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The True Cost of Food



We're All in a Hurry

I want to show you how simple and fast healthy meals can be. I want to arm you with easy meal ideas so you will know just what to grab and make as you are hurrying through the grocery store trying to figure out what you can get on the table ASAP.

I want you to experience how good you can feel after eating like this for a while. You may feel so good, in fact, that you won't be lured back into eating processed convenience snacks and meals very often. You'll be disappointed when you end up stuck eating junk on the rare occasion that no other options are available. And you may even notice a lower energy and concentration level than usual on those occasions.

Delicious, Fun, and Easy

I want to show you how to eat nutrition-packed food without spending an arm and a leg—how to spend your money buying valuable nutrients that your brain and body thrive on instead of empty, low-nutrient foods that keep you foggy, tired, and craving more.

I want to reveal the mystery of processed, packaged foods once and for all. I want you to know why eating sugar and refined carbohydrates such as white flour causes your fat cells to store those calories rather than burn them. I want you to know why you crave these processed foods so you can avoid them.

No one needs to be miserable while eating nourishing, disease-preventing food. Healthy food can be delicious, fun, and easy. In fact, from the big-picture perspective, you can't afford not to eat food that is good for you.

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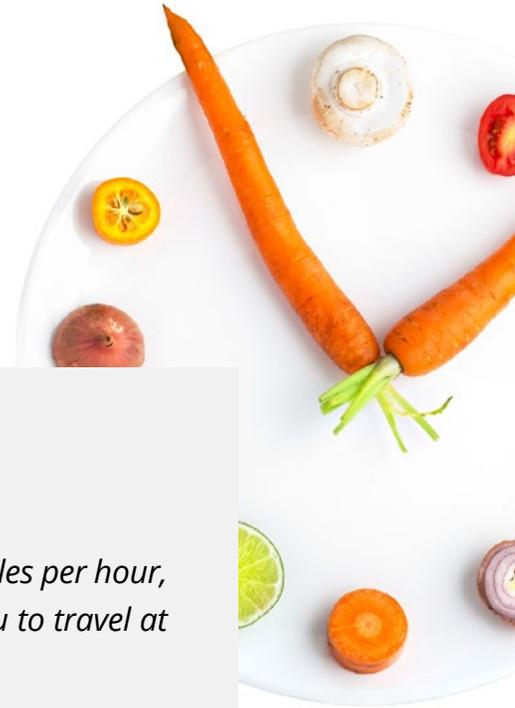
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Fueling a Smarter Life

I also want people to know that the food and drinks we consume directly affect the brain's ability to function.

We don't often think of our meals and snacks as helping us accomplish our to-do lists, and yet our ability to concentrate and be productive can be slowed down by our fuel choices.



Think About It.

If a particular type of gas made your car move at a maximum of twenty miles per hour, you would be sure to fill your tank with a different brand that allowed you to travel at the car's maximum ability and efficiency.



This is also true of the fuel we put into our bodies: a poor decision for lunch can truly derail an entire afternoon of productivity.



Did You Know?

The average American puts on about a pound of weight every year. That might not sound like a lot, but it adds up over time. Additionally, we often lose calorie-burning muscle mass as we age. The combination of excess weight and muscle loss takes a serious toll on our figures, but worse, it makes our bodies sick and our minds dull without us even realizing what's happening.



The Silent, Chronic Inflammation

Whether or not we're overweight, many of the lifestyle choices we make each day are killing us. Poor diet, activity levels, and sleep choices trigger autoimmune responses from the body, which then tries to repair itself.

Our day-after-day naive lifestyle preferences also create this constant need for the immune system to jump into action. As this cycle continues for months and then years on the inside of our bodies, a low-grade burning, irritating effect causes damaging inflammation. This chronic

inflammation is silent, so we are not aware that, over time, the entire body is negatively affected by the small choices we make each day.

This long-term inflammation slowly damages our organs and our ability to function at an optimal level. It traps cholesterol, causing it to build up and make our arteries hard and rigid. I heard a heart surgeon describe this inflammation as red, angry, practically bleeding vessels that look as if the arteries had been scrubbed with a stiff metal brush several times a day.

This silent inflammation also causes insulin resistance, forcing the body to produce more insulin to balance itself. That, in turn, directs the calories we consume to be used to grow more fat cells rather than being burned by the body for energy, making it even easier to gain more body fat and lose health-promoting muscle.

Even those without a weight issue often suffer from the ravages of insulin resistance and chronic inflammation due to diet choices and lack of exercise. All this ongoing irritation leads to rapid aging and diseases that kill both overweight and thin people. In 2013, these conditions and diseases accounted for about 75 percent of the total health-care costs. Heart disease, type 2 diabetes, cancer, Alzheimer's disease, metabolic syndrome, and sarcopenia (age-related muscle loss) are all common effects of this inflammation cycle that hurt our productivity and sabotage our quality of life.

Newer research has found that particular food patterns and exercise can lessen some of this damaging inflammation and help us improve our body composition. For those carrying excess body fat, decreasing body fat is the biggest bang for your buck. "The most powerful way to reduce your inflammatory factors is to lose excess weight," said Walter Willett, the chairman of the nutrition department at the Harvard School of Public Health.

For those who are not overweight, those same eating and movement changes needed to help lose weight can make a difference as well.



A Practical Approach to a Healthier You

Improving Your Health Is Easy

Making a lasting weight change is a tough hurdle for many people. Every time we try to stick to a new lifestyle plan, our all-or-nothing dieting mentality sabotages us.

We get so discouraged that we end up not making any real, lasting changes.

But the truth is that losing fat and building muscle don't have to be difficult. You don't need to be on a rigid diet to see real results. You don't need to guilt-trip yourself every time you don't eat well.

In fact, the sooner you throw those fears and guilty feelings out the window, the better.

Losing weight and improving your health are easier than you think. We all make small choices that we don't realize have an impact on our health over time. The life plan I teach you in this book will identify the simple steps and attainable habits that will make the biggest impact on your weight and health using the least amount of effort.



And when I say “simple,” I really mean it. If you can keep unhealthy food out of sight, grab an apple, and toss a handful of almonds in a Ziploc bag before you leave for work in the morning, you have what it takes to reach your weight-loss goals.

A Practical Approach to a Healthier You



Think About It.

Studies indicate—and I strongly believe—that doing something, however small, is better than doing nothing. I've seen this time and time again in my years of practice. Making small changes over a long period of time can make a huge difference in your health and in your life. In fact, small changes actually make a bigger difference in the long run than big changes do over a short period of time.

My plan isn't about being perfect. Any one step is designed to break the all-or-nothing dieting cycle that leaves you feeling tortured and discouraged.

You Can Feel Better

You can be healthier with fewer medical bills. You can maintain a stronger, leaner body. You can have more energy and a better quality of life to more fully enjoy your loved ones for a longer time. You can

concentrate better and become more productive and successful. And you can embrace every day with the powerful knowledge that you are achieving the real changes you need to live a smarter life—physically, cognitively, and financially.

You can have all of this and more with the simplified plan I'm about to share with you, based on the latest scientific research.



My Journey



Staying On The Frontlines of Nutrition

My passion for nutrition started with a healthy love of food. In junior high school, I ran track and I wanted to know the types of foods that would help me to become the best possible runner. This interest grew over time, and in college I graduated with a bachelor's of science degree in medical dietetics, followed by a master's degree in health education. After graduate school, I traveled the world, immersing myself in culinary cultures.



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But what really opened my eyes to the importance of this type of work were the effects that my healthy suggestions and practices had on the real people I worked with each day. And what drove me to stay on the front lines of nutrition were the people we didn't know how to help.

I remember one client in particular: Cheryl. She came to me in 1988, when I was an outpatient dietitian at Lawrence + Memorial Hospital in Connecticut. She was confident and ambitious, and she was used to achieving her goals—but she was having trouble with her weight. Cheryl was a typical yo-yo dieter. At the time she came to see me, she was eating only about thirteen hundred calories per day, but her weight wasn't improving.

Today, we're more aware of why repetitive dieters gain back more weight than they initially lose. We are also beginning to understand that the type of calories we eat is much more important than the number of calories.



My Journey



But in 1988, I didn't know how to help Cheryl, and that frustrated me. I spent the next two and a half decades on my quest to find the answers that would help Cheryl and others like her.

My mission to help clients who had lost hope ultimately paid off.

As science advanced and provided us with new knowledge about weight loss, I was listening for it. Today, I continue to keep up with the latest research on nutrition. If Cheryl came to me now, I'd know exactly how to help her, and I've helped plenty of others like her over the years—by finding easy, desirable, and delicious food solutions to their health challenges.

The value of simple, healthy life changes doesn't stop at the physical level. The fixes in this book have the power to affect everything that matters as the years go by. I love the feeling of making a real, positive difference in people's lives today as much as I did back then. I thrive on helping others to make the changes they need to solve their health challenges—and oftentimes these changes don't even have to be big ones.



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Less Is More

For more than twenty-five years, I've worked with thousands of people to improve their eating habits. I've spoken to many corporations, and I've helped people change their health for the better. I'm the president and founder of Nutrition Educational Solutions, more commonly known as Foods with Judes, a company dedicated to wellness. I'm also the corporate wellness dietitian nutritionist at Total Customized Fitness.

In 2010, I became an instructor at the International Culinary Arts and Science Institute. There, I educated a new generation of chefs about nutrition, and I research new ways to make healthy foods easy, desirable, and delicious. For nine years before that, I was the president of Health and Nutrition Education Services, where I brought interactive wellness tools to thousands of children and their families.



Weight Loss and Healthy Living

What is equally important is that I practice what I preach. I've spent almost thirty years unlocking the keys to weight loss and healthy living. During that time, I've been observing, studying, and investigating legitimate research on the subjects in this book. I love learning about the science behind the work. Even more, I love converting that science into easy-to-adopt practices that create a difference within the reality of daily life.



Think About It.

No matter who you are or what your diet history is, you can change your health for the better. I've seen it happen over and over again in my career. The small, simple steps are what make the real differences in the long run. Making some changes most of the time for the rest of your life is much better than making lots of changes for a short time.

Less truly is more!



Start with One Fix

My philosophy is simple: identify the most helpful actions to improve health and make them easier for everyone to adopt.

I've pinpointed the twelve most important actions to get the biggest bang for your effort. These behaviors are simple, sometimes seemingly insignificant, and often these behavior shifts aren't difficult when taken on individually. However, their effects can be enormous, especially when even a few of them are added together over a lifetime.

Fixes

I have a term that I will use in this book to refer to these little changes. I call them "fixes."

The twelve fixes found throughout these pages may indeed look simple, but their effects are incredibly far reaching. After just a couple of months of utilizing these fixes, you'll begin to feel more energized, awake, and astute. Your body mass will begin to shift from fat to more lean tissue. Inches will vanish from your waistline. You'll be less hungry. And as the unhealthy body fat melts away, you'll feel like you can conquer the world.

Collectively, these twelve fixes become a life plan. This 12-FIX LEAN LIFE PLAN is not like traditional weight-loss programs. It involves eating, not starving. It boosts your metabolism, rather than

slowing it down. It helps fat cells burn calories, not store them.

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My 12-FIX LEAN LIFE PLAN means simple changes to your environment rather than a fight with your willpower. This plan provides action steps and research-based strategies to make healthy living easier. It celebrates successes instead of dwelling on failures. It fits into just about any lifestyle or diet restriction. This plan turns seemingly huge challenges into easy-to-reach goals.

This 12-FIX LEAN LIFE PLAN can transform your health for the better and makes it easy for you to keep it that way.



Think About It.

Scrap the mentality that you have to do it all. This is not a diet. Any one thing that you do will help you to achieve significant results in the long term. If you exercise for one minute, that's better than zero minutes. If you eat one apple instead of a second piece of chocolate cake, that apple will do its part to reduce your inflammation, especially as new habits form.

These Fixes Are Not Difficult

It's not hard to keep less-healthy food out of sight and keep an apple on your desk at work. It's easy to change the order or the times of day you eat rather than going hungry. You will be surprised at how simple these fixes are if you concentrate on making changes one at a time, most of the time.

Track the things you do right, not the things you do wrong. Before you know it, guilt will disappear. Health and success will take its place.

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“Everything” might sound impossible, but “something” almost never is—and even if a change is small, it will bring a healthy transformation to your body over time.

When working toward a new lifestyle starts to feel overwhelming, remember: just start with one fix.

