

New Year, New You Diet Success Plan



***Lower Your Weight and Elevate Your Health and Happiness
By Changing the Way You View Dieting!***

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New Year New You Diet Success Plan

Chapter 1: The Problem with Diets of the Past

It's a sad fact that most people reading this book right now are not on their first diet. Most probably aren't on their second, third or even fourth diet, either. You're probably used to the merry go round of dieting, and each year, your weight creeps up higher and higher and you're breaking the wrong sort of records.

It's not your fault unless you find out how to fix this problem and ignore the advice, choosing instead to get back on the same harmful, discouraging path you were before.

What's wrong with the diets you've previously been on? A lot.

They Concentrated Heavily on Numbers

Most diets require you to have a strong background in math to properly understand and master them. From the calorie counting to the number of pounds it's okay to lose in a week to the inches you gained in muscle and lost in fat - numbers swirling in your head can get overwhelming.

Some diets go even further than simple calories and have you performing math equations on every single meal you eat. Did you get the right number of carbs? Is the ratio of carbs to protein in the right vicinity?

What happens when you're having to be a mathematician for each meal is that you get annoyed. You don't feel like counting and dividing and comparing and crunching numbers - so you just fly by the seat of your pants, do it all wrong, and wonder why you failed.

That or you get exhausted spending 10 minutes on math when you only have a 30 minute lunch break. Your diet should be focused on your well

being and how you're feeling, not on whether or not you got your math facts right.

They Focused on Extremes

Diets in your past probably went from one end of the spectrum to the other. Elimination diets where they have an all or nothing mentality aren't feasible - and they aren't enjoyable.

You need to learn how to eat for life, not for 30 days or six months. In some diets, you have to eliminate whole food groups - sometimes surviving solely on fattening meats and foregoing healthy fruits and vegetables.

Now does that sound like a smart thing to do to your body? They're setting you up for failure because they're not doable for the long-term. If you look at a diet and start tallying up how many days you'll "have to do it" to lose a certain number of pounds, then it's not a good diet to be on.

You Develop a Diet Mindset

A diet mindset is crippling. If you become someone who is always thinking about dieting talking about dieting and planning your life around dieting, then it's not leading a pleasant life.

Life should be about enjoying the time you spend with friends and family, about relishing the time you get to indulge in your favorite hobbies, about pursuing success and satisfaction in your career.

It shouldn't be an obsession with your body's faults and how you can take drastic measures to change the way you look. It should be about pursuing things that make you feel better - habits that deliver total wellness, including mental happiness - and a diet mindset isn't what that's about.

People with a diet mindset tend to do some of the following things:

- They constantly announce their diet progress to their friends and family - what they're planning to do, what they're doing, what they did and where they failed.
- They don't realize it, but they often become critical of friends and family who aren't following the same regimen that they are - always verbally nitpicking on other people's actions to force them to change.
- They continually beat themselves up whenever they have slipups - always focusing on what they did wrong.

Instead of propping yourself up for yet another failure, and even more pounds packed onto your frame - make a commitment to change the way you diet starting this year.

Chapter 2: A Better Way to Succeed With Dieting

More than anything you just want to finally succeed. You're tired of failing and regaining even more weight than you had on you before. When New Year's day rolls around, you're probably in a good state of mind.

You've motivated yourself for this day and you're ready to fight back against obesity. You start off great and probably thrive, watching the pounds fall off for days, weeks - maybe even months if you're one of the lucky few.

But it doesn't last. There comes a day when you're done. It starts with a few slip ups along the way. That turns into you beating yourself up for being a failure, and then one day you start to believe it - you accept defeat and quit until next New Year's Day (or maybe right before summer when you have to adopt your "bikini" mindset).

Forget About a Time Span

Are you looking to lose weight for a month - right before your 20th high school reunion? Or is this something you'd like to keep off for a lifetime? We both know the answer to this question, so why are you considering diets that aren't doable forever?

Lifelong habits are what you're after. So I want you to forget about how long you'll be dieting or how long it will take you to lose the weight you want to shed. I want you to just start today being a healthier person, period.

When you take the time pressure off of yourself, it opens you up to a whole new world of success. It won't feel comfortable, though. After all, every diet has promises of "2 pounds per week" or "She lost 15 pounds" with the small print of *results not typical that you like to ignore.

And what about those goals you have on your calendar? The ones like:

- Lose the last 15 pounds of baby weight by May 15th
- Lose 30 pounds before swimsuit season
- Lose 50 pounds before my high school reunion
- Lose 100 pounds before I walk down the aisle

What about those? You've put a ton of pressure on yourself with those goals. It's okay to have them - without an end date in mind. And it's great if you do reach those goals by the date you desired.

But what if you don't? If you don't, there's a tsunami of disappointment and failure labeling coming your way. There's an extreme diet fad in your near future as the deadline looms and you're not reaching your goal fast enough.

You end up doing more harm than good - and what really matters is that you become healthier, right? Once you analyze your body physically for its health needs (and yes, that may include weight loss), then you have to adopt a total mind and body wellness approach.

Use a Total Mind and Body Approach

Dieting isn't just about your body's size. It's about fueling your body for all of its needs and it's about working on your mindset so that you are all about self care and not about wondering what others will think about you.

You need to approach dieting this New Year from head to toe, inside and out - on a physical and emotional level. This is going to be difficult for you to initially get used to, but once you do, you'll feel more powerful - and freer - than ever before.

You need to look at dietary changes that don't just help you get trim, but that help clear up your skin, help your heart function better, help you have more energy, help you get pregnant (if that's a goal), etc.

And you also need a diet that's not a diet in the traditional sense of the word. You want a way of eating. A way of feeding your body that makes it perform better for you. Something mindless that you can do without trying so hard.

Change the Word "Diet" to "Lifestyle"

The word diet can be a dirty word to some. It reminds them of being chained to a way of life that's limiting - something they dread. How about lifestyle from now on?

Instead of saying, "I can't eat that marbled steak - I'm on a diet and it has too many calories and too much fat," simply say, "Oh I like eating healthier, so I think I'll have lean chicken instead, but thanks!"

Instead of, "I have to burn 500 calories so I can have a Ho Ho today," say, "I'm going to take care of my body by giving it time to move today and increase its performance."

Chapter 3: Analyze Your Current Diet Mindset

The first thing we have to do - before you ever put a single bite of "diet food" into your mouth and before you get up off the couch and get moving - is to set your mind on the right path to success.

We have to take an honest account of where you are mentally. And it's kind of like how a doctor can look at stats going back 3 months - not just today's stats for your blood sugar levels.

You don't want to be all revved up and excited to lose weight today and trick yourself into a false sense of security that "you've got this." We have to get real and see where you've stood over the years.

Are You Going Into This Expecting to Fail?

If you have failed before, you'll probably fail again, right? Not necessarily - but with an attitude like that, your chances increase. You have to go into this New Year lifestyle plan with expectations that you'll succeed.

Not wishful thinking - that's a very different concept. This has to be something where you "see" yourself trimmer, healthier, and more energetic than ever before based on what you plan to do.

If you get on a diet plan that's too restrictive, you can look at the odds and know right away that you're not going to stay on the plan 100% of the time. When you have a slip-up, you label it as such - and once you've done it, it doesn't matter if it's small - you've "failed."

This failure label gives you permission to go off the deep end. Instead of just eating a snack sized Snicker bar, you're suddenly on a death-by-chocolate bender.

There's a big difference between a 45-calorie snack and a 1,400-calorie dessert - and the effect it has on your body - but you won't care because you're being too rigid with yourself.

If the diet said no sweets and you broke the diet law, you should punish yourself. Get rid of your attitude that doesn't allow you to eat differently from time to time - and stop labeling things as "slip-ups" or "mistakes" as you plan your diet this New Year.

Another problem when you never expect success is that inevitably, you don't work as hard at the task as you would if you expected to succeed. You might not even be able to recognize that you're doing it, either.

If I told you right now that if you pushed yourself to work up your cardio this week and stuck to a reasonable diet plan and you'd lose every pound of weight that you wanted - 100% guaranteed, you'd do it.

But instead, you might be plotting your New Year diet in a way that just has you avoiding failure for as long as you can - so you might do cardio, but not nearly as hardcore as you would if you knew you'd succeed. You might eat okay, but not do it perfectly because failure is bound to happen anyway.

Have You Announced It to the World?

Traditionally, diet experts have advised people to set a goal and announce it to the world. They claimed that it made you accountable for your efforts. This should be a good thing, but it isn't.

There are several reasons why it's a better idea to quietly make this decision to lose weight on your own - and then keep it to yourself.

Announcing your weight loss goals does put pressure on yourself - and instead of having one person beating you up (yourself), you open the door to having everyone and their grandmother comment about what you're eating, and everything they believe you're doing wrong.

Studies also show that the simple task of announcing your goals satisfies you so much emotionally that it makes you work harder on the real things that matter - the actual nutrition and exercise portion of your diet plan.

It's as if announcing it was all you needed to do. But don't forget the guilt you feel - and shame - when, after announcing it to all of your friends, family, co-workers and Facebook friends, you have to then show them what a failure you've become when you don't achieve your wild 50 pounds in 5 weeks weight loss goals.

I know you want support - that's your real reason for announcing your goals to the world. You're hoping people will cheer you on and help you get past obstacles you encounter with your eating.

And yes, part of you might even appreciate (to a certain point), the nagging that occurs when you go to your Mom's house and try loading up on some fattening dessert, only to hear "tsk tsk" from a well-meaning loved one.

But remember that this journey you're on toward better health isn't about your friends and family - it's about you. You're the only one who needs to know this, and putting pressure on your acquaintances to babysit you isn't fair to them, either.

When is it okay to let people know that you're eating healthier or dieting? When they're a source of the problem. If your grandmother bakes you 7 pies a week, it's a problem. She needs to be told not to do that.

If your co-workers try pushing you into attending an endless stream of office celebrations with sweets, then you might say something in passing such as, "No thanks, I'm cutting down on my sugar intake."

But you don't need to make a declaration of your New Year diet plans, how much weight you plan to lose, and keep a running tally on Facebook for everyone to see of every meal you ate, each time you hit the gym, and how many calories you consumed in a 24 hour period.

There's a lot of pressure to publicize your dieting, too. There are apps that will auto-Tweet your weight each week. There's another app that tells everyone on social media when you skipped a workout at the gym.

You might as well walk around with a sign around your neck that tells everyone you meet that you need their approval to be happy because you're inviting scorn, not just applause.

Do You Feel Guilt Associated with Diet Slip-Ups?

This is very common. In fact, if you're dieting and "slip up" in front of people without acknowledging your guilty feelings, people wouldn't even understand why!

Stop using words and phrases like "cheated" or "fell off the wagon." Your self-talk is the first thing you have to get under control so that you can stop feeling so negative about the choices you make.

This New Year, you should look at the long road ahead from this day to the rest of your life and realize that not every day has to be so regimented and restricted. Once you have the freedom to understand this concept, it makes it easier for you to have things that are outside your official diet plan without raking yourself over the coals for it.

That said, this doesn't mean your diet is now open so that you exist on nothing but donuts and brownies. But when you truly allow yourself to not feel food guilt anymore, you'll see how easy it is to indulge from time to time without turning it into an official (and unhealthy) binge.

Chapter 4: Evaluate Your Existing Nutritional Intake

Before you begin making nutritional changes, you have to see where you currently stand. Your goal is to identify both the habits you need to change and the habits you can feel good about keeping.

The Right and Wrong Way to Keep a Food Journal

Keeping a food journal requires two things: consistency and honesty. Without both of those, a food journal isn't going to help you replace bad habits with good ones!

You can keep a food journal on your PC, using a mobile app on your phone, or even using a traditional pen and paper approach. Some people even make video blog food journals and stick them on YouTube.

The goal is to record everything you eat and drink so that you can understand why you stall with weight loss if you reach a plateau or start gaining again. It's also supposed to keep you somewhat accountable in helping you stay on track with your diet plans.

Some people like to record everything as they eat every meal. You can record ingredients, portion sizes, caloric intake - down to the percentage of vitamins and other nutrients that the foods you eat offer.

But this can be too time consuming and daunting for many people. If your life is busy, it's okay to take a moment at the end of each day and record what you ate - as long as you don't forget about the time you went into the snack room and grabbed a croissant, or dipped into someone's candy jar on their desk.

You don't have to always keep a food diary, either. Some people like to do it forever, while others prefer to do it periodically just to help them see where their behavior is going wrong in a nutritional sense.

If you eat differently just because you're journaling, this can be a good or a bad thing. It's good if it helps you eat healthier and stick to your plan, but it's bad if the plan is so restrictive that you can't do it without monitoring yourself 24/7 like the food police.

You not only want to track your food, but the other elements that affect your nutrition. That includes where you ate - was it at the table or sitting on the couch mindlessly watching TV?

It also includes how you were feeling whenever you ate. Were you stressed and anxious (could that be why you just polished off a family sized bag of potato chips?) or were you content and eating mindlessly because you were in a comfortable mood and just wanted to feel relaxed and happy? Food diaries help pinpoint triggers for you.

Some people find that it helps to write down their food goals for the day at the beginning of each food journal entry. For example, you can jot down how many servings of grains or fruit you want to try to get into your diet.

You can even cross them off as you consume them, so that you're looking at what you do eat, rather than what you can't have. A food journal can help you figure out which foods you need help getting more of or getting less of.

A food journal won't do any good unless you go back later and actually read it. Look at your weight loss and other health factors for the week and then look back to see where the foods you ate helped or hurt the efforts.

What Are Your Portions Like?

Portions in America have gotten out of control when it comes to restaurant meals - we already knew this. But it's the same in our own homes. We put way more on our plate than we really need to fuel our bodies.

Portion recommendations differ according to your age, your weight, your gender, and whether or not you're pregnant or breastfeeding. But you still need to know a starting point to see where you currently are with portions.

It might help to go ahead and fix your plate and then measure the foods so that you can see what you've been doing. Don't measure before putting them on your plate because that doesn't tell you what you've been used to doing.

You might think you've only been eating a half a cup of mashed potatoes, but get shocked when you measure and realize it's actually been 2 1/2 cups this whole time.

Do you fill your entire plate - and if so, is it a large dinner plate? Plate sizes have grown with portion sizes in America, to help fool us into thinking we're eating a normal amount.

What about how you fill your plate? Have you noticed that the biggest portions on your plate are the meats or fats, with the grains or vegetables being the tiniest portions?

It's important to see how your plate stacks up now against the future health and wellness plate you plan to prepare in the New Year on whatever diet plan you choose to follow.

Are You a Grazer or a Fueler?

Some people snack all day long - from the time they wake up and pour their first cup of coffee to the moment they slip into bed with a little before-slugger snack. This is known as a grazer.

Grazers don't usually sit down to three square meals a day - breakfast, lunch, and dinner. Instead, they keep their bodies going all day long by snacking. The key is in knowing why you're snacking.

Strategically, this can be a helpful dietary plan - like those who eat 6 small meals a day rather than three large ones. But if you're snacking because you're stress eating, or snacking on the wrong kinds of food all day (like propping your body up with a non-stop sugar rush), then it becomes a problem.

Fuelers are different types of eaters. They fuel up with a hearty breakfast, work all morning, and stop for more nutritional fuel at lunch - doing the same at dinnertime until the day is done.

They choose not to snack in between meals. Some people prefer this because they like how it feels to eat and fill up rather than never get that specific "full" feeling that grazing lacks.

Either way, you can lose weight and feel great. The key is in choosing healthy foods that keep hunger pangs at bay, but which don't stuff you like a Thanksgiving turkey each meal.

It might be easier for you to transition from foods that aren't as nutritionally sound to foods that offer a multitude of health benefits if you keep eating on the same schedule that you always have - at least for the time being.

You might want to switch schedules after awhile if you decide to, once you're familiar with the new foods and feeling confident that you enjoy the meal plans you're working with.

Chapter 5: What Kind of Movement Is Your Body Getting?

Some people think they're more active than they really are. Along with diet, your body needs to move to maximize the benefits of your eating plan and help you get as healthy as possible.

Let's take a look at three different types of lifestyles so that you can see where you currently are - because you might be on a higher level of

activity than you realize and therefore need more calories to sustain your body's energy throughout the day.

Extreme Sedentary Lifestyles

It takes a lot to be sedentary. Most people aren't sedentary at all - they're somewhat active, going to their jobs, grocery shopping, attending their kids' sporting events or participating in family activities.

Sedentary people are known to have what's called sitting disease. That's all they do - sit. They might get up to go to the restroom, their bed, or the kitchen - but other than that, they're couch potatoes the rest of the time.

Now being home doesn't necessarily mean you're sedentary - even if you happen to sit quite a bit. If you're active around the house during the day off and on, then you get bumped up to the moderate movement category.

Try to keep a little log of the hours you spend sitting down - even if it's at a desk working in an office or from home - compared to the times when you're up moving around.

You can track a week or so, but make sure it's an average week for you - not one when you happen to have a lot going on that requires more movement than usual.

Write down what it is you like to do during your sedentary moments, too. Is it sitting and staring out the window? Reading a good book? Playing video games? Watching a good TV show or movie?

Your goal later will be to incorporate some of your favorite activities into more physical movement. For example, there are video game consoles like Kinect that require movement so you're not being sedentary at all.

Moderate Movement

The moderate movement level has a different meaning. It's all about light activity - more than sedentary, but not quite hardcore exerciser. The moderate mover doesn't always work to include exercise into their daily routine, but they happen to get physical activity throughout their day.

Or, it's possible that they lead sedentary lifestyles but do work in a small amount of exercise in their day, such as a 30-minute walk around the neighborhood after dinner.

People who fall under this category could be students in college who walk from class to class and across campus, people who work in an office setting who are constantly getting up and down out of their chairs, or workers who have jobs where they're continually moving like doctors or blue collar laborers.

When you start tracking your movement, look to see if you have 120-180 minutes of movement each week. If so, even if you're not working up a complete sweat during this time, then you fall under the moderate movement category.

Exercise Elite

The exercise elite are those who are extremely active. These people don't just get more movement throughout their day due to basic decisions like walking to deliver a message instead of emailing - they actually do that and work in an abundance of exercise that gets their hearts beating before each day is done.

The elite exercisers are those who are considered athletes. Do you regularly play a sport or participate in athletic events like marathons that you train for continually? If so, you're an active person - not moderately active or sedentary.

Some careers require you to be highly physically active. This would include a soldier, some agriculture laborers, or other industry workers. If you get

anywhere from six to 10 hours a week or more is considered extremely active.

Make a record, like you do of your nutritional intake, of how much movement you get. Not necessarily formal exercise - because all movement is good for you - but times when you're up off the couch, putting your legs and arms in motion.

Tally up the hours to see if you qualify for moderate or extreme exercise levels and then you can choose a meal plan that helps you fuel your body. The last thing you want is to cut calories to such a deficit that you weaken your energy stores and become less active and less able to lose weight effectively.

Chapter 6: What Other Health Needs Should Your Diet Assist?

There are plenty of diets to choose from, but only certain ones will help you get other health problems under control. Diets that target specific health conditions or diseases can make it easier on your body to lose the weight because the diet is focused on whole body health.

By selecting a diet that treats the whole body, you're more likely to have long term success because you'll be getting and feeling healthier as you lose weight. The focus of a diet that shows you how to eat well and get fit will be on improving your lifestyle rather than as a quick fix.

Heart Disease

A lot of people struggle with health issues that can cause heart disease. One of the symptoms of this health issue early on can be high blood pressure readings. So if you have a problem keeping your blood pressure under good control, you'll want to look for a diet that can help you with that.

One of those diets is the DASH diet. This is an acronym for Dietary Approach to Stop Hypertension and it's one of the diets that the National Institutes of Health recommends for people who have hypertension.

You can either use the regular DASH eating plan or the one that's geared toward lowered sodium meals. There are no special foods to buy - you simply eat healthy ones like fruits and vegetables, low fat dairy and lean meats.

If the DASH plan isn't what you wanted, there are other diet plans beneficial to heart disease reversal and prevention. Other diets beneficial for the heart are the TLC diet, the Ornish diet, Flexitarian diets, a vegan or vegetarian diet, and many more.

Diabetes

The DASH diet also helps people with diabetes. Another health issue you want to look at when you're searching for the right diet plan for you is your glucose control.

If you've been diagnosed with pre-diabetes or diabetes, you want that stabilized to either prevent getting full blown diabetes or getting it under control to stave off long term health affects that diabetes can sometimes cause.

You can use the DASH diet for treating diabetes as well, but another healthy diet for treating this condition is the Weight Watchers program. Weight Watchers puts an emphasis on making healthy food choices, though you're allowed to eat whatever you like.

The plan will give you well rounded meals that include healthy foods and will give you the guidelines to help you with the portion sizes as well. This plan also focuses on something that impacts diabetes - and that's exercise.

By choosing a diet plan that promotes exercising, you can bring your diabetes under control and have A1c levels within recommended ranges. If you don't want to try the DASH diet, there are others - including the Biggest Loser diet, the Engine 2 diet, the Mayo Clinic diet, the Glycemic Index diet and more.

Anti Aging

The foods that you eat can take a toll on your organs. If you eat a diet that's high in fat and red meats, not only does it show up on your skin, but it can cause cellular aging within the body, too.

Diets that can help with anti aging have one thing in common. The diet is centered on foods that are natural and will result in a safe rate of weight loss. The foods in any anti aging diet will include whole grains because fiber helps your blood vessels stay in good shape.

A diet that's rich with anti aging properties will also have fish and lean meats as the protein suggestions for your meals. Fish is rich in Omega-3 and can also assist users with maintaining cognitive skills including fighting against memory loss.

The anti-aging diet will also have you eating plenty of antioxidant bearing fruits and vegetables. Not only do you get the benefit of eating foods that help in the fight against cancer, but these foods help your eyes fight against conditions that would attack your eyesight.

Cancer Prevention

It used to be that cases of cancer were less common than they are today. Some of the reasoning behind that is because we have better early detection tests, but some of it is because more and more people rely on a diet that's loaded with foods that don't give their bodies the benefits of cancer fighting foods.

It's easy to fall into the habit of grabbing whatever is fast and convenient. But eating healthier really doesn't take any more time - it simply takes commitment and planning ahead.

The long term benefits to your body are well worth that. Look for diets that will help your body give you a boost up on cancer prevention. The American Journal of Clinical Nutrition published a story that showed the benefits of one diet against the risk of getting breast cancer.

That was the Mediterranean diet. In this diet, users avoid the saturated fats and processed foods that contain ingredients that aren't good for the body. Instead, people who follow the Mediterranean diet can help keep cancer at bay by eating foods rich in antioxidants and fish containing Omega 3.

If you're looking for a diet that will give you long term benefits, this is a good one - especially if you have a family history of certain cancers.

Inflammation

Some people struggle with inflammation. Whether it's short or long term, inflammation in the body can make you feel miserable. You want to have an eating plan that will give your body relief from inflammation.

Diets that contain sugary foods or foods that are high in saturated fats can trigger certain inflammation. If you've been struggling with any kind of inflammatory disease or you have arthritis in your joints that seems to get worse, what you're eating could be what's triggering your flare ups.

Diets that help treat inflammations are diets that suggest avoiding white foods like sugar and white flour. Vegetarian diets are good diets for people who have inflammation.

Even eating a vegetarian meal plan a few times a week can make a difference in how you feel. Select foods like whole grains, baked fish, dark leafy greens, almonds, low-fat dairy, tomatoes and beets.

All of those foods are good as part of a balanced meal to help you lose weight, but you'll notice that you feel better when you eat foods that target inflammation. One of the diets that you might want to check out if you're struggling with inflammation or arthritis is the Paleo diet.

Energy

If you seem to struggle with not having enough energy to get through the day, you'll want to look for a diet that can help to boost your energy levels. The kinds of diets that can help you to get your stamina back are diets that are loaded with high fiber foods and foods that help keep your energy level up during your waking hours.

If you're looking to boost your energy, then you need to be careful around low carb diets because carbs give you energy and the more complex the carb, the higher amount of energy it gives you as it turns the carb into fuel for your body.

If energy is a side health issue for you, then you might benefit from a diet plan that requires multiple small meals throughout the day. That helps keep your metabolism boosted so that you can function better.

Infertility

Carrying too much extra weight can make it more difficult to conceive. If you need to lose weight and you're struggling with infertility, there are diets that can help you with that health issue.

Certain foods affect your hormonal levels and can help you with ovulation. The nutrients in some foods play a role in your reproductive ability and your hormones need these nutrients in order for you to conceive.

You want a diet that's rich in green, red and yellow vegetables and you want to choose organic foods whenever possible. Eat a lot of fish and stay away from processed foods.

Get your servings of fiber because that helps your hormones get the balance that they need. A good example of a diet for infertility would be the Mediterranean diet.

Other Health Concerns

Sometimes habits we have can really do a number on our health. But there are diets that can help us stop continuing with bad habits. Smoking can be curbed through a diet and the foods in a healthy diet can help repair damage done to the body from smoking.

To stop smoking, look for a diet that offers up plenty of hard, crunchy food. Some foods that aren't good for you actually make smoking taste better while other foods, such as apples, make a cigarette taste worse.

Stress is another health issue that some dieters deal with. There are diets that can help you fight stress. These diets suggest stress fighting foods such as oatmeal, complex carbs, fruits and vegetables.

For those with allergies, eating right while dieting can sometimes be challenging. There's some truth to the saying that an apple a day keeps the doctor away. Apples are good in diets for allergies and so are red grapes. Nuts, onions and garlic can also fight allergies. Look for a diet that includes these helpful foods.

Indigestion is never fun. Normally, a diet that suggests lots of fruits and vegetables is beneficial for all users - but not for people with indigestion. If you suffer from this, you'll want to stay away from diets that are filled with acidic foods, which worsen indigestion.

Avoid citric and tomato based foods as well as coffee, garlic and spicy foods. Sometimes, you'll only need to cut them out in the evening hours, but you can enjoy them early on in the day.

If you want to leave insomnia behind, you can do it naturally through diet. There are foods that contain tryptophan, which helps you sleep. Diets high in whole grain foods, fruits and vegetables and low fat dairy products can help you stop tossing and turning.

If you want a diet that helps you heal from skin problems, diets that are heavy in fish, especially salmon, can help. Blueberries are great at correcting skin problems, too.

You want to avoid pineapples because they can cause flare-ups and so can certain spices. So diets that focus on spices as a way of preparing meals wouldn't be good for you.

Did you know that certain foods can actually trigger a headache? They can - because some foods contain tyramine and can bring on a headache. Foods containing tyramine are processed meats, beans, soups, nuts and many cheeses.

For people who deal with headaches, avoiding these foods can stop the cycle. With the exception of eating beans, a vegetarian diet can help eliminate headaches.

You never want to choose a diet plan solely based on how many pounds it can help you whittle off your body in the shortest amount of time. Instead, you want to look good and feel great!

You want longevity and good health with your new, trim figure. So it's important that you base your diet plan choice for the New Year on its health-benefiting traits according to what you need for your body.

Chapter 7: Do You Want to Officially Diet or Get Healthy?

Your first instinct is to jump on a diet plan that will crank up your metabolism and help you burn more calories than you take in so that the weight falls off. But you want the all over body and mind health benefits.

Choosing a Diet Plan That Works for You

Consider your health issues first. If you have high blood pressure and your doctor is telling you that he or she is concerned, then maybe a Weight Watcher's diet where you can eat anything as long as you control a certain number of points isn't right for you.

You need to be realistic with your health because it doesn't matter how skinny you get if you end up hospitalized due to side health factors you chose to ignore in the name of fitting into a smaller size.

Look at what's required of your schedule. If you are a completely busy person, then it might be wise for you to choose a diet that might include foods that are either pre-packaged or easy to prepare ahead of time.

If your schedule is packed, it might not be feasible for you to sit there constantly measuring and analyzing each bite you put in your mouth. On the other hand, if you work from home and have a little more time to utilize, then you might want to choose a meal plan where you can take advantage of those perks by preparing fresh foods for all of your daily meals.

Pick a diet that allows your favorite foods. If you're lucky enough to not be suffering from any additional health issues, then you might want to choose a diet that lets you consume some of your favorite foods.

For example, if you're a big meat eater, it would be cruel of you to restrict your entire diet to a vegan or vegetarian diet seven days a week. Going meatless a few times makes sense for future health reasons, but there's no reason to jump to extremes that will only make you miserable.

If budget is a concern, look for a diet that suits yours. You might really love the idea of Jenny Craig's diet plan, but finding out that the weekly meals cost as much as they do could shoot a hole in those plans.

Don't let it become an excuse for you to eat unhealthy, though. Some people complain that fruits and vegetables are too costly, but there are plenty of options that are affordable.

You can cut down on costs by not buying organic produce, by buying whole pieces instead of those that are prepackaged and already cut up and pre-washed for you, and by shopping for items that are in season.

Make Small Changes That Improve Health

Use special nutrition-friendly plates. You can buy smaller plates - and even plates that have the right portion control on them, like a space for fruits, a space for grains, a space for vegetables, and a space for protein.

Resist the urge to add salt and sugar. Your foods are already packed with plenty of salt and sugar, yet we tend to add much more because our taste buds have grown used to it.

You have to wean yourself off of extra salt and sugar. As you go through withdrawals and allow your taste buds to get back to a normal state, you'll realize that you need less and less sugar and salt - and you can taste them naturally in the foods that you buy.

Learn how to pair carbs and proteins. Carbs are good - they give you energy that you need to refuel and keep going throughout the day. But eaten by themselves, and your energy spikes and then crashes.

Instead, you should learn how to pair a carb with a filling protein that keeps you feeling satisfied for a longer period of time. For example, let's say you want some sort of bread breakfast like toast.

That's okay - but eat it with a piece of string cheese or some yogurt so that the protein works to stabilize your blood sugar and keep you from feeling hungry faster.

Don't skip meals - or should you? For a long time, the advice was that you never skip a meal - especially breakfast. It was touted as a way to rev up your metabolism and help you lose weight.

But now experts disagree. Some say that if you're not hungry - don't eat! You have to make this decision yourself based on your habits. Do you tend to skip a meal and then binge when you finally do sit down to eat? If so, then it might be a good idea to stick to traditional thinking.

Focus on what you can add to your diet, not what you have to lose. For example, try to get a rainbow of fruits and vegetables into your diet each day. Think of how you can work it into your meal plan, like this:

- Breakfast: Orange cantaloupe
- Mid-Morning Snack: Handful of blueberries
- Lunch: Raw or steamed broccoli
- Afternoon Snack: Red strawberries
- Dinner: Yellow squash

If you can work in more, do it! Try to make a list of a variety of colorful foods that you like in both the fruits and vegetable categories. Test things you haven't even tried yet, too.

Chapter 8: Natural Ways to Burn More Calories Throughout Your Day

There are many ways you can go from sedentary to moderate or even elite exercise enthusiast. You can join classes for fitness, invest in exercise equipment, and commit to regimented programs that get your moving more.

But this year, you should also be working toward increasing your average, everyday activities - because it's in this area that the efforts can truly add up and amount to better health.

Use a Pedometer

If you don't have time to get your fitness routine done every day, there's still a way that you can burn calories. There's a simple and inexpensive device you can get that can help you to knock off calories and pounds.

You can get a pedometer. Studies have shown that using a pedometer helps people on their weight loss journey because it gives them a way to see their efforts. They get to see progress daily.

By walking 10,000 steps in a day, you'll walk about 5 miles. When you have a pedometer along with a healthy diet plan, you'll lose weight steadily. The best thing about a pedometer is that you can get in your daily steps even while you're just going about your regular routine.

You'll find that you're looking for ways to add to your step count - such as parking further away from the door of the store when you have to go shopping. You can start slow if you're not used to doing anything physical and you can increase your progress a little bit each day until you're at the point where you're meeting or exceeding your daily step goal.

Experience Short Bursts of Exercise at Work

Another way that you can burn more calories can be done while you're at work. Even if you have a job that requires you to sit at a desk for most of the day, you can still get in some quick and effective moves that will help you stay fit.

You can do seated leg lifts right in your office chair. Simply lift your left leg and hold it out straight. Count to ten and then lower the leg slowly. Switch to the right leg and do the same. Alternate each leg for a few minutes to tighten those muscles.

If you have an area at work where you can be alone for a few minutes, you can knock out some pushups using either the floor or against the wall. Sit ups are good, too if you can find some space to do them in.

While you're standing at the water machine or waiting for someone at the office, you can do standing leg lifts. Stand on one leg and bend the other one at the knee so that you're raising the heel of your foot toward your rear end. Hold until the count of ten then slowly put your foot down. Repeat with the other leg.

Walking during work is a great way to exercise and you can take a brisk walk around your office area. You can also go for lunch walks. If you don't have the time to get outside at your office, walk your office building to deliver messages instead of using email.

Skip using the elevator and instead, choose to use the stairs. Each time you use the stairs, those steps add up. Get rid of your desk chair and instead, sit on a large exercise ball. Using an exercising ball helps you strengthen your abdominal muscles while you're exercising. You're also exercising your calf muscles at the same time.

You can do toe raises while you're at a desk. With the heel of your foot on the ground, lift the toes of your foot upward and hold for the count of ten. Lower your foot and switch to the other foot.

You can burn calories and get your rear in shape at the same time by squeezing your glutes. You can do this while you're waiting to go into a meeting or even get in a few quick squeezes while in the restroom.

Jumping jacks are another easy exercise that you can do at the office. You can also run in place or do walking lunges for a couple of minutes at a time several times throughout the day. A couple of minutes here and there to do these simple exercises can easily add up to a workout.

Make Cleaning a Physical Activity

Sometimes, there's just not time to get to the gym or to go for a walk because life can get busy - or maybe you'd rather do anything else than commit to a daily exercise routine. You don't want to lose the momentum you have going and there are other ways you can shed calories.

One often overlooked way of burning calories besides heading for the gym is cleaning. Whenever your body is in motion, it's burning calories. If you don't have time to exercise or you hate to exercise, then start cleaning!

The more vigorous the cleaning, the more calories you'll burn. Just sweeping the kitchen floor can burn 112 calories. If you have carpet in your home, that can be a good thing to help you burn calories because every time you vacuum, you can knock off 119 calories.

Dusting the knickknacks or the furniture can net you a burn of 85 calories. Making a bed burns 68 calories. If all you did was work for half an hour and you made your bed, dusted the room and vacuumed, you'd burn a total of 272 calories.

If it took you an hour, you'd double that number. Before you clean your bedroom, if you decide to do some laundry first, you'll burn 36.5 in calories for every 15 minutes you spend doing laundry.

When it's time to clean your floors, think about the calories you'll burn while you're getting your home in great shape. Every time you scrub the floors, you burn 258 calories for every hour.

Spring cleaning your house burns more calories and can give you the same vigorous workout you'd get if you were going hard at it on a treadmill. Doing simple chores burns calories, too - and if you hand wash the dishes instead of putting them in the dishwasher, you'll take off 78 calories.

Chores where you have to work up a sweat can really take off the calories. If you need to clean your bathroom, you'll burn 200 calories and that's every half hour you devote to it. If you live in a home that has more than one bathroom, you get to multiply that loss by the number of bathrooms you have for every half hour that you clean.

The best part about knocking off calories through cleaning your house, besides having a clean house at the end of all the chores is that it doesn't all have to be done all at once like working out at the gym does.

Instead of spending hours cleaning, you can clean in short bursts for 10-15 minutes at time throughout the day and still get the same benefit you would if you'd worked straight through.

Do Some Outside Work to Burn More Calories

Besides cleaning inside the house, doing work outside is great for getting rid of calories, too. You can take your dog for a walk around your neighborhood and depending on your weight, you can easily burn 150 calories or more for every half hour you spend walking your pet.

The things you do to make the outside of your house look nice can be a good way for you to exercise as well. Washing the outside windows of your home knocks off 102 calories in a thirty minute time span and will help make your house sparkle!

Mowing the yard is an outside activity that will burn calories fast. If you're 200 or more pounds overweight, you can burn over 276 calories for each half an hour it takes you to mow. So if you mow for an hour, you'll burn over 550 calories.

Washing your car can burn up to 204 or more calories every hour. If you like flower gardening, you can have a yard filled with pretty flowers and take off 272 calories for every hour you spend giving your home some curb appeal.

Engage in Fun Activities to Better Your Health

Burning calories doesn't all have to be chore related. Don't forget that fun activities that help you relax can also burn calories. Dancing is one of those activities. You can dance at home, with friends or in an organized group class.

However you do it, you'll be twisting and turning those calories right off. Dancing can burn 240 or more calories per half hour depending on the type of dancing that's involved. The more complex and the faster the pacing, the more calories you'll burn.

Many people enjoy roller skating - but you might not know that roller skating can easily burn 350 or more calories for every half an hour that you spend doing it. For people who like to engage in activities like kickboxing, they can burn over 480 calories every half hour they spend doing it.

If you take a kickboxing class, in one hour, you could burn 960 calories - and not only are you getting fit, but you could also be learning some helpful self-defense moves while you're at it.

Playing racquet type games such as tennis, badminton or squash can burn a lot of calories in a short amount of time. Because it's faster paced, squash burns the most, coming in at 533 calories for every half an hour spent in a game.

Tennis burns almost 400 and badminton 285. If you like to go bowling, you can take off 308 calories for every hour you spend doing it. Golf is a sport where you may not be going fast, but you can walk up to five miles if you play one round of 18 holes!

There are some days when you don't feel like doing anything outside or inside the house, even if it is fun. On days like that, if you spend half an hour playing with your children or with your pets, you can still burn calories. Playing with your children will burn 241 calories and playing with pets will burn the same amount.

Chapter 9: Check-In Milestones Throughout the Year

This year, it's important to step away from your daily check-in habit because you're turning this into a lifetime change, not an obsession. There are monthly, quarterly and semi annual or annual logs you can keep to ensure you're on the right track.

When you're on a quest to lose weight and get your body in shape for a healthier you, you want to have some milestones in place. Sometimes in enthusiasm for starting a new health journey, we can get our nutrition out of balance or we can do too much of a good thing.

Monthly Makeovers

Monthly makeovers are something that you want to schedule the time for. There are certain things you want to keep an eye on throughout the month. One of those things is your nutrition.

Sometimes you can go by the way you feel. If you start to feel tired and run down, then you might not be getting all of the nutrients you need. Check what you've been eating to make sure that you're covering all the right food groups.

If you see an area that you've been a little lax with, then you can alter your diet to get where you need to be. If you can't figure out what's lacking in your nutrition, you can get your doctor to do a simple blood test to tell you what you should add to your diet.

Remember that too much of a vitamin or mineral can potentially also have negative effects - just as too little can. That's why it's important that you check what you've been eating.

You can also tell if you're getting enough nutrients in the foods you eat by how fast you're losing weight. If you start to lose weight too fast that's a sign that you're not replacing the fuel that your body is burning.

Healthy eating always goes hand in hand with its partner - exercise. If you're not exercising enough, sometimes that will show up as a weight loss plateau. You'll just stop losing weight.

So if that's the case, you'll need to step up the output a bit. A regular exercise routine helps you lose the weight, but it also helps tone areas of your body that need toning - plus it keeps your organs healthy.

But just as what you eat is important, how much you exercise is important, too. You don't want to push your body to the extent that you're straining and spraining things in your body.

Too much exercise will cause you to lose too much weight and will send your body into a starvation mode. When that happens, your body will slow the metabolism down as part of its safety mechanism. You don't want that to happen because then a slower metabolism makes it more difficult to lose weight.

Stepping onto the scale during regular weigh ins can help show you if you're making progress in the direction you want to take. You should make sure that your weight is coming off at healthy levels - and that's at the 1-2 pounds a week that doctors recommend.

Any faster than that after the initial first week and it's too fast. When you weigh yourself, you can see how you've progressed and whether or not you need to do more to continue losing.

You shouldn't be so focused on the numbers on your scale that you get down emotional if you notice your weight stayed the same from the last weigh in or if you've gained since then.

Your weight will fluctuate according to several factors, so if you get one weigh in that isn't what you want, just stay on the path. It will change. The number on the scale isn't always the best indicator of true weight loss.

You want to pay attention to your body's measurements every month. Measure your chest area, your waist and hips to see if those numbers are going down. That - plus how your clothes fit - are usually a better indicator of weight loss than the scale.

Quarterly Milestones

As well as monthly makeovers for your weight, you also want to look at how you're doing quarterly. During the first period of a new weight loss and fitness journey, toward the end of the first quarter is when enthusiasm starts to lag.

Sometimes this can be due to being in the same exercise routine for too long. That's why it's important that you not stick with the same exercise routine. Not only can boredom be a problem, but not changing anything in your diet or exercise is what causes your weight to become stagnant.

You have to shake things up and the best time to do that is about every three months or so. Maybe the time of year has you stuck inside now and you can't get out in the fresh air and go for a run the way that you used to.

Find another set of exercises that you enjoy to take the place of running during those months. Now might be a great time to sign up for a vigorous dance class or to take some martial arts classes to shake your body up.

If you're used to exercising alone and you feel the need to make some changes in your routine and you're looking for some accountability and motivation, consider getting an exercise partner or personal trainer.

You also want to check to see what it is that your body is saying to you. Check out how your skin is looking and how your hair looks. Your diet and exercise routine should not make your skin look dry or your hair lackluster.

You shouldn't be stuck dealing with the same problem area of your body and not have noticed any changes in it by now. Sometimes you have to adjust your nutrition and physical activity to find what works for you.

In the first quarter, your body should have changed in some way. You should notice that there are inches gone from that area or that it's firmer than it was before. You also want to look at your BMI numbers to see what they are. By now, there should be a change in your BMI - even if it's not a very big change yet.

Take a look at your weight loss goals and see if you are where you wanted to be since you started your journey. Seeing progress, even in small increments, can help you stick with it for the long haul.

Remember that it's okay to make changes. What worked for you in the beginning may not work for you now. It's okay to change your diet, your routine - and your goals. The object is for you to get healthy and that's what matters.

Semi Annual or Annual Check-Ups

Getting a semi-annual or an annual check-up is very important when you're on a weight loss, get fit life change. Seeing changes on the outside

doesn't always indicate that what's going on within your body is what needs to be happening.

The only way that you can tell if everything is well inside is to get tests done at your doctor's office. He or she can run a blood panel and test to see that all of your numbers are at a good (or improving) level.

You want to get your glucose level tested. You'll want an immediate one that will tell you what it is at the time, but you'll also want an A1c - because this will tell you if your glucose levels were within range for the previous three months.

Get your cholesterol tested as well. High cholesterol should go down with the right diet. You want to make sure that you're eating the right diet that's targeting any of the health problems that you have.

Because it can be easy to get off track with the vitamin levels you need when you're dieting, it's important to ensure that your body is getting all that it needs of each vitamin and mineral.

So get your vitamin levels checked. You'll also need your blood pressure tested, which is usually customary at any doctor's visit. With diet and exercise, your blood pressure should be within the normal range.

By getting the blood panel done and having your blood pressure checked, you'll see how you've been faring. If your numbers come back and they're not within the acceptable range, that's an indicator that something isn't working.

If you know that you've been exercising faithfully, then a clue would be that your diet isn't working. Even if you've seen weight loss with the diet, that doesn't mean that it's targeting your health problems. You want the diet that does.

So if you've been on one diet for six months and you've lost inches but your glucose levels are still out of control, then it's time to switch to another

diet. Sometimes, even if a diet is outlined to help with one health issue such as the DASH diet does with hypertension, it doesn't work for certain people.

The reason is that our bodies are all different and what works for one person is not 100% guaranteed to work for another. So if you started the DASH diet to help you with your hypertension and it's not bringing your numbers down into the range that the doctor wants them to be in, then you should switch to another diet that helps with that condition such as Weight Watchers.

Weight Watchers can help lower blood pressure in some people that struggle on other diets. Each diet is unique - just like you are - so if you try one and you don't find the success that you're looking for, don't give up.

Just stop that one and try another. With all of the healthy diets that are available, you're sure to find one that will work for you. You might even want to switch up diet meal plans throughout the week!

It's perfectly acceptable to try two or even more diet meal plans. For example, you might adhere to a vegetarian diet three days a week, follow a Mediterranean diet two days, and the other two days, pursue the DASH diet or Weight Watchers if you'd like to work with that.

Chapter 10: Supplementing Your Diet Success

As you go on this wellness journey in the coming year, and you find a nutritional plan you can pursue as well as an activity schedule that agrees with you, you'll want to supplement your diet with anything that helps you succeed.

Be Careful With Actual Supplements

When you're using a diet that addresses complete health concerns, you might be put on medications to help you succeed if your doctor feels you need them. You have to be careful about what you eat or use in conjunction with them.

For example, if you're on cholesterol medication, it might be wise to avoid eating grapefruit as part of your diet. You're going to read lots of conflicting advice about supplements, too.

Even natural supplements can be touted by one professional (such as Dr. Oz promoting the use of green coffee bean extract) and discouraged by other leaders in the dietary field as dangerous.

Find out what your doctor recommends based on your health panel as well as disease history that your parents and grandparents suffered so that you prevent future issues.

Almost all experts will recommend that you try to get your nutritional value from real foods, not supplements. No one should live on a diet of diet soda, processed foods and a handful of pills each day. That's not healthy for you.

Rewards Versus Self Care

Don't forget to supplement your journey with an ample supply of nurturing and pampering for yourself along the way. It doesn't always have to be expensive items like massages or mani/pedis.

You can do little things like giving yourself extra time to relax and read a book, or using an at home face mask to spoil yourself and keep you feeling good as you make major life changes to your physical body.

Keep yourself motivated with books and blogs that inspire you and tune out of disparaging remarks on social media or news stories that tend to get you depressed.

Most years, you've probably searched for that one perfect diet that's going to melt off the pounds and have you squeezing into a size 6 dress in 24 hours. It's time to adopt a healthy way of life - something that benefits you from a total wellness point of view.

Slam the door shut on unrealistic expectations, be willing to switch things up and be unconventional when it comes to planning your meals and getting enough exercise - and never let anyone else pressure you into harming your body through extreme weight loss measures that set you up for failure.

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