



Remain Mindful.

Help your client recognize and name the negative feelings they might have about being sedentary or overweight. Encourage them to work through emotions rather than set them aside — if they are avoided, they come back.



Build Connection.

People often feel isolated in their struggles. Remind clients that even though their negative self-image seems intensely personal, many others are challenged by the same things. They are not alone.



Be Kind to Bad Feelings.

Just as a parent's soothing words to an infant release the love hormone oxytocin, adults can also calm themselves with self-kindness. Remind clients to be good to themselves, even (and especially) when they don't feel like it.



Learn from Negativity.

Interrogating bad feelings can uncover where they come from. Maybe it's worry about being a poor role model or concern about personal health. Help clients get the "why" from their negativity rather than simply suffering with it.



Envision the Future.

Using the visual parts of the brain to imagine the future increases the likelihood of success. Help your client see the future they desire: lifting a challenging weight, running a 5K or hiking a picturesque mountain with their children. To see is to believe!

Assisting the Apprehensive Exerciser

When meeting with new clients looking to lose weight or get in better shape, you may find that many are dealing with internal negativity and self-doubt. It's important to know how to help them through these emotional barriers, improving their chances of a successful fitness journey.