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Introduction

Is NOW finally the time you are going to say "Enough Is Enough"? I am ready to start on a path to a healthier me, I'm NOT going to make any more excuses and I AM going to make a change by shedding some of those extra pounds...No matter what!!!

If it is then get ready to...

DROP THE FAT AND CHANGE YOUR LIFE!

In this day and age it is easy to be tempted by promises of rapid weight loss that are given by certain weight loss programs, or offered as a result of "magic diet pills", or other "miracle weight loss diets". But honestly, it is a total load of B.S.

There are a few basic truths you should know before you decide on how you will proceed.

First, realize that there is **NO** miracle weight loss treatment.

While it is possible to lose significant weight by adhering to a highly restrictive or other popular fad diet, in reality the biggest problem with that is the harm to your body, in essence they deprive your body of essential nutrients.

These diets can leave you with brittle bones, low immunity and overall health that is worse than in the beginning. More important though, is the problem that if no changes are made to your lifestyle, the moment you stop depriving yourself on the crash diet, you are highly likely to return to your previous eating and exercise habits, which leads to the dreaded Yo-Yo phenomenon.

Studies have shown that the majority of people who are overweight and crash diet, then regain the weight lost almost instantly and are in a much worse state of health than those who remain at their original overweight size.

Which leads to the question....How can I lose weight? and How can I make a difference in my and my family's life?

The plain answer is... there is no miracle, only tried and tested nutritional and exercise advice, and this is what this book is all about.

The goal of this book is to assist the multitude of everyday people who desperately want to make a change in their own and their family's life now, and make that final decision to live a healthier, happier and more fulfilling life.

If you want to make a commitment to lose weight and keep it off, this book will help, assist and provide you with all the ingredients you need to achieve your goals and dreams.

Today is the day to make the decision to LOSE THE FAT AND CHANGE YOUR LIFE...FOREVER

Why Do I Gain Weight?

With the rush of our everyday lives, the advancement of technology, along with the conveniences of fast food, it sure is hard to stay active and eat a healthy, balanced diet. But if you know how to do it, it can be done, even with a busy lifestyle.

In this first section of the book we are going to look at:

- ⤴ All the reasons why we gain weight,
- ⤴ The people we need to talk to when we decide we are ready to lose the weight,
- ⤴ Why keeping yourself on a schedule actually helps you to lose the weight,
- ⤴ Weight loss secrets,
- ⤴ Plus many other subjects that will help you to learn how to finally take the weight off and keep it off once and for all

The Major Causes Of Weight Gain

• **We eat more calories than our body needs in a day, so the excess gets stored as fat.** Our human bodies are designed in such a way that back in times it was harder to get food, our bodies could be prepared by having stored extra calories in times of plenty in the form of fat. Now, with the ease with which we get food, a lot of people tend to overeat, and this is a severe problem that causes a huge number of people to become overweight or obese.

• **Genetics play a factor as well by setting basic parameters on the metabolic efficiency of your body.** People who are overweight many times have very efficient metabolisms, meaning their body needs fewer calories per day than others to operate, and they store the excess calories as fat. Also you have a greater risk of being obese if one of your parents is and an even greater risk if both parents are.

- **Your metabolic rate.** Besides genetics, your metabolic rate depends on how active you are. It is said that every ten years past our mid-twenties we lose about 10% of our metabolic rate. This probably does not have to do completely with age, however, but instead with how active we are. The more active we are, the more muscle mass we can retain, or even build, and in turn the more fit we are because muscle tissue is metabolically active whereas fat is not. On the other hand, if we lead a basically sedentary life, we are much more likely to be able to gain weight as we lose muscle mass.

- **Eating patterns.** People's eating habits make a huge difference in determining their weight. When foods high in fat or sugars are favored, this of course can cause much weight gain. Also, how you serve the food, i.e. do you put the portions on everyone's plate or do you bring it all to the table and serve it the food family style where everyone can take as much as they want? Portion size is one of the main reasons people eat too much. Also, how have you learned to eat? If you are a fast eater, you may not even realize the cues your stomach gives you that it is full.

- **Larger portion sizes.** Over time, larger portions of food have become the norm, especially at many restaurants. Weight has also gone up because of this.

- **Exercise or the lack thereof.** Exercise is essential to a healthy lifestyle and to maintaining a healthy weight. When you exercise, especially when you include strength training in your workouts, you gain muscle mass and raise your metabolism and in turn the muscle helps to burn more fat. In turn, you will weigh less and you will look leaner and firmer because muscle takes up less space than fat. Plus, strength training helps reduce the risk of accidental injury, improves your bone density, helps with digestion and helps in lowering your blood pressure, cholesterol and triglyceride levels.

As you can see, even if your genes make it easier to gain weight than other people, diet and exercise are the two main factors that affect your health and weight. Regular exercise is essential to getting to and maintaining a healthy weight – and so is what you eat, how you eat and how much you eat.

● **Learn portion control.** This is usually a huge factor for most people, and they do not realize how much they are actually eating. A portion of food the size of your fist is generally all that should be eaten at one time, because that is the size of your stomach as well.

Eating several small meals a day, rather than two or three big ones, will help you to be able to eat less and also not be hungry in the early days of forming this habit. Another vitally important thing is to never skip breakfast, as this sets up your metabolism for the day. If you don't eat breakfast, your body will go into defense mode and store more fat, because it will think you are starving.

Try slowing down your eating as well if you have the habit of eating fast. This way you can feel the signals from your stomach when you have had enough, before you stuff yourself full. When you have done that, you know for sure you have eaten too much. In reality, on a scale of 1-10 of fullness, we should feel right in the middle, around a 5, when we are done eating. It takes some practice, but you can learn this trick and you will feel so much better knowing you did not stuff yourself to the maximum capacity.

Another thing to watch of course is your intake of fatty and sugary foods. We all need nutrients, including healthy fats, to keep us balanced, but eating a lot of junk food and sugary drinks will attribute greatly to us gaining more weight. Processed foods don't generally have a lot of nutrients in them, or any at all, and they are high in salt, sugar, and unhealthy fats.

In today's busy lifestyles, we may not realize how often we are eating these foods. If you are one who is always ordering out for work, or going out to dinner as well, this is not going to keep you healthy because you do not have the control as to what is being put in your food (except special ordering at a restaurant) and it is much harder to make sure you are eating the right kinds of things and getting all of your nutrients. Going out to eat is fine every once in a while, but be sensible in what you are choosing, and you don't have to clear your plate of the large servings you will most likely be given.

Should I Go On A Diet?

When most people think of losing weight, they think of going on a diet. Many times, this means finding some fad diet that is probably popular at the current time, and trying to follow all of its crazy rules and recipes, like lemon juice, cayenne pepper and maple syrup. But honestly, who enjoys these things? Do you like cutting out entire food groups such as carbohydrates or drinking crazy concoctions that simply do not taste very good and do not fill you up?

It is doubtful that anyone does. Yes, there are other diet plans out there that have a lot of merit to them, and if a diet is the way you want to go, then researching the different ones out there is very advisable so that you can find a reasonable, sensible diet plan that is not going to harm you or make you go crazy with hunger, causing you to fail in the end anyway.

Choosing the Right Diet Plan

When you are ready to choose your diet or eating plan, there are certain things that you must take into consideration to make sure that you are picking one that will help you to attain the weight loss goals you have and to make sure you are staying healthy. Some diets, as we mentioned, do not contain the right balance of nutrition that your body's needs, and can therefore make you sick, and won't help you to lose weight properly.

Here are some important things to keep in mind when choosing the right diet plan:

- **Realistic Expectations:** You must realize that losing weight is a process and takes time. The length of time to achieve your goals depends on how much you have to lose to get to your goal weight. You do not want to take on a crash diet plan that promises you to lose a lot of weight in a short amount of time, as that will most likely be a very unhealthy and an unsafe option for you. After the initial two or three weeks when weight loss is rapid because of water loss, you should be losing around 1-2 pounds a week to maintain healthy weight loss.

- **The Right Nutrition:** Make sure you look over any diet plans you are considering thoroughly and see what they allow or suggest for you to eat. If it has a balanced-looking diet to it with the right amounts of foods from the main food groups, you are probably looking at a plan that is safe. Any of the fad diets that cut out whole food groups, or make you starve yourself or drink strange concoctions are not safe. You also want the right amount of protein, carbohydrates, fiber and make sure you are getting no more than 30 percent of your calories from fat per day.

- **The Right Fit For You...or Not?** While you are researching different diet plans, make sure it is something that you think would suit you and your lifestyle. If you are a very busy person who is not home a lot, look for a plan that has convenience as well as healthy choices. If you wind up choosing a plan that you don't stick to for whatever reason, you will wind up failing and you will then most likely go back to your old ways, but now feeling worse than when you started out.

- **Calorie Level:** Make sure that the plan you choose has you eating enough calories. You essentially want to cut out enough calories so that you can lose those 1-2 pounds a week. You have to weigh this all against you and your activity levels, as how many calories you need each day will vary from person to person depending on how active they are and their weight. You might want to work with a trained health professional to help you decide which is best for you.

How Diets Work

Losing weight is simple; lose more calories than you can eat.

We eat because it is a necessity. The food we consume will be processed by our body, breaking them down and only keeping what is needed while throwing out the rest. As we do our normal daily tasks our body uses calories and nutrients from our food as fuel for your body to complete all the tasks. However our body only needs a certain amount of calories to do this and this leads to all the unused calories being stored in our body as fat.

The problem with our body is there is no way to tell it to stop storing calories. All excess calories will be converted into fat no matter how much fat you have in your body already. Most of us would always eat more than we need to, taking in all those extra calories to lead us into being overweight.

"So in essence a diet is supposed to help you lose those extra calories"

A diet is an eating plan where you would control the amount of calories eaten. Eating less is not the only way to diet. Since the goal is to eat fewer calories, you can have constant food but it is low on calories. So food like fruit or vegetables are low on calories if you compare same amount with other food like meat.

When you are dieting, you will be eating less than normal. So you would feel hungrier throughout the day and feel more unsatisfied when you finish your meal. It cannot be avoided since you are after all trying to lower your calorie intake. Do not be mistaken with skipping meals or starving yourself. Those will only worsen your diet conditions.

What a good diet would include is help in suppressing the hunger, may it be psychologically or physically. A good diet should always prepare you psychologically first before starting it. This is to ensure that you will be able to keep on the diet plan for the whole duration and reach your goal.

Diet plans will also give you alternatives snacks that you can eat to suppress your cravings.

When you are on a diet, don't think that you will be having water and vegetables to last for the whole day. Diet actually promotes eating a balanced meal. You only want to have a lower calorie count but the rest of the nutrients shouldn't be ignored.

So when you are avoiding certain kind of foods, you would also be avoiding their nutrients. So the diet plan will show you alternative food you can take to replace the missing nutrients. Usually these foods are avoided and not forbidden completely. So you can still eat them in small portion once a while.

A good diet also contributes to your natural metabolism. Each person has his own rate of metabolism. A person with higher rate of metabolism will be able to burn more calories a day. A proper diet plan can help people with low metabolism to fully utilize them. Like having a proper breakfast to jump start the metabolism, lunch to keep the energy going and eating less for dinner since you do not burn as much calories at night. This is to ensure that you have enough calories for the day.

Rule of Thumb

When you want to keep a diet plan, discipline is one of the most important factors. Weight loss through proper diet will take from months to years to achieve your proper weight. Diet that is extreme and promote speedy result can turn into a form of yo-yo dieting. Yo-yo dieting is a term where a person following a diet and manage to lose his weight but eventually will eat and gain more than he lose.

This happens because the diet he followed was too extreme; limiting his food intake and forbidding a lot of food category. So he cannot take all these diet thus giving in and eating more. Or it can be due to the lack of discipline after the targeted weight is achieved. This is usually the cause when you go for extreme hyper caloric diet.

So to avoid that, dieters are advised to go slow in their dieting where it will take months to see big result and where majority will quit halfway. It is not easy to change a habit you built up for years. So that is why you need a lot of discipline, willpower and determination to be able to stay on a diet.

Changing a habit is hard at first. You must stick to your diet plan daily for the first month. This will set the foundation. After 30 days it is said you have formed a new habit.

No one has to diet alone. I truly encourage you to get a friend to help or even diet with you. By having someone beside you for encouragement, you can also slowly see the result in each other. It also helps to have someone to confide in when you think that the diet is not working out for you.

When you pick a diet to follow, you should consider a few diet plans that might be similar to the one that you are already doing. This is to diversify the diet. Following the same diet that you hate over and over again will have a negative effect on your willpower later on. This might even cause you to abandon your diet. So by diversifying your diet, you will find a diet plan that you'll like and won't feel bored watching what you eat. You can cycle diet plan by weekly or monthly, making the diet eating plan fresh.

Just remember if you have broken one of your diet meals, this does not mean your whole day is ruined and you should not continue to follow your diet plan for the rest of the day. Just continue your day as if you never broken your diet in the first place. Over time this is what leads to long term weight loss/management

Industry Secrets

There are several things that the weight loss industry is not telling you – nor do they want you to know. Their business is booming thanks to all the fads, gadgets and pills out there that they are selling to people desperate to lose weight.

Some of These Industry Secrets Include:

- **Most weight loss product ads deceive the buyer.** A majority of the weight loss products you hear about on the radio and see on infomercials don't even do what they claim to. Even so, consumers are lured into buying these products with promises like "Lose the weight and keep it off", "Eat whatever you want" and "no diet or exercise required". Basically, if it sounds too good to be true, it most likely is.
- **Just because they say it's "scientifically proven" or "doctor-endorsed" doesn't mean it works.** These claims are typical as well, but they never tell you anything about where the studies were made or by who so that you can check out the validity for yourself.
And what does it really mean anyway? Often these so-called health professionals have a financial interest in the product, and probably did not review the scientific evidence. If it was reviewed, they may not have even used acceptable review standards. Why would you want to risk your health on such a thing?
- **Just because the government allows a product to be on the market does not mean it is safe for consumers or that it does what it claims.** There is a huge misconception that the government would not allow a product on the market if it could potentially be harmful to you. People tend to think that the government has to pre-approve them first, but many times that is not the case.

• **Products touted as 'natural' or 'herbal' are not guaranteed safe.** People also assume that just because a product is made of natural ingredients means it must be safe as well. But until the FDA receives evidence that a product is harmful, the companies are free to put their products on the market.

Not everything you hear is true, and you shouldn't believe it. There are plenty of products that claim to do things that they just do not, and you should steer away from products making high and lofty claims.

Don't buy into the claims of fad diets, either. Anything that requires sudden and radical changes to your eating patterns is very difficult to sustain over time. They will send you into a quick cycle of weight loss which likely is followed by a rebound period where you gain the weight back and then some in certain instances once you're normal eating resumes. Plus, the next time you try to take the weight off, it makes it all that much more difficult. There are no health benefits to these diets, and if any one of them worked, do you really think there would be the need for new ones?

There is also no quick fix or magic pill that will help you to finally lose weight. If the product is making such claims, you can just about guarantee that they won't work.

What Do I Do Now?

To make any diet a successful one, you need to be committed to it. Only with a right mind-set can you reach success. To prepare yourself, you need to know what stage you are in before you can move on the next stage of your diet. It might not be obvious but it is there.

The First stage is pre-contemplation. You do not see yourself as being over weight. You do not feel like changing yourself. Only strong pressure will lead you to seek help. But then you would resist and just be demoralized as you see your own situation as hopeless.

Second is contemplation. This is where you acknowledge that you have an over weight problem and start to think of a solution. But you are not willing to perform that solution. You would just brood over it, knowing what actions to take to make a change but never ready to do so. You will procrastinate about performing the solution.

Third is preparation. You've finally decided to do something about your overweight problem. You move on from brooding about your problem to realizing your solution. You would also start to think about the future where you are slimmer and feeling much healthier. But at this stage you are not fully resolved yet. You would still have second thoughts about the solution as it requires you to change your lifestyle.

Fourth is action. You start to take action in losing weight. You would start choosing the food you eat and do some form of exercise every day. It is the first step in achieving your targeted goal. You should always set goals when losing weight. If you don't set your goals, then it's very possible that your whole dieting plan might not go the way you imagine it.

“If you fail to plan, you plan to fail”

List the following:

- ✦ **What is your current situation right now?** List all your eating habits, food preferences, everything that could affect your weight loss. Working out, etc
- ✦ **What is the reason you want to lose weight?** This could be an upcoming event, summer, or even for a certain special someone. List the single BIGGEST reason you can think of.
- ✦ **What are the benefits you get from your weight loss?** List AS MANY as you can. It can be health, better energy, admired by partner, etc. This should be your main motivator.
- ✦ **Your Goal. “I want to lose XX lbs of weight in XX days”** - Write this in bold and make it really sink in. I would personally say that setting a goal of more than 10lbs per 2 weeks is not realistic, especially if this is your first attempt at a goal like this. Be realistic. You must write “I want” not “I wish”

Write everything down and look at that paper every day. Put it in a place where you can see it. Once you see it every day, you will constantly be reminded of WHY you do this and what the benefits are.

BE PERSISTENT ONCE YOU TAKE ACTION BECAUSE IT’S NOT GOING TO BE EASY

STEPPING OUT OF YOUR COMFORT ZONE.

If you see yourself making excuses rather than STARTING a diet that is effective, you should think about why you don't really want to lose weight. You must be able to step out of your comfort zone and as Nike's famous slogan goes, "**JUST DO IT!**"

The final step would be maintenance. You need to keep the momentum going that you have in the action stage. If at anytime you lose your commitment or support, then you would fall back to any of the previous stages.

So the final stage is the most important stage in your diet plan as you need to keep your commitment going for a long period of time. There are several methods you can use to keep being committed. First is to make a list about the reason why are you doing this in the first place. Look at the list daily to remind you of your goals. Do not have negative thoughts in your mind. Words like "never" or "depriving" should not be in your vocabulary. Rather than saying "never", you are just having desserts "occasionally and in moderation". And so the word "deprived" can be replaced with the word "choosing" as you choose to skip chocolate cakes.

Visualize in your mind your future slim self doing all the things that you always wanted to do. This visualization will strengthen your motivation to commit to this plan and be the desire to succeed. Do this visualization daily, every time you wake up and anytime of the day you feel your commitment is weakening.

Who to Approach When You Want to Lose Weight

Now that you've decided you want to lose weight, you should include some other people in your weight loss journey. These people can help you with many aspects, including choosing your diet plan, setting your goals and encouraging you along the way.

- **A Therapist:** Some people know they overeat, and how unhealthy it is for them as well, yet can't seem to stop their overeating no matter how hard they try. Many of these people eat for emotional reasons like loneliness or unhappiness and will try to hide their hurt and other feelings with food.

People that do this should seek the council of a therapist or other professionals trained in this specific matter so they can get the proper support. In some severe cases, it will take checking themselves into a specialized clinic designed for this purpose so that their nutrition and exercise can be closely monitored.

- **A Dietician:** A dietician will have a wide range of knowledge that can help you to understand your body and to help prepare a food plan that will fit your particular needs, because in most states and countries it is required to get a medical license before they can become a dietician.

Their goal is to help you eat healthier, and in turn you can lose weight. Because of this, dieticians are set apart from anyone who promotes a fad diet because they are not necessarily nutritionally sound for you. A dietician will also help you to figure out how many calories you need to consume in a day and to balance your intake of all the various food groups that you should be eating from.

- **A Physical Trainer:** The majority of people have never learned to exercise properly. A physical trainer will ensure that you do, and will push you to attain your goals, and can also help in the process of setting your goals. They will oversee your exercise routine in a gym, giving you both cardio and strength based exercises to follow.

The main goal of a personal trainer is to see to it that you get fit, and they also educate you on how to do that properly for yourself. Each person is different in their needs, and a personal trainer can adjust your training program to fit you just right. Over the course of the weight loss process, both the physical trainer and the dietician may give you advice in changing up your diet and your workout routine as you begin to gain more muscle tone to help support your new muscles.

- **Friends and Family:** When starting your weight loss journey, you may want to let friends and family know what you are doing so that they can be supportive of you. It always helps to have people you know and trust that stand by your side in any endeavor.

You can even have a friend, or your spouse, keep you accountable to them and stop you from sneaking any extra snacks or sweets, or to motivate you to keep on your exercise regimen. You will likely be more successful in the end if you have someone alongside you (even over the phone if they are long distance) who will help encourage you when you are reaching your goals and to help push you when you start to struggle. Then, when you do reach your final goal (or even mini goals throughout) you can celebrate your achievements with the ones you love.

Persisting Through Failure

If you want to commit to losing weight, then you need to be able to persist through failure. Everyone who has accomplished something of note has struggled with failure at one or more points in their ascent. The difference is they didn't quit when it got tough, persisted through it and learned a lesson.

“When the going gets tough, the tough get going”

Those are the two keys in dealing with failure. You must persist and learn.

If you slip on your diet, or miss a day of exercise, don't fret about it. Don't let it derail you. Push it from your mind. Focus on all your positive days, not the one slip up. Remember it is all about living a healthy lifestyle, the more good days add up and before you know it bad days become few and far between. But the trick is to keep going and push through the bad days. Treat it as a cheat day and move on. This is how you persist, failing for a day is OK, just don't let that day stretch into a week and then a month.

You have to accept failures as natural and develop a tough mental state to deal with them.

The second step is to learn from your mistakes. Quite often learning from your mistakes will be more efficient than learning from your successes. When you fail, treat it as a lesson learned. It is just like in business, when you fail at something, you learn the things that don't work. This is the same with weight loss. If you have slipped off your new diet every time you drink, then maybe you avoid drinking. If you realize that every Friday you miss out on exercise because of a late work meeting then reschedule your workout.

“I have not failed. I've just found 10,000 ways that won't work.”

—Thomas A Edison

Failure is a natural part of life, along with death and taxes. You can't avoid it, and even if you could you wouldn't want to. Your life's lessons are learned through your failures along with your successes. Don't fear failure, persist through and learn from it.

Buddy System

One of the best things you can do when you are trying to lose weight is to add some accountability to your routine. How do you do that?

The buddy system.

Having a buddy to try and lose weight with is a great motivator. You will feel more accountable to reach your weight loss goals when you are actually sharing them with someone. They can also be helpful because the person is someone that can relate to you about struggling to lose weight. You can share your triumphs in joy, and your setbacks in support.

If you are working out regularly a buddy is invaluable. They can change a boring walk or jog into an exercise slash therapy session. A hike in the wilderness is always more fun with a friend along! If you are into weight lifting it is also nice to have a buddy. You guys can challenge each other while at the same time providing encouragement and practical help like spots on heavy lifts.

It is sad to say but in this day and age, you can probably find yourself a weight loss buddy in your group of friends. If you can't, don't panic you can always do it virtually online as well. You could find a friend on Facebook that is losing weight and work with them. Having Facebook chats and sharing progress pictures on Facebook.

There are also many web forums and sites dedicated to linking weight loss partners up virtually.

The bottom line is this - if you want to lose weight working with a friend can provide motivation, support as well as the always important accountability. Find your weight loss buddy now!

Why Maintaining a Daily Schedule is Critical

The next step in planning your weight loss goals is to set up a daily schedule for yourself. You need to decide when the best time for you to exercise is. For instance, if you are not a morning person, getting up two hours earlier than you are used to is probably not a good plan because you are likely to miss many mornings.

At the same time, if your job causes you to work late into the evenings frequently, scheduling your workouts for after work is not a wise idea either. You can also schedule out your meals, including the times you eat each day, and schedule out what your meals will be. The best thing to do is to schedule them out for a week at a time, and make a list and stick to it, so when you go shopping you will not be as tempted to impulse buy or stray off of your diet.

- **Keeping Yourself in Check:** If you have a specific schedule to follow, you are more likely to stick to your goals by writing everything down in a journal or other recording device like a smartphone. But, if you do miss a scheduled workout, or have an extra snack, you can keep note of it and vow to do better the next time.
- **Knowing What You Are Doing Each Day:** Having what time you are supposed to be doing your workouts or eating your meals written down can keep you in the know ahead of time, and in this way you can schedule things around your workout times, rather than scheduling over them and just missing workouts altogether. This can be easy to do, and if you start doing this, it will eventually snowball into increased times where you are missing your workouts, until you are thrown off track completely.
- **Lose More Weight:** By keeping yourself on a schedule, you will tend to lose more weight in the end because you will be likely to not miss any workouts (or very, very few in the long run). If you keep going back and forth and missing your workouts, or skipping a meal and confusing your body's metabolism, you will have a much harder time maintaining a steady rate of weight loss.

Chapter 3

Healthy Nutrition And Its Benefits

You would have heard lots of people saying that healthy nutrition is important for a healthy body but you need to know what is the actual meaning of healthy nutrition and why it is so important. Let's define nutrition.

"Nutrition is the process of giving your body all the important and necessary elements which can help it to grow in a proper and balanced way."

This is the simplest definition of nutrition which tells you that you need to eat proper food with good basic nutrients. Healthy nutrition can make your body strong and healthy as well as help it to grow and repair itself, while an unhealthy nutrition plan can make your body weaker and can make you ill and more susceptible to disease.

Calories In - Calories Out

Everyone who wants to lose weight has probably tried multiple diets, supplements and/or plans. There are hundreds of weight loss methods available to buy.

Here is the hard truth - there are no magical pills, diets or exercise gadgets that will make weight instantly disappear. It comes down to eating right, staying healthy and burning more calories than you take in.

That is where the saying "calories in - calories out" comes from. You want to make sure you burn more calories (out) than you consume (in).

Clearly, this is a simplistic view and a proper diet consists of taking more than calories into consideration. We will look at that in other chapters, but right now we want to talk about creating a calorie deficit.

In order to track this you need some basic information. First off you need to figure out how many calories you burn per day naturally. This comes down to factors such as age and weight.

Calculating the Number of Calories You Burn Daily

BMR calculation for men (kg) $BMR = 66.5 + (13.75 \times \text{weight in kg}) + (5.003 \times \text{height in cm}) - (6.755 \times \text{age in years})$

BMR calculation for men (pounds) $BMR = 66 + (6.23 \times \text{weight in pounds}) + (12.7 \times \text{height in inches}) - (6.76 \times \text{age in years})$

BMR calculation for women (kg) $BMR = 655.1 + (9.563 \times \text{weight in kg}) + (1.850 \times \text{height in cm}) - (4.676 \times \text{age in years})$

BMR calculation for women (pounds) $BMR = 655 + (4.35 \times \text{weight in pounds}) + (4.7 \times \text{height in inches}) - (4.7 \times \text{age in years})$

This formula will give you the basic calories you burn daily, just by breathing, heart pumping etc. These are how many calories you burn if you didn't move all day (**Basal Metabolic Rate**).

Once you have that number, you need to start tracking the calories you burn and the calories you consume. This can be tricky because it is a lot of information to keep track of.

There are websites that can help though:

<http://caloriecount.about.com/>

This is one of the more popular calorie counters out there since it is free. It will help you track what you eat, and what you expend.

You just have to enter the foods and activity you had for the day. It will even allow you to input your basal metabolic rate.

It is ideal if you can keep a daily caloric deficit, but that isn't always possible. Sometimes we slip and sometimes we indulge. If you can get a weekly caloric deficit that will still have you losing weight.

This isn't about starving yourself, or exercising until you are dead. It is all about being aware what you put in your body, and what you exert. Weight loss can be a struggle, but if you can manage your calories in and calories out - you can overcome!

Clean Eating

We have talked about calories in calories out - the basic weight loss guideline. It is a basic tip because you still want to make sure you are getting those calories from good sources. Keeping your calories down by eating two corn-dogs a day probably isn't your best choice.

Eating clean is a term that doesn't have an official term but in general it means:

"Eating healthy whole foods while avoiding processed foods and refined sugars".

That is a general goal to strive for, it isn't always possible to eat completely "clean" but if you are getting the majority of your calories from clean sources then you are doing great. When you eat clean you avoid processed foods so automatically things like fast food and junk food are eliminated from your diet. If you do eat some processed food don't fret over it, the idea is to eat leanly as much as possible.

Here are some general clean eating tips:

- **Learn to read labels!** Read the nutritional information and ingredients of everything you buy.
- **Choose whole grains when possible.** Whole wheat doesn't necessarily mean whole grain either! Look for bread, pasta and etc that are made with 100% whole grains.

- **Eat lots of fruits and vegetables.** They are great whole sources of clean calories.
- **Prepare more of your own meals,** don't eat out as much or buy microwaveable type meals. These meals even when "healthy", can be loaded with things like sodium.
- **Choose lean meats when cooking.** Eating meat is fine and the protein will help build muscle and make you feel full. Chicken and fish are great meat choices.
- **Avoid processed meats like bologna or hot dogs.**
- **Replace junk food with unsalted or lightly salted whole nuts.**
- **Check out the internet for great clean recipes. Keep a list!**
- **Don't fret over falling off the wagon,** even grant yourself a cheat day now and then!
- **Eating clean while out can be tough but more restaurants are offering clean menu items.** A salad can be a good choice, but if you are really hungry you might need to add some protein!
- **Start as soon as possible!**

Eating clean is a great way to make sure you not only lose weight but you are overall healthy. It isn't necessarily an easy transition and you don't have to try and turn on a switch and do it overnight. If you are committed to losing weight and being healthy, you should choose to clean up your diet.

Reducing Your Portions!

Anyone who is trying to lose weight needs to consider their portion control. Just talk to anyone who has actually lost weight (and sustained it). They will almost assuredly bring up portion control as one of the keys for their success.

What is Portion Control?

Portion control is understanding how much a serving size is and how many calories a serving contains.

One of the biggest problems overweight people face is realizing what constitutes a proper portion of food. When you eat a meal you need to realize what constitutes a serving size of your foods. While not scientific, the following list gives you an idea of some recommended portion sizes. If you struggle with weight loss, these portions might seem smaller than you thought:

- Vegetables or fruit is about the size of your fist.
- Pasta is about the size of one scoop of ice cream.
- Meat, fish, or poultry is the size of a deck of cards or the size of your palm (minus the fingers).
- Snacks such as pretzels and nuts are about the size of a cupped handful.
- Potato is the size of a computer mouse.
- Steamed rice is the size of a cupcake wrapper.
- Cheese is the size of a pair of dice or the size of your whole thumb (from the tip to the base).

I know personally that the cheese serving size surprised me when I first saw it. You can find portion information online. You can find much more specific portion control guides online as well. Some sites will break it down by food weight, so you may need to weight your food for exact portions. The above list though is good enough to give you a rough idea.

When you eat a meal, control your portions! Learning how much food you actually need is one of the biggest steps you will take on your weight loss journey.

Spreading out meals into smaller portions as opposed to eating enormous meals at any one time is a major factor in losing weight. It's been proven that rationing your meals not only reduces your caloric intake throughout the day but it also helps to steady your metabolism. If you're in the habit of eating 2-3 massive meals daily, consider eating 6-7 smaller meals, which are spread out throughout your day.

One thing people enjoy doing is eating right from the packet as opposed to taking out what they need and putting the packet away. Such an example is eating out of a mega-sized packet of potato chips. Not only do you have no idea how much you are consuming, but typically you're satisfying a craving by eating more than you really need until you are completely satisfied when instead you could pour a small portion into a bowl and add a piece of fruit to get the amount of food you actually need.

Super-sized packets are more commonplace now than before. More items are sold in bulk and more foods are served at restaurants with the option to supersize for a few extra cents. Increased portions are a factor in the rising statistics for obesity. There is always a cause but people put enjoyment ahead of anything else which naturally leads to a health risk. This is why rationing meals are a handy way to take control of your bad habits.

It takes discipline to make adjustments and there's really no reason why people must feel they should eat until they're full. As always, tiny servings are fine but if you are still "peckish", add a tiny bit more as opposed to loading your plate and trying to finish it all. Rather than sit around feeling stuffed and undoing your belt buckle, leaving some room so that you can have another small meal a few hours later while still feeling good enough to mix in a little bit of exercise is a good balance which leads to improved results.

Doing this helps control the weight and slowly it begins to come down which is a marvelous feeling when you experience it, motivating you to work a little harder as you become confident in your ability to take control of your own body as opposed to allowing your cravings to take control for you.

Water Is Your Best Friend

It's been suggested by research that you require at least 8 glasses of water daily, but it can depend on your weight regarding how much you actually require. You would need to divide your weight by 2 so as an example, a man weighing 180lbs would need 60 ounces of water in a day.

So why do experts suggest that we drink lots of water and why is it considered so essential to a healthy life?

Well first off it helps to avoid dehydration and it keeps the kidneys functioning well by assisting in the elimination of waste products plus it helps to increase your metabolism, which helps you to lose weight. But aside from listening to what experts tell you, you should **make it a priority to listen to your body first and foremost**. When you are thirsty, then naturally you will drink water to replenish yourself.

Depending on the kind of work that you do, you should try to get into the habit of drinking water regularly or even better, keeping a water bottle handy, especially on really hot days since the heat causes you to sweat and your body loses water and thus you will need to replenish yourself.

This is why water is so important in our lives. Not only is it zero calories, it is the best source for quenching your thirst AND the healthiest. You may consider adding water to all of your meals over time and doing away with fruit drinks and sodas ultimately as it will help reduce your caloric intake and you'll also feel much better without the added sugar that comes with the other drinks.

The Importance Of Exercise

In this chapter, I will tell you about different types of exercises and their effects on different aspects of your life and health.

- v Exercise to improve bone and muscle strength
- v Flexibility increasing exercises
- v Cardio-vascular exercise
- v Aerobics

Exercising

Exercising and dieting are two things that go hand in hand. If you just diet without exercising, you may not see any result at all because you are not losing calories fast enough in your diet. Also if you do manage to lose weight without dieting, you would look thin and frail as you lose your fat. So it is better to exercise to keep your body fit while you diet. There are also other reasons to exercise.

"A recent survey showed that seven out of ten adults do not exercise regularly and close to four out of ten are not physically active. If you do not exercise, then you will risk getting stroke, diabetes and heart disease. This has lead to death for about 300 000 people."

Before you start exercising, you should consult a physician. This is to know your current body condition and see if you would risk injuries if you perform tiring exercise activities. When you first start out exercising, do it slowly. First start off with only 10 minutes which then is increase to 20 minutes then to 30 minutes and so on and so forth over the period of months. This will help avoid your body to feel very sore after each work out and decrease any injury risk.

You should at least do 30 minutes or more of moderate cardiovascular activities each day. You do not have to do all 30 minutes together; it can be even short bouts of intermittent activities. Then twice a week, do exercise that would train your muscles. You can incorporate this physical exercise into your daily life. For example, take the stairs to the office instead of the elevator; go for a jog during your lunch time or park further away from your work place.

If you feel this is a too much of a chore, why not try to make your leisure time more active. Instead of sitting at home, ask your family out for a bicycle ride, join a rock-climbing club or just stroll the park every evening.

Pick out exercising activities that you would enjoy to do, find it satisfying and gives you a feeling of accomplishment. A successful run will motivate you more to be physically active. Make it easy for you to be active by picking exercise that is easier accessible so you will not be unmotivated every time you want to perform your exercise. Lastly, pick out exercise that is compatible with your body and current age.

The 3 Main Types Of Exercise

First of all, you need to know that there are three kinds of exercise plans, which are available and all of them have different advantages for your physical health.

Exercise To Improve Bone and Muscle Strength

These exercises are also called strength and resistance training. Most of the people take body-building as strength and resistance increasing exercise but you need to know that body building is another category of exercise in which the primary goal of the person is to enhance muscle growth.

You can add some weight lifting and body building in your fat burning and weight control plan but you should do it to an extent where your body can bear it without any problem. If you over tried this exercise then, your whole body can be a mess.

I have seen people joining gyms and doing hard exercise just by watching other people doing it. This is not the way to go instead consult your trainer personally and ask him about appropriate exercises which can fit in your needs. If your weight is under control and you need just light exercise to keep your healthy system going then, you do not need to lift heavy weights.

Flexibility Increasing Exercises

Second type of exercise plan can be to increase your flexibility and in more common terms you can say that if you used to have pain in your arms, legs, lower back, neck and other similar areas of your body then, you need to make your body more flexible. Flexibility will increase resistance and you will be able to cope with more difficult positions and postures easily. You have to go through different postures in daily life for example if you work in an office then, you can be given an uncomfortable chair at times or you may be given some work in which you have to concentrate hard on computer screen and you cannot rest your back with chair. In these situations, if you do not have any flexibility in your body then, it will create problems but regular flexibility exercises, which will not take more than 10-15 minutes of your time, will increase this flexibility and will make you feel better and active.

Cardiovascular Exercise

Cardio means heart and vascular means the vessels of blood and this whole phrase means that these exercises improve the functionality of your lungs and make the use of oxygen more effective and rectify any heart problems which you can have. These exercises are little time consuming and should be properly learned from your doctor or trainer. Most of the times, people who already have got some heart problem perform these kinds of exercises to avoid any future problems.

Finding Exercises To Be Done At Home

Rising gym membership prices and binding contracts have resulted in a tend to opt for home fitness programs.

Finding exercises to be done at home is not a complex job, rather a much more convenient option. There are many great cardio exercises which can be done without much cost to the users. The main money spent is in a good pair of walking, jogging or aerobic shoe, depending on the kind of activity desired. Besides, a jumping rope is also a great addition for skipping at home because it provides users added alternatives of aerobic workouts that can include rapid work interval training. One can do it while watching TV or may be by playing music alongside. One should jump for a duration of thirty seconds to a minute as fast as possible and rest in between for sometime before starting again. You can always perform it during ad commercials and watch the rest of your show calming your body. Today, video and DVD market is flooded with exercise, aerobics and yoga CDs and DVDs which can be purchased for a favorable fitness exercise regime to start at home.

This gives more alternatives to people in case jogging or walking becomes mundane or if the weather is inclement. Running and walking can actually become all the more interesting if done with a partner.

Varying the ground of the running or walking area can also add change to the daily workout process. Remember, it is very essential that you enjoy what you do to keep yourself fit if you actually want to feel the change in your health and body. Besides, age does matter while selecting the kind of workout that you do. An adult person may be capable of losing weight using particular equipment and build muscles as well, but an elder may not just get the same results from the same regimen. It is simply because of the quality of performance and not the utilization the expensive and similar machines. It's advisable that you always choose a kind of fitness regimen that goes well with your body, age and needs keeping the various health constraints that age brings along.

Exercises that you can perform at home

Leaving you with no excuses of not finding the right type of exercises that you can do at home, here is a list of the appropriate home fitness based program exercises for you-

- These exercises can be performed by using easy drills at home and employing minimal equipment which you can get from around your house.
- For upper body you can do chair dips, lateral raises, push-ups, chin ups and bent over row. For core exercises you can do dead lift, sit ups and side bridge.
- For lower body you can opt for step ups, wall squat, bucket squats and lunges.

Prior to starting these exercises you must warm up yourself for minimum of five minutes by jogging or brisk walk around the block or by skipping on the spot. You must perform multiple sets of the exercises mentioned above depending upon your endurance level and requirement. Also, taking intervals in between is equally essential. You can combine two exercises that use diverse muscle groups alternating between two things that provide each muscle group some rest while you perform another.

To get the best results, perform these workouts at least three times a week, with no less than a day between exercises for sufficient recovery. You must always strive to increase the intensity or load and to increase your fitness growth. Once your fitness improves, you can undergo this routine without bothering much and start with a more superior program. Use your creativity and find more things to use for working out at home.

Using buckets, filled with the amount of water you want can be employed for squats and step-ups.

Filling up milk bottles with 2 liters of water makes it equivalent to a 2 kg weight to be used for overhead triceps extension, bicep curls and bent over rows.

Shopping bags and a backpack filled with items can be used for lunges, step-ups and squats. Utilizing bricks by breaking them in half in case of lower weight is appropriate for pushups, bench press, lateral raises and front raise.

Then comes the age old forms of exercises that come under the practice of yoga asana. A lot of people not just perform these exercises for the sole aim of relieving mental stress but to get and stay fit as well. This is the most natural way of dealing with your body and respecting it as well.

Living The Healthy Lifestyle

Once you have reached your target weight, you'll want to know how to maintain it so you don't put all that hard work to waste! Educating yourself ahead of time will help you when you are at the point where you have attained your weight loss goal. You wouldn't want to ruin the celebration you will want to have, and you of course want to continue on with your newfound healthy lifestyle.

- **Don't skip any meals!** Remember, your body's metabolism will take this as a signal that your body is starving and will begin to store fat for reserves. Make sure you keep up with eating your meals, scheduled out as you have been. Besides, if you skip a meal at one point in the day, it could mean you overeat later on when you are just so hungry.
- **Keep eating a variety of foods.** This will help you to keep getting all the nutrients and vitamins your body needs to stay working properly. It will keep you feeling healthy, energized and protect your body by keeping it healthy. You can include choices from whole grains, fruits, vegetables and lean proteins.
- **Keep up the exercising!** Don't get lazy and slack off on your exercise routine now. You have gained the knowledge of what kind of a workout is right for you, and probably how to change it up every once in a while as well if you had instruction from a personal trainer.

Changing up your routine is a great idea to keep you from getting bored, and to keep your body guessing. As long as you are always combining your cardio and strength training, you will continue to stay fit and feel strong and healthy, all the while protecting yourself further from illnesses coupled with your healthy diet.

- **Adjust your daily caloric intake.** Many people wonder if they should increase their daily caloric intake right away. It is probably advisable to do so, but do so gradually. Try starting with just 250 calories more a day. After a week, weigh yourself. You'll probably still have lost some more weight. If this is the case, add another 250 calories, then weigh yourself a week after that. Repeat these steps until you see that your weight has remained the same when you weigh yourself for the week. If you gained a bit, take away some calories, 100 at a time, until your weight evens out and remains the same from week to week.
- **Keep drinking that water!** Don't forget to have at least eight glasses of water a day to keep your body working well. Water aides in digestion, increases your energy and helps rid your body of toxins naturally. Plus, you will stay hydrated and healthy.
- **Keep eating frequently.** Eating five to six small meals a day as you have probably already learned to do is a good thing to continue doing, as this keeps your metabolism up, and keeps you feeling satisfied. It is important to continue this as well because you don't want to fall into the trap of increasing your portion sizes again if this was a problem before. You will throw yourself all the way back to square one eventually. In the very least, you will gain a bunch of the weight back you worked so hard to shed.
- **Don't let the junk food back in.** Now that you've developed your healthy habits, why ruin it by going back to your old ways and eating junk food? You have discovered plenty of delicious tastes to satisfy all your cravings with healthy foods. Keep your intake of fruits and vegetables up to several servings a day, preferably 6-8.
- **Take your daily vitamins.** Remember to keep taking your daily quality vitamins as well. Doing this will help assure that you acquire all the vitamins you need each day and it will help you to maintain your healthy weight as well.

The Secrets of Staying Healthy

Everybody wants to live long and healthy lives; nobody wants to count on getting any severe diseases. Although we can't predict or prevent every situation, there are ways to help protect ourselves that can make our lives more full and healthy overall.

- **Prevention and early detection is the first thing you should consider.** Most people dread going for a yearly physical, or even the dentist cleaning every six months, but having good doctors and keeping these appointments in your life will help you to stay healthy because your doctor can detect things that you can't on your own.

Knowing your family history is also important because if there is any history of heart disease or cancers in your family your doctor can keep any eye out for symptoms and do testing on you regularly.

- **Love the people you are with.** Make sure and spend time with the ones who surround you daily such as your spouse, children, other family members, friends and coworkers. Enjoy the time you spend with other people, plus maintain healthy friendships. These relationships are needed to make you feel fulfilled in life.

- **Get eight hours of sleep.** Although many people find this one difficult to do because of how busy we can get in our lives, it really is very important to leading a happy and healthy life.

- **Find something you are good at.** All of us have times where we need to be doing something we really enjoy, and most of these are things that we excel at. This is usually something that makes us feel good inside as well, and can even be soothing and stress relieving.

- **Manage your stress – don't ignore it!** Everyone has stressors of some kind, and it is important that we handle our stress so that it does not get out of hand and consume us.

When you are riddled with worry and stress it can literally make you sick in many different ways. Daily walks can help clear your head, and make sure that you are not over-filling your agenda for each day or letting other's schedules dictate your day.

- **Find balance in your life.** Don't try to take on too many projects at work or let work consume you. Find a balance so you are still able to enjoy all the other things around you like your hobbies and your friends and family.

Although financial times can be tough, it is still so very important to find time to spend at least with your family, the ones you are working so hard to keep safe and provided for.

The Advantages of Staying Healthy

The benefits of staying healthy are boundless. It doesn't just mean that you are happy with the way you look and can fit into that new outfit. Being healthy has to do with your whole physical, mental and social well-being.

- **Your Physical Health:** Keeping yourself physically healthy can help you all around. Not only can it help you to take part in daily activities such as being able to walk, move and bend, but it allows you to be physically able to take care of your loved ones around you who depend on you.

It can be financially beneficial if you avoid diseases that were preventable and that would be very costly.

- **Your Mental Health:** If you do not have a good mental health, your physical health will also be affected. Many people don't realize just how important their mental health is to their overall well-being. If you allow yourself to be over-stressed or for that stress to rule your life, it can make you sick.

Stress can raise your blood pressure, which increases your risk of a heart attack or stroke. You need to deal with your stress in positive ways like through exercise, meditation or therapy. Don't deal with stress by things that can damage your overall health like smoking, drinking or eating unhealthy foods.

- **Disease Prevention:** Making sure you are eating a healthy diet is vital to your overall health and staying healthy. The foods you choose to eat can have a direct impact on your health.

Phytochemicals are important for your health and could prevent things like heart disease, specific types of cancer, diabetes and high blood pressure. They are found only found in certain foods like berries, spinach, olives and kale. Eat a low-fat diet full of lots of fruits and vegetables plus whole grains to help protect your cardiovascular health.

- **Long Life:** Striving to live a healthy lifestyle can be a big factor of you being able to live a long and healthy life. Although you can't prevent all health problems and some of them are out of your control, a lot of the most significant ones you can help to avoid by living healthy.

With the leading causes of death being chronic diseases such as diabetes, heart disease, stroke and cancer, having lifestyle choices that include controlling the foods you eat, keeping your weight at a healthy level, how much you exercise and how you deal with the stressors in your life can have a huge impact on keeping these diseases at bay.

Living a healthy lifestyle can also improve your mood and give you greater self-esteem and mental focus. You will be stronger, have a higher stamina and you will be able to get a better night's sleep. Other benefits of a healthy lifestyle include improved digestion and a lower blood pressure. Keeping yourself healthy can also help ease or eliminate back problems and back pain plus improve your posture, enhance coordination and balance, and lower your resting heart rate.

Conclusion

Ready...Set...Go!

Now that we've learnt how to change your lifestyle and lose weight now, everybody knows what to do. They read the material, they realize they need to take action and put in the effort but the truth of the matter is, people seldom do. Unless you discipline yourself to resist the temptation of eating unhealthy foods and motivate yourself to eat healthy foods, you will find it difficult to get on the road to a healthy life.

No amount of reading or saying "*Yes, I can do it*" will help you unless you take that first step. It takes a strong commitment to get on track and it takes an equally strong commitment to keep at it. Most people give up after a short time because they're not satisfied with their results. If you can commit and keep yourself motivated and continue to aspire to eat well and train well, you will achieve your goal. No matter what the goal is, be it to lose weight or increase your endurance or become a better athlete in a specific sport, you just need to go out there and make the effort and do the work required.

Over the course of time, not only will you mentally adjust to your training regiment but you will develop a great amount of discipline and self-confidence and you will naturally maintain a positive attitude, which means easily being able to resist any kind of temptation. Everybody needs to start from somewhere. Setting your goals little by little as opposed to attempting to go all-out and trying to sweat out 10 pounds on the treadmill in the course of a week will do more harm than good. Starting the process slowly is key which means going for a brisk walk to help acclimate your body to the more rigorous runs you plan to do in the later weeks.

One mistake people make when starting out is going all out which leads to injury and soon they decide that training is just too painful and taxing. As mentioned before, set a schedule and if necessary, consult with a personal trainer about what might be good for you if you feel uncomfortable doing this alone.

Although you do not need to make the process so difficult. If your desire is to lose weight, all you really require is a small daily window allotted to your exercise and keeping an eye on what you put in your body.

Simply be confident and work towards your goals. Be positive and you will get the results you want.

As we once again enter Spring, maybe now is a good time to begin developing that plan and taking a course of action so you can get on the road to the super healthy lifestyle you deserve?