

by having set menu plans, but by planning to experiment with *one* new idea each day," she says.

GET SUPPORT

"This is vital," says Sophie. "Everything is so much easier when you're not on your own. If you haven't got the motivation of friends, read inspiring books, keep a journal, or find an online forum like the one on the Beyond Chocolate website." Finding out more is a particularly good way to keep you focused. "Read articles about weight-loss, know your topic and become a professional," suggests Benjamin. "Educating yourself about slimming allows you to overcome future barriers."

Benjamin also advises to choose your network wisely. "We all have those 'bad influence' friends who say we look fine, then coax us into ordering a dessert we don't want!" he says. "It's imperative to find people who respect your goal, and mix with those who've already achieved, because we subconsciously mirror people we meet regularly."

THINK POSITIVE

"When motivation drops, take note of your negative thoughts," says Georgina. "If you're hearing things like 'I'm fat' or 'I'll never do it', turn them into positive affirmations to repeat regularly. Reinforce beliefs like 'I'm slim' and 'I'm succeeding'. Sometimes it's easy to forget why we wanted our goal so much. If you start to feel this way, take a few minutes to visualise yourself at your ideal size. How do you look? What are people



saying to you and about you? How does it feel to wear those skinny jeans? Get excited about your goal and you'll find that pizza less tempting!" Benjamin also believes in the power of positive thinking. "Repeat statements in the present tense such as: 'I have the desire and inner strength to achieve', or 'I can do this'," he says. "Positive affirmations can support a change in your life today, but you must act to achieve results. Positive thinking + massive action = unbelievable results."

TRY VISUALISATION

"When trying to lose weight do you suddenly find all the wrong things more appealing?" asks Georgina. "This alone can jeopardise your weight loss, but the great news is you're in control of your thoughts, your likes and your dislikes. From now on, stop reminding yourself how much you like chocolate and focus on your love for salad and fruit. If this sounds basic, ask why you're constantly telling yourself how you miss your favourite food?"

As you eat healthier options, picture something that makes you smile and visualise the goodness fuelling your body. When you feel tempted by food you're avoiding, imagine it's mouldy and full of maggots – it takes practice, but it works!" Sophie also recommends trying to change your relationship with food.

"Focus on how, why and when you eat," she says. "Only eat when you're hungry, make a meal of it and savour your food."

DON'T RUSH

"The best way to lose weight is very, very slowly," says Sophie. "That way it will stay off. It's much less exciting, but far more beneficial." If you want to succeed, it's also important not to set your targets too high and try

SLIM AT HOME READER PANEL

What's your top motivational tip?

Debbie Ware "Never consider that you're on a diet – it's a healthy eating lifestyle. Also, take pictures regularly to see how well you've done."



June Smith "I find it very handy to keep a food diary to look back at, to see what I was eating during the weeks when I lost the most weight."

too much, too soon. "Walk before you run," Benjamin advises. "And don't go cold turkey. Set a few new rules each week, then pin them on the fridge so you can look at them every day."

BOUNCE BACK

If you do waver from your diet, don't give up, adds Benjamin. "If you have fallen off track, don't waste time feeling bad about it; it's just a diversion to keep you off target," he says. "Feeling guilty can make you depressed, which can then in turn make you crave comfort. Instead, acknowledge you went astray, then get going again. This is much more empowering and much less dramatic. And persevere – if you knew you'd have your mortgage paid for life if you lost weight, you'd definitely do it, wouldn't you? So stop making excuses for not getting back on track with your diet!"

"When you feel tempted by food you're avoiding, imagine it's mouldy and full of maggots"

MEET THE EXPERTS



GEORGINA BURNETT is a presenter and lifecoach on *healthzone.tv*. She is a qualified life coach specialising in health, and a qualified NLP practitioner. When Georgina first entered

the field, she used the techniques she had learned to lose 2st herself. For more information click on georginaburnett.com



SOPHIE BOSS is a psychotherapist and is co-author of *Beyond Chocolate* (£9.99, Piatkus) with her sister Audrey Boss. Together they run workshops around the UK to help women to establish a healthy

relationship with food, and to create a positive body image. Visit the website beyondchocolate.co.uk for more information.



BENJAMIN BONETTI is the founder of Empower Your Life. Visit empower-your-life.co.uk to learn more about his motivational programme to help you shift the pounds. *Slim at Home* readers can buy

the Weight Loss Programme for the special price of £199.97, a saving of £30, by calling 0845 194 9644 and quoting SLIM.