

I prioritize the three foundational ideas to my work with weight management clients!

1) Behavior Change

The principal aim of my work is identify and implement small, capturable bits of behavioral change that my clients can build on, piece by piece. A major misconception about weight management is that drastic, painful challenges need to be made, and all at once. I'd lump that sorta philosophy in with what I'll loosely refer to as "diet culture." This sort of approach is characterized by willing, bullying, one's self into and through changes that they are actually powerfully resistant to on all sorts of levels. I see my clientele as creative, collaborative partners on the journey and mission of personal transformation. The journey being more theirs than mine, I make sure that all plans and strategies towards healthier habits are ones that they are - ideally - coming up with themselves, or that we are at least in complete agreement about. This is the kind of journey that will not work if it's me dragging them on my idea of a weight management path while they dig their heels in. I like to give my clients as many opportunities as possible to take the lead on, and to take ownership of, their journey towards greater health and vitality.

2) Focusing on Wins

As allergic as I am to false, unearned positivity or any kind of blissfully optimistic approach to anything, I've found it incredibly effective to keep both my client's attention, and my own, on the wins being captured. Every bit of progress and every healthy behavior that we've created is something to acknowledge and build on. In addition - to keep my clients moving in a healthy direction, I make a point of stressing the importance of physical activity and all of well-researched benefits that go way beyond the number on the scale. Hugely-significant cardiovascular, pulmonary, and musculoskeletal benefits can be accrued through physical activity even if the number on the scale isn't changing as rapidly as one would like. Lots of major health risks can be lessened (and confidence and physical capability gained) by increasing the amount, and the quality, of physical activity, and this should be considered as important as the weight itself!

3) Empathy

As important as any part of this work is the practice of meeting clients where they're at and, as best as one can, getting into their world. The better I can understand the day-to-day and task-to-task realities of my client's lived experiences the better I can serve them, both in terms of providing an empathetic ear and in terms of program design. Empathy can be expressed through general sensitivity, through understanding of all of the negative connotations my clients might associate with words like "fitness" or with gym spaces, and it can be expressed through intelligent exercise selection that will make daily life easier, and the benefits of activity immediately, and increasingly, apparent.