

UPDATE YOUR STORY

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If you have a hard time reaching your current health goals, don't worry. Success can be as easy as changing the story you tell yourself each day. Take Frank, for example. Every day, Frank told himself the same story: ***"I can't stick to anything. I'm hopeless. I don't exercise, I don't follow my diet, I don't always take my pills, and often forget to check my blood glucose. My health team should stop helping me. They should save their advice for someone who is able to do what they say."***

When Frank's doctor and other members of his healthcare team asked him to try a new task, he was sure he would fail. He truly believed he was unable to stick to anything. But was that really true? I met with Frank and asked him to list a few things he does often.

Here is his list:

- ✓ I go to work each day.
- ✓ I attend church Sunday mornings.
- ✓ I call my mom every few days to see how she is doing.
- ✓ I brush my teeth a few times each day and floss before bed.
- ✓ I kiss my wife as I go out the door each morning.

Frank completes these tasks regularly, without fail. He does them because he thinks they are worth doing. So that is the real fact: He *can* stick to certain actions and get them done. He just doesn't realize he is a doer. Once he sees this, he can be much more open to trying the diabetes care actions he knows are important and really wants to do.

DOES YOUR STORY KEEP YOU FROM REACHING YOUR GOALS?

Take these next steps and see what happens:

Who are you? Describe yourself and tell your story. Such as this:

"I am a person who *can't* stop eating."

Now, take your story and prove it wrong. On a piece of paper, list the times when you *do* stop eating, such as while you are on the phone, in the car, at a concert, at church, in a library or at the doctor's office. If you are able to stop eating sometimes, you are able to stop eating at other times also. You *can* stop if you feel it is important to do so.

Now, correct your story to tell the real truth about yourself:

"I am a person who *can* stop eating when I want to."

Frank made some changes and you can too. Don't take a huge step, but choose one task. For example, use your meal plan for breakfast only. Once you do that for several days, add lunch to your list. Then you can say you are a person who uses a meal plan.

What kind of story do you tell yourself each day? Is it a correct one? Does it help you or does it hinder you from meeting your goals? Don't let the story you tell yourself keep you from caring for your health. Create a new story that can help you be in charge of your diabetes and feel good about yourself and what you can do.

