

*Darlene Nicholson's*

# **Weight Loss Success University**

Real-Life Health and Fitness for Real People



# **4 Steps To Permanent Weight Loss**

**Secrets from a Fitness  
Industry Insider**

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**“Progress is impossible without change”**

George Bernard Shaw

## Introduction

I can't believe I'm actually writing “the” book that is going to help you achieve the level of health and fitness that you have always dreamed of. Me. Little, scrawny, sickly Darlene that was always last picked in gym class and couldn't run a block to save her life. There's power in a good story so here is mine:

I spent most of my childhood and young adult years struggling with my health. I battled severe allergies, asthma, spastic colon and irritable bowel syndrome (IBS) and low self-esteem for as long as I could remember. I grew up sickly, weak and defeated. I was told not to over-exert myself, take my medicines regularly and make the best of it. I wasn't encouraged to play outside for fear of my allergies and asthma “getting stirred up” and needless to say sports were out of the question. One year I attempted to play softball - but it's hard to want to try at something where you get made fun of regularly...so I rarely played. During my college years I was in and out of the emergency room with “tummy” complications due to my spastic colon, IBS and poor diet. I continued to battle with my health until my mid 20's. One day I got SICK AND TIRED of being SICK AND TIRED. **I had to take control and take back my life.**

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I studied food and how it affected my body. I began to make healthier choices and was blown over by the way I started to feel. I had energy, felt great and best of all my IBS and “tummy problems” just disappeared! I felt so good that I started to exercise. Me, Exercise! WOW! It wasn't easy and I had to crawl before I could walk **BUT I DID IT!** The girl who couldn't even run in gym class or do a single push up was jogging daily and lifting weights. I couldn't believe how my body was transforming before my eyes. I went from being the scrawny, sickly girl to a fit, new and improved version of me. The thing that amazed me the most was that my allergies even improved, anyone suffers from them knows how big of a statement that is! I took control of my health which eventually helped me focus more on my marriage (nearly 15 years and stronger than ever), dive deeper in my faith, gain self confidence and reach a level happiness in life I never thought possible.

Well, 9 years and 2 kids later I'm still at it. I am allergy, asthma, spastic colon and IBS FREE! I have finally found peace in my own skin and I am in the best shape of my life. I now take great pride in dedicating my time to helping others feel better and look better than ever before.

(If you want to get my entire story check out [www.healthygrocerystoretour.com](http://www.healthygrocerystoretour.com))

So are you ready for this kind of life change? Are you sick and tired of being sick and tired? Great! Let's see if you are ready to get started.

# Step 1

## GET YOUR MOTOR ROLLIN'



I have trained many people over the years. I have trained the young, old, over-weight, under-weight, athletic and sedentary. There is one key element they must have before I will even begin to train them. They must be ready and willing to change their lifestyle. You must be willing to make changes to your eating habits and exercise on a regular basis. You must be willing to cut back on certain foods and find time in your busy schedule for exercise. I can't tell you how many people expect major change for very little effort. (hence all of the fad diets and weight-loss-in-a -pill products) Sorry, but it doesn't work that way! I don't do diets! I demand that people stop the quick-fix mentality and start investing in permanent lifestyle change. Ooohhhh, I know that sounds so scary right now but I'm not talking about giving up chocolate cake and pizza for the rest of your life. I'm talking about moderation and more importantly - BALANCE. So you need to take a hard look at your life, commitment level and the importance of this change in your life. Are you ready?

## Start with the **KISS** plan...

### Keep It Simple Stupid

#### **Being healthy is NOT rocket science.**

- Educate yourself so there is no doubt in your mind about how you should be exercising and what you should be eating.
- Surround yourself with the people, places and things that will aid in your success.
- Don't overanalyze everything...JUST DO IT! Sure, you will screw up but you will learn from those mistakes.

***“But I have tried and fail so many times before.”*** Let me ask you...was it a balanced, sound program? Or was it a quick fix in a bottle, no carbs, no fat, stand on your head and basically-make-you-miserable-program?

Diet programs that make unrealistic claims and ask you to eliminate key elements of a balanced diet **DO NOT WORK!**

The key word is BALANCE!



“I know the price of success: dedication, hard work, and an unremitting devotion to the things you want to see happen.” Frank Lloyd Wright

**My program is very simple...**

### **Conceive**

Know your goals. You must know why you want to make changes and more importantly ARE YOU READY FOR CHANGE. Many of us want to lose weight and become fit but when it comes down to it, we don't want to do the work or change our lifestyle. You must have a ready mind and open heart before any positive changes can take place. We are going to talk more about these areas later.

### **Believe**

Believe you can do it! No matter how many times you have started new “diets” and “fad workouts” know that you have the ability to change. **You** are the only thing stopping you from SUCCESS. You must believe that optimal health is within your reach.

## **Achieve**

Like Nike says JUST DO IT! Do what you know you need to do for your physical health but also for your mental and spiritual health. By achieving better health you reward yourself with more energy, self-confidence, better attitude and an empowered spirit. There is no limit to what you can achieve.

### **So what do you do first?**

Let's start with four questions... I want you to write down answers and thoughts to the following on a piece of paper. We will use these notes later.



### **Am I ready to make the changes necessary to live a healthier, more active life?**

- Why are you doing this? For your health? family? someone else?
- Are you satisfied with your health, fitness level, confidence, energy level?

### **ARE YOU READY TO RUMBLE!!!!!!**

BE honest! Check all that apply to you:

- I take responsibility for the current condition of my body.
- I am ready to make the necessary healthy changes to my diet. Even if it means cutting back on my favorite fatty and high calorie foods.
- I am ready to start exercising regularly. I will find time to fit it into my busy schedule.
- I am looking permanent weight loss NOT a quick fix that only lasts a short time.

- I understand that achieving weight loss is a step towards better health. I know that all my problems will NOT magically go away when I lose the weight.
- I want to lose weight for me and my health. NOT simply because my doctor, spouse and society says so.
- I will NOT start conversations about exercise with “I can’t do that because...”.
- I WILL NOT quit because I’m not seeing results fast enough.
- I refuse to accept a life of defeat!

If you checked most of these boxes you are one step closer to wellness success. It’s really important for you to understand that this journey is going to require effort, dedication and patience. If you didn’t check most of the boxes above you may not be ready for lifestyle change. This journey is not an easy one. If you must be ready... mind, body and soul. There is no way you will make a complete transformation if you are not open to change. You will just continue on the yo-yo start-and-stop of yet another program. Search your heart. See if you can dig down deep enough this time to pull out what you need to achieve success. I know you have it in you! It’s just up to you to dig deep enough and search your spirit hard enough to make it stick this time.



### **What is my motivation?**

- What is in our future if we don’t change our unhealthy habits?
- Don’t we owe it to our family?...especially our children!

Let’s take a minute to do a really eye opening exercise.

1. Move forward to the time when your children (child) are grown. If you do not have children use another family member or friend. I want you to write their biography as if you died today. What will your child's (or other) life be like? How will it affect them if you keep on the path that you are on right now?
2. Now write the biography as if you make the changes you know you need to make. How will their life be affected if you make better choices and lifestyle changes, today!

WOW, eye opening stuff. If this doesn't put things into perspective for you I don't know what will!



### **Where do I start?**

- What are your (realistic) short-term, long-term and motivational goals?
- Make a plan using a daily log book.
- Visualize your success!
- Meditate/Pray for encouragement at moments of weakness & to regain focus.
- Educate yourself on what and how you need to eat and exercise.



### **How do I take action?**

- Don't diet! Make healthy lifestyle changes. People don't fail at diets, diets fail people!
- Find what exercise you like and make it a priority! No more excuses.
- Educate yourself on how, what and when to eat healthfully.
- Find someone who will encourage you, build you up & be firm with you (in a loving way). You need someone to hold you accountable! Hire a trainer or ask a friend... don't go it alone.
- **JUST DO IT!** No more excuses! Refuse to accept a life of defeat!

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- Read on...

So you what do you think? ARE YOU READY? Are you willing to do the things I just told you about? You know what you MUST do. Now I'm going to tell you HOW to do it!

# Step 2

## STOP THE DIET MENTALITY



**B**efore you can even think about what to eat and how to workout you need to get into your head. You see, I have watched countless people start the lifestyle change process only to quit three weeks later. There is so much more to it than eating right and working out. You **MUST** dig deep inside to find out what led to your current health status and find out what will motivate you to success. Let's start digging...

### **ASSUME RESPONSIBILITY**

You got yourself into this mess now it's up to you to get yourself out! No one forced you to gain weight or become unhealthy. Before you can go forward on this journey you must take responsibility for your actions. It's not your best friend's fault because she ordered dessert or your kids because they keep you busy running them around. You make your own choices and the sooner you realize the ball is always in your court the closer you are to weight loss success.

### **THE PAST IS THE PAST**

Yeah, you've made some poor choices in the past. All those choices have led you to the shape you're in right now. Why do we eat an entire box of Girl Scout cookies at one time? Why do we use our treadmill as a clothes line? There are many reasons for this behavior: self-pity, poor attitude, depression, lack of focus, no plan, laziness, no will-power, emotional turmoil and stress, to name a few. Sometimes there can be deep emotional scars from a childhood trauma or emotional event that needs to be addressed. Sometimes these type of pent-up emotions can prevent weight loss or lifestyle change. I recommend seeing a therapist or pastor to truly get to the heart of the matter. Leave all that old stuff behind and start clean. The new you is just around the corner.

### **EMOTIONAL EATING**

One of the biggest enemies of weight loss is Emotional Eating. That would be the action of eating an entire box of Girl Scout cookies because you are bored, stressed, had a fight with someone, etc. Most of us have done this at some time in our lives but when it happens on a daily basis it is a MAJOR problem. You need to learn to handle these moments of weakness with positive alternatives and more importantly learn to head them off before they happen. Understanding what

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triggers these events will become very important in your overall success. We will talk more about this and how to handle these moments later in this book.

### **GET YOUR ATTITUDE IN CHECK**

Another key element that could very well determine if you are successful in changing your lifestyle is YOUR ATTITUDE. People who have a positive attitude are always more successful in weight loss and life change. “I can’t” needs to change to “I will”. Self affirmation is very powerful.

Negative thinking creates self doubt, fear and discontent. Dr. John Sklare, [www.ediets.com](http://www.ediets.com) Psychologist, says “It is the very fuel that creates and sustains a negative internal environment.” Simply put, he calls this “stinkin’ thinkin’”. Change your thought and your body will follow!

Assignment: Make a list of at least five things you are going to gain from exercise and eating better. Post this list on the bathroom mirror, fridge or in your car, that way you will be constantly reminded of what you have to gain by sticking with your new healthy lifestyle.

Here’s a sample:

- I will gain more energy.
- I will have more self-confidence.
- I will lose weight and feel better overall.
- I will lower my cholesterol and/or blood pressure.
- I will lower my risk of heart disease.
- I will fit into my old jeans.
- I will be a great role model for my kids.
- I will improve my golf game.
- I will make all my friends envious!

“No one can defeat us unless we first  
defeat ourselves.

Dwight D. Eisenhower

As a trainer, I often see the “I can’t” attitude sneak into workouts. Let’s face it, we don’t like to work hard and we will find every reason to get out of exercise. I have heard all the excuses in the book.

“I have bad feet, back, legs (you name it) and I can’t exercise”

“I don’t like to sweat”.

“I have PMS today and can’t workout”.

“I had a bad day at work and can’t workout today”.

“I can’t workout in the morning, too early”.

“I can’t workout after work, too tired”. (usually the same person as “too early”)

**STOP with the excuses! Believe you have the power to succeed!**

### **GUILT**

(You DO deserve better health)

The #1 exercise excuse that I hear most often is “I can’t take any more time away from my family!” I think what that really means is, “I feel GUILTY for taking time for myself”. **YOU OWE IT TO YOUR FAMILY TO TAKE CARE OF**

**YOURSELF!** The house isn’t going to fall down, the chores will get done, the kids are not going to run away, your spouse will love the new you and you will be more productive in the end. Take time for your self and your family will thank you for it. **YOU DESERVE IT!**

“We must use time as a tool, not as a  
crutch”

John F. Kennedy

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### **NO FEAR**

I know that change is a scary thing. We fear failure (yet again), letting others down, getting out of our comfort zone and being held accountable. Sometimes the extra weight that is surrounding us is like a safety cushion. It embraces us, protects us, we can hide behind it and use it to make sure no one gets too close. We fear losing that protection because the true *us* might be exposed. I say EXPOSE IT! Let it all out! You are an incredible person who shouldn't be afraid to let your spirit soar and invite others in. Don't fear the transformation you are about to step into. Embrace the changes and use them to learn more about yourself.

### **GET REAL**

(Beware of Unrealistic Expectations)

NEWSFLASH!!!! All your problems will not be solved if you lose 30 pounds. However, the journey to get there may just change your life. Each step in your journey to better health is going to teach you about your strengths, weaknesses, educate you about proper nutrition and exercise as well as build your self-confidence. This is a journey and your weight loss and personal goals are not going to be achieved over night. It took a while to put the weight on and IT WILL take a while to get it off. You can go out and do a deprivation, no carb, weight-loss-in-a-bottle or dehydration plan and lose a bunch of water weight in a week. Problem is you are going to feel like crap and gain it back (and then some) as fast as you can say "I'm a sucker, take my money".

Listen folks, you are going to have to do things differently than before. You are going to have to invest your time and focused energy into this thing. You must fit exercise in your schedule, take extra time to grocery shop and prepare food,

commit to your workouts and get over your fear of exercise in general. Unless you are bed-ridden you can exercise. If you are in a wheelchair or cannot stand for long periods of time you can do Chair Aerobics (see your local YMCA) or seated exercises. If you have a bad back then do exercises that gradually and safely make the muscles that support the back stronger. **STOP using old injury and current fear as an excuse not to gain control of your health.**

### **EMBRACE YOUR MISTAKES**

(cause' your gonna make'em)

At some time in our lives we have all started a diet only to quit three weeks later. Stop beating yourself up and learn from these experiences. “Regret is a signal from the brain that opportunity still exists”, says Neal Roese Ph. D., author of *If Only* (Broadway Books, 2005) “Studies have shown that it can help us assess risk, find more creative solutions and confer a sense of control over life.” This is one of the reasons I encourage clients to keep a *journey journal* (more about this later). If you can see what behavior or events led up to the demise of yet another diet attempt you might be able to change those behaviors next time. Did you get sick, have something stressful happen at work, get in an argument or did you let a dinner party binge be the reason you threw in the towel. Look, we all mess up! It's how you learn from those mistakes and move forward that determines your weight loss success.

## **Stop living a life of defeat! Through knowledge comes POWER!**

### **KEEPING THE WEIGHT OFF**

Most people think that once they lose the weight they can go back to living life as before. Don't you think that if you stop exercising and eating healthfully your body

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wouldn't take notice? YIKES! The tools, skills and lifestyle you are about to learn are keepers. If you revert back to your old ways **I GUARANTEE you will regain every pound (and then some)** you worked so hard to lose. The truth is that the new you is not going to want the old lifestyle back. You are going to gain so many wonderful things by improving your health that I doubt you will ever go back to your old ways.

Be aware of triggers:

- The girl in the office who is always bringing baked goods
- Your "best friend" who pushes you to wallow in fast food misery with her
- Your over comforting parent or spouse who wants to feed the problems out of your life

See it coming and head it off at the pass!

### **EMBRACE THE NEW YOU**

You have made many changes to get you where you are now. You may be lighter, more energized, more motivated and happier than ever before. Embrace this new you. This journey may have shown you strengths in your personality that you never knew you had. Continue on your journey by involving friends and family. Together you can try new activities, exercise and recipes. Show them how far you've come and inspire them to create a healthy lifestyle of their own.

Use your newfound energy and self-confidence to gain a new friend, find a new love or put the sparks back into an old one. As a group exercise instructor, I have seen many friendships form from conversations after class. There are a couple of ladies who met in one of my classes and are getting ready to walk their first 5K race together. Both admit they never could have come this far if it weren't for the support of the other. Don't go it alone, find a workout buddy.

### **CONTINUE TO BE AWARE**

Your “old self” is going to rear its ugly head every once in a while. You need to have a plan in case you start to put on the pounds. Sometimes we get over-confident in our ability to self-monitor. Try breaking out the measuring cups every so often and checking your portions instead of eyeballing everything. Get out the journey journal and monitor your eating for a week to see if your eating is as “clean” as you think. Successful losers keep it off when they are aware of their choices and always in control.

Instead of telling yourself you “can’t” have this or that food, try finding a way to occasionally work it into your current plan. I often add an extra walk or exercise class the day before and/or after an event where I know I want to splurge. I burn off the extra calories and keep my mental attitude in check. If I didn’t do this I’m sure I would beat myself up for days and possibly slip into another splurge session. Think ahead and you can save yourself from days of regret.

### **ENJOY YOUR NEW LIFESTYLE**

You did it! Now enjoy it! Many times I see clients reach their weight loss goals only to be miserable because they expected their lives to do a 180 ° simply because they lost weight. It isn’t the scale numbers going down that brings happiness it’s the journey and what you learn along the way. It’s awesome that you lost weight but more importantly you have learned about healthy choices, digging deep into your self-confidence and willpower.

# Step 3

## **BUILD YOUR HOUSE ON A ROCK**

In the Bible there is a parable of a man that builds his house upon the sand and another who builds his house on a rock. When a storm came the man on the rock still has a house but the man who built on the sand washed away. It's the same with lifestyle change. If you just jump in and build your program without planning it out you will yet again wash away in the waves of disappointment and failure. If you take the time to set goals, plan your meals, exercise correctly and monitor your progress you are going to stand firm on that rock of success. So let's start building!



**“You seldom get what you go after  
unless you know in advance what you  
want.”**

Maurice Switzer

### **Let’s Talk About GOALS Baby!**

I have found that people who set their goal simply as “try to lose weight” usually don’t. Why? Because goals need to be S.M.A.R.T.

- Specific
- Measurable
- Achievable
- Realistic
- Time Specific

Losing weight can definitely be part of your overall goal but you also need to have small short-term goals, as well as, specific, measurable long term goals. One of the

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key things you need to do when setting goals is not to include the word “try”. It is not I will “try” to walk three times this week. It should be... I **“will”** walk three times this week and I am committed to doing so. You need to be committed to change and “try” is not being committed. Saying you “will” do what you must to make it happen, not letting anything get in your way.

I have a client that works out at 5am in order to get home, dressed, feed the kids and get them off to school before she goes to work herself. This client knows that if she waits until she gets home to “try” and workout, most likely she will not. This is the type of commitment level that you must have. Maybe you are not a 5am is not feasible so be just as committed to 6pm after work.

### **Short Term Goals**

Let’s talk about short-term goals. These are the daily or weekly goals that are extremely important to your overall success. They need to be S.M.A.R.T. and you need to write them down and post them in a place you will be constantly reminded of what your mission is. I recommend on the fridge door or bathroom mirror.

#### **Short-term goal examples:**

Week 1:

I will walk 3 times this week and drink a full glass of water with every meal

Week 2:

Continue with last weeks goals, limit myself to 1 fast food meal this week, replace all soft drinks with water.

Week 3:

Continue as above, take a fitness class, hire a personal trainer or try an at home workout video, Replace 3 high fat/calorie items on my grocery list with 3 low fat/cal alternatives. (fruit, veggies, yogurt, pretzels, etc)

Week 4:

Same as before but change all high fat meat to a lean alternative (lean beef, turkey, chicken, fish, etc) and add one serving of raw vegetable to my lunch four days this week.

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I think you get the idea. Each week you should be making a healthy change. Before long you will have weaned off the old ways and be on the way to a leaner, healthier you. If you fail to reach a goal then keep that same goal the next week until the new healthy habit is set in place.

### **Long Term Goals**

Long term goals are just as important as short term goals. Long term goals are the big picture and keep the overall focus of your mission. It is very, very important not to set yourself up for failure by setting unrealistic goals. You should not set a weight loss goal of 30 pounds in two months. If you drop that kind of rapid weight loss is dangerous and will not be permanent. Besides, if you meet your goal sooner than expected you can just create a fresh new goal to keep you motivated.

#### **Long-term goal examples:**

- I will lower my cholesterol to \_\_\_\_\_.
- I will lower my blood pressure to \_\_\_\_\_,
- I will lose \_\_\_ lbs (4-5 lbs a month is safe weight loss) by my high school reunion.
- I will lose \_\_\_% body fat (see my website for what your body fat should be)
- I will drop from a size 18 dress to a size 14 or go from a size 42 pant to a size 38.

### **Motivational Goals**

You should also set motivational goals. These goals are much less specific but are just as important as short and long-term goals. These are the things that aren't measurable to anyone but you and are the deep reasons for your desire for lifestyle change. Visualize your success!

#### **Motivational goal examples:**

- I want to be able to climb the stairs without getting out of breath.

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- I want to be able to run and play with my kids/ grandkids.
- I want to be the first one in my family to break the obesity cycle.
- I want to gain self confidence.
- I want to live pain free.
- I don't want to be embarrassed of my appearance any longer.
- I want to be able to prove to everyone that I can change.

**When you reach your goals set new ones! Always!**

### **BUILD A JOURNEY JOURNAL**

This is a very valuable tool in your lifestyle change process. This is more than just a food log, it is how you are going to understand and recognize the events, people and situations that sabotage your success. Think about it... at noon you ate a big lunch (giant salad from Applebee's) with your co-worker, 2pm and you grab a Cappuccino and hand full of Hershey Kisses. At first you may think "a salad is healthy" and "coffee isn't so bad and it's only a Kiss". When you log this meal in your Journey Journal you find that the salad ended up having more calories and fat than a Big Mac and fries. The Cappuccino (not coffee) and Kisses event happens 5 days a week costing you 1900 calories and 105 grams of fat a week! Yikes! The little stuff adds up.

The Journey Journal allows you to see what time of day you're "blow-it moments" take place and helps you recognize unhealthy patterns in your diet. I had a client that was working out like a mad woman but not seeing any major change in her weight or shape. I had her start a Journey Journal and after a week realized she was eating a huge amount of peanut butter. I had mentioned that in moderation this is a healthful snack. What she heard was "it's good for you so eat tons of it". I also found that because she was skipping breakfast it was causing her to be famished and overeat at lunchtime.

Another great benefit of logging your meals is that it creates an instant sense of accountability. It's one thing to eat a Twinkie and a whole other thing to actually have to write down that you ate a Twinkie. Chances are you won't eat it if you have to write it down. I know what you are thinking "I just won't write down the bad stuff". This attitude is the very stuff I was speaking about at the beginning of this book. **YOU ARE NOT READY FOR CHANGE** if you think this way! You need to seriously step back and re-access your motivation and commitment to lifestyle change.

The Journey Journal needs to list the following:

- the date, day of the week
- food and quantity consumed
- time of meal and who you ate with
- how you felt before and after eating
- total calories, protein, carbs and fat (optional)
- exercise type, intensity (1-10 perceived exertion scale), duration

So basically you are logging your behavior, intake and expenditure. If you break it down to the ridiculous... take in enough to keep the body functioning and burn off all the other stuff. When you take in more than your body needs the excess cannot be burned off and you become a human storage facility. Don't turn into U-Store-It, monitor your intake and burn off the excess!

### **VISUALIZE YOUR SUCCESS**

People learn in different ways: by touch, sight, hearing and doing. It's the same way when learning what works to motivate you. Some like to listen to motivating audio tapes while working out, others like to take group exercise classes so they are surrounded by people just like them who have similar goals. Others need to see pictures that remind them of where they want to be physically and that motivate

them to reach their goals. (We won't get into people who are motivated by touch...eeewww yuck!)

A great tip I learned from the Body for Life plan by Bill Philips was to surround your self with visual motivation. I bought a simple binder from the office supply store to keep my Journey Journal pages, exercise or nutritional info, my weight and body fat logs or anything else that I needed to see on a daily basis. On the front of this binder was a clear protective pocket where you can put pictures of people that motivate you, your goals, a particular reward that you will give your self if you reach your goals or quotes that inspire you. Seeing these things on a daily basis will help re-affirm where you want to be and motivate you towards lifestyle change.

**“BUT THE REFRIGERATOR IS CALLING ME...DO YOU HEAR IT?”**

You're sitting on the couch, watching tv, minding your own business and then you hear it! You try to ignore it by turning the TV up louder but it doesn't stop...there it is again! It's the fridge calling you, tempting you to eat the kids' leftover mac-n-cheese. Or maybe it's that tub of ice cream your husband insists you keep stocked in the freezer...or else. Whatever the temptation may be YOU HAVE TO BE STRONGER than it!

You need to find alternative behavior for when these moments come around. Take a walk or call a supportive friend - but most importantly...get your mind some place else. If you don't, the fridge will keep calling and calling and calling... until you cave.

There are quotes throughout this book that you can use for motivation. Write them on small pieces of paper and stash in places you look often. Here are a few more quotes:

"The secret of success is focus of purpose." *Thomas Edison*

"It's the moment you think you can't that you realize you can" *Celine Dion*

"The major quest in life is not what you are getting, but what you are becoming."  
*Dave Ramsey*

"Never eat more than you can lift" – Miss Piggy

### **SETTLE DOWN WILL YA!**

Go, go, go! That's the only language we seem to know these days. We need to get moving but we also need to know when to settle down and BE STILL. Taking time, if only 5 minutes, to pray or meditate could be the thing that puts you in the right mindset for lifestyle change. Sitting quietly and thinking about the day ahead, clearing the mind of the negative stuff from the day before and seeking guidance from God is a wonderful way to start the day. So you're not the God type? Well, I could say a lot about why you should trust in God to help you through this but let me just say, "What do you have to lose?" Prayer is not hard and there is no right or wrong. Just speak your heart.

**"You create your opportunities by asking for them"** *Patty Hensen (Chicken Soup for the Soul writer)*

# Step 4

## HEALTHY EATING FOR DUMMIES



**DIETS DON'T WORK!**

**T**here I said it! It may not be what you want to hear but ITS THE TRUTH!  
PERIOD!

I start this chapter off with this very important point because many of you are “dieters” and some of you are “lifelong dieters”. Why do you think you haven’t kept the weight off? Because... diets don’t work. They are temporary fixes that only set you up for re-gain later. You need to learn how to eat, when to eat and how much to eat. Let’s talk a little more about diets.

### **Deprivation SUCKS!**

Or maybe I should say DIETS SUCK!

Diets = Deprivation = Suffering = SUCKS! Get it?

Changing your lifestyle is a good thing and doesn’t involve suffering. You need to learn that you CAN have your favorite fatty, sinful foods every once in a while as a reward but not on a daily basis. Learn to make healthful daily choices and exercise regularly and you can have your cake and eat it too!

I remember when I was a little girl and my sisters were teenagers. I remember them dieting and talking about staying thin. I recall the all grapefruit diet, boiled egg diet and popcorn diet. I thought it was pretty funny when they got mouth sores from all the acid in the grapefruit. The things we do to ourselves! WAKE UP FOLKS! If you can’t eat that way for a lifetime don’t do it at all. You are truly wasting your time with the quick fix, weight loss in a bottle, only protein, no eating, lose weight in 24 hours joke programs. Get that way thinking out of your life and clear your mind for some truly life changing information. Let’s get going.

### **EATING WELL TO BURN MORE**

Obviously exercise is going to help you burn fat and calories but let's focus on how to eat to burn.

Small meals more often. Get away from the 2-3 large meals every day. You should be teaching your body to be a burning machine but eating smaller meals more often. Think about it...most people skip breakfast and slow their metabolism to a crawl, then eat a big lunch (often over eating because they are so starved), hit rock-bottom around mid afternoon and have a soda pick-me-up and go home to eat a big pasta meal with the family. It's all about deprivation and overload. Not eating breakfast slows the metabolism, big lunch and dinner meals are way too much food at the wrong times of day and the body can't burn off all the calories. Especially, the big pasta dinner because you will be going to sleep shortly after that meal when the body burns even fewer calories. The pasta has no where else to go other than your hips and tummy!

You need to learn to eat a moderate sized breakfast, lunch and dinner with small snacks in between. Fuel the body so it burns until you fuel it again. Think about when you have a campfire. You don't just toss a bunch of logs in the pit and throw a match in. You must nurse the fire by slowly building it up and adding a log when the other burns down. You can't add too many at once or it will smother the fire and if you don't add a log the fire will burn out. It's the same with the body, add too much food to your fire and you will over fill. Don't fuel your body and you will burn out and have no energy. Maintain a consistent fuel source for your body and it will become a burning machine.

## **BALANCE OUT EACH MEAL**

You need to have a balanced plate at meals and snacks. What I mean is that most every meal needs to have a protein, carbohydrate and fat. Your body needs both protein to repair and build lean muscle and carbs to provide energy. So having a giant bowl of pasta is not a balanced meal but having a small portion of pasta with a chicken breast is better. We are going to go into detail about Protein and Carbs a little later.

## The Fuel of Life

### **PROTEIN**

Ah, the big “P” word. There has been so much talk about protein over the last few years I don’t even know where to begin. Let’s start with...

**What is Protein?** Protein is the body’s major building material. The brain, muscles, skin, hair and connective tissue are all composed primarily of protein. Protein is also needed to complete water balance and fight foreign organisms.

Protein is needed regardless if you are walking or strength training. Each time a muscle is worked, it develops tiny tears that the body must knit back together; it’s during this mending that the muscle grows bigger and stronger. Which also means less jiggly and flabby!

Here’s a passage from an article titled *Snack on This* from [www.Prevention.com](http://www.Prevention.com). French researchers found that high-protein snacks keep you full longer and may reduce the amount you eat at your next meal.

"High-carbohydrate snacker's got hungry as quickly as subjects who had no snack at all," says study author Jeanine Louis-Sylvestre, PhD, "but protein eaters, who snacked on chicken, stayed full nearly 40 minutes longer." Since it takes longer for protein to break down, you stay satisfied longer.

So put down the crackers and grab a yogurt instead!

### **How to Calculate Your Protein Needs:**

The RDA recommends of 0.8 g/kg to 1.2-1.8 g/kg. If you exercise a lot you will want to be in the upper range. Here's how to calculate your protein needs.

1. Weight in pounds divided by 2.2 = weight in kg
2. Weight in kg x 0.8-1.8 gm/kg = protein gm.

Use a lower number if you are in good health and are sedentary. Use a higher number (between 1 and 1.8) if you are under stress, are pregnant, are recovering from an illness, or if you are involved in consistent and intense weight or endurance training.

Example: 154 lb male who is a regular exerciser and lifts weights

$$154 \text{ lbs} / 2.2 = 70 \text{ kg}$$

$$70 \text{ kg} \times 1.8 = 126 \text{ gm protein/day}$$

150 lb female who walks 1-2 times a week.

$$150 \text{ lbs} / 2.2 = 68 \text{ kg}$$

$$68 \text{ kg} \times 1.0 = 68 \text{ gm protein/day.}$$

## Protein counts

<b>Food</b>	<b>Portion Size</b>	<b>Protein (grams)</b>
<b>Milk</b>	<b>1 cup</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Cottage Cheese</b>	<b>1/2 cup</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Cheddar Cheese</b>	<b>1 ounce</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Yogurt</b>	<b>1 cup</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Egg/egg white</b>	<b>2 Large</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Tofu</b>	<b>4 ounces</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Fish</b>	<b>3 ounces*</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>Chicken</b>	<b>3 ounces*</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>Turkey</b>	<b>3 ounces*</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>Pork</b>	<b>3 ounces*</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>Beef</b>	<b>3 ounces*</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>Pasta</b>	<b>1 cup</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Rice</b>	<b>1 cup</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Corn</b>	<b>1 cup</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Beans</b>	<b>1 cup</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Bread</b>	<b>1 slice</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Peanut butter</b>	<b>1 tablespoon</b>	<b>4</b>

## CARBS

This is not a four letter word! Everything you read, hear and watch now a days says that carbs lead to obesity.

Ughh, noooooo:

- That Big Mac and fries leads to obesity....
- The fact that we sit on our butts too much leads to obesity...

Let's break it down to the ridiculous here:

Carbohydrates in the correct form are the fuel that the body needs to burn and function. Think of them as the logs for your fire. Problem is that we overeat carbs in all the wrong forms and essentially overload our bodies with too much fuel. We need to be eating fiber rich carbs in whole grains and vegetables in the correct portions.

### **FAT**

Good News! Everything you eat doesn't have to be fat free! Bad news is the fat you can have isn't what you think...or want.

### **WATER**

You don't drink enough! However much you're drinking...DOUBLE IT!

No...TRIPLE IT!

### **FIBER**

You don't get enough! I don't even know you or your eating habits but I can almost guarantee you don't get enough fiber in your diet. Fiber is essential to a healthy functioning body and is very important in weight loss. Fiber is the stuff that washed away the bad stuff. It's like Roto-Rooter for your body. Your target daily fiber intake should be around 25-35 grams. Replace refined carbs with whole grains and you will be half way there. Eat bread with 2 grams or more fiber per slice and add a bowl of a "bran-type" cereal and you could add up to 8 more grams. Rye crackers (try Wasa brand) have six times the fiber than saltines.

### **PORTION**

Supermarket

- Super Size/ Super Value packaging. These are usually too large in portion, contain more calories and encourages overeating. The only exception I can think of is lean meats, nuts and water.
- Buy single serve items such as individual fruit ice pops as opposed to a gallon of ice cream. You are way more likely to over eat ice cream when you are scooping the portion vs. an individual fruit pop that is already controlled.
- Shop the walls! Grocery stores often keep lean meats, dairy, whole grains (breads), fruits and vegetables on the walls of the store.
- Stay away from the inside isles. The inside isles are full of pre-packaged , over processed and nutritionally void foods Some examples are flavored rice and noodles, frozen meals, canned foods, pizza, junk food, snack foods and chips, snack crackers. Try eating fresh fruits and veggies , make your own pizza with fresh ingredients and load up on fresh salads.
- Have a list and stick with it! Make your list at home (don't forget it!) and don't add to it while you are there. It will keep you from throwing in stuff you shouldn't and keep you from overspending.
- Beware of the deli! Pre-made salads and sides are always made with high fat mayo and contain crazy amounts of sodium. Take a little time to make your own and you can eliminate tons of fat, calories and sodium from your diet. Deli meats can be just as frightful. If you must have lunchmeat go with lean cuts and stick with brands you trust like Healthy Choice. They are usually lower in sodium and fat than the others. If you like sandwiches I suggest you cook your own turkey or chicken, slice the meat and freeze it. You will have yummy lean meat for salads and sandwiches for weeks.

## Restaurants

We are a super-sized nation. Our portions are twice if not three times the amount they should be. I'm a firm believer that we can eat well and not feel deprived if we just eat the right portions. Here are a few tips when eating out:

- Ask for a To Go box to be delivered with your meal. Before you even take the first bite put half of your food in the To Go box. You will have a well portioned meal to eat now and another one for tomorrow. Remember, as your stomach expands, so does your appetite.
- Gain an edge on your hunger by starting with a broth-based soup, fruit, small salad (watch what you put on it!) or raw vegetables (no dip).
- Always be in control of your order. Ask for all sauces and dressings to be on the side. Opt out of buttered "white" starches and ask for double vegetables. Also ask for the vegetables to be without sauce and butter. You may have to wait a little longer for them to prepare it but it will save you many calories and fat grams in the end.
- Slow down and chew! Eating slowly will help you to feel more full and satisfied.
- If you are eating at a fast-food restaurant go for the leanest, grilled or baked item. You can also choose a kids meal. It will be a smaller portion and they now offer sliced apples and juice instead of fries and soda.
- Skip the buffet- PERIOD! If you must go to one of these "feeding troughs" I suggest you go for lean grilled or baked meat and a green salad. Make only one visit, eat slowly. My secret weapon at the buffet is to wear tight clothing! Maybe you will stop eating when you feel your belly busting out over your belt. Works for me!
- Always cut off the fat off and remove the skin of chicken before eating.

- Stay away from thick, rich sauces. The thin sauces are more broth based and probably don't have the added fat and cream. Avoid hollandaise, béarnaise, beurre blanc, or anything that resembles gravy. Red sauces are better than white.
- Order dressings on the side and use them sparingly. I like to order the dressing on the side and ask for a separate, empty bowl or cup. I pour the proper portion in the empty container and then use it on my salad. Other ideas are lemon juice, vinegar and oil or buy the little portioned packages and stick them in your purse.

### At home

Just like in restaurants portions are way too big at home also!

- Start with using smaller plates, bowls and glasses. You will be less likely to eat as much on a smaller plate.
- Never pile your plate high.
- Always plate your food (no family style) and no seconds.
- Measure food so you know what a portion looks like. Try measuring out a portion of chips and compare it to what you really eat. Oh and CEREAL...geeze...we really blow it there! Measure it! Amazing how easy it is to overeat when you are not in control!

## **Miscellaneous Must-Knows**



## Scale Weight and Weight Loss

I feel the need to stop for a minute to talk about scale weight. Ahhh, the precious scale! How can an object that sits on one of the dirtiest surfaces in our home, the bathroom floor, be the holder of all great knowledge. You laugh - but some of you step on every morning to worship “the great deceiver” and **you need to STOP!**

Scale weight is made up of three elements:

- water
- Muscle and tissues (or lean weight)
- fat

Those of you who jump on the scale every morning to worship “the de-motivating wonder” are setting yourselves up for failure. Weight can shift dramatically

overnight due to PMS and even the chips you had the night before. Water retention can make you think you are gaining or losing unfairly.

How many of you have went on a fad diet or weight loss in a bottle program and lost several pounds in the first few days or even week. That was your body shedding its water due to the extreme nature of the diet. You shed the water weight tricking you into thinking you lost fat weight only to regain all the pounds (and then some) when you returned to your regular diet and stopped taking the pills.

## **Water weight**

The slight shifts in weight within a day or two is not enough to set weight loss/gain into stone. It is losses over weeks and months that are the true measure of success. We are talking about breaking bad habits that have been bring us down for most of our lives. Scale worship is definitely one of those things that can ruin your weight loss efforts. I have seen many a client have their entire day ruined by the all mighty scale telling them they are up three pounds. Stop worshipping the scale every morning and pick one day a week to step on the scale. Don't let an object from your bathroom floor have power in your life!

Here are a few things to keep in mind regarding water retention:

- Caffeine is a diuretic that rids the body of water. For every glass of caffeine try and drink a glass of water.
- PMS can really mess with your mind. I would recommend not getting on the scale during this week.
- Supplements can make you gain or lose water. I'm not a big supporter of weight loss supplements for this very reason. You don't want temporary weight loss!

These products tend to help you get a quick weight loss fix rather than keeping it off. Usually as soon as you stop taking the product you will immediately start to gain weight back as your body replenishes its water needs. Why go through that let down? Do it right the first time.

- Stop over-salting your food! Most people salt out of habit. You have learned to do this and might actually enjoy tasting the food more if you backed off the salt. I don't know how many times I have watched people at restaurants talking to their family and just be shaking that salt over their food the whole time. Most food we get at restaurants and most pre-packaged items already have tons of salt added in. Be aware and be in control!

## **Plateaus**

During the weight loss process sometimes the body will take a break, this is called reaching a plateau. If this happens you need to kick things up a notch and get the weight loss train back on its tracks. Change your workout routine, push yourself, take a fitness class that will push you out of your comfort zone, hire a trainer, get a little more strict with your meal plan, cut back calories a little more. You don't need to do all these at once but try a couple and see if you can shock your system into losing again.

## **Metabolism**

Oh, do people like to throw this word around!

**“I have slow metabolism and that's why I can't lose weight”.**

I hear that one all the time. Truth is many people hide behind statements like this so that they can find an excuse to give why they aren't losing weight or trying to lose weight. Let's start by defining metabolism.

The American Council on Exercise defines metabolism as “The chemical and physical processes in the body that provide energy for the maintenance of life.”

Encarta® World English Dictionary, North American Edition defines metabolism as “**life-sustaining chemical activity**: the series of processes by which food is converted into the energy and products needed to sustain life.”

Food and Exercise = Energy burned to LIVE!

Metabolism is controlled by staying active, eating healthfully and LIVING WELL. So if you're sitting around and eating poorly you most likely do have a messed up metabolism. So what are you going to do about it? Are you going to be one of the “blame gamers” or are you going to start making that metabolism of yours turn into a burning machine? All I can say is BURN BABY BURN!

## **Calcium**

Some people cut out dairy foods because they think they are too high in fat and calories but this is just not true. Studies have shown women and men have lost significantly more weight when they include 1200 milligrams of calcium from dairy products and a reduced calorie eating plan.

The most exciting report showed people who added low fat calcium to their diets lost more inches in the stomach and hips. So grab a low fat yogurt and enjoy!

### **Ladies check this out!**

Researchers at Columbia University found that women who took 1,200mg of calcium per day noticed a 48% decrease in PMS symptoms.

How does calcium do this?

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<http://www.healthygrocerystoretour.com>

Calcium helps to slow the production of calcitriol, which directs fat cells and the fat burning process. In other words, calcium decreases calcitriol = less fat made = more fat burned for energy.

Can I take a calcium supplement?

Supplements work but better results have been shown to come from those who ate dairy products.

Experts recommend consuming 1200 milligrams of calcium daily or 3 servings of dairy. Please make note that the body cannot absorb more than 500-600 milligrams of calcium at one time. Here is a quick reference chart to help you get started:

<b>Food</b>	<b>Calcium (mg)</b>	<b>Calories</b>	<b>Fat</b>
Quaker Oatmeal Nutrition for Women (1pkt)	500	160	2.5
8oz. non fat yogurt	345	213	0
Kraft 2% Cheese (1oz)	400	70	4
2% Milk (1/2c)	148	65	2.5
Dannon Light and Fit Smoothie	150	80	0

Other benefits of calcium:

- Reduces risk of cancer
- Helps in blood clotting, muscle contraction, nerve transmission and formation of bones and teeth
- Fights Osteoporosis
- Aids in lowering blood pressure
- Builds strong bones

Did you know? Calcium is found in dairy but did you know it is also in kale, broccoli and Chinese cabbage.

## **Smoking**

Smoker's who increased the amount of time they exercised by 30 minutes a week while trying to quit were 30% MORE likely to be successful than those who didn't exercise, reports a Brown Medical School study of 109 people. They averaged 4 hours of exercise a week.

Obviously I don't think anyone should smoke cigarettes but if you do I have a special place in my heart for those of you who do. You see my entire family (except my mother) has smoked at one time or another. Mom, dad, sisters, nephew, grand parents, aunts and uncles all currently smoke or did so for many years. I spent most of my days at my grandparent's house while my parents worked their fingers to the bone at their factory-type jobs. My grandparents didn't have much but always found money for their beloved cigarettes. I loved grandma and grandpa with all my heart but I can honestly look back now and say they were adding to my health problems with every puff. I had horrible allergies and asthmatic problems my entire childhood and I truly believe being surrounded by the second hand smoke made a profound impact on my health. I might also add that both my grandparents died of smoking related illness and disease. The only good that came out of their deaths from this dangerous habit was that my Dad stopped smoking almost immediately after their passing.

If you want to keep smoking and have no intention on stopping please be careful not to smoke around children. The smallest amount of second hand smoke can make a huge impact in the small lungs of a child. If you have the desire to quit please seek assistance. There are many medications and aids that can help you in this journey. I also recommend looking into programs online, at local churches and community centers.

Smoking stats per American Heart Association

- 30% of cancer deaths and 87% of lung cancer deaths can be attributed to tobacco.
- Smokers who quit can expect to live approximately 10 years longer than those who continue to smoke.
- 2004 - 38,000 deaths to non-smokers from second hand smoke.

## **Alcohol**

### **SKIP HAPPY HOUR!**

I'm not here to lecture you but this is really a no-brainer. The studies go back in forth about red wine but for the most part you need to skip the alcoholic beverages. Not only does it slow your metabolism by changing the rate in which your body burns calories but it puts you in a position to make poor food choices. Alcohol demotivates and messes with your body and kills workouts!

Many studies show that 1 6oz glass of red wine can have heart healthy benefits. In my opinion, it's better to improve your heart through better eating and exercise then banking your heart health on a glass of wine. Again, don't let yourself make excuses and try to justify your unhealthy habits.

### Happy Hour can kill your diet...really!

Rum and Diet Cola (3.5oz.)	97 calories
Pina Colada (4.5oz)	245 cal
Gin and Tonic (3.5 oz.)	131 cal
Wine (3.5oz)	79 cal
Martini (3 oz)	207 cal
Light Beer (12 oz)	103 cal

## **GETTIN' DOWN TO BUSINESS**

Now you are ready to dive into your personal exercise and nutrition plan.

Yeeehhhaawwww! And YES, I said plan. You must have a plan of attack and

KNOW without a shadow of doubt that you are eating and burning to lose.

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Both exercise and proper eating must be in the picture in order to achieve better health and weight loss. You cannot do one and not the other. If you think you are only going to change your diet and not exercise or vice versa you will not be changing your lifestyle. All you are doing is putting a band-aid on a wound that needs stitches. You are still in the diet, quick-fix mentality. No one said you have to go run a marathon or never eat again. We are talking baby steps and gradual change that is “do-able” and realistic.

I realize you may need some help creating this plan so I want to point you towards one of my very best tools for teaching you exactly what to eat, how to make it tasty and most importantly how to fit it all into your life. It’s called my The Healthy Grocery Store Tour and if you truly want to make your weight battles and “dieting” a thing of the past you simply MUST get your hands on this program. Go to [www.healthygrocerystoretour.com](http://www.healthygrocerystoretour.com) and check it out.

Whatever you decide to do from this point on will determine if you spend another day feeling bad about your health and weight OR if you finally break through the wall that has kept you from the lifestyle and body you truly want. Good luck to you on this journey.

Best of Health,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Darlene Nicholson". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.