

# Think Two Steps Ahead

## *Find the BIG Picture*

*-- By Joe Downie, Certified Physical Fitness Instructor*

The house is a mess, the kids need a ride somewhere, you haven't sat down in hours, and you have 10 minutes to eat something.

It's 1 p.m., you've been working non-stop to finish a project because your boss is breathing down your neck, and it's time for a quick, 20-minute lunch before getting back to the grind.

We often face situations similar to these two. Normally, we choose to think one step ahead. "I am tired, hungry and stressed out. I need to eat something quick. I don't care what it is!" Unfortunately, those decisions come back to haunt us in the future, only adding to the stress already in our lives.

After a long day with the kids, doing laundry, reading books, and working on night school homework, you might have to decide between exercise and a couch that is screaming your name. Another difficult decision we face on a regular basis, and once again we often choose to think one step ahead. "I need to rest – I'm so drained!"

The difference between one step ahead and two steps ahead can mean the difference between staying on the fitness roller coaster or achieving your goals. Two steps ahead, we are still tired, stressed and cranky, BUT also determined, committed and able to see the big picture.

What is the BIG PICTURE? It's different for everyone. Having a few thoughts that motivate and inspire you will help fight through step one and see that vision. Here are a few:

- "My self-confidence is going to be so much higher because I've struggled through a difficult situation and found a way to conquer it!"
- "I've had to find a way to deal with things during a very stressful time in my life. I can't wait to see what I can do without all the stress!"
- "I'm going to be able to keep up with my kids and be a part of their lives for a long time!"
- "Why shouldn't my health be the most important thing in my life – it doesn't make me selfish, just smart!"
- "If there is one thing I have complete control over, it's my health. I am going to do whatever it takes to figure out a way because I have pride in who I am!"

"Step Two" reminds us how important consistency is in reaching our goals and helps us envision that beautiful feeling you get when you work hard to achieve something.

Start practicing now. Step One - "Oh, what a great idea. I should try that sometime, but I really have to go clean my oven." Step Two – "What a great idea. I'm going to come up with three things that will motivate and inspire me each time I have to choose between a healthy and unhealthy decision, and I'm going to write them down so I see them on a regular basis! Now, I'm going to go clean my oven!"