

Summary of Session Three of Eating for Your Health

Body Shape & Size Diversity

Humans come in all shapes and sizes. We are born to end up at different heights, with different eye colours and shoe sizes, so why not different weights and shapes too? In reality every person has the right to a happy life untouched by discrimination. Wanting to change your shape/weight can be seen as a form of self-discrimination. You can never accurately judge a person's health status by appearance alone and this is why we promote the focus on health and wellbeing rather than on body size or shape.

Looking After all Areas of Your Health

The Te Whare Tapa Whā model incorporates the four cornerstones of health and is represented pictorially as a whare/house with four equal sides. If one of the sides is not sturdy, the whole whare will be shaky. It is easy to focus on one aspect of your health, but it is actually important to look after yourself in all four areas – taha tinana (physical health), taha hinengaro (psychological (mental) health), taha wairua (spiritual health), and taha whānau (family health/relationships).

Thoughts

The way we think can have a tremendous impact on how we feel, and on our behaviour. Sometimes we have helpful or neutral thoughts, but a lot can be unhelpful. Try to replace any unhelpful thoughts you may have, with a helpful one instead. Treat yourself like you would treat a good friend who was struggling.

Giving Yourself Positive Encouragement

It is important to look after yourself and give yourself positive encouragement for things you do. Looking after yourself and treating yourself well can help you to make changes. If you can incorporate this self-care, you are more likely to feel good about yourself, and positive feelings = positive actions.

Psychological Health

We can learn positive mental health strategies to help become happier and more resilient. To do this we can incorporate five actions into our day to day lives, known as the Five Ways to Wellbeing, Ētahi Ara E Rima Ki Te Ngākau Ora:

1. Connect, me whakawhanaunga - talking, listening, being there, and feeling connected.
2. Give, tukua - giving your time, your presence, your words.
3. Take notice, me aro tonu - being mindful and remembering the simple things that give you joy.
4. Keep learning, me ako tonu - embracing new experiences, seeing opportunities and surprising yourself.
5. Be active, me kori tonu – Do what you can, enjoy what you do, be active and move your mood.

There is a lot of quality information on the Mental Health Foundation of NZ website:

<https://www.mentalhealth.org.nz/>

Movement for the Joy of it

Our bodies are meant to move and they work much better when they do, but you do not have to necessarily punish yourself or sweat. Instead try to think of it as a positive self-nurturing fun activity. Have a go at something new, or something you used to enjoy, or include a little more activity in your general day by parking further from your destination and walking the rest, or taking the stairs instead of the elevator, etc.

There is also the option of a green prescription, which gives you access to Harbour Sport and their free health and wellness programme. This programme helps with physical activity and other aspects. They may still have a bit of a weight focus, but you can ignore these aspects now you know what to do! You can refer yourself to them, or if you would like us to refer you let me know. For more information you can check out their website: http://harboursport.co.nz/healthy-lifestyle/?gclid=Cj0KCQjwp4j6BRCRARIsAGq4yMF_-D6fRXBexES4tZS2j8j2MRVAvaosFRMKUqHwAZ79ZnXtFqhCnWlaAskYEALw_wcB

Homework

1. Look around any public place to see just how amazingly and beautifully diverse human body shapes are. While you are watching notice if you make any assumptions (positive or negative) about others based on their body shape.
2. Incorporate some positive mental health strategies through the Five Ways to Wellbeing. Also fill out that challenging unhelpful thoughts sheet and have a go at challenging any unhelpful thoughts that crop up for you over the next week. Again, the more you do it, the more it will become second nature.
3. Have a think about some movement/physical activity you might like to try or to incorporate into your life. Remember to identify any barriers you have and address these.

Next time

We will look specifically at food a bit more:

- Healthy Eating
- Every Day and Sometimes Foods
- Food Groups
- How to put it all into practice
- Label reading
- Planning and preparation
- Goal setting