

## Rewarding Yourself!

Everyone deserves a pat on the back once in a while. What better time to do this than when you're out of your comfort zone, challenging yourself to maintain and improve healthy habits. Although the feeling of accomplishment can be a reward in itself, it's great to get something tangible when you have reached a goal. Rewarding yourself is one of the easiest and most powerful ways to keep you focused, motivated, and moving forward since it creates a feeling of doing something you actually want to do! In terms of reaching your goals, instead of expecting perfection or getting down on yourself for what you do wrong, pay more attention to what you do right. Straight talk and brutal honesty are often good for getting you going but for sustained motivation, a positive approach and rewarding yourself from time to time will keep you from burning out.

### Reward System

The rewards you give yourself do not need to be big or expensive. Make them a personal choice that is meaningful to you. Rewards should be set ahead of time and something you are willing to work for.

Next, agree on some completed goals or reward levels that will justify getting rewarded so that you will look forward to treating yourself to these rewards. Smaller rewards for reaching smaller goals are a better idea than saving up for bigger rewards that require more work and more time. Little gifts to yourself along the way can add the extra momentum you need! Be honest with yourself and don't lie about your numbers or "borrow" against the next reward. This hurts the whole propose of building lifetime healthy habits.

Rewards should not consist of food or skipping regular exercise as a slippery slope could occur. Always remember to keep your focus on maintaining and building healthy habits, not just figuring out how to get the reward.



### Reward Ideas

Here is a list of some suggested rewards you can give yourself. Some are free, some cost a little, and some cost a little more. The key to choosing rewards is to make it something you really want and something you are willing to work for. Whether it is a small reward to get you through smaller steps or a big reward for completing a big goal, make it yours!

- Compliment yourself. Write down what you would say to anyone else who accomplished what you did.
- Take a vacation or weekend getaway.
- Put \$1 in a jar every time you meet a goal. When it gets to \$50, treat yourself.
- See a movie.
- Make a grab bag of little prizes. When you reach a goal, reach in and get a reward!
- Buy yourself a gift certificate.
- Subscribe to a magazine you always wanted.
- Get outside and take a walk, enjoy the flowers, take the kids to the park, etc.
- Buy something for your hobby or craft.
- Find some time to be by yourself.
- Fly a kite.
- Update your look with a makeover and new clothes.
- Get exercise equipment.
- Buy new workout shoes or clothes.
- Give yourself a bouquet of flowers.
- Buy a book, CD or DVD.
- Spend some relaxing time alone.
- Give yourself a piece of jewelry.

