

LOVE YOUR MAY



Cheer your successes, don't fixate on your stumbles.

EASY INSPIRATION

Ramp up your resolve

If you want to eat well or save money but keep falling off the wagon, take heart: You can strengthen self-discipline, just like a muscle. Here's how one woman used proven tactics to follow through on her intentions. What she gleans can help *you* stick with anything, too!

“I wish I could resist splurges.”

STRATEGY Shop on a low-stress day. The greater the number of difficult decisions you make, the less willpower you'll have, according to a study by the Carlson School of Management in Minneapolis. A morning spent hatching a complex plan at work, for example, is likely to weaken your resolve when it comes to those pricey pumps (or the fast food at the mall). If you must run errands when life is nutty, use lists to simplify decision making, recommends study coauthor Kathleen Vohs, Ph.D.

ROAD TEST I visit the mall on a mellow Sunday, armed with a list of what to stock up on (shirts, not shoes). Narrowing my options ahead of time helps me concentrate on the stuff I genuinely need and avoid temptation—both in the shoe department and at lunch.

“I wish I could stay on task when I'm at work.”

STRATEGY Fuel up to focus. People who eat before a self-control challenge perform better, says Roy F. Baumeister, Ph.D., professor of psychology at Florida State University in Tallahassee. A breakfast composed of protein and complex carbs, which break down slowly to provide several hours of energy, gives you mental stamina to say no to distractions.

ROAD TEST It works! Eating a couple of eggs and whole-wheat toast helps me work consistently—no fidgety fits and starts, Facebooking or using any excuse to get up from my chair.

“I wish I could maintain a workout routine.”

STRATEGY Pursuing too many acts of willpower at once (say, quitting smoking while cleaning up your diet) makes it tougher to succeed, a study by Baumeister finds. Better to introduce one new behavior at a time and keep it up for a couple of weeks, so it becomes ingrained, requiring less conscious effort.

ROAD TEST For two weeks, I postpone other healthy initiatives and focus on going to the gym, which gets easier. Soon I've built so much of my morning around my workout, it would be a hassle to skip it. That's not willpower; it's a habit! —Sara Reistad-Long

“I wish I could eat more nutritiously.”

STRATEGY Move toward a vision of who you want to be (strong) rather than what you want to avoid (sweets). People who have a “higher belief system,” meaning a purpose that reflects their values, possess more self-control, a study from the University of Miami in Coral Gables finds. As someone who writes about nutrition, I decide to practice what I preach diligently—to maintain my weight and my integrity!

ROAD TEST On a visit to a chocolate show (temptation central), I recall my goal of leading a “sensible lifestyle.” The treats entice me, but I manage to sample just a few and avoid a pig-out.

Peel those pounds off!

Swimsuit season is only weeks away? Bring it on! That's all the time you need to reveal your best body ever.

Consider the SELF Challenge your shortcut to Slimville. There is no faster, easier, healthier way to shed pounds and uncover hottie-patottie curves. Whether you're starting the program now or you've been following it from the start, expect major results this month: flatter abs, leaner legs, a firmer rear and shoulders that beg to be shown off. Sign up at Self.com (if you haven't already) and look forward to a summer of confidence in *anything* you wear.

- **Lose inches!** Find your fat-melting cardio plan on page 88. This month, you'll sweat an hour less each week and still shrink an entire dress size.
- **Tone up!** Sculpt sexy muscles—not too big, not too little, but *juuust* right—with our fun, do-anywhere strength moves on page 92.
- **Feel full!** You'll never go hungry with our tasty meal plan on page 100. (Dessert is required!)
- **Stay psyched!** Use our proven motivation tips on page 98 to discover your inner winner.

Win crazy-cool prizes at Self.com!

A DREAM VACATION

When you enroll in the Challenge at Self.com (it's free), you'll be entered for a chance to win the grand-prize getaway: a six-night, seven-day trip for two to the Costa Rica Yoga Spa in Nosara, courtesy of Crystal Light. Included: round-trip airfare, all meals, yoga classes, a cooking lesson and spa treatments (value: \$6,000). Prepare to be pampered!



A TOTALLY CUTE SUIT

Each day you update your progress logs at Self.com, you'll be entered for a chance to win this two-piece by Carve Designs (\$88).



A HOME GYM
Finish the Challenge (you're so close!) for a shot to win this Mobia by Nautilus fitness machine (\$2,300).



Track your progress on your own private webpage at Self.com. You can blog, too!

Want freebies? We've got 'em!

WORKOUT VIDEOS

Watch how-to videos of the Challenge strength routine at Self.com. Or pull up the On Demand menu on your TV, choose ExerciseTV and find them under What's New. SELF fitness director Meaghan Murphy will personally train with you!

Exercise TV

FREE ONE-WEEK GYM PASS

You can do the Challenge absolutely anywhere—in your living room, in your backyard, even on the beach (scope out the grand prize, right). But if you prefer to do it in a gym (and maybe take some classes), 24 Hour Fitness will treat you to a free seven-day pass to one of its 400-plus clubs nationwide. Go to Self.com for a location near you.

