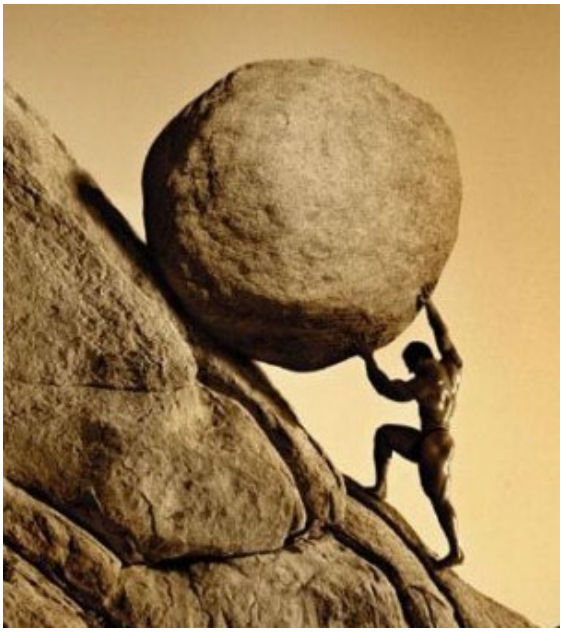
Uncovering You

Weight Loss, Rebirth and Liberation from the Prison of Flesh

Chris Krause



When diet is wrong medicine is of no use. When diet is correct medicine is of no need.

DISCLAIMER

I do not claim to be a medical professional. On the contrary I am an academic researcher who has no formal medical training. At my heaviest I was over 440 pounds and lost more than 170 in my first year. Do not apply anything I write here to yourself until you have done extensive independent research from reputable sources and consulted with a doctor. I also do not claim to be a nutritionist (a word we will explore in a bit). Instead you should read this work as you would any personal diary; consider my words as they apply to me, and if you find something familiar in your own situation, may it help you in self-awareness and personal goals. **Low carbohydrate, high fat diets are not permitted for those with Type 1 diabetes or gallbladder disease.**

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Feel free to share the ideas from this book with your friends and family. Suggest that those who benefit from this information compensate me for my time – but my main concern is that their health improves. You do not have permission to profit from this work or to mass distribute it.

Contact

You can email me direct at krause@krauselabs.net. I welcome correspondence of any sort. You can also reach me on Skype at tyrspawn. I offer coaching for those who would prefer some guided help in this tricky and sometimes exhausting quest. There is a way forward.

Organization of this work

This work covers how to transform hopelessness to courage, fat to muscle and fear to calm. You will lose the weight. You will gain strength. Mental and physical. You will learn the methods to know what is to your benefit and what will undermine your goals. Most importantly you will achieve the latter: you will become the person you can and should be.

My Long Struggle

The text begins with an introduction of who I am, my story and how I defeated the curse of lifelong fatness. Coming into view is the main body of the text, comprising three sections. Each section is further subdivided into a series of vignettes relating to the objective at hand.

Section I: Liberation From the Prison About You

This chapter begins with an overview of the nutritional science which will save your life. We advance to a simple overview of good nutrition and the fundamentals of fat loss, so engendering a method which is enjoyable, sustainable for life and deeply effective.

Section II: From Flesh to Steel

Now that you have learned to manage your weight and restored your health we begin a regiment of training to master, make robust and strengthen the body. Herein you will find an overview of the basics of exercise; a progressive program which begins with the most basic efforts and advances to the level of athleticism. An important consideration is paid to avoiding injuries and common mistakes.

Section III: The Way to Victory

Not all is physical. The mind must also be trained. This shorter section offers a crash course in strengthening the mind so that it becomes an inner citadel: impervious to misfortunes, glad for all, hardened against negativity and becoming a tool for self-motivation and action.

Miscellaneous

Random stuff which did not fit elsewhere including recipes, recommendations and reflections.

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My Long Struggle

Before we dive into the guide proper you might be interested in my path to lose weight. It's pretty simple: I was born fat, have always been fat and if my weight were mapped throughout my life it would be an ever increasing plot. My mother is obese and obesity or at least pudginess runs in the family (it's how our ancestors survived famines and the Black Death in old Europe I guess). My father's family is a mixed bag: some are a bit on the chunky side but there are no hugely overweight people. Growing up I remember constantly being hungry, uncontrolled kitchen grazing and lots of junk food. Bad food habits and habitual overeating was also forwarded by my father, who having been raised by a traditional Italian mother, believed in food as an experience, as a reward and as an expression of affection. My father insisted on always eating more, and the more was often pasta and starches. I was pretty active as a kid – I played outside a lot and on the weekends did "manhunt" and "wrestling" with friends, which was a lot of high intensity sprinting, circuits and stress positions. Compared to peers outside of my circle of friends I was probably less active, as I was and still am interested in technology, gaming, scholarship and craft; yet I would have been considered an athlete in comparison to most of today's kids!

Other than a few times in which my pediatric doctors advised me to lose weight by eating less (fat) and exercising more, I was never cognizant of just how big I was becoming. I never weighed myself, did not have access to a full body mirror and was reassured by those around me that I would eventually "slim out"

as I grew up. Side bar: this is a lie – metabolic disturbances and weight gain you accrue while young will be very difficult to work off later on and parents allowing this are committing child abuse in my opinion. I knew I was fat but not until I began to weigh myself consistently (just in mid-2011) did I realize the depth of the problem.

I had a shit load of medical issues, all of which were complications of my diet and undiagnosed. I would get winded after going up stairs and it took no less than ten minutes to recover. I got shin splints after walking for more than a half mile. My vision was often blurry in the morning after I eat my bagel, cereal and margarine (a sign of diabetes and abnormal blood sugar). I was constantly tired and experienced daily crashes after meals which left me irritable and unable to focus. My skin was dry and flakey. I often developed heat rash in the lower extremities during the summer. Speaking of summer, I could not operate in temperatures over 80 F for very long before become miserable or fatigued. I avoided going to some places because I couldn't fit physically. My painful activities with the opposite sex were often restricted to the dreaded friendzone. I had tooth decay. My heart would often chug violently and one time I even called an ambulance because I thought I was having a heart attack. Constant heartburn and indigestion. Stomach ulcers. Headaches and withdrawal symptoms whenever I went extended periods without certain foods. My flexibility was horrible – I could not raise my legs very far without experiencing horrible pain and stiffness. I actually could not sleep on my back at one point, as the weight put a lot of pressure on my lower back and made me toss and turn all night. The list goes on and on.

It was for these symptoms, not for my size (which I had trouble perceiving) that I first tried to lose weight. My first attempt in middle school was with Herbalife, a snake oil supplement brand and severe calorie restriction diet that my mother seemingly lost some weight employing (regained later). But I did not have the money for an extended course and my sporadic consumption of the initial one convinced my mother not to further her economic support of that regiment. During high school I was vegetarian and even vegan for a time, and only gained more weight. I tried calculating my energy needs using basal metabolic rate calculators and formulas, and took nutrition and conditioning classes in college, furthering my lifelong interest in medicine, nutrition and conditioning. It's indeed an ironic thing to be the most educated person in a room when it comes to medicine, biology and nutrition and yet be the

unhealthiest! I experimented with various things but could never find a solution, and when I failed, would become depressed and apathetic. I simply stopped caring and resigned to the seeming impossible situation I was in.

In spring of 2011 I finally got fed up with being fat and started religiously following the common conventions for losing weight and good health and following the nutritional guidelines forwarded by the US government: a lot of whole wheat carbohydrate, a small amount of fat, a relatively small amount of protein, cut out the soda and juice, avoided salt, fruit, decreased my calories to just my basal metabolic rate and increased my physical activity. At one point I was doing an hour of boxing a day and weight lifting on a weekly basis. I tried this regiment for two months. Then the totally incomprehensible happened: I still did not lose any significant weight. The breaking point came when I went to my new and current doctor one day (for an infection in my leg, probably a complication of my obesity), they had to weigh me during processing and my weight was higher than the scale could support, greater than 350 lbs. The last time I had been weighed was in high school and I was 340 or so then, so this alarmed me. I got home, and bought a scale online that could support up to 440 pounds, thinking that I would probably be a few pounds heavier than 350.

The scale came and I weighed myself for the first time in about ten years. I stepped on, the scale creaked and the number flashed onto a vibrant blue LED with big black text. I was 437 pounds. My heart literally sank and I felt like I was just informed of my impending demise. I got dizzy for a second and collapsed on my bed, staring at the ceiling. How did it get to this point? How was I this big? Why didn't anyone help me? Why didn't anyone tell me? Why did all those fuckers lie to me? How could I be so stupid? Is the scale broken? How is this possible? All these questions raced through my fat head and I broke out in a sweat. I had always told myself that if I ever got this heavy I would just stop eating or otherwise find a radical solution to get rid of the weight. I vowed then and there, to myself, to go online and find something that would work – because obviously what the government was forking out wasn't working for me.

The first place I went was the internet forum Sherdog, a mixed martial arts, combat sports and functional conditioning community. I had gone there before to talk about boxing gear I was buying in the months before and knew of the existence of a nutrition sub-section which I had yet browsed. My experience in the other areas of the forum convinced me that they might have some clues

on how to lose this heavy burden: the forum was seemingly inhabited by boxers, mixed martial artists, powerlifters, trainers, competitive athletes and other individuals who could demonstrate results. Browsing through the nutrition forum I ran across a few threads focusing on low carbohydrate diets, ketogenic diets and intermittent fasting. A common feature theme in all of these threads was success stories by formerly obese dudes who sounded like they were in a situation similar to mine. Reinforcing the anecdotes were scattered links to medical journals and posts by forum "authorities" – well respected veteran posters who were personalities in either the sport training or martial art community. I read all of these threads, most of which spanned dozens of pages of discussion, and determined that the ketogenic diet probably had the most starkly contrasting results for the obese. I didn't read too far into it, or conduct any research, as I figured it was just another nutritional concept which wouldn't work for me. But as I was depressed and hopeless, I decided to try it out of complete desperation.

So what's in a ketogenic diet? This book will cover that, but a grossly simplified definition for sake of conversation would be a diet in which only a small percentage is comprised of carbohydrate, the majority consists of fat and a moderate amount consists of protein. The mechanism is that the body burns its own fat for energy instead of glycogen, the latter of which is converted through a process of carbohydrate metabolism. I didn't know much more than this basis and the success stories swirling about my head and decided to half-ass it to see if there was any truth to it. I stopped eating all carbohydrates except a few grams in cheese. My miserable diet consisted mainly in deli meats and cheese, some eggs, a lot of water and some peanut butter and a miniscule amount of nuts. Eating in such a manner was miserable but as I weighed myself on a daily basis and began to chart the numbers the amazing happened: I lost 18 pounds in the span of one week. The next week I lost another 15. The weight was literally flying off and what's better: I instantly felt transformed. Almost all of aforementioned health woes were gone in the first week or the coming weeks. I felt like I had won the lottery. This diet sucked ass, but I had figured out the essential nutritional configuration necessary for me to lose weight! For those who don't have the patience to read much further before throwing this guide out: do not fret, the diet we adopt to lose and maintain our weight is wonderfully diverse and delicious, it was just that in my initial exploration of it I did not know what I was doing.

Those glorious bastards on Sherdog were right! A stroke of luck and a desperate gambling leap in the dark had gifted me with an invaluable seed of knowledge necessary to begin a more deliberate and exhaustive inquiry into this little known world of nutrition. This guide represents the findings of that inquiry – through personal experimentation, academic surveys and analysis, a retrospective on mainstream and official guidelines, and discussion of philosophies of health. I attempt to distill, offer alternatives to and expand upon the basic plan I have followed to transform my health, lose a huge amount of weight and achieve a more fulfilling life. How did I personally do it?

- Sound nutrition is the key to health; good food is medicine and the way to avoiding disease
- Nothing goes in the mouth that has not been considered
- Eat a small amount of carbohydrate a day if possible, eat a lot of fat and a moderate amount of protein
- Eat a good amount of fibrous vegetables, nuts and seeds
- Fast daily
- Focus on whole, natural produce and avoid stuff coming in boxes
- Hydrate religiously
- Lift heavy things, walk a lot and sprint occasionally
- Indulge during the holidays and special occasions
- Become interested in cooking and experiment in the kitchen
- Focus on what's in your power and become indifferent to what's outside of your power
- Eliminate bad influences, praise health and imitate inspiring role models
- Set goals and reach them; force yourself into uncomfortable and challenging situations

Note: All of the above concepts will be covered in this work.

Forget everything you know about failure. All of that is about to change. All it takes to overcome a hopeless struggle is a push in the right direction and a whiff of the truth. Rather than struggle in self-defeating cycles as I once did, I will reveal the most common configurations which persist to defeat us: in doing so you will triumph over these pitfalls. Let's get to work.

Section I:

Liberation From the Prison About You

Objective: Restore your health. Lose fat. Ensure longevity.

Who should read this?

You are at least 300 pounds of fat ass. Maybe you are 400 or 500. You have been fat your entire life. You despise the idea of going out because you can't fit in most chairs. You have tried to lose weight before, but for whatever reason it didn't work. You get winded. You are often depressed. You feel hopeless and can't figure out why you are fat. You are sick all the time. If you walk for a long time your bones hurt and you need to rest for a long time. You haven't been laid or haven't been laid in years. Your attempts at improving the latter have failed horribly. You live in western civilization. You want to lose weight.

The goal

You are closer to 200 than 300 something pounds and rapidly approaching your target weight. Whenever you see family or go to parties there is no end to the compliments: “you look great, how did you lose the weight, it’s amazing, you look half the size you once did.” You have confidence. You wake up and feel excited for conquering the world and going outside and being active. You don’t care if you wear tight clothes because you look good and look better every day. You recently signed up for a dating website, and rather than have to beg people to go on dates, you were offered a date by someone else. You have shown other people in your family how to lose weight and now you are a minor celebrity. Your energy level is through the roof; you stay up late and wake up early and still feel like you have more power than you know what to do with. You fit in restaurant booths with feet of space to spare. You don’t feel frustrated anymore because you know exactly what food does to you. You are a new person and look forward to the future. For the first time in recent memory you are happy.

This goal is not out of your reach: you will accomplish it if you follow what I say.

Nothing will stop you from losing weight, because you will soon know once and for all why you are fat.

How to read this

If you have ever read any of my previous works, you will note a distinct shift in language. Brevity will be key here, and I will not infuse the same level of rigorous erudition which is common in my academic writings. It is your responsibility to look up names and concepts I drop and to check my sources. I am an advocate for responsible internet searching and in this regard you are in luck: the internet has the best nutritional data and information available. The nonsense that is on TV sometimes will manifest but it’s also often accompanied by good stuff, especially if you check out the websites I am going to suggest to you and avoid commercial sources. Bookmark Pubmed and search it constantly as much as you do Google. I am not going to teach you how to be a critical thinker, for that see Carl Sagan’s Baloney Detection Kit, go to (a good) college, or

read *The Trivium: The Liberal Arts of Logic, Grammar, and Rhetoric* by Miriam Joseph and the Platonic dialogues.

You must become a perpetual student of nutrition and a scientist. This involves, with the former, asking questions everywhere, and reading as much as possible. With the latter it refers to using your body as a chemistry set, within reason, to apply different nutritional concepts until you find something which works for you. Not everything in this guide will work for you, perhaps nothing will. If you take anything away from it, observe the method of skeptical scientific truth seeking, and apply it to yourself. I hope that by reading this you at least develop a disdain for mainstream nutrition and start to seriously explore your health by checking out those who are warriors. If someone looks like Dr. Phil they probably won't give sound nutritional and health advice.

No one knows anything

I primarily wrote this guide because no one knows anything about our situation. First, the conventional wisdom of the United States regarding nutrition is nonsense. Contrary to popular belief, the United States did not become obese from fat intake but from excessive carbohydrate intake. As "fat making you fat" is a central theme of mainstream nutrition in the United States you should not bother with any mainstream sources of nutritional advice. Those in pricey suits calling themselves doctors on Oprah and on TV don't know anything. Otherwise all those middle aged house wives would be slim. Don't listen to your friends; they lied to you your entire life. All the bullshit they told you about "you're just big boned" and "you'll slim out eventually" is destroying you. Whole-grain bread isn't going to save you (it's worse than white bread), and neither is diet soda or sea salt. Just consider this basic premise: if the mainstream cure for obesity actually worked, and all your friends (and you) tried it with little or no result, then of what use is the cure? None. The current trends enrich certain parties at the expense of your health and have no basis in science.

You need to wake up. You've been lying to yourself all these years, accepting everyone's bullshit and weaving a complex web of rationalizations and justifications that it's ok to be as big as you are. Deep down you know it's not OK

and you are miserable. You don't want to die young and you don't want to feel horrible all the time, day after day. Get mad. Get mad at yourself for those years of self-neglect and use that energy to motivate yourself to make a change. Buy a scale and see yourself for what you are: in numbers. It's time to finally face the numbers.

Another important fact is that there is not one doctor in the United States who has a degree in nutrition. Nutrition is not a branch of medicine such as oncology or geriatrics; there are no certified academic experts in nutrition. This is a major failing of modern medicine, as nutrition is the determiner of all health. As a corollary, it is still considered as such in traditional Asian medicine. While the latter is often incorrect on matters of advanced medical conditions, it is sound in the sense that it approaches an individual's health primarily from the perspective of nutrition. Nutrition is everything – it determines your mental health, your physical health and your quality of life. If you eat the slop everyone else does, you will be tired all the time, you will be depressed and you will be weak.

Did you ever notice how all your friends complain about being tired all the time? How they are often irritable and lack concentration? It's because their blood sugar is constantly spiking and normalizing due to the unnatural shit they put in their mouth. The majority of their diet consists of refined sugars and syrups which did not enter the human digestive track until a few decades ago, and the antecedents of which (grains) did not until thousands of years ago. For millions of years human beings did not eat the slop which now constitutes the vast majority of the American diet. During this old time human beings were taller, leaner and less prone to "diseases of civilization" – they were virile specimens. They eat what was commonly available and evolved to best metabolize these foods. The advent of agriculture and the contemporary invention of mechanized food processing went against evolution and the historical record by introducing foods into the human diet as staples which previously were either not consumed at all or consumed in very small quantities. The result: disease and obesity.

With this in mind: every person you know probably has wretched nutrition and you need to start ignoring them and start going to body building and martial arts forums and reading posts and articles by people who are warriors. Chances are the "common sense" advice you have been getting from

those around you is ineffective at best and dangerous at worst. If someone hasn't demonstrated significant weight loss or athletic achievement you should be wary of their advice. This is something I learned the hard way: decades of listening to rubbish contributed to my obesity.

Returning to the topic at hand: all nutritionists are simply people who studied nutrition, came up with their own conclusions, and now call themselves nutritionists. Professionally nutritionists offer nutritional guidance, but their medical conclusions are often quite different. In fact, there are thousands of commercially successful nutritionists who call themselves nutritionists and do not even have a medical degree. I cannot stress how important this fact is: there are no doctors who have a concentration in nutrition, as nutrition is not a branch of medicine as of the time of this writing. Most doctors have to take a few classes on nutrition in medical school in order to graduate, but nutrition is not central to the conception of health. For instance, most doctors would not consider blood sugar and carbohydrate intake in the causation of feelings of being run down, depressed or tired. Firm orders to change your lifestyle (What you actually need to do) are rarely made by doctors, even if they are aware of the breadth of nutrition, which few are. The relevance of this fact is that what should matter most to you when judging if something is bullshit or not is on the DEMONSTRATED RESULTS and peer-reviewed scientific evidence cited by the expert. And not just any scientific evidence, it must be randomized and controlled, but we will get back to that a bit later.

One final point is that there ARE nutritional experts who you should pay attention to. When I think of people who know their shit the first names which come to mind are Martin Berkhan (leangains.com), Lyle McDonald (bodyrecomposition.com) and Alan Aragon (alanaragon.com). These are contemporary names, and I do not mean to insult the memory of past greats by omitting them here; Jack LaLanne knew what he was talking about. Great, so these guys know their shit, so I just read their articles, get a clue, and then I lose weight right? Wrong. Martin and Lyle were never 400 lbs – most of their clients were not 400 lbs, and they do not write with the complexities of being 400 lbs in mind. I would not be so bold as to suggest that they do not understand being THAT fat, only that they do not write for that audience. And who does? No one. At least no one I have run across. To make matters worse most of the current nutritional gurus write for body builders, athletes and other scientists, not for the exceptionally fat. That's part of the reason why I'm writing this. No one

understands that you can't "just jog around the block" – you are so fucking fat that you would kill yourself trying to do that, and even if you could physically do it, you would not be seen in public doing so. And you have tried to "stop eating so much" – only to remain fat. This is your lucky day because all of that is about to change permanently.

Research Shenanigans and Who Knows Their Shit

It's on the news again. Research finds that eating eggs causes heart attack. Research finds that eating meat causes cancer. Research finds that (insert natural thing to do or eat) causes disease. There's an information war going on and conflicting reports arise constantly. How and why does this happen? There are two issues at play here: the need to sell a headline, and scientific ignorance.

The first is pretty straight forward. No one would be willing to read your article if it said "in a study of mice, directly injecting cholesterol lead to a 10% increase in cardiac events" – instead it's "you will die if you eat eggs." The media gets away with this because they know punchy headlines (like the one preceding these paragraphs) get people's attention. You can either use those headlines for good, or you can use them for exploitation, which leads to the second component of this puzzle.

No one seems to understand how medicine works. In medicine the primary way to figure something out is to start with an observational study, in which some researchers draw vague connections amongst trends, often from self-reported data or from a small sample group, or from animal testing, or from statistical analysis. If this preliminary sort of investigation looks promising a more serious form of research called a randomized controlled trial is then used to confirm findings. The problem with the media, and with those who want to exploit or manipulate you for their own gain is that they more often than not cite observational studies and then claim associated health risks or benefits. Observational studies are absolutely worthless for lifestyle change and adjustment unless they are reinforced by a series of mutually corroborating randomized controlled trials conducted under sound and rigorous scientific methodology. What are some specific problems with observational studies?

- The researchers often know which test groups are under which variables, possibly skewing outcomes.
- The test subject could be a rat.
- The application of test variable could be insanely unrealistic, such as directly injecting mega doses of hormone or steroid, and then drawing the conclusion that eating food would have the same effect.
- The test subjects, if human, could be self-reporting – they could be keeping a "food journal" and not be under constant clinical supervision, potentially invalidating results.
- Outstanding variables are rarely, if ever, excluded and contaminate results. Observational studies have shown a connection between fat intake and heart disease – but carbohydrate intake and other nutritional factors are rarely controlled. This is the most common and most severe example of shenanigans.
- The number of patients could be very small or very limited in scope and findings could not reliably be used as general principles across broader demographics.
- Trends analyzed from statistics often do not translate to clinical settings.
- And more.

So if observational studies are such shit why are they used? They are helpful for giving researchers a "clue" or potential lead to investigate; no one wants to grant funding to a randomized controlled trial which has no possibility of producing good science. So you get your leads from observational studies and then you confirm those leads with randomized trials. The outcome? The vast majority of observational studies are NOT confirmed in a randomized, controlled environment. The problem here is not with the scientific method but with the media and special interest exploitation and misapplication of that method. So what's different about a randomized controlled trial?

- Randomized: There are multiple test groups including at least 1 control which is under placebo, and the researchers don't know which group has which variable so they can't intentionally or inadvertently influence the outcome.
- Controlled: The subjects are under clinical supervision, all extraneous variables are eliminated and constant blood work, vital stats and other monitoring occurs. All statistics derive from internal testing and nothing external affects the test.

- Trial: It's a long term application of a scientific concept on a demographically diverse human group. Even beyond the clinical trial the patients are observed on a long term basis before findings are concluded to mitigate the possibility of lingering side effects.

So why am I spending so much time on this? You need to know the difference between these two types of scientific findings, because a lot of conmen use observational studies to back up their bullshit claims. Whenever you hear a medical scientific claim look at the source: if it's not randomized and controlled, it's worth noting as potentially interesting but not something to change your lifestyle around. Furthermore, one randomized trial is not enough to make a lifestyle change.

Why am I fat?

There are two possibilities. Either you are a fat ass due to gluttony, in which you should amend your character rather than your nutrition, or you are a fat ass due to metabolic factors and poor nutritional choices. This guide focuses on the latter, if your problem is gluttony, binge eating or other psychological problems, you need to see a therapist. I know some of you reading this binge eat in response to occasional feelings of hopelessness or pain, or might feel persistent hunger pains and an urge to eat constantly (this effect is caused by the food you eat and will soon be replaced), but if it's one of those things you can consciously control, then continue reading. If you can't in any sense restrain yourself from eating shit, you should work on that before you come back here.

Fact: genetics is the single most important factor in weight. You know people, those tall and skinny sons of bitches, who can eat anything and remain skinny. Yeah, that's genetics. It also could be why you are fat. In my case, I am carbohydrate (sugar) sensitive, which results in me immediately putting on weight whenever I eat excess carbohydrates; if I eat more than a certain number of carbs a day, I balloon up. The less carbs I eat, the more effective my weight loss is, and if I eat above a certain amount, weight loss is difficult or impossible.

With high levels of sugar in the bloodstream from consuming carbohydrate, your body can develop a resistance to insulin. Insulin is a hormone responsible for regulating the metabolism of fat. When you have too much insulin and sugar in the blood, your body is more likely to store fat. This is sensitivity in action. Sensitivity manifests in a continuum beginning with normal blood sugar metabolism and ending in type 2 diabetes. In between are glucose (sugar) intolerance, insulin resistance and metabolic syndrome. We will get to this in a bit, but it can be summarized simply as this: consuming foods high in sugars creates an environment in the body which signals the body to store fat, causes disease and disrupts our natural metabolism, contributing to a wide array of complications other than mere weight loss. For sensitive individuals 100 calories of bread is not interchangeable with 100 calories of meat: the bread is more likely to signal fat storage. While sensitivity can be influenced by dietary choices (namely eating refined carbohydrates), there is also a genetic factor, which is why obesity tends to run in families.

Furthermore, adiposity (fatness) of mothers has a direct correlation to adiposity of their children. Why? High insulin levels in the mother translate to high insulin levels in the child, creating excess fat cells and abnormal metabolic function in the womb which may be carried to adulthood if not intervened upon early in life. Eating high carbohydrate meals also skyrockets the hormone cortisol, which signals visceral fat storage (*Effects of single macronutrients on serum cortisol concentrations in normal weight men* by Martens et al). With the consumption of high carbohydrate meals not only will your blood sugar/insulin levels become abnormal but as cortisol raises, this creates a perfect environment for weight gain and chronic metabolic disease; you're not only obese but you feel horrible!

Most fat people fall into this category and this is for whom I primarily write. Is your entire family fat or have people had weight management problems? Is the fat accompanied by feelings of fatigue, hunger cravings, irritability and energy crashes? It's probably you then. I did not know I was sensitive until I, on a whim, decided to cut out virtually all carbohydrates from my diet out of desperation. When I did so I noticed two things: I was losing weight **RAPIDLY** and I felt amazing.

Having a condition such as sensitivity does not doom you, it just makes it a lot harder to stay at a normal weight (and maintain your health) unless you

change your diet. That the obesity rate has soared in the United States in recent decades is because a myriad of insulin and blood sugar destabilizing foods have become a staple of our diet, establishing a "toxic environment" – namely refined sugars. This new diet is associated with heart attack, stroke, obesity and other complications of what is known as metabolic syndrome. Look up metabolic syndrome or insulin resistance on Wikipedia. Check out the symptoms. Sounds like your life, right? That's because you're eating garbage which you never evolved to consume and need to stop. It's not natural to feel the way you are. It's not natural to be sick all the time, it's not natural to get cancer, it's not natural to get acne, it's not natural to be exhausted 24/7, it's not natural to get heart disease: they are all diseases of civilization caused by a diet which has only become common in the Western world in the past 50 years.

Some people can't eat carbs to any significant amount on a regular basis and remain healthy. If you eat carbs to excess, you will retain water, and you will gain body fat. It's ok to eat carbs every once in a while, but you will need to work it off. Sorry, but there is no way around this; you can't change your genetics. You'd have to bust your ass in the gym like an animal every single day to keep a healthy weight if you are sensitive and eat more carbohydrates than you can tolerate. No one wants to live like that. Instead: change your diet, occasionally indulge in the crap your society does, and routinely eat food which is good for your body and will not raise your blood sugar.

Ultimately your body chemistry is heavily correlated to what sort of foods you can eat and remain healthy. Some types, the tall skinny guys, can eat whatever they want keep the body fat off, while you and I have to avoid eating certain things like refined carbohydrate or we bloat up. **If you don't eat the right food, you will never lose fat and keep it off.** I wrote this book for those like me: we're fat and our family is fat, and we tried to eat what everyone including our doctors said to eat, and it didn't work. Don't lose hope; you **WILL** lose weight if you follow what I say here. The principle of weight loss goes like this:

We eat foods low in carbohydrate, high in fat and moderate in protein so as to:

> **Create satiety:** The foods are inherently satisfying/filling, so you end up eating fewer calories overall, thus leading to weight loss. In other words, you eat less because you aren't as hungry. This is the magic bullet.

Control Insulin/blood sugar: You control your blood sugar levels by eating less carbohydrate (which break down into sugars and thus increase serum blood sugar levels), which then modulates insulin. Insulin signals your body to store fat. Less insulin, less fat storage.

Enter ketosis: Your body can use organic compounds called glycogen or ketones for energy. At a certain carbohydrate sparing threshold unique to each person your body prefers to break down fat for energy and produce ketones through the liver (ketosis) rather than prefer the glycogen (glycolysis) provided by carbohydrate metabolism. If you eat less carbohydrate than is required to replenish the body's demand for glycogen, the body starts breaking down fats for energy. This process reduces overall bodily fat composition.

For a good overview of the science for the layman start with the documentary Fathead (2009) and then advance to the series "The Skinny on Obesity" (2012). Both are on YouTube. If you really want to get into the hard science check out:

- *The Art and Science of Low Carbohydrate Living: An Expert Guide to Making the Life-Saving Benefits of Carbohydrate Restriction Sustainable and Enjoyable* by Stephen D. Phinney and Jeff S. Volek
- *Good Calories, Bad Calories* by Gary Taubes
- *Wheat Belly* by William Davis
- *The Cholesterol Myths* by Uffe Ravnskov
- *The Great Cholesterol Con* by Malcolm Kendrick

I will not spend time further summarizing the science, as I doubt most of you care and my goal is to help you lose weight. Let's focus on action first and foremost, but I encourage you to read into this stuff so you will eventually be able to give back: you'll help those around you get healthy too.

You did not fail in the past, your diet failed you.

Nutrition

Let's beat a dead horse, shall we? Nutrition is central to your weight. You hear idiots talking about how they need to "hit the gym" or "go to the gym" in order to lose weight. They go for a bit, remain fat, and then stop. Wrong. **Exercise should be considered a supplement to your health, not a foundation of your weight loss.** Nutrition is the foundation by which all things health related stand; no matter how much work you do in the gym, you will still be fat if you eat food which is metabolically at odds with your body chemistry, extremes excepted. You could in theory eat whatever you want if you did 2-3 hours of INTENSE, continuous, Rocky-style lifting and sprinting a day but it's just not practical. The chances of you succeeding in a lifestyle like that are slim to none.

When I first tried to lose weight, I did what everyone said to do. Stop drinking soda, eat stuff like chicken breast, eat whole-grain breads and exercise. I did an hour of boxing a day, which is pretty much the most intense form of cardio you can do (and something I highly recommend), and only drank water. I did not lose weight. Why? I was still eating 2-4 slices of bread a day, plus pasta, noodles and other carbohydrate rich foods. All the good progress I made from boxing was essentially erased by the food I was eating. It is incredibly easy to destroy days of progress made by disciplined eating by consuming one meal comprised of carbohydrates (such as pasta). For people with different genetics, it is not a factor, but for us, it determines our weight.

Nutrition is great for you because it doesn't require much effort. Unlike going to the gym, you just get up and eat good food, and you don't eat bad food. It's pretty easy and you WILL lose weight. A lot of people fail because they think they want to lose weight, so they go to the gym for one day, spend $60, realize they are pieces of shit and that the gym is brutal, stop going to the gym and binge. That's ok though, because you don't need to jump right into the gym, and if you are really big you will rapidly lose weight just from rethinking your diet in a significant way. You need to focus on diet, and once you are at a more manageable weight and you have confidence, then you can start working out like a madman. Don't let me stop you from working out, but focus on your diet more so than anything. It's much better in all ways to skip working out for a day, or even five, than it is to eat food for one day, in a single meal, which is not in your best interest. Exercise's goal should be to strengthen and invigorate your physical systems; it is not the most important factor in determining body weight. Exercise can help you lose weight, but it does not compare to the importance of nutrition.

A final point: eating dietary fat does not make you fat and does not increase your risk of heart disease (see the recent research on this topic: *Systematic review and meta-analysis of clinical trials of the effects of low carbohydrate diets on cardiovascular risk factors* by Santos et al). Eating dietary cholesterol will not deregulate your cholesterol (see *Modification of Lipoproteins by Very Low-Carbohydrate Diets* by Volek, Sharman and Forsythe). There has never been a single randomized controlled study which demonstrates causation between a high fat diet **in isolation** and heart disease; heart disease is caused by the oxidation of carbohydrate and the associated inflammation of arteries. In observational studies where high fat diets were demonstrated to contribute to heart disease, carbohydrate intake was either uncontrolled or at a high level. The deadly combination in western societies is a combination of high fat and high carbohydrate. In isolation only one of these macronutrients significantly increases morbidity factors: carbohydrate.

The idea that dietary fats are bad from you derives principally from the debunked lipid hypothesis and an unfortunate marriage of commercial and government interests in the United States during the 1970s. The vast majority of Americans enjoyed a fat rich diet before this period, and were unequivocally healthier and thinner than we are today; cardiovascular metabolic markers improve substantially on such a diet. This is covered in the scientific sources I listed before, but do your own research as well. Bottom line is: we will be eating a lot more meat and fat, and we will lose weight, feel better and no longer be depressed and tired all the time. Trans fats (hydrogenated vegetable oils), found primarily in margarine, Crisco and in some processed foods (check the label), are still to be avoided as consumption disrupts natural cholesterol levels and contributes to the formation of arterial plaques and thus heart disease.

Meta-analyses of low carb, high fat diets conclude that they are more effective than very low calorie diets (typical exercise and calorie cutting) in both rate of weight loss and viability of long-term maintenance (e.g. “Very-low-carbohydrate ketogenic diet v. low-fat diet for long-term weight loss: a meta-analysis of randomised controlled trials” by Bueno et al, May 2013). The latter is particularly notable, as weight loss strategies which cannot be sustained by means of an enjoyable lifestyle are not worth pursuing except in hedge cases less applicable to most people (such as breaking out of a temporary weight loss plateau). Conclusive research has only been conducted in the last ten or fifteen years, as the fat phobia fog weaved by corporate interests and bad science held

a prolific sway during the 1950s-1990s. The paradigm of blaming the individual for not exercising and starving enough is slowly but steadily being undermined by our efforts.

Effortless factors for losing weight

A number of measures can be taken which will make you lose weight and are entirely effortless. You should adopt these immediately, and work on everything else slowly and progressively as you feel comfortable.

Water. Water is the most important single factor in one's nutrition for losing weight. You need to buy a 32+ ounce water bottle (Nalgene is a nice company). From now on, you only drink water. Don't drink diet soda, don't drink Crystal Light. Only drink water. Drink a lot of water, much more than the conventional wisdom of old wives would have us believe. Why? First, excess water gets urinated out, so drinking more water is of no harm. Second, the amount of water you need as someone overweight is way more than someone who is slim. Third, refined carbohydrates have a lot of water in them, and as you eat less, you will need to supplement your daily water intake. Drinking a substantial amount of water will help you rapidly lose weight, and it will also help you shed retained water weight. If you hold back on water, you will retain water and this turns into water weight. And wanna know something cool? A huge amount of your weight right now is probably water weight. When you first start eating right and replace juice/soda/crap with water, you will rapidly lose weight.

Sleep. Get a full night's rest, in the range of 6-8 hours. And wake up naturally without an alarm. If this means you need to go to bed earlier, wake up earlier and play less video games at night, so be it. Don't worry; if you eat the way I do, you won't have a problem with energy anymore anyway. DO NOT oversleep (more than 9 hours or so); oversleeping has a number of serious associated health problems and is just as bad, if not worse, than under sleeping. If you do not sleep well and sleep enough your body will not replenish itself properly and weight loss rate will decrease.

Intermittent fasting (IF). Eating in a 4-6 hour window a day and fasting the rest of the day will greatly improve your health. It is a myth that you have to be eating all day to keep your metabolism going. “Starvation mode” is a real thing, but it takes months of deprivation to enter, not hours (we return to this topic in more depth later on). I benefit IF with a lot of my weight loss and my increased health. IF not only helps with fat burning but it also boosts your immune system and gives you an insane amount of energy. Fasting for a period every day will likely alleviate any gastrointestinal issues you are having; never take “probiotics” or any crap designed to improve your gut bacteria, simply not eating for an extended period of time will return you to your natural, stable state. We will cover this in-depth a bit later.

Reduce your stress. Stress is associated with the retention of water. Your muscles and bones don’t know the difference between fat and water weight, it weighs you down the same, so you need to minimize the amount of water weight you retain, at least at this point. Stress also creates cortisol, which signals the storage of abdominal fat – you will put on more fat while in a chronically stressed state. Stressed individuals are more likely to reach for junk foods to comfort them from an evolutionary standpoint. What’s more: stress is horrible for you in general, manifesting physically as fatigue, headaches, inflammation (leading to heart disease and stroke), ulcers and gastrointestinal disease, to name a few complications. *Cortisol Connection: Tips on Managing Stress and Weight* by Maglione-Garves et al offers a good overview of the potentially damaging metabolic outcomes of chronically elevated cortisol levels. How can you reduce stress? Most effective means is to do cardio exercise, but getting a dog, doing Vipassana meditation or reading some Epictetus works too.

Let’s eat healthily

First off, we already went over the water. That’s step 1 – make sure you drink at least 150 ounces a day. Don’t drink all the water at once, pace it throughout the day, so that your piss is always clear. Constantly drink water and you will see weight loss.

Next you need to learn how to read labels. Everything you eat should be calculated and scrutinized -there's no more of just leaping in the dark and eating food without scientifically dissecting it. If you don't know what you are putting in your mouth, spit it out. The only time you should ever eat things without knowledge of what is inside is when you are having a scheduled "cheat meal," a pre-planned time in which you go off the diet and indulge. Any other time is unacceptable. An invaluable resource for finding nutritional data on any food is nutritiondata.com – a website which shows nutritional labels for virtually everything. You can also google "x food name nutritional data" or "x nutritional label" and it'll usually come right up in an image search.

Second, forget what you heard about eating 1 gram of protein per lb of weight, or anything about how many calories you should eat per day. All those metrics ONLY apply to people who are not horribly obese like you are, and if you try to eat 4000+ calories a day as calculated, you will never lose weight. Eat as many calories, grams of protein and etc as your target weight. 2000 calories a day MAX for most of you is fine, and the 1 gram of protein rule only applies to lean muscle weight, not, skeletal or water weight. As a rule of thumb, the more fat the better but don't let it violate your calorie restriction. As far as what ratio of macronutrients (carbs/protein/fat) you should maintain, try to limit your carbohydrate intake and expand your fat intake, while eating a moderate amount of protein; the goal is low carb, moderate protein and high fat. Everyone's different, so tweak accordingly.

Ideally you should be consuming less than 100 grams of carbs a day (The average American consumes 300), I would recommend less than 50 and I personally eat less than 20-30 grams on most days. This allows me to enter into ketosis (a term coming from ketogenic diet), a state in which ketone bodies are converted from fat and used as energy, thus greatly reducing the amount of body fat you have. In other words: in ketosis your body uses your fat as energy, and because of that, you lose weight. Ketosis, like intermittent fasting, also has a number of associated benefits in excess of mere weight loss. Ketosis + IF = unlimited energy, positive mood, boosted immune function, lean body and a great affect. You don't need to enter into ketosis to lose weight, but you should try to limit your intake of carbohydrate as much as possible; try starting off with a target of 100 g or less a day, and where possible eat more vegetables instead of refined carbohydrate like bread, rice or pastas.

So what are we going to eat?

Meat: Any type, including beef, pork, game meat, chicken, etc. Feel free to eat the fat on the meat as well as the skin on the chicken and do not buy "lean" cuts which have either removed or reduced. If possible try to choose organic or grass fed meat. Do not avoid meats which are high in sodium (pork), the saltier the meat the better.

Fish: Fatty fish such as salmon, mackerel or herring are great. No *bread*ing. Most cheap fish is very high in protein and very low in fat – which can be problematic. You can eat this sort of fish fine, but consider a smaller portion size and then compensate for overall satiety by adding in a heavy fat sauce (see below). One of my favorite meals is the fish basa, a catfish from the Mekong Delta. Basa has a very mild taste, almost tasteless (read: not "fishy"). Basa's greatness comes in the fact that it soaks up spices and fats splendidly, serving as an excellent "blank canvas" for a fried fish with a fatty sauce atop it. I serve it with full fat Greek yogurt after frying it in olive oil and seasoning it with lemon salt or Cajun mix.

Careful with shellfish – most have carbohydrate packaged along with them and it's easy to overeat on these very low fat delicacies. If you are going to eat shellfish include them as a component of a heavy sauce.

Eggs: The ultimate food. Cheap and an extremely potent source of protein. If you only had one food on a desert island, this would be it. Hard boil them for food on the go, fry them in butter/olive oil/coconut butter for a daily meal. For ultimate deliciousness make an omelet with bacon in it (Cook it in the bacon grease). Add peppers and onions and caramelize them. Fuck yes. Do not remove the yolk or I will hit you.

Natural Fat, High-Fat Sauces: Using butter and cream when you cook can make your food taste better and make you feel more satiated. Try a Béarnaise or Hollandaise sauce, check the ingredients or make it yourself. Coconut oil and olive oil are also good options. Eat a lot of Greek Yogurt. Full fat. Plain. No fruit crap. Get live culture yogurts only. **Avoid foods which are a source of Trans fats; these are atherogenic and will *actually* cause heart disease.**

Vegetables that Grow Above Ground: Not all are created equal, but unlike fruit, there aren't many red flags in the vegetable family. Listed in order of net

carbohydrate (from low to high): Sprouts, alfalfa and other small seeds (sprouted legumes have more carb), Greens – lettuce, spinach, chard, etc. Hearty Greens - collards, mustard greens, kale, etc. Herbs - parsley, cilantro, basil, rosemary, thyme, etc. Bok Choy, bamboo shoots, celery, radishes, nori, mushrooms, cabbage (sauerkraut too), jicama, avocado (technically a fruit, but the king of low carb, high fat, fiber), asparagus, okra, cucumber (and pickles without sugar added), cauliflower, green beans, fennel, broccoli, peppers andddddd Brussels sprouts!

Dairy products: Always select full-fat options like real butter, cream (40% fat), sour cream, blue cheese, ranch, Caesar, Romano dressings, Greek/Turkish yogurt and high-fat cheeses. Be careful with regular milk and skim milk as they contain a lot of milk sugar. Avoid flavored, sugary and low-fat products. Be wary of some fancy wine/platter cheeses, they are often infused with sugar or have a rind of sugary nut bits.

Nuts/Seeds: Not all are created equal – but choice picks are very high in fat, moderate in protein and offer an excellent source of fiber, antioxidants and micronutrients. Check out walnuts, almonds, brazil nuts, pumpkin seeds, sunflower seeds, macadamia, tahini, peanuts, pecans, hazelnuts, chia seeds, flax, sesame seeds etc. Avoid nuts with a lot of sugar such as cashews, pistachios, chestnuts etc. Golden flax deserves its own separate mention and you should eat it. Golden flax is a carb, nearly 100% fiber, which has amazing health benefits due to the omega 3, omega 6 fatty acid and antioxidant content.

Most nuts and seeds can be processed in a variety of ways, the most common of which are as a butter or as a ground meal. Both are quite easy to make on your own. Both can be used to creatively make low carb desserts, cereals, faux “bread” and porridge. If you’re a lazy fuck you can buy nut butters and meals at most supermarkets. As the organic movement takes up more and more steam these products should become a standard staple and their prices (which are higher than the commercialized poo equivalent) should lower. The “special” butters are usually located at the top shelf above the Jif in the peanut butter section and the meals are often located in the baking section. Bob’s Red Mill is the highest end variety of the latter and although it’s pricey I highly recommend it. Don’t flip out when you buy your first organic nut butter, there’s going to be a bunch of separated oil floating at the top. You’re supposed to

churn this into the butter before you eat it and is perfectly normal; it's actually a sign that it's been properly made and is all organic and shit.

Berries: Okay in moderation, if you are not a super strict or sensitive. Good with whipped cream. Can make a delicious jam (think grape jelly without the sugary grapes) with chia seeds.

Avoid

Sugar: Poison. This is why you are fat. Soft drinks, candy, juice, sports drinks, syrups, chocolate, cakes, buns, pastries, ice cream, breakfast cereals. Avoid commercial brands of sweeteners such as Splenda, Equal and Sweet n Low (we go over why soon enough). Most boxed food in stores has a ton of sugar in it. Anything that says "low fat" has a ton of sugar in it. Read labels.

Starch: Bread, pasta, rice, potatoes, French fries, potato chips, porridge, muesli and so on. "Wholegrain products" are just as bad, if not worse than their white, refined brethren.

Margarine: Industrially imitated butter with unnaturally high content of omega-6 fat. Has no health benefits, tastes bad. Statistically linked to asthma, allergies and other inflammatory diseases. Usually contains Trans fat.

Beer: Liquid bread. No nutritional value. Will make you fat.

Fruit: Some (apples, watermelons, grapefruit) are OK from time to time, but most are just little sugar bombs. Eat once in a while. Treat fruit as a natural form of candy. We have an entire section on this topic.

Once in a while

Alcohol: Dry wine (regular red or dry white wine), whisky, brandy, vodka and cocktails without sugar. See the section “Drink and be (not so) merry” for complete treatment.

Dark chocolate: Above 80 % cocoa, preferably just a serving. Shave the chocolate onto fluffy whipped cream for deliciousness. Unsweetened cocoa can be consumed on a regular basis and makes an excellent base for mocha-style coffee contraptions and sweets.

Drink

Water: Drink it constantly. Don’t try to sweeten it or do anything to it, just get used to drinking it. If you live in an area with bad water invest in a simple filter, because you’re gonna be drinking a lot of this stuff.

Coffee/Tea: Try my everyday recipe of 3 cups of coffee, 1 tbsp. of heavy cream. Season with pure stevia extract, liquid sucralose (ez-sweetz), pumpkin spice, unsweetened cocoa powder and/or vanilla/maple extract. Can also add coconut oil or butter for some added fat. Aside: caffeine (natural sources in coffee, cocoa and tea) has been demonstrated in many studies to increase athletic performance and decrease body fat, but avoid building up a tolerance to it by cycling on and off.

Snacks

Could eat daily: No sugar jello, pork rinds, nuts, seeds, heavy cream, whipped cream, 90%+ cocoa chocolate, eggs, fatty cheeses, avocado with sour cream, some greek yogurt, cold cuts (not from a box), tahini, olives (loaded with feta cheese)

Occasionally: Cheesecake, 80%+ cocoa chocolate, low sugar fruits (black, blue or strawberries for instance), nut butters (peanut, almond, sunflower etc), hummus, wine

I generally disapprove of snacking - routine is very important for someone in losing weight. You should try to eat at the same time every day and get most of your nutrients in meals while having clearly defined periods in which you do not eat. If you feel hungry have a hardboiled egg, a small handful of nuts/seeds, some pork rinds, a few pieces of cheese or maybe a serving of 85%+ cocoa chocolate.

A sweet tooth can be handled by getting some low calorie, no carbohydrate jello, mixing it with a small amount of whipped cream and adding some unsweetened cocoa powder and a handful of walnuts. A more detailed recipe is in the miscellaneous section.

Low/zero carb slushies can also be made for those with a sweet tooth. Just get some Mio or another liquid sucralose based sweetener, crush up some ice in a food processor or blender, squirt the Mio in, add some cocoa powder, maybe some fruit and cream. Ice pops can also be made in this fashion.

Some meals I've had recently can be seen in the "recipes" section of the manual, which follows the primer.

Salt won't make you have a heart attack

When you lower your carbohydrate intake the pounds are going to fly off. You are going to be in the bathroom peeing a furious torrent all day, and you will notice visible changes in your body composition very quickly. This is retained water and salt leaving the body, which in carbohydrate intolerant people is stored due to disturbed metabolism. Losing this excess weight is great and will motivate you to keep on the path, but it can also fault you.

Sodium and potassium (salt) are essential nutrients in regulating the circulatory system, too much and your blood pressure is elevated, too little and your blood pressure drops to unhealthy levels. In low carb diets we actually need to eat MORE salt because if you excrete too much of what is retained you are going to potentially get dizzy or noticeably experience weakness. It may be especially prevalent when you get up quickly or first start a workout; if you are experiencing these symptoms you need more salt in your diet. In ancestral low carbohydrate diets the need for salt was fulfilled primarily by eating blood, which is rich in the stuff. Lucky for us (or unlucky for those who are vampires) we no longer need to eat blood in order to get our daily needs. Simply shaking some table salt on our food should be enough to do it, and don't go crazy, there's no need to over-season.

And of course you can and should get your daily salt from natural whole food sources: beef, pork, sardines, cheese and olives are all excellent options of sodium, and spinach, turnip greens, collard greens and kale, sweet potatoes, peas and fibrous beans are excellent sources of potassium. Another way to ensure your daily salt requirements is to take an electrolyte supplement like Powerade Zero (liquid) or Emergen-C (powder). Note that Powerade is not a drink intended for regular hydration and should not be imbibed in any large quantity; it should not replace water.

The one golden rule: do not eat sugar

Sugar tastes delicious to us because in nature sugary foods indicate something of great value: a natural source of micronutrients, fiber and a substantial amount of energy. Evolution has trained our brains and taste buds to want sugar for this very reason as in nature sources of sugar were extremely rare and represented a rich source of nutrition. The problem with excessive sugar consumption, as we have covered briefly, is that it greatly deregulates our bodily hormones, the most critical of which is insulin. Why? We never evolved to regularly consume sugar, as encountering fruit in nature was a rarity. While our body can metabolize sugars, when consumed in excess insulin levels increase, and a chemical dependency not unlike addiction can develop. When insulin levels are high in the blood, carbohydrate more commonly converts directly to

fat rather be expended naturally, resulting in obesity and a number of related health issues. This is why a “calorie is a calorie” is flawed and idiotic logic: it assumes that all foods will be expended or stored following the same chemical process. In reality some foods are more prone to fat storage and are tied to hormonal levels; those with high levels of insulin in the blood will overwhelmingly prefer to store carbohydrate as fat, regardless of energy needs. In other words: our bodies did not evolve to consume sugar regularly and in large amounts, it evolved to eat the occasional, rare piece of fruit we would encounter. The body did not evolve to consume grains of any sort (and did not enter the human digestive tract until the advent of agriculture), and humans are the only mammals that eat them. And no manner or amount of clever marketing will reverse the inherent biology and mechanisms of our body and blood.

Another important concept is that no one dies from obesity, except in severe cases where the mass of the weight damages the body. Obesity is not a cause of disease, it does not cause type 2 diabetes, or heart disease, or other pathologies associated with metabolic syndrome. Instead obesity is an indicator and a possible side effect of poor metabolic health. Furthermore, millions of people have poor metabolic health and are not obese; we are just the lucky ones with choice genetics that get fat AND get cancer, dementia, cardiovascular disease and diabetes while the skinny bitches just get the diseases. This is an important point: your physical appearance is not the worst thing about your obesity at this point; it’s your poor metabolic health which is going to cut your life short. If you keep up your diet as is, you will get sick and will die young.

Lucky for you the pathologies of metabolic syndrome can be reversed quickly and acutely by simply eliminating most sugar from the diet. The effect of this prohibition will be immediate: no longer will you feel your energy crash, will your vision become blurry or will you feel exhausted and fatigued after a meal. In the long term your energy levels will skyrocket and you will just feel healthier overall.

How does this fit into your nutritional planning? Your daily carbohydrate intake should be connected with fiber and micronutrient intake, not with a noticeable sugary taste. What this translates into are fibrous vegetables, seeds and nuts. Fibrous is the key word, as not all vegetables, seeds or nuts are made equal and some have quite a bit of sugar in them. You should eat enough carbohydrate to get your daily fiber, 20 grams or so, and prefer carbohydrate

sources which have the highest fiber to carbohydrate ratio and have the highest micronutrient levels. Avocado is perhaps the best food in this class, although it's technically a fruit: it is overwhelmingly composed of fiber, and is rich in micronutrients. Artichoke is another great example. As a rule of thumb if something grows in the ground (such as potatoes and carrots), it tends to have a much greater amount of sugar than those which grow above ground and the nutritional data will typically corroborate this general principle.

In general you should avoid eating foods which have more than a few grams of sugar marked in the nutritional data under total carbohydrate. My biggest daily intake of sugar comes from peanut butter, but I also combine it with cinnamon, which dampens the effect of sugar on the bloodstream, and it's also only 3 grams per 2 tbsp. There is essentially no reason to eat anything which has more than 5 grams of sugar per serving, and my recommendation and my personal law is to restrict my sugar consumption to less than about 10 grams a day – not including regular carbohydrate and fiber. The less sugar you consume, the better. Again, this speaks to the importance of reading labels: you must analyze everything you are putting in your mouth, because many of the foods today you would not expect to have sugar in them have been enriched with sugar

Let's return to the subject of fruit for a moment. A misreading of this work might be that all fruit should be avoided and that fruit is unhealthy for you. This is not the case. Some fruits as we have seen, such as avocado, could be incorporated into the diet on a daily basis for optimum health. That being said, the greater category of fruit is a minefield: nutritionally speaking some fruits are no better than a candy bar while others might be eaten in careful moderation. Consider grapes. There are reasons why when you bite into a grape you instantly taste an explosion of sweetness – they are overwhelmingly comprised of fructose (sugar) by composition and have little nutritional value. Grapes are essentially nature's empty calories: although they have some vitamin C, it's not worth the massive sugar injection that accompanies it. Blackberries in contrast are much lower in sugar, have a substantial amount of fiber per serving, have powerful antioxidant properties, are anti-inflammatory, are richer in micronutrients and can be considered a fruit that could be responsibly eaten in moderation. The problem with contemporary society is that we tend to favor very high sugar fruits for regular consumption and these supposedly healthy

alternatives to junk food are often only marginally better for us. Here are some suggestions to inform your search:

Low sugar fruit, could eat on a daily basis in moderation	*Moderate sugar fruit, could eat on a weekly basis in moderation*	*High sugar fruit, avoid if possible, eat rarely*
• **Rhubarb** (don't eat the leaves – they are poisonous) • **Raspberries** • **Blackberries** • **Cranberries** • **Avocado**	• **Strawberries** • **Casaba Melon** • **Papaya** • **Watermelon** • **Peaches** • **Nectarines** • **Blueberries** • **Cantaloupes** • **Honeydew melons** • **Apples** • **Guavas** • **Apricots** • **Grapefruit**	• **Plums** • **Oranges** • **Kiwifruit** • **Pears** • **Pineapple** • **Tangerines** • **Cherries** • **Grapes** • **Pomegranates** • **Mangos** • **Figs** • **Bananas** • **Dried Fruit**

The Myth of Whole-grain

There is a myth that refined carbohydrates of the brown, whole-grain, whole-wheat or multi-grain variety is somehow healthier for you than evil white rice and bread. Simply put: this claim stands without any scientific support and in reality these foods actually contribute to GREATER fat gain and morbidity than their infamous white brethren. All bread is horrible for you – but these supposedly healthier alternatives are nothing of the sort, even relatively speaking.

A new generation of Americans have been misled that eating these foods will help them lose weight: the problem is not merely a substitution in the diet of something less healthy, but also an increased consumption of that which is not in our best interest due to the touted health benefits. Whole-grain food will not help you lose weight, are not good for your heart and will not reduce your risk of

cancer. With these latter claims, it will actually worsen your condition when compared to white bread, as whole-grain foods have a higher inflammation factor than the alternatives.

Why? The glycemic index of a piece of whole-grain/whole-wheat bread is actually greater than white bread – meaning it has a larger effect on blood sugar and associated insulin levels. Don't believe me? Go to NutritionData.com and look up these foods: pay attention to the glycemic index and inflammation factor numbers for one slice of white bread versus one slice of whole-wheat or whole-grain bread; the higher the glycemic index and the lower the inflammation factor the worse for you. Note how the whole-grain and whole-wheat breads have both a higher glycemic index and lower inflammation factor.

The reason why this myth has such widespread appeal is probably due to a combination of two factors: marketing buzz/corporate interests and the presence of fiber in the food. What is true is that whole-grain/whole-wheat food DOES have a good deal of fiber, and consuming fiber with carbohydrate does dampen the effect of sugar metabolism on the blood.

That being said, this dampening effect is minor, and does not appreciably offset the higher glycemic load that occurs when we eat whole-grain or whole-wheat foods. Is fiber good for you? Yes – it's great for you, but that doesn't mean we should select fiber sources which also come packaged with a high amount of sugar, as is the case with these supposedly miraculous brown products. Get your fiber from true wonder foods like avocado, asparagus and fibrous nuts/seeds and you'll more likely lose weight and remain in good health.

Low fat foods do not help you lose weight

What did you hear on Oprah? You should lower your fat intake and your body fat will fly off. Fat, so they (the TV doctors) say, is the cause of obesity in the Western world. Isn't it strange then that obesity rates have soared since the 1970s, a time in which the US government mandated by way of the United States Senate Select Committee on Nutrition and Human Needs a radically different diet than Americans were accustomed to, a diet based around the

consumption of starch, refined carbohydrate and sugar with a restriction on dietary fat? The American diet mandates 300 grams of pasta, bread and grains a day while logic, medicine and history would have humans eat mostly meat, vegetables, nuts and (rarely) fruits. It isn't a coincidence that obesity rates have soared since this diet became mandated by corporate interests in government. Here is another case in which you have not failed, your diet has failed, and the toxic environment engineered by those looking to benefit has failed you. You probably followed the government mandated guidelines for diet perfectly and are still quite fat; you did not lose weight on such a diet because it is at odds with your biology.

As fat in food has been demonized, low fat foods have been championed as the savior of the obese. There's just one problem: food without fat would be disgusting, so low fat foods are enriched with loads of sugar. Low fat actually means high sugar in most circumstances. We should avoid low fat foods. Furthermore, there is no need to avoid fat in food. Fat is an essential nutrient which also plays an important role in inducing satiety. Without fat, you will find yourself prone to overeating, as sugar does not induce satiety as effectively. And this is to say nothing of the serious health complications of a diet high in sugar: energy crashes, inflammation of arteries (heart disease), tooth decay, gastrointestinal problems and elevated risk of disease.

You must learn to abolish this idea of feeling guilty when you eat steaks, hamburgers, bacon and butter. You feel good when you eat because your body evolved to regularly metabolize stuff like that: it is perfectly good for you. The very thing the government and mass media demonizes is what will save you from an early death and obesity: fatty foods. That may run contrary to logic, as the dietary advice of the US government has become the common sense, but has it helped you lose weight or get healthier? Nope, it hasn't. On the contrary in countries like France, Sweden and the Netherlands, recent trends in low carb high fat nutrition have contributed to rapidly decreasing obesity and obesity related mortality rates.

Constipation

An easy mistake to make when going low-carb is not eating enough fiber due to decreased carbohydrate consumption. This results in chronic constipation, especially when compounded by other factors which contribute to constipation. In order to avoid constipation:

- Eat more fibrous foods including vegetables, nuts and seeds
- Take psyllium husk supplements daily
- Take a daily magnesium supplement (the best ones also combine vitamin d and calcium; calcium is good for weight loss and vitamin d for immune system and mood)
- Drink water
- Get your daily salt – lack of proper salt intake will contribute to constipation
- Do cardio exercise/move around more
- Reduce stress
- Eat more fat, fat will delay bowel emptying but will decrease constipation

What's the deal with fiber? Fiber is a carbohydrate that does not digest in the GI tract, it just passes through it and in doing so, binds together your shit. You need fiber to shit. More importantly for purposes of this discussion: fiber does not "count" as a carbohydrate in nutritional terms because it does not break down into simple sugars in the stomach like non-fibrous (soluble) carbohydrate. Accordingly when you eat fiber, the effect of carbohydrate's effect on insulin levels and blood glucose will be dampened and will gradually increase instead of spike sharply. These spikes are what contribute to insulin resistance and associated fat storage. Bottom line: make sure your sources of carbohydrate have fiber in them – just read the label.

Wonderful sources of fiber include chia seeds, avocado, pumpkin seeds, flax seed, artichoke and Brazil nuts. Note that most of these foods have a large amount of fiber per serving but a small amount of soluble carbohydrate. These whole, natural sources also offer a rich amount of nutrients, antioxidants, fat and protein. Look for organic sources if possible, as processed variants tend to have their micronutrients stripped, sugars added and all sorts of chemicals used to extend the longevity of the food stuff. Strangely enough: not all pumpkin seeds are created equal. Some variants are genetically engineered to taste sweeter or have been enriched after being gathered, or have had their fat removed through

some process to make them “healthier” – always look at the label before you buy. Salted or unflavored, whole organic variants are always best for your health.

90/10

So you might be one of those people who say “I can never live without X.” You may think that now, but eventually the foods you eat will make you nauseous and you will dread the spike of insulin you feel after a feeding. Regardless, there will be times when you want to eat crap in order to remain sane and keep fighting the good fight. If you are going to do this, it needs to be regimented, not at random. If you do it at random times, your diet will shatter. Remember that a diet is not a “get skinny plan” – it’s a lifetime nutritional plan that will be with you for life; if you switch back to consuming vast carbohydrates when you slim down, you will gain all that weight back! With this in mind, we can schedule a specific time every couple of weeks in which you will have one (1) decadent cheat meal. If you are going to cheat know when it is, and do not have “extra” cheat days – you will just derail any progress you have made. If you lack the willpower to control post-cheat cravings for carbohydrate, only cheat on holidays, or not at all. And one cheat meals means ONE, if you get a large meal you don’t get to eat the leftovers: eat it, throw them out or give them away.

Pre-plan a time in which you will have a cheat meal. A cheat meal is by definition a meal in which the laws of your dietary plan do not apply. I like to eat until I am stuffed, and I like to eat crap that I would never even consider eating normally such as Taco Bell, Chinese food or the like. An important rule: a cheat meal does NOT become a cheat day; it is one meal, and you should follow your normal meal plan for the rest of the day. **I would not recommend any cheat meals during the first three or four weeks of adaption to a low-carb diet**, as that will disrupt the process and essentially reset it, but after that you may introduce them slowly and deliberately.

This leads me to the holidays. You should eat whatever you want on holidays and very special occasions (anniversaries, friend’s birthday parties etc) and if obliging family members try to make special arrangements for you, assure them to not waste their time and that you will merrily eat whatever is available.

This new lifestyle and diet should not negatively impact your social life or limit you from doing things with your family: you should enjoy the holidays. How is it possible to enjoy the holidays and still lose weight? 90/10.

The 90/10 rule says you should eat 90% of clean, good, nutritionally sound food and you can eat 10% of crap. The implication of this is that what you do the vast majority of the time determines your health and wellbeing, not the few exceptions which diminish you. If you keep this as a "golden rule" in nutrition you will do well.

Water weight will be gained when you cheat. Carbohydrate metabolism causes water to retain on lean tissues in the body which can lead to sudden, massive weight gain following a cheat meal. Some individuals who are very sensitive, like me, can gain as much as five pounds from a single cheat meal. On a weeklong vacation during Christmas time in 2011, in which I did not eat exceptionally much except on the eve and day of the holiday, I gained about thirty pounds. This is nothing to be alarmed over: the weight will come off over the course of a few days or after a particularly intense cardio session.

Eat more fat, to get less fat

So you read this guide, or maybe some other enlightening stuff by the likes of other dietary heathens and you learned that carbs sorta make you fat. Eating all that sugar raises your insulin, so the story goes, and signals your body to store, rather than mobilize fat. Great. So you cut all those sugars out and start eating meat like a mad person. You eat your meat with a varnish of dairy and a token amount of veges or fruit. Entire chickens vanish into your gut, and while the weight is coming off, it's not coming off very quickly. You have hereby made one of the most common mistakes in this quest for health: eating too much protein.

Fun fact: half of the protein you eat gets converted into sugars in a process called gluconeogenesis. These sugars aren't as insidious as the white variety, but they nevertheless will signal fat storage. This often results in stalls and plateaus rather than outright weight gain, as the benefit of overall

carbohydrate restriction typically outweighs the *new genesis of glucose* (get it?) deriving from protein metabolism. Still, things could be better. We need to do the unthinkable: eat a lot more fat. Throw heaps of butter on everything. Seriously, butter is one of the best things you can do for your health, contrary to unscientific old wives' tales. Put coconut milk in your coffee. Olive oil everywhere. Really fatty cheeses: put them in your mouth hole. Blue cheese dressing. Other fatty cheese dressings. Yes! If you make vegetables, they best taste amazing. If they taste bland, you aren't putting enough fat into the mix. Individuals very sensitive to blood sugar fluctuations (like me) can see their weight jump up from eating an entire can of shredded chicken or tuna fish or other very high protein sources with low amounts of fat. While the effect of a high protein binge in these populations is not nearly as bad as shoveling pizza, it is a lesser evil.

All in all if you are having problems with feelings of bloat following large protein meals consider positioning fat as the central nutrient in your diet. This is a counterintuitive and often paranoia-inducing dictum, as we stand against an entire generation of claims that fat kills. The science, as we have already reviewed, simply does not support this position.

Why else should you not eat massive amounts of protein? Eating more protein than the body requires results in elevated ammonia secretion in the urine and breath. Yeah, your breath is going to smell funky if you keep up that high protein diet.

Facing the scale

Something you need to do every day is face the scale. The first thing you should do is buy a good scale, and most scales will not support your weight so make sure you check maximum weight in the specifications. The Eatsmart Precision Plus is a great buy and it supports up to 440 lbs. At the beginning of every morning, try to go to the bathroom and have a bowel movement, and after that, weigh yourself. You weigh yourself now because you are dehydrated and hopefully have an empty stomach and thus will have the lowest weight out of the day; you may be as much as 5 lbs heavier when you go to bed. Record

your weight. If you have Microsoft Word or another program with graphing ability like OpenOffice (free) you should create a line chart of your weight values. Eventually you will be able to understand the direct impact of foods on your weight on a daily basis. Soon you will know what food will exactly do to your body, and it will no longer be a mystery. One of your problems right now is that you probably don't understand why you are fat, or how eating X or Y will impact your weight. Now you will learn.

An important note of caution: weight may fluctuate a few lbs a day, and if you don't have a bowel movement before weighing in this can further compound things. It is for this reason that some people advocate only weighing yourself once a week or taking your weight as an average but I find this to be foolish. If you carefully consider what the scale tells you, and listen to your body (meaning: if you feel like you are retaining water or haven't had a bowel movement you can expect to see some extra weight) then daily weight measurements are invaluable. I want to stress that your weight WILL fluctuate on a daily basis; just use the scale as a strategic aid and a tool for self-awareness of how you are advancing. Also note that you may increase weight when you begin weight lifting, as muscle bleeds and heals (grows) rapidly for beginners.

There is a phenomenon I often see in beginners called **the fallacy of individual days.** Your weight may spike on a day for no reason and we suddenly think all the progress we made over the prior weeks has been erased. We panic, can become frustrated or even depressed. This is a pivotal point in weight loss in which you need to remind yourself of the science and reasons for daily fluctuations. It is impossible to "gain" four or five pounds of real fat in a day – the amount of food needed to accomplish that would be staggering. If your routine the day before remained consistent and something like that happens repeat to yourself: this too shall pass.

A quick note on the rate of your weight loss. There is a myth that one can only lose 2 pounds of weight a week and remain healthy. The reasons vary on why this "common sense" is the case, ranging from one could only lose more by starvation (something we will address in a bit), to fanciful theories on how weight can only permanently be lost if shed in a slow, deliberate manner. In 2000 a review of the medical literature on this topic entitled "Lessons from obesity management: greater initial weigh loss improves long-term maintenance" by Astrup and Rossner found this popular theory to be without

merit. Furthermore their findings actually demonstrated the opposite of the myth, finding that those who lose weight rapidly actually tend to manage their weight better in the long term.

This being said you should caution from comparing yourself to other's weight loss. If you start off at 350 pounds you will lose weight slower (probably) than someone who is 100 pounds heavier than you. Water sheds rapidly as we reduce our carb intake. Some individuals may have more retained water than others. This can result in dramatic or not so dramatic weight loss in the first few weeks. If your weight loss isn't as dramatic as others, it's NOT a big deal – water is easy to pack back on, and it's easy to shed. If you're losing a pound a week, I'd consider that rapid. Two pounds would be considered impressive, and anything more would be exceptional. If you're losing less than one pound every two weeks, there is probably something that needs to be tweaked.

So fret not my pretty, nothing bad will befall you if you lose weight rapidly. And lose weight rapidly you will, both at first and in the long term when compared to your merely chubby compatriots. If you are obese your body probably has a great deal of retained water, which will shed rapidly. Furthermore if you go low carb, the glycogen stores on your lean tissues, which are populated by carbohydrate metabolism, will quickly be depleted, further increasing weight loss. That being said, your new way of eating is not a means of losing weight but a means of maintaining a healthy lifestyle; you could potentially regain the weight you lost if you try to go back to the old ways. It's for this reason that I recommend starting modestly unless you are absolutely confident in your self-control. Just keep in mind that if you do find yourself rapidly losing weight for whatever reason it's totally cool.

I want six pack abs!

Your belly is still fat. You still have fat in other spots you would like gone. Too bad. Why? You can't choose where fat comes off of, **there is no way known to man which reduces fat in one spot of the body.** The relevance of this fact should be that you should focus on overall weight and health rather than the proportions of your physique. As your weight continues to decrease and body fat

decreases overall, the unsightly spots will eventually shrink. In most people abdominal fat is the last to go, which means if you are looking for “six pack abs” it isn’t going to happen until you are lower than 10% body fat. I promise that once your health improves you will turn into a sex idol, but for now, just be patient and keep up the good fight.

Furthermore, to get “six pack abs” – or any form of visible muscularity does not involve exercise or weightlifting. Sure, weightlifting will increase the mass of your muscles, as well as develop the proportion of the muscles in relation to each other, but it is NOT related to being able to see muscle. To see your muscles, you must decrease the amount of body fat you have. This is all that matters, it’s as simple as that. Right now the muscles are there on your body; you just can’t see them because they are covered in a layer of fat. Cut the fat, and your lean muscle, which is already there, will then emerge. A lucky fact is that if you are one of those people who are prone to fatness, and have been fat for most of your life, you already have a huge amount of lean muscle mass. When you gain weight, not all of it goes to body fat; a good portion of it goes to lean muscle, regardless if you worked out or not during the time in which you gained the weight. What this means is that when you do get rid of the body fat, you will look quite muscular. Quite a nice turn of events, isn’t it?

Ultimately you cannot lose weight in a rapid time around a certain area: ignore everyone who says otherwise, they just want your money. Sound weight loss involves consistent, gradual losses.

Loose skin

What most people call loose skin or “extra” skin isn’t usually either. When you begin to lose weight you will notice flabby skin hanging off your arms and legs. Except it isn’t really skin, at least not mostly. That flabby stuff is actually subcutaneous (“soft”) fat, covered by skin. This sort of fat is typically appears after substantial fat loss, and its likely going to afflict you. Great! Why do I say great to this offensive looking droopy flesh which you try to hide from view? It means you are almost down to where you need to be, and although it will be stubborn to go away, eventually most of it will.

This is great news for you because it means you don't need to pay a plastic surgeon tens of thousands of dollars to remove it, and it isn't some hideous disfigurement that is going to remain the rest of your life.

That being said, extra skin **is** a real phenomenon – just one that is exaggerated by both those looking to fleece you of your money, and by the public which does not understand the way fat manifests. The severity and location of loose skin is determined by skin elasticity (the ability to expand and contract without wrinkling), which is influenced by a few different factors:

- Genetics: Natural limits imposed by your ancestry.
- Age: The younger the better – older people have less elastic skin.
- Duration: The longer you've been fat, the worse the extra skin will be.
- Smoking: Smoking will decrease your skin's elasticity and potentially make the loose skin thing even worse.
- Fish Oil: Supplementing daily will increase skin health and elasticity, and thus mitigate skin related complications of weight loss.

As you can see the first three aforementioned factors are not in your control and you are more or less stuck with what you've got at this point. Extreme weight loss will likely result in at least some degree of loose skin, but first banish it by reducing your body fat. Surgery is an option of last resort.

I think I'm dying!

So you decided to go low-carb. Holy shit, what is this? Headaches. Nausea. Shakes. Am I going through heroin withdrawal? Not quite, your body chemistry is changing rapidly, and there's virtually no way around this period of adaption. If you are following a ketogenic diet like me, the adaption will be especially brutal. How long will it last? For me it was a week for the most brutal conditions and two more weeks of milder conditions. Recent research by Lustig, Schmidt and Brindis ("Public health: The toxic truth about sugar", 2012) suggests that sugar consumption mimics drug use metabolically, creating a seesaw effect

of euphoria and withdrawal, of highs and lows. In this period of adaption you are observing sugar's addictive properties at work.[1] Like all periods of withdrawal this will eventually pass – and unlike withdrawal from hard narcotics, cannot lead to death, only discomfort, headaches, fatigue, sweating and nausea. **Fight through it**, there's a light at the end of the tunnel…

Lucky for you once it's over you will no longer be chronically tired, depressed, weak and sick, especially if you are following a ketogenic diet plan. You will find an abundance of energy and you will begin to immediately lose weight, even if your activity level remains the same. Hunger cravings will become increasingly rare as your blood sugar and insulin levels return to natural levels and you will no longer feel a compulsion to eat sweets. Painful and disgusting intestinal gas is in this state a thing of the past. No longer will you feel uneasy and fatigued when separated from food – but instead feel calm and satisfied. A bit nerve racking to adapt your body to this state, but once it's realized, you'll hate yourself for ever tolerating the alternative.

You are not on a diet

The idea of going on and off a diet is idiotic and makes no sense. The way you are eating now is going to be for life, and you need to start acting that way. Get better at cooking, discover new food which are good for you and enhance your quality of life at large rather than try to find ways off of the diet. A diet is not a tool to lose weight; it is a permanent and natural means of sustaining your life. Your diet may be tweaked overtime, but it is not something that you should revert from once you lose the weight, otherwise you will gain it back and you will get sick again.

The longer you avoid eating the sort of garbage outlined in this book, the less likely you will be to crave those types of foods and may even become sick when you consume them. When I first started my weight loss journey my diet was extremely basic, bland and predictable. As time went on I eventually mastered this way of life (because that's really what it is), and now it is a joy to

[1] http://ajcn.nutrition.org/content/early/2013/06/26/ajcn.113.064113

be in the kitchen; I regularly eat food which has more flavor and is more enjoyable than at any other time in my past.

I want to drive the point home that you should not be looking at a way out – a way of eating pasta, bread, sugar and soda. There is no going back, at least if you want to keep a healthy body weight, keep from getting sick, getting cancer, dementia and heart disease.[2] That you may be craving those foods now is thanks to the addictive properties of sugar and eventually those cravings will fade. From time to time you will indulge in the crap everyone else eats, and those foods will be ever the greater tasting when you do, but for most of your life, the 90% that matters, they are off limits.

Some foods are marketed as "low carb" alternatives to traditionally high carb, and thus high sugar, items. Few of them work as advertised and will spike your blood sugar and cause insulin-related fat storage just as quickly as the alternative. Many of these products get around the effective impact of their foods by using terms like "net carbs" and "effective carbs" and by arbitrarily eliminating some of the carbs from the nutritional calculations using propriety formulas or marketing magic. Many of these products subtract sugar alcohols from the total number of carbohydrate. This is a great case of chicanery at work: there are a myriad of sugar alcohols, some metabolize poorly, while some metabolize with almost comparable effects as glucose (table sugar). Before you buy any "low-carb" item make sure you Google each ingredient with an –ol or -alt suffix on the end, denoting sugar alcohol. There is no such thing as a low carb cookie or bread, at least none bought in a supermarket, and you should altogether stop looking at those sections of the store and instead focus on the bins of fresh produce.

Embrace your new way of eating naturally and embrace the joy of experimentation in the kitchen. Even you lazy dudes out there can still make very good stuff in the kitchen, and save hundreds of dollars in the process! I am one of you and will rarely make a meal if it takes me longer than ten minutes – yet I still am able to make amazing food. Just requires a lot of trial and error, and eventually you'll be making delicious and more importantly healthy foods.

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[2] A recent overview of the pathologies which are alleviated by with adoption of a low carbohydrate diet: *Beyond weight loss: a review of the therapeutic uses of very-low-carbohydrate (ketogenic) diets.* Eur J Clin Nutr. 2013 Aug ;67(8):789-96. doi: 10.1038/ejcn.2013.116. Epub 2013 Jun 26 .

You aren't going to gain this weight back; you are changed for life as long as you keep the path relatively straight and narrow.

Do not starve yourself

Eating less will accelerate fat loss, but there is an ocean between eating relatively less and starving yourself with a massive, persistent calorie deficit. As a rule of thumb you will need to expend 3500 calories in order to lose a pound of body fat. In order to lose weight you should eat less and control the processes and mechanism of fat gain. With the latter I am referring to the simple fact that as someone who is sensitive to carbohydrate, 1 calorie of bread is not interchangeable with 1 calorie of hamburger: the bread converts to body fat more readily due to effects on the blood sugar, while the hamburger is more likely to be burned. Furthermore, carbohydrate sensitive individuals are much more prone to putting on "water weight" – water which is retained from eating foods contributing to a high glycemic load (a fancy way of saying they introduce a lot of sugar into the bloodstream). This water weight manifests as a bloat which will not go away and accumulates until you stop eating refined carbohydrates for an extended amount of time. This sort of bloating, and associated glycogen storage on the muscle, can add a substantial amount of weight to carbohydrate sensitive individuals. This is why you are going to losing weight so rapidly at the beginning of a new dietary plan which cuts out the vast majority of carbohydrate consumption; the weight is mostly being urinated out.

So two things need to happen: eating less, but not drastically less, and eating smart.

Eating less is simple, it means eating foods which induce a feeling of satiety rather than foods which do nothing of the sort. You could drink gallons upon gallons of soda and would never feel satisfied, while eating an avocado and some chicken breast would satisfy you for a good part of the day. The critical factor to consider is that the soda is substantially more calorie dense, but carries no nutritional value and does not satisfy, to say nothing of its horrible impact on your blood sugar. If you are doing it correctly you won't even notice that you are eating less and it will actually feel as if you are eating more because increased fat

consumption leads to feelings of satiety. Once you start eating real food, and less processed garbage, you will be hungry a lot less.

Dietary fiber also substantially contributes to feelings of satiety. The trick is to find foods which are low in carbohydrate but high in fiber such as certain seeds, nuts, vegetables and a few select fruits. In the morning I like to have an omelet. I add green peppers and some onion, bacon and cheese. I usually eat it with seasoned pumpkin seeds on the side. Pumpkin seeds are loaded with fat and are almost entirely fiber when consumed with the shell intact. This morning meal, a keen combination of fat, protein and fiber, will leave me satisfied for most of the day, until I have a second large meal at around dinner time. Avocado is the king as it combines large amounts of fiber and fat.

Before I changed my nutrition I would often eat four to eight pieces of bread a day, well within the nutritional guidelines offered by the US government. This bread added anywhere from 400-800 calories to my daily caloric intake and translated into chronic fat gain. If you eat similarly, a simple calorie cut would just be NOT eating the bread or pasta you eat normally. Just stop eating the refined carbohydrates and eat a bit more fat and fiber to accommodate satiety demands and you will have established a realistic calorie deficit. **Under no circumstance, no matter your body weight, should you eat less than 1000 calories a day**, and for most of you a daily intake of 1200-1800 will be ideal. Men should eat on the higher side of that scale and women on the lower. You won't die if you eat less, it just won't be very pleasant and you might feel an urge to overeat to compensate – you may also experience gaps in your micronutrient levels. Some people find calorie counting software/social sites like MyFitnessPal to be useful, which offers meal planning, nutrient and calorie logging, but I personally don't bother. If you are oblivious to the nutritional composition of food something like MyFitnessPal might be useful to start off and diagram/take stock of what you're putting in your mouth, but don't use it as a crutch to avoid reading labels – you need to learn this stuff in order to flourish.

You don't have to worry about counting calories too much, just eat good, clean, natural foods until you are satisfied and try to stay within that range. What I mean is: you should maintain a calorie deficit, but do not flip out if you go above or under it by 100 calories on a daily basis: the main thing is that you are consistently eating less than you once were. Consistency will pay off. There are metrics which exist that can determine your daily caloric requirements, but they

are vastly inaccurate when applied to obese individuals: you'd likely be suggested to eat over 5000 calories a day at your current weight, if not more. Forget everything you hear about BMR (basal metabolic rate) and eat as many calories as your target weight would – **eat as a 150-180 pound individual would, not someone who is 400 pounds**. BMR is only accurate for those who are in a relatively normal weight range, and you are not. Also *ignore* BMI (body mass index), it is a population statistic tool which was never intended to be applied to individuals for personal health and is largely irrelevant as it does not consider body composition (ratio and relation of fat, lean tissue and bone). As a case in point of the absurdity of BMI when applied at the personal level consider that Arnold Schwarzenegger in his prime would have been classified as morbidly obese.

When you first start a calorie deficit you may feel some hunger. This is normal and your response SHOULD NOT be to eat junk, it should be to eat what is within your daily caloric needs and focus on fibrous, fatty foods and good hydration. Within a few days this feeling of hunger, if there was any to begin with, should subside. What will surprise you is that a diet high in protein, fat and fiber will quickly eliminate all feelings of hunger. This is because a diet high in carbohydrate does not induce satiety, and to make matters worse also creates an addictive connection in your brain to eating due to the metabolic effect of sugar. Fiber and fats take a long time to digest and so will give you a satisfied feeling for hours on end.

What you need to learn is that it's ok to stop eating and that the feeling of hunger will pass, to be replaced by feelings of contentment and satisfaction. Hunger does not mean you are dying, and you do not constantly need to feel stuffed and bloated. When you start eating properly you will rarely be hungry unless you skip meals and should not feel hunger in-between periods of not eating. Hard to believe, mainly because you are probably used to grazing in the kitchen and constantly feeling hunger, but this will soon change.

You would do well to really examine your feelings of hunger. If you are experiencing what you recognize as hunger a few hours after a meal, it may have more of a psychological or habitual element than anything else. Your body is in a fed state and is still digesting food; how can one be properly fed and still experience hunger? Recent research by Dr. Robert Lustig suggests that sugar has a highly addictive property and that one can easily go into withdrawal-like

symptoms which we recognize as hunger. Failure to habitually indulge in sugar results in headaches, shakes and a feeling of malaise, the same sort of thing a drug addict might experience. **The addictive properties of our foods, combined with the irregular social patterns of individuals who have no conception of separate periods to eat and stop eating combine as a perfect storm to derail us from your journey.** Luckily after a few weeks of potential unpleasantness you will eventually come to a place where hunger is rarely if ever apparent to you and you can go more than 15 or 20 hours without food and still feel perfectly fine. I personally never feel hunger, even when I am experimenting with longer fasts (which will get to in a bit) lasting a day or more.

I would not recommend snacking of any sort – each meal should be purpose oriented for nutritional reasons and snacks are simply reasons to eat outside of your plan. That being said, one could dedicate a small amount of calories per day as a fund for snacking to deal with feelings of hunger when you first start. If one is eating 2000 calories a day, 200 of those could be used to snack for instance. And when we snack we want something tasty and satisfying in small amounts. For this reason I recommend nuts, eggs and cheese. A simple snack could be a small handful of peanuts or almonds, or a hardboiled egg and a piece of cheese. Sugar free gum could also be used as a sort of appetite suppressor. Be cognizant of the amount of calories you are consuming, at least approximately. When all else fails just drink more water, it'll do away with the temporary feelings of hunger. This leads me to my next topic…

But if I eat less food my body will eat my muscles for energy!

You have heard it before: some people say that if you eat less OR fast you will enter into "starvation mode." The story goes that in starvation mode:

1. Your metabolism will decrease – you will burn less fat
2. Your body will use your muscles for energy because it will have nothing else to use
3. You will have serious health complications

Simply put, this so-called phenomenon DOES occur, but only for those who have less than 5% body fat. The idea derives from a medical study conducted between 1944 and 1945 called the "Minnesota Starvation Experiment", so-called because it took place at the University of Minnesota. The participants in the study were of normal weight, starved for months and then eventually their bodies underwent a transformation as they went below 5% body fat –they had a serious host of medical problems, both physical and mental, the most relevant of for our purposes being muscle atrophy and wasting. The muscles of the patients were cannibalized for energy, and it took a long time before they were properly rehabilitated.

So what does this experiment tell us? It tells us that fasting for 18 hours a day and then eating for 6 hours poses no health risk whatsoever. It tells us that you could fast for a week straight and feel fine. Fasting will neither lower your metabolism nor contribute to muscle wasting. As a point of reference most people begin to have visual abs when they have less than 12 or 13% bodyfat. The implication of this is that you would need to look like someone from a death camp in order to be experiencing starvation mode effects; as an obese person you have a huge amount of extra fat reserves which get burned up before the muscle does. In fact if you are as obese as I once was, in the 450+ lb range, you could probably stop eating for an entire year with no adverse effects, assuming that you maintained your micronutrient levels by taking vitamin supplements. The medical literature abounds with such cases: one particularly impressive example is a study by Stewart and Fleming entitled "Features of a successful therapeutic fast of 382 days' duration" documents one such case: a 27 year old morbidly obese man underwent a supervised 382 day fast and lost 276 lbs with "no ill-effects."

So don't buy into the popular logic that ceasing to eat for a few hours at a time will lower your metabolism and that a life of constant eating is the only way to lose weight. That eating constantly will raise your metabolism is true: but again, just like "starvation mode" – it doesn't apply like we might think. When you eat and digest your body temperature raises and you burn more calories. How many more calories? You might burn a few extra calories per gram of food you are eating, a completely insignificant amount of calories that will never contribute to meaningful weight loss. The amount of calories you expend from the reaction of digestion is far outweighed by the amount of calories consumed, thus making it irrelevant. Sure you could burn 5 calories from eating some

pepperoni, but you're also eating 200 calories of pepperoni; it simply doesn't make sense as a weight loss strategy! When someone invents a 0 calorie food that needs to be digested (by definition impossible) it might be worth looking into.

Lastly the natural state of all mammals is not to eat. The vast majority of time a canine spends in the wild is hunting and looking for food, NOT eating. The same is true for humans: in our ancestral past we did not have the luxury to open a fridge and eat what we wanted, as we liked, we spent the vast majority of our time roaming around in the hunt for animals and gathering plant foods to be processed in a time consuming manner. If one were to take an inventory of the amount of time animals in nature spend eating versus attempting to find food in a fasted state you would see that fasting is much more common. There is nothing unnatural or unhealthy about fasting or about eating less, extreme circumstances like starving for months on a desert island excused. **It's ok to not eat if you aren't hungry, you won't instantly die.**

With these facts in mind I would not recommend a fast of longer than 24 hours at a time: micronutrient levels crash after this period without careful supplementation. You will also probably suffer socially and personally: not only will you not eat with your friends and family, but you will also crave, which can lead to yo-yo dieting and overeating in the rebound. I have done longer fasts as experiments, up to 72 hours, but I find that 24 hour or less fasts are the optimal configuration for living in the modern world.

Hypocrisy? Calories matter.

What is this nonsense? Now I'm sending mixed signals. But it's true: calories matter. It's just that in the method in which we are going to eat calories don't matter. Makes sense right? Of course not.

First, there is an element of carbohydrate raising blood insulin and causing inflammation, which tells the body to store fat – that much is true. But arguably the most significant effect of a diet rich in carbohydrate in increasing body weight is that carbohydrates are not simply satiating, which leads us to eat vastly

more than we would if we had eaten an equivalent amount of fat and protein. Take a huge tub of popcorn from the cinema as an example: these "snacks" range from 1200-1800 calories, essentially the entire daily caloric intake of someone who is attempting to reduce their body fat. Do we feel satiated when eating that huge tub? No. We can just keep on eating, and every handful triggers an addictive reaction which tells us to keep eating more. After we leave the cinema we are starving (blood sugar effects) and want to keep eating. The hunger never ends. Same goes with pasta; no one eats the recommended serving size (typically 1 cup). That 1 cup is a few inches circular on a plate and is about 220 calories. Is such a small amount of carbohydrate satiating? Not remotely. So we eat huge piles of the stuff, with little nutritional value gained. The deadly combo of huge calorie counts and a compromised metabolic process leads to obesity.[3]

In contrast a carbohydrate restricted diet modulates hunger. We eat less calories overall because we feel satisfied when we eat. A cup of coffee with a few tablespoons of coconut oil and heavy cream or an egg omelet with cheese and bacon might keep us feeling content for most of the day; try the same with a big bowl of cereal and your mileage might vary. Persistent hunger is a symptom of low calorie, carbohydrate heavy diets: such a way of eating is simply not sustainable and leads to day long grazing, unscheduled binging and a general sense of being unfulfilled. Meanwhile we can reduce our caloric intake by eating a lot of fat and feel like we are eating more!

In conclusion: calories matter. Although some anecdotal and observational evidence suggests that one will gain less weight eating 2000 calories of heavy cream versus 2000 calories of popcorn, the research just isn't complete on this topic and what we eat does get metabolized in one form or another. And yes, the mitigating factors of an abnormal blood sugar, soaring insulin levels and other metabolic abnormalities associated with carbohydrate intolerance leads to increased fat gain. That being said, we don't have a blank check to eat as much as we want, whenever we want – we just won't *need* to.

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[3] Nichols-Richardsson SM, et al. *Perceived Hunger Is Lower and Weight Loss Is Greater in Overweight Premenopausal Women Consuming a Low-Carbohydrate/High- Protein vs High-Carbohydrate/Low-Fat Diet*. J Am Diet Assoc. 2005;105:1433–1437.
Volek JS, et al. *Comparison of energy-restricted very low-carbohydrate and low-fat diets on weight loss and body composition in overweight men and women*. Nutrition & Metabolism 2004, 1:13.

Drink and be (not so) merry

You're probably wondering: where does alcohol come into the picture? It's pretty simple: beer is nothing more than liquid bread, is high in calories and has even negligible nutritional value. Like soda, beer is a way of energy to enter the mouth rapidly without satiating you, to be metabolized into fat readily and is all too easy to over consume. And just like soda beer should be cut out of your routine diet and be replaced by water. There's nothing wrong with having an occasional beer at a special event, but beer should not be regularly consumed just as bread is not to be regularly consumed.

There are some superior options. As a rule of thumb alcoholic drinks which have a higher alcohol to carbohydrate ratio are better options for weight management. Red wines, dry white wines, dry champagne, spirits such as whisky, vodka and brandy are all superior options – they have much less carbohydrate per volume when compared to beer. Avoid dessert wines like Riesling and liqueurs: both are distilled with added sugar for sweetness. A few ounces to a cup of such liquids could be incorporated into a routine diet, adding between 2-5 grams of carbohydrate a day, if you're one of those wino types. And of course there is nothing wrong with having a beer or two on special occasions.

Isn't eating before bed bad?

Speaking of bullshit that a lot of people believe and flat out has no basis in science or reality: the idea that if you eat before bed that the food will go straight to fat or otherwise somehow be bad for you. This notion is even more credulous than the aforementioned ones as they do not even have a basic grounding in scientific reality: it's based on the idea that when food is in the stomach it either converts to fat or is burned up. As human beings, the story goes, we can expend those calories that we just consumed, or they immediately go to fat. The logic extends to the notion that since we are going to bed after eating, the calories store as fat rather than burn off from activity.

Fortunately nutrition and our bodies don't work like this. What you do over weeks of time has more importance than what you do in a day and meal timings do not matter. The only time meal timing becomes a factor is when you are fasting: clearly one would not want to consume anything other than water during a fast or otherwise would disrupt the benefits of said fast. Other than this one caveat meal timings have no effect on body weight: whether you eat all your calories in one meal in your period of feeding or rather spread them about makes no difference. When the sun is up food digests the same as when it is down. The stomach is not a magical vessel which takes what the body needs for energy, burns it up, and then saves what's left over as fat: the process is much more gradual and complex than that.

What you should worry about by the end of the day is: did I stay within my calorie budget, did I eat a fair amount of protein, fat and fiber, and did I consume enough micronutrient rich foods? When you eat those things does not matter: just that you eat them.

That being said, there is one potential side effect of eating before bed which may but is not guaranteed to affect you: acid reflux/heartburn. For some people lying down after eating causes such effects and for others nothing of the sort happens. For those who are prone to heartburn simply do not eat 2-3 hours before bed and this won't be a factor. In any case this rare circumstance won't have an effect on your nutrition or weight loss.

Banish bad foods from your home

Do you currently have a huge amount of cookies, chips, dips, candy and other garbage throughout your kitchen? I have a homework assignment for you that you are going to do right after you are done reading this and you are not going to put it off to set yourself up for defeat.

We need to get rid of this stuff. Out of sight, out of mind is a saying which is so true: if that crap is within range of your hands, you may find an excuse to eat it. We do want to sometimes eat that sort of crap, 10% of the time (remember 90/10) , but we want to do it in a rewarding way in which we have to

inconvenience ourselves to access it: events like eating out and holidays with friends and family, and then only during scheduled cheat meals. At our fingertips we want to have healthy, clean, natural food and should not have to see Oreos and other garbage which presents as an easy way to crush weeks of progress. It's an OK thing to eat out once a week and eat whatever you want for one meal, but you need to return to a consistent equilibrium of good food, and you do not want to pollute the home with distractions.

My recommendation is to gather up all your sugar loaded, processed, low fat, refined carbohydrate food and either throw it all out, burn it or donate it to a local charity. Whatever you do the important thing is that you get rid of it and it is no longer a convenience. A good time to banish this food which made you fat would be now, do not procrastinate and be undercut later when you have a temporary lapse in discipline.

What should you eat instead? Whole, natural, clean, unprocessed foods and fresh produce. Avoid eating stuff in boxes. Avoid eating stuff in bags. Don't eat stuff with colorful cartoon characters stamped on it, or "low fat" claims, or claims about how amazing the minerals and vitamin content of said Frankenfood is. Isn't that more expensive? No. That's some bullshit you heard from your friends or your mom as they justified stuffing Doritos into their mouth. Natural foods are often less expensive than the processed alternative, especially if one is discerning: don't eat lobster every day (eat a lot of eggs and chicken, and vegetables) and you won't have a problem eating clean. Why eat clean? Processed foods have most of their micronutrients stripped out, are loaded with refined sugars, polyunsaturated vegetable oils, carcinogens and other garbage.

Hey asshole. Why are you still sitting here? Go throw it out. Now. Stop. You're still sitting here. I will hit you.

No one brand of diet makes sense

You may have heard of the so-called "Paleo" diet, based on the concept that humans have for the majority of their history eaten in a certain way, and that sudden departures in contemporary times from those well-established ways

of life have contributed to our wide array of modern health problems. This premise is mostly true, but the problem with "Paleo" or any branded approach to nutrition is that it comes in a package and often includes elements which are illogical. Most regiments of paleo for instance prohibit the consumption of dairy, and without a coherent scientific principle behind said prohibition. There is nothing wrong with eating cheese or heavy cream or butter in moderation from a purely analytical perspective and in consideration of the nutritional data.

The Paleo folks prohibit dairy simply because it did not exist on the African plains 200,000 years ago; not all foods originating from the time of the agricultural revolution are horrible for us, only most are. Some proponents of Paleo also claim that genes can be reprogrammed by behavior to make us strong, strapping athletes like our paleolithic ancestors – this is nonsense and has no basis in science. Observe the "primal" recipes for Paleo protein mix which claim to be low carb and to be composed of natural, basic materials and yet have 5 grams of sugar or more per serving. I do not mean to single out any one diet, but artifacts of marketing, not in your best interest, can be found in any branded diet where there is money to be made.

Nutritional data should guide our decisions, not fashion, and this is what I hope to communicate in this section. Surely you would fair infinitely better on a Paleo diet than on snake oil and severe caloric restriction fashions such as SlimFast or Weight Watchers, but that still doesn't excuse the illogical. If it doesn't make sense, you shouldn't do it. This might be obvious to some readers but this often sneaks up on us in tricky ways: we assume that since one element of a system is true, so must the rest. This is not the case. If you take anything away from this guide it should be that a legion of clever marketers are trying to take your money and they profit from the lack of nutritional and science knowledge in the general public. This is true especially of the United States, where "get six pack abs in 2 weeks" offers run rampant.

The ideal student synthesizes sound research from multiple areas while using his own body as a laboratory, within reason. That is why some of the particular points in this guide have been left intentionally vague, although the fundamentals and major errors have been clearly defined. Everyone's body functions differently, and genetics, blood lipids (hormonal levels) and environments vary: for this reason you must be willing to test different

combinations on yourself. Learn to listen to your body and always consider the bottom line: your feeling of wellness and your body weight.

Intermittent fasting

What a paradox: just in the previous section I caution against starving oneself, yet now I am going to advocate extended periods of fasting. Let's make one thing clear: fasting, extended periods of not eating, is not the same as starving oneself. Starvation is a chronic calorie deficit over a long period of time, days or weeks, where the body is deprived of essential calories and nutrients. In intermittent fasting one simply eats in a restricted amount of time and spends the vast majority of the day in a fasted state: the amount of food intake is the same, the food timing is what differs.

Why would one do this? Fasting has the following benefits:

- Modulates risk factors of cancer, heart disease and other chronic diseases
- Improves gastrointestinal health and reduces feelings of hunger overall
- Greatly increases energy levels
- **Greatly increases the activity of fat burning enzymes – burning stored body fat rapidly!**
- **Greatly decreases the amount of insulin in the blood – less insulin, less fat storage!**

Intermittent fasting is one way in which you can effortlessly cut body fat simply by sitting around and letting your body break down fat for energy.

There are various ways to start an intermittent fasting program: some prefer to fast for a few 24 hour periods throughout the week, while some prefer to fast every day for most of the day, but still eat something every day. I would recommend the latter as it is the most realistic for those who have a 9-5 job. It involves fasting for approximately 18 hours a day, and eating for approximately 6. The important thing is that about a quarter of the day is spent eating and the

rest is spent fasting. During the fast you only consume water, although black coffee, calorie free sweeteners and sugar free gums are OK.

Practically speaking this involves eating your first meal at around noon and your last meal at around five or six in the evening. From your last meal to your first meal, nothing with calories enters the mouth and be sure to drink plenty of water. The first few days you may feel hunger, but eventually you will discover something you probably never have before: complete stillness in your body, amazing energy levels, a lack of hunger and noticeable immediate fat loss in inches.

So you have a 9-5 like most of us? Great, you can still do intermittent fasting. Just skip breakfast and have your first meal during your lunch break. Somewhere in between you might want to have a small meal (snack), and then when you get off work have your last meal. Now just wait and enjoy the benefits.

The 18/6 schedule for intermittent fasting is arguably the best for those living regular lives with families, spouses and other social commitments. For those who live alone and don't have to answer to anyone you may want to try alternate day fasting, although I personally do not. Alternate day fasting is as the name suggests, eating in a 24 hour period, at any time of the day, and then fasting for 24 hours straight. Do this twice or three times a week. **Do not fast for longer than one 24 hour period at once**, and this leads to my next point.

You would do well to take your vitamins and supplements while fasting, especially for very long fasts. Lapses in micronutrient levels, even temporary ones, are not ideal and overtime can contribute to malnutrition. Furthermore, it's much better to have steady, persistent levels rather than suddenly take all your pills at once. For the 18/6 fasts, just take your vitamins with meals, but for longer fasts, those 24 hours or longer, in which no meals are consumed for the entirety of the day, the wisest practitioner would do well to take his or her pills at the same times one would eat normally.

Intermittent fasting has a synergistic effect when combined with a ketogenic diet: **this is arguably the most effective nutritional arrangement for burning body fat.** Not only will fat burning enzymes be supercharged due to the fast, but ketogenic nutrition forces the body to burn body fat for energy in order to

produce ketones. When combined, simply sitting around in a fasted, ketogenic state will lead to substantial fat loss, as long as the nutrition is keenly observed.

For those interested in the science of intermittent fasting I recommend Dr. John Berardi's "Experiments with Intermittent Fasting," which covers the effect fasting has on the body and the efficacy of various fasting schedules. Dr. Berardi's work is available online for free.

Experiments with ketosis

I have mentioned the ketogenic diet at several spots prior, now I will expand upon it. I would like to remind you that you do not have to adopt a ketogenic diet in order to succeed at weight loss, but for some, they will experience an ideal weight loss configuration while in ketosis, especially for those who are especially sensitive to carbohydrate. For those who are not interested just try to eat as little refined carbohydrate as possible and you will lose weight, even if you are not technically in ketosis. What is ketosis? We've gone over it in brief before, but in detail it goes something like this.

- Your body uses glycogen for daily energy, which comes from carbohydrate.
- If there is not enough glycogen available for your energy needs the body immediately begins to break down triacylglycerol (fat).
- The liver converts the fatty acids to ketone bodies, which are then used as an alternative energy source.
- This process continues until you either have an excess of glycogen or you are out of fat (at which point you body starts cannibalizing lean tissues and eventually you die).
- It takes 2-4 weeks of sustained ketosis for the body to prefer and become optimized to use ketones just as well as glycogen – this is known as ketogenic adaption ("keto adaption"). During this period large carbohydrate feeds may "restart" the entire process.

This process is a direct rebuke to the "common sense" idea that carbohydrates are somehow essential to our diet. As long as the body has fat,

which it can gain from sources other than carbohydrate (such as our staples: protein and dietary fat), nothing runs amiss. When you first reduce your carbohydrate consumption your glycogen stores will be depleted rapidly, paving the way to ketosis and increased fat loss.

So how much carbs can you eat and still remain in ketosis? It varies for everyone. In order to determine if you are in ketosis you should buy a box of Ketostix. They are little paper slips which you pee on and change color (like a litmus test) to indicate the level of ketone bodies in the urine. If the ketone level is high, this indicates that your body is producing ketones; if it's low it indicates that it's still primarily using glycogen. A more definitive and accurate option is to buy and use a glucose/ketone meter like the Precision Xtra, although the price of test strips can be prohibitive for those on a budget.

If you aren't in ketosis, it means you need to eat less carbs. Ideally you should start off at about 75 grams and eat less and less until the Ketostix show a good result: measure your urine every day or other day when you wake up. For very sensitive individuals you may need to eat less than 20 grams net carbs a day, while some may enter ketosis somewhere below 100 grams. I am very sensitive so must really watch my carb intake in order to benefit from a state of ketosis. If you don't feel like buying monitoring equipment to check ketone levels just eat as little carbs as you can, shoot for a goal of under 30 grams a day.

Being in ketosis is so hard to explain for those who have never encountered it. For those who eat a lot of carbs, gas is probably a persistent issue, and your stomach is a bubbling and annoying thing. In ketosis you are filled with a Zen-like physical stillness, a complete absence of hunger craving and acuity of mind. A ketogenic diet is an excellent way to lose your fat, as it requires little effort or additional work other than food selection.

Salvation for the sweet tooth

Eating like this means a diet of complete abstinence from the sweet taste, right? No silly head. You just need to get creative, and to abstain from the most

common sweet sources, which will likely make you fat and/or give you cancer, gum disease, diabetes and other fun things.

As we've established: the one golden rule is not to eat sugar. That said, there are other ways to experience sweet, much more intense tastes and in much healthier ways:

- Whipped heavy cream, gelatin, fibrous fruit (blackberries, strawberries etc), nuts/nut butters (pecans, almonds, walnuts etc), sweet/dessert spices (cinnamon, nutmeg, clove, vanilla, ginger etc) and unsweetened cocoa in moderation
- Artificial sweeteners
- Sugar alcohols
- Natural sweeteners not deriving from sugarcane

The first category is self-explanatory. Just mix those components, or other sweet food sources with low sugar quantity, in moderation. I like to take some heavy whipped cream in a bowl, add unsweetened cocoa shavings, a handful of black berries and some pecans for a delicious low carb dessert. For a real quick fix you can get whipped cream in a can and just take a "shot", or have a couple tablespoons of almond, sunflower or peanut butter. Or have a sugar free jello cup, now commonly available in supermarkets.

Artificial sweeteners are a bit trickier. In essence these chemicals work by invoking a sensation of sweet but without the metabolism and associated energy/glycemic impact of sugar. The most common ones work splendidly (no pun intended), and are tens or hundreds of times sweeter than sugar by mass, but they often come packaged in a problematic way. Take Splenda for instance. Splenda contains a small amount of the 0 calorie, 0 sugar, 0 glycemic index sweetener sucralose and a "filler" of maltodextrin and dextrose. The latter are not artificial sweeteners, but instead are byproducts of, and operate similar to, sugar. Because of this packets of Splenda contain 1 gram of carbohydrate each. Not much, but this can add up substantially when it comes to baking, in which some recipes call for multiple cups of sugar substitute. It can also add up, if like me, you prefer an intense sweet taste; 1 packet ain't gonna cut it. All the most common commercial varieties of artificial sweetener follow this formula: small amount of sweetener, a lot of filler. Equal uses aspartame as a sweetener and Sweet n Low uses saccharin – both are cut with maltodextrin and dextrose and

thus have 1 gram of carb each. What's worse: the chemical process of infusing these sweeteners with flaky fillers produces an aftertaste effect in many commercial variants.

Don't fret. You can enjoy these sweeteners without all the unnecessary crap if you buy and incorporate them in their pure form. Doing so also makes them much more versatile in baking or in general use sweetening, as well as will save you some money. Example: Ez-sweetz is an amazing brand of pure liquid sucralose. The latter comes in a little eye dropper bottle where 1 drop is equivalent to 1 tablespoon of sugar. I like to put 5 drops in my morning coffee (along with some heavy cream and pumpkin spice) and also use it judiciously in baking. Sucralose has a taste indistinguishable from sugar and numerous studies have been conducted to evaluate its health effects – the overall consensus is that sucralose is perfectly safe and has negligible effect on human metabolism.

Speaking of which, using artificial sweeteners allows you to essentially reproduce any type of sweet. Merely substitute the requirement of sugar with a sweetener, and where things like wheat and flour are called for, substitute with a ground meal of fibrous nuts or seeds ("almond flour" for instance). Entire websites are dedicated to these sorts of recipes – we'll cover that elsewhere soon enough. Ultimately thou shalt rest assured: sugar is not necessary.

Sugar alcohols are yet another tricky component in sweetening. Sugar alcohols are bastard carbohydrates somewhere between alcohol and sugar. There are many varieties – all of which have differing impacts on blood sugar, sweetness and caloric value. IMPORTANT: **not all sugar alcohols are made equal**. Some also cause significant gastrointestinal distress ranging from nausea, to diarrhea, to painful cramping. They are sweet, but some also are accompanied by secondary sensations such as "cooling" and "heating." All sugar alcohols except erythritol and mannitol have an effect on blood sugar and ALL have calories: some nearly as much as sugar, some less so. Consider the following chart:

Name	Sweetness relative to sucrose	Food energy (kcal/g)	Sweetness per food energy, relative to sucrose	Glycemic Index
Arabitol	0.7	0.2	14	No data
Erythritol	0.812	0.213	15	0
Glycerol	0.6	4.3	0.56	3

HSH	0.4–0.9	3.0	0.52–1.2	39
Isomalt	0.5	2.0	1.0	9
Lactitol	0.4	2.0	0.8	6
Maltitol	0.9	2.1	1.7	36
Mannitol	0.5	1.6	1.2	0
Sorbitol	0.6	2.6	0.92	9
Xylitol	1.0	2.4	1.6	13
Compare with: Sucrose	*1.0*	*4.0*	*1.0*	60

You're likely to run into sugar alcohols when you buy "low sugar" candies and sweets, in which they are often subtracted from total carbohydrate in the marketing/packaging in an estimation of "net carbs" or "effective carbs." This is a path of folly however: as we can see above, **sugar alcohols MAY have an effect on blood sugar, and DO contain calories.**

Compare against artificial sweeteners in their pure form – which have negligible calories and no effect on blood sugar. The most notorious sugar alcohol, which is used in virtually all mainstream/mass produced "low sugar" candy is maltitol. Maltitol is literally the worst thing ever. Not only does it raise blood sugar nearly as much as sugar but it also causes horrible cramping and gastrointestinal distress in most people. Do not buy anything that contains this wretched product of the hellfire. That being said, some of the other sugar alcohols are OK in moderation when you seek sweetness in lieu of the full brunt of sugar. Among them xylitol and erythritol are the healthiest, having the least complications and metabolic effect, while still maintaining a high degree of sweetness. Xylitol is perhaps the king among them, presenting the least gastrointestinal complications, having equivalent sweetness when compared to sugar, and even demonstrating pro-dental properties. Bottom line: Google every sugar alcohol before you eat it in any appreciable quantity or introduce it as a daily element of your diet.

Lastly we have the category of natural sweet sources which derive from non-carbohydrate and/or non-sugarcane sources. Stevia is the most common. Stevia is a naturally occurring herb from South America which is about a thousand times sweeter than sugar, has anti-oxidant properties, no glycemic load and no appreciable carbohydrate. Its taste is NOT identical to sugar; in its pure form it has a honey-like taste with a bitter undertone. Stevia is an acquired

taste but I would argue is just as good as sugar in confronting a sweet tooth if it's used in proper amounts (too much will overload your taste buds) and adapted to over time. Commercial stevia products have the same issues as artificial sweeteners: as it is extremely sweet it is often "cut" with maltodextrin/dextrose or lactose (a milk sugar) and then sold with 1 gram of carbohydrate per serving. Ignore brands cut with sugar alcohols and go for a brand with one ingredient listed: Stevia. Basically, you want Stevia leaves which have been pounded into a fine dust, not some whack chemical cocktail. The taste will be significantly different than the filler brands, but this is what we want for optimal health and taste profile. Check out Pure Stevia Extract Powder by Kal.

All of these elements can be utilized, combined with a general knowledge of nutrition and READING LABELS, to produce fantastic sweet foods. Some of my favorites are cheesecake and fudge. Google around for "low carb desserts" and you'll be amazed at what people have, and what you, can come up with. In many cases the low carbohydrate variants of our favorite sweets taste better than the "original" – I much prefer my cheesecake with an almond meal crust and a liquid sucralose sweetener than the standard fair!

There is no going back

I hate to say this, but if you are morbidly obese now, you will have to pay the consequences for the rest of your life. It's a biological fact that the number of fat cells you have never decreases, the size of the fat cells simply shrink when you lose weight. The relevance of this fact is that no matter how slim you get, you will still be capable of rapidly regaining the weight when compared to your leaner friends. You will have to eat in a relatively disciplined way in order to remain at a healthy weight and modest deviations from the plan will lead to weight gain. Even a few weeks of a caloric surplus, high in carbohydrates, could lead to seemingly impossible weight gain: I have seen it happen.

The psychological salve for this turn of events is simply to enjoy the holiday feasts, the occasional cheat meal and special occasions and to simultaneously redefine your relationship with food. Food could be a reward, or something to engage in decadently, but only at special, choice times in your life.

The overwhelming majority of the time food should be good, but should not be an experience; it should not be something which must be an intense pleasure. When you are eventually at your target weight, and want to just maintain rather than lose weight, you could probably have a few cheat meals a week and still break even. However the truth is: by the time you get there, you will no longer crave food the way you once did.

While you might be prone to fatness for life – that doesn't mean you are cursed or that you should fret. Like anyone with a medical condition you just need to be aware of the limitations of your body and how to avoid exposure to certain triggers. While you can gain it back, at least now that you are health conscious it won't be something that will run out of control, and you now have the tools to maintain the fire.

I stood up and almost fainted – what the fuck?

Did you stand up suddenly and almost fall over? Did you take a hot shower and then started to lose your balance? Feeling tired and exhausted, especially after exerting yourself? You have discovered a common complication of carbohydrate restriction: increased sodium excretion, and associated sodium deficiency in the blood serum. What's the fix? Drink a 2g sodium broth daily (bullion works fine), or, if you are a boss, eat blood.

What's the deal here? When we severely restrict our carbohydrate consumption, particularly in the case of ketogenic diet, our kidneys rapidly excrete sodium (and the other electrolytes) as we shed our "water weight." Sodium is sorta important as it's the primary regulator of blood pressure. No sodium, no blood pressure. If you are deficient you'll experience head rushes, dizziness, grogginess, nausea, confusion and feelings of weakness. This is easily fixed. As above, just throw two bouillon cubes in two or three cups of boiling water and drink. Or, put a shit load of salt on all your food. Or make your own broth from the boiled bones and remains of a whole chicken – it tastes better that way. In a pinch an electrolyte supplement like Emergen-c will do, although most of them contain some sugar to make 'em taste all fruity. Buyer beware.

Herein is one of the most common complaints levied against the low carb diet: mistaken initiates as well as critics cite this condition as a fundamental problem associated with our way of eating. On the contrary this condition simply implies improper nutrition rather than an essential failing of the diet. Our ancestors achieved their salt by simply incorporating more blood into their diet, but as few of us fancy ourselves as vampires, the alternative supplementations suffice.

Putting it all together: nutritional programming

At this point we have all the disparate details required to "do" nutrition. We know what foods to avoid, what to eat, and the general premise of how we get fat and how our body becomes sick. But now it's time to go to the grocery store. How much should I eat (calories/energy)? In what macronutrient composition (fat/protein/carbohydrate ratio)? What is the timeline?

Let's begin with our composition. As a rule of thumb we should eat a lot of fat, a moderate amount of protein and a small amount of carbohydrate. In terms of a ratio, something like 70% fat/25% protein/5% carbohydrate by calorie is close. Exact calculations are both frustrating and unnecessary. Daily variances in any one of these categories by 10% will not derail your nutrition and instead should be considered general principles when composing a "plate." For instance: most fish is very high in protein and has virtually no fat, to accomplish your goals you should eat the fish with a generous serving of cream, butter, hollandaise, béarnaise or full-fat yogurt. If you select a fatty fish like salmon or herring, perhaps you could eat more fish and less fat for that individual meal. Note the large preference for fat: many improperly educated students confuse a low carb diet with a high protein diet. We've covered before how eating very large amounts of protein can produce weight plateaus or even weight gain in extreme examples due to the process of gluconeogenesis.

Timeline. I recommend beginning your new diet with a fast, even if you don't intend to do intermittent fasting later on. Why? You can't reliably judge hunger at this point and you have all sorts of crazy sugar cravings which are out of sync with your body's inherent sense of hunger. After about a day but up to

two days of not eating, your sense of hunger should normalize and subsequent eating will become much more satiating. Drink a lot of water to stave off the hunger and I promise it will eventually subside from a powerful, uncontrollable urge to a dull, barely noticeable feeling. This is real hunger. The former is bullshit sugar addiction at work. If you can handle it, perform a 48 hour fast, although a 24 hour fast (1 entire day of not eating) should be sufficient. Although the first few hours of a fast are difficult, rest assured that it will get a lot easier as time passes – recall the Stewart and Fleming study in which one patient fasted for 382 days straight! Noting this, a 24 or 48 hour fast is nothing.

At the end of our introductory fast we begin to eat whole dairy and meat sources in accordance with our sense of hunger, until satiety. You could eat a small salad of heavy greens a day, but in general we want to severely restrict our carbohydrate intake during this time. This period will see the complete eradication of long-term persistent hunger as your body shifts its chemistry around. Do this for a week or two. You will start to feel amazing soon. Make sure you drink your broth.

Starting on week three we can begin slowly ramping up the amount of carbohydrates we eat if we desire (nuts, seeds, more complex vegetables). You'll know you have hit your tolerance level when you start putting on water weight (feeling puffy) or experiencing plateaus. As a rule of thumb most "fat since birth" people have a tolerance of 40 grams or less, while more tolerant individuals can possibly go up to 100 grams without issue.

Once you discover your tolerance level that's how much carbohydrate you can eat a day and still lose fat. I recommend eating well below this "wall" – 20 grams or less a day is a decent operating level. Reserve carbohydrate for micronutrients and fiber: fibrous greens, vegetables, nuts, seeds and a bit of carefully selected fruit.

Energy. As we've established, calories matter. Do you need to count your calories? Probably not. Numerous studies show that when low carbohydrate, high fat diets are compared to calorie restricted high carb diets the low carbohydrate groups lose more weight, and often result in reliable, long-term

weight loss.[4] We've also established this is because low carbohydrate foods are inherently satiating and we end up eating less energy (calories) because we are less hungry and more rarely experience the addictive neurological and physiological effects of sugar consumption.

But hold the phone Batman. You're obese and you're probably used to binge eating and generally eating way above your energy requirements. **Ultimately you ARE accountable for your caloric intake**. We introduce a fast during the timeline to modulate our hunger and to prepare the body for more satiating foods, but that doesn't mean you can go crazy. You're probably used to eating a lot, and that won't be necessary once we change *what* we eat. You probably have no idea what you actually need to be satisfied. I recommend starting off with a small amount of food and keep adding to it across days until you are no longer hungry. By doing so you will have created a calorie deficit given your body size. Note: this doesn't work with carbohydrate rich foods, where you can eat mountains of the stuff and never reach satiety. Eat slowly. Savor the food. Consume with ample water in between bites. Pause. Eat.

Day 1 after your fast: try having two or three eggs, a couple pieces of cheese and bacon for your first meal. If you're a coffee person, drink a mug of that with a tablespoon of heavy cream. Now wait. You shouldn't be hungry after an hour, if you are, we can increase things the next day. A low carb meal should keep you completely satiated for at least six to eight hours and you should not have hunger cravings after your first meal until much later in the day, perhaps until dinner time. Speaking of which, when you start to get hungry again have a second meal. Try a chicken breast/hamburger/sausage, with some cheese, cooked in butter, with a cup or two of asparagus, broccoli or spinach, cooked in olive oil or butter. Or equivalent. Have another mug of coffee if you want, or tea. Add a tablespoon of heavy cream. You shouldn't need a third meal, but if need be, have a small one: a couple hard boiled eggs with some cheese might work, or a small handful of almonds.

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[4] Samaha FF, et al. *A Low-Carbohydrate as Compared with a Low-Fat Diet in Severe Obesity*. N Engl J Med 2003;348:2074–81.
Brehm BJ, et al. *A Randomized Trial Comparing a Very Low Carbohydrate Diet and a Calorie-Restricted Low Fat Diet on Body Weight and Cardiovascular Risk Factors in Healthy Women*. J Clin Endocrinol Metab 2003;88:1617–1623.
Volek JS, et al. *Comparison of energy-restricted very low-carbohydrate and low-fat diets on weight loss and body composition in overweight men and women*. Nutrition & Metabolism 2004, 1:13.

Day 2 after your fast: How did we feel yesterday? Were we noticably hungry at any point? We shouldn't have been. If we were, let's add some more food, but a small amount. For instance: our dinner meal could do with a few tablespoons of sour cream with our chicken, or our breakfast could include another egg or another piece of cheese, or we could add a tablespoon of coconut oil to each mug of coffee. You should be honing in on your natural demands. Be sure to eat slowly and maintain the same water intake: high.

Day … after your fast: Listen to the body. Does it feel robust and strong? Or are you left with hunger or weakness? A small amount of hunger after hours in a fasted state is fine, but if you are left with craving for food, add a bit more. Maybe another piece of protein for our second meal, or maybe a fatty sauce (yogurt, hollandaise, béarnaise, blue cheese etc) on top of what we already have, or an avocado somewhere. You should never feel "stuffed", just satisfied. Feelings of having eaten too much are feelings of having eaten above energy balance and it means you're going to gain fat. The body is a finely tuned reporter.

Energy guidelines. Some of you may prefer to count your calories. I never did when I started but always had a rough idea of how much I was eating. It was never a complete mystery how much calories I was eating, just wasn't precisely accounted for – I would know within a margin of error of three or four hundred what I was consuming. This also assumes that packages are accurate, which they often are not. Listening to your body is key – don't eat unless you're hungry, and eat if you are hungry.

Energy requirement calculations are very difficult to determine for morbidly obese people. The most common metric is basal metabolic rate (BMR). BMR is the amount of energy you supposedly require to survive at rest. Eating at your target weight's BMR, not yours, is roughly accurate to the limit of how many calories you should be eating. BMR is wildly inaccurate for those above 250 pounds or so, as it assumes the weight is mostly lean and not fat; lean muscle requires more calories than fat so it inflates the number. As a case example let's consider me: my BMR is calculated (tons of them online) at about 3500 calories for my starting weight of 440 pounds and about 2000 calories for my target weight of 205. Would I lose weight eating the former? No (I'd probably gain). Would I lose weight eating the latter? Probably; it should be considered the upper limit of my daily caloric intake. Most of you should be eating between

1400-2000 calories a day with women on the lower side and men on the higher. This can increase once we have achieved our goal, but for now, we eat less.

As previously discussed in this volume, you need to create a deficit of 3500 calories to lose a pound of fat. Unfortunately the topic of calculating energy requirements is not an exact science, which is why a properly honed sense of hunger, without the misleading input of sugar cravings, can really be useful. While you're assaulted by persistent waves of hunger at this time, this will change once we stop eating refined carbohydrates and you'll be liberated from a life of constantly grazing in the kitchen – a life which has made you who you are: fat and sick.

Section II: From Flesh to Steel

Objective: Learn to use your limbs again. Train strength. Be robust.

Getting active

Truth be told, exercise is not a means of losing weight, but a means of improving your overall strength, health, flexibility and endurance. You can lose weight fine without entering a gym, or lifting a finger. This is the most common, and most severe, misunderstanding in health: the idea that you must deprive yourself horribly and exert yourself to the brink of death, in order to lose weight. On the contrary I strongly discourage exercise until you are already consistently losing weight, and then only as a thing of experimentation and eventual routine recreation, not as a thing central to your weight loss quest. **Exercise while very large is a punitive experience which can contribute to yo-yo dieting, binging, feelings of depression and frustration.** Once you're light of foot introduce exercise as a form of entertainment and general wellness improvement, not as a reactionary component of weight loss. You'll know when the time is right: you'll be walking outside one day and realize that it's no longer a chore to move around, and you'll get a spontaneous urge to run or climb something. Yeah, just like when you were a kid.

Why isn't exercise central? Studies show that exercise isn't effective in weight loss. When control groups are compared against groups who do hours of exercise a week, the exercise groups normally break even, only have a slight

weight loss difference or actually gain weight. The reasons why are pretty understandable if you, like me, were told to stop eating so much and "just exercise." You force yourself to go outside. You feel like shit, and look like shit, but you do it anyway. Huffing and puffing, you somehow force yourself into the indescribable hell of running for 30 minutes. The entire time, your heart is popping out of your chest and you have pain all over. When you're done you notice two things: hunger and exhaustion. The first makes you eat something, but since you've exercised, it's ok. The second makes you loathe your existence, and you don't want to do it again. You come to hate the thing, rather than be liberated by it and appreciate it.

But I hate to break it to you: it's not OK to eat something extra after you've done 30 minutes of running. The 30 minutes of running didn't burn many calories; you'd have to do that every day without consuming anything extra in order to benefit. What's worse: when we exercise like that we are often confronted with absolutely furious hunger, and in our exhausted state can't or won't prepare healthy foods which require some time. What do we reach for? Garbage. And we binge on it because in our mind it's excused by the hard work we just put in. Nope, one little binge like this will set us back a week, or at least a few days.

The solution? Don't do it. Eventually you'll be at a point where you can handle this stuff, but for now, just focus on nutrition. Nutrition is the basis of what causes you to lose weight and fundamentally improve your health. The immense efforts we devote to exercise are of little impact in weight loss. At some point soon it won't be an immense effort to exercise, and you won't hate it. That's when you should do it: when it's fun, or at the very least gratifying, not when it's a hellish chore.

Furthermore when you first start you don't want to overcomplicate things. If you try everything at once, you will fail. If you approach your new health in stages however, and in chunks of new experience, things are much more manageable and much more easily tracked in isolation. Try this:

Stage 1: Adaptation (4 weeks)

Throw out all the crap food in your place. Eat mostly meat, dairy and some fibrous vegetables. Very basic diet with virtually no carbohydrate.

Start drinking a lot of water. Introduce supplements. Start fasting. Start routine tracking of weight and establish an accountability journal to yourself or others for review, analysis and planning. No cheat meals.

Stage 2: Experimentation (a few weeks-few months)

Here's a period of experimentation in which you master cooking, different meal timings and nutrient compositions until you find what works perfectly. This could take a few weeks to a few months. The essential base is the same, but you're constantly tweaking until you really start enjoying what unique configuration works for you, all the while losing weight.

Stage 3: Weight Loss Rollercoaster (as long as it takes)

Here you have already perfected your nutrition, sleep schedule, stress management and other stuff and are just shedding weight in a reliable, controlled way. You might encounter some setbacks, but it's all being recorded, and you have the context to make adjustments and fix any missteps promptly without drama.

Stage 4: Getting Active (Life)

You have got to the point where weight loss is easy, you know exactly what's going on, how foods effect you, how to rebound from setbacks and are starting to feel an itch to use your body again. You feel lighter on your feet and just want to start moving, probably for the first time in years. You begin a program of routine exercise, clumsily but with an open heart. Read "the way forward" which follows.

Stage 5: Athleticism (optional)

At this stage you aren't just "getting active" – you're becoming a warrior and getting into advanced topics of exercise. You aren't just jogging in place anymore, or even jogging down the block, but are trying marathons, and have begun lifting huge amounts of weight in a safe, controlled way. People stare at you in the gym with equal shares of admiration and intimidation. You eagerly accept physical challenges and

routinely introduce new challenges to test yourself. You work to overcome physical hurdles until they are demolished. There are no obstacles, only opportunities.

The way forward

Eventually you are going to going to be at a point where you feel like you can become active. Your energy level is going to be soaring and you are going to start feeling good about yourself. Time to start actually using your body! Of course you probably looked at a bunch of exercises on the internet and can't imagine yourself doing most of them. Here's some fat ass friendly advice.

Before we do anything, I must recommend that you order "The Art and Science of Low Carbohydrate Performance" by Volek and Phinney. Much like the virtuous pair's other book, which covers the essentials of low carbohydrate nutrition, Performance covers the fundamentals of exercise while the carbage intake is low. It's from this book that I learned some of the tricks I mention in this work, such as the need to supplement your daily nutrition with an electrolyte giving broth, and also the fundamentals of perfecting your body chemistry and remaining active while in a ketogenic state. If you can afford it, order it, and then keep reading. For the record Phinney trained Olympic runners to perform their best while eating low carb by optimizing fat mobilization for energy! Onto our beginner's program:

The first step is to begin cardiovascular exercise. The goal being to restart our atrophied physical systems and get them to a baseline level of conditioning so that we can do real work, like resistance training and higher intensity, explosive actions. This initial process translates directly into increased metabolism, general improvement in standard of life and stamina. Once we can tolerate basic cardio, which will probably be relatively soon after you start working out, we can advance to weight training. One important note: you will feel horribly sore when you start to get active – I promise that this will eventually be replaced either no soreness or very short term soreness once you become adapted (assuming your nutrition remains responsible), just keep at it and have faith. Your cardio sessions should be at least 20 minutes of intense work and 10

minutes of “sort of” work/warm up and cool down. Double the duration of both once you get healthier. Cardio isn’t really an essential component of becoming active: weight training is more effective at transforming our health, in both of time spent and effect, but you aren’t at the point where you can do a barbell squat and expect not to kill yourself.

The simplest form of cardio we can start off with is running in place (RIP). It’s like running, except its lower intensity, won’t destroy your knees because you don’t have to stride, and you can do it inside (and if you are a giant fat ass like I was, you don’t want to be seen outside). You just stand in one spot, and run by raising your knees as high as possible and bringing them down quickly. Make sure you land on the ball of your feet, not your heel. A more advanced form of RIP is jump rope – but don’t try to start off with jump rope, you will fall on your ass horribly. If you have stairs in your house or somewhere nearby you can also just walk up and down stairs – it doesn’t sound like it’s that effective but after five minutes or so, you will feel the effect! Fast walking is fine but in order for it to be effective you shouldn’t be able to talk while doing it; **if you can have a conversation while doing cardio you are doing it wrong**.

Once you can RIP for longer than ten minutes without gasping like a fish out of water, I would advance to bag work (boxing on a bag used for boxing). This requires a bit of a monetary investment and research on how to hang it, but it shouldn’t cost more than $200 for a nice bag, the hardware to hang it and a pair of good gloves. It’s not a good excuse that you can’t hang it in your house, you can buy a stand and bag combo on walmart.com for like $150-160. Protip: don’t buy plates to weigh the stand down, just buy 50-100 lb bags of sand from your local home improvement store and use those instead. Make sure you get large 18-20+ ounce gloves; the size of the gloves is directly proportional to your body weight. DO NOT use the gloves which come with the bag, as they are 2-6 ounce pieces of crap and you will fuck your hands up if you try to box with them. Also make sure you wrap your hands properly and learn some basic form from the interwebs so to avoid injuries.

Boxing is by far the most intense cardio you can do, and it’s great because it scales depending on ability level. You can start off by just doing footwork, light punches and bobbing and weaving, and then you can advance to power punches, and when you are good at that, advance to very fast power punch combinations. Boxing will not only improve your cardiovascular health,

but it will teach you how to defend your friends and family, strengthen your bone structure, function as a full body resistance exercise and greatly improve your stability and balance. Boxing is the best overall thing you can do for your health in terms of exercise. If you do kick or Thai boxing you will especially work your core muscles as well.

If you start getting really fit I would introduce burpees, although they are not a very fat ass friendly exercise. As I said, only if you really start to get fit. Also once you get to a point where you are no longer a land monster the best thing you can do for your health is join a boxing gym. Avoid gimmicky martial arts studios where you have to earn "belts" and do "kata", stick with western or Thai boxing or other styles which will strengthen your body, teach you a reasonable combat skill and do not cost you a fortune. The commitment to the gym will keep you accountable and also help build some friendships based around constructive activities; at this point in your life, you may have some jealous people nearby who are going to try to drag you down, and you can and should replace them with those who value health, beautiful things, setting goals, and accomplishing them.

What about weight lifting? Well, first let's get the bicep curl out of the way. Ever see a movie, TV show or your stupid friends featuring the gym? They are probably doing bicep curls. Just one problem: the bicep is an essentially worthless muscle and is rarely used in feats of strength – its physiological function is to support other muscles which actually do work, like the deltoids and triceps. So we aren't going to be doing any bicep curls, and we aren't going to be doing a huge laundry list of exercises to target specific muscles either. Instead we are going to do a few complex, heavy lifts which target the majority of your muscles and translate into everyday feats of strength. Just by doing these few lifts you will radically transform your body and become incredibly strong. You will never get sore from picking up a box again, and will be able to easily move large pieces of furniture by yourself or with minimal assistance. You'll feel hard, lean muscle under whatever flab you have remaining, and eventually all of it will be replaced by the former.

Before continuing make sure that you can jog, run, do bag work or the equivalent for at least twenty minutes or perform the equivalent and that said activity doesn't exhaust you for hours or days on end. You should at this point be able to go jogging for 30 minutes, build up a huff and puff situation, then go

home and drink some water and feel better than when you started. Until you reach that point, keep working on basic conditioning and adding a few minutes at a time to your cardio sessions. Again: the goal of these sessions is to "rewake" your body so we can do some real transformative shit. You must be able to use your body in a basic sense (able to perform the feats of everyday living without pain) before continuing.

The importance of resistance training or what to pick for the lazy

While the aforementioned is a blueprint to begin to properly use your body, it's a bit more complex than that. For many of you, you will loathe the idea of doing cardio/aerobics, even if you find a relatively fun method like punching a bag really hard.

There is also a possibility that you don't have the time to work out so often or so long (at least that's what you tell yourself). That's OK because there is a factor of diminishing returns to consider. The essential truth which you must recognize is that cardio and aerobics are only marginally effective for weight loss. Cardio will help you lose weight, but the power of cardio compared to sound nutrition is minimal. Furthermore, weight training is much more effective at weight loss and at improving overall health than is cardio. Cardio in itself can't hurt, but it can if you are dedicating time to that instead of lifting, or using the associated exhaustion as an excuse to eat more or go off your nutritional plan. If you must pick a single type of exercise to do (for whatever reason) pick weight training: it offers more bang for your buck.

The proof is in the pudding (from an article on T-Nation):

Kramer, Volek et al.

Influence of exercise training on physiological and performance changes with weight loss in men.

Med. Sci. Sports Exerc., Vol. 31, No. 9, pp. 1320-1329, 1999.

Overweight subjects were assigned to three groups: diet-only, diet plus aerobics, diet plus aerobics plus weights. The diet group lost 14.6 pounds of fat in 12 weeks. The aerobic group lost only one more pound (15.6 pounds) than the diet group (training was three times a week starting at 30 minutes and progressing to 50 minutes over the 12 weeks).

The weight training group lost 21.1 pounds of fat (44% and 35% more than diet and aerobic only groups respectively). **Basically, the addition of aerobic training didn't result in any real world significant fat loss over dieting alone.**

Thirty-six sessions of up to 50 minutes is a lot of work for one additional pound of fat loss. However, the addition of resistance training greatly accelerated fat loss results.

One more:

Bryner RW, Ullrich IH, Sauers J, Donley D, Hornsby G, Kolar M, Yeater R.

Effects of resistance vs. aerobic training combined with an 800 calorie liquid diet on lean body mass and resting metabolic rate.

J Am Coll Nutr. 1999 Apr;18(2):115-21.

The aerobic group performed four hours of aerobics per week. The resistance training group performed 2-4 sets of 8-15 reps, 10 exercises, three times per week.

V02 max increased equally in both groups. Both groups lost weight. The resistance training group lost significantly more fat and didn't lose any LBM, even at only 800 calories per day. (The reason the calories were so low was to really take any dietary variables completely out of the equation and compare the effects of the exercise regime on LBM and metabolism.)

The resistance training group actually increased metabolism compared to the aerobic group, which decreased metabolism. It seems that resistance training is a more significant stress to the body than a starvation diet.

Such studies, which are numerous, demonstrate that not only is weight training more effective for weight loss when compared to aerobics but it's also more effective for improving overall health. That being said, I still think you should start with cardio as a way of first waking up your bodily systems. Why? When you first start doing cardio, it's going to be a full body workout – you will be sore all over, and in fact it will function as a form of full body resistance training for systems of muscles which are atrophied and in poor condition. The resistance in these particular cases is not weight in your hands, but the fat of your own body. If you are very fat, simply walking briskly will be a full body workout and it's a great way to start.

Cardio is much less intimidating than weight training for a beginner; everyone knows how to walk, not everyone knows the proper form for a squat. For this reason I recommend, as mentioned in the previous section, starting with cardio but eventually moving to weight training and then focusing on weight training as a cornerstone of your health. While I occasionally do cardio it's often for entertainment and for stress reduction more than weight loss: I feel less guilty about missing a round of bag work than I do about a day of weights. Consistency is key – working out a lot at once and then quitting is worthless. Consistent work, just like your adherence to a diet, is what will matter in the long run.

As a final note gaining muscle will increase your basal metabolism over time and make it easier to lose weight: muscle cells require more energy for maintenance when compared to fat, bone and ligaments. The relevance of this fact is that in the months following a weight training regimen you will be able to eat more and you will burn more calories and thus lose more weight while at rest. And while our genetics tend to make us pack on the fat, it also helps us build muscle quickly: if you put in moderate consistent effort at weight training you will likely see amazing results.

Seminar in basic resistance training

The mechanism of getting stronger is pretty simple. You put stress on a system, and it adapts to meet that stress. You lift a really heavy thing ten or

fifteen times, your muscles increasingly are unable to do it, and by the last time you lift it, are literally torn and no longer can do it. But that's ok. They heal within a few days, and when they heal, they heal with more tissue, and vibrant, new tissue. The blood vessels surrounding these muscles become resilient, and the nerves more responsive. This effect snowballs: over time the muscle becomes "trained" and is ready to spontaneously perform feats of intensity, for longer periods of time (endurance) and explosively. All of this together is "strength" and the goal of a resistance program is to develop strength.

Stop. First we're going to go over my laws of resistance training. You will obey these or I will find you and hurt you. Any professional is going to agree with these laws, more or less, but you are probably oblivious to them right now, so listen up and get these tattooed on your forehead or at least over your heart:

- **Proper form and deliberate, full range of motion is always more important than increasing weight**. If you do more weight with improper form you will either only have "cheated" to appear to have extra strength, or, more importantly: you will probably fuck yourself up. I don't want to hear you bitching about how you can only do 20 pounds or something like that when you start. Keep in mind that you are fat, so you already moving a deceptively large amount of weight. When I first started I could not perform a single barbell squat due to my inflexibility and weakness, and as of the time of this writing can safely squat three hundred pounds; I state this to demonstrate that everyone starts off as a weakling and ego needs to be left at the door.
- You will not do any lift that you don't know the form of. Any motion you make will be intentioned.
- You will not enter the gym unless you know what you are going to do; you will have a plan every time.
- You will hydrate before you lift, and if you are a low carber you should consume a broth as well.
- If you feel any pain or load on BONE or LIGAMENT, you will stop whatever you are doing. Bone shouldn't lift things, muscle should.
- You will perform a warm up. This should involve performing the same lift or exercise, but doing so at decreased intensity or load before your main effort. This will prevent injury. If a muscle is cold and constricted when you perform a lift, it will not perform properly.

- Don't fuck around. The quicker you transition between lifts, the better. Aggressively rack and move the plates around. Rest as little as possible between lifts. If your heart is chugging, that's good because the session will turn into a cardiovascular and full body stimulus. I don't want to hear you talking to your stupid friend who is doing bicep curls or see you texting. Get it done.
- Machines are for weaklings who cannot perform real lifts. I rather you start doing lifts using barbells and dumbbells, even if it means less weight, because this will more readily translate into real world strength, flexibility and endurance.

Refer to the following website: Exrx.net has an index of virtually every exercise imaginable and has animated gif images showing you the proper form. Each exercise on the website has a full list of the muscles involved in it, risks, how to decrease or increase difficulty and much more. Use it to look up all the shit I am about to mention.

I also insist that you read **Starting Strength**. Mark Rippetoe's masterpiece is the closest thing I'll consider to being canon. If you want to get into a weight lifting regiment that is not excessively time consuming but will substantially increase your health and quality of life I highly recommend that book and program. Rippetoe's book is intended for the complete novice to begin weightlifting for health, without a coach, mostly using the barbell, in a completely safe and controlled fashion. Starting Strength comes with hour long instructional videos on each of the fundamental motions. You can probably find these online if you are crafty enough. A YouTube search for "Starting Strength" or "Mark Rippetoe" is also fruitful. Mark Rippetoe knows more than me (real talk). You should read what follows as an insight resistance training for our unique situation (weakness, obesity, confidence issues etc) and then ideally, if you have the time, apply the methodology of Rip. He's a boss.

So what motions will transform you?

(Barbell) Squat – The king of lifts. It involves the whole body in one form or another, and is by far the most important exercise you can perform because of it. The squat's primary function is to strengthen the lower body. Lower body strength most routinely translates to daily feats of strength including lifting heavy objects, walking, stepping, squatting (you don't say!) and lunging. Doing a

squat properly will have the most significant effect on your physical fitness – if you only have time to do one thing, do this.

(Barbell) Overhead Press – Raising a heavy weight above your head and then behind you above your scapula will strengthen all the muscles in your upper body but particularly the shoulders, including both deltoids. The overheard press is the most challenging lift when we start, as years of keeping our arms at our sides have led to significant atrophy of the shoulders. Combined with the inherent heaviness of our arms, you're likely going to start with very small amounts of weight or even no weight at all and may just use the body as resistance.

(Barbell) Deadlift – This involves picking up a really heavy object from the floor and is arguably the most important exercise after the squat. It targets all the muscles of the back, but also involves the entire body with the exception of the shoulders. Both the squat and deadlift will make your testosterone soar if you are a dude. You will experience something happening that hasn't happened in a long time: getting boners all the time and generally feeling more confident and greater sex drive. Turn that drive into effort and work! Be proud to be a ballsy bad ass.

(Barbell) Bench Press – Here you move a weight from right below the neck from the upper ribcage in an upward pressing/pushing motion. This exercise targets the chest primarily but also has a secondary effect on the arm muscles, particularly the triceps. If you have trouble getting up or pushing objects working the bench press will resolve this.

The bench press has some risk associated with it (namely the bar falling on your neck or chest). It's also potentially awkward to start without a spotter, or for fat people like us to lie down on a bench without serious discomfort and according complication of improper form. Because of these factors I recommend replacing it with dumbbell flies and press (Two separate exercises targeting different areas of the chest/arms) when first starting and only introducing the bar when you are absolutely confident that you can safely control weight during a pressing motion. If you lose control while using dumbbells you just bring the weights down your side and loosen your grip, letting them fall, with no harm done, if you lose control while using a barbell and no one is around to help you, you can die.

Stop. Don't be scurred: the chance of injury while weight training is one of the lowest when compared to other forms of sport. You're more likely to injure yourself playing basketball or football by an order of magnitude when compared to resistance training.

(Barbell) Power Clean – This is a lift where you start by doing a deadlift and then explosively transition ("clean") the weight up onto the top of the chest ("catch") while standing. We start this lift only once we have already mastered the ones above and its primary target is to enhance your explosive power, neuromuscular response and overall flexibility. It involves the strength of the entire body and will train any minor/supporting muscles which otherwise were neglected by the aforementioned lifts. The power clean has some associated injury associated with it, namely on the wrist. Because of this I want to reiterate that we only start doing power cleans once we have already mastered the other lifts.

These five lifts, when performed properly, are all you need to transform your entire physique into a trained, strong state.

All of these lifts require access to a barbell and a variety of weight plates. A simple way to acquire such equipment is Craigslist or a yard sale. On Craigslist you can buy a used weight set for pennies on the dollar, and many individuals often give away entire sets if you are willing to pick them up (in the "free" section). If this is unavailable to you, get a membership at a cheap gym (ask for and make sure they have a squat rack). A crappy gym like Planet Fitness only costs $10/month for a basic membership; do not pay for one of their coaches to train you, most of them will not know what they are doing. If that's not possible due to poverty there are still solutions. Get a sack or sturdy box and some bags of sand from a construction supply place like Home Depot. Bags of sand usually go for like $2/50lbs. Or steal some sand from nature. Weigh the bag/box on your scale. Then add the sand. Weigh again. In this way you can determine how much weight you are using. You can also use hay bales, big tires, heavy objects, logs and the like in lieu of sand, although it may be trickier to incrementally increase your weight trained in such a fashion.

Alternatives for the 99%

Can't afford a weight set or gym membership? Don't have the strength to begin lifting weights? Want to try out a program before you flounder around at the gym? Try this stuff, I did.

Squat - replace with squats against body weight. You simply stick your hands out in front of you, then keep them level and squat down as low as you can go without putting strain on your knees. See exrx for proper form. And when those are too easy add 5 pounds of sand at a time to a box/bag and perform a "zercher squat" or "goblet squat." You should be able to easily advance in the squat in this fashion. If you are especially flexible you can also substitute the zercher/goblet with a hack squat.

Overhead Press – start with simply performing the overhead press motion without a barbell and against body weight. Chances are this will be properly exhausting. When that's too easy just add a bag/box with sand/heavy stuff and do the same motion.

Deadlift – Same thing as a deadlift, except use a large bag or box. Try to distribute the weight as laterally as possible.

Bench Press – Ye old pushups work just fine. You probably can't do a legit pushup when you start, so do it against the wall. Lean more and more horizontally until you can do a pushup on the floor. When that's too easy do a pushup on the floor, except move your arms in closer to your body. When that's too easy add a weight onto your upper back. If you can afford it I highly recommend pushup stands. They are little metal handles which allow you to even distribute the weight onto your wrist through a gripping motion and reduce the risk of injury. You can also perform dumbbell flies and press without the dumbbells by using bags/boxes, but make sure the weight is evenly distributed to your wrist.

Power Clean – Works fine with a bag or box. Distribute the weight laterally.

All of these exercises can be assisted at higher weights with the use of ropes/gloves. These ropes should not be tied so as to carry weight but to simply keep the weight even distributed and secure, or as a hand hold. The one real advantage of a barbell and plates is that by gripping you do this naturally; it may be difficult to grip a heavy bag or box and without donning gloves could result in

your hands being cut up from tearing forces under heavier weight. **If you can afford it, get access to a barbell.**

Programming

How often should you work out? What is the structure of the workout? The timeframe?

Before every session hydrate. Drink a lot of water, at least 32 ounces is my recommendation. If you become dehydrated during the middle of a session, everything is going to go out the window and you are going to suddenly be unable to perform. Don't hydrate as you are walking out the door but instead do so starting at least 1.5 hours before and continue slowly until you leave. You might also want to consider an injection of caffeine 15-20 minutes before starting, as caffeine has been demonstrated in studies to increase the overall explosive power and endurance of a trainee (one such: *The effect of caffeine as an ergogenic aid in anaerobic exercise* by Woolf et al, 2008). I recommend 6 cups of dark roast, full body coffee – adding some heavy cream or other source of fat will help speed up the absorption of the caffeine. If you are on a low carb diet you also should drink a broth an hour or so before you leave or you may experience weakness/dizziness during the gym session for reasons we have already established.

If it's cold out, drive to the gym with your heat blaring – your entire body needs to be warm before we start lifting, which is also why we do a general warm up. When you get to the gym it's time to perform the latter. I suggest two options: either about 20 minutes of cardio on the step machine, elliptical, rowing or other full body machine, or if you can handle it, doing a large number of squats with just the barbell and no weight loaded. Of course if you are just starting the latter might not be possible: the squats should not exhaust your muscles, but instead should just be used to get your heart pumping. If you find your muscles becoming exhausted from squatting with an unweighted barbell: STOP and do cardio instead. If you don't have equipment you can do some sprints/running or jump squats/burpees to warm up. I like to do 20-40 squats in fast repetition with an empty barbell or with some light weight added and by the

end I can feel a sweat. When the latter is achieved, it's time to work! **NOTE: If you need to stop lifting for whatever reason and your body becomes cold, you will need to warm up again.**

The target of our workout is to perform 3 sets of 5 repetitions ("reps") at maximum weight for each lift. This essentially means we should be able to perform a lift 5 times, rest for about 30-60 seconds then do it twice more. This part of the session in which you exert yourself to train the muscle is called a "work set." The one exception is the deadlift: one need only do 5 reps for the work set in order to effectively train the muscle. It should be a serious exertion to perform the work set and during the last set you will start to feel like you are unable to do it. You can do it, but at the end you should be unable to, as your muscles will be fully exhausted. The amount of weight should go up every session by 5 pounds if possible. If not possible, you should do the same amount of weight as the last session with immaculate form, and then increase weight during the subsequent session. If you find yourself stuck for more than two sessions during the start of a resistance training program you are not eating, hydrating or supplementing properly, or trying to do way too much weight. When you first start, do all your lifts with an unloaded bar and then advance from there. Keep a journal of exactly what you did every day.

How we reach the target "work set" is to first start with lower weight and over a few sets to prepare the muscles for the real work. For example, if your work set is a squat of 170 pounds, you should maybe do 3 sets before your 170 pound set like so: 5 x 60, 5 x 100, 5 x 125. When you initially begin a resistance training program your warm up sets will involve body weight, as your work set involves an unloaded or only lightly loaded bar. Note that you never get close to your max on the last set as you do not want it to interfere with your work set's performance by exhausting the muscle. The objective of these initial sets is to, as I might reiterate, prepare the muscle for proper work, not to exhaust or train the muscle. If during the last warm up set you start to feel the muscle strain, simply stop, you've accomplished your job; every set doesn't have to be 5 reps! Perform these sets preceding the lift that you are working, not all at once. In sum the overall plan looks like this:

1. Hydrate/Sodium & Caffeine Supplementation
2. General Warm Up – 20-30 minutes of resistance cardio or ~20-40 reps with barbell or low weight squats/rowing machine

3. For each lift: warm up sets at reduced weight, work set: 5 reps at maximum weight, rest up to 60 seconds, three times (3x5 reps).

Always start with the squat. Put your most effort into it, even if it means the other lifts won't be done as explosively or powerfully. Do not skimp here but instead channel your willpower and fucking do it (not at the expense of form). You do the squat and deadlift every session and you divide the other lifts between alternating sessions like so, three times a week, resting on the weekend:

Beginner's Schedule

Monday: Squats, Overhead Press, Deadlifts

Wednesday: Squats, Bench Press, Deadlifts

Friday: Squats, Overhead Press, Deadlifts

Each session should take about 45 to 60 minutes, not counting commuting. After your last lift put the weight back to where it was when you started, which serves as a nice "cool down" workout if you do it fast enough. Once all the weight is back, drink water and enjoy a ride home with the AC on or the windows open. If you're just starting, prepare to be (really) sore in the morning. Stretching helps.

Eventually you will get to the point, probably about three months into this regular program, where your lifts begin to plateau and it becomes challenging to be explosive on the last reps of the squat and deadlift. This is when we introduce the power clean into our regular routine, while we decrease the amount of times we do the deadlift. Essentially we now alternate between power clean and deadlift. The deadlift, as I have already alluded to, is an exceptionally exhausting lift, which will become increasingly obvious at higher loads. At this stage in our resistance training career merely performing the deadlift once a week is all that is necessary. Performing the deadlift more than that can actually be counter-productive as it will not provide enough time for the back to fully recover in-between sessions.

When you first doing power cleans start slowly and with an unloaded bar: if you can't perform it properly as such you need to work on your wrist flexibility. One way to accomplish this is to place the bar on the rack and to grasp it in the "catch" posture of the power clean, putting some pressure on it until you can accomplish that extension with little discomfort. As long as you start with really low weight I am confident you can do it, just watch a lot of Ripp's stuff on YouTube or read this article from T-Nation "How to Master the Power Clean" by Bryan Krahn. The latter is quite good.

Our new schedule looks like this:

Intermediate's Schedule

Monday: Squats, Overhead Press, Power Cleans

Wednesday: Squats, Bench Press, Deadlifts

Friday: Squats, Overhead Press, Power Cleans

That's it guys – no huge intimidating introduction to weight lifting, that's literally all you need to do unless you become a body builder. 5 lifts, and that's all.

Two addendums: ripping skin and getting distracted. For the first you should know that these lifts will be substantial tearing forces on your skin. For those of you who have manual labor jobs (unlikely) and have callused palms, congrats, you are probably fine to continue on task. For those soft, liberal types like myself you will likely cut up your hands pretty bad performing these lifts. The most stressful in this regard is the deadlift because it's so dependent on grip strength, but all the lifts should cause some stress initially. A serious cut on your palms can keep you out of the gym for a week or more! Some people may get special weight lifting gloves to deal with this challenge but I have found them to interfere with my form and aggravate me. For me the best and actually cheapest solution is gym chalk. You can buy a pound of the stuff, which will literally last for years, off Amazon for like ten bucks. Apply it liberally before every work set, and eventually as your hands become callused you can probably use less and just focus on application preceding the deadlifts and power cleans. Chalk also had the added benefit of aiding with grip.

There may be times when you can't work anymore for whatever reason (injuries, sickness, weather, moving, bitch breaks your heart etc), and you may feel like you are failing. Always fall back on sound nutrition. Remember that it requires no effort, and as long as you keep your nutrition solid, you will never gain fat again – it's that simple. Whatever you do: do not give up your consistent nutrition, and do not binge in response to setbacks, stresses or diversions of the resistance training program.

A sample progression: from noobie to hero

A smart way to approach your becoming active is to think of it as advancing milestones of ability. Below is a simple program you can consider following. Start from the top, and once you can complete each task, advance to the next and replace the former. By the end you'll be lifting weights three times a week, running on two days and resting/playing on the weekends. This isn't set in stone; rather it's just something to get you thinking about where to start and where to conclude. The objective at the end is to be a fully rounded athlete with a routine weekly schedule in place. Slow, gradual, routine progress is key to success.

- **Noobie**: Run in place in the privacy of your own home for 15 minutes
- **Recruit**: Walk briskly for 30/45/60 minutes a day
- **Bad Ass**: Walk briskly for 30 minutes then jog for 5/10/15 minutes
- **Bawse**: Walk briskly for 30 minutes, then alternate between running for ten minutes and jogging for 30 minutes, walking where necessary to recover
- **Warrior**: Begin a resistance weight training program and join a gym - buy "Starting Strength" by Mark Rippetoe and follow that program. Perform resistance training three times a week alternating with rest days.
- **Spartan**: "Warm up" with a light cardio session of no more than 15 minutes then do a 45-60 minute weight training session as above.
- **Super Hero**: As above, except introduce an hour of intense cardio (running, brisk hiking, rowing etc) on alternating days so that:
    - Monday: Lift
    - Tuesday: Cardio
    - Wednesday: Lift

- Thursday: Cardio
- Friday: Lift
- Weekend: Rest

To gym membership or not, that is the question

Many people in your circle friends will probably talk about "hitting the gym" and "let's go to the gym" but these sorts of arrangements rarely end in results, and the gyms know it, which is why their membership costs are so high. They know that they can operate on the weak will and poor work ethic of the fatties: only a small percentage of their users are regulars who use gym facilities regularly, the vast majority are newbies who flunk out after one or two sessions. It doesn't make a difference to the gym: they have your $80 or $200, and you aren't getting it back, regardless of how long you spent in the gym.

It is for this reason that I am very suspicious of those looking to get gym memberships and why I suggest you do not waste your money. Going to the gym is fine, the range of equipment will far exceed anything you have available at home, and the services within may certainly be a benefit to you. That being said, the benefit has diminishing returns: we have shown that only doing a few simple exercises can transform your physique, and you won't need all those special machines, treadmills, ellipticals and other nonsense when you first start. The gym is for those who want to surpass basic cardio such as walking/RIP (and who might not have the means or ability to work on a bag at home), and who want to surpass fundamental weight lifting and become bodybuilders. The gym is the proper place for amateur athletes and should represent the natural evolution of your physical fitness to the highest level – it is completely unnecessary to invest in a costly gym membership right out of the gate when you should still be experimenting and testing your abilities and self-confidence.

A visit to the gym should be clearly task oriented: arrive, do chest, do cardio, then leave. So many people, clueless as to advanced weight training, arrive, look at the displays on each machine, do some random machines, and then leave. I can't stress how pointless a workout of this nature is. Right now you want to do some basic, complex lifts which will work the vast majority of your

muscles, not do individual machines which pinpoint target muscles and should only be used for those sculpting a very specific physique and intentionally working on muscle proportions.

These cautions aside, if you are going to go to the gym, and you are new to this game, try to mimic what you would do at home if you had the same equipment. Full body workout and cardio. Once your overall physique is healthy and toned you can worry about bodybuilding, if you ever do, which is not necessary. The gym does have some fancy cardio equipment: I will not deny that an elliptical is a nice machine to bust your ass on, and that the rowing machine is invaluable, but make sure you have the discipline and basic physical fitness to do basic cardio and commit to a workout BEFORE you come to a gym and spend money there.

The meaning of pain

Your body likely feels slacked, soft and comfortable before you start training. Although comfortable, your muscles are quick to tire and lack explosive power, any exertion conjures a feeling of dull soreness. When you begin lifting weights and moving about this will change and you will encounter something which may compel you to stop altogether: pain. Pain in areas you have never felt before, debilitating pain which makes it difficult to move or to bend certain body parts. Certain limbs may twitch or shake, and you may also encounter small red stretch marks (popped blood vessels) on areas you trained before. Worst of all the pain comes hours or days after a workout and lasts for days on end, perhaps only goes passing after a week, a phenomenon known as delayed onset muscle soreness (DOMS). This is hell.

While we have said and must remember that bone pain is **NEVER** good, pain in the muscles indicates that the muscle had previously been exhausted by exercise and is now gorged with blood and repairing; it indicates growth and revitalization of the tissue. Many people never get past this phase because they assume that this sort of thing will happen every time they exercise. Nope. This sort of pain, just like when you first began eating low carb, is an adjustment period which will eventually pass. Don't get me wrong: you will encounter

soreness after every workout, but the intensity and the duration will be severely minimized once you are in fighting shape. Lack of soreness or pain of any sort indicates that the muscle was not exhausted and thus the workout was of minimal benefit, the solution being to increase weight in the case of weight training and intensity/duration in the case of cardio. **What's important is that you don't chicken out or develop a fear of pain from your initial, unpleasant exposure to it – eventually that diminished feeling of pain will be a reward and indication of hard work rather than a punishment.** Just keep working out and eventually it'll become effortless and the pain will become a short-lived and minor component of your life.

What about shakes? Shakes happen when ligaments or muscles are about to fail, typically right before exhaustion. Not a problem, keep working until you can't possibly lift the weight anymore. You may also find after a particularly effective workout that there are some twitches or shakes in the targeted muscle group. This isn't something to be concerned about and it'll go away in a few hours. Little red stretch marks are also nothing to worry about. Sometimes when you are putting in an intense workout small, superficial blood vessels may burst from pressure or torsion. This is just a cosmetic thing and not a risk to your health. The appearance of these burst vessels will typically fade within a few days.

If you can get through this stuff then your body will enter a conditioned state. Simple feats such as lifting boxes, moving around, walking for a few miles, bending over, squatting etc will no longer cause soreness or shortness of breath and will actually make you feel good. Instead of gasping like a fish out of water for fifteen minutes or longer after exerting yourself, and feeling your heart pound violently and heavily, you will recover within seconds and be ready to start acting again immediately. Instead of this mushy feeling when you touch your arms or legs, you will feel hard muscle, and you will be able to explode with speed and strength if need be. This is the end product of overcoming that initial pain roadblock.

Lastly there are some useful tricks to reducing soreness and speeding up recovery. Frequent stretching of the affected area is arguably the most economical and practical way to reduce the painful soreness following weight training. I again refer you to exrx.net for individual stretching techniques tailored to target specific muscle groups. Stretching helps with circulation and will thus

speed the rate at which the muscle heals (it also can reduce stress, an added bonus).

Another trick is to take ice baths or very cold showers. Ice baths have been a matter of dispute for years. Proponents argue that this sort of cold therapy reduces lactic acid buildup in the affected muscle following a workout, thus decreasing soreness/stiffness and speeding the healing process, while opponents claim such measures operate merely on the placebo effect. In 2012 a review of 14 existing studies entitled "Cold-water immersion (cryotherapy) for preventing and treating muscle soreness after exercise" by Bleakley et al found that there was "evidence that cold-water immersion reduces delayed onset muscle soreness after exercise compared with passive interventions involving rest or no intervention." While the review called for further research to seriously corroborate these findings, this summary nevertheless gives us enough reason to at least experiment with such activities for our own benefit.

The simplest application of an ice bath involves running a very cold bath. The water should be cold enough to cause noticeable shocking discomfort. If the water is not cold enough, add a liberal amount of ice cubes. Then submerge the affected area for ten minutes maximum – hold yourself in there even if it really becomes unpleasant! The same can be performed with a shower and it's what I personally prefer as it takes a shorter amount of time to setup – the down side being the simple fact that you can't submerge your lower body as well while standing. If you didn't chicken out and kept yourself exposed for at least ten minutes you will likely benefit from the following effects: a speedy recovery, reduced inflammation, less soreness/muscle pain/stiffness and an invigorating feeling afterwards. What's more: there is some evidence that cold therapy can trigger thermogenesis (heat production) in humans, increasing fat oxidation rates and resting metabolism. The jury is still out on this bit, but can't hurt to try.

It's more than improving your physical health

There is more to getting active than merely improving your physical health. Your muscles will get toned, your circulation will improve and you have increased agility, endurance and reaction time from weight training and doing

cardio, that's for sure. But physical fitness is much more than that, and in my opinion, the psychological benefits outweigh the physical. Exercise is the ultimate stress relieving activity, promotes a healthy, energetic mindset, and will create a euphoric high which will infuse in you a willingness to confront obstacles with joy.

Right now, the idea of going for a walk or even having to walk from your car to a building a few hundred feet away is torturous. What if I told you once you lose weight and walk outside you will feel as if you are gliding on air, and will welcome rather than hide from the sun beating down on your brow? Human beings are not supposed to fear using our bodies, and soon you will be refreshed and overjoyed from simply moving. Right now that idea might sound absurd. You probably get immediately exhausted when walking small distances or taking some short stairs, are unable to recover, feel your heart pounding, and might even feel a persistent pain in your shins or other bones as you move.

These conditions are all complications of your body weight stressing your skeletal-muscle system, dehydration, malnutrition and muscle wasting. Once you get to a more manageable weight via nutrition and a slow introduction of physical activity that misery will be replaced by effortless action. Not only will you feel refreshed by going on long walks, but it will actually INCREASE your energy and when you get back inside you will want to do more. I know this sounds like a fairy tale right now as you read this, and I used to doubt there was any hope for me, but I promise: if you get your weight under control, everything else will follow.

So what is life like when using your body is effortlessly? It's fun, it's open and everything is accessible. No more awkward pauses and struggles, no more barely fitting into spaces and no more bouncing about. With weight loss will come a streamlined body you can become proud of, or at least tolerate, and your self-esteem and positivity will skyrocket. After exercising your mental faculties will be sharpened and will be at your disposal for some very productive work! Negative people around you will appear silly and self-defeating. Physical activity, combined with your lower bodyweight, will greatly enhance your quality of life, not just your appearance.

Whenever I feel anxiety and stress, from work or from the catastrophes and misfortunes of life, my immediate reaction is to go outside and do a few

rounds of boxing and footwork on my heavy bag. Eventually you will hear a little voice in your head saying “go do it,” a nagging thing from inside that knows it is in your best interest. Listen to this voice, not the voice of resistance and nay-saying, nor the negative influences around you, and put the work in. You will feel amazing and thus be a better human being to everyone around you.

The importance of good footwear

The topic of footwear deserves its own coverage, as improper footwear and footwork in physical fitness can lead to injury and reduced performance.

First, your footwear needs to fit. This might sound obvious, but even slightly oversized footwear will substantially lower your performance and expose you to risk of ankle injury. The ankle is the real thing we must protect when we use our feet: twisting or rolling the foot the wrong way, from an oversized shoe for instance, can lead to muscle and bone damage which can set us back thousands of dollars and months of time in rehab.

Ultimately you should not have to “fight” your shoes in order to move. Your shoes should perfectly support your arches and should be lightweight enough to both offer ventilation and to be fairly unnoticeable. The new light shoe models that have come out in the past few years from companies like Saucony, Nike and New Balance are built from breathable, mesh material that will make you feel as if you are walking on air, superbly ventilate your feet and offer amazing support. Saucony and Nike are decent for those with size 14 or below feet, while New Balance is essentially the only option for those with larger feet. I currently wear a pair of Saucony Shadow Genesis, size 14, and they were worth every penny. The difference between a decent pair of active running shoes and the clunky, traditional walking shoe is massive: the support and weight of a shoe will greatly impact your mobile performance. Do not buy the shoes online, I know you were thinking about it, instead go into the store, try them on with socks and make sure they are snug but not tight, and offer enough support for exercise.

If you are poor I seriously recommend you go barefoot or buy a used pair that properly fits rather than exercise in an oversized or undersized shoe: you will get injured. Proper footwork is also essential while weight training. If at any time you suspect that your feet are planted in the wrong spot, STOP and look up the proper form. Improper foot placement will equal injuries, especially as the amount of weight increases. **You should NEVER feel pain or strain in your bones**: ONLY your muscles should get sore. If you are feeling any signs of strain or pain while exercising in your bones you need to stop immediately.

Another thing which you need to be aware of is that your feet may shrink when you lose weight. I started at size 16, and then 140 pounds lost later, was at size 14. People often don't think of feet as something which can shrink, but keep in mind your feet are probably covered in a thick layer of fat right now. When you lose weight your feet may be one of the first places that will noticeably thin out.

Finally I will quickly comment on running or jogging. I don't recommend running or jogging regularly, as it is perhaps the most injury prone sport, but it still might be beneficial to do once or twice a week once you are more comfortable with your body. I started jogging and running when I was in my 270s, when I could tolerate being seen in public and felt that I could move quickly without injuring myself. The importance of foot care is even more important here: expect to experience foot pain when you first start, as your feet become conditioned to the rigors and stresses of something you probably haven't done since childhood. Most importantly do not wear cotton socks (they cause blisters) and invest in some nice running socks like Smartwool or Fitsok. Keep your socks dry and change them if they get dirty, anything that causes friction can blister your feet or cause imbalances. Don't even think about running unless you have a nice pair of running shoes, and if you experience any bone pain **STOP IMMEDIATELY** – no exceptions!

My recommended regiment goes something like this:

- When you first start find a low traffic road or path if possible, the less people the better. You will feel less self-conscious. I like to go at night, but make sure you wear reflective and bright colors.
- Speed walk or RIP for 20 minutes. This is a warm up and will stretch stuff out, which will help prevent injury.

- Here's the tricky part. You probably haven't jogged or ran in years, maybe even decades, and you probably don't know what to do. This video should help, or just Google "good running form." Some tips: do not cross your arms in front of your body, make sure your arms rise from your hips toward your face with every step and do not land on the ankle but the ball of the foot.
- Start really slow – think of RIP except moving forward slightly, until you feel comfortable displacing. Focus on number of steps instead of distance between each step – do not lunge. Herein is the importance of being alone or in a low traffic area: you can experiment and flop around until you get it right.
- The rest should come naturally. When you settle in I recommend a 20 minute warm-up of moderate intensity speed walking followed by a 20 minute period cycling between two activities: running/jogging until exhaustion or until your gait degrades followed by high intensity speed walking.
- You will feel it in the morning but you'll be better off for it!

Supplements

For the most part, supplements are snake oil. To determine if something is snake oil or legit, you need to find peer-reviewed studies demonstrating their efficacy. One great website which summarizes these findings is informationisbeautiful.net – under the "play" section check out "snake oil?"

Some supplements you might want to seriously consider:

- **Multi-vitamin:** Very important for low carbers because we sometimes have gaps in our daily micronutrient requirements. This will cover small gaps and generally ensure you have the right nutrient levels. Opti-Men make an excellent one. Furthermore, a 2010 study spanning 26 weeks (*Effects of multivitamin and mineral supplementation on adiposity, energy expenditure and lipid profiles in obese Chinese women* by Li Y et al) placed one group on a multivitamin and one on placebo while keeping nutrition controlled. The study found that the vitamin group lost 3

kilograms more weight on average than the placebo group, suggesting that gaps in mineral and vitamin levels interfere with weight management. A special note is to ensure your multivitamin covers your daily needs for zinc and selenium, which are often underrepresented in Western diets.

- **Fish Oil:** Omega 3 fatty acids have been linked with decreasing risk of certain cancers and increasing cardiovascular health. Many varities of fish oil are snake oil, containing miniscule amounts of active ingredients DHA/EHA. Make sure whatever you get has at least 1 gram combined DHA/EHA or you should plan to take multiple capsules a day to achieve that.
- **Staying "regular":** Psylium (seed) husk can be consumed on a daily basis to combat constipation or gastrointestinal issues. This is the active ingredient in Metamucil and the only difference is that a three pound bag of psylium husk costs the same as a small bottle of Metamucil and doesn't look as flashy. Psylium can also be purchased from the baking aisle of your super market and incorporated into recipes rather than used as a supplement. Further, if you're having constipation issues try magnesium citrate, a slow absorbing magnesium supplement which should soften your stool a bit. Ensure a good daily intake of calcium (nutritional or supplementary) when taking magnesium citrate otherwise there may be "runny" side effects. For the calcium, consider Greek Yogurt, which not to mention is fucking delicious, will also help along digestion.
- **Calcium**: Speaking of which, calcium has been shown in several studies to increase fat loss when compared against placebo. Either supplement it, or eat it. (*Calcium and vitamin D supplementation is associated with decreased abdominal visceral adipose tissue in overweight and obese adults* by Rosenblum et al)
- **St. John's Wort:** I cannot fully endorse this supplement, as I don't know how it will react with some people – for me it greatly improved my mood. In studies it is found to be as effective as SSRI anti-depressants but without the toxicity and side effects.
- **Vitamin D:** Vitamin D is arguably the best supplement you can take for all cause health. It will greatly boost your mood, immune system function and general health. Studies have shown that individuals deficient in Vitamin D present a series of major health related issues; check out Wikipedia and prepare to have your mind blown. I recommend

a daily supplement in gel tab form, taken in the morning, in strength of 4000-6000 IU. For those who only care about weight loss and don't mind having heart attacks, cancer, unhealthy skin, multiple sclerosis, osteoporosis, and other fun things rest assured that Vitamin D has also been demonstrated in a number of strong studies to significantly increase rates of fat loss. In a September 2012 study spanning only three months, those who supplemented Vitamin D lost 2.7 kilograms of fat more on average when compared to the control. (*A 12-week double-blind randomized clinical trial of vitamin D3 supplementation on body fat mass in healthy overweight and obese women* by Salehpour et al).

Whey and Protein Shakes

One other topic of note: Whey protein is not a supplement and does not have magical powers, ignore every idiot that says otherwise. Whey will not build your muscles, will not make fat melt off and will not cure cancer. Whey protein is simply a food replacement high in protein and is inferior to natural sources of as it lacks micronutrients and a complex profile of fat. Whey could be used as a replacement for other forms of protein when necessary – it serves well as a quick meal replacement when you do not have time to cook meat or eggs for whatever reason. Protein mix is also a viable component in low carbohydrate sweets and baking. The reason I bring this up is because whey, like expensive gym memberships, are too often the rave topics of the healthcare industry in want of fleecing your money.

And you might be "one of those" who insists on drinking protein shakes anyway, so listen up. Invest in a high quality, zero carb protein mix. Isopure Zero Carb is a nice option and although more expensive than the alternatives, pays for itself in the fact that it is not sweetened with carbohydrate. Isopure also has a more complete micronutrient profile when compared to competitors.

Protein drinks are not inherently satiating: they are overwhelmingly protein by mass, with trace amounts of fat. Protein by itself is not satiating. To ensure your mix is satiating, and thus does not leave you hungry (and thus eating more than you need), add fat to it. Coconut oil and/or heavy cream are options;

a couple tablespoons of either should do it. Such fats will also enhance the flavor and texture of your shakes.

Curious: I started busting my ass in the gym, and now my weight is going up!

So you're at a point in your life when you want to move heavy pieces of iron around, run down the street at full bore and generally be a consummate badass. You start walking, then jogging, then lifting some weight, and you maintain your food intake. You figure: "hey, I can totally lose more weight than baseline if I do this, and build some muscle too." Then the very curious occurs: the weight loss stalls, or you might even gain weight. Here is strange anomaly of the scale at work, and why you can't take it seriously all the time.

Before you become active you are in an "untrained" state. This essentially can be defined as a neuromuscular system which is atrophied (and probably reducing). Your muscles are slacked, you have very low endurance, even basic feats of strength can exhaust you and you are left with soreness for days or even weeks on end after exerting yourself. Most people despise this, and give up at this stage mistaking it to be a routine state of affairs but as I have already taught you: this is temporary, and will soon pass. So you fight through it like a loyal soldier and then the scale offends you.

This phenomenon is caused by the simple fact that when muscles are sore and as they develop they retain water. Contrary to what your stupid uncle says who played football in high school, you aren't rapidly gaining muscle; that's not why you are gaining weight. You also aren't gaining fat due to protein being turned into muscle (that's not how it works). What's probably happening is that you have slightly increased the rate of fat oxidation and the rate of muscle gain while the muscles have called for aid against the soreness by withholding water.

What's the solution (excuse the pun)? None. This is also why you can see your weight fluctuate so drastically on a single day. I have "gained" five pounds from a particularly stressful day at the gym and then woken up the next day seven pounds lighter. It just happens. If you obsess over the numbers on the

scale when you become active you will go mad. The worst thing you can do is cut calories or stop working out. The best course of action is instead to keep doing what you're doing, and the weight will eventually come off. When the weight does come off it will likely drop quickly, a phenomenon often referred to as a "whoosh." Lyle McDonald theorizes in *The Stubborn Fat Solution* that the mechanism for this strange state of affairs lies in the fact that fat may be reduced but water is retained in the fat cell until stimulated to release by some other stimuli; the fat has already been burned but water is sticking around. When the water does release it appears as if we have lost a huge amount of fat in a short period of time, but it's actually just water leaving the fat cell. In any event, retained weight which defies logical explanation is almost always a matter of water regulation. If you MUST know your proper weight you could do two hours of intense cardio before bed to dehydrate yourself, drink nothing and then weigh in the following morning. You could also take a diuretic such as a mega dose of caffeine (from coffee or pills) to induce peeing. This is extreme and probably unnecessary. A mental coping mechanism against this phenomenon is to remain steadfast and remind yourself that the weight will come off. Or take your weight at a longer interval, or as an average.

I was losing weight, and then it stopped!

When you first start the program, weight loss will be rapid, and seemingly without end. But there may be times, months or even years down the road, when your progress slows to a halt. This can be for two reasons: lack of optimization, or having reached your body's natural homeostasis. A period of stagnation in weight loss is known as a plateau and this phenomenon is often referred to as plateauing. Try the following:

- Reducing or eliminating cheat meals for non-holidays or special occasions.
- Are you weight lifting? If not, start! At the very least do lifts against body weight such as pushups, squats and sit-ups.
- Are you under a lot of stress? See the section on stress under "effortless factors for weight loss." Reduce your stress. Elevated cortisol makes you fat.

- If you can handle it, try slightly reducing your caloric intake (100-200 calories) – keep in mind as you lose weight your daily caloric needs will decrease. You shouldn't be experiencing hunger though or you've gone too low.
- Are you doing intermittent fasting? If not, do it. If you already are, try doing a 48-72 hour fast under supplementation. If you are doing alternate day fasting add one more day a week in which you are fasted. Do not let these longer fasts become a standard thing and **do not starve yourself**.
- Reduce your carb intake and seriously consider going ketogenic. The more carbs, the harder it will be for you to lose weight for the majority of human beings. If you already think you are ketogenic, maybe you're not. Start tracking blood ketone levels with a meter and if you aren't in ketosis, eat more fat in lieu of protein.
- Are you really being faithful to your diet? Are you eating "low carb" cookies and other crap like that? Be honest and start writing down what you put in your mouth. If you really want to lose weight, every calorie must have value.
- Introduce high intensity interval training (HIIT) cardio. This isn't the sort of long, moderate cardio you are probably use to but involves cycling between short periods of extremely intense work and rest/lower intensity work. I allude to this recipe in the aforementioned guide on jogging and running. I recommend sprinting or running as hard as possible until exhaustion or until you feel your gait degrading (no longer than 60 seconds) and speed walking for a period of 60 seconds, repeated for 20 minutes or so.
- You can also do the same sort of thing with combination punches in boxing – throw extremely fast power punches for 60 seconds, rest/RIP/shadowbox for 60 seconds. Jumping jacks, ski steps, cycling, rowing, and burpees and other full body exercises are also ideal for this sort of thing. Bottom line: intensity in your cardio is what matters, not duration. If you are still big select low impact exercises such as rowing or cycling over high impact exercises such as running or burpees to reduce risk of injury and stress on the skeletal system.

What should you pick? A variety of the above will be the best antidote to combat your plateau, not any one single measure. There's also the possibility that you may be approaching your natural weight. At that point, you will

experience diminishing returns in your weight loss and will need to seriously bust your ass in the gym in order to lose a pound – it might not be worth it and it may be time to simply maintain rather than lose. Keep in mind your goal should be healthy metabolic function, functional strength and quality of life rather than a specific number of pounds anyway. What determines your natural weight in homeostasis? Obese, older and insulin resistant mothers tend to produce fatter children, but there may be a myriad of factors otherwise not identified yet.

That being said, it is all too easy to use this as an excuse or rationalization to accept being fat and not to put in any extra effort. It's not impossible to get through a plateau, just requires some experimentation. Try introducing one new tweak at a time so you can determine its efficacy in an isolated environment while keeping your daily diet fairly uniform.

Section III: The Way to Victory

Objective: Achieve good practice and iron mind. Prepare for misfortune. Grasp your destiny.

Speed and unrealistic expectations

Very commonly I will coach others to lose fat and they will be impressed by an initial, massive weight loss. This can be attributed to, as we have explained, the rapid secretion of water and sodium following adoption of a low carb diet. When this initial water is gone weight loss slows down. If you are adhering to the plan, the rate of loss will still likely be rapid, but not impossibly rapid. How should we judge our success over time?

Less than 1 pound/2 weeks = you are likely doing something wrong. Likely culprits are too much protein or carbohydrate, extreme stress, not sleeping or hydrating enough.

1 pound/2 weeks = acceptable

1 pound/week = good, fast

2 pounds/week = exceptional, rapid

More than 2 pounds/week = almost impossible to achieve, truly amazing. You might start off here but it's not going to last forever, be prepared for that.

Accordingly if you find yourself in a weeklong (or even two week) plateau and then have a "whoosh" style event which makes your weight drop 4 pounds the next week, you are still averaging an exceptional rate of weight loss. Your reaction to stalls should not be to eat less or workout more to the point of discomfort, that will surely lead to negative behaviors such as binging. Consider your weight as an average lost over a month rather than over singular days and you are better suited for victory. The scale should be an aid, not a punishment.

Harsh truth: it took you a long time to get this fat and it's going to take some time to lose it. You're going to lose it very quickly, but it's not going to be instant, it might take a few years. Compared to the years or decades of neglect which brought you to this point it's a small price in time to pay. Furthermore: you get to enjoy everyone telling you how amazing you look as you visibly transform. You get to buy new clothes, feel yourself become the new you and behold the marvel of strength and rigor returning. Don't fuck yourself by having unrealistic expectations.

Join the community

So you are losing weight in a controlled fashion now but you have some hiccups, some micromanagement issues, and are looking to discuss things. Your friends are useless, and your family even more so – they are all fat, and if they aren't, their apparent svelteness is probably not due to lifestyle choices, it's more likely of being handed a choice card in the genetic lottery. You need to get on some forums son – and some good forums. There is a lot of crap out there, and part of your process of discovery will be finding a community to post in which represents your beliefs. I post on the sherdog.com forums, primarily in the nutrition sub-forum – the community there is serious minded, cosmopolitan, scientific and involves discussion of nutrition applied to physical activity.

Other websites exist which are dedicated to nutrition and bodybuilding such as bodybuilding.com. My main gripe about bodybuilding.com is its cliquishness, general fixation on aesthetics and immaturity. That being said, if you avoid the "misc" section you will find a wealth of information and guidance there – just keep in mind that the goal is not to look pretty or have the perfect

physique (as body builders do) but to reach and maintain good metabolic health. Other places I recommend are the "keto" and "loseit" sections of the social media website Reddit. The "Redditors" are known for their friendliness, tech savvy, humor and tolerance. The "keto" sub-Reddit (section) is especially receptive to those who practice low-carb, ketogenic and higher fat diets and contains amazing transformation stories. The cool thing about keto is that the amount of weight a member has lost is displayed next to their username, which can put what they are saying into perspective. A notable number of keto Redditors were once as big or bigger than you are now and have made amazing progress. My one critique of the keto subreddit is an orthodoxy regarding cheat meals (they don't believe in them, *ever*) and sometimes an emphasis on high protein rather than high fat. Remember: when we consider nutritional and lifestyle advice, we look for results first and foremost.

Places to avoid are any social "weight loss" forum or website. These places are rife with misinformation and worst of all: affiliate marketers posting under the guise of help but actually attempting to hustle their magic weight loss solution. What should indicate a good forum is:

1. A myriad of threads, all with a lot of internal discussion. One sign of a poor community are a lot of threads with no replies. You're looking for an active and responsive commons.
2. Posts which cite news events, scientific papers and blogs by experts – avoid communities which have un-policed posts attempting to sell or link to "squeeze pages" and product videos.
3. Prominent posters/moderators who either have demonstrated massive weight loss or who are martial artists, scientists, athletes or trainers.
4. Weight loss and weight training "journals" or "logs" where people post about progress and are received by constructive advice and support.

The bottom line is: find a community which suits you; they aren't very hard to locate by googling. It's also important to find a community which will accept fat asses, some are very judgmental and will just make fun of you if you post and be honest. Scout them out and look for people like you. You will feel like you are besieged in your everyday life by idiocy, misconceptions and bad advice and coming online and discussing good nutrition and health with people who are knowledgeable is a godsend. Eventually you will be able to give back by

helping out new guys and giving them some good info. Whenever I have a very specific question that I can't answer with a google search I post on a forum.

A word from the wise: when posting on nutrition and bodybuilding forums, make sure you use scientific evidence to back up any claims you make and always attempt to demonstrate that you have searched the forum or other spotlighted resources for answers before posting.

Routine = victory

The one thing which will benefit weight loss or any personal project the most is consistency. Consistent meal times, consistent limits and consistent activities. You wake up and structure keeps you on the path to health. This entails a planning of the day that is dependable so that you don't stray off the path and will always know how to orient your efforts. I recommend eating at the same times every day if you can help it, avoiding "grazing" or snacking of any sort if able, exercising at the same times during the week and scheduling any deviations. No single factor will lead to your victory or defeat than this perseverance. Chaos is the enemy and order is your best friend.

Your relationship with food should be such that you eat at meals, then stop eating until the next meal. It is all too easy to graze our way to obesity or to react to boredom with small bits of food which add up to defeat us. Clearly defined times in which we fast and feed are essential. It's not OK to eat whenever you want, it's pointless to limit your meals one day if you're eating pasta on every alternating one and it's not productive to lift weights at a few random times a month. Persistent, gradual, constant effort is what leads to victory. Eliminating distractions, negative influences and preparing to deny your lurking desires and impulses by imagining how they could crop up are boons to your wellbeing.

How do you do this? Chart out every hour of every day of the week. You can either make a schedule of certain time ranges or you can make a list of certain goals you must accomplish for the day. This practice also does something special: it makes you realize how often we squander our days, and compels you

to fill at least part of them with self-improving, constructive behaviors. If you were to tally the hours you partake in activities on paper, would you consciously accept the fact that you're on YouTube for 5 hours straight when you could be splitting that time up between getting some new clothes for yourself, grooming, lifting weights, calling your family, preparing a good, healthy meal or going for a jog? In fact, what are your goals? If you have none, define them now. They won't happen if you don't schedule those hours and orient them to accomplish something. When you have a schedule looking you in the face you can't make up excuses. You can't push it aside. IF you do, you need to make it up or you're cheating the future you, the you excavated from a mountain of flabby self-deceit. You'll see this for all things eventually, but for now let's focus on weight loss and health.

Monday. In the morning I wake up and tell myself: this and that can go wrong, and this is how I will respond. I throw 3 eggs, a tablespoon of butter, some chia seeds and some cheddar on the skillet. I take my vitamins. I remind myself how beautiful the sunrise is, how lucky I am to be alive when others are horribly maimed. At work I prepare to hear the negative or irrelevant comments of my coworkers – I know I am on a quest to better myself and don't need that. When I get home it's time to eat. I know exactly what I'm eating, more or less, because I thought about this yesterday. I don't eat that entire block of cheese I love so much, just enough to satiate me.

Tonight I go to the gym. Before that, I drink coffee, meditate for an hour and watch a video relating to self-empowerment, philosophy or mind expansion. After the coffee I brush my teeth: that's it, no more food. I read for an hour. Words that make me nobler, more productive or wiser. I write down any thoughts of failure I had during the day. From whence did these arise? Is it in my power to change? How will I respond today and tomorrow? At the gym I know exactly what lifts I am doing and exactly how much weight. I leave having accomplished a goal I had already established: increasing my squat by five pounds. It's a simple science – and if I had a bad day due to sickness or some other factor I'd increase it the next.

When I return home I prepare for the next day. Tuesday involves a long walk around the neighborhood and food shopping. I know I need to buy some avocado because I am currently out of a source of fiber and micronutrients in my

fridge. I also need another quart of Greek yogurt to supplement my fat intake with my fish that I intend to eat that night.

This may sound obsessive, but filling in the gaps with whatever you want, especially when it comes to food, results in boredom related grazing and unscheduled diversions which might derail us. This is why intermittent fasting can be such a benefit in modulating hunger: clearly defined windows are created for feeding and fasting, and eating of any sort is off limits during the fast window. In this sense intermittent fasting is a mental toughness training (in the beginning) just as much as a biological reprogramming of the body's hunger response.

Now, life is not all serious business. Sometimes we like to spontaneously grab our keys and drive to that town on the other side of the state, see an ex, or go on a little vacation. That's fine, and the more active you are the better! That being said, anything that underpins your success should be crafted as a matter of routine, a checklist of things to do before your day is over. When you go off the script, a little bit is chipped away, and overtime, will lead to failure. Apply the 90/10 rule of nutrition to your time as well: it doesn't matter what you do with the time that isn't improving the project of you, go play some fucking video games. Big victory on the scale or get a promotion at work? Go play some fucking video games. But remember the consistent effort that made the sweet victory possible.

Into the wild

When you're big going outside sucks. A pool of sweat pools around your ass. You get heat rash when you walk more than ten feet. Shin splints, instantly. Since you're huffing and puffing all over bugs seem to prefer you and swarm around mercilessly. You can't take off your shirt or show your body. Intense overheating afflicts you while others seem content to run around and play soccer. Being outside becomes synonymous with a chore at best, and torture at worst. Shit sucks. You spend your days indoors, maybe playing video games, making watching Netflix, perhaps reading. Sensory deprivation and isolation are the result, and depression follows. Consider shocking the nervous system back to health by introducing a change of scenery.

I implore you to get over these bad experiences. Trekking into the wild is one of the best things you can do for your health. Free of the hustle and bustle, the meaningless, time consuming distractions and torpor of our modern lives the wilds provide an excellent place to relieve stress and orient yourself to the world in a way which will greatly enhance your life. Two hours in a cinema cannot compare to two hours filling your eyes with the spiritual and magnificent sights of nature. Here we can meditate while walking and reflect upon our journey while visualizing the heroic self. We hike, earn a sweet sweat and the tension built up over the week vanishes. When we finally return to the car we are filled with a Zen-like calm which lasts for the rest of the day and fills us with energy and love of life. True beauty, free of human pretenses, is hard to shrug off.

Of course to truly benefit from such a hike into nature you must be at a point in your weight loss so that walking is not a punishment. And it may be a commitment: you may need to drive an hour to escape the urban sprawl (it's so worth it). Maybe you don't have a car. Or good shoes (a must). Be creative if possible and if not work toward being in a spot in your life where you have the opportunity to experience boundless nature. Don't go anywhere without a compass, water and a trail map, at the bare minimum. Start off with small, closed loop trails of a few miles in distance with good reviews, easy, rolling terrain and numerous markings. Listen to some inspiring, heroic music and walk. Breath in the aroma of the wilds deeply and let go. Let go of all the manufactured, fake outrage, bullshit and lies. This is a place of training and of contemplation: here we embrace the most ancient forms as a visitor and member of a greater living system.

The first time you lay eyes on a wild animal in its natural habitat, free of fences or the fear of death, you will experience an inner awakening which will be hard pressed to fade. Go on Google Earth and search your area for "wildlife refuge", "national forest", "state park", "national park" and the like. If you can't go to one of these places find a place on the outskirts of town and just start walking, you'll find the nooks where nature has yet to be abolished. Maybe go at night when there are fewer distractions: listen for the sounds of the wind, crickets, frogs and of the owls and be refreshed.

While nature hiking can be a form of exercise I recommend that you do not associate such ventures with losing weight but instead with relaxation, leisure, mental strengthening and the joy of adventure. Walking over rough

terrain will probably aware you of muscles you did not know you had, but you will acclimate quickly. Long, moderate to low intensity walks will be of the most benefit. Bring extra socks. If your feet get wet, change them. Go when there is enough daylight and do not get caught in the dark. Leave everything as you found it: you are a visitor to the world of bears, snakes, wolves, cats and hawks, not a master over it; fail to respect it and you will likely pay with injury or death.

Although I prefer the solitude of my thoughts and imagination, going for a walk in nature is an excellent opportunity to do something productive and healthy with friends, or to make new friends. A much better use of time than going to a bar, drinking to a stupor or eating crap. Go to Meetup.com if you have no one – there are hiking groups in your area, even if you live in a major city. Team up with these folks and go out into the wild. Imagine your strength and achievements while there and then return with renewed determination. Return a bit wilder but also a bit nobler. The ultimate goal is to take inventory of yourself but also get you used to being outside, being active and interacting with the world. As the fat we too often retreat inward and seclude ourselves – becoming disconnected from our bodies in an unhealthy way which has serious ramifications for our social lives. Fostering meaningful relationships, getting stuff done and achieving goals too often slips through our fingertips, so we fill the gaps with distractions which ultimately undermine our progress. Force yourself to go outside and you'll thank me for it.

Inspiration and character building

I know most of this will be fairly contentious which is why I left it for last.

I firmly believe that in order to succeed in life, and especially in weight loss or a consistent workout plan, you need to become indifferent to all the negative influences surrounding you and introduce positive influences. This does not necessarily entail a hiding or removal from the world, but training in becoming indifferent to it, and developing a love of what is good; you must love and cultivate what is beautiful in yourself and reject what can degrade or destroy you. For the former, I would recommend studying the philosophy of Stoicism. It's a practical virtue philosophy for life which focuses on developing indifference to

factors outside of your control and developing a joyful life of service to those around you. It'll help you not get angry when you have setbacks in your quest to lose weight and improve your health, to see those setbacks as what they are and to focus on what is within your power to change. Stoic wisdom will help you confront feelings of inequity, inadequacy, betrayal, attack and misfortune. Your desires for irrational things and for things not in your best interest will evaporate and be replaced by a love of what is good. Start with Epictetus (the Enchiridion) and then check out his discourses, Marcus Aurelius and Seneca. Shakespeare also serves this purpose.

I also think it would benefit you to commonly think on the greats who have come before and try to imitate them. Our societies overwhelmingly pay worship to whores, weaklings, criminals, addicts, and charlatans in two thousand dollar suits. Instead of doting on those who drag us down look to the bad asses whose sacrifices and virtue allowed for this system of abundance and waste we now squander.

No one is more bad ass than James Stockdale. Dude was shot down over Vietnam and tortured in Hoa Lo prison for seven years. When they tried to use him on Vietnamese state TV as a propaganda piece he scalped himself. They broke his legs a ton of times, and he refused to betray his country. When they tried to force him to give a confession he slit his wrists. All the while he upheld the military chain of command amongst his fellow prisoners, instilled in them hope to continue fighting in their own way and served as president of the Naval War College following his release. Whenever you bitch about "but I want to eat that pizza everyone else is" think of Stockdale in a puddle of his own shit and piss, alone in the dark, with broken legs. Is your life really that hard?

Warriors like that should be your inspiration and your role models. The classics are a good place to start. You will find powerful role models in stuff like the Iliad, the Bhagavad Gita, Odyssey, and Aeneid, and historical heroes in accounts such as Plutarch and Livy. Cato the Younger and Cincinnatus, such god damn bad asses. Think on the historical founders and mythic heroes of your civilization, and strive to imitate their action, persistence, service, love and good. Find some dudes who you can look up to, and who make you swell with feelings of admiration. Men have been blown up before, crawled on their bellies until they could drag themselves on their knees, until they could walk for a few moments, falling and cursing, until some bloody years later they could lift cars

and run without end. Be proud of being like them, and of living with no apologies for your own strength. Surround yourself with others who appreciate the good life, health, restraint and other virtues which are important for the heroic, self-realized individual. You should be proud of your friends, not have to apologize for or rationalize their selfish, destructive behavior. Banish the negative, destructive and unhealthy where possible, and where not possible, become indifferent to it.

Begin a regiment of meditation. Meditation doesn't imply merely thinking about random things in a dark room – rather it instructs a deliberate process to examine and transform our thoughts. Two suggestions: Stoic and Theravada Buddhist techniques. The former involves an action on waking. Think of all the things that could go wrong today. Maybe you could crash your car. Maybe someone will make fun of you. Maybe they will bring cake into work. How will you deal with this? How will you NOT deal with this? This allows you to prepare and anticipate the worst things that could happen, and then develop a plan to confront those things. If someone brings a cake into work and all your weak, pale co-workers are ingesting it, you should be prepared not to. Do not allow events like this to suddenly ambush you, otherwise your instincts, rather than wisdom, may prevail. And while instincts help us survive, they do not often help us flourish. In this way we can prepare effective strategies to confront our problems rather than confront them recklessly, and we also are less shocked when misfortune befalls us, allowing us to deal with setbacks in a more sober and less hysterical way. You will see the scale go up some days, and for seemingly no reason, maybe even after a huge effort in the gym. What is the response? Not shoving cake in your mouth, but instead thinking about things rationally. Buddhist meditation is a bit more technical, but do look up Mindfulness and Loving Kindness meditation, as they are immensely rewarding.

You no longer know anything for sure. Go on YouTube and watch some TED talks, **every week**. Open your heart to positive change and new directions. The same old doesn't work. Throw out the past. That girl/guy who broke your heart isn't going to fall into your arms one day. They are fucking someone else, loving it, and think you are disgusting. Hard truth: you might be. But not for long; now you're in training, like a Spartan, like Batman in the Dark Knight Returns after a period of painful exile. Don't ever look back. Charge forward. Get to your feet again. Charge forward. Force yourself to smile and buy some new clothes. The future is open now, not closed to darkness and hopeless. Keep watching

those TED talks. Don't buy anything from any "gurus" but listen to them all, and what appeals to your reason, experiment with. Some won't work, but some will. Hey, your life just substantially improved because you're now thinking about things in a novel way. Map out every hour of the day and get all this stuff in. Plan. Schedule. Act.

How do you describe yourself? What words define you? Abolish all negative labels. Come up with a list of words which would describe the heroic you, the you who others aspire to be. It's not good enough to just "get by" anymore, hiding in the darkness and hating yourself. Nope, it's time to become worth a damn. Can't think of heroic traits? Stop watching TV and read some ennobling words which steel your spine, leave the city (even if it takes an hour) and go on long hikes in nature, listen to music with fills your heart with strength and reach for the sky. Here are some suggestions for things you can hope to embody: **fortitude**, **temperance**, **justice**, **prudence**, strength, health, dutifulness, decorum, modesty, mercy, humor, humanity, wholesomeness, truthfulness, courage, compassion, hospitality, filial piety, moral autonomy, loyalty, rectitude, benevolence and honor, to name a few options. Look up "virtue" and define your virtues. Write them down. Memorize them. Keep them close to your chest and do not speak of them; rather embody them in action. Create a credo that you recite each morning to drill them into your head. Say them in your head everywhere you go. How do I respond to this? With courage. How do I respond to that? With justice. What am I? Honest, just, prudent, honorable, strong. This list of words now defines you, not the old. If anyone calls you something else or tries to degrade you, sever yourself from them. You don't need that shit just like a drug addict doesn't need someone offering them a hit which will chain them back to the ground.

Begin a program of positive visualization. This involves picturing yourself from the outside succeeding in what you are doing. See that pretty girl? No, she isn't going to laugh at you when you approach; she is going to accept your offer, because you are a fucking boss. If she doesn't: her response was out of your control and is irrelevant, it does not say less of you, and it just means that the dice did not roll to your favor. See that barbell on the ground, loaded with weight? You are going to lift it. Imagine the muscles tensing and then exploding with power. Grab the bar and picture yourself from ten paces away. Do everything with intensity, control and precision. A fury against the prison surrounding you. Lift it. Some great challenge ahead? Picture yourself having

completed it, not failing it. The sweet feeling of victory, a well-earned exhaustion and respite from weary labors. As you hear the voice of resistance trying to distract you, picture this end in benefit of you and become aware of it and then let it subside. Positive visualization isn't wishful thinking, and failure is possible, but you mustn't fail due to lack of belief in yourself. If you fail, that's great – it means that you are getting closer to victory and will prevail the next time. Tell yourself this, even if you don't believe it. Keep it constant.

All that disbelief, insecurity and self-loathing was installed by a world which is oriented to defeat you. You will triumph over it by hardening your body, training your mind and refining your character. You will feel pride for the first time in many years, and you should bask in it from time to time, absent the conceits of ego. Rather reflect with an awareness of the dark past, the hopeful present and the goals to follow. Goals which should be penned on a wall and looked to upon waking every morn. Include visions of the heroic you there: that is to say what you are now and are destined to master in time.

There is a cult of failure in western culture. A cult of excuses and of emasculation. You're leaving this cult behind and it's going to be scary. It's scary, but you're about to take control and feel good for the first time in so many years. Imagine waking up and feeling amazing, and knowing exactly what's going on and where you are. This isn't a fantasy, it's now. And you're now a force for good in this world. No one can stop you but you. All those laughing, stupid motherfuckers are dead wrong. And all those like you want to see the light at the end of the tunnel just as badly and NEED YOUR SUPPORT. Find them online, at school and on the street, cling to them, and move mountains together. Believe in them and by doing so, believe in yourself.

Go out in the world, grab it by the neck, shoot your gun into the mouth of doubt and do what you want.

Miscellaneous

Recipes

What follows are resources for eating in a healthier way: lists of websites that I have found helpful, annotated with my notes and suggestions, followed by my own recipes. Rather than include all my recipes to detail I have only included unique recipes that I consider "my own." I cook for myself I prefer to cook simple, delicious, bold, quick meals with fairly consistent ingredients. For really fancy stuff (cooking for a group, a significant other, or a special occasion) I highly recommend the "recipe websites" – I visit such places whenever I want to impress the little lady, make something for the holidays, or am in an especially creative mood and want to try making something new for the sake of science! The resources under the "fundamentals" section should be referenced first and foremost if you are clueless in regard to how one eats in absence of a constant influx of sugar and grains.

Fundamentals

- Diet Doctor's "LCHF For Beginners" – This is a general introduction to low carb, high fat nutrition, including the scientific basis. There is a section on what type of foods to eat, including some very basic recipes and "shopping lists." Use this as a general guide on the types of foods you should be considering for recipes and meals.
- The Art and Science of Low Carb Living – Volek and Phinney's excellent synopsis of the science and lifestyle of low carb also includes an introduction to the tenets of low carb nutrition, including basic recipes, meal planning for a week and shopping lists.

Recipe Websites

- Linda's Low Carb Menu and Recipes – The greatest website ever made. It sounds like something out of the early 1990s, and doesn't look much better, but this is the most exhaustive site when it comes to low carb

diet. Hundreds upon hundreds of recipes and food ingredient reviews, all neatly filed into various sections reminiscent of a sanitized, old school grocery store website.

- About.com's Low-Carb Recipes – All around solid recipes, I especially enjoyed the fudges and cheese cake recipes.
- Peace + Love + Low Carb Recipes – Gourmet low carb recipes. I go here whenever I'm looking to make something special. The zero carb buffalo wings are a stunning recipe, check them out!
- Cave Man Keto – A wide range of mostly wholesome recipes for entrees. Check out his Almond and Flax buns if you want a cool way to eat sandwiches and burgers!
- r/KetoRecipes – Reddit's ketogenic diet recipe section. It's a bit inconsistent as all recipes are submitted by various users yet this resource still provides some wonderful gems and recipe ideas. From inside the keto recipes sub-reddit you will also find a myriad of other recipe websites.
- Carb Genie Recipes
- Low Carb Friends Recipes – One of the original recipe sites of the low carb movement, and thus one of the largest. Thousands of recipes, and a huge online forum community, although quite a bit disorganized and inconsistent.

Breakfast

Golden Flax Porridge

- 2/3 or 3/4 cup of boiling water to 1/2 cup of ground flax meal
- Add 1/2 tbsp butter, mix, let sit for a few minutes
- Flavor: Add 4 tbsp heavy cream, 10 drops of EZ-Sweetz (liquid sucralose) or other sweetener, 2 tbsp almond or sunflower butter, pumpkin spice mix to taste, mix

Nutrition:

720 calories, 26 gram carbohydrate (23 fiber – 3 net carb), 64 gram fat, 20 gram protein

Omelet

This meal formed the staple of my diet for over a year and I share it now with a fond heart.

- Ingredients:
  1/4 bell pepper
  1/4 onion
  4 eggs
  2 slices cheese
  thyme
  Montreal seasoning
  2 slices bacon
  Skillet with cover
  Spatula
- Cut onion into quarters so you can unravel it with your hands, then unravel all the rings of one quarter. Cut rings into halves so you have a bunch of triangles. Cut bell pepper into quarters, cut quarter into small half inch blocks.
- Mix 4 eggs.
- Cut 2 slices of bacon into halves and put on medium low heat.
- Once the bacon grease begins to separate from the slices introduce onion.
- Stir fry the onion until it becomes caramelized (light brown hue with maybe the edges being a darker brown). Stir/tilt pan so the bacon grease cooks the onion. You can also introduce the bell peppers at this stage, but I like to do it later so they are crunchy. Flip bacon/onion every few minutes. By this time, if you waited for the bacon grease to separate, once the caramelization is done the bacon should be done.
- Prepare all materials. Remove onion/bacon, separate onion/bacon. Turn off stovetop or put on very low heat. Put egg mix onto pan. Quickly introduce the onion, peppers, thyme and Montreal seasoning and then cover the pan. Resume to medium low heat.
- Check every few minutes until when you open the lid you see no wet egg still present, if there is a little bit that won't go away just tilt the pan so it cooks on the edges. The mechanism here is that the top of the omelet is being steamed and the bottom is being cooked by direct convection - so there is no "Flipping" involved at any stage.
- When it's done you should have what looks like a pizza. Cut cheese slices into halves and arrange them horizontally in a cross shape. Place bacon slices on top of each. Place spatula at the top of the pan under the egg, and slowly apply pressure downward in a scooping action. It should flap over like folding a piece of paper in half.
- Wait 2 minutes, eat. Have an orgasm.

- Can also add pepperoni, pre-cooked chicken and a small splash of salsa for a nice effect and depending on your taste.

Nutrition:

640 calories, 7 grams carbohydrate (2 grams fiber – 5 net), 48 grams fat, 41 grams protein

Entrees

General Recipes

These represent what I eat on a regular basis, obviously if you are inclined to cooking, you can come up with stuff which is much more creative.

- Baked whole chicken, with an herbal and butter rub. Served with cheese tapas and mixed vegetables, sprinkled heavily with ground parmesan.
- Asparagus, chicken sausages, onions and peppers, all cooked on the grill
- Chicken in a peppery sauce, with avocado, salt, pepper, sour cream, shredded mixed cheese and shrimp scampi on the side
- Four egg, peppers, purple onions, thyme, bacon, Munster cheese and chia seed omelet – with spicy pumpkin seeds on the side
- Broiled chicken burgers seasoned with Montreal seasoning, served with garlic and mushroom, with a cheese melt in a butter sauce
- Basa fillet "breaded" in ground flax meal, seasoned with parmesan shavings and peppercorns, cooked with onions in olive oil
- Broiled hamburgers, with a mustard green salad, feta cheese, blue cheese dressing, with brussel sprouts cooked in a garlic and butter sauce on the side
- Whole chicken breast, buttered and covered in Montreal and poultry seasoning, baked and then broiled until crispy, with seasoned avocado and sour cream on the side
- BBQ steak, seasoned in a herbal rub, served with whole steamed broccoli, whole garlic, butter and thyme
- Roasted broccoli. Butter, sautéed peeled garlic, olive oil, feta cheese, olives.

- A pound of bacon sautéed or baked. Sautéed green beans with golden flax breading and blue cheese crumbles. Sour cream on the side.
- Italian sausage, barbequed, with avocado (pepper, salt, blue cheese, feta cheese, salsa), with sharp cheddar "wraps" used for eating by hand
- Baked chicken wings, seasoned in garlic, clove, pepper, salt and herbs.
- Hard boiled eggs wrapped in prosciutto with a dab of mayo, hollandaise or other creamy sauce. Good for a quick meal on the go.
- Pork rinds with blue cheese, buffalo wing sauce, sour cream or other fatty dressings etc
- A big salad of spinach, with a butter broiled beef (cooked with onion flakes and fried garlic), cut up and incorporated, sprinkled with ground flax, flavored with a dressing of buffalo wing sauce, romaine, feta cheese chunks, cheddar and provolone
- Avocado, covered atop with egg salad (0 carb mayo), with a splash of paprika and oregano
- Rotisserie chicken, bought whole at the heated ready section of the supermarket, seasoned. Whole Avocado and ~1 cup greek yogurt - garnished with blue cheese chunks. Everything coated in parmesan cheese grated.
- Baked salmon filet, butter broiled, with lemon salt. Green beans, cooked in butter with tomato/basil flavored feta chunks and ground spicy tamari pumpkin seeds.

Ranch Bacon Chicken Wrap

- Layer in the following order on a *Smart & Delicious Large Size Tortilla* (or other low carb brand): 2 slices of sharp cheddar, 1 serving of pepperoni (14-18 slices), a fist sized portion of hot rotisserie chicken (can ready to eat from most supermarkets/Costco), 2 TBSP of bacon ranch dressing, 1/4th cup almond slices
- Wrap up, eat by hand.

Nutrition (Assumed 3 oz. Costco rotisserie chicken and 6 almonds):

690 calories, 21 grams carbohydrate (12 grams fiber, 9 grams net carb), 53 grams fat, 45 grams protein

Bacon Cauliflower Mash

- Cut head of raw cauliflower into florets
- Steam florets while preparing ¼ to ½ cup bullion and pan cooking bacon (I used 3 slices)
- Into food processor: cauliflower, 2 TBSP cream cheese, 1 TBSP butter, 2 TBSP sour cream, bullion
- Puree
- Coat oven ready pan (e.g. Pyrex) with olive oil (small amount, about 2 TBSP), put mash in
- Crush bacon in, mix
- Cover with cheddar, I used two slices of the sharp variety
- Into oven: broiler on until cheese starts to get crunchy
- 3-4 servings

Nutrition:

970 calories, 48 grams carbohydrate (21 grams fiber, 27 grams net), 75 grams fat, 38 grams protein

Sautéed Collard Greens

- Heat skillet then introduce a generous amount of olive oil, add 2 TBSP of butter, once butter is incorporated, lower heat to medium
- Throw precut, strip, prewashed collard greens into the pan, 4 cups or so should be good.
- Stir the collards so that they are coated in oil, then season to taste with pepper, salt (generous), onion (I use dried onion flakes), garlic (minced/fried) or other wholesome seasonings (poultry, Cajun and Jamaican seasonings work well).
- Flip every few minutes until they are starting to become dark or browned
- Plate, introduce 2 TBSP of blue cheese crumbles
- If you like them soggy, which I do, pour the remaining oil from the pan onto the collards, especially targeting the blue cheese, as a dressing
- Serves two

Nutrition (approximate, may vary, assumes all ingredients are plated and none left in the pan, assumes 4 TBSP olive oil):

970 calories, 8 grams carbohydrate (4 grams fiber, 4 net carbs), 85 grams fat, 11 grams protein

Others' recipes that I have made and recommend:

- Buffalo Wings – These are made with pork rinds as a breading and were insanely delicious; tasted better than any other buffalo wings I have had.

Dessert and Sweet Stuff

"Sorta" Mocha

- 1 TBSP unsweetened cocoa powder
- 1 TBSP heavy whipping cream
- EZ-Sweetz/liquid sucralose to taste, I put 10 drops, which is equivalent to 10 tbsp of sugar (lol)
- 3 cups of coffee, I recommend a premium brand with a dark roast, ground from beans, two of my favorites are Amalfi and Peruvian from World Market
- Layer as follows: heavy cream/half of sweetener, 1 cup of coffee, cocoa powder, 2 cups of coffee, other half of sweetener, mix
- Optionals: Splash of pumpkin spice (with cream), to taste - 1-2 TBSP of whipped heavy cream on the top (press down so it's mostly submerged)

Nutrition:

~70 calories, 3 grams carbohydrate (2 grams fiber – 1 net carb), 6 grams fat, 2 grams protein

Sweet Tooth Emergency Relief

Always carry in your fridge heavy whipped cream (the stuff you spray from the can), heavy whipping cream (liquid), unsweetened cocoa powder and/or 85%+ cocoa content chocolate. You can then put a base of heavy cream (~3 TBSP) in a small cereal bowl, covered by a generous portion of whipped cream,

sprinkle a serving of chocolate as snapped off pieces/shavings or about ½-1 a TBSP of cocoa powder, add/mix some liquid sucralose, then up to any two of the following:

- 1/3 cup blackberries
- 1 oz walnuts
- 1/3 cup cranberries
- 1/3 cup pecans
- ¼ cup almonds, roast for extra points/sweetness
- 3 strawberries, diced
- 25 blueberries
- 1/3 cup hazelnuts
- etc

Use cocoa powder instead of chocolate if you want to lower the number of net carbs, although that will require some additional sweetener to offset the bitterness of the powder. The latter is not a problem if you use a no carb, liquid sweetener like EZ-Sweetz. Of course the chocolate is completely optional.

This concoction is usually in the range of 250-400 calories and around 5-10 net carbs. Each item on the list of additional options has 2-5 grams of net carb.

Example: Light Sweet Tooth Emergency

Here is a particular example of the "sweet tooth" emergency designed to be bulky, filling but low calorie and low carb:

- 6 valutime jelly cups
- drizzling of heavy whipping cream (1 table spoonish)
- 1 table spoon unsweetened cocoa powder
- 1/2 tea spoon granulated Splenda sprinkled
- heavy whipped cream to taste
- small handful of black walnuts
- level tablespoon or a teaspoon of peanut butter (I used Reeses)
- ~4-5 net carbs, 200ish calories

Others' recipes that I have made and recommend:

- Cheese cake – the king of low carb desserts due to the generous portions of fat. You can make these very low carb if you use liquid sweetener – the only extant sugars will come from the almond crust and the cream cheese, which isn't much. This recipe goes really well with a topping of heavy whipped cream and black berries!
- Chocolate peanut butter fudge – do not use a granulated sweetener, use a liquid or powdered sweetener, otherwise it'll have a "grainy" consistency.
- Pumpkin Cheesecake - This recipe goes really well with a topping of heavy whipped cream and black berries!

Inspirational Ammo

The following is the list of intellectual goods I would suggest immersing yourself so as to build character, develop an appreciation for the heroic and generally become a better person. These are my personal suggestions and might not be to your fancy. If the former be true, pattern a wealth of resources in like fashion with the goal being bettering, motivating and inspiring you.

Listen

Immerse yourself in music which creates an epic, inspirational, mythical and heroic environment for the mind to freely associate, visualize and reflect within. I realize I have a unique taste, but I offer it nonetheless:

Hiking/Driving – world transporting, heroic, epic, inspirational, narrative

Arkona, Crimfall, Ensiferum, Wintersun, Turisas, Therion, Suidakra, Equilibrium, Tyr, Rhapsody of Fire, Hammerfall, Mozart, Bach

Lifting Iron – harsh, powerful, fast, spine steeling, body moving, war drums

Amon Amarth, Anaal Nathrakh, Kalmah, Children of Bodom, Fear Factory, King of Asgard, Hatebreed, Strapping Young Lad, Dark Tranquility, Skyfire, Revocation

Meditation/Creative Work – mind expanding, mythological, labyrinthine

Negura Bunget, Burzum, Bathory, Falkenbach, Moonsorrow, Devin Townsend, Diabolical Masquerade, Blut aus Nord, Beethoven, Tchaikovsky, Prokofiev, Stravinsky, Crystal Castles, (classical) In Flames, Trial, Neurosis, Enslaved, Edge of Sanity, Borknagar, Brahms

Read

Odyssey

Iliad

Aeneid

Bhagavad Gita (or the entire *Mahabharata* if you're brave/unemployed)

Dhammapada

Zen Mind, Beginner's Mind by Shunryu Suzuki

Ride the Tiger by Julius Evola

Shakespeare – the tragedies (*King Lear, Othello, Hamlet* in particular) and historical plays (particularly Henry V). Note how Henry turns from a troublesome, hedonistic youth to a Stoic king. Imitate that change of self-destructive behaviors to strength.

Traditional fables, proverbs and fairy tales (before they got rewritten and watered down) – William Bennet's *The Book of Virtues* is a good place to start. Get the hard cover 1993 reprint edition, which is intended for an adult audience.

Plato - *The Republic*. Spend a good 6 months of dedicated study on this one.

Philosophy as a Way of Life and the *Inner Citadel* by Pierre Hadot

Stoic philosophers – *Meditations* of Marcus Aurelius (Gregory Hays translation), *Letters* of Seneca (Richard M. Gummere), *Enchiridion* and *Discourses* of Epictetus (Elizabeth Carter). *Musonius Rufus and Education in the Good Life: A Model of Teaching and Living Virtue* by J.T. Dillon or other critical translations and reviews of Musonius Rufus' ethics. For the briefest of introductions check out Alain de Botton's *Consolations of Philosophy*, for a mid-level one William Irvine's *A Guide to the Good Life* and for a critical volume *Epictetus: A Stoic and Socratic Guide to Life* by A. A. Long.

De Officiis (*On Duties*) by Cicero

Thoughts of a Philosophical Fighter Pilot by James Stockdale

Youxia of classical Chinese literature (Jia Dao, *Water Margin*, Sima Qian, *The Seven Heroes and Five Gallants* etc). *Readings in Classical Chinese Philosophy* by Ivanhoe and Norden is an excellent companion and an anthology of classical Chinese thought.

Other National epics/mythology not listed here – most feature heroic individuals who exemplify virtuous traits. E.g. Kalevala of Finland, Ulster Cycle of Ireland, Nordic sagas and eddas etc

Education of a Christian Prince by Erasmus – don't let the title scare you off atheists, it's about how to be a bad ass, not a particularly good Christian.

The Demon Haunted World by Carl Sagan

The Analects of Confucius and according Wikipedia entries on Analects and Confucianism

Plutarch's *Lives*

The Iron by Henry Rollins

Fuck Calories by Krista-Scott Dixon – this is one to read for the ladies especially. This short ranting treatise proposes some fresh perspectives on the mental culture of food: sharp as a tack, and brutally honest.

Watch

Seven Samurai

Henry V

TED Talks