Why Words Matter

The words we use shape what we expect treatment to do, and whether we see ourselves as succeeding or failing. Here are common diet-culture phrases, the expectation hiding inside each one, and a chronic-disease way to see it.

Common phrase	Hidden expectation	Weight stewardship perspective
Weight-loss journey	There is a destination waiting at the end.	Obesity is managed over time, not completed.
Weight-loss story	Every story has a final chapter.	There is no ending, only ongoing care.
Goal weight	There is one "right" number to reach.	The goal is better health, not a perfect weight.
Medication is a "tool"	Medication is optional.	Obesity medications are legitimate medical treatments, ranging from optional to medically necessary, depending on the individual.
Lifestyle disease	Obesity is mainly caused by personal choices.	Obesity is a chronic disease influenced by biology, environment, and behaviour.
Beat · Cure · Reverse obesity	Treatment eventually ends.	Health can improve, but long-term management continues.
Stay on track · Fell off the wagon	Falling off means you've failed.	Life happens. Treatment adapts and continues.
Weight maintenance	Treatment happens in phases.	There is no separate maintenance phase, only ongoing treatment.
Successful weight loss	There is a finish line, and failure if you don't reach it.	Stewardship means learning to care for your health over time.

Crows use tools.
Humans use treatments.

Biology requires treatment.
Treatment makes effort more effective.

No graduation for asthma.
Obesity care isn't success or failure. It's stewardship.

For education only. Not a substitute for individualized medical advice.