

Weight Bias Internalisation

occurs when individuals apply negative weight stereotypes to themselves and self-derogate because of their body weight.

CONTRIBUTING FACTORS



exposure to weight discrimination

family weight history

weight teasing during adolescence

family weight communication

THE MORE FREQUENTLY A PERSON HAS EXPERIENCED WEIGHT STIGMA, THE MORE POSSIBLE IT IS FOR THEM TO HAVE INTERNALISED IT.

MALADAPTIVE RESPONSES

Internalised body weight bias can be an underlying reason for the adoption of maladaptive coping mechanisms, like:

avoiding situations that are perceived as threatening

confirming and accepting the stereotypical beliefs

eating to cope with stress

repetitive dieting

leads to

depression, self-blaming, lower self-esteem, isolation, inability to express feelings, lack of social support

IDENTIFYING MALADAPTIVE RESPONSES TO WEIGHT STIGMA

Understanding the way people deal with weight stigma is crucial and can be the first step to help them develop adaptive coping mechanisms that can have a positive effect on both their mental and physical health.



WHAT A HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONAL CAN DO?

- > Avoid moral discourse when talking about weight.
- > Move from controlled motivation to autonomous motivation.
- > Be aware of and detect the most common maladaptive responses.
- > Help people accept their body's blueprint and confront others without using identity management techniques.