

DIABETES AND EMOTIONS: TURNING NEGATIVES INTO POSITIVES

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Managing diabetes is not easy.

"It takes time. It's not gonna be all of a sudden. It's slow. Sometimes it's hard. Sometimes it's easy. I'll get moody. Sometimes I get lazy. Sometimes I don't want to do things. I work too hard all day. I don't want to do this. I don't want to do that."

Instead of letting your negative emotions frustrate you into giving up, the key is to develop strategies to handle your negative feelings and better control your diabetes. Turn the negatives into positives.

First, keep your eye on the prize. What are your reasons for taking control of your diabetes?

"I wanna live. I wanna be around. I wanna see my kids have grandchildren, and walk the stage in college and graduate, and get married. So I need to be in control of it."

Take some time now to think of the reasons you have for managing your diabetes. Good health, avoiding complications, feeling better, having more energy; whatever your reason, recognize it. Remember it, and keep your eye on getting there.

Next, set realistic goals. Being overwhelmed by your management plan will just set you up for failure and lead to more negative emotions, like frustration and stress. Instead, take a big task - like making healthy food choices - and break it down into smaller goals that you can reach.

"There are days that I go to work and we are so busy that my blood sugar gets checked twice. You don't beat yourself up about it. You get up the next morning and say, 'Okay, today I'm gonna check it four times.'"

When you do reach a goal, celebrate your success. You did it! Good job! Let your internal voice be your cheerleader. What would your best friend say to you at a moment like this? Focus on each little success and what you did right to achieve that success, instead of the natural urge to focus only on failure.

However, if you do find you are having trouble reaching your goals, don't get frustrated. These are not easy changes to make. Take some time to figure out why you haven't reached your goals. Problem-solving can be empowering and motivate you for further success.

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"Even though you might have bumps in the road, you have to keep moving forward, and keep going to that goal. And you'll get there, eventually."