Learn It. Live It.
A program for use at chapter meetings

Introduction
Did you know that research suggests that only 8 percent of people achieve their New Year’s resolutions? Considering that weight loss is one of the most common New Year’s resolutions, this number may seem a little discouraging. Fortunately, if we make a plan and put our hearts into it, we can reach our goals.

Chances are, you’ve heard of the honeymoon period in relationships. Can anyone tell me what this is? (Give members a minute or so to respond.)

Materials:
- scissors
- colored construction paper or poster board
- paper
- pens/pencils
- copies of this program

Preparation:
Ask members to cut the construction paper into four large heart shapes and let them know that they will be writing on the hearts throughout the program. Distribute paper, pens/pencils and copies of this program to every member at the start of the meeting.
Building Lasting Love

The honeymoon period happens at the beginning of a relationship when feelings of love and happiness are running high and not a thing in the world can bring you down. This is one way to think about New Year’s resolutions. In fact, they’re a little like the “honeymoons” of making healthy habits. The trouble is, after the honeymoon is over, so is the high—and the healthy habits. There’s a reason you don’t hear much about New Year’s resolutions in June. Just as any long-term relationship needs a solid commitment, making lasting change requires a commitment to yourself and to your health. This year, consider these tips to turn your New Year’s resolution honeymoon into a long-term relationship with health:

Schedule time. Relationship experts will tell you that scheduling special time for you and your partner, or having a regular date night is important. When it comes to your resolution to move more or eat better, you have to plan time for you. This could involve scheduling your favorite weekly workout class or a daily walking date with a friend.

(Ask members to write down how they will schedule time for their goal on one of their “hearts.” Have them write down their other answers on the rest of the hearts for the remainder of the program.)

Have realistic expectations. Having high expectations for a partner, or expecting someone to have all of your ideal qualities, can lead to disappointment. The same goes for New Year’s resolutions. Maybe losing 30 pounds in a month or hitting the gym every day isn’t realistic for you. But losing a few pounds a month and going to the gym three days a week could be much more attainable.

(Ask members to write down how they will keep their goal realistic.)

Have a support system. A relationship needs a solid foundation of support to help you navigate the curveballs life throws your way. Your road to health is tough to go alone, and the support of friends and family can help keep you on track. Don’t be afraid to ask for help when you need it.

(Ask members to write down the name or names of people they can reach out to when they need support.)

Know that there will be ups and downs. There’s no such thing as the perfect relationship and there’s bound to be some disagreements along the way. Your relationship with health will have slip-ups, gains at the scale and maybe even setbacks. What’s important is how you bounce back and what you can learn from each bump in the road.

(Ask members to write down a possible obstacle they may face, along with how they can overcome this obstacle.)

Take responsibility for your happiness. No one is responsible for your happiness but you. Don’t delay your happiness until you lose those last 15 pounds or fit into a certain pant size. Instead, look at each day as an opportunity to build a better you, and celebrate each small victory with confidence and gratitude. Even though the honeymoon may be over as the months pass, the relationship with a new, healthier you is just beginning.

Follow-Up

Bring your hearts back to next week’s meeting, and we’ll discuss how your goals or resolutions are going. Feel free to get creative and add inspirational pictures or quotes to the hearts and place them somewhere that will motivate you.