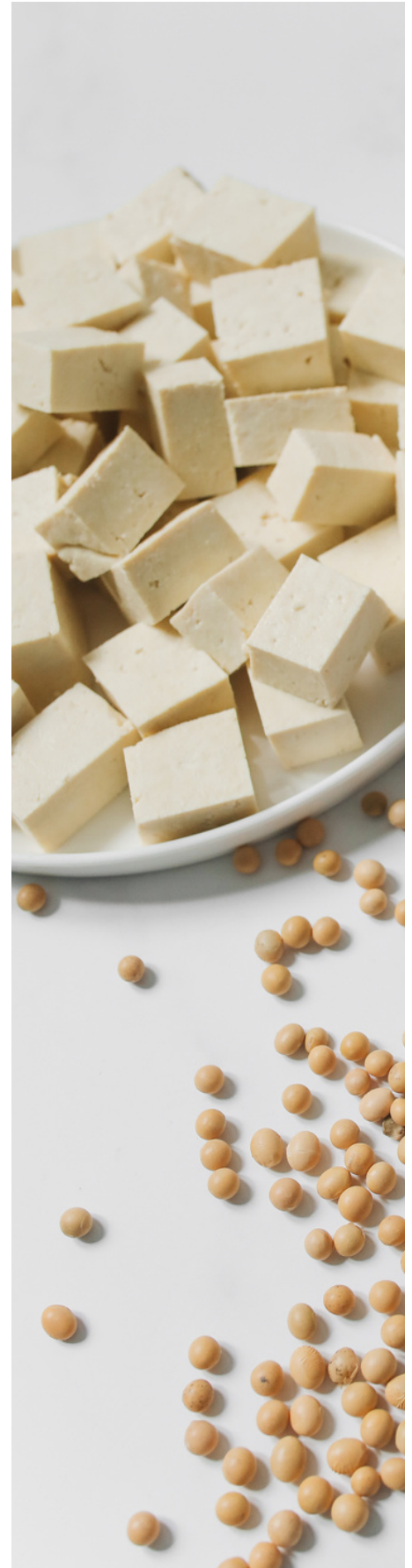
You can choose any option listed above that works for you! If you are new to a plant-based diet, starting out as a flexitarian may be a good option.

**It is important to remember that just because a food is plant-based does not always mean that it is healthy. Be sure to read the nutrition label when buying foods. Check the sodium, carbohydrate, and fat content in the item when buying any food.**

If you are new to a plant-based diet, giving up animal-based foods means you may need to get some nutrients in a different way. Because some nutrients are more abundant in animal-based foods, it is important to pay close attention to these to be sure you are getting enough:

- Protein
- Omega-3 Fatty Acid
- Iron
- Zinc
- Iodine
- Calcium
- Vitamin D
- Vitamin B12

These nutrients can be found in plant-based foods but in a more limited amount. Eating a variety of foods can ensure that you get these in your diet. A supplement may also be needed to support your plant-based diet. Make sure you talk to your doctor before taking any supplements.





# Plant Proteins

You may be wondering what are examples of plant-based proteins? Maybe you have heard of tofu or pea protein? Here is a list of plant-based proteins that you can try:

- Soy (Tofu, Tempeh, Edamame)
- Beans
- Lentils
- Nuts and seeds
- Plant-based meat alternatives
- Whole Grains





# How to Prepare Plant Proteins?

Plant proteins can be prepared in much the same way as animal proteins. They can be roasted, steamed, stir-fried, and more! Different proteins vary in flavor and textures. Try different recipes and cooking methods to find your favorite plant proteins. Follow recipe instructions closely to master cooking them! Use the same seasonings and marinades you use on animal proteins to add familiar flavors.





# Getting Started

Do you want to explore adding plant-based food to your diet but feel overwhelmed and don't know where to start?

The next page shares five tips on how to get started!



# Tips for Getting Started

Here are some easy tips to get started:

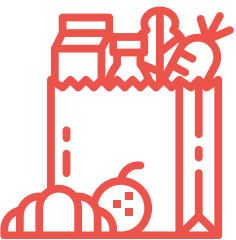


**1. Focus on plant-based foods that you already enjoy such as fruits, vegetables, or oatmeal.**



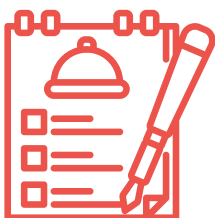
**2. Focus on slowly moving towards a more plant-based diet.**

- Do not give up all of your favorite animal-based foods right away.
- Start by eating a smaller portion of meat with more vegetables on the side.
- Start by having 1-2 plant-based meals every week.



**3. Explore different grocery stores for options that work for you.**

**4. Stock your pantry with plant-based foods and meal ingredients.**



**5. Find plant-based recipes for meals you enjoy and collect them so they are ready when it is time to cook.**



# From Lesson To Action



List your favorite plant-based foods below! Try writing down at 1-2 fruits and 1-2 vegetables!

FRUIT	VEGETABLES

What are some ways you can include the plant-based meals listed above to your diet? Ex. Add berries to oatmeal!

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What is one new plant-based food you are going to buy the next time you are at the grocery store? Never had lentils before? Start there!

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# Lesson 23

## Shop Smart at the Grocery Store





Grocery shopping can be an overwhelming task! It may be difficult to budget, know which items you should purchase, or which items you should avoid. Use these tips to make your shopping trip as healthy and budget-friendly as possible.



## 1. EAT BEFORE YOU SHOP

Be sure to have something to eat before grocery shopping. We are more likely to buy extra impulse items that are not on our list when we are hungry, which can cause us to spend extra money. Also, impulse purchases are often foods that are high in salt, sugar, and calories. Eating before you head to the store can save you money and help you make healthier choices!

If you arrive at the store hungry, try and buy a piece of fruit, a cheese stick, or a protein bar for a quick snack to eat before or while you shop. Remember to keep the receipt with you so you can shop safely and eat at the same time.

## 2. BRING A GROCERY LIST

Shopping with a list saves money and time! If you plan what you need for the week, write it down, and bring the list to the store, you are less likely to buy items you don't need. Having a list also makes it easier to avoid impulse buys.

Shopping for healthy foods is great, but can sometimes lead to food waste when we don't have a plan to the items we buy. It may help to set aside time one or two days a week to plan meals, make a grocery list, and shop. Just don't forget your list when you go to the store!



### 3. SHOP THE EDGES

Grocery stores tend to keep all shelf-stable items in the center. They put more fresh and less processed foods on the edges or walls of the grocery store. Instead of walking through each inner aisle, stick to the edges of the store and enter an inner aisle only when you need something.

Certain aisles are dedicated to snack and dessert foods such as candies, chips, cookies, and soda. When possible, avoid entering these aisles completely. It is common to make impulse purchases in these aisles. Many of these foods have added sugar and added salt. These foods can have a negative impact on your health.

### 4. SKIM THE CENTER DISPLAYS

Grocery stores use the area at the end of each aisle (end caps) to display sale items or food that they want to sell you. These are often foods like soda, chips, fruit juice boxes, or cereal. Give them a quick look to see if the item is on your list or a staple in your house. But, most of the time, you can skip these displays as they usually don't contain healthy items.



## 5. SHOP IN BULK, IF POSSIBLE

Shopping in bulk is often cheaper than buying those foods in pre-packaged boxes or bags. This can be a great way to buy oatmeal, brown rice, flour, dried beans, lentils, or nuts.

Fruits and vegetables can also be bought in bulk, either canned, frozen, or fresh. If you are buying them fresh, freeze what you cannot use! Prepping and freezing certain foods together can also help with cooking later on!

It is important to note that not all foods can be frozen. Therefore be mindful when purchasing perishable items such as eggs, milk, and certain produce such as lettuce in bulk. If these foods cannot be used before they go bad, they may not be cost-effective.

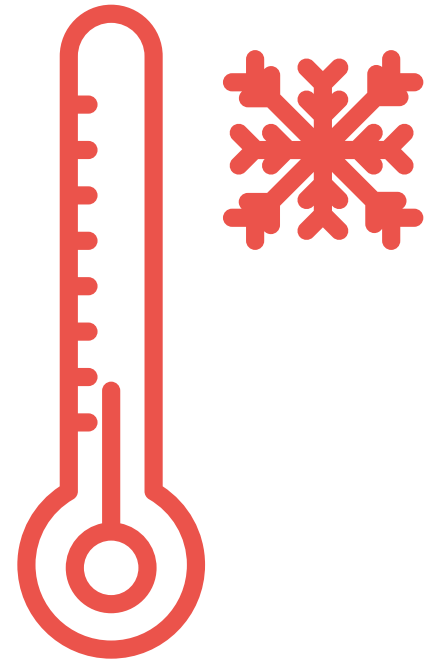
## 6. AVOID PRE-MADE DELI FOODS

Grocery stores know that we are often looking for quick and easy options. Many stores offer a variety of pre-made foods in the deli section. While quick and easy, these options are often expensive when compared to the homemade version. These items also tend to be higher in salt, fat, sugar, or calories. Making these foods or meals at home is almost always healthier and more cost-effective.



## 7. FOCUS ON FOOD SAFETY

When shopping, it is important to keep food safety in mind. To keep your food safe for consumption, shop for all your perishable items at the end of your shopping trip. Refrigerated and frozen foods should stay as cold as possible for as long as possible. If you shop the aisles, start on the side of your store that is farthest away from the dairy, meat, and produce. By the time you reach the area with perishable food items, you are almost done shopping, and those foods will spend less time outside of a refrigerator or freezer.



When shopping for frozen foods, check for big chunks of food stuck together. This can mean the food has been thawed and refrozen, affecting the flavor, texture, and nutrients of the food. It can also cause bacterial growth in the food.

## Shopping at a Convenience Store

Just like grocery stores, convenience stores are designed to lead you to buy more processed foods and sale items. The healthiest foods will often be grouped together or near one other.

Get to know your convenience store and the layout so that you can quickly find the aisles that have healthier food options. Since these stores are usually smaller, items may not be where you typically find them. For example, the brown rice may be located in the chip aisle. Knowing where foods are can prevent you from lingering and making impulse buys. Convenience stores often have limited healthy food options, so only shop at these stores when needed. For example, if you are traveling or do not have a grocery store nearby.



# Shopping Online

If you do any or all of your shopping online, you know that it can be a great time saver and help you stick to your list. However, advertisements will pop up that are designed to distract you. Here are some tips on how to shop smart online.

First, start shopping in the sections on your list and using the search function instead of browsing. This will help you find exactly what you need and will limit impulse buys. When shopping online, you have the benefit of not having to walk down any specific aisles in the store. This means you can completely skip the “Cookie, Candy and Snacks” section!

Before you check out, review your order.

- Check to see if you have made any impulse purchases.
- Check the amount (number and unit) of each item that you’ve selected. There is a big difference between 4 single apples and 4 pounds of apples.
- Make any adjustments you need to fit your budget.



If you're a smartphone user, then make the most of free mobile apps that may allow you to create grocery lists or save coupons.



# From Lesson To Action

Circle below which aisles typically have the healthiest food options:

EDGE AISLES

MIDDLE AISLES

What two tips can you use during your next shopping trip to help promote healthier purchases?

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Practice below by creating a grocery list with items for one of your favorite meals or snacks!



Meal/Snack Name: \_\_\_\_\_

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## Lesson 24

# Using Self-Compassion to Meet Your Goals



There is no debate that life can be challenging. There are no ifs, and, or buts about that. Using self-compassion during the hardest times in your life - and every day - can make the difference between meeting your goals and getting stuck in feelings of guilt and shame. This lesson focuses on what self-compassion is, how you can integrate it more into your life, and why it is important for reaching your goals.

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## Self-Compassion

How do you define self-compassion? In its simplest form, it is treating yourself with the same kindness and care as you would a loved one or even a stranger on the street. Self-compassion is recognizing and embracing any challenges you're facing, appreciating that you're doing your best, and offering yourself forgiveness if you make a mistake.

For many of us, our internal voice is often hyper-critical. Have you ever found yourself thinking something like:

I am never going to succeed, so why even bother trying.

Why did I ever think I could have done that?

No one wants to hear what I have to say so I might as well not say anything.

I'm just not [good looking, smart, wealthy, funny] enough.



These thoughts are all examples of negative or critical self-talk. You are not alone if you have thoughts like these. Many of us do. Such thoughts can break down our motivation and reduce our desire to keep trying. Thus, it's important to first acknowledge and then combat these thoughts with self-compassion.



Self-compassion is not letting yourself off the hook or taking the easy way out. In fact, focusing on self-compassion is often much harder than being critical. But, it will serve you well and support you in reaching your goals.

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## Self-Compassion and Progress Toward Goals

If negative self-talk and criticism helped us progress toward our goals, we would all be much more successful in doing so. The reality is that negative self-talk works against us, bringing down our mood, self-worth and motivation. This isn't just the talk of self-help experts. Research shows that people who have high levels of self-compassion are better at coping with setbacks, have a greater sense of self-identity, and are less anxious and stressed.

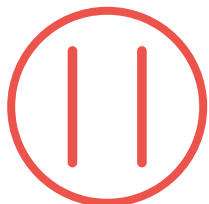
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## Self-Compassion Tools



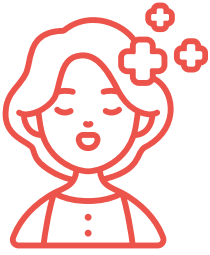
Try these strategies to bring more self-compassion to your life:

1. Start to observe your own self-criticism. Do you have a phrase you often use when you're upset with yourself, like "I am so dumb"? What situations bring on that kind of reaction? Knowing how you speak to yourself and what causes you the most pain is important for making changes. Remember when we discussed reframing negative thoughts? Apply that here!



2. Pause and reflect on your self-talk. Recognize that your brain and body might be trying to protect you from something upsetting. Use that reflection time to identify what you are saying to yourself and why. Then, focus on a way to compassionately support yourself instead.

3. Change your tune. It takes time to change behaviors and that applies to being more compassionate too! Here are some ways you can add more positive self-talk:



Ask yourself if you would say the same thing to a friend or loved one as you do to yourself. We often give others much more space to be human and make mistakes than we do ourselves. If you wouldn't say it to a friend, don't say it to yourself.

Remind yourself that every person faces challenges, feels pain, and makes mistakes. Try telling yourself:

- I forgive you for this error.
- I am still learning.
- I am human, and that's okay.



Express gratitude or thanks for what you do have, what you have done, or whom you have around you. For example, if you feel frustrated by a mistake that you made at work, can you express thanks to the people you work with and their support to fix the mistake?

When all else fails, can you find any humor in the situation? Can you take a moment to laugh at yourself or connect with someone else over the humor of a shared mistake? Laughing and humor stimulate joy, which can help shift attention away from any negative thoughts in the moment.







# From Lesson To Action

Do you have negative self-talk? If so, what do you often say to yourself? List below any top thoughts that come to mind.

Now let's turn that self-talk around! Everyone experiences this but how you handle it makes all the difference. Self-compassion is key!

Below come up with a few sayings that you can use when feeling down or negative about yourself. Having a personal mantra or handful of sayings in your toolbox will help you change the discussion in your head!

What benefits would more self-compassion bring to your life?

# Lesson 25

## Healthy Habits for a Successful Day



# Healthy Habits for a Successful Day

Have you heard the phrase “Put on your oxygen mask first before assisting others?” This phrase is said at the beginning of the safety demonstration on flights but has been adapted for everyday life because it represents something key about health, self-care and mental wellbeing.

If you don’t take care of your own needs first, you will not be able to support those around you. And remember, “self-care” isn’t spa days and vacations. Self-care is the work that you need to do each day to ensure that you are healthy, safe, and happy. It’s not always easy, but putting healthy habits in place can set you up for success.

## Start the Day with Purpose

Mornings can be hard. They can also set the tone for the rest of your day. Kicking off your day with some natural sunlight and movement can help your body wake up and reduce overall stiffness. After you wake up, open your window curtains or blinds and move around by making your bed. Within just a few minutes, you have already crossed something off the to-do list. Natural light and fresh air are great for boosting energy and productivity, so get outside for a few minutes, even if just to walk around the block. (This might not work in the wintertime, so instead try walking in place near an open window or do some stretching.)

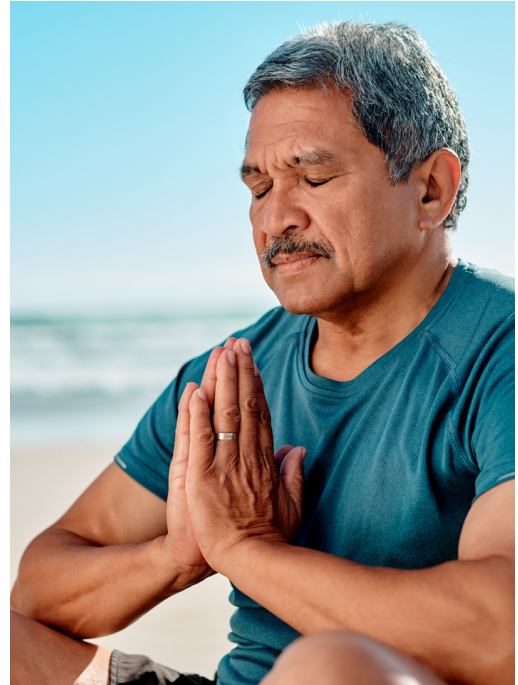
## Tackle the Hardest Thing First

Doing the hardest thing on your “to-do” list early in the day has many benefits. Of course, it gets done, bringing a sense of productivity. But, it also helps you avoid feeling like you have something looming all day long. Waiting until the end of the day, when you are most tired, increases the risk of not completing the task(s) at all. We may end up spending more time on the undesirable task by putting it off than by simply tackling it head on.



## Plan Time to Breathe

You might be thinking that breathing is the one thing in your day that you DON'T have to plan for. But, taking a few moments each day to breathe deeply can support increased focus and energy and reduce stress levels. How often are you focusing purely on breathing and nothing else? Pausing to take a few deep breaths can help you better manage changes or challenges in your day-to-day life. Your body and mind will thank you for this!



## Reflect

Sometimes a structured schedule is a very helpful tool for increasing productivity and getting tasks completed, and sometimes too much structure can be a source of stress. After you've taken a break to breathe, reflect on how your day typically flows. Does your day usually unfold in a similar way from day to day, or is every day on a different schedule? Take note of how that feels. Perhaps you need more structure and can benefit from making a "to-do" list or perhaps you need to build in some more free time into your day.

## Express Gratitude

Doesn't it feel good to say thank you to someone and really mean it? It turns out, that feeling of thankfulness can have significant positive impacts on our mental and physical health. You can express gratitude for the "big things" like family, friends, spirituality, and a roof over your head. Or you can be thankful for the small things, like how beautiful a flower looks or the fact that your car started this morning. Try doing this in the morning, before bed, or when you are having a rough moment in your day.

## End the Day with Routine

We sleep best when we approach sleep with a routine. Aim to get to bed around the same time each night whenever possible. Use the time before bed to decompress as much as you can. If you need to get things done at night, aim to have at least 15-30 minutes of unscheduled time before bed. This time can be used to stretch, read a book, chat with a loved one, or start your evening routine of teeth brushing, flossing, etc.



## Finding Time for Fun

Children spend huge portions of their days playing, imagining, building, and destroying (for better or worse!). But, as we age, the time that we get to “play” or just have fun gets less and less. Spending a little time each day playing or having unstructured, free time to do something that brings you joy can help relieve stress. Research has even found that play can act as a pain reliever.

Not sure what play could look like for you? Here are some ideas:

- Playing cards
- Getting out some pens, markers, or crayons and drawing
- Dancing to your favorite music
- Playing yard sports or games
- Crafting, knitting or do-it-yourself outdoor projects, like gardening

# From Lesson To Action

What does your daily routine look like? Write 2-3 times below where you could add a new habit to an old habit! For example: Current habit= "I drink coffee each morning." Add a new habit to this current habit by adding "I will drink a glass of water while the coffee brews."

Current Habits

New Habits

Remember to find time for YOU. Bonus if it's FUN too! Choose one thing you will do to end your day today that is either FUN or all about YOU time! An example of this is: "I will read a book for 20 minutes."



## Lesson 26

# Mindfully Moving Forward



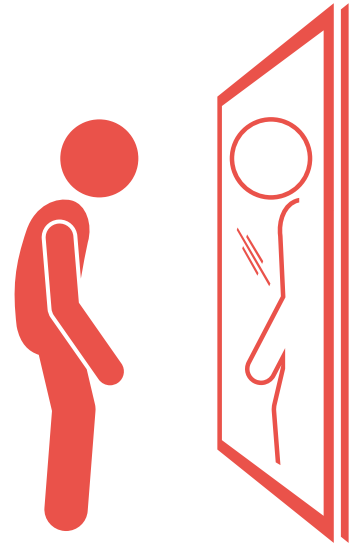
**KEEP MOVING  
FORWARD**

# Congratulations!

Congratulations on reaching the final lesson! Changes are on the horizon, but you now have the skills to navigate healthy choices and form healthy habits. It has been our pleasure to provide you with the food and support needed to meet your goals. In this lesson, we will reflect on your progress and recap some of the top tools from past lessons that will be helpful as you continue on your health journey!

Let's reflect on how far you've come since starting this program! Take a moment to think about these questions:

- What changes have you made to limit sugar intake for better blood sugar management?
- What are new foods or meals you tried and liked?
- How has this program changed your thoughts around food?
- Why is it important to YOU to maintain good health?
- What new habits have you made that you want to continue doing?



## SMART GOALS: A REVIEW

As a reminder, SMART goals are:

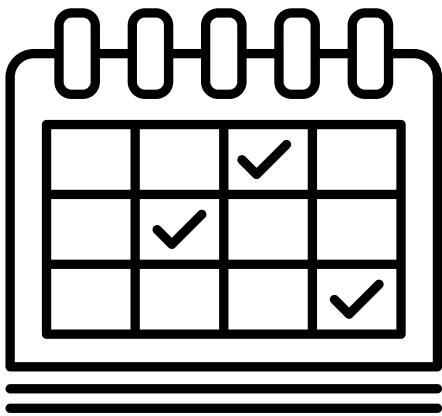
- **Specific:** Your plan is clear and simple
- **Measurable:** You can measure your progress over time
- **Achievable:** You have the skills and tools to achieve your goals
- **Relevant:** Your plan helps you achieve your larger goals
- **Timely:** You have set a timeframe and deadline for your goals

For example: "To reach my goal of eating healthier, I will add more fruits and vegetables to my week. To do that, I will enjoy 1 cup of either a fruit or a vegetable, raw or cooked, in my lunch this week."

SMART goals give you realistic steps to help you reach bigger goals.

## THREE WAYS TO PROBLEM SOLVE

We all have different goals we're working on to support our overall health. Knowing how to problem solve can help you keep moving forward each day. The three ways to problem solve are:



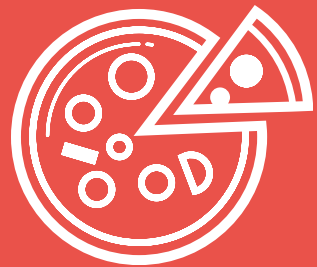
**1. PLAN AHEAD:** Think about future barriers that may get in the way of your goals. Then plan for a solution.

Barrier: I know this next week is busy. If I run out of time to make dinner, then I will stop at a fast food place for a quick dinner option.

Possible solution: I'm going to double the recipe I make on Sunday so I will have leftovers for busy nights of the week.

**2. IN THE MOMENT:** We can't always control our environment. But, we can control how we respond to it. When something unexpected happens, think through your options. Then choose the option that is most doable and supports your goals.

Barrier: I was planning to make a low carbohydrate dinner at home, but my children surprised me with a pizza dinner.



**Possible solutions:**

1. I enjoy the pizza in moderation. I use portion control to limit the amount of pizza I eat to 1 piece.
2. I add high-fiber sides to have with the pizza to help balance the meal and manage blood sugar. I could even add protein as a topping to the pizza.
3. I continue with plans to make my own dinner. I explain to my family that I want to eat my own meal to control carbohydrate-intake and avoid blood sugar spikes which don't make me feel good.



**3. LOOKING BACK:** This form of problem solving occurs while reflecting on past experiences. Think back to the problem and learn from it. This can help you prevent it from happening again.

**Barrier:** Last week I did not reach my goal of eating five servings of vegetables each day. I realized this happened because I didn't have the energy to prepare vegetables to eat.

**Possible solutions:**

1. I buy pre-cooked vegetables such as low sodium canned or frozen options.
2. I pick a day to prepare vegetables (cut and put in a container for later) or cook vegetables in batches. This helps me make the easiest choice and the healthiest choice.
3. I plan which vegetables I will eat at each meal. I can share this plan with my partner, family member, or friend.



### **Celebrate your wins!**

It is super important to recognize the time, effort, and commitment you've put into creating a healthier you! You've adapted to new habits and it's important to celebrate them - no matter how small! Remember: there are many small steps to accomplishing bigger goals. Celebrating milestones along the way can help keep you motivated! Step back and reflect on what has worked for you and what hasn't so you can continue to see success.

This is only the beginning! We know that you now have a great foundation of knowledge and skills to keep your blood sugar stable and you feeling your best! Always refer back to this booklet, the meal cards booklet, and the other educational resources we have provided so you can continue to experience success.

# From Lesson To Action

Let's take some time to reflect! Write down the biggest challenge you experienced during this program and how you overcame it. Can you use this strategy again in the future?

**Challenge:**

**Strategy:**



**Time to celebrate!**



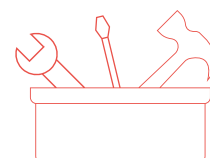
What are 3 things you do now that you didn't do prior to starting this program?

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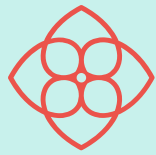
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YOU are now the expert on what you need to succeed and live a healthy lifestyle. Your tool box is now full of helpful tools to keep you going! Write some of your newly acquired "tools" here to reflect on all you've done.









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Food is health, food is care.  
**Food is healthcare.**