

TECHNICALLY FIT



**SEDENTARY TO
STRONG**

BY SEAN COLINS

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Sedentary to Strong

Sean Colins



CREATIVE TECHNOLOGY MANAGEMENT



FOREWORD:

Do you spend most of your day stuck in a sedentary job, surrounded by donuts and other temptations? If so, you're not alone. Millions of people around the world struggle with the negative effects of a sedentary lifestyle, but the good news is that you have the power to take control of your health and well-being.

In *Technically Fit*, you'll discover a proven approach to move beyond your sedentary lifestyle and unlock the potential of your body and mind. Drawing on personal experience and scientific research, this book will show you how to make lasting changes that improve your physical, mental, and emotional health. You'll learn how to resist the temptation of sugary, starchy foods, optimize your exercise routine, and

develop healthy sleep habits that leave you feeling rested and recharged.

Technically Fit isn't just about making drastic lifestyle changes. It's about finding fun and practical ways to integrate healthy habits into your daily routine. Whether you're a tech professional, a student, or anyone looking to improve your well-being, this book offers a step-by-step approach to help you reach your goals.

I know it's hard to get through a whole book, but I've put some incredibly important information into the chapter on Sleep at the end of the book. Even if you have to skip around, and read some but not all of this book, don't miss the Sleep chapter. It's incredibly important to your ability to get through any weight loss program, especially this one.

So, if you're ready to leave the sedentary life behind and embrace a brighter, healthier future, Technically Fit is the book for you. Get ready to feel great, look great, and tackle any challenge that comes your way!

<https://www.technically-fit.com>



INTRODUCTION

Technically Fit is about moving on from a sedentary lifestyle in a server room, or other dark corner of the office, into a bright future full of confidence strength and flexibility. You'll end up looking great, and feeling amazing, with energy to take on any challenge that you care to address. Many of us working high pressure jobs or running our own businesses fall into the stereotype of leading sedentary lives and indulging in sugary, starchy comfort and convenience foods. It's a problem that affects not just our physical health, but also our mental and emotional well being. Personal experience has taught me that these issues can have serious consequences. I have lost peers to health complications related to poor lifestyle choices and diet. I don't want to lose you too, so I wrote this book hoping you would find it, hoping you would read it and take it to heart, and hoping it will be the match strike that ignites a fire within you that will keep you going for the rest of your amazing life.

The good news is that many of the root causes of these health issues are within your control. For example, it's easy to resist the temptation of a plate of donuts once on a dare, but it's much harder to resist the constant temptation of a box of donuts sitting on the kitchen counter day after day, or worse yet on the workbench in your office. People believe they are being generous when they provide a dozen donuts to start a day of work. In truth, nobody benefits from that temptation. Throughout the rest of this book I'll present the scientific case for why that is. Our behavior is influenced by many factors, including our body chemistry, the timing of our meals and exercise, and our sleep habits. Even life stages can impact things like muscle recovery, bone health, hormone levels, and sleep patterns.

It's not fair to expect ourselves to solve these problems on our own, especially when we are bombarded with conflicting advice from all directions. This book is here to help you build a lifestyle. You will work to improve your health, taking into account your unique motivations, preferences, and limitations. You don't have to change who you are or try to force yourself to do things you don't enjoy. Instead this book will show you how to take action on systematically proven ways to make positive changes that last.

Frustration and Confusion:

It can be frustrating when different causes can produce the same symptoms. For example, night sweats can be a sign of menopause, drug addiction, or alcohol detoxification. This means that the same uncomfortable experience late in the night, can result from a phase of life that is beyond our control, or from the biochemical results of an otherwise positive life choice.

The addictive qualities of substances like alcohol and sugar are well studied and documented. In this environment of constant marketing pressure to consume sugar, willpower

will always be a heavily taxed and dwindling resource. In the absence of consistent information on what foods either contain sugar, or turn into forms of sugar during digestion, it can be difficult to fight impulses and to make choices that support our goals. It's important to have fair expectations of ourselves, because we will not win this battle every time we face it. To increase our odds of success, we need to develop strategies that help us stay on track. You will benefit from taking mind-hacking actions to increase your willpower. You will create countermeasures to help resist temptation. You will learn before you are done with this book, exactly what choices to make and why, and how to keep them on track to support your goals.

Weight gain is a symptom that can have many different causes, and the way that body fat accumulates can vary depending on the underlying cause. Some people seem to be able to maintain a healthy weight effortlessly, but as they get older, they may begin to gain fat weight, lose muscle mass, and experience bone density loss. Others may make what appear to be healthy choices consistently, not understanding their metabolism, or how their bodies will process and use or store what they eat. This can be especially frustrating if you assume these problems are a part of who you are, rather than a result of your choices, circumstances, or underlying health conditions.

If you apply a growth mindset, as described by Carol Dweck, Phd. in her book "Mindset: The New Psychology of Success," you will find that characteristics and behaviors can be changed because they are not inherent to the person, but rather the result of decisions that can be altered. For example, someone with a growth mindset might approach the problem of weight gain by gathering more information about their diet, exercise habits, and lifestyle, rather than simply blaming their genetics, or family background. They might also be more open to making changes in their behaviors and habits in order to achieve their desired outcome. You can be that person, in fact you are more likely to be that person

because of your technical analytical professional life, and the fact that you were interested enough in this book to pick it up and start reading.

Your choices and actions have a powerful impact on your life obviously. If you have ever had self defeating or limiting thoughts about your own capabilities this is a great time to change that habit. If you cultivate a growth mindset, you will find that your whole approach to change shifts in a positive direction. You'll make fewer excuses for things staying the same, and have less patience with stagnation. You will grow, and you will achieve your goals. What will your goals be?

Imagine the Healthiest Version of You

One of the unique aspects of this book is that it provides a concise guide to the information you need to know all in the first chapter. If you keep reading from here, you should be able to understand the key concepts within an hour. The changes you need to make will not be easy at first. The benefits to your health, fitness, and appearance will be worth the upswings and downturns of the coming months. Just imagine the satisfaction of looking in the mirror and smiling because you feel confident and happy with your appearance. Imagine getting into your car and realizing that you didn't strain your back for the first time in years. Imagine running to the boarding gate all the way across the airport to make your flight, and actually making it all the way without having to stop for a rest. These are the kinds of positive outcomes that are possible when you take control of your weight, your fitness level and by extension your well being and quality of life.

What To Expect Next

In the beginning pages of this book, I will outline specific steps that you can take to address the common problems faced by technology professionals, such as a lack of physical activity, insufficient sunlight, high levels of stress, and unhealthy snacking habits. These recommendations are based on my own experiences, and as I state throughout the book, you should consult with your primary care physician before following any of these recommendations. A medically driven nutrition plan geared toward weight loss must take your personal health characteristics into account, and as such this book can only be a guide and is not to be followed blindly. If you are skeptical of my claims or want more information about the research behind my suggestions, I will provide references and explanations inline with the content where available. Keep in mind that these solutions are

generally effective for most people, unless there are underlying medical conditions at play. Later in the book, I will also discuss strategies for managing stress, and sleep, which are major contributors to negative physical and mental health, and body weight outcomes.

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CHAPTER 1, THE WHOLE SYSTEM IN ONE CHAPTER

“I Know This Plan Works for People Like Us Who Want To Understand the Reasoning Behind What We Do.”

As a technical professional, you understand the importance of efficiency and optimization. However, when it comes to your own health and fitness you don't prioritize your health because you are constantly prioritizing the work. It can be challenging to find a plan that works for you, and that assumes you are looking for one at all. You have a demanding job and other responsibilities that leave you with little time or energy to prioritize your physical and emotional health.

I know this struggle all too well. For years, I was stuck on the treadmill literally and figuratively, trying to get in shape but seeing no progress. I was overweight and suffered from chronic back pain, which affected my self-image and overall quality of life. I bounced back and forth between trying to get in shape and giving up out of frustration, only to gain weight and feel worse than ever.

I didn't give up though. I researched and experimented until I built a system that worked for me.

My experience in creating a system that helped me lose 50 pounds and get in the best shape of my life was born out of experimentation and adjustment. As a technical professional, I was naturally drawn to a systematic approach, and my curiosity and persistence eventually paid off. Through trial and error, I discovered what worked for me and what didn't and after decades of misdirected effort I found my solution. It worked for me. Hallelujah.

My quest didn't end there. After achieving my weight goals, I became fascinated by the science behind my success. I delved deeper into the latest research to understand why my system worked. I was inspired by the potential to help others who, like me, faced the challenges of working in sedentary and intellectually demanding jobs, and who struggled to prioritize their health and fitness amid a busy and stressful work and family life.

Then I learned that my marriage was about to be over for reasons I couldn't control, and I found myself depressed, separated, alone and responsible for my two teenagers. I got into therapy when the separation was too much to handle on my own, and after a few sessions my therapist suggested I find a yoga studio to join to ease my nerves and to give me something to look forward to each day. At first I resisted the idea. I always kind of equated yoga with strangeness that made me uncomfortable for some reason. Though I was skeptical the idea of yoga stuck in the back of my mind.

One day I was early for a wireless network site survey at an office building and happened to walk right past Hot 8

Yoga in Beverly Hills California. They had a promotion running, an open door (literally) and friendly people at the counter. At that point in my life I had hit a level where I realized I had no control over anything and I decided to just take a leap of faith. I went to one class per day for a week and I was hooked. Yoga immediately became an important part of my life. I don't expect you to have the same experience, and my own experience would have been completely different if I hadn't walked by that studio that day. Without the separation, I likely wouldn't have started yoga in the same way. The timing of life is something I don't think any of us truly understands, but I know this. You don't have to follow my path or walk in my steps to achieve the results I achieved. You can just do what I lay out in this book, all benefit, no downside.

The result in this book is specifically designed for people in technical professions and others in sedentary lives, who face a higher risk of disease and early death due to a sedentary and work heavy lifestyle. By achieving a medically appropriate weight and increasing strength and flexibility, readers of this book can improve their overall quality of life and happiness.

Through this book, I share not only the practical strategies that helped me achieve my goals but also the scientific principles that underpin them. My aim is to help others take control of their health and transform their lives, just as I did. With this plan, you can learn the script to run for success, and discover how to improve your physical strength, flexibility, and appearance, while also gaining a deeper understanding of the science behind the methods.

So if you're ready to prioritize your health and well-being and become the best version of yourself, this book is your guide to achieving your goals. With a focus on both practical strategies and the latest scientific knowledge, it provides a roadmap to sustainable improvement that will help you achieve lasting success.

Food in, Energy Out

One of the key elements of this system is the concept of "food in, energy out." Making strategic choices about your food intake and increasing your physical activity, you can significantly improve your health and fitness. There is much more to this equation than simply "diet and exercise." In this book, we will delve into the details of what works and what doesn't, and explore the science and psychology behind why certain approaches are effective or not.

As IT professionals, we often face long hours, high levels of stress, and a lack of physical activity, which can contribute to negative outcomes like weight gain, low energy, and poor mental health. The strategies in this book can be used to counteract these effects and achieve better health and vitality.

I know that you are busy and have many demands on your time and energy, it's part of the gig. That's why I have made this book as concise and practical as possible, so that you can quickly get the key concepts and start implementing them. I believe that anyone can make significant changes to reduce obesity, improve strength and muscular flexibility, and as a result achieve an improvement in overall health. That's the goal. You too can do this regardless of your starting point or your current circumstances.

You may know that your food intake is a major factor in your current physical condition, but you may not know which adjustments to make to your food choices or which exercises to do and when to do them. It's frustrating when you're given a correct but incomplete answer because you can't follow incomplete instructions. What's worse, bad information is out there looking no different from the good information. It's like being told to implement advanced security on a mail server without understanding how to do it, or even being the server administrator.

In this book, you will be given clear and specific instructions on what to do, why you should do it, and how to

do it to achieve your desired outcome. You will know exactly what to do to reach your goals. It's true that diet and exercise are the key factors, but it's not as simple as just hearing that advice from fitness experts, doctors, or society. It can be demoralizing and lead us back to bad habits. The good news is that the solution is simple. The bad news is that it won't be easy. It will however be worth it. This book will provide you with a dose of reality and a plan to follow.

The Long Road Forward

This journey towards better health and fitness is not going to be easy. You will need to make changes to your diet and let go of old habits that have contributed to your current situation. It will take effort to reprogram your mindset and break free from the "cult" of unhealthy habits you have cultivated over the years. Once you find your own best practices, remember that your body will continue to change as you age, so you will need to be flexible and adapt your approach. Be patient and remember that achieving lasting results takes time.

You will need to build a highly personalized system based on a foundation of basic principles, much like managing client computers with recipes of settings to achieve a desired outcome. You have a range of options available to you, and it's up to you to choose what goes into your plan to meet your needs specifically. Keep in mind that your body is a complex system and it's important to be prepared for unexpected challenges along the way. Now, let's move on to the next steps you need to take.

All of the Steps

STEP 1:

Go to your primary care physician, and when you do ask them to read the following paragraph. Bring this book with you to the appointment, ask your doctor to read the following:

"Hello Doctor, my name is Sean and it's an honor to imagine meeting you as I write this! The person sitting in front of you is a true intellectual. They're capable of squashing viruses and malware, and they might even be looking at your phone and computer thinking they can help you upgrade your systems. This person is kind and wants to make things work better. They have a heart that deserves to beat for many more years than it can in its current condition, so let's work together to create a plan to reach a healthy weight, body mass, and body composition. While we're at it, let's check cholesterol levels, liver function (good people tend to drink heavily because we want to make the world a better place and we're often depressed that we can't do it on our own), kidney function, and possibly look for signs of diabetes. These are just suggestions, of course, because I'm not a doctor. Oh, and let's check Vitamin D levels too. If there's anything else you think needs to be done, go ahead and run the test. My friend here is committed to making positive changes and it's worth spending money on tests now to avoid problems later. I know it may seem strange, but I've been in this person's shoes and I know how vulnerable, frustrated, and in pain they may feel sitting in front of you. Let's do our best to help them.

*This person is worth it. Alright, you can give our
friend their book back now, thanks!*
-Sean”

STEP 2:

Your doctor is going to take excellent care of you, so listen up. I know we've got Google, WebMD, and a million other resources at our disposal, but this isn't the time to try and fix everything on our own, despite our natural inclinations to take on the world and fix everything ourselves. It's time to listen to the doctor and work together to create a plan that's uniquely yours. You wouldn't expect your doctor to be looking up how to treat you on WebMD, so why would you go to that resource to second guess what your doctor tells you? If you want a second opinion, go find another doctor and get a qualified second opinion, but leave the WebMD lookups to entertainment (if you're into that kind of thing.)

We're going to do this the old fashioned way with a brand new, shiny three ring binder. Yeah, I know we live in the digital age, but there's something special about putting pen to paper (and having a physical thing you can throw across the room when you're frustrated.) Besides, you can take notes, doodle, and scratch stuff out, rip out pages, crumple things, throw pages in the fireplace, paper can be cathartic. All joking aside, it's a great way to stay organized, and you can start with just the binder, and a whole lot of blank paper so there's no excuse to not get started immediately. So go ahead and put your doctor's plan in that binder and hang onto it tight. You'll be using it every day, multiple times a day. Trust me.

STEP 3

It's time to assess the contents of your pantry and refrigerator at home. If you work from an office, you'll need to find a way to reduce your access to certain types of food and drinks that might not be helpful in achieving your goals. This might involve physically blocking your view of the snack counter in the office, or developing a habit of avoiding wherever it is in the office altogether. The goal here is to be mindful of your caloric and carbohydrate intake and make choices that support your plan. This will be challenging, but by reducing your exposure to temptation, you can make the challenge a little easier on yourself. Take the time to clean out your personal space as well as your work space and remove any items that don't align with your goals. Remember, the less you see these unhelpful choices, the less temptation you'll have to face and the less willpower you'll need to exert.

STEP 4:

Resist the Temptation To Have Just One Drink

It's time to say goodbye to alcohol for a while. Numerous studies have shown the negative effects of alcohol on the body including internal organs, skin etc. What's worse for us, it negatively impacts the brain including memory and cognitive functions, and your sleep, but recent research has also demonstrated that alcohol consumption can lead to an increase in food intake. Whether it's a brain science thing or common sense, the fact is that alcohol consumption will result in you eating more. So, it's important to clear the alcohol out of your home and to resist the temptation to have just one

drink. Remember, the effects of alcohol on food intake have been shown to occur after just one unit of alcohol. You won't be drinking for a while, so it's important to just accept it don't make it into a big deal and move on to step five.

STEP 5:

I want you to invest in some specific items to support your journey. First, ask your doctor about adding a salmon oil and vitamin D3 supplement to your daily routine. This simple addition can have numerous positive effects on your health, and it's both affordable and easy to take. Next, head to a reputable source and stock up on flash frozen or fresh, pre portioned fish such as salmon, haddock, cod, or tuna (whatever fatty fish you actually enjoy). Choose wisely and don't waste money on a type of fish you don't like. You should also buy vegetables that are low in sugar (avoid carrots) but high in flavor (try broccoli).

The BulletProof Diet by Dave Asprey is a great resource for lists of “Bulletproof” approved foods and the science behind them. I recommend checking it out for more detailed information on specific types of foods you can plan into your weekly intake for fuel that will reduce inflammation. For now, make sure to buy and use plenty of Kerrygold unsalted, grass fed butter. Kerrygold is widely available and the grass fed aspect makes a significant difference. Don't skimp on the quality of your butter and be wary of other brands that produce dairy from unhealthy cows.

We'll dive into the relationship between fat and weight loss later, but the unexpected truth is that you can actually lose weight by eating fat. It's also important to note that you've just gotten rid of all of the negative options in your pantry and fridge, so this is your first lesson in self control. As technical people, we appreciate a rational argument. Here it is: this process will save you thousands of dollars on groceries over the course of a year. Plus, you'll be on your way to achieving

a rockin' body. So, practice self control at the grocery store, specifically at the checkout. The part of your brain that wants to protect your money is stronger at this location and earlier in the day than it will be at home. Instead of spending money on snacks and alcohol, calculate roughly how much you would have spent and put that money into a tropical vacation fund. Trust me, it works. Don't believe me? Just wait for the next step.

STEP 6

It's time to visit the bank. Head to the institution where your checking account is kept and bring with you a seed amount let's say \$100, but feel free to choose a different amount. Have your favorite banker set up a new account for you, one that is electronically linked to your regular checking account but doesn't have a debit card associated with it. Every time you return home from grocery shopping, make it a habit to go to your computer and transfer the amount you would normally have spent on carb heavy foods and alcoholic drinks into your new account. Call it your "tropical vacation fund" and visualize yourself at your ideal weight, showing off your muscles in a swimsuit at your dream vacation destination. Make these fund transfers from your phone or computer as soon as you put your perishables in the fridge, and don't take anything out of that account until you are at your target. On to the next step!

STEP 7:

It's time to introduce some fasting into the mix. Don't worry we're not going to be too extreme here, I know there is a perception that fasters are a little crazy, so here's my pitch.

Fasting has been shown to have numerous positive impacts on health, including reducing inflammation, promoting weight loss, and even increasing lifespan. As long

as you are careful to stay hydrated and plan at least one meal per day (no fewer than one meal per day, no snacking allowed), there really aren't any downsides to intermittent fasting. However, it's important to check with your doctor before starting any fasting regimen, as not everyone can fast safely and the way in which you fast may vary depending on your individual needs. One strategy is to skip breakfast and possibly dinner as well, which allows you to cut calories without actually having to reduce the size of your meals. While this can be a challenging adjustment, the benefits are substantial. We'll dive deeper into the topic of fasting later in the book.

STEP 8

You aren't eating to be healthy, so stop thinking you can eat "health foods" to lose weight. I get a lot of pushback on saying this because there's no agreement on terminology. What is eating healthy? There's a difference between eating healthy and eating to lose weight. While you're working towards your weight loss goal, your focus isn't on eating healthy it's on maintaining a caloric deficit while also being mindful of how the foods you *are* eating will be processed by your body. That means you'll have to put aside some of those "healthy" foods like whole grain bread, pasta, all varieties of potatoes, and of course sugary vegetables like carrots and beets. These are great in moderation once you hit your target weight, but they won't help you lose weight. In fact, it's easy to stagnate unless you remove carbs and stay in caloric deficit.

To repeat and be completely clear, what you need to do is *reduce your calorie intake and avoid specific types of foods, including all forms of complex carbohydrates*. By cycling your diet and almost entirely eliminating carbs for planned periods of time, you're removing the foods that either contain sugar or are converted into sugar during digestion. Planning your

meals or using a meal planning service can help you stick to this low or no carb diet and achieve your weight loss goals. This whole low carb thing is about making your body burn fat for energy instead of sugar. It's complicated. Read more about it in chapter 8.

STEP 9:

Let's talk about why it's important to wait until you are 60% done or 10 pounds away from your goal weight before introducing exercise to your routine. When you are overweight, your joints, skin, bones, and connective tissue are all carrying more weight than they should be. If you try to work out too soon, you risk injury that can set back your progress significantly. In the beginning, it's important to avoid overdoing it. While exercise does help improve heart and lung function and burns extra calories, the risk of injury far outweighs the benefits at this stage. Instead, start by simply walking for 20 to 45 minutes per day as your "exercise." As you consistently make progress with your diet and get closer to your goal, we'll introduce yoga as a way to build flexibility, mental focus, strength and muscle tone. Yoga is the perfect form of exercise for these goals. We'll discuss why later in the book. Don't forget to check with your doctor before starting any exercise routine.

STEP 10:

This is where you get to use your legendary organizational skills. In step ten, it's time to press your three ring binder into service. Your doctor's approved plan should be placed in the front and highlighted for easy reference. Add additional pages to the back for daily tracking. Each day, record your morning scale measurements, your specified food/meal list for the day (no need to worry about calorie counts, just focus on eating the right foods), and the total minutes spent

walking. You can also include a diary section to note how you're feeling. As you track your progress over time, you'll start to see trends in your data that can help you adjust your food intake and exercise. While it's convenient to have pre made meals delivered to you, it's important to learn how to prepare the foods your body needs to lose weight.

STEP 11:

Drink up, my friend! Adequate hydration is crucial for a variety of reasons. It helps to regulate your body temperature, aids in digestion, and even helps to flush out toxins. Plus, staying hydrated can help to keep you feeling full and satisfied between meals, which is especially important when you're trying to lose weight. Water is simply the best way to hydrate, you don't need bubbles, you don't need flavors, you just need simple filtered water. You will undoubtedly also try zero calorie beverages to fill in the edges, so here's a few other things to watch. Diet sodas usually carry a lot of sodium, so beware and watch your blood pressure. Coffee is technically water, right? So is tea, and you can get your water intake from herbal teas, black teas, and others. Just be sure to pay attention to your caffeine intake, as it can have an impact on your heart rate and anxiety levels. Consult with your doctor to determine the right amount for you. When you drink herbal teas be wary of any that contain added sugar, as that will negate your progress in limiting both carbs and calories. Stay hydrated and you will stay on track to achieving your weight loss goals!

STEP 12:

As you progress through your weight loss journey, it's important to remember to limit your intake of fruit. While it may be tempting to indulge in sweet, natural sources of sugar, it's important to remember that fruit is sugar and can

still impact your body's ability to burn fat for energy. Instead, try to focus on vegetables and other low sugar options as you work towards your goal. Of course, this isn't to say that you should never eat fruit again. Once you reach maintenance mode, you can incorporate it back into your diet. For the purpose of maximizing weight loss, it's best to minimize your intake of fruit until you reach your weight target.

STEP 13:

Carb cycling. In planning your food schedule, you're going to cycle your diet by alternating between strict and maintenance phases. The phases for me were weeks. One week of strict no complex carb and high fat medium protein, followed by a maintenance week, and then cycling that over and over. This strategy can be a game changer, and it's something that many people overlook. In a strict phase, you'll follow a specific dietary plan, like eating mostly fish and cauliflower for a week. While this can be challenging, it's important to stay committed and focused. After a week of strict adherence, you can take a maintenance week where you can experiment with different foods and see how they affect your body. This can help you identify any food allergies you didn't know about, and it can give you insight into how your body processes different types of food. It's important to keep a detailed food journal during these maintenance weeks to track your intake and any reactions or changes you experience. The main goal of maintenance week is to figure out how you can continue eating once you reach your target weight, without causing the weight to come back on. It's important to gradually transition back to a more normal diet, rather than going from "diet" to "normal" overnight.

Maintenance Week Is About Finding a Balance That Allows You To Enjoy a Varied and Nutritious Diet Without Sabotaging Your Progress.

You'll cycle through these strict and maintenance weeks repeatedly, adjusting your diet as needed based on your progress and the insights you gain from your food journal. Remember, the goal is not just to lose weight, but also to learn how to maintain a healthy weight for the long term.

STEP 14:

It's time to introduce "Ice Cream Day" into the mix. I know this may seem like a temptation to deviate from your plan, but trust me, it's an important part of the process. When you feel bored or restless with your current diet, indulge in Ice Cream Day. I actually have this planned in your sequence for a specific week if you read the rest of the book. This is your chance to indulge in some of the foods that may have been off limits. Just remember, this is only for the first day of one of your weeks, so don't go too crazy. In chapter 14 we'll explore some tasty foods that are indulgent, but still relatively sane in your overall plan. You will gain some weight back during this week, but it's just a temporary setback on your journey towards long term weight loss, and you will need the pressure release valve to open up as some point. The next step in the process will help you get back on track. And don't worry, there will be real ice cream included in Ice Cream Day (just check out the chapter with the same name). So go ahead and enjoy yourself, but remember to be mindful and stay within the guidelines.

STEP 15:

This is all about getting back on track after your weight loss vacation in step 14. It's time for another maintenance week! By now, you've probably done a few of these and have figured out your go to maintenance menus. I've got some new twists for you in the "The Return" or maintenance chapter that will help you maintain your progress so far, while introducing some new and welcome changes to your diet. From now on, you should continue to alternate between strict and maintenance weeks, using the insights from your food journal and observations to choose the foods that work best for you during maintenance. You are becoming an old pro by this point. You've got this.

STEP 16:

This section is all about starting hot yoga. You've probably made it to 60% or 10 pounds from your goal weight by now, and you're feeling good about your progress. It's time to take things up a notch and start getting sexy with hot yoga. If your doctor has cleared you for it, go for it! Find a studio near you and check out the reviews to find one that other people love. Most studios offer a promotion for new members, like a free week of unlimited classes. Take advantage of it and try out a few different classes to see which ones you like best. It's important to alternate between "Yang" classes (power, hot, fusion, etc.) and "Yin" classes (stretching, healing) to get both strength and flexibility. If you have to skip a day or switch to a regular yoga studio for medical reasons, that's okay. Just be consistent and try to find a studio you love. Later on, I'll explain why hot yoga is so important and why I recommend it over other types of workouts. Just trust me for now and get your sweat on!

STEP 17:

So, if yoga isn't your thing, don't worry I've got you covered. You can truly work out anywhere, including the office or network room. This is a super simple way to get in some exercise no matter where you are, whether at home or in the office. All you have to do is take advantage of any momentary lulls or progress bars you have to wait for to do body weight resistance exercises. For example, when you see a progress bar, drop down and do a push up, or if you have a momentary lull while a system reboots do a few crunches. Read on for more ideas on how to sneak in little exercises throughout your day. Trust me, you can do this!

STEP 18:

It's time to update your wardrobe! If you've lost a significant amount of weight, your clothes probably don't fit you well anymore. Even more importantly, now that you have a slimmer figure, you can wear things you might not have been able to before, or even wanted to before. Once you get there, your whole mindset is going to change, it's inevitable. Go ahead and accept now that you will become interested in dressing better once you get into great shape, and if you don't get interested right away you might just meet someone who motivates you to want to look better like I did. To get started go to a department store like Nordstrom and ask for a stylist to help you pick out some new clothes that suit your personal style. The people selling the clothes are not just there to ring you up, many of them are talented stylists with great clothing knowledge who spend much of their time thinking about clothing and style. Leverage that experience. Don't be afraid to ask for a different stylist if the first one doesn't seem like a good fit. And while you're at it, don't forget to buy some new workout clothes for your hot yoga sessions. As you get stronger, you'll be doing more inversions

and it's important to have form fitting tops that won't fall over your head when you're upside down. It's hard to believe that you're even at the point where you're thinking about inversions, right? But here you are, making progress and looking good while doing it.

STEP 19:

Share Your Story on Social Media and Tag Technically-Fit!

It's time to show off all your hard work! Find a local photographer to take some professional photos of you looking your best. Call around to get pricing and ask to see examples of their work. Make sure they have a portfolio of impressive, high quality photos of their clients. Have them take a variety of shots of you, standing, sitting, and in different outfits. These photos are for you to share on social media and brag about your success. As your final step, go to the Technically-Fit website and share your story and the best photo from your photoshoot.

STEP 20, 21, 22 AND BEYOND:

Sleep, play, enjoy. There is just nothing more important in all of this than your sleep. Sleep quality is linked to every important aspect of your mental and physical health. In the last chapter of the book I list a lot of great reasons to get more quality sleep, how to do it, and some cool tech tools to help you get the sleep you need. Here are the take aways. Sleep is critical to weight loss, muscle health, recovery from workouts, mental health, memory retention, prevention of late

in life mental health issues such as Alzheimer's and dementia, and a laundry list of additional metabolic functions. Every organism on the planet sleeps. There is evidence that even single cell organisms sleep. It's an evolutionary mandate, and thinking you don't need it is just plain arrogance. If you believe you can skip out on proper sleep and still be performing at your job, in your relationships, in the gym, or anywhere else at anywhere near your actual potential, you're just wrong. Use the last chapter as a guide on sleep and make sure it's a top priority from now on.

That's it. Those are the steps to take you from beginning to end. It might seem daunting, but you can do it. If you don't have time to read the rest of this book, you have enough information now to get started. The first thing to do is to speak with your doctor and explain the steps outlined in this chapter. Together, you can agree on any specific limitations and adapt the plan to your needs. If you want to learn more about the background of this plan, and recommended foods, or preparation techniques feel free to read on. When you're ready to start your yoga practice, you may want to consider investing in some specialized equipment and certainly some new workout clothes (more on how to shop later.)

For those of you who like the details and also want templates, lists of best practices and fun ideas for how to mix things up, read on and keep visiting our website and our social media spaces which will be updated with the new stuff that came about after this book was published. Also, if you need a template or have an idea, reach out. I love suggestions and can't wait to hear from you. The rest of this book is your guide, and the deep dive you crave, so lets get started.



CHAPTER 2, WHAT TO EXPECT AND SETTING NEW HABITS

The Reward Isn't Just About Looking Good, It's About Experiencing a Whole New Way of Being.

The first time you walk up stairs and feel strong, or get out of a bathtub without straining your back or your legs, you'll suddenly get it. The reward isn't just in looking good, it's in realizing there is a whole new way of existing in your body. You are preparing to be a strong person, more in control of your body and your mind than you have ever been before. It's going to feel amazing, trust me.

On your path there will be illusions, setbacks, and tricks played on you, so I'll prepare you for those setbacks ahead of time. I've noticed over the years that when I get motivated, or make a change, and have an eye on the future, I don't expect

my body to do things that hurt me just as I'm getting started. If you've been drinking a lot of alcohol and decide to stop as part of your fitness journey, you'll have headaches and struggles with self control as you try to stop. You'll also receive a nasty gift from your body every night, sweating during your sleep as if you were sitting in a sauna. Night sweats are no joke they're not just annoying, but truly alarming if you don't know they're coming, or where they're coming from. If you've been drinking that much, I recommend you talk to your doctor about getting on a medically assisted plan to stop drinking. There are medications only recently approved for addiction therapy that may reduce your addictive draw to alcohol completely, making the stopping much easier.

Another crappy gift from your body that can shake your confidence in your new plans, is that within days of starting to eat right and exercise, your body might suddenly look and feel more heavy or bloated around the middle. This is exactly the opposite of what you're trying to achieve so you could easily lose your confidence and feel like stopping. That happens, in fact it will probably happen off and on throughout your first 60 days, so be ready for it. If you know it's coming you can try not to be disappointed. It will take about thirty days to start seeing your weight and shape change in the way you want, and that change won't be dramatic, it will be gradual, and hardly perceptible at times. That doesn't matter, you are making progress and any progress at all is an encouragement for your hard work.

Another source of discouragement will come from people you love and respect. People mean well, but they may unintentionally discourage you shortly after you start, especially if they believe you won't be able to do it. They'll be watching for the results you've told them you're trying to achieve, and it's hard to ignore their words and behavior. This is especially hard right at the beginning, because your cravings are powerful and deeply ingrained. They are hard to ignore regardless of your conscious choices. Anything

external that supports your subconscious mind's desire to go back to business as usual will make your willpower weaker and make it easier to return to bad habits. Remember that people mean well, but also don't have a lot of self control. People are habitual, and that extends to their expectations. Your close family and friends are accustomed to you looking like who you are right now, even if that isn't healthy for you. It is comforting for them to see you over and over again as the same person they know. It gives people comfort to see consistency. Don't worry, once you are the new you, they will get used to it and learn to love you for who you really are inside, regardless of how amazing you look on the outside.

Strict Eating for Loss, vs. Eating To Maintain Health

When people think about eating healthy, depending on their definition for that word, they may go straight to the fruit and vegetable aisle to pick out lots of grapes and oranges and mangoes and pineapples, and then they might go to the cereal aisle and pick out Cheerios and granola and whole wheat-based cereals, and then they might go to the bread aisle and pick out whole wheat bread, and then go to the grains and pick out quinoa and grits and cream of wheat and oatmeal.

The problem is that if someone is trying to lose weight all of the foods I just mentioned, while very good for you, are *not* good for you *and* conducive to weight loss. They all are either heavy on sugars, whether natural or not, or they are made of things that convert to sugars in your bloodstream, and therefore are burned by your body for energy rather than burning fat for energy.

When nutritionists and health experts tell people to eat healthy foods based on a broad based list of nutrients and a variety of different types of foods, including lots of sugars and starches and complex carbohydrates, that recommendation

does promote overall well-being, but not the loss of body weight. This misalignment of instruction with desired outcomes can lead to frustration because people try and try but never lose the weight, or succeed but so slowly that they lose interest or motivation or the belief they can do it.

Do Only What Works for You

I'll give you a really personal example. When I worked as a systems administrator at large fitness publishing company in the 1990's, a good friend of mine and colleague was a triathlete. He would bike dozens of miles every weekend. He would swim three or four times a week. He would run every night, he had what seemed like zero percent body fat. It was annoying. At lunchtime he and I would go swimming whenever we could. Usually it worked out to be about three or four times a week and we would swim for about 45 minutes because we had a one hour lunch. At the end of every work out we would go to Jamba Juice and he would order one and I would order one. For months we did this and I never lost a pound. I knew I felt stronger, and I knew I could hold my breath for longer which is great, but I was very frustrated with how I looked. I was still fat after all of that work, and sacrifice. I was pissed. The secret, of course was that whatever calories I was burning in the pool were inconsequential compared to the calorie bomb at the Jamba Juice, which was very "healthy", but was loading me up with fruit sugars after the work out. It was a healthy choice, but it was not a choice that promoted my weight loss goals. Add to that, he never gained a pound, and in fact he complained that he couldn't gain weight or put on any body fat no matter what he ate. This was partially because of his body type, but it was MUCH more because he was a life long athlete who never got fat in the first place. It was like his body didn't know how to put on fat because it had been trained to be the way it was, a high performing machine. He could have that Jamba Juice as part of a nutrient rich diet that promoted the health of his

body because he had always been in maintenance mode. He never had to do a weight loss program in his life. Add to that the fact that he was working out as a part of his social life and it was his primary hobby. It was his fun time. If you take all of that into account, you get a clear picture of why our post workout dietary needs were different. So remember when you read advice to eat health foods, and you follow that advice, you aren't going to lose the weight you must lose to be truly healthy. I know it is a hard truth to absorb, but please trust me. Health food isn't weight loss food.

Caloric Deficit and Training the Body to Burn Fat

When someone is trying to lose weight, it's very important to promote a caloric deficit, and to encourage the body to burn fat rather than sugars for energy. Doing so accelerates the reshaping of the body, which helps one to see progress when one looks in the mirror. When you're looking at the numbers on a scale and you're trying to achieve a goal, you benefit from being efficient in your approach to achieving that goal.

Eating Differently

The maintenance weeks in this diet are different from the strict weeks in several very important ways. Maintenance weeks in this plan promote eating those healthy foods I was just talking about, journaling about the results of how they affect your key performance indicators (weight, body mass, allergic reactions, inflammation, stamina, mood, etc) and building an understanding of what works for you as an individual and what does not. Maintenance weeks are also about learning portion control, exactly how much of each of those healthy foods you can really consume in a week without moving the needle back up again. That process is by

nature trial and error because it's based on your unique body, your unique health history, weight history, and countless other unique things about you as a person. It's old fashioned troubleshooting, like binary troubleshooting in the old days of technical support. Back then you could have a problem and take out half of the extensions, or maybe half the preference files and reboot. If you still had the problem, you knew the problem was in the half you kept. You'd split and repeat until you had it narrowed down.

Figuring out the foods that work and don't work for you is exactly like managing extension conflicts in that you don't know what foods don't work for you until you pay attention to the results of adding those foods back into your diet after removing them for a period of time to reset your body. This helps you to identify foods that pack on the weight, but possible allergens too that may leave you with skin problems, bloating, eye problems, hair loss, upset stomach, and even cognitive differences. Food is your fuel, and your engine needs fuel that works for you, so the journalling helps you to weed out the bad and confirm the good for you moving forward.

Maintenance for the Rest of Your Life

I put in the maintenance weeks because people who are not fitness experts need to understand the difference between a weight loss plan and a lifestyle building plan. The maintenance weeks are all about building a long-term diet filled with all of the best kinds of foods, including all of those fruits and vegetables, and all of those good for you fiber filled breads and grains, but for sure avoiding sugary cereals, and other sugary foods forever.

The point I try to make in the book is this: one of the reasons why people fail to lose weight is they believe the fallacy that eating healthy equals losing weight. It doesn't. The truth is eating healthy isn't the same as eating for weight loss. Caloric deficit plus restricting carbs equals weight loss.

Healthy, diverse, nutrient, filled variety equals long-term health and maintenance.

This isn't a journey towards a destination. It's a change of your life path. Don't worry about where you are on the path today. Just focus on making the choice to continue on the path every moment of every day. If you do, time becomes the ally that gets you there, rather than an enemy to battle.

Swing for the Fences.

Stay on target! Commit to yourself that you are going to hit your target. You set the goal, not me. This has to be something you desperately want to hit, and it has to be something that you **CAN** hit. Swing for the fences here. If you are 350 pounds and five feet nine inches tall, you have a long way to go, but don't aim just to get to 300 pounds. At five feet nine inches, your ideal weight is somewhere around 155 to 165 pounds. So aim for a number in that range. Period. No excuses. If you have medical problems that prevent you from doing whatever it takes, go see your doctor. I mean it. Pick up your phone right now, stop reading this book, and call your doctor. Tell the receptionist that you are overweight and unhealthy, that you are sick of it, and that you need to meet with your doctor to make sure you are healthy enough to embark on a weight loss program. They will happily set an appointment, and your medical doctor (which I am definitely not, remember that I am just like you, not your doctor) will help you to modify the suggestions in this chapter (and the rest of this book) to meet your unique needs.

It's important to set goals and consistently work towards them. For some people, it's easy to start but difficult to follow through. To stay on track and reach your goals quickly, it's

critical to take the necessary actions to avoid falling back into old habits and triggers. In the coming chapters, I will discuss strategies to achieve your goals and maintain progress.

I'm telling you to develop new habits, so let's be sure we're defining our terms here.

Habit: hab·it | 'habət |

noun

1 a settled or regular tendency or practice, especially one that is hard to give up: we stayed together out of habit | this can develop into a bad habit.

- *informal an addictive practice, especially one of taking drugs: a cocaine habit.*
- **Psychology an automatic reaction to a specific situation.**
- *general shape or mode of growth, especially of a plant or a mineral: a shrub of spreading habit.*

The word 'habit' can mean several things, but I want to focus on the psychology related meaning in American English as listed by Apple's Dictionary app: “an automatic reaction to a specific situation.” Later in this book, I will discuss building your plan, cleaning house, relearning shopping, meal planning, journaling, water consumption, and much more – all of which are about building new habits. Allow me to suggest a handful of ways to change your environment to support the development of these new habits.

To support the development of a new approach to food you have to remove temptations from your environment. Throw away all sugary foods, snacks, and drinks that might tempt you to stray from your plan. By eliminating these foods, you can make it easier to stick to your goals and avoid the temptation to indulge. Rather than replacing these items with other foods that may appear to be “healthy”, just remove

them and leave the space empty. This can help you avoid the temptation to fill the space with other sugary options and that will make it easier to resist cravings. By removing foods you can't eat from your field of view you will be more able to stick to your plan. Replace a bowl of candy with a vase of fresh flowers, a snack cabinet could be repurposed to store canned foods for emergencies. Whatever you do, don't just take away really bad foods and replace them with alternative foods. The whole point is to not put food in your mouth unless it's absolutely necessary until you reach your goal, so don't make the mistake of putting new foods in place of the old. Eliminate the food from view, and reprioritize the space around some other theme. Potted plants are great alternatives to bowls, trays and plates of foods.

Using smaller plates and bowls can help you control portion sizes and reduce the temptation to overeat. By making it harder to get a lot of food on your plate, you can reduce your overall intake of calories and stay on track with your dietary restrictions, just don't go back for seconds. Smaller plate size has been studied extensively and proven to have a positive impact on total food consumption and on weight loss.

Preparing less food during meal prep is another helpful strategy. This will result in not overeating to avoid the guilt of wasting food. How many times have you had dinner with family and watched as the kids leave food behind, or there is more food left in a serving dish after you've eaten enough already, and out of a misguided guilt response you find yourself eating the rest so it doesn't go to waste. It isn't your job to do that. I used to do that all the time, sometimes I still do honestly, it is a hard habit to break, but breaking that habit is super crucial to your success.

Planning your meals in advance and shopping for groceries accordingly can make it easier to stick to your dietary restrictions. By having ingredients on hand, you'll be more likely to choose options that align with your plan when you're hungry. Additionally, having a plan in place can help

you resist the temptation to order takeout or eat out at restaurants, which can be difficult challenges when trying to follow the plan.

Change your language. By using the present tense when speaking about your future self, you can trick your brain into believing the statements and acting accordingly with less effort. For example, instead of saying “I want to be self controlled so I can lose weight” say to yourself “I have all the self control I need to eat only what I need for fuel, and I am losing weight.” Other phrases to try include “I am healthy,” “I am strong,” and “I am so happy I’ve changed my life for the better.” You can also create visual reminders by printing and mounting statements, or creating a mock magazine cover with a picture of yourself and headlines celebrating your accomplishments as if they have already happened. These types of repetitive reinforcement can have a powerful effect on your mindset and can be a useful tool in reaching your goals. (Thank you to Hannah Randle, a coach in Los Angeles California, for the magazine cover idea, it’s a coaching technique she uses with her clients.)

You are either in ketosis or your are not. There is no kinda-ketosis. Eat for weight loss on strict weeks following the plan. Eat for health on maintenance weeks, and stay on target for success. You won’t regret it.



CHAPTER 3: JOURNALING YOUR EXPERIENCE

Pull out your binder. You remember that three ring binder you bought back in Chapter One? Here's how we're going to use it. Your doctor approved plan goes in the front. Go ahead and highlight anything in there that you find especially important to keep front of mind. Now add blank pages to the back. You can download a template to print from the Technically-Fit website which you can use to fill your three ring binder, or you can make your own if you prefer. Here's some guidance on how to make your own template. Make a four box grid to fill the page.

Upper left box, is for measurements. In that upper left box you will write down your scale measurements from the morning, foods you ate within the last 24 hours with quantities or portion sizes, and the measurements from any tools or apps you use to track things like blood pressure, ketone levels, hours of sleep the night before, etc... I also want you to write down how many minutes you spent walking or doing other exercise.

Upper right is a journal spot for how your body feels, this can include any changes you notice from new pain, to lack of

pain, to how you look in the mirror, or skin changes. If you feel bloated, write it down. Feeling tired, write it down.

Lower left is where you put running totals for the week for all of the things you are measuring in the upper left. This can help you to track one week to the next for weekly totals. Don't forget to total your minutes walking or working out.

Lower right is where you write how you feel emotionally, it's not a big box, you can do this. Feeling depressed, write it down. Feeling energized, write it down. Feeling lonely, feeling grateful, feeling loved, write it down.

Each day, you write down your body numbers, a couple of lines of diary about how you feel, and a list of your meals and calories along with a log of total minutes spent walking. Over time, you will start to see trends in your data that you will use to adjust your food intake and exercise. Use the bottom of the page for notes in the margin, if you notice a trend or something that doesn't fit in the four boxes, just jot it down at the bottom of the page so it's captured.

Unfamiliar With Journaling? Notes on Style:

There are many styles of journaling, and aside from tracking progress on a form as suggested above, you can employ other techniques in your journal to enhance your experience and your insights. Just add pages, or alternate pages. For example, do the form suggested above, and follow each days form page with a blank page for something similar to one of the options below.

Tracking Progress: Basically this is the technique I suggested above, use and enjoy.

Writing a Gratitude Journal: Each day, set aside time to write down three things that you are grateful for, taking the time to reflect on your progress. Be open and honest with yourself knowing that only you will ever read the journal. It's

kind of like self hypnosis and it will absolutely improve your mood, and might improve your physical results as well.

Daily Check Ins: Before starting each day, take a few moments to ask yourself some important questions such as “What do I need today?” or “What steps will I take to reach my goal today?” Anchoring each day with purposeful intention setting can help keep you on track and encouraged. You may also find it helpful to minimize your exposure to other people’s drama. Gossip, unnecessary drama, fighting with a spouse or partner, and other forms of mental and emotional distraction can limit your willpower, and the amount of mental focus you have to expend when you are focusing on a major accomplishment. To stay focused, these daily check in journal entries can be used to simply write down what you want, to visualize it, and to write it as if it has already happened. For example: Today I wrote in my journal, I followed my food intake plan to the letter and I’m really proud of my self control and my energy levels and my ability to accomplish my goals. I’m feeling like in addition to getting this weight loss thing done, I can do almost anything I set my mind on accomplishing. I feel great.” This kind of self talk is designed to change your thoughts from the inside out.

Reflective Journalling: At the end of every day, make it a habit to sit down with your journal and reflect on the events of the day from how meals were planned out to how much exercise was completed all while giving yourself a pass if something didn't go as intended. This reflective practice can be immensely helpful in gaining insight into what adjustments should be made for improved success. This event reflection is in addition to your dietary cause and effect journalling. Taken together, after a few weeks of journalling, you will see a narrative emerge. You’ll have your own story arc, and you’ll begin to see it going somewhere you really like.

Journalling is an effective method to track self improvement, but it’s also a great way to activate your scientific approach to problem solving. Using the tips from earlier in this book, your journal will give you the insight you

need to build a list of foods, and workouts that work best for your body. Eventually, you'll have a well researched body of knowledge about YOU that will inform every choice you make about your diet and exercise for the rest of your life.



CHAPTER 4: CLEANING OUT THE PANTRY

If you want to be successful in reaching your health and weight loss goals, you must remove temptation from your environment. This means clearing your pantry and refrigerator of any sugary or high carbohydrate foods that may derail your progress. If you work from an office, it may be difficult to control the snacks available to you. However, you can still take control by removing any unwanted options from your own workspace, and avoid walking past the snack stations that may be strewn around the office by well intended office managers. By removing these temptations or your access to them, you'll be more likely to stay on track and make progress towards your goals. Carb restriction is a key part of many successful weight loss plans, so don't be afraid to clean house and get a fresh start.

Suggested Targets

Here's a short list of suggestions for targets on your dietary problem hit list.

Throw away your processed snack foods, such as chips, cookies, and crackers. This one is easy, though it might trigger your guilt about wasting food, but get past it and throw it out. You won't be buying these foods probably ever again. Not because you can't, but likely because once you are your new self you probably won't want them anymore.

Eliminate drinks like soda, sports drinks, and fruit juices. Fruit juices might sound like bad advice to you, but fruit juices commonly have as much sugar as a Coke, and it's not that it's "good" sugar vs. "bad" sugar. For health, that is a real thing, but for weight loss it just doesn't matter. When you are losing weight, sugar is sugar.

Eliminate the cereals except for oatmeal. You'll use oatmeal in your maintenance weeks, sparingly.

Canned fruits packed in syrup are an obvious thing to toss, they're disgusting anyway.

Here's one that won't make immediate sense. Get rid of sweetened condiments. Condiments are sweetened you may ask? Yep, look at the labels. Ketchup, BBQ sauce, and obviously syrups, but look at all of the bottles and check the labels for sugars and carbohydrates and eliminate accordingly. One that might surprise you, mayonnaise is fine, but you might want to replace what you have with a brand that has no preservatives, or heck make your own, it's easy.

Throw away cakes, cookies, and baked goods. Obviously. Also any unopened boxes of cake flour, muffin mix, pancake mix, anything you could whip up in an insanity fueled Hulk level craving transformation. The unopened boxes? All of that gets donated to a food bank. Check with local churches and temples, most have food donation programs that are easy.

Remove all candy, chocolate, and other sweets. Yes for now that includes dark chocolate, even though it's relatively

low in sugar and filled with antioxidants that are amazing for your body and brain. IF the packaging is unopened, donate accordingly.

Processed meats, such as hot dogs, sausages, and deli meats, that contain added sugars or carbs are a hidden disaster, because you think they are a good source of protein and fit into a low carb diet, but you wouldn't believe how much sugar is in bacon and most sausages. That being said, check out hard cured meats like salami, look for the labels that indicate zero or close to zero carbs, because they can be amazing snack foods that keep you from feeling horrible on strict weeks.

Most frozen packaged foods are a nutritional disaster. Act accordingly after reading the labels. Ask your food bank if they take frozen foods, some might although most won't because they don't have storage capacity for frozen foods.

Remove any granola bars or energy bars. Even among low carb energy bars, they just aren't great for weight loss because they are calorie dense, they are sweet and they activate the craving part of your brain which leads you to eat more of them. Bad idea, lose them.

Discard any sauces or dips that contain added sugars. This is a lot like the ketchup thing, but it's worth noting that some of these might be in your pantry and not your fridge. Lose them.

Get rid of any dried fruits, because they are all of the fiber and sugar with none of the water, so they are ultra calorie dense. Fantastic on a long hike to keep your energy up, but not good for weight loss. Also, later when you reintroduce them into your diet be careful to buy dried fruit that doesn't contain preservatives because those preservatives are known toxins that will mess with your health, and of course don't buy dried fruit with added sugar.

Toss any high carb snacks, such as pretzels or crackers, again, similar to earlier points, but pretzels are bread and salt. The bread is a complex carb, and the salt will make you retain

water and confuse your weight tracking from one day to the next.

Remove any ice cream or frozen yogurt from the freezer, even if it says Keto on the label. Just let it go.

Get rid of any flavored coffee creams or syrups, these are all bad, not just now but probably forever once your tastes change.

Remove any breads or bread like substances, such as bagels. I know, bagels are awesome, but so are burritos and one burrito could feed a family of four for a whole day. Kill them now before they kill your weight loss.

Discard any pastas. White pasta, colored vegetable pasta, whole wheat pasta, soba noodles, or ramen noodles, the ramen especially, oh my god ... so much salt, so many chemicals.

Remove any fruit spreads or jams whether they have added sugars or not, they are concentrated fruit which is sugar. I know I'm beating this into you now, but when you are losing weight, NO SUGAR.

Avoiding Temptation

The More Temptation You Experience the Less Willpower You Possess To Deny the Temptation.

With the above list of suggestions, and some common sense you'll be able to remove the temptations that beset you every time you look at them. Getting rid of temptation helps you to bolster your will power. Each day, you have a finite amount of will power to apply to all of the temptations you experience. This is one reason why you are more prone

to snack, and to drink alcohol as the day grows long and enters into night. The more temptation you experience the less willpower you possess to deny the temptation. Remember that, because it will save you.

Removing the temptation from your physical environment supports your decision to become the stronger, better you. So get started right away, and once the temptations are gone, move on to our next step.



CHAPTER 5: ALCOHOL HAS TO GO, AND WHY

There are several negative effects of alcohol on the body that you should understand before deciding to remove alcohol from your home entirely. Alcohol is expensive, so throwing away all of your bottles of expensive special occasion champagne, or those giant bottles of vodka, gin and tequila you keep around for “parties” can really hurt. First, you know you want to drink them, so ouch. Second, you know what you spent on them, so guilt. Third, you know you want to drink them, wait, did I say that already?

The Painful Truth You Must Face, Alcohol Is Killing You.

Damage to the Liver:

Alcohol can cause inflammation and scarring of the liver, leading to conditions such as alcoholic hepatitis and cirrhosis, both of which will kill you eventually.

Alcoholic hepatitis is a liver inflammation that occurs as a result of excessive alcohol consumption. It can lead to scarring of the liver (cirrhosis) and liver failure. Symptoms of alcoholic hepatitis can include abdominal pain, nausea, vomiting, fatigue, loss of appetite, and jaundice (yellowing of the skin and whites of the eyes). Treatment includes abstaining from alcohol, taking medications to reduce liver inflammation, and supportive care to manage symptoms. In severe cases, a liver transplant may be necessary, but that sucks because hospitals won't put alcoholics on the liver transplant list. So if you are including that in your list of parachute options, that's not going to work. Alcoholic hepatitis will kill you. Painfully.

Cirrhosis

Cirrhosis is a condition in which the liver becomes severely scarred, usually as a result of many years of continuous injury. The scar tissue that forms in the liver is not functional, and as it accumulates, it interferes with the liver's ability to function. Cirrhosis can be caused by a variety of factors, including long term alcohol abuse, viral hepatitis, and nonalcoholic fatty liver disease. Some symptoms of cirrhosis that may occur individually or together include fatigue, weakness, weight loss, loss of appetite, nausea, and yellowing of the skin and whites of the eyes (jaundice). In advanced stages of cirrhosis, fluid accumulation in the abdomen (ascites) and bleeding from blood vessels in the digestive tract may occur. Cirrhosis is a serious and life threatening condition that requires medical attention. Cirrhosis will kill you.

Increased Risk of Cancer:

Alcohol consumption has been linked to an increased risk of several types of cancer, including breast, colon, esophagus, and liver cancer. Cancer, if you get it and don't treat it in early stages, will kill you.

Alcohol can cause cancer in several ways. One way is by damaging DNA in cells, which can lead to mutations that can cause normal cells to become cancerous. Alcohol can also increase the levels of certain hormones, such as estrogen, in the body, which can increase the risk of certain types of cancer, such as breast cancer. Additionally, alcohol can weaken the immune system, making it more difficult for the body to fight off cancer cells. Finally, alcohol can increase the absorption of certain carcinogens, such as those found in tobacco smoke, which can also increase the risk of cancer.

Heart Problems:

Alcohol can raise blood pressure and increase the risk of heart attack, stroke, and other cardiovascular diseases. Basically your heart muscles, lungs, and brain dissolve over time. It'll kill you.

Excessive alcohol consumption can lead to a number of heart problems, including high blood pressure, irregular heart rhythm, and increased risk of stroke. Alcohol can also weaken the heart muscle, leading to heart failure. Heavy drinking can also lead to a condition called cardiomyopathy, in which the heart muscle becomes enlarged and weakened, leading to difficulty pumping blood effectively. Alcohol can also raise cholesterol levels and increase the risk of developing blood clots, which can lead to heart attacks, which will kill you.

Pancreatitis:

Chronic heavy alcohol consumption can lead to inflammation of the pancreas, a condition called pancreatitis.

Pancreatitis is a condition in which the pancreas, an organ located behind the stomach, becomes inflamed. This can cause symptoms such as abdominal pain, nausea, and vomiting. Alcohol consumption is a common cause of pancreatitis. When alcohol is consumed, it is metabolized in the liver and the byproducts of this metabolism can be toxic to the pancreas. Over time, this can lead to inflammation and pancreatitis. This one, probably won't kill you, but the pain? Whew, that's gonna suck.

Weakened Immune System:

Alcohol can weaken the immune system by inhibiting the production of immune cells and impairing their function. When you consume alcohol, it is absorbed through the stomach lining and intestines into the bloodstream where it is delivered to every part of the body. While being absorbed into every cell in your body it can affect the functioning of the immune system. Alcohol consumption can decrease the production of immune cells such as T lymphocytes and B lymphocytes, which help to fight off infections and diseases. Alcohol can also impair the function of immune cells, making them less effective at protecting the body from foreign invaders such as viruses and bacteria. Additionally, alcohol can increase inflammation in the body, which can further weaken the immune system. Chronic alcohol consumption can lead to a state of immune deficiency, making a person more susceptible to infections and diseases of all kinds, not exactly like AIDS, but sort of. Which means you are more susceptible to all sorts of other things that will kill you.

Cognitive Impairment:

Here's a fun one, you know how your brain is pretty much the whole enchilada when it comes to your work? You know, that thing that you do that makes your life possible? Right, alcohol is destroying it. Actively. Aggressively. And in a way that you can definitely feel as it's happening, but because of the other effects of alcohol you kind of care less. In fact, if you are drinking while reading this list and thinking, meh, I'll be fine, or meh, I don't care, that's the alcohol talking, because your sober self knows better.

Alcohol affects a laundry list of neurotransmitters in the following ways:

GABA: Alcohol activates the GABA neurotransmitter, which leads to feelings of relaxation and sedation. This is one of the main reasons people drink, so this activation is one we would consider purposeful on the part of the drinker.

Glutamate: Alcohol can inhibit the release of glutamate, which can lead to impaired cognitive function and memory loss. This is bad on an epic scale for people who think for a living.

Serotonin: Alcohol can increase the release of serotonin, which can lead to feelings of happiness and well being. Want to feel good in the short term, release some serotonin and enjoy, but the dark side of this is that serotonin production hitting an artificial spike means when you don't have the artificial trigger, your body isn't releasing the amount you've become accustomed to on it's own, which means you stop drinking and you start feeling less happy. It's a vicious chemical cycle that has nothing to do with bad judgement, depression, or life circumstances. It's just chemistry.

Dopamine: Alcohol can increase the release of dopamine, which can lead to feelings of pleasure and reward. This is exactly like the problem with artificial serotonin production. In the same way, dopamine makes you feel good, but your body can become accustomed to higher artificially created levels.

So when you stop drinking you go back down to natural levels and you feel less pleasure from natural stimulants in your normal environment. This of course motivates you to drink again, and again, and again.

Acetylcholine: Alcohol can inhibit the release of acetylcholine, which can lead to impaired cognitive function and memory loss, but also impaired or altered muscle function and more. Acetylcholine is a neurotransmitter which actively interfaces with many different body functions. It facilitates nerve impulses and partially controls muscle function, including the contraction of skeletal muscles and the relaxation of smooth muscles. Ever have a panic attack that caused your rib cage to contract painfully and uncontrollably? Right, so that kind of panic attack would be chemically exacerbated by the aforementioned effects coming together in a perfect storm in your chest. Not fun. Acetylcholine also plays a role in the function of the autonomic nervous system, which controls many automatic functions in the body, such as heart rate and digestion. In the brain, acetylcholine is involved in learning and memory, and it is also involved in the regulation of sleep and wakefulness which is why you wake up at 3am after a night of drinking when the alcohol starts to wear off. It's not to go to the bathroom, it's because Acetylcholine is out of whack in your body. Stop drinking and you will start sleeping better. Acetylcholine is synthesized from choline and acetyl coenzyme A, and it is broken down by the enzyme acetylcholinesterase. Dysfunction of the acetylcholine system has been linked to neurological and psychiatric problems.

Norepinephrine: Norepinephrine levels can increase in the brain in the presence of alcohol. Alcohol can stimulate the release of norepinephrine, as well as block the re-uptake of norepinephrine by neurons, leading to an increase in the levels of this neurotransmitter in the brain. This increase in norepinephrine can contribute to the stimulating effects of alcohol on the body and brain. Norepinephrine is a neurotransmitter hormone that plays several important roles

in the body. It is produced in the brain and the adrenal gland, and it is released in response to stress or low blood sugar. Norepinephrine when released increases your heart rate, blood pressure, and blood sugar levels. Blood vessels constrict and pupils dilate when it is released as well. It has a role in the body's fight or flight response to stressful situations, helping to prepare the body for physical activity in response to stress or danger. Norepinephrine also has effects on mood, attention, and memory, and it is thought to be involved in the development of anxiety and depression.

Alcohol Addiction:

Chronic heavy alcohol consumption can lead to addiction, psychological dependence and a chemical dependence.

Alcohol addiction is a chronic disorder characterized by an obsessive need to drink alcoholic beverages and a lack of ability to control the impulse to consume. The addiction can have serious short and long term consequences for an individual's health, and relationships.

It can be difficult to determine when alcohol abuse has crossed the line to addiction. Typically, having way too much to drink on one isolated night is not even a blip on the alcoholism radar. So how do you know? Some signs that you may be addicted to alcohol follow:

Drinking more than intended. If in the morning you say, I'm definitely not drinking anymore, and that night you find a drink in your hand, bingo, you're there.

Trying and failing to cut down, or stop drinking. The best of intentions are still only intentions, and saying "I can stop any time I want" is a dead give away that you won't stop until you hit some rock bottom level where you finally "want to."

Spending a significant amount of time recovering from alcohol exposure. Hangovers suck. Hangovers every morning are a very very bad sign.

Continuing to drink despite negative consequences such as problems with friendships, your marriage, your kids, or your work. These relationship problems can come from repeatedly abusing the ones you love either verbally or physically and the work problems are no different.

The social effects of alcohol addiction can be significant and can include strained or broken relationships with family and friends, legal problems, and financial problems.

The career effects of alcohol addiction can be severe, as alcohol abuse can lead to absenteeism, poor job performance, and job loss, and that's only if you are someone's employee. If you are a consultant or small business owner, you have so many responsibilities there are never enough hours in the day. If you spend hours every day drinking, you absolutely won't have enough time to keep up your skills, your bookkeeping, or your client relationships and ultimately you will run out of money and people willing to help you out.

Alcohol addiction can also have negative impacts on learning, as it can interfere with the ability to concentrate and retain information. This can make it difficult to perform well in school or on the job.

The psychological effects of alcohol addiction can be significant, as long term alcohol abuse can lead to mental health problems such as depression and anxiety. It can also worsen existing mental health conditions.

Alcohol addiction can have serious negative impacts on your body. As described in previous pages, alcohol lowers your inhibitions, your willpower, and your appetite suppression. The result related to your weight is that you become snacky, you are less able to turn off the desire to snack, and you just don't care because the part of your brain that usually cares is basically turned off until the alcohol wears off.

Alcohol brings out the most out-of-control version of you. That's not the best version of you that we're trying to build. It's counter productive, inefficient, and points to other

problems that need your attention. If you are using alcohol to avoid dealing with problems that make you sad, you have to figure out another way to deal with the situation that is making you sad, or the sadness, but you cannot just throw a wet blanket over the problem and expect it to go away. When you are drinking, the only thing going away is you.

When You Are Drinking, the Only Thing Going Away Is You.

If you think you may be addicted, don't just try to quit alone. The nature of addiction makes it immensely more difficult than you can appreciate to stop the addictive behavior. Treatment options for alcohol addiction include therapy, medication, and support groups. Personally, I think everyone is different and what works for one person won't necessarily work for another. Start with your primary care physician, explain the problem and tell them flat out that you want to be placed in an addiction program that is covered by your medical insurance. Treatment will start with an interview, nothing really difficult, but be completely honest in the interview or you won't get the right kind of help. The great news is, recently developed medications can be prescribed that can in some people make the craving for alcohol diminish to a level where you really CAN control your consumption. With the right treatment and support, it is possible to overcome alcohol addiction and regain control of your life, and repair your health.

This book and this plan won't work at all if you can't cut out the alcohol at least until you are done losing the weight to your goal. That being said, if you feel you might be addicted, please consider getting the help you need to stop drinking,

and please consider being a life long non drinker. Your primary care physician is the best place to start. What you say is simple. “I am drinking much much more than I should be, I’m concerned about my own safety and my health, and I don't know if it would be safe for me to stop without some kind of supervision or a plan. I would like to be referred to a specialist or a clinic that is covered by my medical insurance to start the process of detoxing and to treat my addiction.” Your doctor will take you seriously and will help.

A Very Personal Request

Hey, if this is all speaking to you personally, I just want to say thank you for taking care of yourself. You are worth protecting, and I’m glad you are still reading these words. Because if you are, it means you are very likely about to do something about it.



CHAPTER 6: RELEARNING SHOPPING

I took away your carbs, then your alcohol, you might be asking yourself at this point, “is this going to be all about what I can’t have? Cause screw that!”

No, it’s not all about restriction and rules.

If you enjoy shopping, this next part might actually be fun. If you like self motivation, you’ll definitely love this. There are some things I need you to buy. If your blood work comes back from the testing site the way I think it will, deficient in Vitamin D and with high LDL and low HDL, you probably want to get a salmon or other fish oil supplement containing vitamin D3. Ask your doctor about your specific dosage and how much magnesium to take with it to aid absorption. Be super consistent. This one thing has a large number of positive effects on you, it’s cheap and it’s easy. Why fix these levels? Read on.

A Bit About Cholesterol and Supplements

HDL (high-density lipoprotein) and LDL (low-density lipoprotein) are both types of cholesterol that circulate in the bloodstream. While both are necessary for normal body function, having too much LDL cholesterol in the blood can lead to the formation of plaque in the arteries, which can increase the risk of heart disease and stroke. Having high levels of HDL cholesterol is associated with a lower risk of these conditions. H = happy cholesterol.

LDL cholesterol is often referred to as "bad" cholesterol because it can build up in the arteries and contribute to atherosclerosis. HDL cholesterol is often referred to as "good" cholesterol because it helps to transport excess cholesterol out of the body.

Fish oil is a dietary supplement that is high in omega-3 fatty acids, which have been shown to have a number of potential health benefits, including reducing inflammation and improving cardiovascular health. There is some evidence to suggest that fish oil supplements may also help to lower LDL cholesterol levels and increase HDL cholesterol levels.

Where To Shop

Go to a trustworthy source, this could be WholeFoods, but they aren't sponsoring this book, so choose a nice local market if you have one you like. You're about to invest heavily in flash frozen pre portioned Salmon, haddock, cod, tuna, or whatever nice fatty fish you actually like. Don't buy a type of fish you hate for obvious reasons. There are plenty of options so choose wisely. Also buy veggies that are low in sugars (no carrots) but high in flavor (broccoli).

Buy and use lots of Kerrygold Butter, in the unsalted variety. Kerrygold is sold all over the world and happens to be grass fed butter, which makes a huge difference. Don't cheap out on the butter and don't be fooled by other brands. If it isn't 100% grass fed the health benefits disappear. There are

problems with conventional butter in the same way there are problems with conventional milk in the United States. We'll talk about fat and weight loss later, but for now, just know that you can lose weight by eating healthy fats. Also important, you just threw away all of the things you won't be eating for a very long time so here is our first opportunity to address self control and when it's easiest to find and leverage.

When to Shop

Your grocery shopping is moving to a whole new schedule. You're going to start shopping for food and beverages in the morning, best if it's after you've eaten breakfast, but before lunch. The reason is simple. Your motivations and priorities are different in the morning than they are later in the day. Also, if you don't buy the bad food in the first place, when you want it later in the evening it just won't be in the house to eat. You can't snack on foods you don't have, and you can't make yourself a drink with alcohol that isn't in the house. Sure you can go out for bad foods and drinks, but that requires effort and people are inherently lazy. You are beginning to learn how to use momentum to help you rather than hinder you.

Shopping for the Good Stuff

So what should I shop for, you might be thinking? In general, I love the idea proposed by others (not my idea, but a good one) of shopping the perimeter of the grocery store for your food. All of the center isle stuff is generally the stuff you want to avoid, so its a fun way to think about re-learning shopping. Once you have that idea in place, let's move on to more specifics. We've talked about Salmon, and how important that was to *my* process, but you don't need to eat just that one protein. Also, there are a lot of foods that are considered healthy, but I think it really helps to have a list of foods that you can safely buy at any grocery store and that

won't get in the way of your weight loss progress. Here's a good list to start you out for your first week, which will include a day of strict dieting and a day or two of maintenance. Week one, as you'll see is a cycling week, it's here to get you started These foods are great for week one. Choose among the items you like most.

Example Shopping List:

Avocado
Spinach
Broccoli
Asparagus
Cauliflower
Brussels sprouts
Radishes
Coconut
Olives
Avocado oil
Coconut oil
Olive oil
Ghee
Butter (Grass Fed)
Eggs
Beef
Pork
Bacon (no sugar added)
Lamb
Chicken
Salmon
Sardines
Mackerel
Tuna
Cod
Shrimp
Lobster
Crab

It's a short list, I know, but it's a good list full of healthy fats, healthy proteins, and healthy veggies. So now we know where you will shop, we know when you will shop, and we know what you will buy. We also know that you will suddenly be saving a huge amount of money (mostly because you

aren't buying alcohol, or buying delivery food). What will you do with all of that opportunistic cash flow? That's for the next chapter so read on.



CHAPTER 7: USING FINANCIAL INCENTIVES

It's hard to estimate how changing the food you buy will change your cash flow, but all of us who drink have an intuitive sense of how much of our income we must be wasting on alcohol. Lets be honest the wrong foods we buy are not far behind in that cost structure. Delivery and eating out for convenience take nutritional control and hang it out to dry. So let's play a little thought experiment on ourselves and make a general life improvement calculation. Keep in mind that if you drink as much as I suggest in this example, you should seek medical help right away. Quitting drinking heavily all at once without medical supervision can be dangerous to your health. You can quite literally have a stroke, so tread carefully and with a doctor to quit. Be careful and read on, this will just give you an idea of what you can do with all of that money you should now be saving.

Doing the Money Math

If someone drinks 5 gin drinks, and a gin bottle contains 750 ml of fluid, and that gin costs \$30 per bottle, how much money will someone save in a year of not drinking?

Well, assuming someone drinks 5 drinks per night, (admittedly a heavy drinker, but remember this is just an example) and each drink is made with 1.5 ounces of gin, then they are drinking 7.5 ounces of gin per night. Since there are 128 ounces in a gallon, this means they are drinking about 0.059 gallons of gin per night. If a bottle of gin contains 750 ml of fluid, and there are approximately 29.57 ml in an ounce, then a bottle of gin contains about 25.36 ounces. This means that the person is drinking about 2.3 bottles of gin per week, or about 120 bottles of gin per year.

If each bottle of gin costs \$30, then the person is spending about \$3,600 per year on gin.

What if You Put Your Money Elsewhere?

If invested in an S&P 500 tracking stock fund, what would \$3600 per year invested grow to over time?

The S&P 500 has historically enjoyed an average annual return of between 9 and 10%. So we'll use 10% as our calculation basis. It makes the math easy.

If you invest \$3,600 per year in an S&P 500 tracking fund and earn an average annual return of 10%, after 5 years you would have about \$22,194, but after 10 years, you would have about \$49,425. Consider this though, this lifestyle change you are about to make is going to be for the rest of your new healthy life, so lets go further. After 15 years, you would have about \$108,471, and after 20 years, you would have about \$239,661. All that just from not doing something that admittedly is also actually killing you slowly, killing your earnings potential and killing your overall quality of life.

Compounding Earnings

Now, what if you reinvested your earnings from that investment back into the same fund and never took any money out, ie: taking advantage of compounding?

Well, if you reinvest your earnings back into the same fund, your investment will benefit from compounding interest, meaning that you will earn interest on your original investment as well as on any returns you earn. This can lead to a higher overall return on your investment.

For example, using the same assumptions as before (an average annual return of 10% and an annual investment of \$3,600), if you reinvest your earnings back into the same fund, your investment would grow as follows:

After 5 years: \$26,928

After 10 years: \$76,462

After 15 years: \$218,734

After 20 years: \$626,756

That money is currently serving you as maybe a really poor self medication, or a way to loosen up your personality at parties, but if you are drinking every day, you can put your own numbers into that calculation to see how much money you could have by 20 years after making your decision to not drink. Do what you will with that math, but it's an impressive amount of money any way you slice it

So that's what happens if you stop shopping for your favorite bottle of alcohol and start shopping for S&P 500 funds, but what about that food savings, and what if you already have a retirement fund and you want a more motivational investment opportunity?

Investing in Fun

Well, let's put 2 and 2 together shall we. You are losing weight, you're going to start working out soon. You are on the way to looking really good in a swim suit, you are on the way

to having stronger muscles, you are on your way to greater physical flexibility and reduced body aches and pains.

What if you take that money you save each week and you open a new bank account, give it a label like “New Me Vacation Fund”, and then you put all of your saved money into that account. At the end of this process, when you look and feel terrific, you are stronger, and more flexible, and you are naturally happier and looking for fun things to do, won’t it be great to have a fund to take you on that dream vacation you’ve never felt confident or strong enough to take?

Reward Yourself With a Vacation

Here’s a short list of sexy, adventurous, highly active vacations you could plan for a two week vacation after you’ve hit your target weight and fitness level, along with estimated costs for one person.

Hiking the Himalayas: This vacation would involve hiking through the beautiful mountains of Nepal, with the opportunity to stay in traditional guesthouses and monasteries along the way. Estimated cost: \$2,000 to \$5,000

Whitewater rafting in Costa Rica: Costa Rica is known for its gorgeous rivers and majestic rainforests, it is the perfect destination for whitewater rafting. You can zip line and ride horses on beaches and stay in world class resorts. Estimated cost: \$1,500 \$4,000 and up depending on the resort.

Scuba diving at the Great Barrier Reef: The Great Barrier Reef is world famous for its unmatched ocean life, making it a top pick destination for scuba diving. You could also enjoy snorkeling, kayaking, and other water sports. Estimated cost: \$2,000 \$5,000

Mountain biking in Moab, Utah: Moab, known for its geology and the many trails for avid mountain bikers, would make a memorable destination. Not into mountain biking? It’s still a great place to go camping or hiking to challenge your newly athletic body and stamina. Estimated cost: \$1,500 \$4,000

Surfing in Bali: Bali is known for its beautiful beaches and excellent surf, making it the perfect destination for a surf vacation. Bali is well known for it's luxurious resort living, so treat yourself to a relaxing time in this remote part of the world. Estimated cost: \$1,500 \$4,000

Any drool worthy beach destination: A beach vacation is a great way to relax, rejuvenate, and show off your new body. You can also usually find a beach destination that won't break the bank. Look for fun unexpected places like Croatia, and go have an adventure! Estimated cost: \$1,000 \$5,000

A spa or wellness retreat: If you've gotten seriously into Yoga during your transformation, you may be seriously motivated to do a yoga retreat. Most also have a spa like environment to pamper yourself and focus on your physical and emotional well being. Estimated cost: \$1,500 \$4,000

A hiking or outdoor adventure: If Moab isn't your thing, there are tons of places all over the world. The Grand Canyon is a great example and even has a hotel right near the rim of the canyon in Arizona. Estimated cost: \$1,000 \$3,000

A ski or snowboarding destination: If you enjoy winter sports you probably have a dream destination in mind already. Here in California we have Tahoe and Mammoth available as amazing destinations, but you could hit Colorado, or any other famously amazing ski destination. Of note here, after you have done yoga for 6 months or so, you won't know it until you experience it, but your ankles will be so much stronger you'll be a dramatically better skier! Estimated cost to head to the slopes to show off your mad skills? \$1,500 \$4,000

A sports retreat. Maybe you found HIIT, or tennis or some other fun sport during your transformation. Most sports attract enough interest to spawn camps or retreats where you can spend a week or two working on your technique while also showing off your physique. Loosely estimated cost: \$1,000 \$5,000

Whatever you decide to do, clearly you can save up enough money with your food and alcohol savings to have an adventure that adds benefit beyond the relief of physical fitness. You can enjoy something new, adventurous and fun that speaks directly to you, and you can pay for it with the money you saved by spending it in better ways to promote your long term health. The result? You live longer, in a body you are more comfortable living in, doing things that make you excited for living. Win, win, win.



CHAPTER 8: USING THE PRINCIPLES OF FASTING

The plan in this book does not incorporate intermittent fasting, but once you hit your target weight, you'll be in maintenance mode forever, and a tool I have found to be helpful in much the same way that a strict week is helpful, is an intermittent fasting schedule where you avoid two of your normal three meals per day. Again, don't do this until you've hit your target weight and you've been coasting in maintenance mode for a while. If you find your weight creeping up you can throw in a few days of intermittent fasting easily and it will very probably get your weight down to your set point quickly. You'll be weighing daily forever so you can see your weight creep up in real time and react to it quickly so it doesn't get out of control again.

Now we're going to explore the concept of fasting. Nothing too extreme so don't worry, and don't get all freaked out about the word "fasting." Fasting has been used for

centuries as a way to improve health and well being, with research showing that it can have many positive impacts on our body, including inflammation reduction, weight management, and even extended lifespan. Fasting isn't something you just jump into haphazardly though. Success with fasting will depend on how you do it. If done with plenty of water and consuming one meal per day (no fewer than one small meal per day with no snacking), then there are virtually no downsides other than feeling hungry when you start. It is essential to discuss any plans to fast with your doctor before starting. Follow your doctor's orders closely. By skipping breakfast and maybe dinner too you won't be struggling to cut calories or volume from a meal, you simply cut out the unneeded meals which helps reduce calorie intake for the day.

While fasting for more than one 24 hour period at a time is a time honored practice in many cultures, and it can be done safely to achieve health benefits, we're not really talking about engaging in that kind of fasting here. Instead we're talking about skipping meals on purpose according to a plan, and cycling in periods where you do not fast intermittently.

Experts suggest that intermittent fasting may help improve metabolism by alternating between periods of eating and periods of fasting which gives your digestive system time to rest.

Fasting can also lead to reduced stress levels due to less decision fatigue related to what food choices you need to make each day, as well as improving mental clarity by helping facilitate neurogenesis (the growth of new neurons) in the brain.

Fasting Can Also Lead to Reduced Stress Levels due to Less Decision Fatigue Related to What Food Choices You Need To Make Each Day, As Well as Improving Mental Clarity by Helping Facilitate Neurogenesis (the Growth of New Neurons) in the Brain.

So while some may think that skipping meals will leave them feeling weak or fatigued over time, in reality it can actually boost energy levels when done correctly.

Fasting is a centuries old practice that has been used to improve physical and mental health. Research shows that fasting can have many positive impacts on our body, including inflammation reduction, weight management, and even an extended lifespan.

The Benefits of Fasting

Fasting has been shown to boost the immune system by reducing inflammation throughout the body and aiding in weight loss. A study conducted by researchers at Harvard Medical School found that intermittent fasting was associated with reduced levels of inflammatory markers in both men and women over a period of 6 months. In addition, researchers at Columbia University found that after 12 weeks of intermittent fasting there was a significant decrease in fat mass as well as visceral fat. Evidence also suggests that regular fasting may lead to an extended lifespan due to its ability to reduce oxidative stress.

How to Fast Safely

If you are given the green light by your doctor to begin fasting, here are some tips for safely making the most out of your fast.

Start slowly don't jump right into long periods without food, begin with shorter windows such as 12 or 16 hours between meals so your body can adjust.

Stay hydrated drink plenty of water throughout your fast; herbal teas without sugar are fine but avoid caffeinated beverages as the caffeine can dehydrate you and mess with your energy regulation.

Avoid snacking. Eating during your fast ends the fast, hard stop. If you find yourself craving food make sure you are drinking enough water and if you need to end your fast, just end the fast. You are only fasting for 24 hours or less anyway, if you feel the need to eat something, just do. It's fine. You'll be fine.

Finally, listen to your body. If you experience any adverse effects while fasting stop immediately and contact your doctor.

The History of Fasting

Fasting isn't weird, regardless of what you might think. Fasting has been a part of cultures and religions around the world for as far back as we have written records. Historians have documented fasting practices dating back to ancient times. Fasting was part of worship and spiritual practice in the Judaeo Christian tradition. Fasting was also prominent in festivals celebrating various harvest or springtime traditions in places like India, China and Japan.

Fasting is often closely linked with religion due to its potential to bring people closer to their faith. As in, "Oh God, this fasting thing really sucks, please save me from this fasting." Or, also a prevalent sentiment "Lord, deliver me from

the absence of food.” Also the ever popular “Oh higher power of the Universe, make time move quicker so I can be done with this Fast.”

In all seriousness, removing food from the equation takes one of the fundamentals of biology off the table consciously and literally. This freedom from needing to think about maintaining a biological imperative can be mentally channeled with great focus into a meditative state. Essentially food is treated as a distraction, without which one can become more focused, more centered and in many traditions it is believed those qualities allow greater closeness with God. Ramadan is an important month long period of fasting in the Islamic faith for example. During Ramadan, Muslims abstain from food and drink during daylight hours, which helps them focus more deeply on prayer and devotion.

In addition to its religious roots, fasting has also been used for health benefits throughout history. Ancient Egyptians would use fasting as a way to purify the body before engaging in major events or ceremonies. In the ancient Greek world, Hippocrates himself was known to recommend fasting as a natural remedy for digestive issues or even mental health problems like depression.

Today, intermittent fasting has become popular among those who lead sedentary lifestyles, but want to lose weight or improve overall health and fitness levels. By limiting caloric intake, usually for 2 to 3 days per week in an 8 hour window, individuals are able to reap the health benefits associated with increased fat burning while maintaining their technical job roles that require sustained concentration throughout the day. Stories of success abound. Many people have reported drastic improvements in health markers like cholesterol levels, hormonal balance and improved mental clarity due to intermittent fasting.

The Science of Fasting

Fasting triggers a profound metabolic shift in the body which can be explained by a number of physiological and biochemical processes. At a basic level, the body quickly recognizes that food is scarce and begins to switch from the usual glucose based metabolism process to fat based metabolism. This is similar but not the same as engaging in a ketogenic diet because with fasting your body has nothing to burn but the fat and protein stores in your body. Body builders will engage in what they call “cutting” where they lose body fat to an extreme before competitions. During that time they have to be very careful about how they eat, because your body burns whatever is onboard if you don’t give it enough calories to run. That means your body will actually burn muscle tissue, and you can lose the muscle mass you’ve worked so hard to achieve in workouts. When the body is starved of input, it will burn your onboard energy stores. For most of us, that means body fat. The point of the keto idea is, you use special types of fat input to retrain your body to burn fat for energy. When your body goes through the fat you are ingesting, it’s primed to start burning the onboard stores of fat for energy rather than haphazardly turning to muscle tissue or shutting down bodily functions to conserve energy. That energy conservation is what happens when you experience a plateau in weight loss, and it’s why you have to shake things up from time to time. Your body is all about survival, so it doesn’t want to burn the onboard fat stores, especially not if the body is under stress. That’s why I don’t want you engaging in fasting during this program. I only want you doing this once you’ve already lost the weight, in order to shave off a pound or two as needed, and for the other tangential health benefits.

When your body shifts to burning fat, the shift is signaling for mitochondrial biogenesis, where new mitochondria are created within our cells for more efficient energy production, allowing us to constantly draw energy from our stored fat

reserves instead of needing immediate energy from food sources.

At a cellular level, fasting also triggers autophagy, whereby dead or depleted proteins and metabolites are broken down and recycled in order to reallocate resources towards more important functions. This helps maintain cell integrity while preserving vital energy stores, but it's also not burning fat, so this aspect of lengthy fasting can actually slow your metabolism and keep you from burning fat, instead shutting down the speed of your metabolism so your body can cope. On the plus side, fasting has also been shown to reduce inflammation, reducing the risk of chronic diseases such as cardiovascular disease, diabetes or cancer. It can improve cognitive function and boost overall mental well being due to its modulatory effects on hormones like noradrenaline and cortisol. So as you can see, it's not a simple on and off thing, and if you ever do participate in a longer fast, you'll want to do so with guidance and maybe even supervision by a professional to be sure you don't over do it on your own.

While fasting can seem daunting at first, with an understanding of its scientific basis as outlined here, it can be both manageable and downright beneficial for those looking for longer term health benefits.



CHAPTER 9: THE EFFECTS OF HYDRATION

You're going to be drinking a lot of filtered water. You don't like the taste of water, or you think water is boring? Water has no flavor? I don't care. You're drinking a lot of filtered water regardless. How much? As much as you need to not feel hungry between meals. You can also drink teas and coffees, but watch your caffeine intake as it can have an impact on your heart and anxiety levels, and coffee can actually dehydrate you so be careful. Get doctors advice on quantities of units of coffee and black or green tea. Herbal tea is zero problem unless it somehow contains sugar in which case stay away.

Water is obviously essential for life. It is the most abundant substance in the human body and plays a crucial role in maintaining overall health and wellness.

The Effect of Hydration on Weight Loss

Adequate hydration can help to regulate appetite and metabolism, making it easier to maintain a healthy weight. When the body is dehydrated, it can mistake thirst for hunger, so you eat when you don't need to. Adequate hydration can also help to increase the number of calories burned at rest and during exercise, which can aid in weight loss. Hydration causes this increase through a process called thermogenesis. Thermogenesis is the process of generating heat in the body and it requires energy, which results in the burning of calories. When adequately hydrated our bodies increase the production of a hormone called norepinephrine. Norepinephrine is a hormone that plays a role in the body's "fight or flight" response and it is also involved in the regulation of metabolism. When the body is dehydrated, the production of norepinephrine decreases, which can lead to a decrease in metabolism. Getting enough water into your body can help to increase the production of norepinephrine, which can increase metabolism and the number of calories burned at rest.

The Effect of Hydration on Exercise

During exercise, hydration also plays a crucial role in maintaining energy levels. When the body is dehydrated, it can lead to fatigue, making it harder to sustain exercise. Adequate hydration can help to maintain energy levels, making it easier to exercise for longer periods and burn more calories. This becomes more obvious the more your specific exercise is done in heat or humidity, where your body is losing water much faster than normal. This is why it is so important to drink several quarts of water during the day leading up to practicing Hot Yoga.

Dehydration can cause muscle fatigue and cramping. There's nothing like a severe muscle cramp to put a pause in your otherwise fantastic workout.

Electrolytes

Just drinking water may not be enough to keep you properly hydrated for your needs. Electrolytes are important for maintaining hydration during intense physical activity. Electrolytes such as sodium, potassium, and magnesium help to balance fluids in the body and are essential for proper muscle and nerve function. Drinking sports drinks containing electrolytes, or eating foods rich in electrolytes, can help to maintain hydration during intense physical activity, but most drinks of that kind are extremely high in sugars and calories, so they are off the table. At Hot Yoga studios, they frequently provide Himalayan pink salt to take before practice. Himalayan pink salt is considered to be a healthier alternative to regular iodized table salt for several reasons.

Himalayan pink salt is a natural and unrefined salt, while regular iodized table salt is refined and often contains added chemicals such as anti-caking agents. Himalayan pink salt is hand-mined from ancient sea salt deposits in the Himalayan mountains, and it contains a variety of minerals and trace elements, such as potassium, magnesium, and calcium, that are not found in regular table salt. These minerals and trace elements can provide health benefits, such as supporting the health of the bones and muscles, regulating fluid balance, and maintaining a healthy pH balance in the body.

Himalayan pink salt is less processed than regular table salt, and it contains less sodium. Regular table salt goes through a process of heating, bleaching, and adding chemicals, which removes many of the natural minerals and increases the sodium content. Himalayan pink salt is minimally processed, and it contains less sodium, which can be beneficial for people who need to limit their sodium intake.

Himalayan pink salt is also rich in iodine, which is essential for the proper functioning of the thyroid gland, which is responsible for regulating the metabolism and energy production in the body. Regular table salt is usually fortified with iodine, but Himalayan pink salt contains iodine naturally.

A Note About Food Safety

One note about pink salt and Himalayan pink salt. They aren't the same thing. Research the source of your salt online, you can look up the manufacturer by brand and find information about where the salt comes from. Some pink salts have been tested and found to contain a wide variety of unwanted naturally occurring minerals including ones that are actually radioactive, and definitely toxic. We've already learned that we can't really trust the FDA to keep poisons off the shelf, so do your own research and be safe. One easy way to check the safety of foods in general is to see if they are allowed in other countries around the developed world. If a food available in stores in the United States is banned in the EU because of known toxicity, you probably want to avoid that food forever.

Detox

Detoxification is the process of removing harmful toxins and waste products from the body. The body has several natural detoxification systems, such as the liver, kidneys, lymphatic system, and skin, that work to remove toxins and keep the body healthy.

The liver is one of the main organs responsible for detoxification. It filters toxins and waste products from the blood and converts them into a form that can be excreted by the kidneys. The kidneys also play a crucial role in detoxification by filtering waste products from the blood and excreting them in the urine. The lymphatic system also helps

to remove toxins and waste products from the body by transporting fluids and waste products through the lymph vessels to the lymph nodes. The skin is also a part of the detoxification process, eliminating toxins through sweat. When the skin can eliminate toxins it takes some of the load away from the liver and kidneys which is another reason why sweating profusely is so good for you.

When the body is overloaded with toxins, the natural detoxification systems can become overwhelmed, and it can lead to a variety of health problems such as fatigue, headaches, skin problems, and weakened immunity. By supporting the body's natural detoxification systems, you can improve overall health.

There are several ways to support the body's natural detoxification systems. Sweating profusely is one great way, which is why the Hot in Hot Yoga is so important. You can also support detoxification by consuming the right foods and supplements and drinking plenty of water to help flush out your system. All of that being true, engaging in regular intense physical activity to increase blood flow and enhance the function of the lymphatic system is my favorite tool.

Avoiding or limiting exposure to toxins such as smoking, alcohol, and pollution, can help to reduce the toxin load on the body's systems.

The Effect of Water on Your Workout

Staying hydrated is an important part of maintaining good health. Not only does it help to regulate temperature, eliminate waste and lubricate joints, but it can also have a significant impact at the molecular level. In fact, proper hydration plays a crucial role in every single metabolic process that takes place in our bodies.

Proper hydration helps to maintain the balance of electrolytes in the body which are essential for nerve transmission, muscle contraction and heart function. When we become dehydrated even slightly, these processes can

be impaired leading to fatigue and other physical ailments such as headaches or dizziness. Additionally, dehydration can cause cells to become less efficient at absorbing nutrients from food which in turn affects their ability to produce energy via respiration this is why drinking water all day before exercising is so important. It takes water about 20 minutes to absorb into the body enough to have an impact on your muscle fatigue, balance, and stamina, so sipping water during a workout is only helpful to your body 20 minutes after you consume the water. It's important for your recovery though so keep that water handy during your workout and remember sip, don't guzzle, to avoid mid workout nausea.

At the molecular level, water molecules act as solvents; they break down large molecule structures into smaller ones which allow them to move through cell membranes more easily. This allows them access into cells where vital metabolic reactions happen enabling digestion and nutrient absorption.

Proper hydration can help to maintain the structure of proteins in cells and has been found to be essential for DNA replication. Without enough water, these processes become less efficient leading to a weakened immune system or slower recovery times after workouts. If you don't drink enough water, and you have unexplained health problems, especially headaches and muscle cramps, simply drinking more water could actually be all you need to help.

The Chemistry of Water

Chemically speaking, water molecules are composed of two hydrogen atoms and one oxygen atom (H₂O). When ingested into the body, these molecules travel through the bloodstream and into cells throughout the body where they can be used for various metabolic processes such as creating energy or assisting with muscle contraction. As water passes through cells it also flushes out any unwanted material such as waste products or toxins like heavy metals which may have

been introduced via food or drink consumption. This process is known as osmosis and it allows our bodies to clean out the gunk.

Osmosis

Osmosis happens primarily because of differences in concentration between two solutions in your body. If you have a solution with a higher concentration of water molecules (low solute) and a second solution with a lower concentration of water molecules (high solute), the water molecules will move from the high to low concentration side in order to equalize the concentrations on both sides. This process is referred to as diffusion, and it is how our bodies remove toxins.

The more water we drink, the higher our internal “water” concentration is going to be relative to any potential toxins in our body. This means that there is more of a gradient for the water molecules to move out of the cells, thus allowing our internal systems to flush out the unwanted materials. Not enough water in your body and those systems won’t have a sufficient gradient to enable the flushing

How Much Is Enough?

The amount of water a person needs depends on their age, gender, weight, activity level, and other factors such as pregnancy or breastfeeding. Generally speaking however, adults who are not exercising or in a weight loss program should aim for at least 8 cups (2 liters) per day while children should be drinking 3 to 5 cups (1 liter). If you are losing weight and exercising you should double those numbers to create a proper gradient to flush the additional toxins being released into your body by the thermogenic process that is burning fat in your body for energy.

Toxins Being Held in Your Body Fat Are Released Into Your Body When the Fat Is Burned for Energy.

Toxins being held in your body fat are released into your body when the fat is burned for energy. This can result in a higher than expected toxicity in the body that must be flushed out. As we just learned, you must have a proper amount of water in your system to provide the necessary gradient to enable the osmotic flushing of toxins from your body. If you are also working out and sweating a lot your water requirement goes up because you must replace the water you are sweating out. While the process of sweating is fantastic for your body and your skin in particular, it's dangerous to sweat out and not replace the water in your body. In fact, if you've ever been in Arizona in the summertime, you know that just walking from building to building outdoors in 120 degree heat with almost no humidity can suck the moisture out of you more than any workout. You

have to keep water with you and drink frequently just to maintain your hydration levels under those conditions.

Normally, hydration can come from both food sources such as fruits and vegetables as well as beverages like coffee or tea, but on our journey we're going to keep it to good old filtered water, and lots of it.

Finally, it should be noted that there are certain medical conditions which can affect a person's ability to stay properly hydrated, such as kidney disease or diabetes, as well as conditions that affect perspiration like hyperhidrosis. Hyperhidrosis can be classified into two main types: primary and secondary hyperhidrosis. Primary hyperhidrosis is a condition that is not caused by an underlying medical condition, and it is typically localized to specific areas of the body. Secondary hyperhidrosis, on the other hand, is caused by an underlying medical condition, such as an overactive thyroid gland or an infection.

People with conditions like hyperhidrosis should talk to their doctor about their individual hydration needs. By understanding our bodies' need for water and being mindful of good hydration habits, we can make it to our weight loss goals, and support a long life of health and well-being once we get there.



CHAPTER 10: UNDERSTANDING THE STRICT WEEK, AND WHY IT IS STRICTLY NECESSARY

Before you begin planning your meals, it is worthwhile to familiarize yourself with the nutritional value and calorie counts for various foods. This can help you make informed decisions about which foods to include in your daily meals, as well as how much of each item to consume. Keeping these values in mind when tracking your carbs will also make it easier to hit a specific target on a daily basis.

Eating for Health vs. Eating for Loss

When embarking on a weight loss plan, eating ‘healthy’ does not equate to losing weight. While nutritious foods are

essential for overall health and well-being, if your goal is weight loss then consuming enough calories and carbs below the target set by your doctor should be your priority.

Low carb diets may be beneficial initially when undertaking rapid fat loss, but they don't work if you stay on them for too long for a variety of reasons. Requesting a target carbohydrate count from the doctor is highly recommended. Also don't make the mistake of thinking you can lose faster by just taking the Strict Week part of this plan and implementing it exclusively. You will plateau if you do that, it's a waste of time and bad for you. So don't do it.

So What Is Strict Week and Why Do We Do It?

For me, Strict Week eventually became a full week of only Salmon filets and water. It was hard to do, but it worked great as long as I cycled into a maintenance week right after the strict week.

Strict week means strict keto in this plan. Strict keto, is a version of the ketogenic diet that is even more restrictive in terms of carbohydrate intake and outlining how much fat and protein to consume and of what type. Typically, the strict keto diet limits carbohydrate intake to 20-50 grams per day, while also maintaining a high fat intake (70-80% of total calories) and moderate protein intake (20-25% of total calories). That might surprise you because you may have heard that keto is like Atkins (which was all about the protein) This is not Atkins, so ditch that idea. The goal of strict keto is to achieve a state of ketosis, in which the body is primarily using ketones for energy instead of glucose. Which means it's burning fat and not carbs to run.

Ketones and Ketosis Explained

Ketones are a type of chemical compound that are produced by the liver when the body is in a state of ketosis. Ketosis is a metabolic state that occurs when the body is not getting enough carbohydrates from the diet to use for energy, so it begins to burn fat for fuel instead. (Sounds exciting right? This is what we've been hoping for!) The process of breaking down fat for energy results in the production of ketones.

The main types of ketones produced in the body are acetoacetate, beta-hydroxybutyrate (BHB), and acetone. Acetoacetate is the first ketone produced in the liver, it's then converted to BHB and acetone. BHB is the most stable and most efficiently used ketone by the body, it's also the main ketone that can be measured in the blood, urine, and breath. (See the section on Lumen later in the book.)

Ketones work chemically by providing an alternative energy source for the body, specifically for the brain, which normally runs on glucose. When glucose is not available, the brain can use ketones as an alternative energy source, which is why ketones are often referred to as "brain fuel."

The body uses ketones in several ways, ketones can provide energy to the brain and other organs, they can also help to increase energy levels, and they can also aid in fat loss by helping the body burn fat for energy instead of carbohydrates. Additionally, ketones can also help to improve insulin sensitivity, which can be beneficial for people with type 2 diabetes.

To enter ketosis, the body needs to switch from using glucose (sugar) as its primary fuel source to using ketones, which are produced when the body breaks down fat. This shift typically occurs when carbohydrate intake is limited to less than 50 grams per day, or to achieve ketosis more quickly less than 10 to 20 grams per day. While I try to help you consume as close to zero carbs on strict weeks in this plan as possible, it is pretty much impossible to eat food and

eliminate carbs completely. Trace amounts of carbohydrates are present in meats even if sugar isn't used in processing them, and even nearly pure fat sources contain some carbohydrates.

Calories are of course also important in the process of losing overall weight, even though we aren't focusing exclusively on counting them. Weight loss is complicated, so it's helpful to follow a plan like this one that has worked for others. Calorie counting is a back of mind task in this plan. It's largely handled for you with food choices. You'll notice that in the meal plan chapter, calorie dense foods are pretty much missing unless the density is in good fats, which actually help to train your body to burn fats rather than glucose for energy.

What You Will Be Eating on Strict Week

Since the goal is to limit your carbohydrate intake to less than 20 grams per day, you'll want to focus on foods that are not only low in carbs, but also high in healthy fats and protein. One word on healthy fats. One thing I learned from Dave Asprey's book *The Bulletproof Diet*, keto can be dirty. There are healthy fats, and there are very unhealthy fats. I highly recommend picking up that book if you haven't seen it before. There's much more information in there than I could possibly summarize here, but I do want to point out one very unhealthy fat category. Vegetable oil is one of those things you just shouldn't ever use, and you should be very careful with reading the labels on long shelf life products sold with a Keto label as they likely contain vegetable oil. The science behind it goes as follows.

Vegetable oils, including soybean, corn, and sunflower oil, which are high in omega-6 fatty acids. The high heat and chemical processing necessary to extract oils from these sources can result in increased levels of omega-6 fatty acids. Omega-6 fatty acids are linked to inflammation and an increased risk of chronic diseases like heart disease and cancer.

Some vegetable oils, such as partially hydrogenated vegetable oil, contain something called a trans fat. Trans fats are created during hydrogenation, which is the process of making liquid oils solid at room temperature (vegetable shortening). Trans fats are known to increase LDL (bad) cholesterol and decrease HDL (good) cholesterol, which can increase the risk of heart disease.

It isn't just the heat that makes these things bad, it's also the chemicals required for extraction. The chemical solvents used to extract the oils leaves a residue that you end up consuming. Hexane is a common solvent used in the extraction of soybean oil. You probably already guessed this, but hexane really shouldn't be consumed in any amount by

anyone...ever. While the trace amounts of hexane left in vegetable oil are typically low, the negative health impacts at toxic concentrations include nervous system damage, skin irritation, respiratory problems, and digestive problems.

There are good vegetable oils out there, and aside from MCT or cold pressed coconut oil which I recommend for a wide variety of culinary uses, you can use avocado oil, and olive oil, which have shown great benefits in studies. You want to use only cold pressed oils though, so read the labels. Why are olives and avocados and coconuts so good for oil? Because you can get the oil out of them without applying chemical solvents, or high heat extraction methods. It's kind of like what you experience when you roll a lemon under your palm on a counter, as you roll it around the oil from the rind just comes out on its own from the minimal force of you pushing against the fruit. If the source fruit or vegetable releases its oil that easily, it's a great candidate. Also, don't forget about animal fats. Butter is a great source of energy, and if it comes from grass fed animals, you realize all of the benefits that come from the healthy animal eating its evolutionarily developed diet. If you use the butter to make Ghee, you get all that benefit with no carbs at all. (Ghee is just butter with the milk solids removed making it shelf stable and eliminating the carbs.)

Now, beyond the healthy fats, and unhealthy fats, let's talk about actual veggies. Some good vegetable options you can eat, even on strict week, include non-starchy vegetables like spinach, asparagus, and broccoli, as well as healthy fruits with tons of fats like avocados (yes, avocado is a fruit, technically botanically a berry). The avocado is high in healthy monounsaturated fats, fiber, and vitamins and minerals like potassium, vitamin K, and vitamin E, which makes it a smart addition to a strict keto diet. In general, one medium-sized avocado (approximately 150 grams or 5.3 ounces) contains around 12 grams of carbohydrates, of which about 10 grams are dietary fiber. This means that a single avocado has a net carb count of approximately **2 grams**. It's the net carb count

you need to track in your less than 20 number, so avocado is a great way to get lots of the nutrition you need on a strict day.

This Means That a Single Avocado Has a Net Carb Count of Approximately 2 Grams.

What about the proteins? While we are not engaging in a high protein diet here, good quality, high fat content proteins will be a staple on strict days. You can eat protein-rich foods like fatty fish, and grass-fed beef for example. Be aware that some cuts of meat may contain hidden carbohydrates, so it's best to check the nutrition labels where possible. For example, I was shocked to find that you have to search for bacon labelled as “no sugar added” in order to avoid those hidden sugars. The same goes for most types of sausage, and even some hard aged meats like salami, and prepared meats such as pre-cooked ham. Read those labels.

Other foods that can be incorporated into a strict ketogenic diet include eggs, hard cheeses that are highest in fat and lowest in carbohydrates, and full-fat dairy products like heavy cream and butter. Don't buy fake butter, just don't do it. The same reasons apply to fake butter that I described above related to vegetable oil. Remember with all of your fat intake that it's important to be mindful of portion sizes. Your healthy fat intake is supposed to be up around 80% of your food intake calories, not food intake volume. That's important so I'm going to repeat it. Don't just look at your food and judge based on what you see, it's not about the volume, it's about the energy content in the food, which we measure as calories. One ounce (28 grams) of MCT oil contains approximately 240 calories, while one ounce (28 grams) of

broccoli contains approximately 10 calories. This means that there is a difference of approximately 230 calories between an ounce of MCT oil and an ounce of broccoli. Fats are super calorie packed, so be sure you aren't using too much.

You may be asking yourself, calories? What about carbs? I know, it's all important and you have to build an intuitive understanding of the relative values of each. Calories are important, but so are carbs for totally different reasons. You can't just cut calories to lose weight because that is only one component. You can't just cut carbs to lose weight either because you could go crazy with healthy fats and proteins and never get anywhere. You have to think about both because remember, what you are trying to do is get your body to burn your body fat for energy. You are just creating the perfect conditions for your body to do that.

You Have To Think About Both (Calories and Carbs) Because Remember, What You Are Trying To Do Is Get Your Body To Burn Your Body Fat for Energy. You Are Just Creating the Perfect Conditions for Your Body To Do That.

I'm asking you to think about carbs more, and calories less because if you follow the plan you won't be consuming foods that contain many calories while you are on your strict keto week. When it comes to maintenance week you will be adding foods back in that make good health sense, and you'll be tracking effects, so you'll understand clearly the cause and effect relationship. By cycling strict and maintenance, you'll be giving your body the cycles it needs to do the right thing over the long term with your dietary impact on your body. So,

you have to do all of it, you can't just pick out the bits you like and discard the rest.

Remember, the key to a successful ketogenic effort is to focus on whole, nutrient-dense foods that are low in carbohydrates and high in healthy fats and protein while keeping a sense for how many calories you are consuming along the way. The secret to using ketosis to lose weight is to cycle it with a safe and sane maintenance diet when you're not on keto.

What You Won't Be Eating on Strict Week

It's one thing to know what to eat, but I have found that knowing what NOT to eat is actually more helpful when I'm trying to find a loophole in the system so I can have something I want without any guilt. Keto is pretty straight forward, but here are some easy to follow guidelines so you know for sure not to eat some keto disabling foods and drinks.

High-carbohydrate vegetables like corn, peas, and carrots are a few specific veggies that are off the menu for now. They have a relatively high sugar content which is obvious when you think about it because after all they are sweet. Also know that some nuts and seeds contain more carbs than others. For example, cashews and pistachios tend to be higher in carbs than almonds or macadamia nuts. That does not mean you can have all the almonds you want and still stay keto, but it does mean that having an almond is better than having a cashew. Just be careful with the calories and the carbs that are still in there.

Obviously sugary snacks, desserts, and condiments like ketchup and barbecue sauce are out as well. They all contain tons of sugar that will kick you right out of keto in any amount.

You will need to avoid high-carbohydrate foods like bread, pasta, rice, and potatoes, as well as most fruits and sweetened beverages. Just let them go.

Lastly, avoid processed foods labelled Keto, like Keto Ice Cream, or Keto energy bars or Keto bread.

Watch those labels because there is no regulation at all on what that keto name actually means for marketing purposes. There is no truth in labelling law for keto, it's all marketing speak. It is likely you'll run across keto white bread at a store if you look hard enough. It may lean more in the direction of keto than normal bread, but you're not in strict mode if you're eating it, and besides keto bread is horrible. It's way better to wait until a maintenance week and slip in some bread there but make it really good bread that satisfies your desire for the best bread you can get. Also remember what I mentioned earlier, bad fats can be more than just a source of inflammation, so don't consume products that contain vegetable oil. Only consume healthy fats as described before.

What You Won't Be Doing on Strict Week

When you think about strict week, changing your body's energy source, and putting your body into intentional caloric deficit you're going to have some pretty predictable reactions.

You will feel tired, and cranky. This is likely to hit you hard in the first few days, and it's all about the sudden lack of sugar in your body. It's a good thing, but your body doesn't believe you yet.

This is unavoidable so plan for how you'll deal with it. Don't do this right before going on vacation, you'll hate the vacation and you'll waste your money and ruin everyone else's time. Don't break from the plan and start exercising exactly at the same time you start doing strict weeks. You won't have the energy to do any kind of significant workout. You will have enough energy to walk, and as I've said elsewhere in the book you should be walking for about a half hour once per day or twice per day if you feel like you can

handle it to get in your physical activity without over exerting yourself or risking an injury early on.

Avoid family gatherings. If you are in the United States, you know the joy of Thanksgiving, and you also know that it is a holiday that is infamous for difficulty with family. Don't embark on this process right before Thanksgiving or any feast based holiday. First, you can't do any of this program and meaningfully participate in a feast based holiday, but second and more importantly your family will all be around you and if anyone touches a nerve with you it'll all be over when you respond and say everything you've spent a lifetime keeping to yourself. Don't be the jerk who does this plan, and walks around in a bad mood all the time. For at least the first few days, and maybe a little longer, try to keep mostly to yourself, and make an extra effort to take a breath and let things go if they annoy you, because everything is going to be really annoying until your body adjusts to your new sugar levels.

Family

I'm going to keep this brief. I believe that one of my success factors was that my whole family went on an extended vacation without me while I tinkered with my food intake. I was in my kitchen alone every day, I was buying food for me and only me, and I planned my food intake around my own schedule. In that environment, I was in complete control.

Before this, I was the dad who made pizza's, had pub food night and made every treat in the book for my kids. If you have a spouse, partner, or kids who eat badly this is going to be much harder for you. Changing your surroundings will require a family meeting, and if you are serious about this, you need to get "buy in" from your stakeholders just like you have to convince executives to spend money on the right IT solutions, even though they don't want to spend it. Same thing, just a different context.

Convince your loved ones that you must do this to be healthy and to stick around for them over the long haul. Trust me, they want you to be around way more than they want Captain Crunch in the pantry. Be persuasive, be firm, and most importantly, be the leader of your family that is about to guide the whole clan into a life of better health. It's worth it for you, so it's definitely worth it for them.

Especially important, think of your kids. From birth until about 26, they are developing body and brain tissue that only has one chance to develop, and that tissue is built from whatever building blocks are available. Also, if you are raising overweight or obese children, you are handing them a life long struggle. Remember the story of my friend the Tri-athlete? Wouldn't you rather your children have his life, never knowing what it means to try to lose weight, than the life you have now where you are frustrated with your own struggles? You can give them that, starting right now. Be the leader. Take control. Be persuasive. Make this whole plan happen, despite the added layer of family members who may not share your goals. Make it happen anyway.



CHAPTER 11: UNDERSTANDING THE MAINTENANCE WEEK

During maintenance, you're going to add foods back into your routine a little at a time. You'll add foods you like, and foods you think of as being good for you, but you won't be limited to the strict week options. What you will experience on maintenance weeks is an intentional and careful re-introduction of the foods you love in moderation and prepared in ways that still limit carbohydrates without attempting to remove them completely. How many carbs should you target per day? Here's the thing, on a maintenance week I don't want you to plan food intake around carbs or calories. I want you tracking and journaling those things, but you shouldn't be super restrictive because that is what strict week is about. I want you to think about eating to be healthy by reintroducing a balanced variety of foods focusing on nutritional value, diversity, and balance.

I Want You To Think About Eating To Be Healthy by Reintroducing a Balanced Variety of Foods Focusing on Nutritional Value, Diversity, and Balance.

Journalling is going to be especially helpful during maintenance week because you'll be recording what you experienced during maintenance. Eventually your journal will tell you what worked best for you so you can use that knowledge to make choices that work for you for the rest of your life. This is crucial for maintaining progress and keeping your diet diverse to support life long health.

Maintaining progress is not only about sticking to a strict diet, but also about understanding how your body reacts to different types of food, and making adjustments accordingly. Continuously tracking your progress through journaling, and experimenting with different foods during maintenance weeks can help you fine-tune your diet to be more sustainable in the long-term.

So how do we build a more diverse menu, while not falling back into old habits? Here are some ideas that will help you to build in imaginative options that will keep you from getting bored with your food.

Coconut

Coconut is everywhere you look these days, from coconut water to the meat, to its oil and beyond. Here are some examples of coconut products you can start using to replace other less healthy products in recipes you love.

Coconut oil: Can be used for cooking and baking, as well as in dressings and marinades. It is high in medium-chain triglycerides (MCTs), which can help to promote weight loss

because they quickly and efficiently promote ketosis and for that reason they improve brain function.

Coconut flour: Can be used as a gluten-free alternative to wheat flour. It is high in fiber, protein, and healthy fats.

Coconut milk: Can be used as a dairy-free alternative to cow's milk. It is high in healthy fats and can be used in cooking and baking, as well as in smoothies and coffee.

Coconut cream: Can be used as a dairy-free alternative to heavy cream. It can be used in cooking and baking, as well as in whipped cream and ice cream.

Coconut water is a refreshing and hydrating drink. Be careful to get the product fresh or not from concentrate. Something horrible happens to the flavor of coconut water when it is processed, and you can absolutely taste the difference. It is high in electrolytes and can be used to rehydrate after exercise, just be careful of the sugars and the calories. It's not to be treated like actual water, but more like a healthy sports drink alternative.

Coconut sugar is a natural sweetener. It has a lower glycemic index than regular sugar, and it is a good source of minerals.

Coconut Oil Capsules can be used as a dietary supplement for those who don't like the taste of coconut oil. It can be used to support weight loss and improve brain function as mentioned above.

Grass Fed Grazers

When you feed animals things they wouldn't eat in the wild some strange things happen to their bodies. They get sick, they have digestive problems, their body composition gets all out of whack. In nature, animals that eat grass have evolved to efficiently digest and utilize the nutrients found in grass. When they are fed grain or other products instead, their digestion is less efficient and they do not receive all of the nutrients they need to build healthy muscle tissue or produce nutritious milk. Additionally, grain-based diets for

cows specifically can lead to health issues such as inflammation and fatty liver disease.

The meat from grass-fed and finished animals is leaner and has a more favorable fatty acid composition. This is why grass-fed and finished meat is considered healthier than grain-fed meat, but the benefits of grass feeding go beyond the meat. Dairy products are chemically different from animals that eat grass than from animals fed on grain and other feeds.

Milk from grass-fed cows is less likely to cause lactose intolerance in some individuals. This is because one of the key enzymes found in higher levels in milk from grass-fed cows called beta-galactosidase helps to break down lactose, the natural sugar found in milk, making it easier for those with lactose intolerance to digest. Studies have shown that milk from grass-fed cows can contain up to four times the level of beta-galactosidase compared to milk from grain-fed cows.

Lactose intolerance is a condition in which the body is unable to properly digest lactose, a sugar found in milk and dairy products, causing intestinal cramping and gastro intestinal distress. If you've never experienced it, you are lucky. It hurts.

Additionally, milk from grass-fed cows contains higher levels of other beneficial enzymes such as phosphatase, which helps to support healthy bone development, and xanthine oxidase, which is known to have antioxidant properties.

My Own Discovery of Dairy Differences

Once on a trip to England, while I was overweight and suffering from severe lactose intolerance, I travelled to Cambridge and stayed at a charming bed and breakfast outside of town. They served an incredible cheese board of cheeses from local dairies as well as from France, Ireland and Scotland. It was one of those opportunities that you just don't miss. This was before I knew about the pills you can take to

offset lactose intolerance so I made the conscious decision to try the cheeses, knowing I would have horrible stomach pain later as a result.

As the day went on, and the next day came I realized that I felt completely fine.

Keep in mind, I had absolutely zero tolerance for dairy products back in the United States. I was not a consumer of organic dairy, I just bought whatever was least expensive at the grocery store at that point in my life, so this was a mind blowing experience for me.

Next stop on the trip was Oxford where I toured the colleges and several cathedrals. At the bed and breakfast I proceeded to try a fresh local yogurt and had no reaction. Then I tried local milk in a bowl of cereal (a massive risk in my mind) and had no adverse reaction at all. By the way, everything was delicious.

I came home from that trip thinking I was cured and proceeded to eat cereal and consume dairy as I had in England. Immediately my stomach reacted and I was right back where I started. It was clear to me that something was very different and it wasn't me.

After some experimentation, I found that if I only consumed organic dairy here in the states, my body reacted as it did on the regular dairy in England.

Years later I learned about grass feeding, and how the US dairy industry is allowed to pump our cows full of things that Europe just doesn't allow unless the milk is labelled "organic", which does come with rules, or non-GMO which also comes with rules on feed sources. In my experience looking at labels as of early 2023, anything labelled "grass fed" in the dairy department is also organic, and also non-gmo, but that may change over time as there is nothing technically tying those things together.

When I found grass fed products in the US, I jumped on that bandwagon immediately and saw even better response from my body.

Today, I have no negative reaction to any of the dairy I consume, even when I consume cheese or dairy at restaurants. I believe in my case that over my lifetime I just became allergic to US standard dairy products. Going organic and grass fed for years allowed my overall toxin load to subside giving my body the ability to filter out the toxins on the rare occasion that I consume it now.

Grass Fed Grazer Examples

Here are some examples of grass fed foods you can add to your maintenance diet:

Grass-fed beef is meat taken from cows that have been raised on a diet of grass. Remember in grade school how you learned that cows have four stomachs so they can digest grass? They regurgitate and chew their “cud” to fully process the grass for digestion. Feed a cow something other than grass that doesn’t fit into their unique biological process, and sure they can live, and maybe even grow faster and cheaper for manufacturing meat, but just allowing them to graze naturally ties into their biology. Grass fed beef is typically leaner, and the fat that does exist contains the “good fats” we talk about all through this book.

You can find grass fed variants of several other meats like lamb, bison, and others but the point of grass fed meat is really the beef, and it’s only really necessary to talk about in America because we make such a point of manufacturing beef like they were automobiles or really large toasters. Basically the rule is, if the default behavior of an animal is to graze, and we make that animal eat something else to grow it faster, or plump it up to a larger size than it could achieve naturally, we’re probably creating an animal that is less nutritious, or even possibly less safe to consume nutritionally.

There is a difference between grass fed and grass finished meat. If beef is labelled grass fed, it could be grass fed its whole life leading up to the last months before slaughter, and then fed a bulking feed to bulk it up to market weight in the

last months of life. These cows do not have the same beneficial qualities associated with cows that eat only grass for their entire lives. Still, we're at the mercy of the labels, and we honestly just can't know exactly where our meat comes from unless we trust the labels to some degree.

If you are lucky enough to live in a community with a Kosher market, the meats available there are held to a higher standard than FDA standards for religious reasons. Of course there's no law that says you have to be Jewish to shop in a Kosher market, so keep in mind that a Kosher market could be a fast pass to great quality meats.

Seafood

Seafood is a complicated topic. Farmed seafood isn't great for the environment or you for a variety of reasons including pollution of local waters in which they are farmed in mass quantities (that's a lot of concentrated fish poop for one small area), and the feed pellets they are raised on and artificial coloring that is added to that feed to make the fish the desired color for market. None of that should surprise you, as it's been widely reported for many years.

Wild caught can be divided into several areas, including ginormous net fishing, small net fishing, and line caught seafood. The huge, and I mean freaking enormous, fishing vessels that fish in international waters are not something you'd want to support if you saw what they do to local fish populations. A single ship in a single pass can remove the food sources for local people off the coasts of Africa or South America for days, weeks or months at a time, contributing to the problems of starvation and economic harm to local communities that are already at an extreme competitive disadvantage with the rest of the world. It can get depressing.

Small net fishing and line caught seafood are very expensive for obvious reasons, there's just no economy of scale to speak of there, so you pay more per pound, as it costs a lot more to bring fish to market that way.

On top of that, good luck figuring out where your fish comes from unless your market says specifically where it is from and how it was caught.

Ok, so what are your options? Well, do the best you can. In general, smaller ocean fish have shorter life spans, so they have less time to build up toxins in their bodies. They also reproduce like crazy so they are generally considered sustainable to catch in mass quantities and frequently without threatening the existence of that particular kind of fish.

For our purposes the best fish are cold water, high fat content, wild caught fish. Prefer line caught if you can get it and you can afford it, or small net caught fish.

In a pinch, completely honestly, I have resorted to frozen single portion packages of farmed salmon sold at Whole Foods. I know the up and down sides and I make my choice as we all must. Mine is driven by short term need of a relatively inexpensive cold water fatty fish with good levels of Omega 3 fatty acids, easily digestible proteins, and reliable quality. As a splurge, I go for the line caught stuff, but it's hard to find even here in Los Angeles, and it costs 4 to 6 times more, which can be doable on a one off, but is very hard to sustain over the long haul.

Here are some examples of fish you can try to incorporate into your diet that will hit our measurements for the goals in this book.

Wild Alaskan Salmon is caught off the coast of Alaska, where the cold temperatures and pristine environment lead to a high omega-3 content and low levels of contaminants. Wild Alaskan Salmon is a great source of healthy fats, and protein, but can be hard to find and expensive.

Wild Sardines are a small fish, low in mercury and high in omega-3s. Sardines are also a good source of calcium and vitamin D. Wild Sardines are caught sustainably and are a great source of protein and omega-3 fatty acids. They are low in mercury because they are short lived and don't have enough time in the water to build up concentrations of mercury.

Wild Pacific halibut is caught in the Pacific Ocean and is a good source of protein and omega-3 fatty acids. Halibut is also a good source of vitamin B12 and selenium. Wild caught Pacific halibut can be fished and caught sustainably, and is a great source of protein, and omega-3s.

Wild cod is caught in the North Atlantic. It's a good source of lean protein and omega-3's. Cod is also a good source of vitamin B12, potassium, and selenium. Wild-caught cod can be fished sustainably, so there's at least less of a chance of ecological or socioeconomic impact.

Wild mackerel is fished in the North Atlantic and is a good source of omega-3 fatty acids, protein, and vitamin B12. It can also be a good source of selenium, potassium, and vitamin D. It can be fished sustainably due to its rapid reproduction rate and vast numbers in the open sea.

As I said before, seafood is a complicated topic. Beyond what I've said already, you have additional problems with fishing impacting sea life that is clearly intelligent and really should be off the hunting list for humans. Dolphin is fished in some cultures, whaling is still a thing though it seems impossible to a Western sensibility, and recent research is showing the the Octopus is probably one of the smartest and evolutionarily divergent intelligent life forms on the planet. Should we hunt and eat intelligent life just because we possess a technology advantage that allows us to do so? Ethics and philosophy are topics folks like us are prone to discussing. I've got my opinions, and I'm sure you have your own. I just wanted to bring this up to make a point that whether you stand on one side of the argument or the other, at least there is a discussion and a choice to be had.

Less Common Veggies

Veggies in our markets are a minor tragedy in my opinion. We live almost a century if we stay healthy and have good luck, and yet we're expected to eat only the options presented to us in grocery chains for our entire time on the planet. Go to the store and count it up, there are less than a hundred options, and that's on a really good day. In many markets you have a couple of tables of fruit and citrus, a long refrigerator case with lettuces, herbs and veggies like cucumbers, squash and peppers. You have a table with tomatoes of several varieties and the typical potato and onion families, and that's about it. It is rare that you'll see anything new, unusual or even interesting unless you shop in specialty markets, and in many communities those don't even exist.

Here's a list of some really spectacular, but likely hard to find veggies that are incredibly nutritious, provide a real variety of flavors and textures, and will wake up your brain as you prepare them in meals.

Sea vegetables (such as kelp, or seaweed) are high in minerals, low in calories, and depending on the variety may contain anti-inflammatory compounds, and alkalizing effects on the bodies pH balance. They are often used in sushi rolls, so you already have likely eaten some, and you can find it in Asian markets locally, or if you don't have an asian market in your town you can always buy them online.

Turmeric root has a bright orange color and is a powerful anti-inflammatory agent. It is commonly used in Indian and Southeast Asian cooking. When you get the root whole rather than powdered you'll notice that the root looks a lot like orange smallish ginger root. You can clean it and shave it into a pot for tea, or roast it in olive oil with garlic to soften and then mash up the garlic and turmeric together to add to stews for anti-inflammatory body healing goodness.

Arugula is a leafy green low in calories and high in vitamin K, which is a vitamin that doesn't exist naturally in many

foods, but is very important for bone health and blood clotting. You can probably find arugula without looking too hard so it's a great option to get a little variety into your salads if you don't have local specialty markets.

Radicchio is another somewhat common option. You can probably find radicchio at your local store, but maybe not. It's a bitter leafy green usually used in a salad with other greens like arugula.

Kohlrabi is in the cruciferous family of vegetables, it is high in vitamin C and glucosinolates, which have anti-biotic properties and can be quite pungent due to the mustard oils they release when you cut or chew them. They also are associated with reduction in inflammation. The sulfur bonds in this food category are broken down during chewing which releases the pungent flavor and aroma. Good for you, but may be too much for a sensitive palate.

Okra is high in fiber and antioxidants, and is known to have anti-inflammatory effects, though you really need a good recipe to cook it and want to eat it. The innards of the okra are super slimy and kinda gross raw so I'd never put it in a salad or munch on it raw. In the US south you can find okra either dusted with corn meal and deep fried in slices, or you find it chopped up and put in stews or soups like gumbo. It's really good for you, but your preparation method can make it a lot less good for you, for example deep frying or breading. One fun thing you can try is dehydrating okra, and salting it as a high fiber low calorie salty crispy crunchy snack.

Jicama is high in antioxidants and anti-inflammatory compounds, and also low in calories. What is fun about Jicama is how versatile it is. You can slice it up as a raw snack, kind of like people do with carrots and celery, but it tastes better. You can also boil the whole root and mash it up like a mashed potato for a low calorie option when you want something "like" mashed potatoes, but don't want to eat an actual potato. It's also great sliced and either grilled or baked with olive oil, salt and pepper.

Black garlic is fermented, which makes it sweeter and less pungent than regular garlic. It has high levels of antioxidants, anti-inflammatory compounds and can be found online if you don't have a specialty market in your area. It's black as you'd expect, and it's sticky and very mellow in flavor, not at all like fresh garlic. You can make it into a spread, or add it to salad dressing, or add it to soups and stews. The health claims run from antibacterial to anti-inflammatory, but personally I think it allows you to speak to the dead. (Just kidding) The real story with this one is how good it tastes and how little it is promoted as a food. Among those who know about it, this is a "duh" moment, and for those who don't, it can be revelatory.

Cardoon has a mild artichoke-like flavor and is high in antioxidants and anti-inflammatory compounds. It is native to the southern parts of Europe, the stalk is the edible part. It can be boiled, fried, baked or stewed, and should be considered part of what some people call a Mediterranean diet. I'm personally not a big fan of artichokes, but if you like them, you'll like cardoon as well.

Here's the thing, there are so many edible plants out there its a real shame we don't get the opportunity to experience more of them. As you go through your maintenance weeks during your process and beyond you'll have the opportunity to add new foods into your diet to bring in variety without diminishing your nutrient consumption. IF you become a serious foodie, and you start having fun with food in new ways, I'm sure exploring the vast array of vegetables, and fruit available on earth will become a big part of your experience.

The Best of the Usual Suspects:

The strange uncommon and generally unavailable veggies are great, but they are more about spicing up your life when you are bored with the old standby veggies. So what are the best of the usual suspects? Here's a top ten list of things you definitely can find at the store. Remember, buy organic to avoid GMO's and pesticide residue as much as possible. If you can't get or afford organic, at least wash your fruit and veggies in a bath of water and baking soda for "long enough" to see all of the debris that comes off. Just wiping an apple off with your shirt can make a difference, but you are still eating toxins on the exterior of the fruit. Wash means wash, not wipe, and not rinse.

Spinach is another leafy green that's high in vitamins and minerals, including potassium, magnesium, iron and folate. Popeye had the right idea, though why he always ate it out of a can is beyond me.

Broccoli is another cruciferous vegetable that's high in fiber, and vitamin C, and has the gluconate benefits mentioned around Kohlrabi earlier. Because it's so widely available, this is going to be a go-to vegetable for you. Broccoli steamed and then smothered in grass fed butter with a little salt and pepper can be easily half if not more of an entire meal. It's a massive nutrient boost, well worth your attention and dare I say, love?.

Bell peppers are high in vitamin C, but they are not low in calories or carbohydrates, so use them in moderation, just as you would with carrots. Both are full of amazing nutrients, but a little too high in sugar to be a smart addition to a strict week, but might be great in maintenance mode.

Cauliflower is a versatile vegetable you know well already. But don't turn up your nose so quickly. It isn't just that dead lifeless flavorless crunchy dry thing on the crudité platter with the broccoli, celery and carrots, and you don't need ranch dressing to choke it down. It can be eaten raw, sure, but

cooked properly it's a whole different thing. Try setting a skillet on medium heat, lining the bottom with grass fed butter, salt and pepper, and then place slices of cauliflower down in the pan. Sprinkle some turmeric, maybe some curry powder, on top, and let it get brown on each side turning every couple of minutes until you get to a desired brown caramelization. Put a pinch of finely chopped scallions or parsley or maybe even cilantro on top of that and chow down. Delicious. It's really versatile, and it shows up in unusual ways in the grocery store in forms like cauliflower rice, flour for pizza dough, and a surprising array of other food options. It's high in vitamin C, fiber, and antioxidants, is super low in calories, low in sugars, high in fiber, and it absorbs and highlights whatever flavors you add to it in the pan during prep. Have fun with it!

Asparagus: This vegetable is high in fiber, vitamins, and minerals, including vitamins K and E, and is also a good source of antioxidants and anti-inflammatory compounds. It famously makes your pee smell funny too. Not relevant to your diet, but there you go. Honesty.

Brussels sprouts: Brussels sprouts are high in fiber, vitamin C, and antioxidants, as well as compounds that may help to reduce inflammation. Also, see all of the above stuff about cruciferous veggies, and add that to the list of benefits here. I've seen way too many restaurants ruin these things by browning them too much, tossing them with giant chunks of pancetta, and then drowning them in a sweet glaze of some kind. Yuck. If you want to do that recipe right, don't try to cover the bitter flavor with sweet, you're hiding the flavor not celebrating it. Instead, make regular bacon in a skillet and stop cooking it about half way from what you think of as done (turning as you normally would to keep it from burning), then cut the Brussels sprouts in half to free them from their little cabbage like shapes, and sauté them in butter and the bacon grease. Take the bacon out of the skillet and cut on a cutting board into small bits then throw them back into the skillet to finish off. Season only with salt and pepper, and serve. If you

want them to cook a little faster without burning, do the final stage in a preheated 400 degree oven, but watch them because they will go past done to burnt real quick.

Garlic. I really should just leave that one word and move on. I mean we all know about garlic. Repels vampires if worn around the neck, cures ear infections if placed inside the ear canal, repels mosquitos if reduced to a concentrate and sprayed around the yard (that last one is actually true). Garlic has a big set of shoes to fill. Even if only a fraction of the claims were true, this one would be worth putting into every meal. It's a flavorful bulb that is high in antioxidants and anti-inflammatory compounds, and frankly can easily find its way into almost every meal. Garlic studies abound, and yes it is associated with more healing than I can write here. Use it raw, roasted, mashed, diced, baked in the bulb, throw a bunch in a bottle of olive oil to make it better, you can do almost anything with this stuff. I think the only way you could hurt someone with Garlic would be to beat them over the head with a bag of it. Unless you are allergic, in which case I'm really sorry Casey, that's got to suck for you.

Onions are a great source of antioxidants and anti-inflammatory compounds, as well as flavonoids that may help to reduce inflammation. Again with the allergic thing, if you are allergic to garlic, you probably can't do onion either and for that, I will now observe a moment of silence out of respect for your taste buds and what they can't get close to. Onions are not associated with as many healing properties as garlic, but they are still an important addition to meals for flavor, something you'll be wanting to apply liberally to your food preparation in the absence of sugars.

Sweet potato: Sweet potatoes are high in fiber, vitamins, and minerals, including vitamin A. They can be nice on a maintenance diet. They have less of the starchy qualities when compared with russets for example, but they are still high in complex carbohydrates and sugars. That being said, they have lots of benefits, and taken in moderation can be great.

Dairy, From Grass

We talked about grass fed options up in the meat department, so lets dig into the dairy section on it's own merits.

Grass-fed butter is made from the cream of grass-fed cows, and is a good source of healthy fats, including conjugated linoleic acid (CLA) and omega-3 fatty acids which are great for muscle growth and cholesterol management. It is also lower in saturated fat than butter from grain-fed cows. I've already mentioned the Kerrygold brand and how much I like it, but if you can find other brands of grass fed butter, I recommend buying them all.

Yogurt, cottage cheese, cream, kefir, pretty much any product that comes from milk from cows, goats, or whatever will benefit from being sourced through animals eating a diet of foods they would eat naturally, and not being pumped full of hormones or other artificial components to increase their milk production.

Spices and Herbs for Health

Flavor. It's what most people complain about the most when they are changing their diet habits. Mostly this is because they are used to foods with sodium, msg, and additives that artificially pump up flavor, or our perception of flavor. Spices and herbs not only provide richer flavor profiles, but many of them have proven health benefits as well. You can heal your body in your kitchen. Here are some great examples you can use in your daily cooking.

Turmeric is known for its anti-inflammatory properties and is commonly used to alleviate pain and inflammation associated with conditions such as osteoarthritis and rheumatoid arthritis. It is also believed to have cancer-fighting properties and may help improve brain function. Powdered turmeric is available at major grocery chains. Buy it, use it.

Black Pepper, just the stuff you have in the kitchen right now, is known for its anti-inflammatory and antioxidant properties. It may also help to improve digestion, boost the absorption of other nutrients, and protect against cancer. A daily dose of 1-2 grams of dried black pepper is a great way to improve the absorption of turmeric, and grant it's other health benefits. This is one of those sneaky things I feel like should be taught more widely. There are some foods that actually assist other beneficial foods if taken together. Pepper it up people!

Ginger like garlic is associated with actual health benefits, and ones that are simply handed down from generation to generation as folklore. The herb is often used to relieve nausea, reduce inflammation, and ease muscle pain and soreness. It may also help lower blood sugar and cholesterol levels, and has been shown to have anti-cancer properties. It'll make you feel better on a cold day if taken with tea lemon and a little honey, but its warming positive effects extend to making really great bread houses. Ask the ginger bread man!

Garlic we've already discussed, but it's worth mentioning that it comes in a powder form too, not that I'd use the powdered form for anything. Best to use the real thing. Did you know that if you just break apart a bulb and smash one clove on its side with the side of a chef's knife, it will mash and the skin will pop right off? It's true. Try it sometime, but be careful. Don't cut yourself. First time you try that, maybe wear a kevlar glove or something.

Rosemary improves digestion, reduces inflammation, and boosts memory and cognitive function. Try it in any protein preparation during the prep phase, but remove it when serving, as you wouldn't want to chew on a branch of it and generally you don't want to plate anything you wouldn't want to actually eat. If you chop up the needles, you can of course eat those, but again, cook them well as part of the preparation of a dish, and not just on their own.

Oregano oil is known for its anti-inflammatory and antimicrobial properties. It can be hard to swallow though, so take it easy. The herb when cooked usually makes you feel like you are eating classic Italian food from central Italy because it shows up in so many recipes from the region.

Sage when burned will cleanse a selenium crystal, and clear a house of restless spirits. More to the point regarding your diet however, it has been shown to improve memory and cognitive function, reduce inflammation, and lower blood sugar levels. It's amazing on poultry, specifically turkey which has a stronger flavor than chicken really benefits from the flavor of sage.

Thyme is well known for its antimicrobial and anti-inflammatory properties and is an amazing addition to proteins and sautéed mushrooms. Be careful to strip the little twigs of their leaves and cook only the leaves. The twigs never soften well enough to chew comfortably.

This is obviously a very short list, and a quick visit to even a big chain grocery store will show dozens more available options, but these are some good ones to get you started both from a culinary and a health perspective.



CHAPTER 12: LEARNING HOW TO TAKE BREAKS WITHOUT STOPPING ENTIRELY

Did you know that there is Keto ice cream now? No joke, it's a thing, and maybe you'll add keto ice cream to your maintenance week in the future, but on this one day you don't need it because you're getting the real thing. Go shopping, buy your favorite flavor of Ben & Jerry's. This is your cheat day, not a whole week, but one day to make your body wonder what the heck is going on. You will have one day of high carb debauchery where you can eat and do anything your heart desires. Pancakes, waffles, fried chicken, french fries, just go to town.

Enjoy your ice cream day as a momentary celebration, and remember it is actually part of the plan. You'll have these ice cream days in your future periodically for the rest of your life, but as you continue to live without so much sugar in your

diet, your taste will transform. It isn't that you'll have more will power in the future, it's that you literally will stop craving the taste of sweetness so much, and you'll enjoy a single bite of something sweet much more and be satisfied with less of it once you've been off sugar for a half a year or longer.

A Change in Your Journalling

One note about how you will journal after this day. You will need to journal in much greater detail than usual for the week after ice cream day. When you do, if you are collecting data points, you'll enjoy making a graph of your data points and seeing what going back to the old ways for a day does to your results for a week. Does it make you gain? Does it break you out of a plateau? How did it affect your results for that week? Did you find a food allergy you didn't know you had?

Once you've enjoyed your break, let's talk about how to not make it a permanent break. Even though you might feel almost sick from the re-introduction of sugary foods, the other thing might happen too. You might really like it. So here are some strategies to make sure the break is truly just a break and not something longer. This will help you now, and in the distant future when you take a break from what you know is on your plan for one reason or another (it happens).

How To Get Back From a Break

Don't beat yourself up: Remember that this break is part of the PLAN, and later on that taking breaks is part of life. You can't expect 100% adherence to ANYTHING that involves decision making for your whole life. Only machines have that kind of consistency. It's more important to approach your return to the strict part of the plan with kindness and self-compassion. Don't let one day of indulgence make you believe for even one second that you've faltered in some way, or derailed. You didn't, this break day is part of the larger plan for the rest of your life. Do you think you're going to

make it through forever without ever splurging? Of course not. And how exactly were you going to handle that later on if you didn't handle it as a part of this plan? You were going to just figure it out? No. Too random, and way too chaotic. This is about planning to succeed, and that's what this indulgence was actually all about in the plan. Learning to deal with setbacks that are unintentional by engineering a set back that IS intentional will give you the strength later on to know you can get back to where you need to be.

First of all, don't go crazy. If you have ice cream, finish that week off as a maintenance week, then the following week go back to a strict week. Do this even if you aren't dieting and it's much later in life. Shocking your system by going full sugar one day, and then trying to pull back on the leash hard is just going to stress your body and your mind. Be gentle, go slow.

Remember that staying hydrated can help you feel full and satisfied, and can also help flush out any excess sodium or other toxins that may be contributing to bloating or inflammation. So keep drinking water throughout, regardless of anything else you do.

Exercise can help boost your mood and energy levels, and can also help offset any extra calories you consumed during your day off. Try to incorporate some physical activity into your day, whether it's a brisk walk, a yoga class, or a weightlifting session. Try not to flail, this isn't a move of panic, it's a tactic. Move deliberately, slowly, methodically. If you choose weightlifting stay in a weight range you know you can do comfortably, and move very slowly. The slow muscle contraction is actually far more effective, and will make muscle injury nearly impossible. All benefit, no downside. If you do yoga, start back with an easy class, not a crazy long, hot or difficult one. Don't make yourself physically sick.

Be kind to your mind at this time. Mindfulness techniques like meditation or deep breathing can help you stay present and focused. More importantly though, by staying present in your thoughts throughout the day, and not getting lost in the drama that arises with each day you can stop yourself as you

reach for something you know does not serve you. With mindfulness you gain willpower and self control.

Don't be shy, look for support from your community. Through others who embark on this journey you have access to a community of like minded people who can relate, and share, and support you. Find the community, and if the community seems missing, be the first to create it and start being that rock for someone else.



CHAPTER 13: WHY FRUIT IS NOT IN A STRICT WEEK

It's important to hold off on consuming fruit while in the strict weeks. It's ok during maintenance in moderation, but fruit is sweet because of sugar, and remember during strict weeks, sugar is the enemy. Once you enter maintenance mode, you can start incorporating fruit back into your diet a small bit at a time, paying careful attention to total sugar levels, and journaling about how it affects your skin, energy levels and weight. Don't take this the wrong way, I'm not saying fruit is bad, I'm saying you have a hard time losing weight with sugar intake high, and fruit is just a very healthy form of sugar. Let's look at fruit a little more closely.

About Fruit:

Fruit is considered a healthier form of sugar compared to processed sugar, but its sweetness has always made fruit a welcome luxury in any meal. Historically in western culture, fruit was considered a luxury item and reserved for special occasions, or as a dessert, because it was rare and almost

always imported from some far off land. However, as our understanding of nutrition has evolved and fruit has become common in our food supply, fruit is now incorporated into our daily diet as a common ingredient. It is now seen as a valuable source of essential vitamins and minerals, and is recommended as part of a healthy diet.

Scurvy and the Health Impact of Fruit

Associating fruit with health in western society is a relatively recent thing. The link between consuming fruit and preventing scurvy for example was discovered in the 18th century, during a time when scurvy was a major health problem among sailors and other people who spent long periods of time at sea where access to a variety of foods was limited by cargo space. Scurvy is a disease caused by a deficiency of vitamin C, which is essential for the synthesis of collagen, a protein that is necessary for the health of skin, bones, and blood vessels.

In 1747, a Scottish physician named James Lind conducted an experiment to test various remedies for scurvy among sailors in the British Navy. Lind divided 12 scurvy-afflicted sailors into six groups and gave each group a different treatment. One group was given a quart of cider a day, another group was given a mixture of garlic, mustard seed, and horseradish.

One group was given two oranges and one lemon each day. The sailors who received the citrus fruits showed significant improvement in their scurvy symptoms, while the other groups did not. Lind concluded that the citrus fruits contained a substance that was essential for preventing and treating scurvy.

It would take decades before the connection between citrus fruits and vitamin C was understood, but Lind's experiment is now legendary.

In the plan proposed in this book, we cycle between maintenance weeks of safe and sane “forever” foods, and

strict low-carbohydrate weeks in which fruit is not recommended because it contains natural sugars, which can kick the body out of ketosis by providing the body with enough glucose to burn for energy, making it unnecessary to resort to burning fat. That is why it's important to keep an eye on total carbohydrate intake especially on strict weeks, in addition to caloric intake.

That means honey and agave nectar are also off the meal plan on strict weeks, because even though they are low on the glycemic index, they are still sugars and cause the same carbohydrate reaction in the body.

The Glycemic Index

The glycemic index (GI) is a measure of how quickly a food raises blood sugar levels. Foods are ranked on a scale of 0 to 100, with higher numbers indicating a faster and more dramatic rise in blood sugar.

The glycemic index of a food is determined by how quickly the carbohydrates in the food are broken down and absorbed into the bloodstream. Some carbohydrates are broken down and absorbed quickly, while others are broken down and absorbed relatively slowly.

Table sugar, also known as sucrose, is a rapidly absorbed carbohydrate, which makes it high on the glycemic index (GI of 65 to 68). When table sugar is consumed, it quickly raises blood sugar levels, leading to a spike in insulin. This can lead to a quick release of energy followed by a rapid drop in blood sugar, which can cause fatigue and hunger.

Fruit also is ranked on the glycemic index for comparison. The glycemic index of a strawberry is relatively low, with an estimated GI ranking of 40. This means that consuming strawberries will have a relatively small effect on blood sugar levels. An orange also has a low glycemic index ranking, with an estimated GI of around 40 to 50. An apple has a slightly higher glycemic index, around 38 to 44.

Examples of Carb Levels in Healthy Foods

Here are examples of 10 common fruits and the approximate amount of carbohydrates in one serving of each:

Apple: 25g

Banana: 27g

Blueberries: 21g

Grapefruit: 11g

Grapes: 16g

Kiwi: 11g

Orange: 15g

Peach: 9g

Pear: 27g

Strawberries: 8g

For example, a single serving of grapefruit is a half grapefruit, which is about 4-5 ounces of fruit.

Compare that with 10 common grain based snacks and their approximate carbohydrate count per serving:

Popcorn (air-popped): 15g

Pretzels: 23g

Rice cakes: 13g

Crackers (whole wheat): 15g

Whole wheat bread (1 slice): 13g

Oatmeal (1/2 cup cooked): 15g

Quinoa (1/2 cup cooked): 21g

Whole wheat pasta (1/2 cup cooked): 21g

Whole wheat pita bread (1 small): 15g

Baked sweet potato (1 medium): 24g

The above measures are for reference only. No two apples are identical. They and the other foods above vary by weight, size, density, and in the case of apples, there are dozens of varieties each with unique characteristics.

Fruit is amazing for all of the aforementioned reasons, but it's not going to help you to lose weight on this plan, so on

strict weeks it's off limits, just like the grains and starchy carbs.

On maintenance weeks, use the data above and common sense to guide the re-introduction of each of these foods, and remember to measure your weight daily, and journal your results along the way to learn what your specific reactions will be.



CHAPTER 14: HOW TO STRATEGIZE DIETARY CYCLES

Scheduling different phases of your diet is crucial for success. The strict week is always followed by what I call a maintenance week. The concept behind the maintenance week is simple, though it is also supported by the concept of dietary cycling. The simple part is this, you have to learn how to eat the most diverse menu possible over the long term, and the only way to do that is through experimentation. While the strict week is all about following the strict plan and modeling your behavior on a proven successful methodology of carb limiting or exclusion along with keeping to a caloric deficit between energy in and energy out, the maintenance week is about being a scientist with your own body and figuring out what works for you dietarily and then sticking with the foods, and portions that work best for you.

Similarity to Intermittent Fasting

This approach of alternating between a strict week and a maintenance week is similar to the concept of intermittent fasting and the concept of carb cycling, but it's different in a way that I feel is more manageable, and suits a different kind of lifestyle (that of a mostly sedentary office worker, help desk tech or anyone else chained to a desk all day.) For example, *for one week, you can plan to eat just high quality fatty fish, grass fed beef, maybe free range chicken, and perhaps snack in moderation on zero carb cured meats like salami, or beef jerky to keep from feeling hungry between meals.* During this week, you should limit your food choices to these types of fatty proteins, and if you feel you absolutely must have some carbs in your diet for these strict weeks, add simple side dishes like sautéed cauliflower in butter, or spinach, asparagus or broccoli, and only consume water, black coffee, or tea (preferably decaf for both.) This may be challenging, but it's only for a week. After that week, you can take a break and have a "Maintenance Week" where you can experiment with a variety of healthy foods that are not designed to lose weight, but are instead designed to help you learn how to stabilize your weight. This can help you identify any food allergies or sensitivities you may have via your journalling, meticulous record keeping, and then plotting your results for later analysis. During these maintenance weeks, it is important that you follow through with filling out your food journal. You may notice some weight gain during maintenance weeks, but it's important to understand that this is a normal part of the process. The goal of maintenance week is to figure out how you can maintain a healthy diet after reaching your weight loss goal. You will gradually transition from a strict diet to a more sustainable one over time, rather than going back to old habits as soon as you "finish" dieting. You can cycle through strict and maintenance weeks until you fine tune a personalized food plan that works for you long-term. As covered earlier, this is the primary

reason for your three ring binder, it gives you a simple place to reference moving forward while also giving you a tangible asset to show your intellectual effort in taking control over your fitness, your health and your life.

Week 1, the Beginning of the Cycle

Week 1 is the exception that proves the rule, and here is why. When you get started the first day is going to feel very very long, and maybe you'll feel like it's just too much. I want you to ease into this, so you have the willpower and strength to go forward with the rest of the program. Think of week 1 as training wheels to get your bearings. In this first week you will get your mind and body used to the feeling of a cycle, but everything goes quickly. After enough practice, you'll be surprised how easy it is to play with your food intake to experiment with results. For now, we're just cycling carbs in and out for week one. You'll see, it's easy and effective.

Here is an example for a person who, like me, started off with 50 pounds to lose. Assuming you have about 50 pounds to lose, and remember this is just an example, here's what your most efficient path forward would look like, with the greatest chance of success. This is just an example of your long term schedule. I'll cover the specifics in the next chapter.

The Schedule

Week 1: Cycling Week - likely loss of 3 pounds, your mileage may vary.

Week 2: Strict Keto - likely loss of 4 to 5 pounds

Week 3: Maintenance - likely no change or slight gain

Week 4: Strict - likely loss of 4 to 5 pounds

Month 1 complete, - You've lost between 8 and 10 pounds by now, congratulations, keep going!

For the following three months, you do exactly the same thing. When you are finished with month four, you've lost between 32 and 40 pounds. If you are within 10 pounds of

your target, you'll switch to just maintenance weeks and coast down the last ten pounds.

By the end of month five you've lost between 40 and 50 pounds. From that point forward you are in maintenance weeks for the rest of your life except for the occasional correction week where you might plan another strict week to manage your weight over the long term. Your journal will tell you what to do over the long term of course. Pay attention to your own data. By now you have learned how to be healthy and fit permanently and you've been doing it for months so by now you are not only comfortable with it, but it feels great and you have records to prove it works!

If by the end of month five you haven't lost the full 50 pounds in this example, you would just keep going on the cycling of the weeks. Apply the earlier principals. Cycle, mix it up, keep going. By the end of six months, for sure you've lost between 48 and 60 pounds. You accomplished your goal and you are on a steady path forward to being healthy and in control of your weight for the rest of your life, which is something you've never been able to say before. This is a HUGE accomplishment, so do something fun to celebrate (anyone looking at beach activities?)

The Rude Awakening

Wait, 6 months to lose only 50 pounds? Yes, it should take that long. It is possible to lose that much weight in less time, but it is much more important that you lose weight in a way that you can sustain when you are no longer trying to lose weight, than it is to drop a lot of pounds all of a sudden. A longer paced approach is effective, not dramatic, and as a result is more gentle to your organs, your muscles, your bones and connective tissues, and your long term health. It won't feel like you are making visible progress on most days. The exchange for the amount of effort will feel at times like it's not worth it to you, but believe me you are making progress, and your body is reshaping from the inside out.

Your liver and your kidneys are getting healthier, your colon is getting detoxed, you are burning through years of accumulated fat that was holding toxins suspended in your body. In fact, you may find that as you go through this plan your body lets off some strange smells as you eliminate compounds that have been stored with your body fat. You may even get sick during this process, so keep up your vitamin C intake as much as possible during this whole process, and remember to stay in touch with your doctor to make sure you stay healthy throughout the whole process.

Start this today and stick with it, by next year you could look like a totally different person. You could be with family at Thanksgiving this year and by next Thanksgiving you'll be the talk of the town. Let's agree however that you are not doing this for everyone else. You're doing this for you. The really amazing change for you will be in how much better your joints feel when you walk, and how much easier it is to get out of the drivers seat of your car. It's the little repetitive things that will truly feel life changing, and they are all within your grasp.

So remember phasing in and out is the key. It's a form of cycling, but it isn't exactly carb cycling and it's not really keto. It's a little bit of a few different things that work really well together in a balanced way. It is my unique recipe for success, it worked for me, it can work for you.

It's a Form of Cycling, but It Isn't Exactly Carb Cycling and It's Not Really Keto. It's a Little Bit of a Few Different Things That Work Really Well Together in a Balanced Way. It Is my Unique Recipe for Success, It Worked for Me, It Can Work for You.



CHAPTER 15: BUILDING A PLAN FOR YOU

Plan building is a personal thing, and should be done with a doctor to ensure the plan will work for you safely, and will also improve your health, not damage it, given your unique body and health history. Obviously if you have a life long kidney or liver disease, you can't go on a plan from a book like this.

The Ideas Presented in This Book Make Two Fundamental Assumptions. One: That You Will Do This With a Doctors Supervision, and Two: That You Will Only Do This if Your Doctor Says You Are Healthy Enough To Handle It. (Don't Go Rogue)

The planning below is meant to be modified by you to suit your tastes, and the needs agreed upon between you and your doctor. Do not simply eat exactly what I set forth below. This is only an example that can be used for guidance much as we did in the last chapter, but we're about to do it in much greater detail.

This menu is a modified version of what I used in my process. I believe it can work for you, and I hope it, or some modified version of it will work for you.

What To Eat:

Week 1: Carb Cycling

Monday: low carb

Breakfast: Coffee with grass fed butter and MCT oil

Lunch: Grilled chicken with avocado and mixed greens salad

Dinner: Steak and broccoli with a side of sautéed mushrooms in butter

Tuesday: moderate carb

Breakfast: Omelette with spinach, mushrooms, and cheddar cheese

Lunch: Tuna salad with olive oil and lemon juice (buy the tuna salad if you can't make it yourself, but watch the sugar content)

Dinner: Shrimp and cauliflower rice stir fry

Wednesday: moderate carb

Breakfast: Smoothie with unsweetened almond milk, spinach, and collagen protein

Lunch: Turkey and spinach salad with balsamic vinaigrette

Dinner: Baked salmon with roasted asparagus

Thursday: low carb

Breakfast: Coffee with grass fed butter and MCT oil

Lunch: Grilled chicken with butter sautéed Brussels sprouts

Dinner: Pork chops with steamed broccoli and a side of garlic and butter sautéed spinach

Friday: moderate carb

Breakfast: Bacon, Eggs over medium with pico de Gallo and half a sliced avocado with salt and pepper and a squeeze of lime juice

Lunch: Grilled chicken with mixed greens salad olive oil dressing and avocado with shaved parmesan cheese salt and pepper

Dinner: Steak with butter sautéed garlic broccolini, rice and a large Caesar salad with real anchovies dressing.

Saturday: low carb

Breakfast: Steak and Eggs with steamed asparagus (lightly steamed, don't over cook it!) smothered with melted butter.

Lunch: Charcuterie board of several cured meats like salami, prosciutto, mortadella, and others with a small selection of hard cheeses and raw almonds with a selection of olives.

Dinner: Shrimp sautéed in butter with parsley chives and thyme with turmeric roasted cauliflower basted with olive oil.

Sunday: moderate carb

Breakfast: Coffee with grass fed butter and MCT oil with a collagen powder (flavored if desired) blended for 20 seconds or longer.

Lunch: Fajitas! Steak or Chicken or both, with sliced onions, garlic and bell peppers sautéed in butter and served on a sizzling cast iron skillet pre-heated to 500 degrees. Pour a small amount of steak juices, or water over the steak and veggies in the hot skillet just before you serve it to make it all sizzle and steam up. Dramatic and fun!

Dinner: Grilled salmon with lemon and sliced fennel, served with roasted turmeric and curry cauliflower with a side of butter sautéed spinach.

I am suggesting this plan for your first week only because I want you to get used to the idea of eating differently first. After this week we will move on to a stricter version of a keto only diet which will last for one week only. Here's the plan for that.

Week 2: Strict Keto Week

Here is a one week strict keto meal plan:

Monday:

Breakfast: Scrambled eggs with bacon

Lunch: Tuna steak

Dinner: Grilled salmon (two portions or more)

Snacks: Cured thinly sliced high fat meats as needed

Tuesday:

Breakfast: Avocado and bacon omelette

Lunch: Grilled steak salad no tomatoes, no cheese, just lettuce as the base for the salad, olive oil as dressing, salt and pepper

Dinner: Grilled or stove top seared pork chops with rosemary infused butter as a sauce (two portions or more)

Wednesday:

Breakfast: Lox on eggs with sliced red onion and a green lettuce salad with olive oil or MCT oil as dressing

Lunch: Charcuterie board of several cured meats like salami, prosciutto, mortadella, and others with a small selection of hard cheeses and raw almonds with a selection of olives.

Dinner: Steak with buttered broccoli and cauliflower

Thursday:

Breakfast: Bacon, egg, and parmesan cheese scramble

Lunch: Sliced turkey and bacon roll ups filled with mashed avocado.

Dinner: Pork chops with butter sautéed asparagus and a salad with olive oil for dressing

Friday:

Breakfast: MCT Oil and butter blended in coffee for 20 or more seconds

Lunch: Thai ground chicken lettuce cups, no sugar in preparation. Sauté the ground chicken in butter, salt and pepper with either curry powder or ginger powder dusting during the cooking process for flavor

Dinner: Prime rib, sautéed spinach in butter and broccoli

Saturday:

Breakfast: Omelette with sausage, bacon and parmesan

Lunch: Grilled chicken and cauliflower skewers with a side salad and olive oil as dressing

Dinner: Grilled salmon and avocado salad on a bed of lettuce with olive oil as dressing

Sunday:

Breakfast: Lox on a bed of bacon and avocado with a side salad of lettuce and olive oil as dressing

Lunch: Grilled steak salad no tomatoes, no cheese, just lettuce as the base for the salad, olive oil as dressing, salt and pepper

Dinner: Grilled pork tenderloin with roasted broccoli and cauliflower

Notice, in week one we did carb cycling while incorporating the principals of other methods, and in week two we went strict keto. Strict keto is great in short bursts, but not a sustainable solution forever. Let's look at what week three is like. I call this a maintenance week. Here's an example of a great maintenance week.

Week 3: Maintenance Week

Monday:

Breakfast: Scrambled eggs with spinach and avocado, served with a side of mixed berries

Lunch: Grilled salmon salad with mixed greens, cherry tomatoes, and sliced almonds

Dinner: Grilled chicken with roasted vegetables, served with a side of white rice

Tuesday:

Breakfast: Oatmeal with cinnamon and a teaspoon of Agave Nectar, whole grass fed milk and a sliced banana

Lunch: Tuna salad with mixed greens and cherry tomatoes, served with a side of sweet potato fries

Dinner: Pan seared cod with a side of steamed broccoli and cherry tomatoes roasted with garlic in olive oil

Wednesday:

Breakfast: Greek yogurt with mixed berries and granola

Lunch: Grilled turkey and avocado salad with mixed greens and cherry tomatoes, with a small serving of sweet potato fries

Dinner: Beef stir fry with mixed vegetables and white rice

Thursday:

Breakfast: Buttered toast with a low sugar fruit spread and optional almond or peanut butter

Lunch: Half a portion of your favorite sandwich, no French fries or potato chips though

Dinner: White wine and butter sautéed shrimp with a side of asparagus and rice

Friday:

Breakfast: Your favorite breakfast food and black coffee

Lunch: Grilled chicken Caesar salad with mixed greens, sardines, and croutons

Dinner: Filet Mignon beef and vegetable kebabs with hummus and white rice

Saturday:

Breakfast: Omelette with seared ham, onions, garlic and gruyere cheese, served with a side of mixed berries, yogurt, and granola added for crunch

Lunch: Sliced beef brisket with a dry BBQ rub, but no BBQ sauce, white rice, and broccoli

Dinner: Sautéed salmon with a side of crispy Brussels sprouts leaves with thin bacon crumbles and sweet potato fries

Sunday:

Breakfast: Waffles or pancakes (your choice) with mixed berries and a sprinkle of chopped nuts, use real maple syrup only though, nothing with corn syrup or processed sugars added

Lunch: Grilled chicken and mixed vegetable salad with a side of white rice

Dinner: Roasted rotisserie chicken, and a baked potato with lots of grass fed butter and crumbled real bacon

Why on earth would a menu like this be in a weight loss meal plan? Because you're a freakin' human, that's why! If you try to just tough it out week in and week out until you lose 30, 50, 100, 200 or whatever your goal is for dropping pounds, nobody could achieve that without a break. In fact, your body just isn't built to respond to that kind of torture, so this is your maintenance week. Maintenance week is about figuring out what works for you, and what doesn't work for you.

Also, think of it this way, a big success factor in weight loss is cycling your diet, whether its carb cycling, or calorie cycling. In most carb cycling plans, it works like our Week 1, a day on, a day off, a couple days on, a day off, that kind of thing. When we take a maintenance week, we are doing a macro cycle and letting our body really adjust to eating well again.

Week 4: Strict Week

This week repeats the plan from week two. Just mix it up. This is where the rubber hits the road. You will be a finely tuned machine on this week. All of the maintenance weeks, and breaks and fun diversions only exist to help you to get through THIS WEEK. So no cheating, no changing, no "oh but what if" calculations. A strict week, is a strict week. Be stoic, do it and the system will support you when you get through it.

Rest, drink as much water as you can handle, seriously make it a mission to drink large containers of water all day long. If you feel hungry, drink a quart or more of water. Feel hungry again, more water. Rinse, and repeat. Pun intended. Go to sleep early each night on strict weeks, and be prepared for the next day with a well rested mind and body. The next day is going to feel amazing.

Week 5: Maintenance Week

A big success factor in weight loss is cycling your diet, whether its carb cycling, or calorie cycling. In most carb cycling plans, it works like week one in this plan, a day on, a day off, a couple days on, a day off, that kind of thing. When we take a maintenance week, we are doing a macro cycle and letting our body really adjust to eating well again.

I found in my process that the longer cycles helped me to focus, and settle in mentally to each process. I found that one week was effective because a week feels like a complete cycle, where a day feels like you're just getting started. Would this plan work if you did it in segments of 5 days or 3 days or even 2? Yes, it very likely would, and in fact the proponents of carb cycling build their diet plans around that idea. I recommend you do what works best for you. That being said, I did this, it worked for me, and I've seen many others take this plan and use it to great effect. The point is, journal like it's a religion, and listen to both your body in real time, and your data. The data you are collecting is gold on paper.

Week five is going to feel like a vacation, but it's really the same maintenance week we had before. You have the plan from week three, so I won't replicate it here. Know that the plan is a guideline, and not a strict list of meals. You need to figure out what eating to stay your current weight looks like for you. Every week, for the rest of your life after you finish this process will be a long series of creatively different, and thematically similar maintenance weeks. During this time, you will undoubtedly try to get a food you love back into a maintenance week, and because you'll be tracking your weight reactions and food consumption in your journal, you will be able to map out which foods cause you to be less healthy, to gain weight, and possibly even make you feel sick. You may identify food allergies in this process you never knew existed, and you'll be able to see it because as you add different foods back into your maintenance diet to see how

you react, you'll be writing down those reactions and be able to track and trace them. This process isn't just about cycling carbs or calories, the maintenance week is about learning how your body responds to what you're putting back into it. The process should be undertaken with respect for the scientific method.

The Scientific Method:

I mention the scientific method throughout this book because I love it. So much of what we do is based on what people tell us to do. It's comforting to me to gather the facts. The scientific method leads us to fact, not opinion, and we can use it to our personal benefit just as effectively as chemists can use it to study and predict chemical chain reactions.

The scientific method is an organized approach to problem solving that includes specific steps for developing and testing hypotheses. It involves the observation, identification, description, experimental investigation and theoretical explanation of phenomena. Through these steps, anyone can better understand the natural world and make predictions about how it will work under specific circumstances.

As you go through this plan and execute on its many steps, you will make observations, you will identify hypothesis, you will write descriptions of your experimental investigations and theoretical explanation of your results. By doing so without guess work, but by testing your results over and over you will learn without question what works for you and what doesn't. For you as a technically minded person, more than most people in the world, this scientific approach should be attractive and compelling, and should make you much more comfortable with the process, and therefore more likely to succeed.

The Long Game:

You will cycle these weeks for as long as it takes. In my experience about 50 pounds came off at times quickly, at times slowly, but it came off in about three months which by most measures is very fast. You may experience the same thing, or not, but you will lose the weight. You just need to keep cycling from this point forward through strict weeks and

maintenance weeks. As you move forward your strict weeks may become even more strict. In my case I did a couple of weeks of literally just eating salmon all week on strict weeks, and working healthy balanced foods back into my diet on maintenance weeks. The more strict your strict week is, the more weight will come off on that week. You will do this until you are about ten pounds away from your target (or about 60% of the way to the target, whichever comes first depending on your total amount of weight to lose at the beginning), and then you will change the cycle of strict weeks and maintenance weeks so the balance is more on the maintenance as you slowly prepare for your forever diet.

The long game is all about being able to maintain your weight. Losing all of this weight is like driving a freight train at high speed, you can't just stop all at once. You'll derail the train. You need to come out of this slowly, removing strict weeks from the overall plan without shocking your body.

When You Are Either 60% Done, or 10 Pounds From Your Goal Weight, Which Ever Comes First, I Want You To Change the Cycle From 1 to 1, to 2 to 1.

When you are 60% or 10 pounds from your goal weight, which ever comes first, I want you to change the cycle from 1 to 1, to 2 to 1. Two maintenance weeks followed by another strict week, and make these strict weeks less strict by adding back in the high fiber veggies that you may have taken out previously.

You'll slow your weight reduction, but that's ok, it's part of the plan. You also will start feeling more energy, and we're going to use that. When you get to only one strict week per

month we get to start working on muscles and flexibility because you'll have the energy to do it. Don't start working out hard until you are consuming the fuel you will need to get your through the hard workout.

In the long game it's going to be all about maintenance eating, and consistent exercise that focuses on building strength and flexibility.

Some Tips To Get You Started

There's just nothing quite as daunting as a blank canvas staring at you, so let's address some simple rules for creating the foods in your list. A simple recipe that is easy to follow can go a long way to making your evenings and days a lot easier, but absent an actual recipe, these guidelines will help you to create better meals to enjoy.

Here are some simple rules to follow for anything you cook on a strict week, mix and match ingredients according to the principles laid out in this book.

Cook with grass fed butter. Sauté, sauce, pan fry, sear, etc but for sure cook with grass fed butter.

Cook proteins, but don't focus exclusively on them. This isn't a protein diet, so don't make the mistake of going to hard on the protein. Especially on strict weeks it's mostly about keeping the fat content of your diet up around 80%.

On maintenance weeks cook with a lot of the high fiber veggies listed in this book, cook with lots of butter, and keep an eye on your calorie counts so you don't blow it out.

When cooking fish, place a bed of herbs on the bottom of a skillet, place the fish on the herbs and cook it all in butter. The fish will pick up the flavor of the herbs and not stick to the pan.

Steak

For a great steak, salt it the night before you want to eat it by coating both sides with a sprinkling of Kosher, or Maldon or Pink Himalayan salts, and place it in a bag in the refrigerator until the next day. The result will be a steak that gets more crispy on the outside, with much more flavor. Add lemon juice to the bag for an added treat, but not too much. Try to grill the steak when possible at very high heat, but if not possible you can always heat up a cast iron skillet to a million degrees in your oven set to broil, then (using a hot pad, duh) take the skillet, put a steak in it and return it to the oven. Time it for your particular steak, to about a minute or two shy of your preferred internal temp, turning it once to sear both sides evenly leave the oven on broil so the steak gets hit from both sides at once. When it's seared but not up to your preferred internal temp yet, pull it out and put half a stick of butter in the pan with rosemary, thyme salt and pepper and with the pan now on the stove but with no heat under the pan, just spoon the melting butter over the steak until it is completely melted. Remove the steak from the pan to a plate to rest, pouring the butter over the steak and the herbs on the plate. Wait 5 minutes while the juices rest in the meat, then cut or serve whole as desired. When you're done, take lightly steamed broccoli and pour the remaining juices over the broccoli.

Shrimp

When cooking shrimp, follow a recipe. Don't wing it. It is really easy to over cook shrimp. Make sure the shrimp are fully thawed before cooking, or fresh, and make sure your cooking time is gauged to the size of your shrimp.

Defrosting

Never cook a frozen protein while it's still frozen in the middle, cooking partially frozen food is a great way to get food poisoning.

When thawing portions of food, if the food is in a plastic air tight bag, place the portion in the sealed bag in a bowl of water and let the water drip, just a drip, not even a trickle, into the bowl. The dripping creates a convective effect in the water which Cooks magazine tested and found to be as or more effective than any other defrosting method. It speeds up the defrosting time by a lot. For fish, chicken or steak, you know its fully defrosted by the feel. If the meat is pliable throughout, it's defrosted. If the meat resists bending at all, it needs more time.

Boiled Eggs

Eggs are a perfect soft boil at exactly 7 minutes.

Mushrooms

Mushrooms are better when cooked with just salt, pepper and thyme, and left in a skillet on the stove top over medium heat stirred occasionally, and allowed to dry out a lot. Never serve slimy mushrooms. They tend to taste better and feel better in your mouth when they have a little crunch to them. Besides, they have so much water in them to start, its kind of hard to over cook them (though it is definitely possible.)

Bacon

Bacon is half fat, and half meat, and the two don't cook at the same rate. That's why bacon is so easy to burn. You can cheat that by starting your bacon in a skillet with a small amount of water, just enough to wet the bottom of the pan. The water will boil, the fat will render, and the meat won't burn because the pan is wet right up until there's enough melted fat in the pan to finish it all off.

Alternatively, bacon is really good when baked in a 350 degree oven, just watch it so it doesn't burn.

Salmon

Frozen salmon portions can be defrosted as mentioned above. When ready to cook, I recommend a hot skillet. You can use the preparation method mentioned above with the herb base. Salmon is usually portioned into pieces that have roughly four sides, top, bottom, and side to side. When you cook it, a white substance may be excreted from the top and sides of the meat. While not a quality or health problem, this may mean you didn't let the fish thaw quite enough. It's ok, but you'll want to scrape away that white substance, as it never fully caramelizes and doesn't feel good in your mouth. Best to remove it and eat the remaining fish. Also, salmon skin is edible, but an acquired taste. If you want to try it, I recommend removing it after cooking when it should come off easily, and then pan fry just the remaining skin in butter and the remaining herbs. The resulting skin will be crispy and if you get it just right, it won't be burned. With salt and pepper, it can be really tasty.

Cured Meat

A mandolin is a slicing tool that should be in every kitchen. If you don't have one, there are cheap plastic models you can try out that are very effective. You can use a mandolin to shave hard cheese, shave veggies, or my favorite, shave hard cured meats for snacks. A single hard salami at Cost Plus World Market can be as low as \$6 and if shaved can provide high fat keto friendly snacks for days.

Chicharrones

Dirty keto is a thing, and there are snack foods that absolutely fit into the plan, but that I don't recommend. This is like the dirty back alley of keto. Chicharrones are fried pork fat. It's insane that I'm even mentioning this in the book, but technically you can eat these and not kick yourself out of keto. So if you are desperate for something like popcorn or potato chips during a strict week, it's probably better to have a few of these than it would be to break down and eat potato chips. (I'm so ashamed) What's worse is, you can mash them up and use them after an egg bath to coat something like a pork chop which you can then pan sear in butter. The result if done right, can be a crispy "breaded" pork chop that hasn't been anywhere near bread. This will require experimentation, but it could work...

Pork Chops

Pork chops and pork loin have a special place in my heart. You can buy an entire pork loin and slice that into steaks that you portion out as you wish, then freeze each portion individually for later use.

For bone in pork chops, you'll want to treat them exactly as I say to do the steak above. Salt the night before, cook on a ridiculously hot surface for a short amount of time. Cooking

time is completely impossible for me to say here because your surface temperature and meat thickness are way too variable, but you can usually tell by the feel of the meat if you apply pressure to it. The less it resists, the less it is cooked. As it cooks (over cooks) it begins to feel hard so don't let it get there unless you love dull grey meat. A note about cooking pork to done. There is a historical thing about cooking pork until it's dry that came from pigs living in pits of rotting food. They would get parasites that would survive the cooking process and continue to live inside of you after eating the meat. Not good. Thing is today the pork we eat is practically manufactured, and pigs aren't raised on rotting food scraps anymore, so it's generally safer to eat pork that is cooked to an internal temperature that doesn't render it the texture of cardboard. Try cooking it a little less than you normally would. The result is a meat that is juicy, full of flavor and that you'll actually want to eat without immediately chasing it with a tall glass of water.



CHAPTER 16: BECOMING FOCUSED, STRONG AND FLEXIBLE

Don't start working out until you are at least 60% to your weight loss goal if you were severely overweight when you started, or 10 pounds away if you were just a little overweight. This advice is practical in nature. You must get a lot of the weight off *first* so you have a safer experience building muscle and flexibility. As with everything else in this book, talk to your doctor first and make sure you are healthy enough to engage in the physical exercise you plan to do. This is very important. Here's why.

At the beginning of this process you were heavier than your body should be. Load level matters to joints, skin, bones and if you overdo it and get injured by trying to work out too

early on, you will hit a barrier that might make you no longer medically able to proceed with exercise. A broken bone, or a sprained ankle or a torn ligament will stop you in your tracks, and it would be way too easy to give up after that kind of injury. Jumping jacks risk your knees, ankles, hips, lower back and all the connective tissue in your feet, so you're not doing anything remotely like that until you are at or near your target weight. Nor are you going to start jogging when you are 30 pounds overweight or heavier. It's just a bad idea. What you need is zero impact exercise.

You followed my initial advice and you've been walking, which is very low intensity and low impact, for a minimum of 20 minutes per day through all of this so far, and that has conditioned your lower body with some muscle mass to allow you to stand for long periods, and improved your sense of balance. These are about to become powerful assets as you move into the next level.

By Starting Hot Yoga, You Are About To Build Flexibility, Mental Focus, Strength and Muscle Tone.

By starting hot yoga, you are about to build flexibility, mental focus, strength and muscle tone. That is why we go beyond simple cardio exercise (which helps our heart and lungs and burns a few extra calories, but not much else) to "working out" which to me means strength training.

Yoga and swimming are the best exercises for people coming out of certain injuries. Yoga however is in my opinion the best if you've had massive physical or emotional trauma. I can't tell you how many people I've met in a yoga studio who got there because a physical therapist recommended it to

heal a sports injury, or doctor recommended it to fend off the effects of scoliosis, or therapists who recommended it to people experiencing trauma like divorce or mourning the death of a loved one. Yoga comes in many forms, and the physical poses are just one level of yoga practice. There is deep tradition and history behind it, some people get spirituality from it, others get a good workout, still others get the time to focus on their problems in a way that is almost like meditation. The benefits are experienced in different ways for everyone, and no one way is “right.”

Hot Yoga Is Just Yoga in a Heated and Humidified Room

Hot Yoga is just yoga in a heated and humidified room that mimics the conditions in India where people can practice outdoors in 110 degree heat with 90% or higher humidity. The addition of the heat and humidity protects your joints and muscles from “cold” injury.

In a hot yoga session, essentially you benefit from the effects of sitting in a hot sauna, but also the effects of strength training with a in person trainer, along with the benefits of targeted stretching, along with the benefits of breathing exercise and cognitive intentional focus (meditation). If you think about that, hot yoga is the most efficient thing you can do to get multiple benefits in one concentrated hour of activity.

Hot Yoga Is the Most Efficient Thing You Can Do To Get Multiple Benefits in One Concentrated Hour of Activity.

Yoga comes in many styles, so keep in mind that not every yoga studio will meet your needs. Some focus almost entirely on breathing. While there is great benefit to doing advanced breathing exercises, that type of yoga won't help us to hit our goals. I'm sending you to hot yoga because of the physical benefits of doing it at the tail end of your weight loss process. Your body just went through a massive physiological transformation, and you need to guide the body into the best functional form you can achieve. All of our bodies are different, you will end up in a different shape than the next person who follows the plan in this book, that's one reason why I am asking you to send before and after pictures to us to show off your success. Your body has a form that is possible based on your bone structure, and other hard and set in stone factors. If you just hit a treadmill, you won't do anything to affect the form your body achieves. If you do strength training in the form of weight training, you will have tighter control over the ultimate form your body takes, however doing so without a personal trainer watching you and correcting you from one moment to the next risks injury, and ineffective and possibly unwanted over all muscular development. What that means is simply, if you lift the wrong way (and it is VERY easy to do it wrong) you will hurt yourself, build muscles that are out of balance, or not build muscle at all. That's why we go to Yoga first.

Yoga classes are always taught by certified yoga instructors, you are in a room with anywhere from a few to a couple dozen people. The instructor is walking around, watching form, correcting you to optimize your results, and doing so in a way that is not just low impact, but is in fact zero

impact. It is all about building strength, improving flexibility, and enhancing your ability to breathe and eliminate toxins from your body. Going into a hot yoga class just three times per week will result in amazing transformation.

Going Into a Hot Yoga Class Just Three Times per Week Will Result in Amazing Transformation.

In many hot yoga studios you will find classes called Yin yoga. Yin is a restorative yoga technique entirely practiced at ground level (not standing up). The various twists and stretches are designed to loosen tight connective tissue, relax tight muscles, and specifically guide your body into a gently more aligned shape. Hot yoga like Hot Power Fusion, Power Yoga and other name branded forms of Yoga can be combined with classes in Yin yoga to provide a balanced regular routine that will build strength and balance and flexibility, making your body better suited to age well with less physical pain, and more balance and body control. Let's put it this way, I'd rather be an 80 year old yoga practitioner, than an 80 year work-a-holic waking up one day with a bent over posture, who experiences pain every time he gets in and out of a bath tub, or chair at the office.

*I'd Rather Be an 80 Year Old Yoga Practitioner,
Than an 80 Year Work-A-Holic Waking Up One
Day With a Bent Over Posture, Who Experiences
Pain Every Time He Gets in and out of a Bath Tub,
or Chair at the Office.*

Yoga for Heroes:

I loved Doctor Strange when it came out. To this day it's one of those movies I can sit and watch over and over.

The story of someone who is forced into a major change in his life, through the loss of his ability to do his work. He defines himself by his work and then loses his ability to do that work, so he loses his entire identity and self worth. For an ego maniac like Doctor Strange, having his ego completely destroyed like that drives him to extremes to get that identity back. All of that sends him on a journey of desperation that finally leads him to accept something his prior self couldn't believe in. He needs and finds complete ego transformation by letting go and learning a new way that actually completely contradicts everything that constructed his identity before. He develops new skills, and new knowledge, which opens him up to an entirely different sense of self worth and value. In the process, beyond just absorbing vast amounts of information, he is guided through forms of physical practice similar to a martial art. Enter the montage...

The Physical Practice of Yoga Is a Form of Martial Art

Truth is, the physical practice of yoga is a form of martial art. I've been in classes with instructors who designed practice that incorporates Muay Thai into a yoga flow. There are other forms that incorporate light dumb bell weight lifting into a yoga flow with aerobic isometrics. At Hot8Yoga in California they have a class called Sculpt that does just that, and believe me, you've never done anything as challenging as trying to survive that class for the first time. It's definitely

where you go once you become more advanced. As you find new forms of yoga, you will find all sorts of other martial arts within the movements. There is something empowering about the practice, it can feel a lot like you're in an actual film montage. Suddenly you are your favorite super hero in the training montage. In fact, if you have a favorite super hero I recommend that (just for fun) you imagine yourself being that super hero in their "training phase" during those first few classes. Puff out your chest, suck in your core, pull those shoulder blades down and together, hold that head up high and be strong. It feels amazing. I highly recommend it.

This form of exercise when approached from the right frame of mind, can be a lot of fun, activating your imagination at the same time that it activates your body, and your mind.

So find that quiet space in your mind that every super hero needs to find to activate and control their super power, and enjoy class.

Yoga Schedule and Plan:

Find a local hot yoga studio and read reviews to ensure it's one that other members love. Many studios offer a new member promotion, such as a free first week for unlimited classes. Take advantage of it, and ask which classes are most appropriate for beginners. Yoga studios are very open and welcoming, so don't be self-conscious.

Yoga is a great way to alternate between power and stretching, so you'll want to alternate between a typical hot yoga class (power, hot yoga or hot power fusion) and a Yin class (stretching and healing) every other day. If you miss a day, don't beat yourself up, but try to be consistent. If the studio you choose has teachers that don't give physical corrections during class or an environment that feels unclean, try another studio until you find one you love.

Hot yoga is an important part of this plan, but if your doctor advises against it, you can still do regular yoga while following the power and stretching schedule. Trust me, the

rewards are worth it. After six months of regular yoga, you'll see progress. Enjoy the process and your new sexy body!

Hot Yoga Plan:

Your studio will offer specific classes at specific times. Honestly getting the right class to fit into your work and family schedule is one of the more challenging aspects of doing this. When you find a studio, you want to book classes that alternate making it easier to build strength, while also healing along the way and preventing fatigue and injury.

Here's a typical week, you can mix and match as classes are available, but you'll see the pattern. It's simple, put a yin stretching class in-between your strength building classes. Rinse, and repeat.

Monday: Hot Power Fusion

Tuesday: Yin

Wednesday: Power Yoga

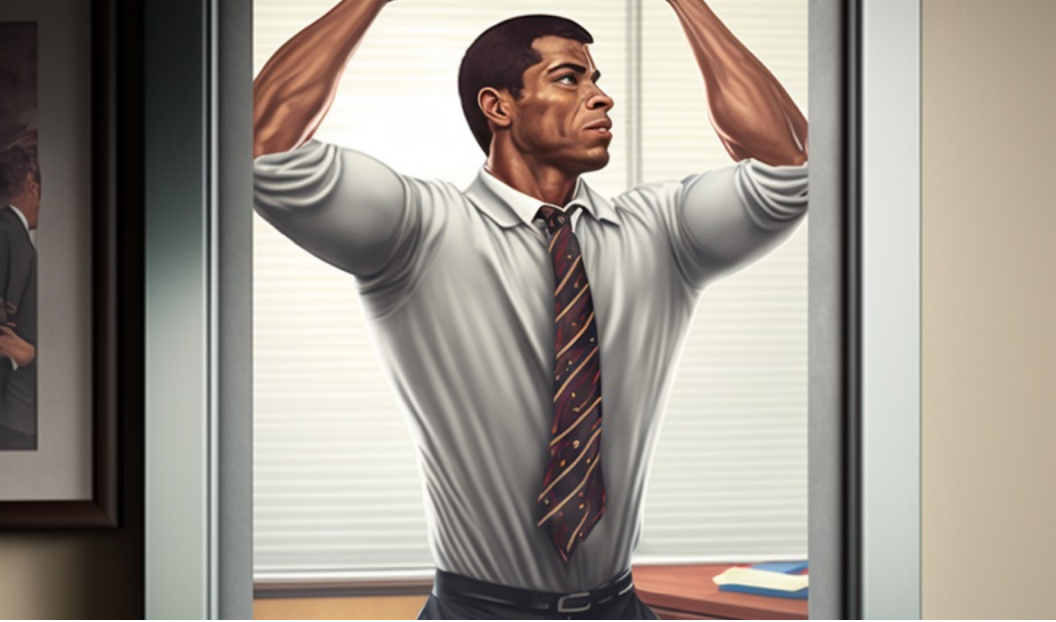
Thursday: Yin

Friday: Hot Yoga

Saturday: Power Yoga

Sunday: Breathing Meditation or Yin

As you can see, it's not a strict do this and nothing else kind of schedule, but instead a working theme you can follow loosely. All you are doing is throwing yin, which is basically a restorative day, in between your very tough yoga workouts on alternating strength building days.



CHAPTER 17: ALTERNATIVES TO HOT YOGA WHEN YOUR DOCTOR SAYS NO

If you're looking for an alternative exercise routine to hot yoga, consider incorporating a "workout anywhere" plan into your daily routine. This approach is simple and can be done in any setting, whether you're at home or at the office. Whenever you find yourself waiting for a progress bar or for a system to reboot, use that time to do a push-up or a few crunches.

Office Workout

Here is a sample workout plan that utilizes the principles of HIIT (High-Intensity Interval Training) and can be done in an office setting:

Warm-up:

5-minute jog in place

10 arm circles (forward and backward)

10 neck rotations (left and right)

10 ankle rotations (left and right)

Strength Building:

30 seconds of squats

15 seconds of rest

30 seconds of lunges (left and right)

15 seconds of rest

30 seconds of chair dips

15 seconds of rest

30 seconds of wall sits

15 seconds of rest

30 seconds of push-ups

15 seconds of rest

Repeat this circuit for 3-4 rounds, depending on your fitness level

Flexibility:

30 seconds of seated forward fold

15 seconds of rest

30 seconds of seated spinal twist (left and right)

15 seconds of rest

30 seconds of seated butterfly stretch

15 seconds of rest

30 seconds of seated hamstring stretch (left and right)

15 seconds of rest

Repeat this circuit for 2-3 rounds, depending on your fitness level

Cool down:

5-minute walk in place

10 deep breaths

5-minute stretching

Work From Home Workout

If you are a work from home person, your options get even better, you can incorporate light weights and do a workout like the following:

Here is a sample workout plan that utilizes weights between 5 and 30 pounds and can be done at home:

Warm-up:

5-minute jog in place

10 arm circles (forward and backward)

10 neck rotations (left and right)

10 ankle rotations (left and right)

Strength Building:

12 reps of bicep curls (using 5-10 pounds)

12 reps of tricep extensions (using 5-10 pounds)

12 reps of shoulder press (using 10-20 pounds)

12 reps of deadlifts (using 20-30 pounds)

12 reps of lunges (using 5-10 pounds)

12 reps of rows (using 10-20 pounds)

Repeat this circuit for 3-4 rounds, depending on your fitness level

Flexibility:

30 seconds of downward-facing dog

15 seconds of rest

30 seconds of pigeon pose (left and right)

15 seconds of rest

30 seconds of warrior II (left and right)

15 seconds of rest

30 seconds of triangle pose (left and right)

15 seconds of rest

Repeat this circuit for 2-3 rounds, depending on your fitness level

Cool down:

5-minute walk in place

10 deep breaths

5-minute stretching

You should always talk to your primary care physician before starting any new exercise program and drink lots of water before your workout, and continue your water intake with sips of water during your workout and continue to hydrate after the workout. It's important to use proper form when doing exercises with weights to avoid injuries, so be sure to get advice from a personal trainer if possible before embarking on weight lifting in home or at the gym. Proper form can be the difference between an effective workout, and a sports injury.

Swimming

Swimming is a great overall body exercise, but to get the full body workout you need, you have to do more than just jumping in the pool and paddling around. Swimmers switch between different stroke types to get a full body workout. Proper swimming pools can be found at YMCA's and private gyms all over, but also many colleges, and high schools. Having lane lines and proper lengths will make it easy to keep track of your distances. You don't need an Olympic sized pool to do this though. Just be consistent and make the time to swim every day.

Warm-up:

400 meter easy swim

4 x 50 meter kick with a kickboard

4 x 50 meter swim with a pull buoy

Main set:

*4 x 100 meter freestyle with 10 seconds rest
between each*

*4 x 50 meter backstroke with 10 seconds rest
between each*

*4 x 100 meter breaststroke with 10 seconds rest
between each*

*4 x 50 meter butterfly with 10 seconds rest between
each*

*4 x 100 meter freestyle with 10 seconds rest
between each*

Endurance set:

*2 x 400 meter freestyle with 30 seconds rest
between each*

Cool down:

200 meter easy swim

4 x 50 meter kick with a kickboard

4 x 50 meter swim with a pull buoy

It is important to use proper form when swimming to avoid injuries, though it is less easy to get an injury while swimming because it is a zero impact sport. You can adjust the distance, stroke and rest time to suit your fitness level and goals.

One last thing, because you are swimming, you may not realize how much water you are losing to sweat in your workout. Drink a LOT of water all day before, just like you would for hot yoga, and don't forget to drink a lot of water after each workout.

HIIT

A HIIT studio will have lots of what look like toys scattered around a room. Giant thick ropes, cones, balance beams, medicine balls, all sorts of low weight dumbbells. You'll use all of it in one workout that doesn't last a long time, but gives you a great functional strength training exercise, and also gets your heart rate up and your sweat pouring. Here's an example of what you might be guided through in a HIIT training session.

This quote is taken from an NIH study on exercise. The study basically supports the practice of HIIT training as an effective form of exercise. Be careful though, HIIT is NOT low impact.

“significant improvements in endurance performance and corresponding physiological markers are evident following submaximal endurance training in sedentary and recreationally active groups”

Laursen PB, Jenkins DG. The scientific basis for high-intensity interval training: optimising training programmes and maximising performance in highly trained endurance athletes.

Sports Med. 2002;32(1):53-73. doi:
10.2165/00007256-200232010-00003. PMID: 11772161.

During a first HIIT (high-intensity interval training) session at a HIIT studio, one might expect a full-body workout that combines cardio and strength training. The session will likely be led by a trainer who will guide participants through a series of high-intensity exercises, such as burpees, jumping jacks, mountain climbers, and squats, that are performed for a specific amount of time followed by a short rest period. The workout is designed to be intense, but the trainer will provide modifications and options to accommodate different fitness levels. The session may also include some stretching and cool-down exercises at the end. The duration of the session will vary but typically last around 30-45 minutes.

Here's a sample HIIT workout plan that incorporates a variety of different sports equipment:

Warm-Up:

5 minutes of jogging or jumping jacks

Dynamic stretching (leg swings, arm circles, etc.)

Round 1:

30 seconds of jump rope

15 seconds of rest

30 seconds of medicine ball slams

15 seconds of rest

30 seconds of cone drills (sprinting around cones set up in a specific pattern)

15 seconds of rest

30 seconds of battle ropes

15 seconds of rest

Round 2:

30 seconds of balance board squats

15 seconds of rest

30 seconds of medicine ball Russian twists

15 seconds of rest

30 seconds of cone drills (agility ladder)

15 seconds of rest

30 seconds of battle ropes

15 seconds of rest

Round 3:

30 seconds of balance board lunges

15 seconds of rest

30 seconds of medicine ball slams

15 seconds of rest

30 seconds of cone drills (agility ladder)

15 seconds of rest

30 seconds of battle ropes

15 seconds of rest

Cool-Down:

5 minutes of light cardio (jogging or jumping jacks)

Static stretching (hamstring, quad, and calf stretches)

Each round is 3 minutes long, with 2 minutes of rest between each round. You can do this workout for 2-3 rounds depending on your fitness level. The number of reps can be adjusted accordingly as well. This workout is designed to be intense, but you can also modify the exercises and equipment to suit your fitness level and capabilities.

With all of these workouts, it is important to know what your heart rate is. Keep it safe, don't over do it. See the chapter at the end of this book on technology to monitor your vitals during a workout. Remember, you don't start working out in this plan until you have lost enough weight to take the pressure off of your joints and muscles. So start planning what you'll do to work out and build those powerful muscles, but hold off on starting the workouts until you've lost at least half of the weight you need to lose to hit your goal.

Advanced (Not Until You Are Already in Good Shape)

You would be amazed at what your body can do when you are generating Human Growth Hormone internally with no need for any supplements. The absolute best way to do this, supported by studies done on athletes, is to engage in sprinting.

The following study found that intensity of exercise was far more important to results than volume of work. So train harder, not longer.

*Most studies have shown that 20 to 80% single-step reductions in training **volume** over 1 to 4 weeks have little effect on exercise performance, and that it is more important to maintain training intensity than training volume.*

-Kubukeli ZN, Noakes TD, Dennis SC. Training techniques to improve endurance exercise performances. Sports Med. 2002;32(8):489-509. doi: 10.2165/00007256-200232080-00002. PMID: 12076176.

Sprinting gets a bad wrap in everyday language because people associate sprinters with people who burn fast and bright but also burn out. Sprinting in reality is nothing like that. In the effort to increase your vitality, your muscle power, and your youthful energy, once you get to a fitness level where sprinting is medically POSSIBLE, you can start to engage in short 10 second sprint sessions with 90 seconds of rest followed by another 10 seconds of sprint and 90 seconds of rest. Done like that in sets of ten, only once per day will actually increase your testosterone and human growth hormone levels, without needing any supplements or injections. It's easy, it's miraculous, and it's all you. For an even more intense sprinting experience, head to the beach if you have one nearby and do it in dry sand. You won't believe how hard it is. No beach nearby? Find a steep hill and do it

there once the flat lands are no longer a challenge. There are plenty of ways to keep sprinting challenging at nearly any fitness level.

This is very important though. This kind of intensity, while entirely the point of this exercise, makes it very dangerous if you have a heart condition, so **DO NOT DO THIS** if you have a prior condition, and definitely **SEE YOUR DOCTOR** and get your ticker tested before you begin. Be safe, and be healthy.



CHAPTER 18: BUILDING PERSONAL STYLE TO MATCH THE NEW YOU

If you've recently lost weight, it's time to update your wardrobe. With your new body, you can now experiment with different styles and looks that you couldn't pull off before. That's right, you will now look GOOD in clothes. It's a big side benefit you should use as a motivator, it's fun so enjoy it. If you have one in your area I have had great luck with Nordstrom. At Nordstrom, you can find a specialist to help you develop a new personal style. It's a completely free service. You're going to be spending a lot of money there, so they are motivated and super friendly. Here's how you do it. Once you get there, request a stylist to assist you in putting together outfits that make you look and feel your best. If you are not comfortable with the stylist assigned to you it might get a little uncomfortable, but it's not worth wasting your time with someone who doesn't get you.

The Paradox of Building Confidence

Here's a bit of a paradox though. If you aren't super confident about the way you look because you've been hating how you look for years (that was me), you may not have a great sense for what looks good on you right away. It takes time to learn what looks good and what doesn't. Be patient with yourself and don't be too attached to your money. You will absolutely make a few mistakes and buy some ridiculous things along the way. Just understand that it's part of the process and have fun with it, rather than being stressed out about needing to make it all perfect the first time around. This is a process my friend, nothing less, and you will make good choices, bad choices and GREAT choices. Just take the wins and keep swinging for the fences.

You don't have to become a fashion expert overnight, but it's important to take an interest in what you are wearing and how it makes you feel. Take a look at what styles and colors you're drawn to and experiment with different looks. Don't be tied to just Nordstrom, I only suggest that store because they provide a helpful service and they have something for everyone. Try different clothing stores and brands, and don't be afraid to ask for help from a stylist or fashion-savvy friend. Take a look at fashion blogs and magazines for inspiration, but remember that you don't have to follow trends. It's important to find a style that makes you feel comfortable and confident. Some of my favorites over the last few years have changed as I've gotten a little older. Keep your style moving, and remember it's about who you want to be. Most people see you in your wrapper before they get to know your insides. Learn to present a terrific wrapper, so more people are drawn in to learn more about the amazing person you are inside. (That is, unless you don't want people to notice, in which case you can develop an entire style and wardrobe around clothes that make you blend into the background and disappear.)

Learn What You Like, and Take Your Time

One of the most important things to remember when developing your personal style is to be true to yourself. Don't try to be someone you're not, or wear clothes that don't feel like you. Be confident in who you are and what you like. It's also important to remember that personal style is not just about clothing, it's also about how you accessorize. Everyone can benefit from a bracelet, a necklace or more. It's about experimenting and finding what makes you feel confident and comfortable. As you continue on your path to becoming a healthier, happier person, remember to focus on building confidence and finding a personal style that makes you feel like the best version of yourself. You've worked hard to get to this point, so don't be afraid to show off your hard work and be proud of your success.

Collecting Ideas Visually

Creating a fashion vision board is an effective way to refine your personal style. Gather inspiration from various sources such as fashion magazines, blogs, and social media, and compile them into a cohesive collection you either print and cut out, or cut and paste into another document on your computer. You need to gather your inspiration in one place to focus your vision and facilitate the crystallization of your style so that when you walk by a shop and see something that fits into the plan, you will notice it.

Even if the inspiration seems scattered, you may notice common themes, so go with them. Identify two or three images that best represent the overall aesthetic and keep them handy on your phone as a reference when shopping. This will help you stay true to your personal style and make better-informed fashion choices. You can bring images you like to your personal stylist meeting at Nordstrom, and your

stylist will have a much better chance of knowing what you need.

A Short Structured List

Reflect on the clothes in your closet that bring you joy and identify commonalities among them. If you hate everything, donate it all to Goodwill and start over.

Gather fashion inspiration from family and friends, social media, fashion bloggers, and magazines, and align with a style type. Try to open your mind to things that may be new or not “you.”

Create a visual reference board to collect anchoring visual ideas to identify and maintain a cohesive aesthetic and keep it on hand when shopping by putting it all in a Note on your phone.

Build a capsule wardrobe of versatile basics in neutral colors to serve as a foundation for your personal style. Steve Harvey did a thing about the suits every man needs to make something like 75 combinations. That’s the idea here. Pick things that can create unique combinations that can’t go wrong. It’s not Garanimals, but mixing and matching can stretch an already thin wardrobe budget.

Experiment with unique and bold fashion choices to showcase your style personality. Don’t know what that means? Ask the stylist.

Personal style is complicated, and I’m not trying to tell you to change who you are just because you are getting healthy. What I’m saying here is simple. You are about to be walking around in a different body, and that presents an opportunity to wrap that body in something new while walking around in the world. Your old clothes won’t fit, so when getting new ones, consider something fun, new and different just to shake things up a bit.

*You Are About To Be Walking Around in a
Different Body, and That Presents an Opportunity
To Wrap That Body in Something New While
Walking Around in the World.*



CHAPTER 19: CELEBRATING SUCCESS WITH PHOTOGRAPHIC EVIDENCE

After you've put in the hard work to transform yourself, it's important to document your progress and celebrate your accomplishments. One way to do this is by getting professional photos taken of yourself once you look your best. Here are some steps to help you find the right photographer and make the most of your photo shoot:

Be sure to already have your new wardrobe at the ready, get a new hair cut, or maybe even a coloring. Consider accessories to make it fun, and think about whether you want in studio or outdoor photos taken.

Finding the Right Photographer

Know What You Are Looking For: Before beginning your search, it is essential to have a clear idea of what type of photography you prefer, and what type of portraits you would like to have taken. Do you prefer traditional poses, or would you like to try something more creative? Knowing this ahead of time makes it much easier to narrow down the list of potential photographers.

Word-of-mouth is how I found my photographer. I needed a new bio pic for my courses with LinkedIn Learning and their staff photographer offered so I went in for a photo session. It was a great opportunity. I wouldn't have known about him except for a network of connections through word of mouth. Simply asking friends and colleagues can be an effective way to find talented professionals in any industry, so don't be afraid to reach out and ask friends and family if they know of any good portrait photographers. This can save you time while also helping ensure that you end up with someone who has a proven track record of quality work with people you know.

Search online for photographers in your area if you can't find one through a personal referral. Check out their websites and look at their portfolios to get an idea of their style and the types of photos they take. You want someone with a great portfolio of portrait photos in a style you want to replicate for yourself.

Contact the photographers you're interested in and ask for pricing information. If the photographer is out of your budget range, there's no point in talking to them.

When meeting with prospective photographers that are within your budget take time to ask them questions about their experience and discuss your specific needs and expectations for the photo session. Good communication is key so speaking openly about what appeals to you for the session is important in order to ensure everyone is on the same page from start to finish.

Photography is an art form, so even once all other factors have been considered its ultimately down to personal preference. Trust your instincts when making this decision. If something feels 'off' it probably is. Don't hesitate to move on to another option if something doesn't feel right.

Planning Your Shoot

Plan your photo shoot: Once you've selected a photographer, plan your photo shoot. Think about the types of poses and wardrobe you want to include. Make sure to have a variety of shots taken, such as standing, sitting, and in different outfits. Consider outdoor, and indoor options, season, temperature, and lighting conditions.

Share Your Awesomeness

Share your photos on social media: After the photo shoot, select your favorite photos and send them to technically-fit.com so we can post them for the world to see. This is a great way to show off your hard work and inspire others.

I promise not to post anything you don't want posted, and if you do want the images posted to encourage others, we'll figure out some way to thank you.

Finding the perfect portrait photographer for your needs can be a daunting task. It is important to do your research, ask questions, and make sure you understand what you're getting before signing on the dotted line.

Lastly, I know this is kind of obvious, but *only* do this if it's fun for you. If it's a chore, skip it. We're all good.



CHAPTER 20: STRATEGIES TO EMPOWER YOUR WILLPOWER

Sometimes, you are your own worst enemy. You create a plan, and you understand everything, but because of your human brain, you still eat the Hershey's kiss, you still eat the snickers bar, you still have the glass of wine or the shot of tequila.

The Monster Inside Wants Cookies

It is ultimately willpower that takes you from wanting to do something, to doing it, or not doing it.

10am I want to drink only water tonight.

5pm I want a gin and tonic.

8pm I want a bag of almonds.

10pm I want salt and vinegar potato chips.

Sleep

6am I have to stop drinking I can't do this anymore
10am I still feel horrible, I'm definitely not drinking anymore
5pm It has been a really rough day, I deserve a gin and tonic
8pm I want another Gin and Tonic
9pm I want ...
Rinse and Repeat.

The Wrong Kind of Cycle

It's a terrible cycle, and each of us has either experienced it, or we've watched someone else experience it. If your weakness is alcohol, you get it. If your weakness is chocolate, or sugar, or something more serious, you know how hard it is to get your impulses under control. Especially if they've become habitual. That habitual nature in humans is why we work on building new habits to replace the old ones. The new habits take over and push out the old, and research has proven that it takes 21 days to establish a new habit. 21 consistent, unchanging, plodding along into the future days.

Repeating the Right Mental Monolog

Saying I only drink water, coffee and tea is a good step. Saying I am in a strict day today, or I am in a maintenance day today, can help you to keep your mental monolog going in the right direction.

The second you let your inner monolog shift to a damaging thought, you're lost because it's going to translate directly to self destructive re-establishment of the old habits.

You have a little voice inside you. If you are just starting out on changing a particularly ingrained behavior, that inner voice is strong, automatic, and self reinforcing. You need to really apply effort to overcome it. If you haven't eaten a sugary desert in 20 years, when the waiter asks if you want to see the desert menu you have no problem at all saying no, I'll just take the check please. If on the other hand, you always

get the chocolate cake with ice cream at your favorite restaurant and the waiter doesn't even bother asking you anymore, it's almost impossible to stop.

In "The Meaning of Life" John Cleese has an explosive reaction to a wafer thin mint. It's a hilariously disgusting visual, and it makes several points simultaneously. Just remember, the mint may be wafer thin, but it can still have a catastrophic impact so try to not tell yourself it's just a tiny little mint. Even a tiny sugary snack can be the final straw, or the first straw that starts a cascade.

The Nature of Willpower

You Can't Build Your Willpower if You Don't Exercise Your Willpower

Willpower is the ability to resist temptation and make decisions that align with our long-term goals. It is a finite resource, and like all resources, it can be depleted. Willpower can be regained however, and there are several strategies you can use to build your willpower strength just as you will build muscle strength by working out. In fact, it's exactly like building muscle strength, in that you can't build your willpower if you don't exercise your willpower. Here are some recommendations for willpower workouts to support you on your way. These tips apply to dieting, quitting alcohol, studying for a test, or accomplishing a career goal. Life takes willpower, so do the following if you want to make more progress towards all of your goals.

Willpower is a mental muscle, and like any muscle, it needs time to recover. When you're feeling drained and unmotivated, it's important to give yourself a break. This is a contributing factor to the success of all cycling diets. The phased approach not only works well with your biology, but it works well with your mind and your sense of willpower. By phasing in and out of strict weeks, or strict days, you give your willpower a break to recharge and get ready for the next push forward.

Lack of sleep can greatly reduce our willpower. Aim for 7-8 hours of sleep every night, and try to stick to a consistent sleep schedule. A good night's sleep will help you with mental focus, physical recovery, energy and creativity, making it easier to resist temptations and make good decisions. See

the sleep chapter later in the book for techniques and the science behind good sleep.

Fueling your body properly is where things get tricky. This plan calls for restricting lots of the foods your body usually uses for energy. At first, you're going to feel cranky, tired, and unmotivated. It's part of the process. During that time, your willpower will be more taxed than usual, that's why we cleaned house before you got started with changing food going into your body. You need to have only good options around you to help you with your willpower.

Break down big goals into smaller tasks. Breaking big goals down into smaller tasks can make them directly addressable. The old saying about how you eat an elephant equally applies to how to NOT eat an elephant. Plan and execute your approach one bite at a time. This can help you regain a sense of control, making it easier to maintain your willpower and stay motivated.

If you are a rewards based person who is motivated by getting something out of your effort, reward yourself! Setting small rewards for yourself can be a great way to stay motivated and regain your willpower. Reward yourself for sticking to your goals.

Replenishing a Finite Resource

Remember, willpower is a finite resource and if you challenge it constantly, it will run out. I supposed that sounds like common sense, but what isn't commonly accepted is that we are bombarded by small choices every day from the moment we wake up to the moment we go to sleep and all of those small choices come with decision fatigue because every time you have to choose what you need over what you crave it takes a little bit of life out of you. It's natural and completely expected that you will lose your willpower to some extent throughout that process. You'll have bad days, I promise, but you'll also have great days where you'll feel

strong and powerful and you'll enjoy the huge high associated with every accomplishment.

Don't stop completely if you have a lapse. If you have a bad day, take the hit, even if it knocks you down, just get back up and keep fighting. Like so many other challenges in life, this is a game you win simply by consistently getting back up and moving forward a little more each day until you reach your goal.



CHAPTER 21: LEVERAGING THE POWER OF SLEEP

Sleep is known to have a direct impact on weight loss, so it would be impossible to address losing weight without addressing the impact of sleep on your health, your weight and your mind.

Sleep plays a crucial role in the weight loss process. If you've been burning the candle at both ends, and sacrificing sleep to get more work done, or parent a newborn, or study for last minute exams, you've been measurably harming your health in many ways. Research has shown that individuals who get enough sleep are more likely to have a healthy body weight, while those who have poor sleep habits have interrupted sleep or who do not experience enough sleep and deep sleep are at a higher risk of being overweight and unhealthy physically emotionally and mentally. I would say enough sleep should equal no less than 8 hours per night for adults, but in teens and younger children could be much

more and at hours of the day that make less sense to adults. Be patient with your sleepy teens with strange sleep habits, it's not a character flaw, it's likely just biology at work.

One Way That Sleep Affects Weight Loss Is by Regulating the Hormones That Control Hunger and Fullness.

One way that sleep affects weight loss is by regulating the hormones that control hunger and fullness. Ghrelin, a hormone that stimulates appetite, is produced in higher levels when you are sleep-deprived, while leptin, a hormone that suppresses appetite, is restricted under the same conditions. This hormonal imbalance can lead to increased hunger and cravings. The result of this imbalance is late night cravings. Have you ever wondered why you are so much more likely to snack on exactly the wrong foods in the evening? Lack of healthy sleep is a huge contributor to that.

Sleep loss affects weight gain by impacting energy levels and physical activity, making it significantly more difficult or impossible to make it all the way through a workout of the necessary intensity to make a difference in your fitness level. Sleep deprivation (sounds dramatic, but that is what you are doing to yourself) will also lower the speed and efficiency of your metabolism, meaning you have to actually work much harder to burn calories and lose weight. Now, if you are like every other technology professional I know, you base your work life around making things more efficient and easier so you can do more with the same amount of time. You will automate, and script your way out of literally anything possible, so why would you sabotage your health, weight,

mental acuity and efficiency by ruining your most important biological process, sleep?

Ghrelin, a Hormone That Stimulates Appetite, Is Produced in Higher Levels When You Are Sleep-Deprived, While Leptin, a Hormone That Suppresses Appetite, Is Restricted Under the Same Conditions.

Research shows that poor sleep can lead to an imbalance in the gut microbiome, which can in turn contribute to weight gain. If the little critters in your gut aren't functioning well, all kinds of mayhem creeps up on you for what seems like no reason. That's a big reason why we put grass fed butter in your coffee, it supports your gut microbiome. Sleep contributes to that health.

The relationship between sleep and weight loss is bidirectional. On one hand, poor sleep can contribute to weight gain, and on the other hand, being overweight or obese can lead to poor sleep quality. You are more prone to snoring, sleep apnea, and a wide range of other sleep disorders when your weight is above your medically appropriate weight for your height and age.

To maximize your weight loss results, you must prioritize your sleep. Aiming for 7-9 hours of quality sleep per night will regulate your hormones, you'll have improved energy levels, and your digestive system will work better.

There are studies going way back that show that people who lose weight and maintain their weight loss, have better sleep quality, as published in the study

“Relationship Between Sleep Quality and Quantity and Weight Loss in Women Participating in a Weight-Loss Intervention Trial”

Thomson CA, Morrow KL, Flatt SW, Wertheim BC, Perfect MM, Ravia JJ, Sherwood NE, Karanja N, Rock CL. Relationship between sleep quality and quantity and weight loss in women participating in a weight-loss intervention trial. *Obesity (Silver Spring)*. 2012 Jul;20(7):1419-25. doi: 10.1038/oby.2012.62. Epub 2012 Mar 8. PMID: 22402738; PMCID: PMC4861065.

Deep Sleep

Deep sleep, also known as slow wave sleep, is the stage of sleep where the brain produces slow, large waves. It is the restorative stage of sleep. The benefits of deep sleep include memory consolidation, physical restoration, and emotional regulation.

Deep sleep is thought to play a critical role in the consolidation of memories. Memory consolidation is the process by which the experiences and knowledge intake from your day, is processed, organized and imprinted into your long term memory by your brain. As such it is important to anyone whose life depends on being able to learn and process information and experiences. I’m going to repeat that because it’s important. Deep sleep is how you remember stuff. If you are getting older, as I am, you know that memory management becomes a concern over time. Sleep is the restorative process that keeps your memory working correctly, and deep sleep is the type of sleep that allows that to happen.

Research has shown that the hippocampus is activated during the deep sleep phase of nightly sleep. The hippocampus is a part of the brain that is critical for the formation of new memories, particularly those related to spatial navigation and the encoding of episodic memories (memories of experiences or events). Damage to the hippocampus can result in anterograde amnesia, a condition

characterized by the inability to form new memories while old memories remain intact. The hippocampus is thought to play a role in the consolidation of short-term memories into long-term memories, as well as in the retrieval of previously stored memories. Additionally, recent research suggests that the hippocampus also plays a role in the formation of emotional memories, and in the ability to imagine future events. Clearly, if you want a better memory, you need to get better deep sleep.

Physical Restoration:

During deep sleep, the body is able to repair and restore itself. Growth hormone is released, which helps with tissue repair and muscle growth. Additionally, deep sleep has been linked to a decrease in inflammation, which can help with recovery from injury or illness. Muscle recovery after exercise is of course part of that process. You can sabotage your hard work in the gym or on the yoga mat by getting poor sleep. See the section below on what to do and what not to do to improve your deep sleep.

Emotional Regulation:

Deep sleep is also linked to emotional regulation. Studies find that people who get more deep sleep have better emotional regulation and are less likely to experience depression or anxiety.

Habits and addictions that can harm the ability to enter deep sleep include alcohol consumption, nicotine use, caffeine consumption, and poor sleep hygiene.

In medical journals, some studies found that deep sleep is important for memory consolidation and emotional regulation.

Doctor Matthew Walker has referenced his sleep studies as proof that it is possible to stimulate your brain electrically to enhance the size of deep sleep brain waves. The benefit of this amplification of deep sleep waves in the brain is enhanced memory, and he is working on using that tool as a mid life therapy to prevent the atrophy of the brain and to enhance memory later in life, even staving off the onset of Alzheimers.

His company is building a closed loop feedback system where they measure in real time what frequency and timing your deep sleep waves are firing at, and they time an electrical impulse you cannot feel through pads you place on your scalp into your brain to amplify the natural wave produced by your brain. They basically goose your deep sleep patterns to give you a boost of exactly the right electrical brain activity to super charge the sleep recharge process. Stimulation *timing* is important as well as *frequency* to stimulate the waves predictively. This is easier to do in deep sleep than in wakefulness because the brain waves come about twice per second in deep sleep, compared with 40 or 50 times per second when we are awake. The next step in their research is to sell a tool they have developed that you can wear **before** bed, rather than something you put on your head while you sleep.

Stim Science:

Doctor Walkers company is Stim Science.

Check out the product at <https://trysomnee.com/>

You can pre-order one as I am writing this. While I cannot recommend this based on personal experience yet, I am looking forward to getting one when they are available to try out, and if the research is an indication, this should be a cognitive game changer.

Insomnia:

The condition of insomnia is an out of control inability to sleep. This can be defined as a problem going to sleep, or a problem with waking in the middle of the night and being unable to go back to sleep. There are some things you can do to help stave off insomnia however, and they are listed in the section below on things you should do or not do to sleep well.

Monitoring your sleep with technology can help you to understand what is actually happening while you are in bed at night. Having the information you need to be successful can be the difference between haphazard guesswork and prescribed solutions. Here are some options that may help you to either sleep, or at least collect better quality data on your sleep.

Sleep Cycle

<https://www.sleepcycle.com/>

You can monitor the quality of your sleep with a sleep app like Sleep Cycle. Sleep Cycle has a site, but you can also buy their app on the App Store. This will allow you to keep a journal of your day and how those events impacted your sleep on the same night. It will track your sleep, giving you

metrics to look at over time to see your cycles, allowing you to work to improve your sleep and see how your efforts pay off or don't.

Nose Breathing

Nose strips can help you to sleep better by opening your nasal passages. There are many products available that claim to stop snoring, but I do recommend making the effort to end your snoring in whatever way you can. This is highly personal, so you'll need to discuss this with your doctor, but snoring and mouth breathing at night is highly associated with several negative side effects, among them including amazingly the development of a double chin (I know, how random is that?). Other negatives include snoring, tooth and gum health reduction, dry mouth, dehydration, sleep interruption, and believe it or not, even death in your sleep. So, obviously, lots of reasons to stop breathing through your mouth when you sleep.

Another recent development is the popularity of mouth taping. While I haven't done this myself yet, I suppose it's worth mentioning that it's become a thing of some popularity lately, and in theory it would force nose breathing which is definitely a good thing. The only problem I see with it is that if you cut off your mouth as an air passage, and your nose is blocked for some reason either internally or externally, obviously you would suffocate and die. So, discuss this with a doctor before attempting it please.

Intake Breathing

<https://www.intakebreathing.com/>

Intake Breathing has an interesting new product that is essentially a higher tech version of the classic nose breathing strips. I'm trying them out now and they seem to work better and last longer than the classic "band-aid" design. They are

worth checking out, though they do seem expensive to use over time as you need to continually replace the small adhesive metal patches that are ferrous and allow the magnets to attach to your nose. From my personal experience I do have to warn you to be careful with choosing among the bridge options they send you. If you place the metal dots on your nose too far toward the base of your nose, and choose a bridge that is too shallow you will go to sleep and wake up with a deep ridge in the bridge of your nose that won't go away for up to a day. It's very disconcerting, and you won't feel it during the night, which is surprising. So be CERTAIN that you place a bridge that rests above your skin by at least a couple of millimeters to avoid having the bridge cut into the top of your nose.

Things You Should Not Do if You Want To Sleep Well:

Alcohol consumption is possibly the worst thing you can do related to sleep. Alcohol is both a stimulant and depressant, but it is both at different times after your last drink. You may feel more relaxed immediately after taking a drink, and even have a feeling like you can talk to people more easily. Alcohol has other brain related calming benefits, but later on you go to sleep or pass out and then you wake up about 3 or 4 hours later and find it hard to go back to sleep. It's consistent, and it's because the sedative effects of the alcohol wear off and you are left with the stimulant. While you are in sedative sleep before that 3am wake up call, you experience basically dead sleep, brain wave activity is nothing like Deep sleep, so your memory is getting no sleep memory consolidation benefit, and your body isn't regenerating muscle either. In fact there is some logic to how black out drinking might be caused. People who drink to a point of not remembering what they have done the night

before have ingested so much alcohol that the hippocampus cannot process the memories that are being formed in the presence of alcohol. If someone reminds you of what happened, you may get a foggy notion of a memory, but its like a corrupted data file, you may be able to see coherent bits, but the entire memory is not clear, and in some cases the corruption is so extensive you may never be able to recall what happened. If you want a good memory, or eventually any memory at all, it's probably best that you not drink alcohol.

Caffeine interrupts deep sleep brain waves. So be aware of your total caffeine intake. That being said see coffee below in the things you should do list, because it has more to do with when than what. In the interest of putting the information where you can reference it later, just remember no coffee within 12 hours of bedtime, and you're better off drinking decaf all the time.

Light exposure, even light exposure in the bedroom while sleeping will keep your brain from going into deep sleep. Wearing a comfortable sleep mask can assist with this, but if you are uncomfortable in a mask while sleeping, cover windows, led indicator lights, illuminated clocks, phones and any other light source. Shoot for total blackout in order to sleep deeply.

Screen exposure before bed is a well researched sleep killer. Avoid screens even with blue light reducing technologies after the sun goes down. Certainly don't go to sleep immediately after watching TV or scrolling Instagram obsessively.

THC

You could try drugs to help you sleep. In the United States at least, not to mention internationally, THC is still controversial in some places. In your area it may be illegal and you certainly don't want to board an international flight carrying a controlled substance, but it is now legal even for recreational use in much of the world including many parts of the United States. People have learned that they can use THC infused products to help with sleep, so it's worth addressing here. THC comes in two main families. If you go into a store to buy THC products the first thing you need to tell the vendor is what type you are looking for, Sativa, or Indica. Sativa typically has an uplifting effect. Indica seems to have a sedating effect. The problem is, that if you use THC over time you will build up a resistance requiring you to take more to have the same effect. This isn't addiction, but instead is dependency or resistance which is technically different. One major downside to using an Indica to go to sleep is that when people stop using THC to go to sleep, they report their insomnia becomes worse after they stop consuming it, so they go back to more THC to get the same sedative effect.

One Major Downside to Using an Indica To Go To Sleep Is That When People Stop Using THC To Go To Sleep, They Report Their Insomnia Becomes Worse After They Stop Consuming It, So They Go Back to More THC To Get the Same Sedative Effect.

The problem is, eventually it won't put you to sleep at all and there will be no top end that will do the trick for you. So you have to be careful. What I would say is, studies indicate that you can absolutely reliably go to sleep on the Indica variant of THC, but it should not be used consistently or you'll develop the inevitable dependency effect. The other problem with THC is that similar to alcohol consumption, it disrupts REM sleep total time, and the intensity of REM sleep eye movement as well as the separate deep sleep level of sleep discussed previously. So the THC is putting you to sleep, but the quality of that sleep is no where near what it needs to be to keep you healthy.

Things You Should Do if You Want To Sleep Well:

Coffee can be good, but only at specific times of day and in moderation or decaffeinated. The way caffeine works is as follows. Caffeine binds to a substance called adenosine in your body. Adenosine builds up over the course of the day and eventually the volume of it in your body makes you feel sleepy. Caffeine basically temporarily mutes the effect of the adenosine by binding to it temporarily and making your brain not see it, so you don't feel the sleepiness. Caffeine will exaggerate insomnia, but it also creates anxiety in your brain by increasing your expression of cortisol and other stress hormones.

Caffeine Will Exaggerate Insomnia, but It Also Creates Anxiety in Your Brain by Increasing Your Expression of Cortisol and Other Stress Hormones.

Caffeine has a life span in your body of 10 to 12 hours, so the best thing to do is avoid caffeine within 12 hours of your intended bedtime. An MCT oil and butter blended coffee in the morning to feed your brain the ketones it needs to perform, and your gut the biome building butyric acid it needs to be healthy is a good thing, in fact it's a cornerstone of the plan in this book. Coffee has a variety of scientifically sound studies behind it that show its positive effects on your health. Coffee is packed with antioxidants which provide enormous health benefits. So here is the fun part you can use as a hack for your sleep and your health. Decaffeinated coffee shows the same health benefits without the negative effects of the caffeine on your sleep. If you drink decaf coffee when you drink coffee, and blend it with MCT and grass fed butter, you can enjoy your sleep and health improving effects with no down side whatsoever!

Sleep and Temperature

Temperature is very important to deep sleep, which is one contributing factor to why women see a steep drop off in deep sleep at the onset of menopause. Menopause comes with hot flashes at night, and the hot flashes keep you awake. Interestingly, when you are detoxing and under other conditions that cause you to sweat at night, you will wake up more frequently and for longer periods, which just destroys your deep sleep. If you can do something to affect night time skin temperature, that will help. This is why a hot bath at night before bed will help you to sleep better. Your core body temperature falls after a hot bath, which keeps your core temperature lower throughout the night which induces deep sleep. Night time hot yoga is amazing for inducing deep sleep, for the reasons that by now must seem obvious. The overheating of the body in the yoga studio late at night, coupled with the cardio effect of the extreme effort of yoga work together to enhance your deep sleep. So look into that 8pm Power class or late night Yin stretching class, it's a great way to see massive improvement to your sleep later that night.

A Hot Bath at Night Before Bed Will Help You To Sleep Better

Cold showers are similar in their health benefits to doing a polar plunge every morning. Studies show an increase in brown fat in the body (healthy fat) and other changes in body chemistry that are beneficial. This in conjunction with the late night hot yoga, or sauna or hot bath, done consistently will teach your body that the cycle is a regular and predictable

thing. You'll set yourself up for better health, and eventually your body will react automatically.



CHAPTER 22: FINAL THOUGHTS, TOOLS AND SUPPLEMENTS:

You wouldn't believe how long it took me to write this book. Most of the time it took me to get this done and published was time in research, and waiting, and not feeling good enough to share my experiences, research and personal thoughts. What drove me forward ultimately was the fact that I accomplished the weight loss in the first place six years ago as of this writing. Not that I felt justified to share my experience just because it worked for me. It needs to work for way more than one person to be worthy of sharing as a plan. No, it was the fact that I could accomplish something, *anything* really, that was that difficult, and required that much stamina. The ability to stick to something and keep going until

it's done, no matter the hurdles or how hard the work was called sticktuitiveness in my house growing up. So after starting and stopping, and making great progress followed by years of self doubt, I finally picked up the book again and found the tools necessary to help me to complete it and get it published.

There is a horrible problem with this kind of book in general however. Reading this book comes with its own sense of accomplishment, just in the reading. It is possible to get to the end of this book, feeling like you've accomplished something that will feel "good enough." After all, now you know in your mind what it looks like, or know how it would go if you actually started and finished this plan.

Rude awakening. No. You haven't. You've just consumed information, just like we consume food. You are experiencing the same problem mentally and emotionally that created your need to lose weight in the first place. Consuming and not expending to offset the consumption.

When you read and learn you fill your head, much in the same way you fill your stomach when you eat food. The secret is *using* what you take in.

The Secret Is Using What You Take In.

Tools and Toys:

You have to be honest with your self, it isn't a questions of do I WANT to be the person who uses the proper tools to get the job done, the question is, WILL I? You can want it all day long, but trying doesn't equal doing. Or in other words...

*"Try not. Do, or do not. There is no try"- Yoda,
Empire Strikes Back*

The line right before "Try not. Do, or do not. There is no try" is "You must unlearn what you have learned." which Yoda says to Luke Skywalker as a reminder of the importance of letting go of preconceptions and old ways of thinking in order to become a Jedi.

You my friend are on a new path, similar to the path of a Jedi, but a path started far later in life than of those mythological knights. You must unlearn old habits, old preconceptions not just about food, and working out, but about yourself and what you are capable of accomplishing within your mind and your body.

You must let go of the thoughts that falsely bind you to a reality that you do not want to sustain. You have not yet had the courage, the shift in your thinking, the change in your beliefs, or the right plan to enable you to break those bonds to your past.

You Must Let Go of the Thoughts That Falsely Bind You to a Reality That You Do Not Want To Sustain. You Have Not Yet Had the Courage, the Shift in Your Thinking, the Change in Your Beliefs, or the Right Plan To Enable You To Break Those Bonds to Your Past.

This is the place in your life where you break the hard calcified immovable structures inside your mind that you

previously could not crack. Now the cracks are already there, the calcification is shattering like old dried up frail bones that previously encased your true self in a cage you were not able to strike. Now you are able, and you are striking out at that frail cage and it is crumbling around you, freeing you to move on with no restrictions, no barriers left between who you are today and who you are just six months from when you begin.

The solution to reaching your weight loss goals has to be completely your own. I'm here to provide the best practices and motivation to help you succeed. That, and some tools.

Tracking your weight requires some equipment, like a digital scale. I recommend investing in one that's a little more expensive, like the ones made by the health technology company Withings. These scales not only measure weight, but also body mass index and fat percentage. Some even measure your heart health. They also connect to WiFi and allow you to set up an online account to track your progress.

While Withings is a good option, there are many other brands on the market to choose from. Just make sure the scale you choose has a user account capability for tracking and reporting your progress without the need for an Excel spreadsheet. It's even better if the device integrates with the health system on your phone. I have one in particular that I recommend listed below.

Buying a health tracking scale can provide you with an automatic tracking system that will show you valuable and reassuring data about your experiences over time. You might not love the initial numbers it shows you, but you'll love the technology. The scale forces honesty, and this whole process requires you to be completely honest with yourself. Honesty and consistency are key to your success. Starting is only the first 1% of the process of achieving a goal, and it's not the most important part either. Anyone can start, but it's the ones who keep going who succeed. Don't focus on patting yourself on the back for taking that first step. It's not the first step, or the second or any of the others that matters. It's the collection

of steps taken together and applied consistently that will get you to your goal.

Tracking your weight requires consistency. You must weigh yourself at the same time of day every day to get good data on how your effort is affecting you. The scale won't chase after you and make you stand on it it's all up to you.

You Must Weigh Yourself at the Same Time of Day Every Day To Get Good Data on How Your Effort Is Affecting You.

There is one type of technology that I believe is not helpful in achieving your goals and that is any tech that claims to exercise for you.

In my personal experience, using electrical muscle stimulating equipment is both painful and ineffective at building muscle mass or strength. It does activate a muscle or muscle group using electrical impulses, but it doesn't offer the same benefits as using your own muscles to move your body and build strength. The goal should be to consistently move your body in a mechanically natural way, as this helps you gain muscle mass in all the muscles needed for that movement. Activating specific muscles with electrical conduction pads may result in imbalances and miss important muscle activation. So, I recommend avoiding shortcuts like these and focusing on moving your body consistently and naturally.

Despite my reservations about certain types of technology, there are still plenty of gadgets that can be helpful in distracting you from difficulties, reminding you of your goals, or motivating you.

There are fun tools you can use to make your experience more scientific, and more enjoyable. Here's a list of some of the tools that really do work.

Lumen:

From their website:

The key factor in your metabolism is flexibility.

Metabolic flexibility is the ability of the human body to switch back and forth between fat and carbohydrates based on their availability.

<https://www.lumen.me/shop>

Basically, this is a breathalyzer for ketones. You breathe out through it, and it tells you what you are burning. It can do this because your breath is one of the ways your body eliminates waste products, so your breath contains the by products of what you are burning for energy.

Once you get started with strict weeks, you'll probably find it frustrating not knowing if you are entering and staying in a ketogenic state. Lumen just tells you flat out if you are or are not so you can make adjustments to your food intake accordingly. Pretty simple data gathering tool and very useful.

Withings Body Comp Scale:

This is almost a requirement of the program (not really.) This thing is so valuable that if you can afford it, you **MUST** buy it, the data it provides is of paramount importance to your health tracking and weight loss and body composition tracking.

<https://www.withings.com/us/en/body-comp/shop>

From their website, here's what it does for you.

Full body composition analysis:

Monitors weight (kg, lb., st lb.), body fat & water percentage, plus muscle & bone mass and for the first time, visceral fat.

Heart health:

Indication of your cardiovascular health via Vascular Age and standing heart rate.

Electrodermal activity:

Measures and assesses sweat gland activity in your feet.

Nutrition tracking:

Set a weight goal and manage your daily calorie budget.

Daily weather forecast:

Step on your scale to enjoy a localized weather report as well as an air quality analysis.

Multi-user friendly

Recognizes up to 8 users with independent sync.

Automatic synchronization

Data from every weigh-in appears in the Health Mate app automatically via Wi-Fi.

This thing also is compatible with Apple's Health app, so everything from this device is merged with your Apple Watch data, and your other tech devices that track your health for you. Big winner.

Apple Watch:

It's almost not fair to include this because I'm sure you already have one, but if you don't you should buy one. Even if it's the least expensive version, it is a great device.

This is not a toy, and calling it a watch is just about as ridiculous as calling an iPhone a phone.

The Apple Watch does what Apple intends, and you can read all about the various sensors and battery life and calling and texting capabilities, but in this case I'm recommending it for the Fitness app the heart rate monitor, and to some degree the other health related benefits like fall detection and emergency calling etc...

<https://www.apple.com/apple-watch-se/>

That's the link to the least expensive Apple Watch, the SE model. It is totally adequate for your needs on a fitness level, and won't break the bank.

If you turn into a high risk activity fitness pro, or expect to destroy your watch with your activity level (like rock face scaling, or ice wall climbing) then you might want to get the Ultra version of the Apple Watch. It's pricey, but super rugged and might be worth a little more up front expense to make sure yours works everywhere you do.

Apple Fitness +:

If you have an Apple Watch, or just an iPhone, you can choose from 11 different workout types on your TV, iPad or iPhone to follow along with, as well as audio-guided walks and runs using Apple Fitness +.

<https://www.apple.com/apple-fitness-plus/>

You get three months of subscription free when you buy an Apple Watch. Yes it's a subscription, so that's one more thing to throw money at every month, but Apple has plans that combine other services that make this very compelling, and I think worthwhile. What I love about this is, if you can't afford a Yoga studio membership, and some of us can't, you can at least get started with guided strength training, yoga, HIIT and other workouts in your home on your AppleTV, or your iPhone and if you have an Apple Watch, you get metrics right on screen on your TV about your progress in the workout, heart rate, and more. It is fun, and can be a great add on tool to expand your workout options as you grow along your fitness path. My only caution is this, because you are doing this in your home without a trainer or a teacher you might injure yourself if you go all in. I recommend the slower paced classes in every workout type, and using a lighter weight in the weight training classes, or following the modifications to make it easier on you.

It's a lot like a studio membership in that you will likely find a favorite instructor you keep going back to. Just don't over do it, take pride in small improvements over time, and enjoy yourself. Remember sensation is good, pain is bad. Don't push it.

If you want to use this service throughout your execution of the plan in this book, they have workout collections that are geared toward long term goals. I encourage you to explore this amazing service, and have fun doing it.

Gloves, Mats, Towels and Clothing:

I started off in loose fitting shorts and a t-shirt on a borrowed mat and towel when I found Hot Yoga. You likely will do something similar, but as you get more and more into it you'll want high performance clothing that empowers your workout rather than dragging you down.

The wrong types of clothes don't react well to being worn soaking wet. They get heavy, suffocating and uncomfortable. It's hard enough to get through a tough workout without having to fight with your clothes or equipment in the process.

I've been a huge fan of Lulu Lemon for years. They have good years and bad years from a style perspective, so who knows, when you read this their clothes might really be horrible, but in my experience so far they build solid workout clothes, made from advanced materials, but most importantly they handle moisture and heat extremely well. Definitely worth trying on. Here are some tips about the clothes.

Buy shorts that are loose everywhere but in the waist band, airflow is key, and light weight is much better than heavy.

Buy t-shirts that are too small for working out. Tight fitting t-shirts while working out function better during a downward dog, a forward fold or any other type of inversion. (Will you be doing hand stands soon?) There is just nothing about a hot yoga workout that feels worse than having a wad of sweat soaked t-shirt cover your face while you are trying to catch

your breath. It feels like I imagine waterboarding would feel. It's suffocating and it's unnecessary. Get the shirt that's too tight, but also is so flexible that it stretches with your body as you move.

Get a mat that provides both grip and padding. Too thin and you'll hurt your hard body edges when they connect with the floor, too smooth and you'll slip around as if the mat is oiled up when you need traction. Go for grippy and padded, oh and at first go for a solid color, black is great because it doesn't show dirt and stains. If you decide you want one with colorful designs later on, you can decide then. This definitely won't be your last yoga mat, so start simple.

Yoga gloves. I found it really hard to find a way to not slip around on my mat in the beginning and it just killed me that nobody sold nice grippy yoga gloves that would really stick my hands in place while doing a simple downward dog on a sweaty mat and more advanced poses that require traction. Lulu Lemon has some that work pretty well, and give wrist support.

Towels are needed for workouts and you don't need the same kind for all workouts. You should have a DRY-OFF SPORT SHAMMY from Tyr if you are a swimmer. These synthetic towels stay soft and are easy to wring out to absorb more and more water. Competitive swimmers always have these nearby. A yoga towel is a towel that is thin and grippy and shaped to the exact size of a standard yoga mat. The towel is preferred in hot yoga because of all of the sweat you will drip onto your mat (it's torrential like a rain storm, not kidding, and only slightly exaggerating). That being said, a small shower towel is also a great thing to have for workouts if your studio, dojo or gym has showers. A small absorbent thin towel will get you dry without bulking up your gym bag.

Gym bags come in many shapes and sizes. Yours should be big enough to accommodate the tools of your specific sport, look for options from your favorite brands, tennis, golf, weight lifting, grappling, yoga, martial arts, all have different equipment needs, so shop and buy with those needs in mind.

Water bottles should be reusable and washable, and are best if insulated and not made of glass inside or outside of the bottle. Many studios won't allow glass containers because of possible breakage and safety risks. Most gyms, studios and even offices today have bottle refill fountains with built in water filters. Having your water bottle with you at all times will remind you to drink water more frequently. Buy a bottle, fill it with ice at home and take it to the hot yoga studio. Fill it with water at the studio right before class. You'll have ice cold water to drink in class for the hour or more you are in the heat. It can be a real life saver.

I'm sure I am leaving out a whole range of tools and tricks, but I'm also sure you will find new ones once your priorities shift. Please get onto social media and find a technically fit community so you can share your finds, your progress, and your challenges.

Supplements

You may find yourself wanting a cheat code, you are in the right chapter for tools and tricks to make faster or easier or better informed progress, so why not.

While I believe a programmer or a systems administrator or other technically minded person is possibly the most likely person to find a more efficient way to do something, I don't believe that means we're cheating. If you want to go beyond simple dietary changes and workouts to give yourself an extra push, I've compiled a list of supplements and dietary enhancements that will jump start your metabolism, help you to burn fat instead of carbs more quickly. Here is a list of supplements that can enhance the ketogenic effect:

MCT Oil:

Medium-chain triglycerides (MCTs) are a type of fat that is quickly metabolized by the body and can be converted into ketones, which can help support ketosis. You can add MCT oil to salad as a dressing base instead of olive oil, you can blend it into your coffee in the morning, but don't waste it by cooking with it. Consume it at room temperature, and it will make your brain energy multiply, and it can jump start your body into ketosis more quickly than just controlling your carb intake.

Grass-Fed Butter:

Grass-fed butter is a good source of healthy fats and contains something called butyric acid. Butyric acid is a naturally-occurring, short-chain fatty acid.

Butyric acid helps regulate gut health and metabolism, aids digestion, improves nutrient absorption, supports immune system function, and can reduce inflammation. By modulating hormones like glucagon-like peptide 1 (GLP-1) and

leptin, it can help control appetite and improve insulin sensitivity. Butyric acid also increases levels of a protein called adenosine monophosphate-activated protein kinase (AMPK), which helps to regulate energy metabolism and can help improve metabolic health. Butyric acid has also been found to have anti-inflammatory properties. It does this by inhibiting the release of inflammatory compounds like cytokines and nitric oxide. By reducing inflammation in the body, butyric acid could potentially help protect against conditions linked to long-term inflammation such as heart disease and type 2 diabetes. It is crazy how good this stuff is, and even crazier that it's in regular old table butter.

Vitamin D With Fish Oil Full of Omega-3 Fatty Acids:

Vitamin D is deficient in practically everyone because it is naturally created by your body with sun exposure. Because most of us who work indoors most of the time we don't have enough sun exposure to create the vitamin D we need. Omega-3s can help reduce inflammation and improve overall health. Vitamin D is also the happy vitamin because it literally makes you happier, and you need all the happy you can get during the cranky days of Strict Week.

Magnesium:

Magnesium is an essential mineral that plays a role in carbohydrate metabolism and glucose regulation, but even more importantly your body has trouble processing your Vitamin D supplement if it's not in the presence of magnesium. Magnesium enables the absorption of Vitamin D.

B-Vitamins:

B-vitamins are essential for energy metabolism. Vitamin B12 has a bit of a cult following in Hollywood. It keeps your energy levels up naturally which can really help you get over the hump on low energy days.

Activated Coconut Charcoal Capsules:

So, you had a bad day. You ate a donut and you feel like you are a total failure. There is this one little trick that can at least minimize the damage. If you eat or drink something poisonous, like sugar or alcohol, taking activated charcoal can prevent your body from absorbing it if taken as soon as possible after you make that mistake.

Activated charcoal is a form of carbon that has been treated with oxygen to make it highly porous and adsorbent. When it is consumed, it binds to toxins and other substances in the stomach and intestines, preventing them from being absorbed into the bloodstream.

Activated charcoal works through a process called adsorption. Adsorption is different from absorption, which is the process by which a substance is taken up and incorporated into another substance. Adsorption is the process by which a substance adheres to the surface of another substance. In the case of activated charcoal, the toxins and other substances in the stomach and intestines adhere to the surface of the charcoal, forming a complex that cannot be absorbed into the bloodstream.

Activated charcoal has a large surface area and a negative electrical charge, which allows it to attract and bind to positively charged toxins and other substances. Once the toxins are bound to the activated charcoal, they are eliminated from the body.

It's important to note that activated charcoal can also bind to some beneficial substances such as the vitamins, oils, butter, and other things mentioned above as well as any medications you may have been prescribed. So speak to your doctor before taking it and pay attention to the timing of your charcoal use.

It's also important to keep in mind that activated charcoal is not actual magic, and you should call 911 if you are ever poisoned for real. If you have an upset stomach, it works

wonders taken with a lot of water, if you ate a donut it could minimize the downsides as much as possible making it a great trick to have up your sleeve in an emergency.



Conclusion:

You made it to the end of the book! Congratulations! At this point in the book, this book becomes less of a book and more of a reference manual. Go back to the pages you dog eared, thumb through the sticky notes or book marks you made along the way, and take your first steps to execute the plan. Remember to send me selfies, and get online and find me to ask questions and to share your success. I can't wait to see what you do. Good luck!

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Sean Colins is a technology management consultant, technical training course author, certified Apple trainer, and entrepreneur.

Sean has a long history in the technology industry, starting with a position at Disney Imagineering and eventually founding his own technology consulting business, The Answer Company, in 1995. He later became the publishing systems manager at Weider Publications, where he managed the Y2K remediation and led the company in transitioning its IT systems from Windows to Macintosh in 1998. In 2002, Sean founded Core Professional Services, which later became CoreQuick LLC, to share his experience with a wider clientele through consulting work. In 2006, at a fortuitous business lunch Lynda Weinman, founder of Lynda.com, asked Sean to author content for her platform. His work is now available on LinkedIn Learning as a result of the LinkedIn acquisition of Lynda.com. Sean won several industry awards for his courses on Lynda.com, and as a result became a public speaker primarily to technology professionals and DIY systems administrators at conferences dedicated to Apple system administration and cyber security. He continues to work with businesses, government agencies, and academic institutions as a systems administration consultant and business coach, using his expertise and instincts to help executives guide their organizations towards success.

Sean is married to Kate Martindale, and lives in Los Angeles, California. Sean practices hot yoga consistently to remain as physically and mentally youthful as possible, and to this day works on incorporating the principles presented in this book. In the words of Steve Jobs, he eats his own dog food.