

# WEEK 2: Iron Sharpens Iron

## CAN THE RELATIONSHIPS IN OUR SOCIAL CIRCLE IMPACT OUR DIETARY CHOICES?

Yes, scientific research suggests that close relationships (or the lack of close relationships) impact both the variety of foods consumed, and the amount consumed. For example, older married men have reported higher intakes of fruits, vegetables, vitamins and fiber and energy-adjusted intakes than unmarried men.

In contrast, when a change is needed, or improvements made to a women's dietary behaviors, female friend support appears to contribute significantly.<sup>1</sup>

## WHAT IS AN ACCOUNTABILITY PARTNER?

Do you have someone in your inner circle that positively impacts your dietary choices? An accountability partner is someone that you meet or talk with regularly (at least weekly) to provide motivation by sharing successes and challenges as you both progress towards your goals. In fact, 76% of people who wrote down their goals and action commitments, then shared their progress with an accountability partner, were able to reach their goals<sup>2</sup>.

### References:

1. Annalijn I. Conklin, Nita G. Forouhi, Paul Surtees, Kay-Tee Khaw, Nicholas J. Wareham, and Pablo Monsivaisb. Social relationships and healthful dietary behaviour: Evidence from over-50s in the EPIC cohort, UK..
2. John Traugott. Achieving your goals: An evidence-based approach. Michigan State University. (2014).



## HOW TO CHOOSE AN ACCOUNTABILITY PARTNER AND ESTABLISH GROUND RULES?

Connect with someone with whom you genuinely enjoy spending time. Someone who needs your help just as much as you need theirs. Agree on some type of structure and ground rules such as:

- » How long will the partnership last?
- » What are each person's goals?
- » How will you check-in with each other?
- » What information will you share? (Daily successes and failures, challenges/stressors on the horizon, etc.)

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## CHALLENGE

Connect with a nutritional accountability partner



"People who are more socially connected to family, to friends, to community, are happier, they're physically healthier, and they live longer than people who are less well connected."

—Robert Waldinger—