

Making lifestyle changes you can live with

September 26 2019, by Len Canter



Research published in the *Journal of Nutrition and Dietetics* highlights two important steps for improving diet and exercise habits. The first is getting practical and personalized tips for making changes that you'll

permanently adopt. The second is developing the inner motivation needed to help make the first step stick.

The study recruited adults from a [rural area](#) in the South with limited access to a gym and other health-oriented facilities. To help them make [positive changes](#), each had four sessions with a wellness counselor who gave recommendations tailored to their lifestyle. These included making realistic changes to the typical southern diet they normally ate, with an emphasis on how to make better fat and carb choices.

They were also given a fitness goal of 30 minutes a day, such as walking at least 7,500 steps at least five days a week, plus information on where to find [farmers markets](#) for healthier food as well as [local parks](#) and schools where they could walk.

Although researchers thought that rural participants would have a harder time making healthy changes than [city dwellers](#), those who lived in the country lost more weight and became more active than those in healthier, more supportive environments. In fact, some became so motivated that the farther they lived from a gym, the greater the number of steps they took.

Everyone trying to lose weight can apply these findings to meet key goals. Consider a personal evaluation from a dietitian to get tips you can easily put into action and which, in turn, can boost your inner motivation. And this can be especially helpful if you live in an area with few resources.

More information: The Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics details what you can expect to learn from a [registered dietitian nutritionist](#).

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