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Embracing Life

Course Overview

Embracing Life teaches the science behind why we behave the way we do and helps you understand the biological, psychological, social, and spiritual basis of how behavior can be changed. It provides the tools needed to help clients get off the diet treadmill by educating them about the effects human behavior has on eating and exercising.

There are three sections to the Embracing Life course: Learn, Change, and Lead, all designed to help you coach your clients to be as successful as possible.

Course Objectives

Upon completion of the Embracing Life course, you will be able to:

- Summarize the latest scientific evidence connecting behaviors with the body, mind, relationships, and spirit.
- Discuss the latest scientific evidence pinpointing how focused interventions can alter behaviors.
- Apply the latest scientific evidence suggesting the certain chronic conditions that manifest themselves in overt behaviors require lifelong maintenance.

Section 1: Learn

In the Learn section you will study the basic roadmap of the body and mind as well as acquire a unique understanding of how relationships and spiritual needs all affect human behavior.

Besides willpower, the following factors influence behavior:

- Body
- Mind
- Relationships
- Spirit

Body

Learn how our brain, digestive system, and genes all influences our behavior.

The Limbic system is the part of the brain that is often referred to as the “______________________”

The four neurotransmitters that have an affect on how we eat are:

- Serotonin
- Dopamine
- Norepinephrine
- Endorphins
These **hormones** are produced by the digestive system under the influence of the brain and interact in managing hunger and satiety:

- Insulin
- Leptin
- Ghrelin
- Cortisol

______________________ can reduce weight even if there are “obese” genes in your family.

**Mind**

Psychology is seen as a modern tool used to explain how and why humans behave in irrational as well as rational ways.

These perspectives of psychology try to explain why people behave in ways that sometime appear to be self-defeating:

- Behavioral
- Cognitive
- Humanistic
- Biological

**Enter the correct psychology perspective.**

- _____________ psychology focuses on learned behaviors.
- _____________ psychology examines internal mental processes.
- _____________ psychology is concerned about the individual’s potential for greatness and the possibility for growth and self-actualization.
- _____________ psychology focuses on the physical and biological causes of human behavior.
Relationships

Who we are and how we behave is, in part, a result of who our closest influences are, not only today, but also when we were growing up.

Our closest influences form spheres around our life, touching us in many seen and unseen ways.

Write the name of each Sphere on the line.

________________  
________________  
________________  
________________

Spirit

For the majority of humans, the spiritual component of being human is likely one of the most important parts.

________________ is missing from the conversation when we talk about our health, especially our mental health.
Section 2: Change

In the Change section you will learn about behavior change including concrete and practical strategies to help your clients change problematic behaviors that are self-defeating and often deeply rooted.

The Embracing Change Model is comprised of four steps:

- Assessment
- Prioritization
- Implementation
- Maintenance

External Behavior Change Strategies

# 1 Attitude

This strategy will help clients have a better attitude regarding their weight loss journey.

Help your clients perform an attitude assessment:

- Consciously choosing to stop putting _____________ things into their mind.
- Consciously choosing to start putting _____________ things into their mind on a daily basis.
- Consciously choosing to avoid _________________ people.
- Consciously choosing to speak in a ________________ way.

Attitude is the state of mind through which we filter all information and make all decisions.

- Attitude is something that can be built with ______________ and ______________.
- Attitude is a consequence of our ________________ and ________________.
- A positive mental attitude is a ______________________ for good in our lives.

# 2 Learning

This strategy is about arming your clients with new information and knowledge to facilitate change.

Learning is so important because knowledge is ________________.

- Knowledge builds ______________ and perseverance.
- Learning also adds ______________ and enthusiasm.
#3 Goals
This strategy helps clients set SMART goals to achieve success. The most important reason to set goals is so you will know where you are going.

A SMART goal is a goal that is:
- Specific
- Measurable
- Achievable
- Written
- Timed

Goals should be ________________.
SMART goals should carry across all areas of ________________.
Progress is not measured in ________________ but in ________________.

Weight loss goals should be built on:
- Weight
- Body fat
- Lean muscle
- Inches lost
- Clothing fit

#4 Community
This strategy will help clients see why Curves is different from other programs.

The benefits of community:
- Knowledgeable ________________
- Best ________________
- Best ________________
- Behavioral change
- Resource
- Group ________________
- Group ________________
- Group ________________
- Strength in ________________
- Focus
- Power of ________________

#5 Control
This strategy will provide clients with coping tools to use when they feel frustrated with something they can not control.

We only have control over ________________ and our ________________.

Encourage clients to use the following tools to accept the things they cannot change:

- Positive ________________ Voice™
- Have a ________________ action
- Forgiveness
- Set ________________
- Take ________________
- Be in ________________

#6 Burden to Blessing

This strategy help clients understand that the struggles they are going through with the program will be a blessing.

For true behavior change, expect:

- To be ________________
- Your burden to become your ________________
- To ________________, your schedule
#7 Feelings

This strategy will help your clients learn to deal with their feelings in healthy ways.

Emotional eating can have detrimental affects on their:

- Life
- Bodies
- Minds

Encourage clients to use the following tools to break the Emotional Eating Cycle:

- Learn healthy ways to ______________ feelings
- Acknowledge that feelings ______________
- Allow their feelings to be ______________
- Focus on the go to _____________________
- Use a _____________ diary
- Look at their _____________________ with food

Remind clients to rely on food for ______________, not for ______________ sustenance.
Internal Behavior Change Strategies

#1 Self-Talk

This strategy will help clients call out the negative self-talk in an effort to separate themselves from it and ultimately quiet those unhealthy thoughts that do not serve them.

A healthy voice is thoughts that bring:

- Peace
- Joy
- Happiness
- Hope

An unhealthy voice is thoughts that bring:

- Fear
- Worry
- Anxiety

There are three tools you can use with your clients to help quiet their unhealthy voice:

- ________________ (i.e., questioning thoughts and replacing them with new ones)
- ________________ (i.e., calling out and turning our own negative labels into positive behaviors)
- ________________ (i.e., statements to boost self-esteem that we can use in times of stress or temptation)

#2 Burn the Boat and Habits

This strategy will help clients maintain a healthy weight by choosing to stay committed to some of the habits they have acquired along the way and not going back to old habits.

Encourage your client not to go back to old eating habits, such as:

- ________________ foods (e.g., white rice, bread, potatoes)
- ________________ foods (e.g., fish, chicken)
- ________________ drinks (e.g., sweet tea, soft drinks)
- ________________ snacks (e.g., ice cream)

Encourage your client to adopt new eating habits, such as:

- ________________ grain foods (e.g., whole wheat bread, yams)
- ________________ foods (e.g., fish, chicken)
- ________________ drinks (e.g., plain tea, diet drinks, water with lemon)
- ________________ snacks (e.g., fruit, nuts)
Both good and bad habits are learned. Habits can be reprogrammed with:

- Assessment
- Prioritizing
- Planning
- Implementing
- Following through

**#3 Seeing is Believing**

This strategy will help clients see what success looks like by showing them pictures and introducing them to people who have accomplished weight loss.

Seeing results is a powerful ________________.

Evidence of results:
- Show ________________ of people who have accomplished weight loss.
- Introduce them to ________________ who have accomplished weight loss.
- Be a personal ________________ to the accomplishment of weight loss.
- Show them ________________ of yourself.

**#4 Thinking Errors**

The purpose of this strategy is to help clients reduce their stress by recognizing their errors in thinking.

Thinking Errors Cause:
- Stress to ________________
- More ________________
- More ________________

**Types of “Stinkin Thinkin”**
- Black and White Thinking
- Overgeneralization
- Awfulizing
- Mental Filter
- Magnifying or Minimizing
- Blame
- Labeling
- Emotional Reasoning
#5 24-Hour Living

The purpose of this strategy is to help clients learn how to live each day rather than being stuck in the past or focused on the future.

An important part of 24-hour living is having an attitude of gratitude.

Encourage your clients to incorporate the following as daily habits if they are stuck in obsessive thoughts:

- _____________ (e.g., read an inspiring quote or mediation)
- _____________ (e.g., quiet time with her Higher Power)
- _____________ (e.g., an inventory of how her day went and what she could change)
- _____________ (e.g., a list of everything she is grateful for)
- _____________ (e.g., a written account of her thoughts, actions, and feelings)

#6 Celebrations

The purpose of this strategy is to help clients learn new ways to celebrate life beyond using food to celebrate.

Life can be celebrated with:

- Positive ________________
- Positive ________________
- Healthy ________________

Meredith’s list of Natural Sense Stimulators clients can use to reward themselves:

- Lotion and shower soap
- Candles and scented oils
- Farmer’s market
- Herbs and spices
- Flowers
- Nature
- Music
- Conversation
- Creative writing and art
- Dancing
#7 Visualization

The purpose of this strategy is to help clients visualize various parts of their life besides their body.

Encourage your clients to journal about the following visualizations and questions:

- Visualize her healthy relationship with ____________________.
- Visualize her life changing now that she knows her ____________________, ____________________, and ____________________ are also a part of it.
- Visualize walking through her ____________________.
- Recognize the ____________________ she has that do not serve her.
- Notice the ____________________ that do not serve her in the process.
- Visualize using the ____________________ behaviors she has learned.

Encourage your clients to:

1. Keep their vision realistic
2. Write short and long-term goals
3. Make time for their priorities
4. Visualize themselves on the inside and outside
Section 3: Lead

In the Lead section you will learn strategies to help your clients lead more productive and joyful lives. You will give them the tools that enable them to take personal responsibility for their behaviors especially as they relate to food and exercise.

Clients will understand the concept of relapse and develop strategies on how to avoid it.

Relapse occurs when our ____________ (risk factors) out number our _______________ (protective factors).

Seven Relapse Prevention Strategies:

1. Support
2. Mentoring
3. Honesty/Self Inventory
4. Physical Activity
5. Balance
6. Cue Awareness
7. Daily Plan

Relapse Prevention Strategies

#1 Support Curves Life

Curves Life program is inviting women everywhere to share their knowledge and encouragement so that together, we can make this world one million women stronger.

The Curves Life Groups is where Curves’ women can:

- Make the program ______________________
- Connect more ________________ to each other
- Find ________________
- Find other women working the same ________________

Why should you make Curves Life program available to your client? So your clients can get inspiration and community support beyond just their coaches.

How can you get your clients involved in the Curves Life Program?

- Encourage them to join when starting the ________________ program.
- Encourage them to go and share their ________________ story with other women.
- Tell them it’s the ________________ and ________________ support complement to both Curves workouts and weight-management program that set Curves apart because it makes it lifestyle.

For more information on how to conduct Curves Life meetings, go to www.CurvesCommunity.com.
#2 Mentoring

Mentoring is:
- A relationship-based process where ______________ and ______________ shared.
- Sharing with others the ______________ news of your experience.

Older members share:
- Experience
- Pitfalls
- Successes

#3 Honesty/Self-Inventory

Honesty will help your client live their best life daily.

Honesty brings ______________.

Helping your clients get honest with themselves, means having them take an inventory of:
- Negative ______________
- Things they can not ______________
- What ______________ they eat and how they are struggling with them

Clients should take an inventory:
- As often as they need it
- Once a year with their Curves Life mentor
- At the end of each day

#4 Physical Activity

_________________________ is just one aspect of the three-legged stool that makes your client’s weight-management program successful.

It is important that your clients make physical activity a ______________ part of their weight-management program.

Physical activity can help your clients:
- Emotionally
- Mentally
- Physically

Exercise is supposed to be something you ______________ forward to.

Encourage your clients to:
- Write a gratitude list about the benefits of their new Curves workout routine.
• Write down when they feel they are on top of their game as something they can refer to when they are feeling down.
• Ask friends in the Curves Life groups how they got through the exercise barriers.
• Exercise with a buddy.
• Find an activity they love that will last for the rest of their lives.

#5 Balance
Life is not about managing a million things. It’s about managing what you ________________
balance and taking off your plate what you ________________.

When clients feel off balance encourage them to:
• Go to a Curves Life Group meeting
• Talk to their mentor
• Do a Self-Assessment
• Workout
• Look at their cues

Clients can also create balance using Marty Lerner’s technique:
• Spirituality
• Rest
• Exercise
• Food plan

#6 Cue Awareness
The purpose of this strategy is to help your clients learn how to deal with difficult situations when they are confronted with them.

There are seven different kinds of cues:
• Food
• Timing
• People
• Places
• Situations
• Thinking
• Physiology

Your clients will be working on awareness of their own cues in their journal.
#7 Daily Plan

Every 24 hours your clients need to rededicate themselves to the process.

Encourage your clients to write down a _____________ statement.

Daily commitments may include:

- Meditation
- Inspiration
- Gratitude list
- Cues

Having a plan will keep them _____________ on the goal.

Congratulations, you have completed the Embracing Life Workbook and Study Guide. The Workbook and Study Guide is an excellent resource for you to refer as you coach your clients through the Curves Complete Program.
Answer Key

**Body** emotional brain, lifestyle

**Mind** Behavioral, Cognitive, Humanistic, Biological

**Relationships** Family, Religion, Friends, Community, World

**Spirit** Spirituality

**External Behavior Change Strategies:**

# 1 **Attitude** negative, positive, negative, supportive, awareness, effort, habit, environment, powerful force

# 2 **Learning** power, confidence, excitement

# 3 **Goals** exciting, life, perfection, increments

# 4 **Community** coach, diet, exercise, support, accountability, numbers, information

# 5 **Control** ourselves, reactions, healthy, weekly, boundaries, inventory, today

# 6 **Burden to Blessing** uncomfortable, blessing, reprioritize

# 7 **Feelings** soothe, pass, felt, food, food, relationship, fuel, emotional, relationship

**Internal Behavior Change Strategies:**

# 1 **Self-Talk** turnaround, self-labels, affirmations

# 2 **Burn the Boat/Habits** processed, fried, sweetened, unhealthy, whole, baked, unsweetened, healthy

# 3 **Seeing is Believing** motivator, pictures, people, witness, photos

# 4 **Thinking Errors** increase, errors, errors

# 5 **24-Hour Living** Inspiration, Meditation, Inventory, Gratitude list, Journal

# 6 **Celebrations** people, environments, habits

# 7 **Visualization** food, body, mind, spirit, cues, thoughts, behaviors, new

**Relapse Prevention Strategies:**

# 1 **Support Curves Life** work, deeply, strength, program, 90-day, life, emotional, mental

# 2 **Mentoring** knowledge, support, good

# 3 **Honesty/Self-Inventory** feelings, control, foods

# 4 **Physical Activity** Physical activity, permanent, look

# 5 **Balance** can, cannot

# 6 **Cue Awareness** N/A

# 7 **Daily Plan** commitment, focus
Embracing Life Course References


The National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse. The Importance of Family Dinners VI. 2010.


Yale Rudd Center for Food Policy and Obesity. Strategies to Prevent Overweight and Obesity. (2010).