

Having a Social Life When You're Dieting

(Excerpted from Day 9, *100 MORE Days of Weight Loss*)



Suzanne was excited and motivated! This time, she was determined to stick with her weight-loss plan all the way to her goal.

It was a perfect week. When her work friends hosted a Friday night dinner party, she brought her own food, making it easy to stay on her plan.

The party begins

Saturday was a little more challenging. Her friends started with a late afternoon movie (with popcorn) then headed for a boisterous dinner at a local grill known for appetizers and steak fries.

Suzanne tried hard, but cheered on by a couple of drinks and the attention of a cute single guy, she reached for the nachos and joined the party.

On Monday, she was back on track—until the promotion lunch on Tuesday, the birthday cake on Wednesday and girls' night out on Thursday.

When she stepped on the scale on Saturday morning, she was horrified to see that she hadn't lost a pound. But she also knew exactly why.

Can I still have a social life?

The fact that you're on a diet doesn't prevent the rest of the world from having parties or eating dessert. And unless you stay at home and never leave your bedroom, you'll still be invited to wine tastings, work parties and family dinners.

When you aren't clear about the boundaries for your diet or weight-loss plan, it's too easy to not have *any*. And that becomes a set up for saying, "I don't care anymore—I just want to have fun."

Instead of sacrificing your diet with every social event, you need to come up with a strategy for combining these two areas of your life.

Weight-Loss Plan A

Begin by spelling out exactly what you will do on your ideal program. For example, write down a food plan based the number of points, calories or fat grams you're aiming for most of the time.

You might even jot down your exercise goals such as a daily twenty-minute walk. All of this is your *Weight-Loss Plan A*.

Weight-Loss Plan B

Now study what's on your calendar over the next few weeks and note the events that revolve around food.

Do you have an important party or a business trip coming up soon? What about your child's recital, the monthly book club or poker night?

Instead of "hoping for the best" when you head out the door, create a strategy for each one of these activities. This contingency approach becomes your *Weight-Loss Plan B*.

Do either Plan A or Plan B

Set a goal that most of the time, you'll follow *Plan A*, sticking tightly to your program and moving toward your goals. When your diet feels too rigid for a particular social event or situation, move to *Plan B*.

For example, to use Plan A at a party, you might arrive late, go home early and swap your usual beverage for a diet drink or club soda.

If necessary, you can switch to Plan B, where you allocate a few more points or calories or maybe choose to eat half a piece of birthday cake. You can also use this approach to handle your favorite restaurants or even specific meals.

There is no Plan C!

Here's the secret to having a great social life at the same time you're managing your weight.

When you're tempted to throw in the towel and eat whatever you feel like, remind yourself there are only two choices—Plan A or Plan B!

That means you don't have the option of taking the weekend off or excusing yourself from your food plan when you go to an evening party.

Regardless of the temptation to ignore your diet, always try to stick with either Plan A or your contingency approach, Plan B.

Whether you're starting a new diet or you've maintained your weight for a long time, you still need a plan to live by. So keep the odds in your favor by reminding yourself, *there is no Plan C*.