Never Give Up

Introduction and Discussion

A part of us never wants to quit. Something inside each of us makes us want to do our best, to show others and ourselves that we can do it. You probably could name many areas of your life where you have been successful in applying that feeling. Take a minute to list two or three of your proudest accomplishments.

(Give members about one minute to list accomplishments.)

Next, write down what it took to achieve these accomplishments. For example, if one of your accomplishments is “being a mother or father,” then you may list “patience,” “understanding” and “unconditional love.”

(Give members another minute to write.)

Think about it, and you’ll realize that you can apply those same feelings and drives to losing weight. Make your desire to succeed work for you. You can do it!

Start by realizing how special you are:

• Would you take better care of yourself or be kinder if you realized your best friend is you?
• Would you be more forgiving of your past mistakes or weaknesses?
• Would you be more encouraging?
• Are you as proud of yourself as you would be of a friend?

Be as nice to yourself as you are to others, and don’t wait until you’ve lost weight to feel good about yourself or to realize how valuable you are. List three of your best qualities right now.

(Give members another minute to write.)

Make a New Start

We are often our own harshest critic. Stop contemplating your shortcomings. Instead, learn from your mistakes and then move on. Think of today as the start of a race. How you did in previous races has no bearing on the outcome of this one. Each day, hour and minute, we choose whether to walk backward, stand still or move forward toward our goal.

Do you realize that every time you say the TOPS pledge it marks a new beginning? Today you said the words “I am an intelligent person” and “I will control my emotions, not let my emotions control me.” That’s the beginning of a whole week of positive thinking.

Positive thinking, talk and actions really do work. If you find yourself in a stressful situation or in a mood where you just can’t seem to feel good about yourself, take a minute to recite the TOPS pledge to yourself. Say it slowly, and think about what those words mean. Think of the strength it gives you and of the thousands of other TOPS who stand with you and also understand what you are going through.

Materials:
• pens/pencils
• paper
• writing surface

Preparation:
Distribute paper and pens/pencils to members at the beginning of the meeting.
Say Goodbye to Excuses

An excuse says: “I am not in control. I am allowing everyone and everything around me to control me.”

Each time you start to use an excuse that will keep you from your goal, counter it with something positive. If you have been thinking, “I will never reach my goal,” change your thoughts to, “I will reach my goal.” Say it out loud. You’ll soon realize that you can encourage yourself. Write down one or two of your favorite excuses.

(Give members time to write.)

Now, next to each excuse, write down a positive, encouraging phrase that you can use to replace the old excuse.

(Allow a minute for writing. Ask a few members to share an excuse and its replacement.)

Try Something New

This week make time to do something for yourself—maybe something out of the ordinary, such as:

• Boosting your self-esteem by doing something that you enjoy and that you’re good at.
• Improving your outlook by doing something special for yourself—getting a massage, for example, or taking a walk in the park.
• Encouraging others by telling your chapter about your successes. It will prompt others to share and will remind you of the excitement you had when you first joined TOPS.
• Spending time with someone who makes you feel good about yourself.
• Emailing or texting a member who needs help. Pick someone you usually don’t contact.
• Congratulating yourself on each small victory, such as taking the stairs or passing up a second helping.
• Planning a week’s menus ahead of time.

Now take a moment to write down one or two things you can do to be your own best friend this week.

(Allow a minute for writing and then a few moments for sharing if time permits.)

If you begin thinking of yourself as your own best friend, chances are better you’ll work at helping yourself as much as you would help a friend who needed you. Don’t ever give up on yourself. You are not a quitter, and you’ve just started the race that will make you a winner.

Remember: “Success is getting up one more time than you fall down!”