New York Times, "Why It's Hard to Keep the Pounds Off"

Introduction

1. Have you ever been on a diet? Did it work?
2. Do you know anyone whose weight tends to "yo-yo"? Why do you think this is so?
3. Are there any TV programmes in your country that are dedicated to weight loss? What happens in them?

Video

You are going to watch a news story about the TV programme The Biggest Loser. Read the information below, would you watch this programme? Why (not)?

The Biggest Loser is an American competition reality show which features obese or overweight contestants competing to win a cash prize by losing the highest percentage of weight relative to their initial weight.

The contestants are grouped into teams, each working with a specific trainer. The trainers are responsible for designing comprehensive workout and nutrition plans and teaching them to the contestants. However, the contestants are individually responsible for implementing the principles taught.

During an episode, various challenges and temptations are featured. Those who win a particular challenge are given special privileges, such as a weight advantage for the next weigh-in or even full immunity from being voted off the show.

From Wikipedia

Now watch the video and decide which sentence best summarises the news story:

1. The couple are preparing to go on The Biggest Loser because their personal efforts to lose weight have been unsuccessful.
2. The couple have set up their own gym because they do not agree with the short-term solutions which The Biggest Loser provides for weight loss.
3. The couple were on the programme The Biggest Loser but have had trouble staying at the weight they achieved on the show.

Watch the video again and choose the correct verb in (brackets):

"Rebecca Wright, a personal trainer, and her husband, Daniel, first (met/knew) on season eight of "The Biggest Loser." They together (gained/lost) almost 250 pounds. But in the last six years, they've (gained/lost) almost all the weight back. Daniel and I have never (quit/given up) since Loser. We've (experienced/seen) some pretty big downfalls. We've (got/put) weight back on. But we've never (started/stopped) being healthy. Wright (participated/did) in a recent study that helps explain why she and many other contestants have (kept off/regained) most of their weight."

"What happens to most people is that they can't (keep up/do) the fight against the slowing of metabolism and the (increased/decreased) appetite, and so they (fall/slip) backwards. It's like asking
someone to (lose/hold) their breath. You can do it for a little while, but it is very difficult to do it for much longer than a minute or two."

"So now we know why this happens to us and why it’s hard. So now it's like, oh, 'cause someone, someone medically is saying, hey, it is hard. But the other answer is it's saying it's not impossible. There are people from the study who have (maintained/stopped) weight loss. So I think the point from the study is, oh, here's why I've (been/kept) yo-yoing. So now what can I do to kind of (organise/design) my life to not do that as much anymore? And this time doing it reasonably and doing it slower, so hopefully there's not this big swing that we saw after Biggest Loser."

Grammar - Present Perfect Simple and Continuous

Look at the examples of the present perfect from the video:

They together lost almost 250 pounds. But in the last six years, they've gained almost all the weight back.

Daniel and I have never given up since Loser.

We've seen some pretty big downfalls. We've put weight back on. But we've never stopped being healthy.

Wright participated in a recent study that helps explain why she and many other contestants have regained most of their weight.

There are people from the study who have maintained weight loss.

So I think the point from the study is, oh, here's why I've been yo-yoing.

The present perfect is used for actions completed in the past that are still important at the present time:

"We've seen some pretty big downfalls"

The present perfect is also used for actions which started in the past and continue to the present, i.e. they are still true now:

"I've been yo-yoing"

- The present perfect continuous is usually used in this context unless the verb is a state verb. Common state verbs include to be, to have, to know, to believe, to like, to want, to try...
- For state verbs use the present perfect simple: "I have always liked chocolate".
• Use for to express a quantity of time and since for a point in time: "I have been a doctor for ten years/since I graduated in 2008."

Grammar: What’s the Problem?

You are going to receive a problem card from your teacher, e.g.

Last year your doctor told you that you were overweight and that you needed to lose weight.

You are going to write clues telling the class the action you have taken since receiving the information on the card, e.g.

• Since last year, I have been exercising a lot.
• I have joined a gym.
• I have tried to stop eating sugary foods...

The class then have to try and guess what the problem was on the card. Feel free to ask more questions to practice the grammar!

Have you given up eating fatty foods?

• Don’t make your clues too hard or too obvious.
• Remember to practice using the grammar.
• Be creative!
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PROBLEM CARDS CUT-UP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Last month you lost your driving licence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Last week your doctor warned you that you could get diabetes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>After going to the doctor's last month, you were warned that you have high blood pressure.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two weeks ago you had an interview with a multi-national company and you accepted a job abroad which starts next month.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your company told you that you need to take an important exam next week in order to continue doing your job.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You had a problem with your water and had to call a plumber, now you need to make some money to pay the rent due in two weeks.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You have been talked into doing a charity half-marathon next month by some colleagues at work.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You had a big argument with your partner last week and you have been trying to resolve the disagreement by being nice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You had a nasty motorcycle accident in which you broke your leg last week, now you are recovering.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Last week your company employed a new boss and you don’t get on very well with them.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>