

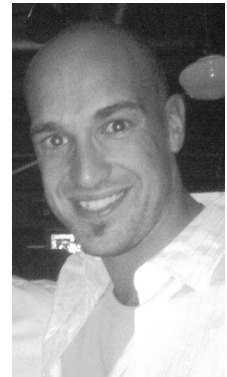


# Healthy Lifestyle Workbook



## Author Brian Ayers, CSCS

This workbook is the culmination of my years of experience guiding people to their fitness and weight loss goals. I am not a registered dietitian nor am I a psychologist or doctor, therefore the advice that I give in this workbook should never be substituted for that of a trained professional in any of these areas. My experience includes a Bachelors of Science degree from UCONN in the area of Exercise Science with a Minor in Sport Nutrition. I am a Certified Strength & Conditioning Specialist and have also trained in Wellness Coaching as well as a variety of other fitness styles including TRX, Art of Strength and kettlebells. The program outlined in this workbook incorporates various aspects the behavioral change models I learned from the Wellcoaches program combined with my personal experiences in guiding clients to a healthier lifestyle and trying to live healthier myself.



## Your Journey

It is important to view this process of change as a long term journey rather than a quick means to an end. The initial stage of this program is designed to be 6-8 weeks of working through the exercises in this workbook to make manageable changes in your lifestyle. During this time you should be meeting with a coach to help guide you in the development of your goals and strategies. You will likely begin to see some physical results in this initial phase, however the focus is not rapid weight loss but rather building a strong foundation for long term success. One thing I can promise is that the harder you work and the more you put into this process, the more you will get out of it.

**“A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step. “**

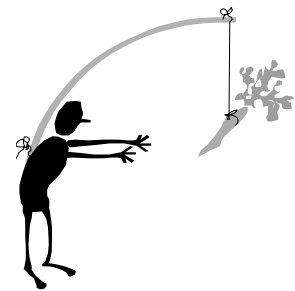
- Lao-Tzu  
Chinese philosopher

You will be challenged in this program to create a healthy lifestyle for yourself that incorporates aspects of healthy eating, proper exercise and managing time and stress. The answers will not be given to you for one simple reason; I don't have them and anyone who tells you they do is a liar. **You are the only one that can create a better life for you.** All I, or anyone else, can do is help point you in the right direction.

## Harnessing Motivation

Once you have embraced the idea of working toward healthy change, you have taken the first important step toward reaching your goals. The next step in the process is to spend some time identifying the deeper reasons why making these changes is important to you. This is an extremely important step that many people neglect. Beginning your weight loss journey by getting caught up in the “*what*” of nutrition and exercise is an easy trap to fall into. What should I eat? What exercise should I do for my abs? People get so caught up in the *what* that they completely lose sight of the *why*.

Have you ever noticed how much more successful you are at completing a task when you know why you are doing it? We tend to lose interest quickly in tasks that are difficult or tedious unless we feel a strong purpose around them. By not exploring their weight loss motivations, many people leave themselves defenseless when encountering obstacles in the form of temptations, setbacks, and time constraints. They have simply not taken the time to find a strong enough reason to overcome these obstacles. This is why it is so important to find the answers to questions like: How will your life be different once you have lost the weight? What will you be able to do once you’ve lost weight that you may not be able or feel comfortable doing now? How will achieving your goals make you feel?



Most people view losing weight on a scale or dropping pants/dress sizes as the only goal of proper nutrition and exercise. However, I challenge you to look deeper. What if you were to view losing weight and inches as the means to a more important goal? What would that goal be? For some it is increased confidence and self-esteem, for others it’s the feeling of accomplishment they get from realizing a dream, for still others it means coming off of certain medications. What does it mean for you? The more vivid your vision of what you truly hope to achieve, the stronger your resolve will be to make it there.

One reason why people neglect exploring their motives is that once they’ve made a decision to lose weight, they jump right into a diet or exercise program with the initial excitement and momentum that naturally accompanies new ventures. However, this is just the honeymoon phase and that early momentum of starting a new program will only take you so far. Without

identifying the deeper motivators to strengthen their resolve, people are quickly derailed as obstacles surface and the going gets tough. Make no mistake about it; the path to a healthy lifestyle has many obstacles that you must conquer. Taking the time to explore this “internal why” is what carries you through the difficult parts of the journey, gives you passion to strategize around obstacles, and ultimately leads you to success.

## **Clearly Define Your Goals**

Clearly defining your goals is one of the most important first steps on your fitness journey. Author Paul Myer commented, “No one ever accomplishes anything of consequence without a goal.” He goes on to say, “Goal setting is the strongest human force for self-motivation.” Having specific, well-crafted goals gives us the context in which to weigh the pros and cons of our daily decisions and actions. Goals help to strengthen resolve and focus our efforts to a specific purpose. Without a well-defined purpose, it can be difficult to internalize the consequences of our decisions. However, once we have a purpose that we strongly believe in, we become much more empowered to make the necessary sacrifices to achieve the objective.

When setting goals, most people immediately think of outcome goals such as decreasing weight and inches, increasing muscle or improving your cardio vascular endurance. These goals are important to have because they represent the desired results of the changes that you will be making. However, it is within these goals that a person’s true motives lie. You must look beyond the simple outcome goal and ask why achieving that goal is important to you. How will your life be better as a result of reaching that goal? Discovering the answers to those types of questions will give your outcome goals more motivational power.

Another type of goal that is often neglected, but is a vital part of the change process, is the behavioral goal. Behavioral goals make up the steps of the path that you travel to reach your outcome goals. People generally recognize that in order to achieve their outcome goals they must make behavioral changes, however, these changes are usually made without proper progression. Attempting to drastically alter your behavior is most often a recipe for failure. As you begin your journey, it is important to always start gradually and build on a foundation of small successes so that the changes are not overwhelming. The key to making lasting behavioral changes is planning and strategizing. This leads us to a third type of goal, cognitive goals.

Goals don’t always have to be action or outcome based. Some goals can be thinking and planning goals. When looking at the stages of change, the first 3 stages (pre-contemplation, contemplation and preparation) all occur in your head. You aren’t actually taking action until the fourth stage of change. Therefore, setting a cognitive goal of planning or preparing for an action is an important step in the process. An example of a cognitive goal is: “I will think of 3 healthy snacks this week that I can substitute for ice cream in the evening.” You are not taking any physical action in this goal, but you are planning for a future goal which could be something like, “I will substitute a granola bar for my usual cup of ice cream 3 nights this week.” In the planning stage, your goals are focused around positioning yourself for success in the action phase.

Setting weekly goals will be an important way to keep yourself on track. This means that once a week you should sit down and evaluate your goals from the previous week, brainstorm strategies to improve on any areas that you had trouble with, and set goals for the next week. Goals should always be written out and begin with “I will” to assert the fact that you are taking personal responsibility for completing the task you are setting. Goals that begin with “I would like to” or even “I intend to” convey that what you are stating is a hope rather than a planned event. Use the SMART acronym as a checklist to ensure that what you are committing to accomplish is a good goal.

## SMART Goal Setting

Whether you are setting outcome, behavioral or cognitive goals, they need to be SMART goals. SMART = Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, Timely.

- **Specific** – Your goals should be as specific as you can make them. For example, “I will eat healthy” is too vague to be a good goal. How do you define healthy? How often will you be eating that way? If your goal raises unanswered questions like this, then you need to better define it. “I will eat 5 serving of fruits or vegetables at least 4 days this week” is a more specific goal. You could even break it down further and set goals of what fruits and vegetables you will consume at which meals on those days. The more specific a goal is, the easier it is to measure success. That brings us to the next part of the acronym.
- **Measureable** – In order for a goal to be effective, there must be a way to measure success. If a goal is vague, then whether or not you have achieved it can be difficult to determine, making it very challenging to stay motivated. Being specific when setting a goal will help to increase its measurability. When you are setting your goal, be clear on things like:
  - Frequency: “I will bring my lunch to work 3 days this week.”
  - Amount: “I will drink 6, 8oz glasses of water today”
  - Duration: “I will do 30 minutes of interval training on the treadmill”
- **Attainable** – Many people make the mistake of setting the bar too high when establishing their goals. I find this to be partially a product of the unreasonable claims made by producers of diet and exercise fad programs. People hear one of the claims that you can lose 30 lbs. in 30 days and they think that is an attainable goal. By setting your expectations for change too high, you decrease the likelihood of success. Don’t forget, success creates a foundation that continued success is built upon, but failures can bring that crashing down. Be sure that the goals that you set for yourself are possible to achieve so that you can move in a positive direction.

- **Realistic** – The concepts of realistic and attainable are closely linked. The distinction between them is that a goal can be attainable, but still not be realistic for you in your current situation. For example, bringing your lunch to work 4 out of 5 days in a week is an attainable goal for the common person. However, if you know that you have to take clients out to lunch 3 days this week, then that goal is not realistic for you at this time. When setting a goal, first decide if that goal can be attained by a person, then decide if it is realistic for you.
- **Timely** – The last criteria of a SMART goal is establishing a timeframe in which to complete your goal. As early as elementary school, we all learned the importance of having a due date in regards to getting something accomplished. Putting an end date on your goals will create a sense of importance around the goal and aid in its prioritization, as well as establish the timeframe in which success is measured. Goals need to be set in the short term, on a daily or weekly basis, to provide tangible steps toward the long term goals.

## **Don't Bite Off More Than You Can Chew**

A common pitfall in this stage is trying to change too much too soon. Making proper nutrition and exercise a lifestyle change requires taking the time to build and maintain new behavioral patterns slowly and steadily. Unfortunately, in our instant gratification society, the slow and steady approach is usually abandoned for the “quick fix”.

Here's a scenario that goes on all too often. John Q. Overzealous decides that he is going to lose weight and get in shape. He's currently doing little to no exercise and has never watched what he's eaten before. However, he has a great deal of excitement and ambition around getting that beach body for his big vacation 3 months from now. So now it's day 1, which always seems to be a Monday, and the plan for the week is to do the 4-day strength training workout that a friend gave him along with cardio days in between for a total of 6 days in the gym. In addition to the new workout, he is going to follow the nutrition plan that he read in Muscle and Fitness Magazine that tells him to eat 5 meals per day and gives measured out meals for the week. That all sounds pretty good, right? He seems to be doing things properly. Working on strength training instead of just a ton of cardio and avoiding the diet pills and starvation diets. The problem is not in John's plan; it's in his expectations of being able to start it all on day 1.

The first two days go well, but then on the third day John realizes that he's out of chicken and has nothing for his 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> meals. He hasn't taken the time to build strategies to maintain the advanced meal plan. By week 2, he's gotten fed up with the meal planning but is still trying to keep up with the exercises. Unfortunately, John is already tired and sore. His body was not ready for the advanced workout plan and that combined with missing meals has run his body into the ground. Half way through his chest set, he feels a pain in his shoulder and has to cut the workout short. When the pain doesn't go away after a few days he goes to the doctor and finds out that he has a rotator cuff injury and can't workout for 6 weeks. He's depressed at his

failure and goes on a week long pizza and ice cream binge, ending up in worse shape than he was when he started.

Setting realistic weekly goals that move you toward monthly goals and eventually toward your outcome goals will alleviate the problems in John's scenario. Some important things to remember when setting goals:

- Establish where you want to end up and then mentally work your way back to where you are now. Figure out what steps you need to take to get where you want to be and set your goals around achieving each step.
- Start out with conservative goals and then build on them. Even small successes will help to build positive momentum. However, the flip side to that is that failures can serve to zap your motivation and create negative momentum. This can be avoided by setting early goals that you have a higher degree of confidence in achieving.
- Write down your goals and keep a weekly goal journal. The act of writing a goal down solidifies your commitment to it. This will help you to stay accountable to the goal.

Instead of attempting to start out on the best workout and nutrition plan, John could have set a series of progressive goals to bring him step by step to the point where he could have been effective in the advanced programs. Remember, the best workout or nutrition plan is the one that will work for you right now. If you bite off more than you can chew, then you usually end up choking.



## Wellness Vision & Weekly Goal Sheets

Use what you have learned in this chapter along with the Wellness Vision Sheet that you completed with your coach to help you harness your internal motivators. Your Wellness Vision will serve as the blue print for achieving your transformation. If you haven't already done so, you should schedule your orientation appointment with your coach to complete this sheet. Once you have completed your Wellness Vision, be sure to keep it handy as you will be using it to set your weekly goals.

Your weekly goals should be small manageable steps toward achieving the 3 month goals that you have set in your Wellness Vision. Each week you will begin by evaluating the previous week's goals to determine what strategies were successful and what obstacles were encountered. Then set the next week's goals to either continue successful strategies or overcome new found obstacles.

**It is highly recommended that you continue to meet weekly with your coach for Goal Setting & Strategy Sessions until you are comfortable with the process.**

## Nutritional Foundations

**T**here is a lot of information out there about nutrition and it can seem overwhelming to try to sift through the articles and recommendations to determine what is important for you to reach your individual goals. In addition to news reports and articles, we are also subject to an almost constant bombardment of advertisements for diets and products, all claiming to be the answer to your weight loss. The formula for these ads is pretty standard. There will either be incredible before and after pictures, or photos of fitness models standing with and/or using the product being advertised. These images will always be accompanied by enthusiastic testimonials from people claiming to have gotten in their current shape solely by using this wonder product. Some companies will go as far as to get “doctors” that endorse the effectiveness of this amazing new pill or powder.

The reality is that the people in the before and after pictures were paid good money for their transformations. While they may have been using the product throughout their weight loss, I guarantee that they were also receiving expert advice in the areas of exercise and nutrition. The product itself may have contributed very little to their overall success. Another effective technique that many ad agencies utilize is fitness models. If the ad does not contain a before picture, then the people that you see in it are just in-shape people paid to hold up the product. More than likely, they had never seen the product prior to the day of their photo shoot. These people simply did a good job picking their parents.



Not only are the majority of these products ineffective on their own, many of them come with a laundry list of harmful side effects. The most important thing to come to terms with is the fact that you simply cannot bottle success. While some products can aid in the weight loss process when used properly, real weight loss success comes from adopting a healthy lifestyle by taking the time to make lasting behavioral changes in the areas of nutrition and exercise. It may seem like hard work at first, but you are building positive habits that will ensure long term success instead of buyers' remorse.



My Body Transformation Program will take you through several weeks of nutritional exercises designed to help you build the foundation for lasting behavioral changes. To help you get started, I've provided some basic eating guidelines to work towards.

## **Basic Nutritional Guidelines**

You may be doing some of these already, and if you are, continue to make them part of your daily routine. For the ones that you are not currently doing, don't try to add them in all at once. Instead, begin to set some of your weekly goals around shifting your behaviors toward gradually incorporating more of them each week. This will help you to avoid becoming overwhelmed.

### **1. Eat small meals every three to four hours**

Eating small meals every three to four hours keeps your metabolism burning high throughout the day. The increased frequency of eating also adds to the number of calories you expend through digestion. This sets your body up to store less of the calories that you take in as unwanted fat. Remember, the idea is not to eat more food in a day just more frequently. Therefore, you should take your total calorie intake for the day and divide it by 4-5 evenly portioned meals.

### **2. Eat healthy balanced meals including protein, carbs, and good fats**

Making sure that each of the small meals that you eat has a good amount of protein, some healthy fats, and natural carbs will ensure that you are getting the necessary variety of nutrients. This will also help to stabilize your blood sugar levels which will give you more constant energy throughout the day, as well as help to reduce the amount of fat that your body stores.

### **3. Prepare healthy meals in advance and bring them with you**

The key to sticking with a good nutrition plan is preparation. If you prepare your meals ahead of time, then you can better control the number of calories and the amount of fat, protein, and carbs in each meal. It also ensures that you will have good food available instead of resorting to undesirable food choices or even worse, skipping a meal, which will slow down your metabolism.

### **4. Avoid connecting eating to emotion, habits, or boredom**

This can be one of the toughest for some people; however, it is one of the most important. Breaking psychological ties to food is a huge step towards achieving nutritional goals. Eating based on having a bad day, being bored, or just because you always have, are some of the biggest obstacles to overcome because most of the time they are unconscious reflexes. Taking control of your eating means that every time you feel the urge to impulse eat, you must stop and assess your motivation for what you are about to eat. Ask yourself, "Is it the right thing for me to be eating right now?" It is okay to gain enjoyment from eating certain foods, but be sure that you recognize the proper time and use moderation.

## **5. Don't keep junk food in the house**

Avoiding refined sugar and heavily processed foods is an important part of stabilizing your daily blood sugar levels and boosting your metabolism. The best way to fight the urge to eat food that will sabotage your nutritional efforts is to avoid being around that type of food. Use an “out of sight, out of mind” philosophy when purchasing items at the grocery store. Stock your house with healthy food and that is what you will eat.

## **6. Don't use exercise to justify poor eating**

Exercise is necessary to burn calories and create the metabolic shift that will decrease your current fat storage. However, if your eating habits continually add new fat stores, using exercise to “make up” for eating junk food is fighting a losing battle. The only way to see real results is to combine proper nutrition with proper exercise.

## **7. Avoid using special occasions as an excuse to overeat.**

There is nothing wrong with treating yourself once in awhile for working hard. The problem with special occasions is that they tend to add up. A birthday party here, a going away party there, and before you know it, four out of the seven days in your week have turned out to be “special occasions”. When at a special occasion, try to keep your intake consistent with your normal planned portion size and eating schedule.

## **8. Avoid basing your eating habits solely on your exercise routine**

In everyday life, there are responsibilities that come up that can sometimes affect your ability to exercise as frequently as you should. However, just because you were not able to make it to the gym that day, doesn't mean that you still can't eat right. Do not get caught up in the scenario where you think “Well, I missed the gym a couple of times this week, so I'll start eating better next week when I have more time to workout.” If you continue eating right, there is less of a chance of gaining back unwanted weight, even if you miss a workout.

## **9. Don't expect to completely change in a day, or allow minor setbacks to zap your motivation**

Good nutrition is not built overnight. It is a goal, and as with all goals, it takes time to achieve. Going “cold turkey” by trying to completely drop all of your current eating habits and eat nothing but chicken and vegetables will not work for most people trying to lose weight. Too drastic of a change is too hard to adapt to and you are only dooming yourself to failure. Also, once you are set up on a reasonable nutrition plan, allow for cheat meals once in a while. Don't look at minor slip-ups as complete failure; just pick back up where you left off.

## **10. Don't force feed yourself foods that are not palatable**

If you don't like cottage cheese and tofu, than don't force yourself to eat them as part of your diet. There's always an alternative food choice to get the same calories and nutrients without all

of the gagging. Remember, the goal is to not just be on a diet, but to make lasting changes in your eating habits. If you choose food that tastes horrible to you, then you won't stick to it.

## Macronutrient Basics

There are a lot of misconceptions and misinformation out there regarding carbohydrates, protein and fat. The following is a brief summary of what you need to know about each of the macronutrients.

### Carbohydrates

Carbohydrates come in many shapes and sizes and while some can be extremely beneficial, others can be quite detrimental. However, despite the negative reputation that carbs have received in recent years, they remain a vital part of a proper diet. Recommendations for carbohydrate intake can range from 40-60% of your daily calorie intake and like proteins, are 4 calories per gram. During digestion, carbohydrates are broken down into glucose which is distributed via the bloodstream to all areas of the body. The Glycemic Index is a scale that rates how quickly the glucose from any given carbohydrate, when ingested by itself, will complete digestion and reach the bloodstream. A carbohydrate with a high glycemic index, such as refined sugars, will be broken down quickly, resulting in rapid release of glucose into the blood.



This in turn will result in an increased production of insulin to remove the excess blood glucose and package it away. For health and weight loss purposes, these blood sugar spikes should be avoided due to the fact that frequent blood sugar spikes over an extended period of time are proven to result in increased body fat as well as increased risk of diabetes. Rapid digestion and uptake of glucose can be slowed by consuming fats and proteins along with the high glycemic foods, however it is still more favorable to choose carbohydrates with a lower glycemic index such as whole or unprocessed grains and vegetables.

Avoiding carbohydrate intake all together is also not ideal as fruits and vegetables contain important vitamins and glucose is a vital source of energy for a variety of bodily functions. The brain, for example, can only run on glucose. Carbohydrates are also an important energy source for exercise. At rest or during low intensity cardiovascular exercise, the body's fuel mixture favors fat usage. However, as exercise intensity increases, fuel mixture shifts to greater glucose usage. The reason for this is that oxygen is needed in the metabolic reaction to release energy from fat while energy from glucose can be extracted without using oxygen. When exercise nears maximum intensity, the body's energy needs exceed its capacity to take in oxygen and glucose takes over as the primary fuel source. Reaching this intensity in your workouts is important because the lactic acid byproduct of burning glucose as a primary fuel source signals important metabolic shifts in your body that will greatly increase your daily calorie expenditure. This process is what will ultimately lead to a stronger leaner body. It is true that through the process of ketosis your body can synthesize glucose from your fat stores to run vital systems such as the brain. However, drastically low carbohydrate diets will adversely affect your exercise

performance and muscle recovery, ultimately impacting your body's metabolic response to exercise.

The key to a healthy carbohydrate intake is choosing the right ones. Carbohydrates are divided into 3 main categories based on their structure and how quickly the body breaks them down into glucose and absorbs them.

Simple carbohydrates, commonly known as sugars, are small structure carbohydrates that are easily broken down into individual glucose molecules. They have a high glycemic index which means that they can easily destabilize your blood sugar levels and should be a limited in your daily dietary intake. While it is widely considered common knowledge that sugar consumption is not conducive to a weight loss program, many people don't realize how many "healthy" foods are also high in sugar. For example, despite their nutritional value, fruit juice and many varieties of fruits contain high amounts of sugar. When consumed alone, they can also cause undesirable blood sugar spikes. This is why it is important to consume these types of carbohydrates as part of a balanced meal containing healthy sources of fats and proteins. Refined or processed forms of sugar such as table sugar or high fructose corn syrup should be avoided all together. These are the highest glycemic forms of sugar and have also been stripped of any fiber or nutrient content.

Complex carbohydrates, or starches, are foods such as grains, rices, potatoes, etc. This type of carbohydrate has a much larger molecular structure consisting of many glucose molecules densely packed together. For this reason, the digestion of these carbohydrates takes longer than simple sugars and the release of glucose into the blood is slower. However, since there is a greater density of glucose molecules in a starch, a small amount goes a long way. The key to proper starch consumption is portion size. You don't have to avoid it completely as long as you measure out the appropriate portion for each meal. Also, much like with sugars, you should avoid bleached or processed forms of starches because they are stripped of their fiber and much of their nutritional value. When choosing starches, look for things like whole grain, or brown rice/pasta. Even yams or sweet potatoes have a higher nutrient content than their white counterpart.



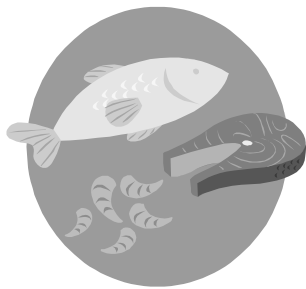
Fiber is the last category of carbohydrate and while you receive little caloric value from it, it is a vital part of a healthy diet for that specific reason. Fiber is largely indigestible and therefore does not make it through the intestinal wall into the bloodstream however it does serve several important functions and it is recommended that the average adult take in 5-14g of fiber daily. Fiber is divided into two categories.

Soluble fiber dissolves in water and helps to slow digestion of simple sugars as well as binds to fatty acids helping to reduce cholesterol uptake. Sources of soluble fiber include oats, nuts, beans, peas, flaxseed, apples, oranges, berries, bananas, and some vegetables.

Insoluble fiber is the least digestible form of fiber and helps to increase the movement of material through the intestines as well as balance the pH of the digestive tract. Sources of insoluble fiber include fruit skins, whole wheat products, seeds, nuts, and dark leafy vegetables.

## Proteins

Protein is arguably the most important of the macronutrients as it is vital, not just for growth and recovery of muscle tissue, but for virtually every process that goes on in our body. For this reason, maintaining proper dietary intake of protein is essential for life. The functions of protein in the body range from structural and movement applications as found in muscle tissue, to enzymatic reactions necessary for digestion, to cellular communications as seen in hormones, and much more. Proteins, like carbohydrates, have a caloric value of 4 calories per gram. General recommendations for protein intake are between 20-35% of your daily calorie intake, while in lowered carbohydrate diets protein intake can be increased above 50%. However, for individuals with kidney issues, high protein diets are not recommended as increased nitrogen levels that occur when protein is utilized for energy can put added strain on your kidneys.



Proteins are complex structures that are made up of smaller molecules called amino acids, which are the building blocks of the body. Amino acids are broken into two categories based on our body's ability to manufacture them. Nonessential amino acids can be synthesized by the body when needed, whereas essential amino acids (EAA's) must be taken in through what we eat. There are eight essential amino acids: phenylalanine, valine, threonine, tryptophan, isoleucine, methionine, leucine, and lysine. All of these amino acids are ingested in sufficient quantities in a normal balanced diet consisting of whole sources of plant and animal proteins. However, if you are on any type of restrictive or specialized diet, you may need to supplement your intake.

There is further classification of proteins as complete or incomplete. Complete proteins are proteins that contain all of the EAA's and include just about all of the animal proteins such as chicken, beef, pork, fish, etc. Incomplete proteins are missing one or more of the EAA's. These proteins are generally found in plant sources. If you are on a vegan or vegetarian diet, you can still take in all of the necessary EAA's by eating the proper combinations of plant proteins.

Proper amino acid intake becomes even more important when you are engaging in exercise. Regardless of the type of training you are doing, protein intake is vital for the rebuilding and recovery of muscle tissue following exercise. Think of your body as a house and amino acids as the building material. If you run out of nails while you're building a wall, the process comes to a halt in the same way that muscle recovery is delayed when the proper amino acids are not available. If those nails don't arrive, the workers building the wall may take nails from other areas of the house to finish their project thereby weakening those other parts of the house. Glutamine, for example, is an amino acid that is heavily utilized by your immune system. If you

are not taking sufficient quantities of this amino acid in your diet and your body needs to rebuild from an intense workout, it can potentially take the glutamine that would otherwise have gone to powering your immune system, leaving you more susceptible to illness.

## Fats

The most concentrated source of energy of all the macronutrients, fat, is found in both plant and animal sources. The USDA's recommendation for fat intake is between 20-35% of your daily calorie intake. Fat has 9 calories per gram and must be metabolized aerobically, which perpetuates the myth that the best way to lose body fat is to do lots of aerobic exercise. While it is true that fat is the primary fuel source when doing moderate to light intensity cardio exercise, increasing your metabolism through adding lean mass to your body is a much more effective way to drop unwanted fat pounds and keep them off.

Another common myth regarding fat is that removing it from your diet will aid in body fat loss. There are several essential fat soluble vitamins that are required for proper body function. Essential Fatty Acids (EFA's) are an important component of cell membranes and necessary for optimum health and proper cell function. Symptoms of EFA deficiency include: dry or prematurely graying hair, dry and cracking skin, slow wound healing, acne, and weak brittle nails. By going on drastically low fat diets, people are inadvertently decreasing their intake of these fat soluble vitamins as well.

### Beneficial Fats:

Monounsaturated and Polyunsaturated fats should comprise the majority of the fat that you consume. These types of fats can help prevent heart disease by lowering your blood cholesterol and contain the EFA's that your body needs to function properly.



- **Monounsaturated fats** are liquid at room temperature but become solid when chilled. Many contain beneficial antioxidant vitamin E as well as help to lower LDL's in the blood and possibly even increase HDL's known as "good cholesterol". **Found in:** olive oil, canola oil, peanut oil, sunflower oil and sesame oil, as well as avocados, peanut butter, almonds, and many other nuts and seeds.
- **Polyunsaturated fats** are also liquid at room temperature and remain liquid when chilled. These fats also help to lower the risk of heart disease. Included in this category of fat are the Omegas (3, 6, & 9). Omega 3 in particular has been shown to increase circulation, decrease blood pressure, and aid in the relief of arthritis. It is important to strive to keep a ratio of Omega-6 to Omega-3 at 4:1. However, because most Americans' diets include more vegetable oils, which contain mostly Omega 6, the ratio in our diets is presently more like 20:1. This is why Omega 3 supplementation is highly recommended. **Found in:** cold water fish (salmon, mackerel, herring, trout, and tuna), grain and grain oils (flax, safflower, corn, and soy bean), as well as walnuts and sunflower seeds.

Eating proper portions of these “healthy” fats can actually help boost your fat metabolism, promoting less body fat storage as well as help to release more that you have already stored. However, not all fats are created equal, and while it is important to have at least 20% of your daily caloric intake from fat, there are certain types of fat that should be limited.

### Fats To Avoid:

Saturated fat and trans fat are the harmful fats that can lead to heart disease, by increasing blood levels of LDL's, otherwise known as “bad cholesterol”, and are linked to a variety of other illnesses.

- **Saturated fat** comes primarily from animal fats and tropical oils. This type of fat has long been linked to heart disease and in recent studies, has been linked to an increase risk of breast, prostate, and small intestinal cancers. Saturated fat intake should be limited to small quantities. **Found in:** dairy products (cream, cheese, & butter), animal fats, coconut oil, cottonseed oil, palm kernel oil, chocolate, and processed foods.
- **Trans fat** is a manmade fat created by adding hydrogen molecules to unsaturated fat in order to increase its melting point and preserve it longer. These types of fats are used in heavily processed foods such as baked goods and fried foods. Trans fats have no nutritional benefits, have been proven to increase the risk of coronary artery disease and have been linked to the development of Alzheimer's, cancer, diabetes, obesity, liver dysfunction, and infertility. This type of fat should be avoided completely. **Found in:** hydrogenated or partially hydrogenated oils, shortening, and processed foods

### Staying Hydrated

Water, although not considered a macronutrient, is just as important as protein, carbohydrates, and fat. Water loss each day through sweat, urine, breathing, and other losses in the average person amount to approximately 32 ounces per day. This loss increases during exercise to approximately 80 ounces. Fluid intake has been shown to have a very profound impact on exercise performance. A 3% loss in body water weight has been shown to decrease performance in endurance exercise, while a 5% loss negatively affects strength performance. A good rule of thumb to follow is when you are working out regularly, drink at least ½ of your body weight in ounces each day. That means that a 180lb person would drink 90oz. If you tend to sweat more profusely during exercise, you should increase your water intake.

If exercise lasts more than one hour, sports drinks such as Gatorade should be used instead of water due to their electrolyte and carbohydrate composition. However, if an exercise bout lasts less than one hour, water is a better choice as sports drinks have been shown to provide no additional benefit. In fact, water is taken up through the small intestine faster than sports drinks, which is important, because during exercise it only takes 15 minutes for water to get from the stomach to the skin in the form of sweat. When consuming fluids, it is also important to remember that the optimal temperature for drinks is between 57 and 74 degrees. The closer the drink temp is



to the lower end of the scale, the better, because colder drinks are absorbed faster than warmer fluids and are generally more palatable when working out.

## **Beware Of High Calorie Beverages**

Anyone who is looking to drop some weight has most likely accepted the fact that they must become mindful of what they are eating. However, some people don't realize just how many calories they are *drinking*. While discussing weight loss nutrition with a client recently, she brought up that she goes to Starbucks every morning and gets a large (or whatever they call it at Starbucks) White Chocolate Moca . She admitted that it probably wasn't the best thing to have but when I asked her if she knew how many calories there was in that drink, she said that she had no clue. I advised her to go look it up on the Starbucks website and added that she should probably be sitting down when she did. She began thumbing away on her smart phone and a few moments later her jaw dropped and her face went pale. That cup of fluid that she had consumed religiously 7 days a week contained 580 calories, 22g of fat and 75g of sugar!!! We calculated her daily calorie expenditure earlier that day and that one coffee beverage was over ¼ of the estimated daily calorie intake to maintain her weight. She could be losing over a pound a week simply by cutting that one beverage out of her daily intake. Needless to say, she has since changed her daily order at the coffee shop. *What's in your coffee?*

These morning coffee/dessert beverages are not the only high calorie culprits. Most people have been made aware of the negative impact of drinking soda. However, you may not be aware of a high sugar drink masquerading as a healthy beverage. Fruit juice, while containing beneficial antioxidants and other essential vitamins, generally contains close to the same amount of sugar as a comparable amount of soda. Rather than drinking juice, you are much better off eating the piece of fruit that the juice came from as part of a balanced meal. At least that way you are also getting the benefits of the fruit's fiber, and the blood glucose impact of the natural sugar is decreased.

The last beverage that most people fail to factor into their calorie intake is alcohol. In general, light beer, wine, and hard alcohol have around 100 calories per serving and regular beer is about 150 calories per serving. That means a night on the town, even just drinking beer or wine, can add up quickly. When it comes to hard alcohol, it's usually the mixers that do the most caloric damage. Most people mix their drinks with some type of soda or juice which, as we already discussed, has a high sugar content. Others go for the blended drinks and fancy cocktails which are potentially the worst calorie offenders on the list. The average Long Island Iced Tea or Margarita has over 700 calories each and a Pina Colada contains 90g of carbs, mostly sugar!!! The other thing to remember when dealing with alcoholic drinks is that your body will preferentially burn the alcohol calories first, leaving the rest to be stored as fat.

The message to take away from this is to be more mindful of what you are drinking and how it affects your total calorie intake. When all is said and done, you can't go wrong with water. It's refreshing, it will help your metabolism and digestion, and it's recommended that you drink at least 8 glasses a day. So the next time you reach for a beverage, make it a nice big glass of high quality H<sub>2</sub>O.



## Exercise Basics

**T**here is no arguing that exercise is a vital part of a sustainable weight loss program. While it is possible to lose weight through nutritional adjustments alone, exercise is vital for improving your metabolism which becomes important for keeping the weight off long term. Much like with nutrition, there is a lot of conflicting information and a plethora of programs and products related to exercise and weight loss. That is why it is important to remember that, just like with nutrition, it's not about what is the best, it's about what is better than what you were doing yesterday. The best workout in the world is useless if you are unable to do it or end up getting injured trying. This is where proper progressions and goal setting come into play. Just like you wouldn't go into the gym and try to lift 300lbs on your first day, you shouldn't go into your first week expecting to workout 7 days straight. Each week you should be setting SMART goals around improving your exercise behaviors. In this chapter, we will go over how exercise fits into the weight loss puzzle so that you have a better understanding of why working out is so important.

### Building A Strong Metabolism

I always tell people that the key to losing weight and keeping it off is increasing your metabolism. Your metabolic rate is basically how many calories your body burns on a daily basis. This number can fluctuate based on a variety of factors including hormones, your activity level and types and frequency of foods you eat. From an exercise standpoint, this caloric expenditure can be manipulated to our advantage in two important ways. The first way is obvious. Everyone knows that doing any type of cardiovascular exercise will burn off extra calories during the time you are working out and help you to lose unwanted pounds. However, the second way that exercise affects your metabolism is much more important. Engaging in strength training exercises that will increase your muscle, or lean mass, will result in added calorie burn not only while you are working out, but also when you're at rest.

**The nutritional aspects of increasing your metabolism are covered in the Basic Nutritional Guidelines and Weekly Activities sections of this manual.**

## Hungry, Hungry Muscles

Muscle tissue will remain metabolically active even at rest. That means that once you've built muscle tissue, it will continue to work for you in the background burning calories for as long as you maintain it. The Katch-McArdle formula that was used to calculate your daily calorie expenditure on your **Calorie Worksheet**, estimates Basal Metabolic Rate (BMR) based on the amount of lean tissue a person has. This is because that equation takes the metabolic activity of muscle tissue into consideration for your "at rest" calorie expenditure.

Using training techniques such as circuit training and super setting can keep your heart rate up during strength training workouts, add a cardio component and increase your calories burned in each session. Also, the extra energy expenditure needed to recover from strength workouts is higher than the recovery expenditure of traditional cardio workouts. Additionally, you can't discount the calorie expenditure that it takes to actually build a pound of muscle tissue. You can look at building muscle like investing in a retirement account. First you invest time and calories in the act of building muscle, then that muscle goes to work for you earning some major caloric interest. So why would you spend hours on that treadmill? Pick up some dumbbells and start investing.

## It's Time To HIIT It!

High Intensity Interval Training (HIIT) has long been utilized by top athletes and fitness professionals to improve athletic performance, lose body fat and improve cardiovascular fitness all in a relatively short amount of time. How does this style of training boast such a wide variety of results? It all has to do with your body's response to the production of lactic acid.

Lactic acid is a byproduct of the body's anaerobic metabolism which is activated during higher intensity exertions. When doing exercise at below 70% of your maximum, your body obtains energy primarily through aerobic metabolism. Aerobic means in the presence of oxygen. Using this system, the body burns fat as the primary fuel source which is why many people mistakenly believe aerobic exercise to be the most effective way of decreasing body fat. However, as the body begins to work closer to maximum effort, it becomes harder and harder to take in enough oxygen to keep up with the energy needs and the body is forced to shift to anaerobic metabolism, extracting energy from stored sugars in the form of glycogen. This process is able to occur without oxygen, but has a short shelf life because of the accumulation of lactic acid that results from burning glycogen. Repeatedly pushing your body to this Anaerobic Threshold will ultimately result in a variety of metabolic adaptations that are greatly beneficial.

- **Increased caloric expenditure of recovery:** Unlike standard aerobic exercise, the caloric expenditure of anaerobic training extends well beyond the workout. Studies show that the excess post-workout oxygen consumption (EPOC) following anaerobic exercise is much greater. This means that your body is burning a higher amount of fat long after your workout is over. Not to mention the fact that if you included strength

training exercises into your intervals, your body has to expend calories rebuilding the muscle tissue. Even though the number of extra calories burned isn't real high, it will add up over time.

- **Hormonal response:** One of the most important responses to lactic acid training is an increased production of growth hormone and testosterone. These hormones increase protein synthesis which builds muscle. This hormone response also results in increase of fat oxidative enzymes which helps burn more fat at rest.
- **Maintaining lean tissue while dieting:** One of the major draw backs to calorie restrictive dieting is that often times the weight lost can include certain amount of muscle or lean tissue. This ultimately serves to lower your daily metabolic rate because, as we just discussed, lean tissue burns calories for you even at rest. However, with the anabolic hormonal response to higher intensity anaerobic training, more of that muscle tissue is maintained even in a caloric deficit. Conversely, prolonged aerobic exercise puts your body in a catabolic state in which muscle tissue can be broken down for energy along with the fat.

HIIT can be utilized during both strength focused workouts and cardio focused workouts. In strength focused workouts, we achieve HIIT by putting multiple strength based exercises together into grouped sets or circuits. These exercises can be for completely different muscle groups or all targeted for one specific area. The goal of this technique is to keep the rest times between exercises low which creates more of a cardiovascular response and an increase in lactic acid production. Work/rest intervals are manipulated based on the exerciser's goals and fitness level.

You can also utilize HIIT for cardio based workouts. This principle is commonly used for the preprogrammed workouts on commercial cardio equipment. Programs such as hills, intervals and random will have you start at a set pace or resistance, then increase the intensity for a set period of time followed by a less intense recovery period and repeated. However, you don't need expensive equipment to get your HIIT in. You can use the same principles in outdoor running or cycling by using a heart rate monitor to measure high intensity and recovery periods or simply set a timer or stop watch and do timed intervals. In any case, your goal after warming up should be to increase your intensity to reach fatigue, and then recover as quickly as you can and repeat the effort.

## **Psychology Of The Scale**

It has been my experience that the greatest challenge to overcome when starting a fitness program is the fact that too many people are fixated on their weight as the end all, be all measure of success. I feel that it is my duty to tackle the myths and misconceptions regarding everyone's least favorite bathroom accessory, the dreaded scale.

If you really stop and think about it, your actual weight is a number that only you and your doctor see. At the end of the day, what everyone else sees are your dimensions and your body

composition. So, why do so many people ignore *those* numbers when it comes to measuring success? I always joke with new clients that come to me and tell me that they want to loose weight. I tell them, if that's the only way that they are measuring success, then I can help them drop 20lbs today!! Just let me get a saw and I'll take off their least favorite arm and voila, the next time they step on the scale, they will be down 20lbs. So far no one has taken me up on the offer which tells me that people really don't want to lose weight, they want to lose fat. That is an important distinction to make.

I joke about it, but the reality is that often times, people look to the scale alone to judge whether their work is paying off and unfortunately, the scale can sometimes lie. Now I know all you scientists out there are saying, "A scale doesn't lie because gravity is a constant, therefore what you weigh is what you weigh." This is true, but what you weigh does not tell the full story of your progress. For example, I've had clients that have dropped a good amount of body fat, lost inches in their circumference measurements, but made little progress on the scale. If we hadn't taken those other measurements and the person was just watching the scale, they may have gotten frustrated with their perceived lack of results and given up on their program. Meanwhile, the scale number could have been skewed from fluid retention or simply because the fat they were losing was being offset by weight of the muscle that they were building.



That brings us to a myth that has been perpetuated for years, the old adage that muscle weighs more than fat. I'm sure that the majority of you have heard this at one time or another. It's kind of like the old riddle - Which weighs more, a pound of bricks or a pound of feathers? (*Don't say bricks, it's a trick question.*) The reality is that muscle does not weigh more than fat it is simply a denser, more fibrous tissue than fat. This means that a pound of fat occupies much greater volume of space than a pound of muscle. I bring this up because when I talk to people, women especially, about building muscle, their immediate response is that they don't want to build muscle and look like a bodybuilder. In actuality, replacing pounds of fat with pounds of muscle will actually make you look smaller, even if your weight stayed exactly the same. Plus as we discussed, more muscle equals a higher metabolism that will help you lose the fat faster and keep more of it off in the long term.

## Tools For Success

**T**he most important thing to remember if you are going to be successful in your fitness journey is that there will be failure along the way. You mustn't allow failures to weaken your resolve. When you find yourself veering off track, it's important to revisit your goal sheet and reconnect with your core motivators. Learn from mistakes so that you can better anticipate future obstacles and press on to victory. In this chapter, we will discuss some key tools to utilize when overcoming obstacles.

### Mindfulness

Mindfulness is defined as a concentrated awareness of one's thoughts, actions, or motivations. This can be a very powerful tool when it comes to making changes in our daily lives. So often, we plow mindlessly through our days with blinders on, relying on our behavioral patterns to get us where we are going. How many times have you gotten to work and realized that you don't remember anything between leaving your house and reaching your workplace? How about returning to your desk after walking past the break room and realizing that you have a donut or a muffin in your hand that you don't even remember picking up? If we are not mindful of the things that we do, how effectively can we make conscious decisions to change?

I have personal experience with this autopilot phenomenon. Ever since I can remember, my grandmother has always kept fully stocked candy dishes in various areas of her house. I grew up right down the street from my grandparents and as a young boy, one of the first things that I would look forward to when visiting, after greeting my grandparents of course, would be exploring these dishes to see what treasures they held. As an adult, even during times of my strictest dieting, I still find myself being drawn straight to those dishes when I go to visit. I have literally caught myself standing in front of the candy dish with my hand outstretched, as though waking up from a trance, wondering how I made it into that room. I speak to others that experience similar situations regarding snacking at night. They explain that they sit down to watch TV and before they realize what happened, they have eaten a whole bag of Smartfood popcorn.

Becoming more mindful of the actions and behaviors that we are engaging in is the first step toward improving them. Only after we have done that can we hope to make lasting changes.

In his book, *The Health Seeker's Handbook*, Bob Merberg writes that “Full awareness of the present moment will reduce or eliminate the challenges you may encounter as you change your health behavior or any other aspect of your life.”

Bob Merberg goes on to list the benefits of becoming more mindful:

Living in the moment will:

- Increase your awareness of what triggers unhealthy behaviors
- Help you keep unhealthy cravings at bay
- Elevate your sense of well-being – free from stresses about the future or the past – so you will intuitively take better care of yourself rather than trying to force it with willpower
- Enable you to cope with relapses without guilt and with overall equanimity
- Liberate you from comparing yourself to other people
- Provide you with a healthful means to deal with anger, anxiety, or feelings of low self-worth, so these common and deep-seated emotions don't undermine you
- Instruct you in how to “let go” of circumstances that keep you stuck

That's the big picture. Mindfulness can deliver immediate returns in your everyday life:

- Practice mindfulness while eating – paying complete and quiet attention to the present moment and being aware of all perceptions related to eating – and you will find that you will naturally choose health foods, eat moderate portions, and “tune in” to your sense of satiation.
- Practice mindfulness while exercising, and you can eliminate boredom and shed those internal voices that generate reasons to not exercise.
- Practice mindfulness at work and when interacting with coworkers, and you will reduce your work-related stress.

## Perseverance

Motivational writer John C. Maxwell is the author of *Talent Is Never Enough*. If you haven't read it, I highly recommend it. The book is written in regards to talent in business, however, many of the lessons he writes about are applicable to weight loss as well.

In one of the chapters, Maxwell discusses perseverance in a way that I feel applies to anyone struggling through a rough patch on their road to fitness. "Confronted with adversity, many people give up while others rise up. How do those who succeed do it? They persevere. They find the benefit to them personally that comes with any trial and they recognize that the best thing about adversity is coming out the other side of it." He goes on to point out that "Perseverance doesn't really come into play until you are tired. When you are fresh, excited, and energetic you approach a task with vigor...only when you become tired do you need perseverance. To successful people fatigue and discouragement are not signs to quit. They

perceive them as signals to draw on their reserves, rely on their character, and keep going.”

This is one of the hardest things for many people to do when it comes to diet and exercise. Once people decide to make a change, they are generally excited and eager to get started. While that excitement can be enough to initiate positive changes, it's perseverance that will ultimately keep them going. There may come a point where you are being consistent with your exercise and sticking to your nutrition plan but, for one reason or another, your progress plateaus. This is not the time to give up, but rather, it is the time to draw on perseverance. It may simply be time to change up your approach. Once your body has adapted to a certain exercise routine, then that routine becomes less effective at facilitating further change. That doesn't mean that exercises as a whole will no longer work for you, it just means that it's time to change up your strategy. Giving up should never be an option.

In his book, Maxwell goes on to discuss the idea that the energy that you invest in making these changes is really an investment in yourself. "...perseverance is an investment. It means more than working hard. It is a willingness to bind oneself emotionally, intellectually, physically, and spiritually to an idea or task until it has been completed. Perseverance demands a lot, but here's the good news: everything you give is an investment in yourself."

This does a great job of summing up what it takes to make real, positive, lasting changes in our lives. You will be tested by hardships on your road to fitness and sometimes it may take all the conviction that you possess to make the right decisions, but you can do so with the knowledge that you are making that investment in yourself.

## **Personal Responsibility**

All too often when I am discussing the topic of eating healthy with someone, I hear the phrase “Just write down what I should eat and I'll eat it”. In general, I find that there is a lot of resistance to actually learning about proper nutrition. Instead, people expect to be put on a “diet” that they can blindly follow. This lazy approach to healthy nutrition is setting people up for failure mainly because nutritional laziness is what got them into trouble to begin with.

Following a diet is only tackling weight loss from the physiological sense. It is true that regardless of how or why, if you are eating the right food in the right portion, you will be able to lose weight. However, this scientific approach assumes that we are just machines and the food is simply fuel. The reality is that most people's food choices are based more on social and psychological reasons rather than the purpose of fuel. Therefore, from a psychological perspective, simply being told what to eat is not enough. You still have not invested anything in the process; you haven't learned about eating healthy, and most importantly, you haven't taken any personal responsibility for your choices.

In the book *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People*, author Stephen R. Covey talks about responsibility, “the ability to choose your response”. He suggests that “Effective people are proactive. That is that they take responsibility. Their behavior is a product of their decisions,

based on values, rather than being a product of their conditions, based on feelings.” To be successful in weight loss you need to sometimes be able to overcome your immediate conditions and feelings by making decisions based on your goals and values.

Here’s a perfect example, a friend came to me a while back and declared that he wanted to start a weight loss program. At the time, he was not very receptive about getting into a discussion of the motivational aspects of weight loss, claiming that all he needed was a nutritional script to follow and he would just do it. Against my better judgment, I gave in and provided him with a 5 meal per day nutritional plan that I had previously used to accomplish my weight loss goals and slightly modified it to reflect his body weight. After a week or so, I emailed him to see how things were going. He emailed me back to say that he was at a party the night before and they didn’t have what he was supposed to eat for his fourth meal so he ended up having pizza and cake instead. After a little more pressing, he admitted that there were other healthier options that he could have gone for but he figured if he was going off script then he might as well go way off. This illustrates the fundamental problem with not addressing the decisional components of nutrition. He ate what he was “supposed to” when it was available, but as soon as freewill entered back into the equation he reverted to his old decision making processes.

If you really think about it, most people don’t need someone to tell them that pizza, cake or any of the other junk food is not a good nutritional choice. The majority of people struggling with weight loss already know that, and yet that knowledge alone is often not enough to stop them from consuming those foods. They also don’t need a lecture on portion sizes to know that eating until you have to loosen your belt on a regular basis may lead to some weight gain. Aside from a few minor misconceptions, most people are aware of the types of food and the general quantities that they should be eating. So why is obesity such a worldwide problem? People are not taking responsibility for their actions.

It is not a lack of basic nutritional knowledge, but rather poor behavioral patterns that are causing people to gain weight at an alarming rate. That means that simply being told what you should and shouldn’t be eating is not going to solve the problem. While some people may have some success with that approach, most will inevitably revert back to their old ways at the conclusion of their diet and gain back the weight they lost. Yo-yo dieting is so prevalent because people try to take the quick and lazy path rather than working to identify and adjust how they think and feel about food.

The only way for lasting changes to truly take root is to embrace the fact that exercise and nutrition is a lifestyle change rather than simply a means to an end and that relying on a diet fad or a pill will only lead to more despair when the weight comes back. Once you’ve come to terms with the fact that the direction you have been traveling has led you somewhere that you do not want to be, you will then realize that it is faulty logic to consider ever going down that path again. Be proactive and take responsibility for the direction of your life. Take the time to explore your deeper reasons and goals, as well as embrace positive change in your attitudes and behaviors regarding the types of food that you are putting into your body. This will give you the strength and purpose to achieve weight loss success.



## Positive Thinking

There is a lot of debate over the extent to which our minds can affect our physical bodies. I've personally witnessed people whose negative outlook towards exercise and nutrition has greatly impacted their physical results. In my experience, the majority of people who fail to achieve their goals do so because of mental obstacles rather than physical ones.

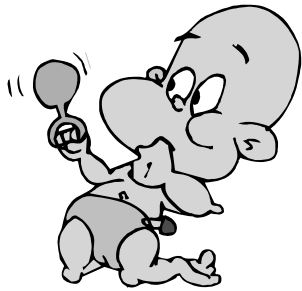
I like to use the analogy that our mental state works much like a weather pattern with our mood being the barometric pressure. This is especially true for people with weight loss and body image goals. A common example of this would be a person who is unhappy about being overweight. This person wakes up in the morning, looks in the mirror or steps on a scale, and is disappointed with what he or she sees. Perhaps this person has been working on an exercise or nutrition program for a while with some positive results, but has recently reached a plateau. Although trying to stay positive, recent setbacks have begun to turn to negative thinking. "I'm getting sick of this!" the person thinks. That's just one negative thought that I'm sure we've all had in a moment of frustration and while some of us are able to brush it off quickly and push on, others allow it to stay and fester in their minds.

Let's take a look at what can happen once that one negative thought creeps in. If not properly addressed, that single thought can cause the barometer to fall. Our mind begins to cloud as the low pressure system builds. The thought begins to echo and repeat in our head gaining strength. As it does, the cloud begins to swirl and intensify and before long that one negative thought begins to kick up more negative thoughts: "I'm sick of this!" leads to "I'm never going to reach my goal", which leads to "Why am I trying so hard, I'll always be fat." All of these swirling negative thoughts finally touch down in the form of: "Screw it, I give up. I'm just going to eat a whole pint of Ben & Jerry's." This F5 negativity tornado flattens the towns of Conviction and Determination that the person had worked so hard build up. The spiraling mass of self-destructive thoughts and feelings could last a day or it could last months. When it's all over the victim looks out over the devastating aftermath with feelings of guilt and despair. "Now it's really hopeless." This is the first thought that starts the whole weather pattern over again. You can easily see how some people can end up living in an emotional tornado ally. I realize that makes the forecast seem pretty bleak but there is hope for those caught in this cycle. It is the power of positive thinking.

Positive thinking can turn the whole pattern around, let's take a look. If negative thoughts act like a low pressure system, then it makes sense that positive thoughts will have the reverse effect. For all of you out there who don't watch the weather channel as much as I apparently do, as the barometric pressure rises, it pushes away the clouds and stabilizes the atmosphere. When you fill your mind with upbeat, positive thoughts, the high pressure system moves in and you are treated to a bright sunny day, or week, or month, or however long you can continue stay positive. Why do you think they call it looking on the bright side? Before long you realize that you've moved from emotional tornado ally to an emotional San Diego and you've turned your body from a rundown mobile home into a beautiful seaside mansion. So when counterproductive negative thoughts rear their ugly heads, it's important to shut them down immediately and replace them with the power of positive thinking.

## Nutritional Maturity

At a young age we begin to associate many of the wrong types of food with fun and enjoyment. Our parents further reinforce this using “treats” as a motivational tool to control our behavior. How many of you were promised cake or ice cream as a reward for some job well done? Or maybe you had that favorite grandmother who loved to slip you sweets when your parents weren’t looking. Perhaps you were even on a sports team where a coach or favorite parent promised a pizza party or trip to Friendly’s after you won the big game. All of these events serve to solidify the subconscious connection between junk food and feeling good. Unfortunately for us, the feelings of euphoria related to eating junk food are not just a learned behavior. There are actual chemical reactions in our brain that occur when we eat junk food that give us a feeling of happiness. Marketing companies are well aware of this connection between junk food and feelings of well-being. This is why every fatty, sugary snack on the market is put into a fun package with bright flashy colors that tap directly into the adolescent enjoyment center of our brains. Go ahead, try to find one junk food package to the contrary, I dare you. These pied piper advertising techniques target our inner child much like the melodious tunes of an ice cream truck drawing out every kid in the neighborhood as it rolls through.



Once you recognize that this junk food enjoyment is, in large part, a product of our childhood, then it’s easy to view the road of health and fitness as one of the last true rites of passage in our modern world. It is, in a sense, a growth process through which we begin making the conscious decision to turn our backs to our childish nutritional impulses and take responsibility for the state of our body and our health. We must mature beyond our reliance on food to make us feel happy and comforted, and accept the mission of becoming strong healthy adults.

It is my not so humble opinion that a major contributor to the obesity problem in our country is that too many Americans are developmentally stunted when it comes to what they eat. In other words, we suffer from nutritional immaturity. Why is it that we feel the need to end a long day at work by “treating” ourselves to a large bowl of chocolate chip ice cream? Are we suddenly six years old again being rewarded for completing our chores? I think it might be time to grow up. In some cultures, to become an adult, an adolescent must walk across hot coals or survive on his own in the jungle. The least we can do is retire our sugary security blankets. If you are looking for some endorphins, try exercise. Not only will exercise make you stronger and healthier, but it will also relieve stress and release those feel good neurochemicals that people attempt to obtain from junk food.

Another major issue we face in regards to nutrition is the psychological aspects of peer pressure. Once again, it’s time for us to grow up and realize that the behavior of our peers is not a justification to succumb to similar temptations. The sooner you come to terms with the idea that you may have to be the one person eating salad and drinking water in a room full of people having pizza and beer, the closer you will be to achieving greatness. Your feelings and reactions

when you encounter this situation are also important to consider. If you are sitting there grinding your teeth over every salad leaf, jealously loathing every bite of pizza the person next to you takes, then you still have not reached your nutritional enlightenment. A person truly committed to their goals will see beyond these momentary sacrifices to the glorious satisfaction of achieving their goals. They will experience a feeling of righteous vindication with every bite of that salad and will even look upon their fellow diners with feeling of pity. Speaking of that, be aware that it is also part of the rite of passage to not feel the need to talk down to those that are not following the same path as you. Even if they begin to attack you for eating healthy, you must realize that it is just the manifestation of their own guilt in seeing the comparison between what you are feeding your body and what they are consuming. If you can remain humble in this situation, then you have passed the test. Just a small side note for those reading who are blessed with a quick metabolism; just because you can eat something doesn't mean you should. Lean people who eat poorly are not immune to heart disease or diabetes any more than the rest of us.

Despite what you may have gathered from this section, I am not saying that you have to be the nutritional equivalent of a Zen master to get results. However, I *am* saying that we could all benefit from developing a little more maturity in our eating habits.

## Willpower

I spend a lot of time speaking to people about their health and fitness goals and one of the most common topics that come up is willpower. A majority of the people that come to me with the goal of losing weight rate willpower near the top of their list of obstacles. To most people, willpower is thought of as something that people are simply born with or without it, and they unfortunately were born without. The reality is that willpower is simply a cognitive skill that must be developed just like any other. We're not born with a full understanding of algebra, but every little kid understands that two is more than one. From that basic mathematical understanding, advanced concepts and skills are developed through practice and study. Willpower can be developed in the same way.

Wikipedia defines willpower as “the ability to exert one's will over one's actions”. It goes on to say, “Willpower manifests as inner firmness, decisiveness, determination, resolution and persistence.” The concept of willpower is synonymous with the concepts of self-control and discipline. I understand that these concepts can seem intimidating when you first set out on your fitness journey. However, by simply resigning to the fact that you have no willpower, you are essentially giving up on improving it.

When looking at willpower as it relates to health and fitness, I define it as **the ability to make a goal directed decision despite one or more temptations drawing you to the contrary**. Let's break down that definition and examine the components of willpower.

First of all, it is important to look at willpower as a decision making ability that exists within all of us. We are all programmed to make the decision that best suits our needs in every situation.

One could argue that there are some extraordinary situations where some people make decisions that are selfless, like a person getting hit by a car after pushing a child out of the vehicle's path. However, that could also be looked at as fulfilling that person's need or instinct to protect the child, and if they hadn't they would have experienced the pain and guilt of not taking what they felt was the appropriate action. This is an extreme example that could be debated back and forth, but the reality is that most everyday decisions that we make can be traced back to two core motivations: avoiding pain or unpleasant feelings and achieving pleasure or contentment.

The reason that some people appear to have more willpower is that they view these pain vs. pleasure decisions from a different perspective. Let's take a common example of a situation that would require willpower. You're at work and you walk by the break room and someone has baked a whole plate of warm chocolate chip cookies and they smell great. You have been trying to lose weight and you know that one will lead to another. Part of you says "Don't get started" while the other side says "Yea, but they do look good". You now have a decision to make. Do you go over and grab one, or do you use "willpower" to avoid them? From the short term perspective, the pain vs. pleasure argument is that you will obtain pleasure from eating those cookies and at the same time avoid the pain of denying your craving. Viewing the decision from only the short term perspective, eating the cookies can be a logical decision in that moment. However, if you can begin to make yourself mindful of the long term consequences of your short term decisions then the pros and cons flip. From the long term perspective, the momentary pleasure of consuming the cookies is outweighed by the potential feelings of remorse associated with moving farther from your weight loss goals. The momentary discomfort of practicing willpower becomes the feelings of success and achievement in knowing that you have taken one step closer to your weight loss goals.

**Revisit *Clearly Defining Your Goals & Smart Goal Setting* from Chapter 1.**

As you can see, making a goal directed decision is based on weighing the pros and cons of a situation against what we desire to accomplish. That means, in order to make a decision, we must first know what it is we want to accomplish and set the proper goals to get there. If you are unclear as to what your specific goal is or how to get there, then you cannot effectively practice willpower. For example, you could be practicing willpower to make the decision to go to the gym instead of sitting home on the couch, but if what you are doing when you go to the gym is not getting you closer to your goal, you will most likely become frustrated and be at risk for giving up. Therefore, it is extremely important that you obtain the proper guidance and information so that you can see the path to your goal and then be able to practice willpower in traveling it. As you may have experienced in the past, if what you are doing is not moving you toward your goal, it will be difficult to maintain those new behaviors even if they are "good for you". I feel that this is an important point in this discussion; to recognize that there are conditions, such as eating disorders and depression, in which the normal decision making processes are altered. If you feel that you may be struggling with any of these issues, proper diagnosis and treatment will be a necessary part of your health and fitness journey.

I incorporate the idea of temptation into my definition of willpower because in its absence, willpower does not exist. In the same way that you can't make a goal directed decision without a goal, you can't practice willpower without temptation. For some, their strategy is to attempt to avoid all temptations. They view these temptations like landmines to stay as far away from as possible, like avoiding going out to a restaurant or a party because they will be tempted to break their diet. Although this may work for awhile, it is ultimately weakening their ability to use willpower. By avoiding a decision, you miss the opportunity to practice making it. It is only through practice that we improve our skills. Therefore, temptation is a necessary part of becoming stronger. Once you've taken the time to clearly identify your goals and your internal motivations, you have no reason to fear and avoid situations in which you will be tested. Each of these tests is an opportunity to practice and improve your willpower. Even in failure we

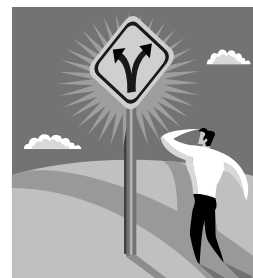
**“Opposition is a natural part of life. Just as we develop our physical muscles through overcoming opposition – such as lifting weights – we develop our character muscles by overcoming challenges and adversity.”**  
- Stephen R. Covey, *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People*

have the opportunity to learn and grow, as long as we don't wallow in self-pity because of it. It doesn't matter how many times you fall as long as you keep getting up. This is where perseverance comes into play.

Succumbing to temptations, in itself, offers a multitude of opportunities to improve your willpower. For example, let's say that you are confronted with the cookie in the break room decision that I discussed earlier. As long as you

are mindful that this is a decision and not just a knee jerk reaction that you are not in control of, you are already practicing willpower. At this point let's say that you decide you are going to have a cookie; that opens up another level of decision making. Just because you are giving in to a craving does not necessarily constitute a failure if you then recognize there is still the decision of how much to have. This next level of decision is the difference between simply eating what is available and limiting ourselves to a preset amount. The part of our brain that deals with food urges hasn't evolved much since caveman days when we were programmed to eat all we could when it was available because it may be a long time before we get food again. That means that it is up to the logical decision making part of our brain to control these urges. You have the ability to decide to have one cookie, enjoy it, and then walk away, despite that part of your brain that is telling you to eat the whole plate. Even if you end up having more than you intended to, you still have the opportunity to decide how to deal with that setback. Will you give into the temptation to wallow in failure and feel sorry for yourself which could continue you down a path further from your goal? Or will you learn from your setbacks and strengthen your resolve to get back on track?

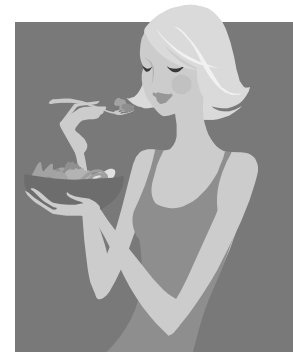
Willpower is recognizing that each decision you make determines the direction of the path you are traveling. Practicing willpower means that you know what you want to achieve and why, and that you are actively engaged in choosing paths that are moving you in that direction. You won't always make the right decision, but it doesn't matter how many detours you make, the only way to truly fail in your journey is to give up.



## 7 Steps to Building a Strong Nutritional Foundation

It is no surprise why diets plans such as Atkins, The Zone Diet, The South Beach Diet, and Weight Watchers are so popular. The bottom line is that for many people these diets work. But, what happens after success when the diet is over? There in lies the fundamental flaw in these programs: people's perception of the word "diet". For most people, a diet is something that they begrudgingly do for as long as it takes to achieve their desired end result or until they get discouraged and give up. Even for the people that do achieve success on these programs, the success is many times short-lived because once they are off the diet, they immediately start to gain the weight back. The solution to this problem is a shift in beliefs regarding what a diet is.

What most people lose sight of is the fact that the word diet has two separate definitions. Yourdictionary.com defines diet as: 1a) what a person or animal usually eats and drinks; daily fare; 2) a special or limited selection of food and drink, chosen or prescribed to promote health or a gain or loss of weight. Our society has become so fixated with the second definition that we ignore the first. Therefore, people consider themselves either on or off a "diet". From a behavioral standpoint this creates an all or nothing mindset. When someone is on their diet they are so strict and disciplined that they get burnt out. This leads to the thought process that once the diet is over it's time to go back to the "regular" way of eating. The problem is that the regular way of eating is what got the person into trouble in the first place. It is that first definition of diet that holds the key to long term weight loss success.



Those who embrace the idea that a diet is what a person usually eats can then begin taking the steps toward adopting a healthy balanced lifestyle. These steps include taking the time to learn about their bodies and what food quantities and combinations will put them on a steady course to their goals. It is a more gradual process, but it is also an investment in yourself that will certainly pay dividends in the long run. Use the following 7 Nutritional Exercises to build your new healthy lifestyle.



# Nutritional Exercise 1

## Your Calorie Needs

The important thing to remember when you calculate your daily calorie expenditure is that it is only an approximation. It does, however, give a good starting point for setting up your meal planning. You may find that you need to adjust your total calories up or down based on the results after the first week or so. Your Vitabot Software will calculate your caloric needs based on one of two equations:

**The Harris-Benedict formula** calculates BMR based on total body weight, age, height, and sex of the individual.

**The Katch-McArdle formula** calculates BMR based on your own total lean body mass and therefore is a slightly more accurate method. For the software to utilize this equation, you will need to input your body fat percentage. Your coach can take this measurement for you.

Now that you have your approximate daily calorie expenditure, you should see how it compares to the amount of calories that you are currently taking in. If your calorie consumption is well above your expected expenditure then start to gradually decrease your daily intake by 100-250 calories per day for a week and see how your body reacts. If your calorie intake is already well below your expected expenditure then you may be putting your body into a starvation state especially if you are increasing your activity level through exercise. This could potentially lower your metabolism making it harder to lose body fat and recover from exercise. Try adding 100-250 calories of healthy foods to your daily intake for a week and see how your body reacts. Remember this is not an exact science and there are a lot of other factors that go into how many calories you are burning in a day. Use the numbers that have been calculated by the Vitabot Software as targets to gradually move toward during these first few weeks.

Use what you have learned in this Nutritional Exercise, as well as the first two, to start dividing your total calories for the day among the number of meals that you normally eat. Continue to use your Vitabot Software to keep track of your intake. This will start to get you ready for the future Nutritional Exercise in which you will learn how the timing and frequency of your daily food intake can play a large role in your overall metabolism.

**If you have medical concerns that relate to dietary issues, you should seek the assistance of a health specialist or registered dietitian before drastically altering your current diet.**







## **Nutritional Exercise 3**

### **Keeping a Nutrition Journal**

Logging your daily food intake is an important part of developing a healthy relationship with food. It is not something that you necessarily have to do forever, but in the beginning of your journey it is a vital learning tool. A well-prepared nutrition journal can help you better judge proper portion sizes, allow you to better understand the nutrient breakdown of the foods you eat, and provide an accountability factor to your food choices. When combined with nutritional education and a proper exercise program, a food log can be the key to weight loss success.

The most important aspect of keeping a nutrition journal is committing to logging *EVERYTHING* that you eat or drink. Your log will not be an effective tool otherwise. This means that any snack or small piece of chocolate from the office candy dish must be written down. This is how the power of accountability comes into play. You will certainly think twice about eating those impulse snacks once you have to start recording them. Additionally, when you do write them down, you will be surprised at how fast those previously unthought-of calories add up. Just becoming more mindful of the things that you eat throughout the day is an eye-opening experience.

**Revisit *Mindfulness* from Chapter 4.**

The basic components of a good nutrition log are:

- **Time:** The first part of your entry should be the time at which you are eating the food. Keeping track of when you eat your meal will be an important step towards adjusting your meal timing to increase your metabolism.
- **Specific description of the food:** The time entry should be followed by a specific description of what you ate. Writing a “turkey sandwich” is not specific enough. What kind of bread was it on? Was there any dressing? Was there cheese or bacon on it? As you can imagine, the answers to these questions can greatly affect the total calories of the sandwich.
- **Quantity:** The amount of any food you eat should be recorded to the best of your ability. When you are preparing meals at home, measuring and/or weighing your foods is a good habit to develop. This will help you to get familiar with the general portion sizes of the foods you eat regularly. As a result, you will become better at estimating the portion sizes when you are at locations where it is not feasible to measure your food.
- **Reason for eating:** This is a very vital part of keeping a nutrition log that is often neglected. People eat for a variety of reasons including stress, boredom, and habits. Analyzing your motivation for eating can be just as important as analyzing what you are eating. If you are eating outside of your scheduled meal times because you are hungry, then you may not be eating enough or the right kinds of food during the previous meal. If you are eating because you are bored or just because the food is there, then strategies need to be explored to help break those habits.

- **Calories and macronutrients:** Totaling up your calories as well as the amount of protein, carbs, and fats in your meals will give you a lot of information about your diet. Use your **Vitabot Software** to record and track your food intake. Based on your body measurements and goals, this software will give you suggestions on improving your nutrition.

In addition to your daily nutrition journal, it helps to keep an exercise journal. Keeping track of your weekly workouts can help you track your strength and endurance progression and energy expenditure. **You can utilize the Fitness Journal board on the Rugged Fitness Online Community located at [www.AreYouRugged.proboards.com](http://www.AreYouRugged.proboards.com).** Once you have a record of what calories you are taking in and how much you are expending, these variables can be adjusted to meet your fitness and weight loss goals. The last piece of the puzzle is a body weight and/or body fat percentage log. This will allow you to evaluate the success of the nutritional and exercise adjustments that have been made.

### **Using your Vitabot software**

You will find the link to the Vitabot Online Meal Planning Software in the Member Login section on the Rugged Fitness home page: [www.AreYouRugged.com](http://www.AreYouRugged.com). At this stage of the program you will be primarily be using the software to record the foods you eat and learn more about their calories and portion sizes. As you progress through this workbook, you will begin to learn how to utilize this software to prepare your meals in advance so that you can take a more proactive role in managing your food intake.



## **Nutritional Exercise 4**

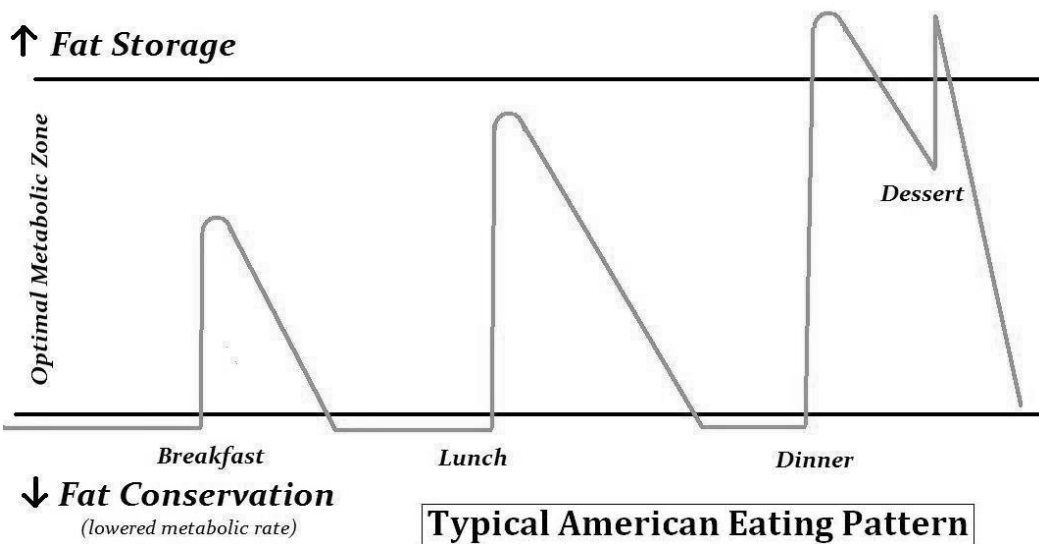
### **Meal Scheduling & Metabolism**

To maximize the metabolic aspects of your food intake you should be working towards incorporating 4-5 evenly portioned meals each day. Your first meal should be within a ½ hour of waking up and each subsequent meal should be spaced about 3-4 hours after that. This concept can seem a bit foreign since most of us have been raised around the idea that there are three meals in a day: breakfast, lunch, and dinner. If it makes you feel better, you can call the extra two meals: mid-morning and mid-afternoon snacks. However, I usually encourage people to completely throw the traditional meal titles out the window and simply call it “Meal 1”, “Meal 2”, etc. The reason for this is that the traditional meal titles carry with them certain built-in connotations. For example, breakfast suggests that there should be cereal or bagels while dinner, to most people, implies a large meal with meat and potatoes. Meal 1, on the other hand can be whatever you want it to be. I knew one woman who decided it was more convenient to eat grilled chicken and vegetables as her first meal of the day and she loved it!

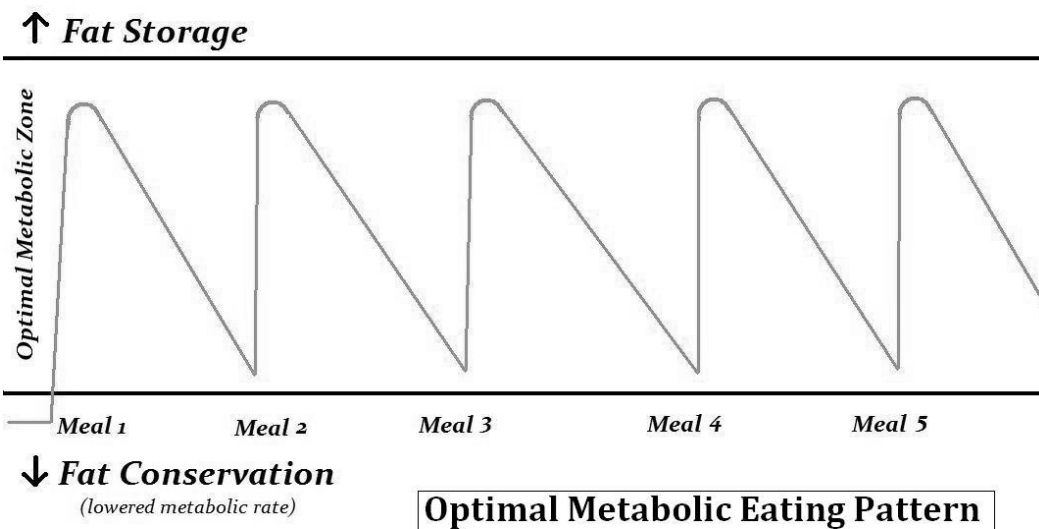


So why does eating more frequently help you to lose weight? The key to weight loss is increasing your metabolism. If your body was a furnace then your metabolism would be the fire and you want that fire burning hot all day long to consume as much fuel as possible. One of the most effective ways to increase your metabolism through nutrition is separating your daily calorie intake into several small meals evenly spaced throughout the day. If you go too long between meals, your body will slow down your energy expenditure and conserve your fat reserves. If you eat too much food in one sitting, or foods too high in sugar, you will end up storing more fat from that meal.

As you can see in the following diagram, the typical American eating pattern promotes an increase in body fat. Waiting too long after waking up to have breakfast and leaving too large of a gap between meals results in spending a large part of the day in a lowered metabolic state where fat is conserved. Then eating a large meal in the evening followed by an after dinner snack high in sugar can lead to increased fat storage.



Conversely, eating soon after waking up will help to start your metabolism earlier in the day and evenly spacing and portioning your meals throughout the rest of the day helps to keep you in the *Optimal Metabolic Zone*. This is seen in the diagram below.



Another reason that increased meal frequency will help contribute to weight loss is something called the thermic effect of food. When you eat a meal your body has to initiate the process of digestion and this process requires the use of energy. In other words, your body is burning more calories while it is digesting food. Therefore, it stands to reason that if your body has to digest more frequent meals, then the caloric expenditure of digestion for the day is increased. The types of foods you eat can also increase the thermic effect of eating. Certain fruits and vegetables, such as grapefruit and celery, are considered to be a negative calorie food. This means that your body expends more calories digesting them than it actually extracts from them. Consuming more of these fibrous foods will certainly work towards your weight loss goals.

This week's nutritional exercise is to start practicing more consistent meal timing. Planning out your meals and snacks for the day in advance is an important part of mastering meal frequency. Use what you've learned about calories in week 1 to keep your portion sizes reasonable. Start to use your Vitabot Software and the charts below to keep track of a couple of days this week.

**Goals:**  
 Calories for the day: \_\_\_\_\_  
 # of meals & snacks: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Calories per meal/snack: \_\_\_\_\_

	Time	Calories
Meal 1		
Snack		
Meal 2		
Snack		
Meal 3		
Snack		
Total Calories:		

**Goals:**  
 Calories for the day: \_\_\_\_\_  
 # of meals & snacks: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Calories per meal/snack: \_\_\_\_\_

	Time	Calories
Meal 1		
Snack		
Meal 2		
Snack		
Meal 3		
Snack		
Total Calories:		

**Goals:**  
 Calories for the day: \_\_\_\_\_  
 # of meals & snacks: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Calories per meal/snack: \_\_\_\_\_

	Time	Calories
Meal 1		
Snack		
Meal 2		
Snack		
Meal 3		
Snack		
Total Calories:		

**Goals:**  
 Calories for the day: \_\_\_\_\_  
 # of meals & snacks: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Calories per meal/snack: \_\_\_\_\_

	Time	Calories
Meal 1		
Snack		
Meal 2		
Snack		
Meal 3		
Snack		
Total Calories:		



## **Nutritional Exercise 5**

### **Calculating Healthy Meals**

Now that you have mastered how to divide your daily calorie intake over several evenly portioned meals and have practiced spacing those meals out evenly throughout the day to increase your body's metabolism, the next level of meal planning is to begin to look specifically at the macronutrient breakdown of the meals that you are eating. You don't need to be a master chef or even a registered dietitian to create an exciting healthy meal plan for yourself. All you need is a calculator, a guide to the nutritional breakdown of food, a food scale, and some creativity. Here's how you do it.

There are many different philosophies on the ideal macronutrient breakdown. The *Metabolic Typing Diet* suggests that a person's macronutrient breakdown is determined by their body type, while other programs such as *The Zone Diet* have a single breakdown of 40-30-30 for everyone. If you subscribe to the Atkin's or South Beach philosophies then carb restriction is the main focus. The most accurate way to determine the best nutrient breakdown for you is to consult with a registered dietitian. The other way is more of a trial basis. Start on a moderate plan and then adjust the breakdown as you go and see what works best for you. Often times, simply figuring out what your calorie needs are and structuring your food intake is enough to begin to see some weight loss results, especially if you focus on making healthy food choices. Try to avoid the temptation to start drastically cutting back on calories until you find the range at which your body reaches equilibrium. That means that you know how many calories will maintain your weight. After that you can begin to adjust your calorie intake to gradually lose weight. A healthy weight loss is about 1-1.5lbs per week.

For the purpose of demonstrating the calculations, I will go with a breakdown of 45% carbs, 25% fats, and 30% protein. Here are the calculations based on a 2000 calorie/day intake:

$2000 \text{ calories} / 5 \text{ meals} = 400 \text{ calories per meal}$	Let's convert that into grams:
$400 \times 0.45 = 180 \text{ calories of carbs}$	$180 / 4 = 45 \text{g of carbs}$
$400 \times 0.25 = 100 \text{ calories of fat}$	$100 / 9 = 11.1 \text{g of fat}$
$400 \times 0.3 = 120 \text{ calories of protein}$	$120 / 4 = 30 \text{g of protein}$

Now we know that we need to build 5 meals that are 400 calories each and contain 45g of carbs, 11.1g of fat, and 30g of protein. Do the same calculations for your specific calorie intake and breakdown. In the next Nutritional Exercise, we will go through the process of building a meal from these numbers.



## **Nutritional Exercise 6**

### **Building Healthy Meals**

Each of these Nutritional Exercises are designed to build off the previous one to give you a step by step guide to build a good behavioral foundation for your nutritional behaviors. In Nutritional Exercises 1 and 2, you began by educating yourself on the calorie count and macronutrient breakdown of the healthy foods you already eat. In Nutritional Exercise 3, you got a better understanding of how many calories your body burns. Then, in the Nutritional Exercise 4, you practiced scheduling meals to improve your body's metabolism, and in Nutritional Exercise 5, you began to look at the macronutrient breakdown of the foods you are currently eating. Now that you have practiced reading labels and becoming more mindful of meal timing and portioning, the next step is to put it all together and start building healthy meal templates that you can use to make eating healthy more manageable. For this exercise, you will want to invest in a good kitchen scale and measuring utensils such as measuring cups and spoons. These items will be important tools for building your meals. You won't always have to measure everything, but I encourage you to do so for as many meals as possible during this leaning phase.

Whenever I build a meal, I always look first at what my protein source is going to be. I find that the protein source will usually dictate what carbohydrates and fats will go with that meal. For example, if I'm having tuna as my protein source, the chances of having oatmeal for my carb with that meal will be slim. As you learned, protein sources can be meats, fish, soy, or in the form of whey supplement products.

**Revisit *Carbohydrates, Proteins & Fats* from *Macronutrient Basics* in Chapter 2.**

Once you've decided on your protein source, the next thing to look at is our choice of carbohydrate. When choosing your carbohydrate sources, you should look for carbs that are higher in fiber and lower in sugar such as vegetables and whole grain products. This serves a few purposes. Besides the well-publicized health benefits of fiber, it also slows down digestion so you will feel satisfied from your meal. Choosing a lower sugar carbohydrate will also ensure that you don't spike your blood sugar levels, which will lead to a crash in energy and feelings of hunger before your next scheduled meal time. Use starchy carbs sparingly and try to choose the higher fiber varieties. For example, choose brown rice over white, whole grain pasta over regular, whole or stone ground oats over instant, and sweet potatoes or yams over white potatoes.

The last part of building a meal is to look at the total fat. If your protein source is something like beef or pork, it may already satisfy much, if not all, of your fat goal for that meal. However, if your protein source is whey powder or egg whites, then you may need to add fat to complete the meal. This is another reason why we look at the protein source first. The carbs that you choose may also contain some fats, which is why we look to add fats at the end of the meal planning.

Let's build a meal using a sample meal breakdown from the 5 meal/day 2000 calorie diet we discussed in the last Nutritional Exercise. This example uses a macronutrient breakdown of 45% carbs, 25% fat, and 30% protein: 400 calories - 45g of carbs, 11.1g of fat, 30g of protein

We want to start by finding the 30g of protein so let's use cooked chicken breast. It's a nice lean meat and lasts for days in the refrigerator once it's cooked. One ounce of cooked chicken breast has

9g of protein, 1g of fat, and no carbs. That means that 3oz of chicken will put us about where we need to be for protein and give us 3g towards the fat we need. Next we can look at the carb selection. Brown rice is easy to make and will also last for a while in the refrigerator as well. 1/2 cup of brown rice has 22g of carbs, 1.5g of fat, and 2g of protein, so that will round out our protein and leave us some room to add veggies to the meal. 2 cups of mixed veggies will be about 21g of carbs, less than a gram of fat, and about 2.5g of protein. That puts us at 354 calories, 43g of carbs, 5g of fat, and 31.5g of protein, which means we are almost there. We can add 1 1/2 teaspoons of flax or olive oil to complete our meal with healthy fats. We could stop there but it would be a bit of a boring meal. Instead, we can add some Asian seasonings and we've just made a nice chicken stir-fry with brown rice that matches our target meal breakdown. Here's what the chart looks like:

2) Carb Source	Brown Rice	1/2 cup	2g	22g	1.5g	125	
	Mixed veggies	2 cup	2.5g	21g	0.5g	91	
3) Fats <i>(if needed)</i>	Olive Oil	1.5tsp	0g	0g	6g	59	
			Totals:	31g	43g	11g	412
			Target:	30g	45g	11.1g	400

Don't get caught up trying to get it exactly to the gram in each macronutrient because it will rarely be perfect. As long as you get close to the goal breakdown, you will be right on track. Use the grids below and your Vitabot Software to practice calculating some healthy meals. **If you need some suggestions, go to the Find A Meal Plan option in your Vitabot account and put your calorie and macronutrient breakdown into the program. It will then generate sample meals for you.**

	Foods	Serving Size	Protein	Carbs	Fats	Calories
1) Protein Source						
2) Carb Source						
3) Fats <i>(if needed)</i>						
			Totals:			
			Target:			

	Foods	Serving Size	Protein	Carbs	Fats	Calories
1) Protein Source						
2) Carb Source						
3) Fats <i>(if needed)</i>						
			Totals:			
			Target:			





## Nutritional Exercise 7

### Putting It All Together

So far we've covered how to figure out your estimated daily caloric expenditure, the purpose behind eating frequent small meals throughout the day, and finally how to calculate and portion your daily meals. However, at this point you're probably thinking, "I don't have time to make these meals everyday!!" Well I'll let you in on a little secret, nobody does. If you were to try to prepare each of your meals individually everyday, you would never have time to leave the house. The key to success in meal planning is to prepare food in bulk.



Every Sunday, I set aside an hour or so and I prepare food for the meals that I will be eating for the next 4-5 days. I will cook several packages of ground turkey and a family pack of chicken and put it in large containers in the refrigerator. I will do the same with steamed vegetables and baked yams. That way, before I go to bed each night or when I wake up in the morning, it only takes me minutes to measure out what I need for each of the day's meals and put it into smaller travel containers. They then go into my cooler bag and I'm out the door.

Preparing food this way also helps to cut the grocery bill. As all of you smart shoppers out there know, things always cost less when you buy in bulk, especially when it comes to meat. The family-sized package of chicken can sometimes cost over a dollar less per pound than the smaller packages. There are also often great sales at various grocery stores, which is why I recommend purchasing a freezer for your basement. When there's a good sale, I load up my freezer and I'm set until the next big sale. You can also visit the wholesale clubs such as Sam's, BJ's, or Costco. I buy things like egg whites, bagged vegetables, and almonds at these places. Not only am I saving money, but I am ensuring that I have a ready supply of all I need to get my meals done fast. Once you have built your meals on your Vitabot Software you can click the "Shopping List" link on the bottom right of your meal screen and print a list to take with you to the store.

The time that you spend once or twice a week figuring out your meal plan and preparing the components of your meals will be well worth it. This will save you loads of time during the rest of the week when you really need it, and it will allow you to establish great eating habits that will lead you to your weight loss goals.

For this Nutritional Exercise, pick the top 3-4 meals that you designed in the last exercise and prepare the components of those meals in large enough quantities to cover 3 day's worth of meals. Then practice portioning out those meals and bringing them with you for a few days. Make notes in your Nutritional Log regarding any obstacles to this process that you encounter and begin to strategize your own solutions to streamline the process.

**If you are struggling to incorporate these techniques revisit *Tools For Success* in Chapter 4.**



## **Nutritional Exercise 8**

### **Only The Beginning**

Even though this is the end of the workbook, it is just the beginning of your journey. Over the past several weeks you have been engaged in making behavioral changes moving in the direction of your 3 Month Goals. These changes require time and consistency to solidify into a true lifestyle change. As you have learned, each new change brings with it new challenges and obstacles. Some may be more difficult to maintain than others while some may come naturally.

#### **Progressions**

Some behavioral changes that you make initially are just stepping stones to aid in transitioning to other more difficult changes. In this workbook we spend a lot of time measuring and calculating your meals in order to build strong nutritional habits. This does not mean that you will have to measure everything you eat for the rest of your life. Once you become proficient in the process of portioning your meals, you will be able to do so without needing to measure and record everything. That being said, it is always good to occasionally revisit those activities as a way of recalibrating your abilities.

#### **Regressions**

Maintenance is not a static process as some people believe it to be and it is not uncommon for people to go through periods where they regress back into some old habits. The important part is to be mindful of these behavioral slides and when identified, revisit the goals and strategies that lead to the previous success. Often times these regressions occur during times of change or stress in your life and therefore you may need to develop new goals and strategies that better fit your new circumstances. For example, if your work schedule changes and begins to effect when you workout or prepare your meals, then you will need to reevaluate your free time and find new ways to reach those goals.

### ***Your Path Weekly Score Sheets***

Now that you have completed all of the Nutritional Exercises you can begin to utilize the Your Path Weekly Score Sheets. These sheets will help you keep track of the important areas of your Healthy Lifestyle. These sheets can be found at: [www.AreYouRugged.com/downloads.html](http://www.AreYouRugged.com/downloads.html)