

The Psychology & Sabotage of Weight Loss – Deconstructing Motivation

A Workshop with Dr George Blair-West, Psychiatrist

A Mindfulness Based Approach

Obesity is a highly complex psycho-physiological condition. Simply treating it as a condition resulting from a self-discipline deficiency has led to an 80% five year failure rate. Successful treatment requires the integration of wide-ranging research and proven intervention models.

Modern psychotherapy has come a long way in recent times – but which approaches are the most helpful in weight loss? Over the last 7 years Dr Blair-West has been researching, developing and refining the psychotherapy of weight loss with both groups and individuals.

His approach to weight loss is built on the precept that there are five necessary behavioural and lifestyle steps that everyone must negotiate *to some degree* to maintain weight loss. When progress through any of these steps fail, or is actively sabotaged, deeper cognitive and emotional issues require exploration. To do this he will share what he has ‘happily stolen’ from these proven and respected schools of therapy and research:

- Attachment & Restraint Theories
- CBT & Response Prevention
- Psychodynamic Theory
- Existentialism
- Expectancy Theory
- Motivational Interviewing
- Mindfulness based therapies

With a long-term success rate of 13-20%,¹ the evidence base is clear: what we are currently doing is not working.

The First Aim of the workshop is to give you the state-of-the-art understanding of the psychology of weight loss. You will learn why people sabotage weight loss and the most common motivations for this. Second, you will leave the workshop having learnt ‘hands on’ techniques for motivational interviewing, driving change and working more effectively with your obese clientele. You will be able to apply these skills the very next time you see an obese person.

Who should attend?

These workshops, while designed for any registered health professional working with the obese, are primarily targeted at:

- Dietitians
- GPs
- Counsellors
- Psychologists
- Nurse Therapists
- Diabetes Educators/Counsellors

About Your Presenter

Dr Blair-West is a Life Fellow of the Obesity Prevention & Treatment Society and is their media spokesperson. In 2006 he was invited to present on the clinical management of obesity at the International Congress on Obesity held in Sydney. In 2007 he gave the keynote address at the *Innovations in the Prevention and Management of Obesity* conference in Melbourne (it was voted ‘the most informative presentation’ at the conference). Trained as a medical doctor, specialising in Psychiatry, he has worked as a psychotherapist for 20 years. He works with both inpatients and outpatients, individually as well as in groups. His presentations are renowned (& reliably rated on feedback) for his comprehensive command of his subject which is paralleled by his engaging, energetic & often humorous delivery.

He wrote *Weight Loss for Food Lovers: Understanding the Psychology and Sabotage of Weight Loss* as a patient manual to support clinical work. He has also been invited to share his work at the Dietitians' Association of Australia, the Queensland Premier's Obesity Summit, Grand Rounds – even the Melbourne Writers Festival.

In a previous life he completed a three year tenure as a part-time Senior Lecturer at the University of Queensland. He has published in peak international journals and presented at international conferences on health care delivery and suicide in depression.

¹ Rena & Phelan. Long-term weight loss maintenance, *Am J Clin Nutr* 2005.

You will learn:

- the 5 necessary steps: from Feedback (1st) to Monitoring for self/other-sabotage (5th)
- the essence of Restraint Theory & why weight loss plans promote self-sabotage
- the ‘What the Hell’ and ‘Last Supper’ research findings
- the lessons of successful losers
- why self-discipline is a marker of weight loss failure
- common drivers of sabotage
- the critical roles of internal & external mindfulness
- the mechanics of motivation
- which motivators have high, low or no power
- how ‘motivation’ is quite distinct from ‘desire’
- how to sabotage the saboteur
- evidence-based psycho-therapeutic techniques
- assessment for banding
- how to elicit critical motivational information
- why group therapy is the most effective treatment modality.
- the right brain model of obesity

For all workshop information, selected research papers and workshop feedback, visit www.weightlosspsychology.com