



IS IT WORTH IT?

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A new campaign by the National Diabetes Education Program (NDEP) has the following slogan: “Managing diabetes. It’s not easy, but it’s worth it.” There is a lot of truth to that statement. There is no question diabetes is hard to deal with: There is a lot to do and lot of choices to make each and every day. Many people use words like *burden*, *struggle* and *challenge* to describe their daily lives with diabetes.

But the second part of this slogan is also food for thought. One of the most important things people with diabetes need to decide is whether the benefit they receive is worth all the work they do to care for their diabetes. Making that decision makes it easier to face choices throughout the day.

WHAT IS IT WORTH TO ME TODAY?

When you have diabetes, you often hear a lot of dos and don’ts about how to manage it. But actually there are no rules, just choices and consequences. Every choice you make has a consequence. One way to decide if the choice you made worked in your best interest is to look at the results. Then you can compare the results with the choices and decide if it was worth it to you.

This works whether the outcomes are positive or negative. If you make the choice to skip dessert to keep your blood glucose level on target, ask yourself if not having the pleasure of something you enjoy or of feeling deprived was worth it. If you decide to have the dessert, ask yourself if the pleasure was worth the calories.

This is not a trick question, and there is no right or wrong answer. One of the truths about deciding whether something is worth the effort is that no one gets to decide for you. After all, you are the one doing the work, making the sacrifices and the changes in how you live your life.

WHAT IS IT WORTH TO ME IN THE FUTURE?

A reason to care for diabetes for many people is to prevent future problems. They understand that by keeping their blood glucose, blood pressure and cholesterol on target they are lowering their risks. As you think about whether the choices you make are worth the results, you also need to consider the future outcomes of your decisions.

Thinking about future outcomes is always harder than

thinking about what happens right now. If you only think about the future, it is harder to stay motivated. Deciding whether it was worth it to you today as you work toward your future goal is one way to think about it. And that can help you stay faithful to your plan.

Some people find that it helps to have something positive to say to themselves when the future benefits seem too far off. For example, “I decided to skip dessert today, and although I felt a little sorry for myself, I know that this choice will help keep me on track for a healthier future. I am proud of my choice today, so it was worth it to me.”

IS IT WORTH IT AT ALL?

One of the benefits of deciding if something is worth it, is that it helps you evaluate things you do without feeling guilty or as though you cheated. There is no such thing as cheating in diabetes. You make choices, evaluate the results and make decisions about the wisdom of your choices in terms of your own targets and goals.

Another benefit is it helps you plan ahead for the next time. You may decide the results were worth the choice you made. Or you may decide they weren’t worth it. But either way, next time you’ll be able to make a more informed choice based on your experience and your thoughts about it.

Managing diabetes is not easy. But it is worth it for your health and peace of mind today and in the future.

Visit the NDEP at yourdiabetesinfo.org

There are no rules in diabetes, just choices and consequences.

