

THE EAT HEALTHY YOUR WAY HANDBOOK

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Note to Newcomers

Welcome to *Eat Healthy Your Way*. Everything you need to know is in this Handbook, but you don't need to know it all at once.

If just want to begin right away, start with Chapter One: The 5 Keys to Success on page 9 and read through to the end of Chapter Three: Introduction to Effective Appetite Training (just under 10 pages). That will get you going in the right frame of mind.

It's fine to stay focused on Effective Appetite Training until you feel ready to move on. Then read Chapter Five: Program Basics.

Take in the rest of the Handbook in sips or gulps as you prefer. Enjoy!

Acknowledgement

I have to lead with is Bernard L. Madoff, he of the \$65-billion Ponzi scheme. Without him, I would never have rethought my experience with Eat Healthy in a way that could be meaningful to people today.

On December 11, 2008, my husband, Gene Wolsk, told me he had very bad news. “Bernard Madoff has been arrested,” he said, and from his tone I knew we were in serious trouble.

We didn’t fully comprehend how bad our situation was that night, but I understood I’d have to go back to work. Gene was 80 and had various health issues. During the fall of 2008, we, like the rest of those invested in the market, had watched with alarm as our non-Madoff investments dwindled by 40-percent. We’d taken the action that seemed most prudent and moved what remained into Madoff. Having been investors for 21 years, we thought of him as the most trustworthy custodian of our money. We didn’t see huge returns in up markets, but he’d never failed us when the tide turned, as it had so drastically that fall.

I remember opening the classifieds in our local newspaper, *The Easthampton Star*. Hardly any ads were listed and none that I could imagine applying for. What would I do?

Three ‘o clock the next morning it came to me. However unlikely it seemed, I was meant to put into practice what I had been thinking about for 20 years, namely how I would change Eat Healthy (the diet and nutrition workshop business I’d retired from) if I were to do it today. The answer is in this Handbook. The path to it is in the Preface: “What does a size 4 woman know about dieting?”

As much as I like to believe that things happen for a reason, I also know that some stuff just happens. But the irony for me was the very same tools that had helped me overcome a weight problem, that I espouse in Eat Healthy Your Way, are the tools that helped me start up again at 63, with no money, in the worst economy in 80 years. And underneath the fear and many frustrations was a profound sense of coming home to what I know best, and what I hope will make a significant contribution to you.

I intend to make the most of the lessons I got from this experience and to include you as a beneficiary. Here’s to the next step for all of us!

Introduction

Why another diet program?

There is a lot of good advice out there. And 87% of the people who read these pages pretty much know what they should be eating.

But there's a part no one talks about enough, the dirty little secret of dieting, the part about studies showing that **95% of dieters will regain what they've lost within 5 years.** *Keeping weight off* is where I have experience that may be invaluable to you. Much of the advice out there isn't really applicable. Dieters are told to eat sensibly, to have smaller portions and just little tastes of desserts and richer foods. But the people who can follow those suggestions aren't usually the ones with a problem. Doing what's best for your body, while logical, is often surprisingly difficult – even *after* you've been successful losing weight.

Every step of Eat Healthy Your Way is aimed at long-term change. No diet, eating plan, regimen, whatever term you want to use, will keep weight off if it isn't geared to your particular preferences and lifestyle. What's more, certain flavors are addictive, particularly those that are overly sweet, salty and fatty. The more we eat them, the more we crave them. The good news is that the opposite is equally true: **You don't crave what you don't eat.** This is the basis of Effective Appetite Training, a method for cutting cravings you'll be able to test for yourself in just days. When your taste buds adjust, you'll find a wider range of food is far more delicious.

Appetite Training and a personalized approach offer important advantages. If you don't look forward to meals and feel satisfied, you won't stay with the changes you make. But staying rooted in new behavior takes time, and there are moments when the process requires the persistence of a warrior.

The question is: Are you committed to keeping the weight off? If the answer is yes, you'll find that Eat Healthy Your Way is designed for the long haul. And, you don't have to want to lose weight to benefit from the program. All the knowhow you need for a healthier lifestyle is here.

I've helped thousands of people change their diets and lose weight. Years ago I founded and ran Eat Healthy Workshops in Manhattan. So many executives at Bloomingdale's were successful, people called it "The Bloomingdale's Diet." "The Bloomingdale's Eat Healthy Diet" became a bestseller. What I recommended then still works today. But we know far more now. And the intervening years added a perspective that allowed me to see what works over a long time span. In the following preface, you'll see how my thinking has evolved, and how I propose improving not only your appearance, but also your overall health and sense of wellbeing.

We're all becoming more aware of the consequences of a meat centered, highly processed diet, not only for our bodies, but also for the environment. Eat Healthy always

has been and still is an ecologically sound way of eating. There's no need to be meat free. But, in general, vegetables, fruits and whole grains will move to the center of your plate, with fish, poultry and meat added in smaller amounts.

You'll make these changes in your way, at your pace. The payoff is weight that stays lost, improved health and far more energy – for you, and for the planet we share.

Preface: How much can a size 4 woman know about dieting?

I was a skinny kid who turned into a well-padded adolescent. I am 5'5" and at my heaviest I weighed 150 pounds, at least that's when I stopped stepping on my scale. It might as well have been double that for all the time and attention I devoted to the problem. Everything in those years revolved around what I would or wouldn't eat.

Every morning I'd wake up and promise myself I was going to be "good." At some point during the day I'd break that promise when cravings undermined my resolve.

When I went to work in the fashion and beauty business, the pressure to be thin intensified. I became the marketing editor of Vogue magazine, worked at several top ad agencies and then held positions at Elizabeth Arden and Chanel. Your appearance, how you "packaged" yourself, was critical in those industries, especially at a time when the words "politically correct" didn't exist. Companies were more comfortable with the notion that employees in visible positions – men as well as women – should look a certain way. Career advancement was a powerful motivator, and I managed to slim down to somewhere just north or south of 125 pounds.

How I felt about myself was profoundly different at 118, which I weighed for about three weeks after a "successful" diet, than it was at 133, when I got ready for the next sure thing. I did all the popular diets then, Weight Watcher's, which taught me how to eat, Scarsdale, the grapefruit diet, various fasts, and so on. I felt I could conquer the world, or I was a spineless failure, depending on my scale.

It wasn't until I started my own business and began working in the diet industry that I took an active interest in the positive role food played in promoting good health. I worked as a consultant on diets and diet aids. I also wrote magazine articles on dieting, nutrition, and fitness for Family Circle, Ladies' Home Journal, Prevention, and Cosmopolitan. All the while, I was involved with the real experts on the subject: the dieters themselves.

I noticed that the most successful all exercised. And I was most impressed by those who had learned, as I was learning, to enjoy food rather than punish themselves with it. **They had been able to give up the idea that they were missing something because they had stopped routinely eating foods that had made them fat.** I wanted to find a streamlined way to that experience.

The seeds of Effective Appetite Training

I began to experiment. With the help of a dozen willing subjects, I designed a ten-day program to cut cravings by reintroducing people to food. I called the process Effective Appetite Training. I reasoned that if people didn't eat fruit for a few days, they'd be so happy to taste pineapple, they might stop missing chocolate. The first version of this approach was published in the Ladies' Home Journal. It worked to produce a dramatic, fast weight loss (something I've come to see as a double-edged sword) while it introduced people to a new balance of food. Sweetaholics reported that going cold turkey had been far easier than they expected, and many readers remarked on having increased energy.

I named the ten day regimen "Transition." Today, over 25 years later, that same balance of food is considered critical to the health of the planet as well as its inhabitants. The emphasis is on vegetables, fruits and whole grains (complex carbohydrates). It includes appropriate amounts of heart-healthy fat (more fat today than back then), low-fat dairy products and the right kinds of protein: beans (legumes), fish, poultry and lean meat. (Preferably wild, low-in-lead, non-endangered fish, and drug-free, humanly raised poultry and meat.) **This balance is consistent with a Mediterranean diet, which is associated with a lower incidence of heart disease, high blood pressure, stroke, diabetes, some cancers and even Alzheimer's.**

Friends of my "live lab" noticed the results, and my Eat Healthy Workshops were born. What gave the Workshop extra visibility was the effect it had on a growing number of executives at Bloomingdale's. It was also noteworthy that the program worked for a group of retailing professionals – no small feat, in an industry where twelve-hour days and frequent domestic and foreign travel are the norm. St. Martin's Press published, "The Bloomingdale's Eat Healthy Diet," and it became a bestseller.

I worked hands-on with thousands of people in Eat Healthy Workshops, and I spoke to and corresponded with many others who read my book. **Among the people who maintained their weight loss over the years, the common denominator was an ability to personalize the program and be flexible.** These two qualities were as important, long term, as exercise and a new relationship with food. I'm still in touch with people who have maintained their success for well over 20 years.

But even with that success, Appetite Training and all the benefits that were so palpable, I don't need a follow up study to know that a significant number of people eventually regained weight. I remember all too well, the sadness and frustration of not being able to intervene successfully when some people seemed unable to get back on track.

A surprising turning point.

In the 1990's, my husband, Gene Wolsk, produced an Off Broadway show called "Forever Plaid." It was a hit in New York and the game plan was to produce it in cities around the country. He would be traveling constantly. I decided to close Eat Healthy and join him. We had a great experience that not only taught me a lot about the theater, but also gave me a critical missing link in my understanding of long term weight loss.

You've heard of the shoemaker's children? Gene was not Eat Healthy's biggest success story. He was a meat guy. And, meat, well, we all know about the cholesterol and saturated fat in meat, particularly in the meat Gene craved. He'd 15, sometimes 20 pounds, but each time he'd start eating meat—just at lunch—and then he'd eventually slip back into old habits.

When I closed Eat Healthy, I felt "off duty" and stopped throwing disapproving glances his way. A friend shared a hint that made sense to Gene: she ate a protein source *or* grains at a meal. We started eating different things for dinner at home, the way we did when we ate out. Most often we'd share a vegetable and I'd opt for pasta while he'd have meat, chicken or occasionally fish.

An astonishing thing happened. Gene, who had carried 30 extra pounds his whole adult life, slowly but consistently lost weight. He also started ordering fish in restaurants out of choice. I stood by and watched in amazement.

I realized that much of what he'd learned in Eat Healthy *had* influenced him. He's eighteen years older than I, and he really did want the benefits of an improved diet. **In allowing himself to eat what he naturally craved, meat, he'd taken away the need to overeat it.** He was able to enjoy beef, in particular, on a regular basis *and* opt for healthier choices more often. I saw that my experience with the addictive nature of sweets had colored my perception of how others would behave in related, but different, situations.

Something else, something even more personal, contributed to a change in my thinking. During my Eat Healthy years, I was such an advocate for my program that the person most "sold" on it was me. I was convinced that if I ate even a small amount of certain foods, my freedom from them would be lost.

Watching the change in Gene, I decided it would be good for me to loosen up. The vehicle I chose for this experiment was nuts. Cashews have 170 calories an ounce. That's the amount in one of those foil packets we used to get with drinks on a plane before they learned we'd fly no matter what. The idea of enjoying things in moderation had always been a hard concept for me to grasp; nuts would be a challenging test.

And I was nervous about tampering with what had worked for me so successfully. Rather than feeling deprived by my discipline, I've felt free. Skipping ice cream and fried clams has let me indulge in pasta, potatoes and bread, things I really loved that were good for

me. But I had begun to imagine a more spontaneous me, someone who didn't always know what she would eat at every moment of every day.

I particularly love super-crunchy cashews. I made Gene hide them. Every once in a while I'd munch a small handful before dinner, slowly, which was hard for me, I'm a gulper. I never ate them during the day.

It didn't take me long, however to find Gene's hiding place in his office closet. We went through several cycles of guilt, confession and a new hiding place before we decided to leave the nuts in the kitchen and see what happened.

What happened was that I ate more of them. And then more. I added walnuts and almonds, which are nutritionally richer. The weird part was I didn't gain weight. I'd cut out so much sugar, empty carbs and fat, I had far more leeway than I'd imagined. In fact, it's been years now and I've slowly lost five pounds. It doesn't seem to me that I eat less of other foods, but I must.

That my experience so completely contradicted my assumptions added a critical piece to reevaluating Eat Healthy. I believe wholeheartedly in Effective Appetite Training. I believe the best way to eat for everyone without special dietary needs is Mediterranean style. But I opened up to a far wider range of possibilities under that large umbrella.

When I talked to people who did my Workshop or read my book, I started asking questions with a new focus. Not surprisingly, I heard things I'd never let in before.

In the past, I'd always assumed that those who claimed to have trained their appetites without the full 10-day Transition had never really been hooked on sweets, salty foods or fats. I started quizzing people about what they'd done instead. I thought about the way some people dive into the water and others wade in. I saw that while I had seen Transition as The Answer to cravings, it was only one effective tool. It was the most tested way to get the result but clearly not the only way.

In the original Eat Healthy Workshop, I thought of Personalization as appropriate for someone *after* they reached their goal. I now see Personalization as the first step. I see that Gene and I are typical of many long-term Eat Healthy success stories – and success stories from other programs and disciplines. **When you find a beneficial way to eat that you love, and you make exercise a routine part of your life, you are half way there.** (Sorry about that, but it's true.) The second half is living with your new lifestyle over time, preparing yourself for the inevitable pitfalls and learning to get back on track as a routine adjustment.

The reward is falling in love with food that truly enhances your life, and, importantly, the planet we all share. In addition to looking and feeling a whole lot better, you'll have more energy and enthusiasm for everything you do. That's a promise I can make with confidence.

One: Five Keys to Success

People assume losing weight is about food. They know exercise helps, but even among habitual exercisers, the emphasis is most often on finding the next new diet that will be the last. And, if your goal is simply to lose weight, limiting what you eat and upping your exercise will do the job.

But **Eat Healthy Your Way** is about *keeping weight off*. Most advice offered on that score lacks the depth to make meaningful changes over time. The five interlocking keys are designed to do just that. They work to reprogram deeply embedded behavior by linking the necessary components. Each is essential.

Key 1. EXERCISE. I'm starting with exercise because **there is no permanent weight loss, no optimum health, physical and mental, without it.** Period. Whether you choose walking, classes, the gym, cycling, swimming, dancing or any active sport you love, exercising a minimum of 4 days a week is your starting goal. Five days is better. Six, better yet.

The latest Federal guidelines suggest a base of 2.5 hours of moderate exercise a week for a healthy adult. Other authorities call for three sessions a week of aerobic exercise and two of strength training. The problem is that if you stay at three aerobic sessions, you'll always be forcing yourself to do it. Even at 4 days a week, it's a push. But if you begin to exercise aerobically 5 or 6 days a week, the effects of the endorphins you produce become addictive.

Endorphins are neurotransmitters produced in the brain that induce feelings of well-being, lessen stress and even reduce pain. They are nature's opiates and explain the fitness boom that keeps growing around the world. Even if you feel reluctant before a walk, you'll come to depend on the endorphin lift you experience after it.

I'll offer specific advice for beginners, as well as suggestions if you're exercising but not yet really hooked. If you think you have no time, the advice is meant especially for you.

Key 2. PLANNING. I know, you thought I'd give food the next slot. But planning what you're going to eat comes before eating it. **If you don't plan, you won't be prepared, and if you're not prepared, you'll eat what's available.** You need to think ahead, to use the good ideas you'll be getting here and to keep yourself open to the many other suggestions you'll come across reading, surfing the net and from friends.

The advice I offer will encompass everything from how to stock your pantry and refrigerator, to how to plan ahead when you're going to a restaurant. That doesn't mean

you'll never eat your old favorites. It does mean that with planning, you can enjoy whatever it is without paying a penalty. **Choosing when to be flexible is different from choosing what you "want" on a menu every time.**

There are now many options in supermarkets to make healthy eating affordable and easy. Local take out places are used to special requests for lighter versions of their typical fare. And while you might resist the idea of ordering a vegetable pizza, light on the cheese, once your appetite is trained, you'll be surprised at how fresh and delicious it tastes. The same is true for Chinese food that is steamed or stir-fried in less oil. You don't have to be in the kitchen if that's not your thing, but you do have to plan. Even for rebels, it's a prerequisite.

Key 3. AWARENESS. Some may find it easier to think of this key as Reprogramming. **Humans are very efficient stimulus-response machines.** Walk into a movie theater and you want popcorn; see veal Parmesan (or your favorite) on a menu and you salivate; have a fight with your boss and you head for Starbucks. Our reactions are so automatic, we don't often question them.

Tune into the voice in your head, the one that's telling you some version of: Life isn't worth living without chocolate. It promises to be good tomorrow, or to do an extra 20 minutes on the Stairmaster. That voice is an amalgam of habitual thinking and is talking to you all the time. Sometimes it's cheerleading, but often it's reinforcing the same old bad habits, over and over.

Eat Healthy Your Way includes specific tools to help you interrupt the stimulus-response patterns that interfere with success. Just starting something new disrupts habitual responses for a period; call it a beginner's honeymoon. But honeymoons don't last forever, and you need effective tools to help counteract the pull of the old.

There are tools aimed at interrupting the stimulus response of temptation and rebooting your thought process about food, and tools that use non-food related actions as a paradigm. When we override a habit in one area, the benefits spill into others. Beware: These tools can be like an exercise bike in your bedroom that turns into a clothes rack. They won't work if you don't use them.

Key 4. FLEXIBILITY. Eat Healthy Your Way lets you design your own structure. It will support *your* goals and is formed from rules. If you are wired to break rules, you may find just a few guidelines are enough.

Once you have a structure in place, you'll see how long you feel comfortable and satisfied living within it. It took me about 20 years to loosen up. My husband, Gene, became successful when he started out flexible.

Yet, from the get-go, there will be exceptions: special occasions, trips, times you're tempted to indulge. Learning to distinguish between positive flexibility and an undermining pattern is an on-going process. Whether you wait to experiment, or build in flexibility from the start, there will be times you tip too far. You'll find that certain foods and situations are "triggers" for you and others aren't. There's a balance that allows you to live enjoyably and take – and keep – weight off. After a while, you'll self-correct as naturally as you right your car when you swerve to avoid a pothole. Until one day, you might notice you haven't been self-correcting and have slipped back into old habits. You'll be surprised at what I recommend for those times.

Key 5. FOOD. Delicious food, and lots of it, is the secret to permanent weight loss and a healthier lifestyle and planet. Yes, there will be things you cut down on, and some foods you'll virtually eliminate, depending on your personal triggers. But that's not where your focus will be.

When vegetables, fruits and whole grains are plentiful, your desire for other foods lessens. Even if you aren't familiar with many whole grains now, and if fresh produce isn't your favorite supermarket aisle, you'll be surprised at the possibilities for fabulous eating. I'll encourage you to experiment with new foods, new cooking techniques, cooking in quantity to save time, and seasonal shopping to keep produce fresh and affordable.

When vegetables, fruits and whole grains are at the center of your program, you'll adjust fish, poultry and meat within healthy ranges you find satisfying. Low fat dairy options, nuts, seeds, heart healthy fats and smaller amounts of richer foods will keep you busy planning and eating. Butter, full-fat cheese and cream become condiments in cooking. You'll be amazed at how little you need to affect the flavor of a dish, especially with a trained appetite, and how often you opt for lighter fare out of choice. Richer foods are added on a basis that works for you, rather than a blanket prescription.

You'll be eating the way they do in Mediterranean countries like Italy and Greece. Yes, they eat meat, and there are very rich foods in both countries, but the natives eat small portions and use olive oil more often than butter.

I'll offer hints for those who like large meals and for those who prefer grazing, with adaptations for those in the middle. You'll also be coached in how to order in restaurants and cultivate those places that will cater to your preferences with imagination.

The overall strategy is that progress is what's important. The idea of perfection is a trap.

So, let's get started on your thinner, healthier body and all the great food that will get you there!

Two: Getting Started

In grammar school, my friends and I walked home for lunch, stopping at a small variety store for candy bars. I'd buy a Milky Way, which would be gone before we walked a block. My friend Dee would nibble one or two segments of her Hersey Bar, letting each tiny bite dissolve so they lasted until she reached home. On the way back to school, she ate a bit more and still had half a bar for later.

I kept promising myself I'd be more like Dee and make my candy last. I never did. I'm still not like her. Some of us nibble and some gobble. That's just the way it is.

I believe in the value of mindful eating and behavior modification. I've seen that people can downsize their portions, moderate between meal eating and cultivate other beneficial new habits. But the fluke of who can adopt what is unpredictable. **One size definitely does not fit all when it comes to eating.**

As much as we're all unique, however, there are ways in which we're remarkably the same. The specifics of personalizing will vary, but the process is similar for everyone.

Loose versus lost weight.

We all have a "bounce," a few pounds we yo-yo that aren't significant. You get on the scale and think you dropped or gained two pounds and wonder why. There is no why. That's your natural bounce.

But when you're dieting, you step on the scale looking for results. And over a matter of weeks, even small changes, especially paired with exercise, begin to register with a consistent lower readout.

I hate to burst your bubble, but you haven't lost those pounds. **You've loosened them.** Go back to richer food and they'll reappear quickly.

The contrary is also true. You think you've lost weight and then take a trip, or break your new routine and feel frustrated because you regain 6 pounds. These quick changes are just a bigger bounce.

Only consistency over time turns loose weight into lost weight. And only abandoning new habits over long stretches undoes the good.

Consistency doesn't mean perfection. **Consistency means trending in the right direction a good percentage of the time.** Perfection is a trap. Progress is what gets results.

Setting Goals

Let's start with weight loss. It's natural to have a number in mind. The problem is that people latch onto to it. When you decide to diet, this number then gets attached to a target date. Often the target date involves an event, a wedding or high school reunion, for example. I know this is hard: let it go. You are absolutely fine right now, this very minute, at this weight. You've been living your life and you can continue to live it just as you are.

I have no scientific evidence for what I'm about to say. I've never seen a study even remotely related to this assertion, but I can't ignore what I've seen. Bodies react to pressure and shut down. **The more you try to force a weight loss on your timetable, the less weight you'll lose.** I've often wondered if it's related to the phenomenon of infertile couples finally deciding to adopt and then getting pregnant.

Bodies have survival mechanisms that haven't caught up with modern life. When we lose weight, a primitive response is triggered that protects us by conserving energy. The best way to deal with this phenomenon is to expect it and then ignore it. If you've loosened some weight, your body will naturally plateau while it adjusts. Be patient.

If you do have a number and date in mind, here's what I want you to do: Halve the weight loss goal. Double the timeframe.

If you're hyperventilating, that's a good sign. Change unsettles us – and the old way hasn't worked.

This doesn't mean you won't lose the whole amount or that it will take you twice as long as you think. **But you have to trust your body, not your hopes and expectations.** Exercise, planning, awareness, flexibility and food are what create success. We undermine the effectiveness of those tools by imposing made-up criteria on our goals.

So, how would you feel if you lost half the weight in twice as long? You'd feel great. Truly. Especially because you'd notice a real difference in how you feel, and you'd be far more likely to maintain and increase your results.

For those who don't want to think in terms of a number, that's fine. The most effective goals are linked to your senses and the specifics of your daily life. I'll give you some examples to consider, which you can modify and expand upon to create your own.

I want...

1. To unwind at the end of the day without alcohol and/or food.
2. To find an exercise routine I truly enjoy.
3. To stop late-night eating.

4. To sit and bend without my clothes binding.
5. To have more energy throughout the day.
6. To know I'm not harming my health and the planet with food.
7. To genuinely enjoy healthier choices.
8. To set a good example for my kids.
9. To eat fewer empty calories.
10. To pay attention when my body feels full.

Choose only two or three goals that particularly resonate with you. Write them down and put them where you'll come across them, on a post-it near your computer, your mirror, or on a page in what you're reading. Occasionally, a reminder of why you decided to make these changes will be well timed.

Your Ideal Video

This is a powerful tool that can evolve and stay with you for the rest of your life. **Your Ideal Video is of you at the top of your game.** How you feel in it trumps how you look – but you look great. It doesn't have to be logical or realistic, yet it needs to be you, not your favorite movie star or athlete. For years my image was of inline skating through Central Park, though I'm a klutz on skates. I saw myself feeling strong, limber and in control of my body. These days, I see myself walking barefoot on the beach around 7 on a summer night. Even in August, when I walk the beach every day, I summon it often.

The essence of your Ideal Video is feeling positive about yourself. It has nothing to do with old style diet hints. I remember too well cutting my face out of a photograph and sticking it on the picture of a model wearing great fitting jeans. She was at least five inches taller than I was, with a totally different body type. The little head in my snapshot looked grotesque on the photo, and the whole exercise did nothing but depress me.

Instead, think of your video as message from the near future. You need to be your age and it's best if you're alone. Kids, spouses, partners, friends, even your pets, make demands sometimes. Being somewhere you love in nature is a big plus.

Take a moment now to create an image. When one comes to you, sit comfortably, close your eyes and take a few slow, deep breaths. Let your mind empty. If you have a relaxation exercise you enjoy, do it. If not, just concentrate on the breath moving in and out of your body. Notice how the inhalation fills your chest and abdomen; exhale, and observe the breath leaving your body. When you feel deeply relaxed, see your Ideal Video in vivid detail. Notice where you are, what you're wearing, the weather, the way your skin feels in the sun or shade. Is there a breeze?

Note how positively you feel, how at one with yourself. Tell yourself: **This is my core, my essence. I have everything I need right now to give this essence the body that will help it flourish.**

When you feel one with your image and are ready, just open your eyes and sit for a moment.

Seal Your Commitment

Goals define the game. Commitment is what produces results. There is no success without a strong commitment. Any and every commitment we make comes with obstacles. Just agree to drive a friend to the doctor and see what conflicts come up to prevent you.

At some point in this process – or at numerous points – you will not want to continue. Your Ideal Video will seem unattainable, or you'll forget all about it. Whether you have a history of yo-yo dieting or not, at times you're likely to confront strong emotions: anger, sadness, fear, resentment, disappointment.

You'll get various tools to help you weather those times, but you'll need to push yourself to use them. That's the nature of down moments; everything feels hopeless; why bother?

The reason why is that you have a commitment to yourself. **Doing what you don't want to do, at the very moment you most don't want to do it, is what accomplishes great things in life.** Watch champions in every field; they don't quit!

You overcome resistance all the time, with your kids, parents, spouse, friends, boss, clients and so on. If it's pouring and your dog won't go out alone, you go out with the dog. It's the nature of that commitment.

When you break your commitment, feeling bad about it is just part of the old pattern. You're playing out a well-worn cycle that it's time to stop. Something is stronger than your commitment at that moment. Be a detective, look for clues. Don't judge yourself. Just notice what's going on. **Feeling guilty doesn't make you thin.** Awareness of the pattern is what's needed. *Use* the tools you'll get to help with this inevitable part of the process.

Everyone who excels at what they do – artists, athletes, business tycoons, master teachers – has learned how to persevere when they don't want to. With a strong commitment, you can excel at changing your relationship with food.

Three: Introduction to Effective Appetite Training

You don't crave what you don't eat. That's a proposition you'll get to test for yourself. And when you discover it's true, a door opens to permanent change.

Feeling ambivalent about letting go of certain desires is understandable. You don't want to crave ice cream, but you don't exactly not want to crave it, either. Life might seem pretty bland without some sweetness in it.

Think about this process as a shift. **You do crave what you do eat.** As your diet changes, you're going to start craving some foods that aren't high on your list right now. This next week, for example, if you follow my suggestions, fresh pineapple (or mango, papaya or your favorite fruit) is going to taste far more delicious than you can anticipate at the moment. Workshop participants most often roll their eyes when I swoon over pineapple and end up as pineapple evangelists.

Yet you don't want to give up the foods you love. Learning to be flexible requires you first be free of addictions so you can more easily see which foods trigger you, and which you can eat more moderately. To begin, **give Effective Appetite Training at least a few weeks to take hold.** The rewards in taste perception will surprise you and be well worth the effort.

There is a physical basis for Appetite Training. Our taste buds are sensitive to four varieties of flavor: sweet, salty, sour, and bitter. We are especially sensitive to the last two because they warn us of harmful substances. But the more sweet and salty foods we eat, the higher the sugar and salt concentration we need to taste those flavors. Physiologists call this process adaptation. Adaptation can lead to behavior that is addictive, which is easy enough to spot with a bag of chips or cookies.

Fortunately, adaptation works both ways. When people cut down on salt, they often taste something they used to eat routinely and find it too salty. The same happens with sugar, but we're so bombarded by sweet flavors, it can take longer to perceive.

There were relevant studies conducted on rats to assess the relationship between alcohol abuse and sweet abuse. In one, rats were offered a water solution and an alcohol solution. The rats, not surprisingly, demonstrated a marked preference for the alcohol solution. Next, a progressively concentrated sweet solution was offered as an alternative to the alcohol. Soon, the rats began to prefer the sweet solution. This preference occurred in rats with a prior affinity for alcohol. Sweet flavors are powerfully addictive.

There might not be as obvious a physical basis, but some people are strongly attached to certain fats. Cheese, mayonnaise and peanut butter are common triggers that respond to Appetite Training. Cut them out completely for a while and it's easier to lower your intake.

What's reassuring is that unlike giving up cigarettes or alcohol, cutting food addictions requires no extended period of withdrawal, if it's done properly. **Substituting one food for another works surprisingly well** – especially in the beginning. It won't last forever, however, and that's when learning to be flexible becomes essential.

In my original Eat Healthy Workshop, the tool for Appetite Training was the ten-day Transition Phase, the staged reintroduction to food. You may decide to go through Transition down the road, but first I recommend you try a more gradual approach that's easier, requires less planning and works remarkably well.

For the next week:

1. Exercise at least 4 days. Exercise contributes to Appetite Training by keeping your endorphins, your natural mood enhancers, high. If exercise is already a part of every day, skip to the next point. For those who aren't exercising or haven't in a long time, or are active only 2-3 days a week, emphasizing it now is a powerful statement of your commitment to change.

Start with a walk. The main hurdle is getting dressed and going outside. Then walk for whatever period feels like some effort but not too much. Anything from 10 – 30 minutes, depending on your fitness level, is fine. If the weather is terrible, put on music at home and dance. Or, if your house has a flight of stairs, go up and down that one flight until you are slightly winded. Rest and do it again. If you're in relatively good shape, do the stairs continuously for up to 30 minutes. If it feels easy, go faster.

Better yet, now's the time to commit to joining a gym or taking a class. This is an essential step this week. Do not rob yourself.

If you already exercise but it's less often than four days a week, increase to four (if you do four, increase to five, etc.). If your routine doesn't work on the new days, walk, ride a bike, dance or do stairs. But *add* to what you're doing.

2. Cut out all artificial sweeteners. I mean *all* diet sodas, packets in your coffee or tea and any foods containing artificial sweeteners. Artificial sweeteners wreck Appetite Training. They distort the palette with a chemical taste that affects other flavors. And they keep you craving something sweet.

This is harder to think about than to do. If you use them in coffee or tea, switch to the other, or drink hot water with lemon. If you can't imagine cereal without them, heat a banana in the microwave so it will taste sweeter. Appetite Training depends on cleansing the palette. If you continue to eat sugar, you won't notice a big difference – yet. But if you follow the step below, it takes most people only few days for their taste buds to adjust. Flavors will begin to taste far more distinctive.

3. Cut out sugar and anything that resembles it. That means no honey or any of the natural sugar substitutes. This is very different advice from programs that offer “lite”

versions of desserts. But most people find it's much easier to go cold turkey than to cut down gradually, especially when an effort is made to reroute cravings in the right direction. When you eat no sweets, you'll be surprised to find how successfully fresh fruit fills the void; eat as much of it as you like, *after* the first few days (see the next paragraph). **Avoid dried fruit until further notice.** It's a concentrated source of sugar. As is fruit juice. For now no pre-sweetened tea, sweetened water or vitamin water, either. And no jelly, flavored yogurts, apple butter etc.

For the initial days, forego all fruit except for one apple a day. You can eat half in the morning and half at night. Cut it up and put it on cereal or mix it with plain yogurt and cinnamon. You'll look forward to it like a candy bar. Be sure it's a fresh, crisp one. When they're in season, you can substitute a generous cup of fresh strawberries. Bananas work well too. Whichever fruit you choose, be sure to limit yourself to one. After no other sweets all day you will really appreciate how delicious your one fruit is.

Buy a pineapple (spring for a "gold" one) and let it ripen for a few days. By the time you serve it for dessert on your 3rd day, the flavor will give you chills. Broiled bananas are another great dessert. It's fine to have other fruits after the 3rd day. But restricting yourself to **just one apple in the beginning and then rewarding yourself with the sweetness of a pineapple a few days later is a very effective way to channel cravings.**

Notice during the week whether this is easier or harder than you imagined and how often that dynamic changes. If you feel sad, angry, edgy, deprived, remind yourself that moods pass and note when the feeling does leave you. It will. The most common side effect is a feeling of irritation. It's greatly diminished by snacking on carrots or other vegetables throughout the day. Snap peas and pea pods are other Workshop favorites. **Bring baby carrots, etc, with you in a zip-lock bag.** You'll be surprised by how satisfyingly sweet and crunchy they are.

4. Drink 6-8 8oz. glasses of water a day. Drink one full glass when you wake up and 1 - 2 before each meal. The more water you drink, the better. It crowds out flavored liquids and enhances Appetite Training. It also fills you up.

Feel free to make other healthy changes, especially cutting down on processed foods. I've focused on sweets first because as long as you eat sweet flavors, the benefits of Appetite Training won't kick in. **For those who don't have a "sweet tooth," cut out the trigger category that gets you into trouble.** You still need to avoid all sweets, but because that won't mean cutting back significantly for you, add chips, cheese, bread or the food you tend to overeat most.

If you find you don't stay with this exercise, that's a valuable clue. Just follow the instructions, and take note of what you're thinking. Don't judge yourself.

It's not uncommon to feel anxiety at the prospect of denying yourself something you want. I distinctly remember a past workshop participant named Dorothy. She'd lost over

40 pounds before she admitted how she'd behaved before. "I used to stock up the house like we might be attacked. As if I wouldn't be able to get to a supermarket for months. I'd actually feel insecure – panicked, really – if I didn't have all my favorites on hand, just in case. In case of what? I wonder now." With so much food on hand, just opening a cabinet, refrigerator, or freezer door had been undermining her.

So, stock up on fresh fruit and vegetables this week. Clear out the foods you want to avoid, or put them on a higher shelf. It won't hurt your family members to reach. And, remember, this is only one week.

Four: Old Dogmas, New Facts

If you're anything like I was, this is the chapter in a diet book you're tempted to skim or skip. But there is enough confusion to make covering a few basics critical. And whether you are more swayed by nutritional science, or by those who criticize its misuse (primarily by the food industry and media), both camps come to the same conclusions: **1.) Eat more vegetables, fruits and whole grains. 2.) Eat less meat, high-fat dairy products, sugar and processed foods.**

Still, it's easy to get confused. Every week there seems to be a new study that contradicts an old one. Some raise more questions than they answer. A few years ago headlines proclaimed that low fat diets were no better than standard ones. The proof was the Women's Health Initiative, an impressively large study that appeared to show no significant difference in health outcomes between low-fat and standard diets. Buried toward the end of the many articles I read, past the point most people would get to, one discovered participants reported their own food intake, a highly unreliable measure, and that the study made no distinctions between different forms of fat. Foods containing trans fats were treated the same as those high in beneficial fats. These specifics made drawing any conclusions impossible. Featuring them would have killed the attention-getting headlines. Remember, most media, including websites, draw you in with "news," often distort facts.

To keep up with pertinent nutritional information, I highly recommend subscribing to Center for Science in the Public Interest's "Nutrition Action Newsletter." (www.cspinet.org) You'll be contributing to a valuable not-for-profit resource and each month you'll get reliable, actionable information aimed at people interested in healthy eating.

I'll keep this chapter focused on clarifying those things you need to know to realize your Ideal Video. You may learn a few things that surprise you.

Meet the Caretaker of Your Body – You. You experience life through your body. It's involved in everything you do and is central to your pleasures. Giving your body inferior fuel makes no sense. You may not even remember what real energy feels like, let alone being in peak form. This isn't a dress rehearsal. **You don't get to trade your body in for a new model when it wears out.**

Think of the amazing things your body is capable of: cooking and enjoying great food, sexual pleasure, taking you fabulous places, on foot, on a bicycle, in a car. Your body heals itself in miraculous ways without your even knowing what's going on. It includes your brain, which plans and contemplates, learns and analyses. And how do you show your appreciation?

You wouldn't put sludge in your car. Yet most of us think nothing of weighing down our bodies. Next time you run your Ideal Video, ask your body how it's feeling and what it wants. Think of yourself in partnership with the wondrous machine that houses you. Give it a say in your decisions.

People in great shape work at it. Don't fight it. Join it!

Who to trust. Epidemiologists study the health and illness of vast populations. I am most persuaded by their research demonstrating that the American diet contributes to the diseases that debilitate and kill us. Most of us eat far more meat, sugar and processed foods than cultures with traditional, plant-centered, lower protein diets. Consequently, we suffer from a significantly greater incidence of obesity, heart disease, high blood pressure, diabetes, stroke, and some forms of cancer. **In Mediterranean, Indian and Asian countries, these diseases occur far less frequently, unless, or until, those populations begin to adopt a more Western diet.**

Nutritional science is always evolving. New knowledge causes us to reexamine old assumptions, a good thing. But the food industry uses new information to sell you "enhanced" products. Consequently, the weight and healthy conscious among us go from one fad to another.

A little skepticism goes a long way in a supermarket aisle. The more blatantly a "food" claims health benefits, the more I'd advise examining the ingredients on the label. Is there a long list of incomprehensible sounding items? Watch out for foods that have additives that don't belong in them. Get your calcium from skim milk and non-fat yogurt, not orange juice. Look for foods close to the way nature packages them, vegetables, fruits and genuine whole grains. Eat the way they do in Mediterranean countries and you'll have generations of healthy people to guide your choices.

Think holistically. It's been reported that livestock production is responsible for more greenhouse gas emissions than transportation. If you care about global warming, eating less meat is as important as cutting back on fuel for your car. **As you change your**

personal diet, you're participating in a growing movement to alter the environmental consequences of our national diet.

You are what you eat, whether you are a person, animal or plant. Our industrialized food industry is having a devastating impact on all living things. The need to produce meat, poultry and vegetables in ever increasing quantities that can be hauled long distances has created a food supply engineered for qualities that actually harm us. As pesticide usage increases, the nutrients in our soil decreases, and the food chain dependent on it becomes nutritionally poorer. Along with the chemicals we're ingesting, and the hormones and antibiotics in the animals we eat, we're also getting less vitamins, minerals and micronutrients. Agribusiness grows ever more soy and corn to feed livestock and the lack of biodiversity further impoverishes our food supply. We need to wake up and recognize the cost of business as usual, both metaphorically and literally.

Moving toward a plant and whole grain centered diet is not only good for us, but is also good for the planet we inhabit. Why buy energy efficient light bulbs and insulate your home and not take steps to "green" the fuel that runs you?

So, let's clear up some issues about what constitutes high test fuel. We all know that food is composed of fat, carbohydrate, and protein, and that all three play a role in a proper diet. It's the balance of the three that causes confusion as well as the balance within the three.

FAT. We need fat in our bodies to metabolize certain vitamins, to cushion our vital organs, and to provide insulation, which helps us maintain a constant body temperature, winter and summer. In addition, recent research suggests that beneficial fats, particularly omega-3 fatty acids, play a significant role in both our physical and mental health, including memory. Some scientists believe that our current industrialized diet has upset the natural balance between omega-3 and omega-6 fatty acids, and this imbalance is contributing to heart disease, diabetes and certain forms of cancer. Again, **epidemiological evidence suggests that populations with high omega-3 intake have significantly lower rates of the most common Western diseases.** Clinical studies indicate that increased levels of omega 3's may reduce the risk of a heart attack by as much as 30-percent.

The richest sources of omega-3's are cold water fishes, particularly salmon, mackerel and sardines (fresh and canned). Walnuts and flax seeds are also excellent sources. Other fatty fishes, nuts and many oils supply additional amounts.

As I write about healthy fats, it strikes me how much has changed in the last 20 years. When I started Eat Healthy and wrote *The Bloomingdale's Eat Healthy Diet*, extremely low fat diets were considered by many to offer the most hope against degenerative diseases. I used to tell people to aim at a 15-percent fat level in the hopes of achieving one between 20 – 30-percent. Now my recommendations are far more about recognizing the different kinds of fat. Optimum health requires we pay attention to eating enough omega 3-rich foods. In addition, **the best fats for cooking are monounsaturated, like olive, peanut, canola and grapeseed oil.** Nut oils also contain nutritional value. It's the

saturated fat in meat and dairy products – and in two vegetable oils, coconut and palm kernel – that need to be limited. Also limit corn oil, long a staple in most kitchens, because it contains higher than desirable levels of omega-6. **Partially hydrogenated fats, or trans fats, which are used to extend the shelf life of many processed foods, should be completely avoided.**

For those who like butter and cream, it's helpful to think of them as a condiment to flavor a dish. Use healthy oils for cooking. Dip bread in olive oil and learn to eat it plain. Convert to light versions of butter, mayonnaise, sour cream and cream cheese. And use even those sparingly. Appetite Training will help you scale down. And the "Program Basics" chapter will offer more advice.

Still, all fats, are 9 calories a gram versus 4 per gram for carbohydrates and proteins. **If you want to lose weight, cutting down on fat – especially the wrong kinds –will help you achieve your goal.** No one suggests that excess fat of any kind is desirable.

PROTEIN. All living things depend on protein and require it to grow. Every cell in your body contains it. The problem with protein comes from a widespread misconception that we need a lot of it. **People worry about whether they're getting "enough" protein. In fact, you're probably getting more than you need or than is good for you.** All you need, day to day, is to replace the small amounts that are lost in the process of living. The RDA (Recommended Daily Allowance) for protein is, on average, 50 grams per day for adult women and 63 grams per day for adult men. Low-fat dairy products, grains, and many vegetables contain generous amounts of protein. So you need only 1 – 2 servings a day (3 - 4 ounces each) of legumes, fish, poultry, or lean meat to supply the rest.

Most Americans get too much protein. They buy protein bars and protein powders to put in smoothies. After your body takes what it needs, it stores the rest, as fat, for future use. Since you already have plenty of stored fat, and you eat protein in various forms every day, excessive amounts will serve only to contribute to increasing your risk of gout or an enlarged liver. It also leads to calcium loss (of particular importance to women) because digesting protein depletes the body of minerals. In animals, excess protein has also been linked to an inflammation of the kidneys.

The most common sources of protein in our diets are meat and dairy foods, both of which contain high levels of saturated fat. **Fish and legumes offer many nutritional advantages, including that they're less caloric.** So, the cost of clinging to the idea that you need a lot of protein is fattening and potentially harmful. Having said this, some people require protein to feel satisfied. In the Personalization Chapter, I'll make recommendations for protein lovers on how to enjoy protein-centered meals while increasing vegetable, fruit and whole grain intake.

CARBOHYDRATE. The secret to using carbohydrates to lose weight and prevent disease is in the difference between the two forms: simple and complex. Simple carbohydrates are sugars, which contain minimal nutrients. Complex carbohydrates are multiple simple ones, that are, well, more complex, and nutritionally richer – such as

vegetables, fruits, whole-wheat and whole-grain breads and cereals, brown rice, millet, quinoa, barley, oats and whole-wheat pasta.

Highly processed foods most often contain simple carbohydrates, no matter how they're labeled. And the low carb craze of the recent past has done a huge disservice to dieters.

Complex carbohydrates provide a relatively low-calorie source of important nutrients, and your brain needs them to function well. A recent study from Tufts showed that women who cut down on carbohydrates didn't function as well when they were tested on both long-and-short-term memory tasks. Their cognitive abilities returned when carbohydrates were reintroduced.

There are other important benefits you get from complex carbohydrates. **Fiber, whether soluble or insoluble, is what remains of complex carbohydrate foods after digestion.** The fiber itself contains no nutrients but provides bulk, which absorbs water to make you feel full. Constipation is a major problem for millions of Americans and the laxative effect of fiber helps prevent it. In addition, it is believed that a high-fiber diet contributes to preventing colon and rectal cancers, hemorrhoids, gallstones, hiatus hernias, diverticulitis, arteriosclerosis, and other prevalent conditions.

Fresh vegetables, fruits, and grains will offer new options as the focus of your meals. You'll feel full longer due to the high fiber content. And, in addition to losing weight, you'll be reversing the consequences of mistreating your body, potentially adding years of health and vitality.

Forget the sugar. Don't pass the salt. You already know what you're about to read. You know that for many people salt is a major contributor to hypertension and sugar supplies only empty calories for everyone. But have you given them up? Probably not.

Depending on how you count, **Americans get as much as 16 - 25 percent of their daily calories from refined sugar.** This simple carbohydrate is frequently the source of complex patterns of overeating. Because it metabolizes so quickly in the body, it isn't satisfying. The familiar reaction is to feel a quick "up" after eating sugar, and then a sensation of sinking, once your glucose level plunges, thereby stimulating an appetite for more. It is also a major cause of dental worries, so you would be wise to cut it out even if you didn't want to lose a pound.

Unfortunately, sugar is present in just about everything. So is salt. And while the battle rages on about just how critical reducing salt intake is, and for whom, there are no easy tests for who is salt sensitive and who isn't.

I mention sugar and salt together because if a prepared or processed food doesn't contain one, it's bound to contain the other. Many canned, frozen, and packaged foods contain both. It's not just the salt that comes out of the shaker, or the sugar from the sugar bowl, that you need to consider. You're getting added salt or sugar in everything from canned tomatoes to breakfast cereal.

A good defense is emphasizing fresh foods. Both sugar and salt do occur naturally in fresh produce, but in amounts most of us can easily tolerate. Some of the recipes I offer call for ingredients that contain some sugar and salt. Those containing sugar are used in such small amounts they're inconsequential. If you're on a salt-restricted diet, you'll know to cut back when necessary. I'll also suggest substitutions.

Appetite Training will lower your desire for salty and sweet foods, awakening your taste buds to a far greater range of flavors. Rather than feel deprived, you'll discover real food starts to taste better. The ability to discriminate flavors builds over time. Most people begin to notice a difference during the Introduction to Appetite Training. If you find yourself still craving sweet or salty foods, the full Transition Phase is recommended.

I'm not suggesting you eat solely for your health. Pleasure is a priority for everyone. But **your well-being is a high price to pay for a fleeting taste sensation.** You can have a healthy body, and eat cake on occasion. What's more, you'll find far more enjoyment in a wider range of foods. It takes planning, knowhow and the trial-and-error of learning to be flexible. The rewards will impact every area of your life.

Five: Program Basics

I repeat: Eat more vegetables, fruits and whole grains. Eat less meat, dairy products, processed food and sugar.

If you hate rules – and you trust yourself – that advice may do it for you. But most people succeed with more structure, especially because I recommend personalizing and being flexible over time.

To help you get oriented, I've organized food into three categories, green (unlimited), yellow (somewhat limited) and red (limited). I've also provided general guidelines that you will be able to adjust for your preferences when you personalize your program down the road.

Green: Unlimited

Almost all vegetables are in this category. I will list a few in the yellow category to give you an idea of appropriate quantities, but most people don't need to worry about that. Eat all you want of: artichokes, asparagus, bean sprouts, beets, broccoli, Brussels sprouts, cabbage, carrots, cauliflower, celery, cucumber, eggplant, endive, green beans, greens (beet, chard, chicory, collard, kale, spinach, etc.), leeks, lettuce, mushrooms, okra, onion, parsley, peppers, radish, squash (all varieties), tomato, turnip, zucchini, etc, including

soups, casseroles, main and side dishes make from the above as long as they are not fried, cooked in butter or in excessive oil.

Fruits: While fruits are unlimited, most people need planning to eat at least 3 fruits a day, which is ideal (1 piece or 1+ cups) apple, apricot, banana, berries, cherries, figs, fruit salad, grapefruit, grapes, mango, melon (cantaloupe, crenshaw, honeydew, watermelon, etc), nectarine, orange, papaya, peach, pear, pineapple, plum, tangerine (Note fruit is also mentioned in the yellow category.)

Spices, herbs, vinegar, lemon and lime juice, and mustard.

Cooked egg whites

Water, seltzer, herb and decaffeinated tea and decaffeinated coffee.

Yellow: Somewhat Limited

Note: Quantity ranges are flexible because you will need to be. Larger men can eat at the high end of the range and lose weight steadily. Smaller women will lose more easily with smaller quantities. There's no problem with choosing to lose more slowly and feel more satisfied, but you'll need patience if that's your choice.

Limited vegetables: 1/2 - 1 avocado and 1- 2 ear of corn (or 1 cup)

Limited fruits: 1 - 2 cups/pieces of whatever fruits you might tend to overeat. Cherries and grapes, in particular, are triggers for some people.

Whole grains: 1/2 - 2 cups, depending on whether it's a side dish or main dish; you're a woman or large man: Whole grain cereals (Grape Nuts, Shredded Wheat, oatmeal, Cream of Wheat, farina, puffed rice/wheat, Wheatena, etc), Brown rice, wild rice, whole wheat pasta, barley, quinoa, groats, oats, whole rye, millet, wheat berries, etc.

Look at serving sizes and calories on whole wheat or whole grain crackers (Finn Crisp, Wasa Crisp, whole wheat breadsticks, whole wheat matzos); 1 -2 slices of whole wheat and whole grain breads, English Muffins, bagels. Be aware that many "whole wheat" bread products are not 100% whole wheat. They're better than white bread but not necessarily *much* better.

Note: There are times you'll prefer semolina pasta or white rice (in sushi, for example). But the more whole grains you eat, the better. Beware of enormous refined bagels (rip out the bread part) and rich breads like focaccia, brioche, etc.

Potatoes are a vegetable, but think of them as a grain. One a day, several days a week is ideal. **The more you vary your grains, the better.**

Protein: 1/2 - 1 cup legumes, including, peas, beans: lentils, lima, navy, soy, kidney, split, etc.; tofu

Whole eggs: 4/week (cooked egg white are unlimited)

3 – 4 ounces fish: fresh and canned wild salmon, chunk light tuna to minimize mercury, (eat fresh tuna, farmed salmon and swordfish rarely. In addition to healthy levels of omega 3's, they also contain lead.), sardines, herring (beware of salt in herring) and all white fishes, fluke, sole, snapper, halibut, cod, etc.

3 – 4 ounces, poultry, drug free, free range when possible; lean meats, drug free and grass fed are desirable.

Dairy: 8 ounces of skim milk, non-fat plain yogurt or low-fat buttermilk are considered “Priority Dairy” for their high concentration of easily absorbed calcium. Non-fat cottage cheese has only half as much calcium (4 oz). Part skim milk cheeses are part high fat. You can get them thinly sliced and add a slice to sandwiches or tear into salads. Feta, Parmesan, blue cheese, and other high fat cheeses can be used by the Tablespoon (1- 2) as a condiment.

Desirable fats: A few Tablespoons a day, including olive, peanut, canola, grapeseed and nut oils.

Nuts, seeds: a few small handfuls a day, unless weight loss isn't an issue

Non-fat half-and-half is good in coffee, soups or sauces (or added to enrich the flavor of skim milk), light mayonnaise for salads (tuna, salmon, egg, potato, etc), light cream cheese as a spread, etc. All will taste fine after Appetite Training. Note the calories and portion size on the label. Measure at first, so you can eyeball later.

Caffeinated drinks: 1 – 2 cups a day of coffee, 1 – 4 of tea. Too much caffeine increases mood swings and jitters, which leads a lot of people to eat more – not less.

Red: Limited

Butter, mayonnaise, whole milk, cheese, cream, sour cream, cream cheese, fried food, fatty meats, homemade baked goods, French fries and mashed potatoes, etc. These are foods that can be pleasurable in appropriate amounts (meaning *small* amounts or very *occasional* full portions) as long as **they are not trigger foods for you.**

Avoid: All highly processed food (too many to list), chips, candy, soda, sweet drinks of any kind, including fruit juice unless it's cut with seltzer, all artificial sweeteners, gum (unless you're giving up smoking or alcohol.)

Program Basics At-A-Glance

Detailed guidelines follow, but this is a handy summary to keep in mind as you read them. After the guidelines, there is a prototype menu.

- 3 - 5 different vegetables (1/2 - 1 cup each)
- 2 - 3 different fruits (1 piece or 1 cup)
- 2 - 3 whole grains (1 -2 slices/cups)
- 1 - 2, 3 - 4 oz servings of protein (legumes, eggs - 4/week, fish, poultry or lean meat)
- 8 oz. of Priority Dairy (skim milk, non-fat plain yogurt and low-fat buttermilk)

Breakfast: a whole grain, fruit and priority dairy – or eggs

Lunch: soup, salad (with protein or grain, or w/o), sandwich, fruit, yogurt, etc

Dinner: soup, salad, protein and/or grain and vegetables

Snack: raw vegetables, soup, fruit, air-popped popcorn, plain non-fat yogurt. Depending on what's possible for you: a small handful of nuts/seeds, a few crackers

General guidelines:

1. **Eat vegetables every day, preferably both raw and cooked.** Choose at least 3 different vegetables and try for 5, **the greater the variety the better.** Include a dark green leafy vegetable daily. Vary the color of the vegetables you eat to ensure a good balance of vitamins and minerals. Emphasize vegetable-based main dishes that are served with whole grains and/or include fish, poultry or meat as just one ingredient.
2. **Eat two to three pieces of different fruits a day.** Berries should be a high priority for their rich nutrient content, especially blueberries. Be sure to let fruit ripen. Buy it before you plan to eat it, and let it stay outside the refrigerator for a few days. Apples and berries are the exception. Refrigerate them immediately. Eat dried fruit sparingly, more as a condiment than as a snack – raisins or currents to enhance a grain dish, for example.
3. **Eat two to three servings of whole grains daily.** Cereal in the morning is one good source. Brown rice, barley, quinoa, or whole-grain bread should be part of lunch and/or dinner. **Vary your grains and be aware of portion sizes.** Most men can eat bigger portions than women and continue to lose weight. Don't under-eat! Feeling satisfied is essential. If you're eating sufficient vegetables and fruits, it's easier to eat appropriate amounts of whole grains and protein sources. It's best to eat grains at mealtime or planned midday snacks and not "save" them for after-dinner snacking.
4. **Don't worry about getting "enough" protein.** The vegetables, grains, and dairy products you'll be eating contain substantial amounts. **Eat legumes more often** (1/2 – 1 cup). Favor fish and chicken over meat, lean meat over fattier cuts (3 – 4 ounces of

animal protein) each day, is sufficient as long as you maintain a high vegetable intake. A word about legumes as a healthful protein source. Beans and peas have almost no fat, are very high in fiber, and consequently are an excellent alternative to animal protein. Add them to soups, vegetable sautés, and casseroles to make easy, one-dish suppers. Consult Italian, Chinese and Indian cookbooks for inspiration on how to use animal protein as part of a dish instead of as the main event. You can almost always cut down on the amount of oil recommended in recipes. **Eating fatty fish at least twice a week is a good way to boost critical omega 3 fatty acids.** Three times a week is better.

5. **Olive, peanut and nut oils are best for salads, marinating and cooking.** Each tablespoon of fat (120 calories) contains 3 teaspoons. A teaspoon goes further than you think. If you have trouble with quantities, do Transition to scale you down. Use a small amount of butter for flavor. Avoid margarine. Fat-free half-and-half works well to give something a creamy taste and consistency. **Scaled back amounts** of the light versions of sour cream, mayonnaise, butter and cream cheese are helpful in cutting back. Using less fat at home helps to compensate for the added fat you get when you eat out, even when you order carefully.

6. **Have eight ounces of Priority Dairy products a day.** Skim milk, low-fat buttermilk (great for making soups creamy), and plain non-fat yogurt are especially important for women because of their high calcium content. It's important to build up calcium intake when you are young to counteract the tendency to lose calcium as you age. (Many medical authorities recommend that women include a 1,200 milligram calcium/vitamin D supplement, usually split into 2 doses. It's best to consult your physician before starting. It is possible to develop kidney stones if too much calcium is consumed.) In addition to the eight ounces of Priority Dairy, non-fat cottage cheese is a good choice, though lower in calcium. **Remember, the other part of part skim milk cheese is high-fat.** But **thinly sliced** light Jarlsberg or Swiss cheese can perk up a sandwich. Grated cheese on vegetable selections or pasta can satisfy a craving for cheese flavor (1 – 2 Tablespoons). Think of full fat cheese as a condiment to flavor another dish.

7. **Drink alcohol moderately, if at all.** While moderate drinking (1 glass of wine, beer or small alcoholic drink for women, 2 for men/per day) is thought to protect against heart disease, a British study of over one-million women confirmed previous evidence that **low to moderate drinking raises the risk of cancer in women.** Cancers of the breast, liver and rectum rose with the first daily drink. The risk doubled with a second. (One glass of wine increased the risk of breast cancer in women by 11%, two glasses raised it to 22%.) If you want to lose weight, **alcohol adds calories while diminishing good decisions.** A lot of people do well during the day and lose their resolve at night – after a glass of wine. Limiting wine to a few glasses a week is a reasonable compromise for those without other risk factors for cancer. Again, trying to be perfect often backfires. If you have a hard time maintaining desired amounts, I recommend cutting it out completely before trying to establish a more moderate level. For some people, moderate drinking is a fine concept but an unattainable reality. If you are one, tell yourself the truth and take action. You are compromising your health in multiple ways if you don't.

8. **Get a feel for the right balance in your food selection.** The more you choose to **eat vegetables as the focus of your meals**, the better for weight loss, weight maintenance, your health and the health of the planet. Then, depending, you'll be focusing on whole grains and/or a protein selection. There are no set rules. So, for example, if your pleasure comes more from protein in a meal, you might choose to forgo it at lunch and eat a bigger portion at dinner. Or if you love grains and eat protein sources because you think they're good for you, you can relax and incorporate legumes more often and eat eggs occasionally. In general, lots of vegetables, 3 fruits, 1 – 2 small serving of protein, eight ounces of Priority Dairy Products and 2 – 3 servings of grains make an ideal pattern. But it's more important to feel satisfied than to be perfect.

9. **In restaurants, don't be shy, be specific.** Restaurants are a service business; you want to be flexible in ways that are important to you, not to them. Obviously, the better the restaurant, the more they ought to cater to individual requests. But even casual spots should be happy to oblige with an egg white or one-yolk omelet. If you're in restaurants often, you'll need an everyday game plan. Then, depending, you might prefer a hot dog in your favorite dive to the finest steak. It's critical to **plan ahead and have some idea of how you want to treat a particular meal before looking at the menu.** Is it a routine meal or do you have leeway you want to use? For those times when you'll be with a group and don't want to call attention to yourself, call ahead and discuss the options before you even get there. When you find yourself in a situation with slim pickings, order a salad and/or a soup and eat what you want when you get home. Don't squander your richer foods on expediency. I'll offer more advice in the Personalization chapter.

10. **Finally, eat.** Eat three meals a day. Snack frequently – whenever you're hungry (on vegetables, if possible). If you prefer to graze, have 5 or 6 mini meals throughout the day. **Plan your food** – especially before eating out. It helps in a restaurant to have an idea of what you are going to order. Look for recipes that you can adapt. If you feel deprived, buy a papaya or a mango.

Prototype Menus

Breakfast:

-Whole grain cereal (see Yellow category list), or whole wheat/grain toast, spread with 1 tablespoon non-fat cottage cheese, or 1 - 2 teaspoons light cream cheese or light butter. Or let a banana get overly ripe and spread it like jam (or put it in the microwave to soften and sweeten it)

-4 – 8 ounces Priority Dairy

-1 – 2 Fruits

You might choose to have cereal with mixed fruit and skim milk or whole wheat toast with fruit and plain non-fat yogurt. If you have eggs, make either lunch or dinner “protein free” (You'll be getting protein in the vegetables and grains you have instead).

Lunch:

- Soup and/or salad
- 1 (optional) legume, fish, poultry or dairy selection, and/or
- 1 bread, cracker, or grain selection (vary it from breakfast)
- Vegetable selections

Soups and salads are an excellent template for lunch. A sandwich and salad also works well. Hint: Try using canned wild salmon for “tuna salad.” You’ll get more omega 3’s and less mercury. (See recipe.) Whole wheat pita pockets can be stuffed with chopped veggies, any kind of beans and 2 teaspoons of vinaigrette. Use beans or a small can of water-packed, chunk light tuna on a salad for a more filling, quick and delicious meal. (Chunk light tuna has less mercury than white. The consistency is looser, but it’s actually tastier.)

Dinner:

- Soup and/or salad
- 1 (optional) legume, fish, poultry and/or
- 1 grain, bread, or cracker selection (vary from breakfast and lunch)
- Vegetable selections

Read ethnic cookbooks for inspiration and sample the recipes included here. Sautéed, roasted or stir-fried vegetables paired with a whole grain (brown rice, bulgur, quinoa, whole wheat pasta) is an excellent template. Add beans (cannellini, limas, peas, lentils, etc) for a protein source. Or fish, or chicken. Occasionally have meat if you crave it. When you serve fish or chicken, two vegetables or a vegetable and salad is a good alternative to a grain on some days.

Dessert:

-Fruit – Try baking, broiling or microwaving fruit to add interest. Serve with other fruit or plain, non-fat yogurt. For example, you can broil bananas (see recipe). Puree fresh or frozen berries for a delicious sauce. (Frozen berries retain their nutritional value.)

Snacks:

- Raw or cooked vegetables as desired
- Fruit
- Up to 8 oz of Priority Dairy
- A small handful of nuts (if you’re able)
- Air-popped popcorn
- Edamame
- Celery stuffed with non-fat cottage cheese, salmon salad, etc.

Six: Personalization

You need to begin this process by making a distinction between dieting and changing your diet. Dieting involves an all-or-nothing mentality that's self-defeating. The long-term success stories I interviewed, all admitted they "cheated." It's not cheating when you're goal is changing your diet. It's personalizing. It's when you tip too far – and don't get back on track – that the deviations keep you from losing and/or maintaining your weight loss.

Progress, not perfection, is what works long term. The overall trend is what matters when you're changing the balance of the foods you eat. With more vegetables, fruits and whole grains, and less sugar, processed food, meat and full-fat dairy, you'll have a healthy margin for flexibility customizing and still be able to lose weight steadily. Slower weight loss isn't as exciting in the beginning but it really wears well.

It's critical to complete the Introduction to Appetite Training. Trying to negotiate with an addicted palette is like climbing a greased pole. After the Introduction, be sure to spend a few weeks on the Basic Program before you begin to personalize. It takes planning to fit in 3 – 5 vegetables, 2 - 3 fruits, 2 – 3 whole grains, 1 - 2 servings of protein, and up to 8 ounces of Priority Dairy every day. Review the "yellow" food category in Program Basics for portion sizes. **Give yourself the experience of eating the full range of foods, keeping your vegetable intake high.** You'll get a fresh perspective and not be as influenced by old patterns.

Identifying Triggers

Some foods and situations trigger us to eat more. Some people may trigger eating for you. To make matters more treacherous, triggers morph. A food you're addicted to can lose its pull once you cut it out, while something unexpected takes its place as a fixation. **Identifying triggers allows you to anticipate and plan, so that you're in charge instead of mindlessly reacting.**

There are people who can spread a tablespoon of peanut butter on a slice of toast, but others can't without doubling the portion and then reaching for a spoon to have more. A square or two of dark chocolate might satisfy or it could make you crave fudge or chocolate ice cream.

Notice that you have a choice at a cocktail party: stand next to the scrumptious tasting cheese or walk away. That choice can be a revelation. Say to yourself what a Workshop participant told me recently, "The ninth bite tastes the same as the second."

You will have different thresholds for how much of various richer foods you can eat without a problem. And what is "desirable" differs for everyone. Gene can eat

something sweet after dinner as a habit because he stops with a very small portion. If I did that, I'd be distracted all night by the thought of the remaining brownie or ice cream in the kitchen – and it would be unlikely to stay there. But I can overeat nuts because they are healthy, and I don't eat sweets or other high-fat foods.

Most often, if you find yourself craving a food you want to limit, you are eating too much of it. It's as simple as that. You don't crave what you don't eat. I don't mean that you won't want fried calamari when you see it on a menu or on someone else's plate. Of course you'll eye the dessert cart when you walk into a restaurant. Most often, however, when you're not eating sweets, once the moment passes, the desire is forgotten. If you find yourself making deals and obsessing over sweets, bread, cheese, or whatever, it's a sign that you're eating too much of what's tempting you.

For those times you really, really want a particular food, use the Craving Exercise described in Reprogramming. If you decide to eat the food, you will have chosen it consciously. Did it satisfy you, or are you're left wanting more? This is the trial-and-error part of becoming flexible.

The easiest route, truly, is not eating the trigger food, except on rare occasions. However, some people find one dessert a week works for them, or a few squares of dark chocolate more often, or a little sorbet sometimes. You'll know when you find a comfortable threshold; you'll look forward to the food and feel satisfied knowing you'll have it before too long. **But if you're craving more after eating something, cut it out and wait longer – or just cut it out and feel free.**

Cheese follows sweets as the most common trigger food. If you want to enjoy cheese occasionally, I recommend buying small pieces so you don't overeat and/or it doesn't get moldy. If you can keep feta in the fridge (in a bit of water in a covered container), and enjoy a tablespoon crumbled on a salad, in a pita pocket, on eggs, OR over fish or pasta, that's no problem. If you find it's gone after a day or two, though, don't buy it again for a while. Same for parmesan, cheddar, etc.

Beware of healthy triggers. We had an avocado addict in one Workshop years ago. She'd buy a few; they'd ripen all at once, and she'd polish them off in her morning eggs, in a salad for lunch and with tea as an afternoon snack. What's more, the smooth, rich taste made her crave brie and other fatty foods. With certain grains, quantities become a trigger problem. Don't generalize to the whole category. Notice which specific grains you overeat and don't keep them in the house.

You'll discover that you can use cheese as a condiment in cooking, or a small amount of butter for flavor. You can eat meat a few times a month, or even weekly, or desserts within the boundaries you set, those occasions don't make you crave more. Larger portions of some foods may be no problem. Same goes for white rice with sushi, or sirloin in a great steakhouse, or eggplant parmesan, on occasion, because you really don't want *all* that cheese anymore. Once you get going, there will be lots of things you do that aren't necessarily recommended but that make life enjoyable and don't impede your

progress. Yes, you will lose more slowly. But if you personalize correctly, you'll be eating far less than you were before – and that's what produces success.

Be alert to signs of the old struggle, of portions inching up, of frequency multiplying.

The program offers effective tools to help you moderate when you confuse personalizing with being flexible. Personalization is incorporating small compromises that make life pleasurable for you. Being flexible allows you to enjoy specific situations and then get right back on track. **The first line of defense when you tip too far with either is to cut out the trigger food.** Return to home base. Clean your palate. You won't want to! That's a sure sign that you need to do what you don't want to do at that very moment. By the end of the first day without the trigger category, you'll be grateful you took action.

Focus on moving in a positive direction toward becoming your Ideal Video. This is not a race. You aren't winning or losing. **You are replacing ingrained habits with superior ones.**

New habits do not take a firm hold right away. You need many repetitions to embed the behavior. Picture carving out a groove to house the habit (thought or behavior). Each time you move away from the cheese, or cut out sweets for a day because you had dessert the day before, you deepen the groove. But not by much. Your old habits have cavernous grooves to house them. It takes many instances for a new behavior to get deep enough to stay put.

Designing a Structure Your Way

The core of Personalization is creating a structure for what and how you eat. Customizing around what pleases and feels natural to you leads to a set of loose or well-defined rules of your choice. In fact, all diets work to some degree because they have rules people follow for a given period of time. Your rules can be simple or complex, but stating them will define the game and give you the boundaries to measure your success.

First, let's look at four basic variables:

1. Rebel/rule-lover
2. Jump in/wade in
3. Quantity/graze
4. Protein/grain

These arbitrary distinctions are meant to get you thinking. Each represents a spectrum and many people will find themselves midway between the extremes.

1. Rebel/rule-lover. Rebels need to be crafty. If, like one Eat Healthy participant, you see a *No Parking* sign as a challenge, you might work better with a looser, no-rules kind of structure. Eating more “green” category foods and far less “red” ones, for example, may be all the structure a rebel needs. But you have to watch out for undermining

behavior. For years I considered myself a rebel, until I realized that my rebel nature performed better within a framework of rules. For now, just notice how you relate to rules in other areas of your life and plan accordingly.

Rule lovers rejoice, you get to make up your own. I recommend starting with just a few. You empower rules by respecting them. If you designate too many, you'll break them, feel badly and undermine your success. Start with the most important for you (see Choosing Your Rules below) and add slowly. I now have rules that cover every situation imaginable, but the structure has happened incrementally over many years. Choose rules that support, not punish you.

2. Jump in/wade in. Dieting is traditionally a jumping in process. Most people start with great energy and intention. The beginning of Eat Healthy Your Way was designed to shake that up by focusing on only one area – sweets (or your toughest trigger).

Some people start fast and peter out. Others wade in and pick up steam. And you can jump in and pick up steam or wade in and peter out. How do you want to begin now that you're the boss? **Do you want to add incremental changes, undertake the program as a whole or structure something in the middle?**

3. Quantity/graze. Look around the world and you'll see that across various cultures, economics permitting, people eat 3 times a day. Yet there are people who eat all day long. They're wired to chew. I used to be one of them.

If you like to eat often, my advice is to go with your nature. Over time, you may choose to modify your behavior, but you don't have to. For example, Sally, a mom with 3 kids in grammar school, described how she ate fruit at breakfast with them and then had whole grain toast and tea at a coffee bar with friends, her favorite daily ritual. She had a small lunch and then a snack with the kids when they got home. She ate a bit of dinner with them and then a bit more with her husband. She had been eating full meals *and* snacking all the time. Once she caught onto treating her meals as glorified snacks, the pounds started rolling off. And she never minded the smaller portions because the next snack was only a few hours away.

If you're a quantity person, vegetables allow you to eat large meals as a positive activity. Over the years, I've moderated my quantities, but I became successful at keeping weight off, when I recognized my need to chew. For years I carried carrot sticks, red pepper strips and peapods with me at all time. I used to steam a giant pot of shredded cabbage because it allowed the maximum chew for the minimum calories. I've always loved the ritual of twirling pasta strands with chunky vegetable sauces – or stuffing a potato with veggies so it takes longer to eat.

Food has a two-fold purpose: pleasure and nourishment. Consider the various foods you need every day to give your body *and* your senses what they deserve. The question is: how would you most enjoy ingesting all that?

Protein/grain

You need both daily, but many people get their enjoyment more from one than the other. So, if you're a "grain" person, who has been eating chicken and vegetables to lose weight, experiment with letting whole grains add to your success and satisfaction. But if you dream of a juicy steak and feel deprived without it, you may be undermining your long-term results by being too "good."

There are other variations. For example, I'm a pasta person, but don't love whole wheat pasta. My deal with myself is that I eat all whole grains except for semolina pasta. As I said, Gene loves meat and eats it once or twice a week. He balances those meals with salmon and other fresh fish, which he discovered he enjoyed more once he stopped thinking of them as depriving him of meat. Sardines and herring make easy, delicious lunches that are high in omega 3's. He also cooks up turkey burgers that he freezes, so he can have a quick burger that's less fatty than a beef burger would be.

Too many people avoided carbohydrates during the low-carb craze. Your body – including your brain – needs carbohydrates. **Concentrate on getting more high quality complex carbohydrates and you'll enhance your weight loss, your pleasure and your health.** But watch out for sauces. Look for vegetable-based and lower fat sauces that work well with all kinds of whole grains. Quinoa, bulgur and brown rice offer rich nutritional benefits and delicious taste.

If you're an animal protein lover, eat fish several times a week to get the satisfaction of a traditional meal without high doses of saturated fat. Add drug-free chicken once or twice, and you can have drug-free meat when you crave it. Fish burgers, either ground or in filets, also make delicious lunches. The burger roll (there are whole wheat versions), relish, ketchup and pickle are the point for many people. Also, try the various veggie burgers available for a low-fat alternative. Meatloaves made with legumes are another good vegetarian option for protein lovers.

All-vegetable soup and salad lunches give you the flexibility at dinner to have more generous portions of protein or grains, whichever appeals to you. If you like both equally, and tend toward larger meals because of that, you might find a good rule is to have either a protein selection *or* a grain, at least at one meal.

Choosing your rules.

Rules create a structure, something that's essential for success. I'm going to suggest examples, but feel free to make up your own. If you don't want explicit rules, follow the basic guidelines of eating **more** vegetables, fruits and whole grains and **less** meat, high fat dairy, processed food and sugar. Even rebels need boundaries.

The idea is to use what works about most diets: you switch your established routine to accommodate a new plan. In adopting the new regime, you inevitably follow rules that make you give up some old, fattening habits, and, guess what, you lose weight. **Giving up any bad habits will work, so choose to let go of those you can live without.** Don't overload yourself. Commit only to rules that resonate with you – whether they are from the list below or those you make up. As we move forward, you can see what you push through to persevere – or not. It's important to choose rules you intend to follow. This is Your Way, not mine or anyone else's. By sticking with it, observing your behavior over time, and getting back on track when you need to, you realize your goals.

I'm not listing some rules you may already be following – no sugar or anything that resembles it, for example. I am listing some that are in the guidelines but that people tend to lose track of. If you want to keep going with just no sugar (or cheese, or whatever your particular trigger is), that's fine. There is no "right" timetable for how long to focus on that one goal. Cutting out your top trigger is a perfect – and critical – first step. Don't invalidate its value by thinking you "should" do more. At some point, you'll notice that without even meaning to, you start to make other changes. You may have started already. But those changes are a bonus. You don't have to turn them into rules. When you're ready, you might decide to add one or two as a commitment. Tell yourself you're wading in and that's an excellent way to proceed.

It's helpful to reread the Basic Program Guidelines to remind yourself of the existing structure. I've emphasized the first 3 suggested rules below because they're so important. You choose which of these, or others, to make your own.

1. **Eat a good breakfast every morning.** Research confirms that breakfast eaters weigh less, maintain weight loss more easily and have a lower incidence of cardiovascular disease. A good breakfast allows you start every day with important nutrients and an enjoyable, positive meal. If you don't like breakfast, try eating it a bit later.

2. **Plan your food** when you wake up, so you're prepared for the day. Be specific. Where are you going to be? What will you bring with you? What do you need to buy? Think about each situation and meal in the morning so you can shop and prep, if needed.

3. **Make exercise your top priority;** organize your day around the time that works. You will be astonished by the unanticipated benefits.

4. Plan 2 – 3 vegetable snacks so you maintain a high vegetable intake and don't get hungry or cranky.

5. Have a plan for a restaurant meal before you look at the menu. (This really works!)

6. Eat fish twice a week. Or 3 times, or more.

7. Don't eat anything after 9 pm (or 8, or 10).

8. Save a piece of fruit to eat before bed. (Or, eat fruit in the morning only, or every day at 5 pm)

9. Eat an all-vegetable lunch (or dinner) every Monday. You can add Thursday if you want to. (Or your own schedule)

10. Measure foods you tend to overeat. (Name them.) Smaller women can use the lower to mid range of the measurements suggested. Larger men can use the higher end.

11. Do a one-apple day if you have sweets 2 days in a row.

12. Play your Ideal Video every morning and/or night

All these rules are good to keep in mind. But designate a few as *yours*. Make up a few of your own. You can change your rules as you go along, but if you are constantly diluting them, reread the Program Basics and follow those guidelines closely for a week.

Special Occasions

Holidays, weddings, vacations, a trip home or a college reunion. Our lives are full of times that are fun, fraught with tension and often both. Inevitably, special occasions involve eating, and a good time is often defined by overeating. Thanksgiving is classic; no one considers the meal a success unless everyone is groaning.

There is no right answer for how to handle these times. And it's important to remember to treat each individually. **You might want to eat differently on a vacation to Italy than on one to Disney World.** No matter what the situation, however, remember to bring your Ideal Video with you.

The spectrum of options includes staying on the program at one end and giving yourself permission to relax at the other. In between I have suggestions for rebels and rule lovers for how to straddle those two extremes.

-Stay on the program. Make the occasion about people instead of about food. You can handle social pressure the same way you would in normal situations. Either taste something to avoid being rude or decline, saying you'd rather not right now. It's only one event, not every event for the rest of your life. Consider it an experiment.

-Choose your spots. If you hate rules, include a little flexibility when and if you want to. All holiday or wedding food isn't delicious. A lot of it isn't as good as other food you enjoy. So just choose to eat those things that seem really special to you. To build strong EHYW muscles – and to lose more weight – eat smaller portions than you would have before.

-**Make up a few rules.** Rule lovers will feel more secure with a structure. You may know what to expect. Decide ahead what to allow yourself. You might choose a maximum of ____ dishes off the program. Plan exactly what you're going to do.

-**Give yourself permission to relax.** Any pounds that pop back on will come right off when you get back on track. Have 2 - 3 no-sugar days (or other trigger foods) as of the night you return or the next day. You won't want to, so you'll need a strong commitment. This is the key for learning to be flexible, which is what will keep the weight off. Notice your behavior: don't judge, just **notice**. Are you eating everything in sight or being somewhat restrained? Bring along your inner scientist to dispassionately observe you.

However you decide to handle special occasions, be conscious of the internal monologue, the deals you make, the back and forth, if there is any. What, if anything, triggers you in specific situations? Is it the actual food, the people you're with, your past associations with weddings, holiday weekends, vacations, trips home? *Seeing* is the first step of unraveling. Stay conscious, aware and non-judgmental.

What counts most isn't how you decide to handle a special occasion, or even whether you follow through. **The most important thing is how you handle your first day back. That's the day your long-term success depends on.**

Exercise tips.

Personalization does not extend to exercise, at least if you want long-term results. If you have an enjoyable routine, you can skip this section. If not, the first step is finding the time of day that works best.

Face it; there may be no perfect time. Yet once you commit, you'll make an imperfect time work. Or another one will present itself as better. At least you'll have started the process. You have to be willing to go out of your way to get into a rhythm.

Waking up earlier is the best solution. Years ago, an 8 am exercise class I loved moved to 7 am. I panicked and would never have stayed with it, if I hadn't already bonded with the teacher and group. Much to my surprise, I adjusted after only a few days, and loved having the extra hour in the morning. I never went back to sleeping beyond 6:30.

Many people find exercising after work gives them energy for a longer, more enjoyable evening. "I've been doing this for years and still have to push myself to the gym most nights," a Workshop participant said. "I just don't listen to the voice saying: *take me home*. The treadmill de-stresses me. Plus, I save 100 calories on a glass of wine and work off a few hundred more."

For those who already get up before dawn and have late-day obligations, I suggest a midday timeslot. A walk instead of a lunch break is ideal, as long as you eat after it. Less time eating and more time walking will surely add to your results. But it has to be a

relatively rigorous walk or you won't get the needed boost. (Walking the dog doesn't count, unless you give the dog its walk first, and it will keep up with you when you're on yours. Both of you have to move – no stopping to sniff for neighborhood news.)

Ideally, when you exercise, you should break a sweat, both for your heart rate and to be sure you're producing endorphins. If midday is the only time you can grab for yourself, and you work, there are solutions. For years I took a 45-minute lunchtime aerobics class in Manhattan that was filled with executive women. We changed into workout clothes and back, showered in seconds, or rinsed at the sink, redid hair, patched makeup and returned to the office energized. If you're not working, don't shower until midday or before dinner. The world won't end. In fact, you'll likely get to stay here longer.

Committing to a class is another good way to start. Music and other people make exercising fun. Joining a gym doesn't work unless you actually go there. Ditto for treadmills, exercise bikes and elliptical trainers you buy to use at home. With memberships and equipment, you have to be disciplined the first few weeks so the new habit gets established. If you have serious time constraints, a home treadmill or other machine is a godsend. You can exercise while you watch the news, read the paper, catch up with your kids or use the phone. Craigslist is a good place to check for bargains.

The real secret to getting hooked is the second rule above: **make exercise your top priority.** You have to put it first or it will never happen. When I worked in the corporate world, looks would fly around a conference table when people excused themselves from a meeting with an absolute commitment to leave. A shrink session, our eyes would tell each other. Treat exercise the same way. You wouldn't sleep late, agree to a meeting, or meet a friend for lunch if you were going to be charged for missing an appointment. Missing exercise costs you more.

After you begin, build up steadily to longer sessions. Ideally, you want to incorporate a half hour or more of aerobic activity, some strength training and gentle stretching to keep you flexible. If you work up to a half hour walk, 4 -5 days a week, over time, you'll naturally increase to longer and more frequent sessions. On rainy days, wear a poncho. When it's cold, wear long underwear. In a blizzard, find a staircase and walk up down two and three flights at a time, or put on great music and dance.

Once you get walking or another aerobic activity underway, you can add simple strength training exercises at home (abdominals, squats, lunges, and push-ups, or modified push-ups for women) along with gentle stretches for flexibility. If you belong to a gym that offers classes, experiment with several types. Yoga twice a week to build balance, strength and calm focus, Pilates for core strength, multi-benefit classes to combine aerobic fitness and strength training in a compact hour. With exercise, the more you do, the more you want to do. You'll get hooked on how you feel after, even if it's a slight push to get yourself going.

A word about trainers. One sure way to fall in love with exercise is to be inspired by a great trainer. A great trainer is educated to know the human body, its muscles, tendons and stress points. A great trainer is looking at you and not at himself in the mirror. She's watching every rep, correcting often but not obsessively. He may be friendly with others but not during your session. She doesn't take phone calls while you're together. Watch the trainers in your gym to see who is observing their clients attentively and who isn't. Try out the one who is focused like a laser.

Exercise not only burns calories, prevents just about every major disease that kills us, and preserves your memory, it is also the best mood elevator known, the antidote to stress. Still think you'd rather skip it? I repeat: I have never, literally never, known anyone with a long term weight loss who hadn't incorporated exercise into their lives.

Building Success

For most people, Personalization happens in stages over a period of months. At first it's normal to concentrate on food, exercise and planning. Awareness and flexibility become more important as time goes on (See Reprogramming). Remember, this isn't a diet. You're *changing* your diet. The structure you create is what supports the process. If you've read this without designating specific rules for yourself, the only person you're cheating is you. Take a moment now to write down 2 rules that will help ensure your success.

Having a long-term perspective allows you to weather the natural ebb and flow of the process. It's normal to undertake any project with energy and intention, but after a while to slip back or get fuzzy around the edges. In fact, it's the nature of life; things have way of unraveling over time.

You can counteract that natural entropy by building in signals to yourself. I'll be offering specific endurance tools to do that, and check out the Entropy section in Reprogramming. But anytime you feel wobbly on the program, go back to the Introduction to Appetite Training and repeat the first week's exercises. All relationships need reinvigorating periodically – including your new one with food!

Seven: Reprogramming

Habits are deeply imbedded behaviors. Consider the number of times you've given in to dessert, how often you've told yourself you deserve it. We're going to counteract those lifelong habits with specific tools that interrupt your stimulus/response patterns with food. You'll be able to alter your behavior and consciously reprogram your existing mental software. These changes happen over time, even if your initial attempts seem miraculously effective. You're etching new "grooves" and it takes time to deepen them.

Here's where Awareness and Flexibility, the 3rd and 4th Keys to Success come into play. Reprogramming requires perseverance. First, however, it's helpful to make a distinction between flexibility, which is essential for long term success and 2 pitfalls that can be confused with it.

Entropy

There's a natural tendency for things in any system to wind down. **Even with no specific issue or trigger, if you don't fan the flame of your new habits, you'll lose steam.**

You'll notice yourself eating the same things, perhaps, and getting bored. Or you'll stop exercising as regularly. You may forget to bring carrots with you and find yourself buying pretzels, eating empty calories and salt, telling yourself that at least it's not candy. When you feel yourself getting fuzzy and lacking motivation, it's time to do what you most won't want to do at that point, such as:

- Stop personalizing for a stretch and get back to basics
- Attend meetings
- Explore new foods
- Be vigilant about exercise; add a new routine or class
- Override the undermining voice in your head with new Litanies (Pg. 46)
- Remember: this much matters
- Reread the EHYW Handbook
- Buy a new healthy cookbook
- Order Nutrition Action Newsletter (from CSPI)
- Sign up for Real Age on the net and get motivating information daily

Entropy responds well to a boot camp mentality. Keep your vegetable intake high, drink water constantly and exercise religiously. Rid yourself of sloppy habits. Within days of taking action you will feel a huge relief. The renewed energy will propel you forward.

Dieting the Problem You Love to Worry About

Worrying about your weight, even when you hated it, was actually a very satisfactory problem. It filled your day and kept you from focusing on other problems. When you start a diet and get anchored in new habits, it's common to feel a sense of freedom and exhilaration. Most people sail along in the "honeymoon" for quite a while, but sooner or later, just about everyone gets slammed with Dieting the Problem You Love to Worry About. **The most common symptoms are mindless eating or raging cravings, almost as if you have an aversion to feeling *too good*.**

I'm not kidding about this. I first noticed the syndrome in myself and thought it was peculiar to me. I was a champ at taking weight off, but as soon as the scale headed downward, I'd find myself eating. It wasn't until my original Eat Healthy Workshops had

been underway for a while that I saw I wasn't alone in not allowing myself to be successful; the pattern was universal.

If you've been on Eat Healthy Your Way for a while, the space dieting took up in your life may have diminished considerably. Food becomes a positive preoccupation instead of a negative one. But the old pattern was most likely to fill your time planning what you would and wouldn't eat. As you went about your day, doing all the things you had to do, there was a separate conversation that used to take place in your head. It went something like: If I have just this cereal for breakfast, I can have that croissant with some coffee at eleven o'clock. Or, maybe I'll skip the croissant and eat something gooey for lunch, like pizza. I can always make up for it by going easy at dinner. But by the time dinner rolled around, the pizza was hours ago, and you'd be making deals with yourself about eating just cereal for breakfast the next day.

Worrying about food used to take you away from life and relationships. While you were sitting in a movie, instead of watching your favorite star, bigger than life up there on the screen, you used to wonder whether to go get popcorn, and then make deals with yourself about what you'd have for dinner if you got it plain, rather than buttered. When your best friend admitted to problems with his son, you'd be wondering how to convince him to go clear across town for lunch because you had a yen for refried beans. While you walked around in your life, you had a monologue in your brain involving what you would and wouldn't, could and shouldn't eat.

When you give that up, when you commit to being the thin person you want to be, you need other problems to fill the void. **Being positive about your relationship with food takes nowhere near the energy that being negative used to absorb.**

And, of course, you overeat to push down feelings you don't want to feel. How much better to worry about whether to eat the cheese than whether your marriage or your child is in trouble. When problems surface, we head for donuts.

Use the awareness tools described below to short circuit the destructive eating that accompanies Dieting the Problem You Love to Worry About. Learning to get back on track will strengthen muscles you'll use in every area of your life. You'll get added insight and an improved ability to self correct. Awareness is the first step in this part of the process.

To change unwanted behavior, observe it.

Awareness training begins with seeing your behavior – **without judging it**. Pretend you're a curious scientist and just watch what's going on. Observing is an essential step in separating flexibility from entropy, in dealing with Dieting the Problem you Love to Worry About, and in solidifying new habits.

You need to interrupt the stimulus/response patterns that undermine success. Our responses are triggered by a wide range of stimuli: physical, situational and emotional, all of which offer opportunities for insight and change. There are 3 interlocking tools to use:

-**The Craving Exercise** helps expose the "anatomy" of a craving.

-**The Feeling Exercise** lets you feel your feelings, not eat to suppress them.

-**Alternative Action** works to diffuse the craving.

You won't always forego the food, by the way. It's not bad and wrong to enjoy richer foods. What we're after is **putting you in control, so you have a genuine choice**, something I'd bet you don't now – or didn't a few weeks ago. And even if you're well anchored in Appetite Training and not bothered by cravings, those embedded habits are there. Sooner or later, they'll resurface. Observing them, along with the emotions they evoke, opens the way to change. This process happens over time and benefits from reinforcement.

These are powerful tools, yet it takes most people a while to begin using them. Some members copy the Craving and/or Feeling Exercises on a 3-by-5 card and keep it in a wallet or wallet or handbag. Jacquie said that even after she'd memorized the questions, the act of taking out the card and looking at it made her "contemplate the craving rather than give into it." The same would be true of feeling the feeling. That's the secret. **Once you examine your cravings instead of act on them, you will have gained control over probably the most stubborn reflexive habit that undermines you.**

Craving Exercise

When you are hit by a craving for an unhealthy food, ask yourself the following questions:

1. What am I craving?
2. Am I actually hungry?
3. Did something happen to trigger this craving?
4. Would something else satisfy me? (something sweet, something crunchy)
5. What is more important to me: realizing my Ideal Video, or this momentary craving?

Be sure to ask each question in order, even when you assume you know the answers. What pops up may surprise you. We assume we know what's going on with us when we "want" ice cream (for example). But actually asking the question, letting your mind offer up an answer, will often yield an unexpected result.

This was Fred's experience: "I thought the Craving Exercise was something my girlfriend would do, not me. But I was craving tiramisu, even lousy tiramisu. I wasn't hungry and

nothing else would satisfy me. I didn't give a flying anything about the Ideal Video. And then I noticed I hadn't asked if something happened to trigger the craving. What happened was a situation at work that pissed me off. I got to see how often I eat to control my anger. It's like I'm mad at them but I punish me. I really got to see that."

In the full flush of anger or disappointment, or any heated emotion, we don't see clearly. We're acting out stimulus/responses that are often as old as we are. **The patterns are so ingrained they're invisible to us.** Another woman once confided that she asked herself: What am I craving? And the answer was love. "It was so stupid," she said. But it wasn't stupid, it was profound. We felt loved when we were soothed with ice cream. It gave us comfort. When you're 45, though, ice cream gives you hips and a stomach, not love.

We tell ourselves we "deserve" it. You have to ask yourself: **What, exactly, is it that you deserve?** A few moments of pleasurable eating – how long does the tiramisu or ice cream actually last? – or to look and feel your optimum best? You can have both, some of the time. But not all of the time. Which is why managing your triggers is essential.

Frequently, just recognizing that you're not hungry, or that the reason you're craving ice cream is because you're disappointed, or the weather feels summery, will be enough to diffuse the desire. At other times, you might discover that you do have a yen for something sweet, and fruit would satisfy. Using the craving exercise will help you examine your desires before you act on them. You will discover, however, that there are times when you'll go all the way through the questions and there's no epiphany, no big emotion, no release. You're left with a desire you want to satisfy.

The Craving Exercise has still done its work. You didn't act immediately. **You acted as a witness instead of blindly repeating an old pattern unconsciously.** Congratulate yourself, truly. But what if this happens when you've been giving into cravings more often? The first strategy is to delay. Delaying interrupts the stimulus/response pattern. An active delay is far more effective than a passive one. If you try to wait it out, you most often end up focusing more attention on the food. When you're active, you divert your attention and give the craving time to pass.

The Feeling Exercise

Eating works to deaden feeling but they don't go away. **The only way to release a feeling is to feel it.** This exercise is designed to help you do that. Ask yourself:

1. What am I feeling? (angry, sad, frustrated, overwhelmed, etc)
2. Where am I feeling it? (Where **in your body** is the sensation located?)
3. What does it feel like?

This 3rd question is what releases the feeling. You might not know immediately what it feels like. You have to ask the question and wait for the response. It will come. When I

did it recently, it felt like my skin was being stretched. It made me laugh because I was so overwhelmed and “stretched” was such a dead-on-accurate description.

In one session, Mim spoke about the pressure she was under at work, how the stress had been undermining her resolve. Her upset was clear in her shaky voice. I went through the questions with her and she said she felt the stress most acutely in her jaw. “What does it feel like?” I asked. “A vice,” she said without hesitating. Then she exhaled and smiled. The relief was instant.

When you describe the feeling, you experience the feeling, which lightens the stress. You then have a moment’s grace to break the habitual eating pattern. Use it to move on to Alternative Action.

Alternative Action

Part of the reason you eat is because it gives you something to do. It’s active. It alleviates boredom. It makes you feel better to do something for yourself when you’re blue. It gives you an outlet when you’re angry. Trying not to eat when you want to makes resisting harder than it needs to be. **Substituting a healthy food is always the first line of defense.** But when that isn’t satisfying, recognizing the need to act helps.

What kind of action? You know I’ll say a walk is ideal. So is making a phone call. For one thing, it’s offensive to hear someone chewing on the other end of the line. For another, just telling someone that you’re blue, or angry, or feel like eating, releases tension. Email and texting are always available but hearing someone’s voice engages you more. Clean out a drawer, sew on a button, pay a few bills. Getting a *small job completed* provides satisfaction beyond the value of the task. We’ll discuss this in more depth in the chapter on Endurance Tools, but for now, when you want to distract yourself from food, make the doctor’s appointment, throw out junk mail or write that thank you note. Cooking something healthy is also an ideal Alternative Action. It’s pleasurable to be around food, and eating something delicious will then be in your future.

The most available, often overlooked, Alternative Action is to breathe, slow, conscious breaths. This can be very hard to accomplish at the moment you feel driven to eat. But once you learn to stop and breathe – when you won’t want to – you have harnessed the most powerful tool of awareness. **Wherever you are, you have the ability to step aside, remove yourself enough to take a slow breath in, feel your lungs and chest expand and then contract as you breathe out. Follow the breath through your body. Repeat it two or three times.** If you do that, if you keep your awareness on your breath, it can’t be on the food, the emotion or the situation. No matter what you decide to do about the food after that, you will have interrupted the automatic response.

You may be using your own version of these tools already. But you’ll need to motivate yourself during rockier periods. You’ll eventually get into a rhythm with cravings. You’ll observe with the Craving Exercise and/or feel the feeling with the Feeling Exercise and

delay with an Alternative Action. Can you imagine how different your life will be when it's your reflex is to breathe, make a call or to take a walk when you feel severely stressed, instead of eating? If you think it can't happen to you, it's only because you haven't tried it.

When to Give in to a Craving

There are times when something delicious to eat is a true indulgence and not a punishment. Let's say you got a yen for a hot fudge sundae. You went through the Craving Exercise, balanced your check book, cleaned out your spice cabinet and still wanted the sundae. My advice would be to have it, and notice if it satisfied or triggered you.

You won't stay with something that is too constricting. What to watch for is when giving into cravings is happening more often. That's a sign that you need to cut out the trigger food for days or weeks, depending. **YOU WON'T WANT TO!**

You really won't want to. When you start telling yourself, the hell with it, tune into what the voice in your head is saying. That voice is not coming from your Ideal Video, it is not your friend. The advice below will help you reprogram self-defeating thoughts. In the meantime: **Giving into occasional craving is not a problem. Not acknowledging a pattern is.**

Our Inner Software

We reportedly have 50,000 thoughts a day, 90% of which we had the day before. Even if those numbers are off by a lot, the underlying principle rings true. It's hard to ignore the repetitive nature of thought and even harder to alter our internal monologue, that endless stream of unconsciousness.

Yet there is no changing behavior long-term without reprogramming the software that runs it. A new diet works for a while to instill a number of new thoughts. We're concerned about planning, preparation and doing it right. We give ourselves pep talks and scoldings. But the old thoughts are so deeply entrenched that it requires an on-going campaign to give new thoughts a chance hold their own over time.

It's not just the quantity of our thoughts, it the quality. Become a curious scientist again and tune in to what you're telling yourself. What's the value of dwelling on fears, doubts, judgments and whatever your particular pet topics might be? When I started observing my inner voice, I found a strict task master and critic who spent countless hours on contingency plans. Yet the stuff I worried about rarely happened. And what did happen, I hardly ever anticipated. We've all experienced that one.

I still have more backup plans than I could ever use, but I often catch myself and laugh. I take a few conscious breaths and let go. I look at the sky or pet my cats, something far more useful.

When it comes to my food repertoire, I speak an entirely different internal language than I once did. It happened over years, no question, but much of the change was consciously adopted. Choosing the thoughts that run you is a highly positive addiction that yields impressive results.

Litanies

In addition to being a form of prayer or a recitation, a litany is also a “prolonged or tedious account.” Most of what we tell ourselves all day qualifies under the third definition. But it’s the first and second definition I had in mind when I called the next tool Litanies. There are 2 kinds that work to replace self-defeating, existing messages.

1. Positive Litany: This is a thought you implant through daily repetition. “I’m losing weight and feeling great now,” is an example. Repeat it over and over as you walk, shower, or do the dishes. Timing it to the pace your walk or an aerobic exercise machine is ideal. For one thing, it’s harder to scarf down cookies when you’re constantly telling yourself you’re losing weight. For another, it’s far more powerful to claim the weight loss than it is to constantly hop on your scale and tell yourself you’re NOT losing.

2. Useful Phrase: This one is not necessarily positive. For example, “It’s not worth it,” is an excellent thought to cultivate in response to the sight of tempting food. You see the dessert cart and consciously think: “It’s not worth it.” You find yourself envying the person eating the ice cream cone and think, “It’s not worth it.”

Whatever phrases you choose need to be thoughts you really want to be true. Beware of choosing a litany you argue with. If when you say, “I’m losing weight and feeling great now,” there’s an immediate, “no you’re not,” response, that’s the wrong litany.

It’s best to start with only one Positive Litany. **Repetition is essential. Your positive litany becomes a mantra, a phrase that eventually feels as natural as breathing.** Supplement it with one Useful Phrase litany.

To begin: Become aware of your existing monologue. What have you traditionally told yourself about food, exercise and your relationship to both?

Life isn’t worth living without chocolate. The best part of a meal is dessert. I can’t control myself with nuts. You can never have enough chips. French fries are nature’s perfect food. Exercise is a drag. It doesn’t matter because I’m not losing weight, anyway. This much doesn’t count. Weekends are for eating. Parties are for drinking. It’s not fun if I can’t eat and drink what I want. Screw _____, I’m going to have the porterhouse. I never stick to things. I hate exercising. I hate to

*cook. I'm not going to think about rules. This is all more trouble than it's worth.
I'd rather be fat and happy.*

Write down what you tell yourself. Note as many thoughts as you can about food, exercise, dieting, changing your diet, socializing, health, illness and so forth. Really push yourself to uncover the messages you've been giving yourself all these years. **The more you notice, the more conscious you'll be when old thoughts reappear.**

Don't underestimate the power of thought. Trying to change behavior without reprogramming the underlying mental structures is like trying to grow sunflowers in dry, rocky soil in the shade. You have to clear the weeds, prepare the bed, plant the seeds and be sure to give your new thoughts abundant attention and care.

Next, look for your first litany. **Always use the present tense.** The mind is literal; this is happening *now*. Here are few possibilities. To start, choose only one or create your own.

- I'm losing weight now and feeling great.
- I love the food that makes me thin.
- I'm thinner, stronger and healthier everyday now, and I love the way I feel.
- I love the way exercise makes me feel.
- I'm giving myself the body I want now.
- I'm giving myself a _____(slim, sexy, healthy...) body, now.
- Eating healthy makes me feel great.
- Eating healthy is easy now, and I'm loving it.

Here are a few Useful Phrases that are worth cultivating for when you need them. Just choose one to begin.

- It's not worth it.
- This much matters.
- It won't taste as good as eating healthy feels.
- The flavor doesn't last, the pounds do.
- I've given up overeating.
- I don't do this anymore.

Write the Positive Litany and the Useful Phrase you choose on a Post-it and stick it on your bathroom mirror. Put one on your desk and on the refrigerator, too. You need to cultivate the habit of using them. Over time, you can add others. When I walk now, I use a string of litanies that have broad implications for me.

Thanks to Bernie Madoff, my mind easily can slip into fearful and negative thoughts. Having used litanies successfully to establish my current relationship with food, I've been able to apply them to my current situation. No surprise: **Everything goes better when you plant desirable thoughts.**

Start with one positive litany and one useful phrase. Get into a rhythm of using them and see for yourself.

Your Saboteur

It can be a struggle to maintain good intentions around certain people. Situations can sabotage you. Stress, anxiety and exhaustion are all potentially undermining.

But the biggest saboteur in your life is – you.

We are all our own most skillful saboteurs. The reasons are as individual and varied as we are. Asking “why” we do something, unless it’s with a trained therapist, is often frustrating and unproductive.

Instead, I want to ask a different question, one that can be valuable in shedding light on the issue of self-sabotage. First, a story.

Years ago, I took a sales seminar. The leader related an anecdote from a seminar he conducted in Italy. He wanted to quickly establish that he was an American who understood Italian culture, and he asked the group what Americans do if you ask them a question. His audience looked at him with blank stares.

He said: Americans answer questions. His audience started to laugh, and he knew he’d made his point.

Those of us listening to this tale were not laughing. I doubt you are. Of course Americans answer questions, what else would you do with them? Apparently, if you’re Italian, you might ponder the question, explore it or use it to go deeper into the subject.

I want to ask you a question that’s worth pondering. It’s not a question you need to answer. It’s a question that will allow you to observe your behavior from a slightly different perspective.

One more point. Again, years ago, I had an insight about myself as a dieter. As an adolescent, I dieted occasionally but mostly I overate without restraint. Once I reached my 20’s, however, I was always on a diet. Sometimes successfully and sometimes not. As I said earlier, it finally occurred to me I was keeping the weight on. At some point, I refused to *let* myself to be thin.

This revelation opened a big door for me. Did people react to me differently because of 10 pounds? Possibly. More likely is that *I* reacted to me differently. What I remember is that losing weight led to the sensation of my life accelerating, a sense of speeding out of control.

When I broached this subject in a Workshop recently, a member immediately responded by saying, “Yes, I know exactly. *I control the misery.*” I heard a collective gasp of recognition, including my own.

We feel safe with Dieting the Problem You Love to Worry About. It’s comforting to stay home and nosh. Or to go out with eating buddies and stay at that table – literally or metaphorically. But you wouldn’t be engaged in this process if you weren’t eager to move on.

A powerful question.

Ask yourself: **How good am I willing to have my life be?**

That’s a slightly awkward way to phrase the question. But ponder it like that for a moment.

In the Workshop, we tried phrasing it other ways: How good will I let my life be? Or how good will I make my life be? But there’s something about the word willing that resonated with people. I think the question was posed to me that way at some point in my past. It certainly stuck with me.

Life does speed up when you take control of your eating. Doing what you don’t want to do often accomplishes your goals. As you accomplish goals, you feel powerful. And fueling your body with high quality food gives you more energy. Your mood becomes optimistic. People notice a change. Each positive step propels the next one. It can feel scary.

It may be useful to have a litany to counter the fear.

I’m feeling powerful, deserving and in control now.
I’m ready for change now.

What becomes clear is that when you change your diet, you change your life in more ways than you anticipate. It may take a few weeks or even months until you feel the sense of power I’m alluding to, but you will.

Be prepared. Backsliding in the face of your personal power is a normal reaction. Think of it as one more opportunity to exercise your getting-back-on-track muscles. The truth is you are willing to have your life be sensational. Otherwise, you wouldn’t have come this far.

As you become used to thinking of your Saboteur as separate from your essence, it becomes easier to observe her/his special qualities. You’ll notice that your Saboteur assumes many roles.

Saboteur Multiple Personality Syndrome (SMPS)

- **The child:** But I want it! Now!! It's not fair if I can't eat it.
- **The slug:** Just give me the easiest thing, a bag of Doritos sounds good.
- **The rebellious teen:** Not eat that brownie? Make me!
- **The seducer:** This much won't matter. You deserve it.
- **The partner in crime:** No one will know!
- **The critic:** You've never followed through before.
- **The bully:** Just do what you want to do
- **The apathetic saboteur:** It doesn't matter. I don't care.

Tune in to who's speaking. You're bigger than a child or teenager, more savvy than the seducer or partner in crime, more committed than the apathetic Saboteur and so forth. Ellie told me that she didn't dignify her Saboteur with such a highfalutin name. She dubbed her *the child* because it reminded her she's bigger, smarter and stronger than that whiny part of herself. Be alert to what makes you feel powerful.

As you shift the power from "her" to you, the weight will not only come off but stay off.

Eight: Endurance Tools

Hate to tell you this, but maintaining awareness and flexibility until your new habits are secure can take years. Understandably, most programs avoid this subject. It's easy to feel discouraged when you think long-term unless you recognize the opportunity being realistic offers. Success doesn't depend on how you handle this day or that event. **Success depends on moving incrementally toward more reliable – not perfect! -- positive behavior.**

The "reach your goal" focus of most diets actually undermines success by misidentifying the objective. **A number on a scale is transitory.** Learning how to be flexible and to get back on track, over and over, is what produces lasting results.

One of the truths we use in the workshop is that **Mastery works better than willpower.** Think about where you're most successful (work, school, a hobby). Notice how you get things done no matter how you're feeling. We tend to have a different threshold for pushing past our moods when it comes to eating. Adults using candy and ice cream to cheer us up as kids had drawbacks.

Effective ACTION Training

Building mastery requires time and awareness. Effective Action Training is surprising easy, effective—and fun. It *follows* Effective Appetite Training because trying to make your goal senior to your mood with an addicted palate is like climbing a greased pole. The program involves two simple tools: a Training Goal and Target Goals. In both cases, you use quick, non-food related tasks to push past resistance.

You'll be practicing following through and taking satisfaction from completing something, no matter how small. **When you pause to enjoy the accomplishment, you'll notice there's a small pop of positive energy.** It's a momentary sensation that feels great. The more you note the energy pops in your life, the quicker you'll get the hang of not only creating—but also sustaining—the body you want.

Training Goal

Your Training Goal is something, not food or exercise related, that is easy to accomplish, which you would like to do every day but don't now do reliably. **It must be just one thing that takes less than 3 minutes to do.** The tool is a 2-step process. You do your one goal and then pause to appreciate having done it. **The satisfaction pause is as important as completing the goal.** Notice the slight energy pop from completing it. Favorite Training goals are:

- flossing your teeth
- making your bed
- throwing out newspapers and junk mail daily
- hanging up clothes before bed
- not leaving stray dishes in the sink (cleaning up after dinner is too big)
- washing your face before bed
- reading a short daily meditation
- saying a short prayer

Whatever you choose must be something you care about but tend to put off doing. If you don't mind a messy bed, making it would be the wrong Training Goal for you. Or, if you make your bed every day it wouldn't work. If you leave dishes piled in the sink, cleaning up would be too time consuming. Watering a plant that needs water only twice a week doesn't work, either. However, keeping the shoes on your closet floor in order *could* work if you straighten them ahead of time and then need only to maintain it.

If you can't settle on a Training Goal, I recommend using The Hunger Site: www.hungersite.com. This is an easy way to contribute to solving hunger in a concrete way as well as to Child Health, Breast Cancer, Literacy, the Rainforest and Animal Rescue. All in less than a minute. Go to the site and notice on the top left where there is a link for a daily reminder. An email will be waiting for you every morning. Each charity is listed and you click to make contributions at no dollar cost. The time cost is minimal.

Even though it's so easy to do, you'll see your resistance come up. There will be days you feel "too busy" for a one minute commitment. Or lazy, or annoyed. Occasionally the site doesn't function correctly. Notice whether you persevere and go back or let it go for the day. I'm not suggesting that one response is "better" than the other. They imply different perspectives that will relate to food.

My first Training Goal was making my bed. I was single at the time and went through periods where I made my bed every morning and others when I let it go. The unmade bed made me feel adolescent and unprepared, even though few people, other than the superintendent on occasion, saw it without my having time to straighten up.

Once I designated making my bed as my goal, my resistance patterns became hard to miss. I felt great when I did it and rebellious and/or ashamed when I didn't. I felt sorry for myself because I *had* to and proud of myself because I left my apartment in such good order. It didn't take long for me to see the link to my thought process with food. I began to *use* making my bed as a conscious paradigm. I'd see myself "getting away with" not making it and notice how that operated with food. I'd be "good" when no one else knew and note that.

For the past few years, I've used the Hunger Site for my Training Goal. No matter what, 98.2% I click every morning. The other 1.8% I get to it later in the day. That I do it so reliably doesn't mean I don't have resistance to doing it. In fact, a fair percentage of the time, those reflexive thoughts about *not* doing it are rattling around my brain. What's valuable is seeing myself swat them aside so easily.

This kind of resistance comes up with any Training Goal you choose. How hard is it to throw out junk mail? Or to floss your teeth? By all means, choose the easiest goal, as long as it's something you really want to do reliably but don't.

Whatever Training Goal you choose, stick with it long after you think the behavior is second nature. When you do add a new goal make it provisional. If your old goal deteriorates, suspend the new one until the old is back in line.

Remember to take a moment when your goal is completed to stop and notice the energy pop from having done it. Do not miss this step!

Target Goals

A Target Goal is an easy-to-accomplish discrete task or the next step in a bigger project. It should be something you would put off but could accomplish easily. **Look for the kinds of things that clutter your life.** No Target Goal should take longer than 15 minutes to complete. Most take much less. Set one Target Goal each morning. Be aware of the commitment. This tool will backfire if you don't empower it with significance.

Target Goals give you the experience of completing tasks and building momentum. All accomplishments are an accumulation of individual steps. You'll see over and over, in a non-food arena, the way small steps further the action. **Notice in particular how completing anything, no matter how trivial, provides an energy pop.** In contrast, *not* completing things, weighs us down. The pants you don't wear because they need shortening, the jacket that has to go to the cleaner, the memo that doesn't have to get done right away but should get done soon. **Any incompletion gums up the works.** Start crossing small things off your list, and you'll gain positive energy far exceeding your expectations.

Cleaning your closets is a big job. Straightening your sweaters will take less than 10 minutes. The corollary is that while changing your diet may feel impossibly overwhelming, eating one more serving of vegetables at lunch or dinner, for example, will help a lot. **The more you get in the habit of looking for small jobs to complete, the more energy pops you'll produce and the more weight you'll lose.**

Here's how to find the perfect Target Goals for you. Take a moment to jot down everything you can think of that you need to do right now that isn't part of your normal routine. Laundry, grocery shopping, putting gas in the car, all those on-going maintenance jobs don't count. Projects count. What needs doing around the house, at work, socially, for your hobbies, volunteer activities and so on. Who do owe a call or an email? A 10-page report is not a Target Goal. The draft for a 2-paragraph email might be.

Cleaning a small portion of a larger job works well. If you're in sales and hate to make cold calls, doing *one* as a Target Goal would be great. A thank you or condolence note is an excellent goal. Buying light bulbs would qualify. Sewing on a button or wrapping a present work. Buying a present would work if you had something in mind. Checking out one store or one website would work if you didn't.

Once you have your list, look for the easiest thing on it. That's your first goal. **Anything you put off out of dread is fattening.** This may sound ridiculous, but I promise you it's true. Keeping a list allows you to do complete a Target Goal whenever you need some positive energy. Designate one a day but feel free to do more.

If you find you are not following through, it may be that your goals are too difficult. Easy goals, quickly done, provide the pop. You can borrow the Useful Phrase Litany: This much matters. You'll find that, indeed, any small completed task creates momentum.

And then, when you get hooked on those energy pops, you'll begin to notice that saying no to the brownie, give you the same boost. So does avoiding the cookie aisle in the supermarket. Making a soup provides a great energy pop. Exercise offers a store of them!

Crisis Intervention

Sometimes people hit really stubborn streaks of backsliding. They go back to the Introduction to Appetite Training over and over and yet can't get themselves into a reliable groove.

This is a normal, temporary condition. It feels like it will never pass. It will. Yet no one wants to regain weight while they passively wait. A surprisingly effective remedy uses a non-food related challenge to get your positive juices flowing. The more you do, the more you do. We actually thrive with demanding projects of our own choice. So, when you're stalled or backsliding take on something to do that scares you.

Tackle a Big Project.

Committing to a big undertaking focuses energy and is a perfect antidote to intractable cases of either Entropy or Dieting the Problem You Love to Worry About. You are both ramping up for a new endeavor and giving yourself a sizable "problem."

The project needs to be something you really want to do. Choosing something and not following through will only make you feel worse. It's fine to have a buddy as long as you do your full share. But don't choose something you "should" do where you can easily get away without following through. Here are popular projects from past Workshop participants.

-Clean your closets. This means take everything out of the closet, sort through it, donate or sell what you can no longer use, clean the poles, shelves, etc and reorganize when you put everything back. If you want to really create positive momentum, include your kitchen cabinets.

-Clean out your attic or garage. Ditto the above advice.

-Have a party. Celebrate a big event – yours, a family member's or friend's. Or just have a party because you haven't in a long time. Go all out. This doesn't mean you have to spend a lot of money. It does mean you do a fun invitation, get your house in order, plan and/or cook the food and take responsibility for all aspects.

-Take an adventurous, active trip, like a bike tour or rafting trip. Volunteer somewhere for a few weeks, where doing something valuable is the draw rather than food.

-Run a marathon or train for some other really demanding athletic event.

-Chair a benefit or take on a really demanding volunteer project.

Use the positive energy generated by your big project to propel your healthy lifestyle goals. You can pair your non-food undertaking with parallel food agreement at any time in the process. Many people wait until the non-food goal is completed. Others get revved up sooner. You can make any food and/or exercise agreements you want. I'd suggest cutting out sweets and exercising as a ground floor agreement. If you're addicted to sweets, you're making everything harder. If sweets aren't your issue, cut out your worst trigger food. Or, plunge into the full program in tandem with your project. There is no "right" way.

Watch how you react to the various phases in whatever project you choose. Notice the parallels to food. Inevitably, there will be highs and lows in the process, things that go better than you could have imagined and glitches that make you wonder why you ever willingly undertook the commitment.

Ideally, whatever project you choose has a focus for completion. Starting a new volunteer job that has no climax is an excellent thing to do but doesn't work as well for crisis intervention. You want an endeavor with an arc. Watching yourself move through the phases to completion is a way to hold up a mirror to your impasse with food.

Anyone willing to take on a significant project to jump a hurdle with food is 62% over the hardest part. You'll come out the other side with a great adventure under your belt – yes, cleaning an attic or garage is a great adventure – and a new level of commitment to and excitement about changing your diet.

A few thoughts.

Stay conscious! Read. A few pages of this Handbook every day will remind you of something useful. Read health newsletters and check out interesting sites on line.

Write down the 5 Keys to Success on a Post-It note to keep them in mind. Exercise. Planning. Awareness. Flexibility. Food. Just those words will prompt useful thoughts.

Copy the questions for the Craving Exercise and Feeling Exercise and carry them with you. Just glancing at what they're written on will help you pause and reconsider before acting.

And, of course, USE your Training Goal and your Target Goals to produce the energy pops that remind you how great it feels to follow through and make good choices. Each day you have the ability to reboot, to exercise, eat well, enjoy food and be thin.

Nine: Eat Healthy Your Way Fundamentals

Whenever Gene sees me trying to open a package with a scissor, he inevitably hands me a box cutter we keep in the kitchen drawer and says, “Use the right tool for the job.” You need a well-equipped tool kit to handle all kinds of situations and conditions.

Eat Healthy Your Way offers a plethora of tools, hints, guidelines, suggestions, and, depending on how you’ve structured it, rules. No one uses them all. It may take a while to need some of them – or to become conscious of others. Here is a summary of the various fundamentals that underlie the program. Periodically, it’s good to review this list for inspiration, to counteract entropy and to deepen your new relationship with food.

First, a story: When I was around eight, my father asked a friend of mine how her violin lessons were going. “Oh, Mr. Stein, she said, as if he’d insulted her, “I learned the violin.” Changing your diet is a lot like playing the violin. It’s an on-going process, not a finite objective. The following will help you practice on your most precious instrument, your mind and body.

Precepts and concepts:

-5 Keys to Success. Exercise, Planning, Awareness, Flexibility and Food play equal roles in your new relationship with food. You usually know instantly when exercise and food consumption is off track. It’s sometimes harder to pinpoint Planning, Awareness and Flexibility as needing attention. Keep them in mind and Exercise and Food will fall into place.

-You don’t crave what you don’t eat. Believe it or not, it’s easy to forget this after a while. You start getting flexible and forget that the reason you’re craving that delicious whole wheat bread is because you’ve started to use it like a dessert. Whenever you have persistent cravings, go back to this precept.

-You do crave what you do eat. Turning the precept around is valuable. If you don’t eat a lot of vegetables, it’s easy to turn Eat Healthy Your Way into “the grain and fruit diet,” as Jennie recently noted. The more vegetables you eat, the more you crave. And the more vegetables in your diet, the healthier and thinner you’ll be. This is true for yogurt, a healthy breakfast, salad and soup lunches and so forth.

-To change unwanted behavior, observe it—without judging. When you judge behavior you add a dimension that reinforces it. Observe your actions like a curious scientist and you’ll free yourself to respond in a new way.

-Health is a function of diet and exercise. Our bodies are the gateway to our experience. We’re dependent on them and they are dependent on us. Switching to high-

quality fuel improves far more than how you look. Your energy and overall health and well-being are significantly enhanced.

-Progress, not perfection. Traditional dieting software runs on *all-or-nothing*, which leads to a yo-yo dieting pattern. Long-term results begin with moving at your pace in the right direction, one step at a time. It includes learning to be flexible, which requires getting back on track when you tip too far. All-or-nothing can be easier for a time, but it's destined not to last.

-Loose versus lost weight. You loosen weight before you lose it. Then it bounces around until it's gone. Whenever you step on a scale, you're seeing a number within your "bounce." You don't regain 3 pounds after an indulgent weekend. The minute you're back on track, they're gone. Only consistency over time produces real weight loss, which shows up as a lowering bounce.

-Doing what you don't want to do, at the very moment you don't want to do it, produces results. We do this all the time at work and with our friends and families. But you *really* won't want to give up a food when you're hooked. The degree of *not* wanting to is a clear sign of the need. Remember: by the end of the first day without the trigger, what you'll feel is relief. Be sure to see "substitution" and "carrots" below.

-“Knowing” versus experiencing. After you're on the program for a while, certain experiences – not craving what you don't eat, for example – can become concepts. You think you "know" that, rather than have a current experience of it. When you get fuzzy on the program, you're likely to remember the energy and positive feelings you had more as concepts. To get the experience again, go back to the Introduction to Appetite Training exercises. You won't want to. See above.

-Entropy. Things in a closed system tend to wind down. This happens with any process. You begin with great intention and over time you lose steam. Being aware of the tendency is step one. Then reread the Entropy section for how to renew enthusiasm.

-Dieting the problem you love to worry about. This one often pops up with success and/or stressful situations. We eat to stuff down emotions and generally distract ourselves from troubling issues. When we're anchored in new habits, those emotions and issues have room to surface. If you're eating is suddenly out of control, this is the one to look at.

-How good are you willing to have your life be? Various foods, situations and people can sabotage us, but we're generally our biggest saboteurs. Our Saboteurs speak to us in many voices. Ask yourself: Who is it telling you that ice cream makes you feel better?

Tools:

-Exercise. The single most critical and effective tool for weight loss, weight maintenance, overall health and well-being. In addition to burning calories and revving

up your circulation, exercise produces endorphins, which make you high. It relieves stress and depression, boosts your memory and may just help you live longer. I rest my case.

-Introduction to Appetite Training Exercises. Sweet, salty and fatty foods are addictive. The simple Appetite Training Introduction is a highly effective remedy. When you begin the program it may take a few weeks to get anchored. But once you've had the experience, just one one-fruit day becomes an effective way to get back on track. Treat it as home base.

-Planning. Plan your food! Be sure to have fresh vegetables and fruits in the fridge and healthy snacks on hand. Cook ahead and cook extra to make healthy meals instantly available. Plan a restaurant meal before you look at the menu. Plan your program deviations so they can be real indulgences. Think ahead before special occasions so you choose your behavior instead of the situation dictating it.

-Ideal Video. A powerful sense of what's at stake is invaluable. A vivid visual of you at the top of your game communicates a world of ideas, emotions and concepts in an instant. You are that person when you act in your own best interest. When you're hooked on a trigger food, that part of you feels very far away. Make the "you" of your Ideal Video your best friend. Replay it constantly.

-Water. Water is a basic tool of Appetite Training. It cleanses your palette while it satiates your thirst. The more water you drink, the more water you'll crave. It crowds out caloric liquids that saturate your taste buds. Water speeds weight loss. I've seen it consistently.

-Rules. Your rules, not mine or anyone else's, are what will produce results over the long haul. Create a sound structure with enough rules for your nature.

-Craving Exercise. Break away from your embedded stimulus/response behaviors with five simple questions. They expose the anatomy of your craving and open the way to change your reaction. This exercise resembles an exercise bike in a bedroom that gets used as a hanger: it doesn't work unless you use it. Write the questions in your Blackberry or iPhone. Don't leave home without them.

-Feeling Exercise. Feeling your feelings is the only way to release them. Eating serves to suppress them and they fester. Your body will give you the clue you need to lighten up—in every way.

-Alternative Action. This is the tool of delay. It's often paired with Craving and Feeling Exercises. Anytime you delay eating a desired food, you alter the established stimulus/response pattern. Eating an ice cream cone after using the Craving Exercise and doing an Alternative Action or two is very different, long term, than responding immediately to the desire. Excellent actions are conscious breathing, walking, making a phone call or *completing* a small task. Review these tools in the *Reprogramming* section.

-Conscious breathing. Think of it as an excellent Alternative Action or a tool on its own. Stopping to take a few conscious breaths interrupts a stimulus/response pattern. Be sure to focus on the breath moving through your body. When you watch your chest expand and contract, your attention is diverted from an emotion or situation. A break of even a few seconds is often enough to give you a real choice.

-Litanies. All clichés are true: we are what we think. Note the difference between the Positive Litanies you establish through repetition and the Useful Phrases you have on hand for specific situations. To change behavior long-term, you need to change the thoughts that run you. Begin with one thought and be prepared to have your results accelerate.

-Food Diary. People often resist keeping a food diary. What you're resisting is consciousness. It's much easier to be vague than specific. But awareness is the first step for change. A food diary can't be beat for revealing undermining habits.

Useful hints:

-Substitution. Each week when I ask members what worked that week, substituting a healthy food for an unhealthy one comes up. When you are cutting something out, be sure to fill the void with an appealing food. Microwaved fruit with non-fat yogurt is a favorite quick dessert substitution. Soup for a late afternoon snack. Edamame for chips.

Substitution also works with Alternative Actions and alternative rewards. You substitute the walk or the phone call for the cookie. You substitute a bath or a massage for dessert after a stressful day.

-Variety. Eating a wide variety of vegetables, fruits and whole grains ensures both optimal nutrition and sensual satisfaction. Because you do crave what you do eat, it's easy to get into a rut. Push yourself to choose different colored foods with different textures. Eat them raw and cooked. Having said that, many people eat the same breakfast every morning. If that works for you, make up the difference in snacks and at other meals.

-Frequency. Snacking a few times a day contributes to sustained energy and feeling satiated. You're far less likely to crave if you eat something appealing and healthy in addition to meals.

-Carrots. Snacking on baby carrots is the Workshops' favorite hint. Especially in the first week, carrots curb or eliminate the irritability that sometimes comes with cutting out sugar. After that, carrots are the go-to food for portable snacking. A zip lock bag of baby carrots is the new "in" accessory in the Hamptons. Red pepper strips, pea pods and jicama are also popular.

-Edamame. Edamame are soy beans and can be bought in the pod, or already shelled, in the freezer sections of most supermarkets. The Japanese serve them in the pod as a pre-dinner teaser. I find them a wonder snack, especially late day, when a hit of protein can satisfy. A cup of unshelled edamame has approximately 100 calories full of fiber, protein and minerals. It doesn't have a lot of fat or sodium, though they taste best served with a sprinkle of kosher salt. They're a finger food; you pop the bean out of the pod right into your mouth. Shelled edamame can be treated like any legume. A whole cup shelled doubles the calorie count. Two minutes in the microwave (in water) and they're ready.

-Walk away. No one said you absolutely must stand next to the hors d'oeuvre table at a party. Ditto a dessert display.

-Open the refrigerator. Look at the food. Keep the hand that is not on the refrigerator door at your side! Close the refrigerator. The existing stimulus response pattern involves the free hand entering the refrigerator and taking something out. The food is in your mouth whether you actually want it or not. Staying away from the refrigerator is an excellent hint but this first step can save you hundreds of calories a week. You do not need that handful of grapes, nuts or olives, even though they are all healthy. You certainly don't need the hunk of cheese, no matter how small. Learning to open and close the refrigerator with your hand at your side is a life-changer.

-Cut the fat in half. In most recipes you can cut the fat by at least 1/3 if not 1/2. If you want to spread peanut butter on bread, use a half what you did before. Over time, you'll naturally scale down further. Members are always amazed to find the one tablespoon of oil with an equal amount or slightly less of a good vinegar is enough to dress a salad. Try it and see.

-Use yogurt and buttermilk to cut fat. See the cooking strategies for how the substitution works.

-Take advantage of lower-fat alternatives. Light butter, cream cheese, sour cream and mayonnaise all work well. Fat-free half & half is fantastic. Yes, they have chemicals in them, but they're not unhealthy, especially when you consider the fat savings. Part skim milk cheese is still part high fat. Get it very thinly sliced and use just one.

-Use cheese as a condiment. This works for meat, too. A little can flavor a dish.

-Use broth, wine or water to cut down on fat. When you sauté or finish a sauce, use a bit of liquid to moisten instead of adding more oil. See low-fat sautéing under cooking strategies.

-To develop a craving for a healthy food, eat it every day at the same time. This is a great hint to help you consume more Priority Dairy, for example. A snack of non-fat plain yogurt and fruit at 4:00 every afternoon, will not only add calcium to your diet, but will also stave off pre-dinner munching while it makes you less ravenous for the meal.