

Introduction

Creating and maintaining a healthy body has never become more important than it is now. I'm not really talking about physical good looks or vanity. It's about our health, and quality of life. Just look around us. We don't need the medical experts to point out that we are facing a health crisis unlike anything we've experienced in history. We see the evidence of our unhealthy society in the grocery store, at the coffee shop, at work. We are facing an obesity epidemic.

Since 1980, the number of people suffering from obesity has more than doubled, and among children the numbers keep on climbing. If this trend continues at the same rate, obesity will increase the already-skyrocketing health costs of diabetes, heart disease, and stroke, the well-documented risks associated with obesity.

What can we do about this societal epidemic? All we really have control of is ourselves. Each of us can start by taking responsibility for our own lives and the lives of our families. I want this book to be a guide to getting started down the road toward healthier, balanced habits that support a longer, more fulfilling life. My sincere hope is that you value your life, your longevity, and the lives of your loved ones so much that you can take this seriously. We are not going to get old and die. We are going to get old and live. How do you want to experience that?

We hear someone say, "I don't want to get old and decrepit like 'so and so.' I hope that never happens to me. I don't want to live to be old. I would hate being weak and in pain all the time. I don't want to live in assisted living, a rest home, be relegated to a wheelchair," as if that is our fate that we all share as we get into our late 70s, 80s, and beyond! Why is it, then, that there are inspiring examples of healthy elderly who still hike, run, ski, travel the world, thumbing their noses at what society expects to happen to them.

I want you to know here and now that your age and your genetics have less power over your health than your beliefs and vision. I'm living proof. As a 60-year-old fitness athlete, I was on my way to early heart disease by the time I was 46. My doctor as witness, at 5'8" I weighed in at 200 pounds, had 33% body fat, high cholesterol, high triglycerides, high blood pressure, all the hallmarks of early onset heart disease. What happened to me? I was a fit, healthy young person just...well, just yesterday it seemed. And yet, the decades had piled on, the job stress had piled up along with a plethora of accumulated bad health habits, and I found myself sliding down a slippery slope that I never expected to experience. It was too soon! I was too young to be this old! Unacceptable! I had barely lived my life and now I was already declining. A switch flipped on in me. I got scared. I felt

fire. I felt anger. I had so much still to accomplish. And I came out swinging hard!

I hired a skilled coach, re-learned how to eat right, lift weights right, how to use cardio right, and how to take care of my no-longer-20-something self. I lost 55 pounds slowly over the course of a year and a half, and committed to a bodybuilding competition. I transformed my body from fat, 47 and invisible, to a fit, vibrant, strong hardbody. I looked 15 years younger. I lost the fat, gained muscle, stamina, confidence, and a passion to help others experience a transformation of their own. Standing on a stage, tan, oiled, wearing a tiny bikini, in a row of 35-year-old fellow competitors, I won my first figure bodybuilding trophy at age 52!

Let me say this again. Let it sink in. You are not going to get old and die. You are going to get old and live. What do you want that experience to be, for you? Do you want it to be filled with the life adventures you love? Then this book is for you.

Eating right, exercising right, and taking care of yourself pays off in HUGE DIVIDENDS as you get older. Don't wait any longer. If you want to know how to start, this book is for you. Since that first competition, I kept at it. Now I'm 63, and it's reaping rewards in my daily life. I'm proof of my own truths, passed on to you. Granted, you will actually have to DO stuff, but knowing what to do right now helps a great deal. These are the seven habits of healthy, happy, lean living that I learned for myself. I'm writing this book for my all fitness clients, their family and friends, and for anyone who reads this introduction and feels a resonance, a call to battle, a second chance to really do it right.



Habit 1

“If You’re Not in the Obit, Eat Breakfast.” -Carl Reiner

Carl Reiner is 97. People ask him how he does it. This chapter title is his answer. He also reads, writes, and walks every day. He meets up for coffee with his friends Norman Lear (96) and Mel Brooks (92). They’re onto something that works. Starting with breakfast.

When trying to lose weight, people can be tempted to skip meals to lower their calorie intake. It is something that I practiced as a teenager to fit into my jeans. It worked! Youthful vitality is often a forgiving grace to protect you before you know better. You’ve no doubt heard “Calories in/Calories out.” This statement is only true if you happen to be a car. Gas in/Exhaust out. But you are not a car. You are a biochemical miracle. Your body does not treat all nutrients the same way. If it did, you could eat donuts and French fries all day until you filled your calorie quota and you would be lean and glowingly healthy. You know that, in reality, you would NOT be fine!!

Breakfast is an easy target for a calorie cutter because it seems painless. You wake up, hit the snooze alarm, and finally bound out of bed just in time to get out the door and hopefully not be late. You don’t have time for breakfast and, more importantly, you’re not even hungry! Fun fact: If you aren’t hungry when you wake up, your metabolism is operating very slowly. The pilot



light is on, but there isn't any heat being produced. (You are burning calories at a very low rate.) Low metabolism = low calorie burning = no fat burning. With this strategy, you'll get hungry by about 11 am, grab a vending machine snack and hold out for lunch.

Let me ask you this: Which is better? Having a high metabolism all day long, or raising your metabolism when the day is half over? If metabolism drives fat loss, which option makes more sense if you want to maximize your effort? Hopefully you can see how advantageous it would be to fire up that metabolism bonfire as early as when you wake up! Turn up that thermostat and GO!

Two sure ways to do that are: 1) Performing vigorous exercise as soon as you get up, or 2) Eating a complete breakfast with protein and carbohydrate. Either way - GAME ON! You become a more efficient calorie-burner by sun up!

Let's take two steps backward and look at this another way. Breakfast literally means "break fast." You are breaking the long fast you had overnight. During the night your metabolism efficiently slows way down, allowing your body to rest and repair. Imagine the difference between a car speeding down the freeway, and a car idling in the driveway. During the night, you are idling in the driveway. Your engine is running, but very slowly. While you sleep, your body repairs small damages that occurred during the previous day and then synthesizes the nutrients you've ingested to make them useful to the body. When you wake up in the morning (if you've had adequate hours of sleep), your metabolism is ready to switch on, burning calories at a higher rate.

Your engine is still idling, however. If you don't eat until 10am or noon, your body is running all morning at idling speed, and you are not burning near the calories you could have been! This is a wasted opportunity. This puts you behind in the game.

"But I'm not hungry when I wake up," I hear you say again. That makes perfect sense, because your metabolism is going slow when you first wake up. It needs a little encouragement. Nourishment raises your metabolism! Eat some scrambled egg whites with tomatoes and spinach, and a small serving of oatmeal. In a huge rush? A protein shake with a handful of strawberries blended in. Start your engine up! Use the next four to six hours to run your engine at a higher rate and burn more calories. Don't idle in the driveway for another five hours or more while you try to perform good work and be creative and professional on the job.

"But I'm in too much of a hurry," I hear you say. Of course you are. You have established a routine around not eating breakfast - AND getting the kids to school, walking the dog, dealing with rush hour traffic, and getting to work on time. You are already proving the point I'm about to make. Routine is everything, especially in the morning. Plan ahead. Make that protein smoothie the night before and have it waiting in the fridge for you. Have your egg whites cracked and ready to swirl in a pan, with oatmeal made ahead of time to reheat. Or have your items in a cold bag, ready to grab from the fridge as you jet out the door. You have efficient strategies that you figured out so far for getting along in

a busy life, so figure out a way to get breakfast into your body by planning it into your morning routine. Find a way.

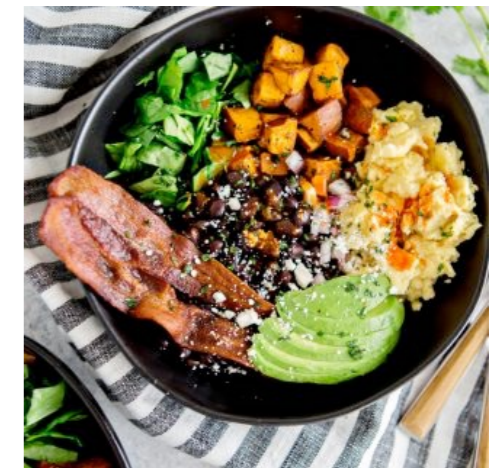
You must find a way to start up your body's metabolism engine first thing in the morning if you are serious about having a healthy, lean body. It is a huge advantage to you if you want to lose body fat and create a lifestyle that supports maintaining your progress.

Here are some other important reasons for eating breakfast. Need more arguments? I have more arguments for breakfast!

- Breakfast will allow you to control your hunger and do a better job of avoiding eating bad choices all day long. It makes your blood sugar stable by keeping it in the body's comfort zone. (You won't get brain fog, feel shaky, sleepy, or hyper, all symptoms of blood sugar run amok.) What would be the use of your new lifestyle plan when you would eventually eat poorly, caused by hunger because you skipped breakfast?
- A healthy breakfast will aid in increasing your body's metabolism. If you skip breakfast, you will place your body into fasting mode longer, causing it to protect you by conserving any energy that it can. Now, when you eat breakfast, you are telling your body that there is plenty of food available to you, that you are awake and you are not fasting anymore. This means that your body is ready to burn fat, and utilizes the energy during the day. This is what you want to happen!
- A healthy breakfast would also help you consume enough calories, especially protein calories. Having enough protein calories

is essential to burning fat, because this allows you to maintain your muscle mass. When you regularly skip breakfast you risk lowering your protein intake, causing loss of muscle mass, which in turn lowers your metabolism. Remember: Losing fat by cutting too many calories never works. It slows your metabolism, causing your body to hoard fat and jettison muscle to keep you from starving.

- Eating breakfast is essential to losing weight, as it helps the body attain its weight loss goal faster. According to research studies, those individuals who miss breakfast are the ones who were four times more likely to become and stay overweight. If you do not want to risk gaining weight, plan ahead so that you don't skip breakfast.



Habit 2

No Water, No Life

Drinking fresh, plain water plays a key role in a healthy lifestyle. If you ever find yourself stuck on a weight loss plateau despite following your nutrition program strictly, then it could be that you are not drinking enough water. Studies have shown that sometimes people unsuspectingly suffer from mild dehydration, and you could be affected as well. Your body requires water for various biochemical processes. The following are the benefits of drinking enough water to your body when dieting:

- Water assists the body in converting fat into energy. When the body is dehydrated the body's metabolism processes are slowed down, and this impedes the breakdown of fats in the body; in effect, your weight loss. If this happens, your weight loss hits a plateau.
- Water naturally holds back your appetite. The hypothalamus region in your brain serves the role of controlling cravings and appetites, including thirst and hunger. This means that drinking enough water not only quenches your thirst, but it takes away the feeling of hunger as well. A study by Washington University found that drinking a glass of water before going to bed reduces the chance of waking up hungry in the night.
- Water also helps in the prevention of slack skin, which is a common side effect of weight loss. It gives the skin a healthier



and youthful look by helping in the reconstruction of new skin cells. The difference between a raisin and a grape is water!

- Water is necessary for elimination of waste products from the body. When you are losing body fat, there is extra waste your cells are letting go of. Without enough water, these wastes stay in the body longer. This means that the body requires plenty of water into which the unwanted byproducts will be dissolved and excreted from the body.
- Water, along with adequate dietary fiber, is effective in avoiding constipation. If the body does not get enough water, it is compelled to siphon it from its internal reserves, normally the colon, resulting in constipation. Normal bowel function will resume once the body receives adequate water.

Even mild dehydration leads to a number of unwanted symptoms. Mild dehydration is characterized by the following symptoms: fatigue, cravings, headaches, and constipation. However, as soon as you get the water in balance, you achieve what diet experts refer to as a breakthrough point. At this point, as fluid retention in the body eases, the liver and endocrine system start to operate more effectively, helping to reinstate your natural thirst while reducing your cravings significantly. This eventually results in a heightened metabolism rate, which facilitates the breakdown and loss of fat in the body. This is where you want to be!

How Much Water Does the Body Need?

Every adult ought to drink at least eight glasses of water every day during cold weather. I personally drink two to three liters,

depending on what activities my day includes. Since there is a lot of perspiration and loss of liquid during hot weather, additional glasses of water are needed. Lastly, if exercise is part of your healthy lifestyle plan, ensure that you drink six to 12 ounces of fluids during and right after your workout. This way, you may be tired from your workout, but not fatigued because you are dehydrated. These are the rules of thumb. Start here and then add more as you feel you need to for your own well-being.



Habit 3

“If Man Made it, Don’t Eat it!” -Jack Lalanne

One of the most confusing and contradictory areas in nourishing the body back to optimal health lies in what we should be eating. The popular media does a number on us. Many of the “health gurus” out there have an agenda to sell something; a pill, a weight loss tea, a panacea that will end all our troubles. My favorite is, “The secret to losing weight that doctors don’t want you to know.” I stand in line at the grocery store and either chuckle to myself, or silently fume at what the racked publications have to offer the unsuspecting public. I find them amusing because of their ridiculous claims, and chilling because people are searching for answers and they will believe the hype.

As an experienced fitness trainer and competitive bodybuilder who was once significantly overweight, unhealthy, and completely confused, I’ve learned for myself what works over time. What I offer here are parameters that are effective, reasonable and sustainable. You can start here and then fine tune these guidelines for what works for you. I’ve learned which experts to listen to, and tried everything, allowing me to sift out the lies and exaggerated claims to get to the most sensible, healthful, balanced approach to building muscle, burning fat, and feeling satisfied and nourished.

First, I will define what unprocessed foods are and what they are not. Then, I am going to do some myth-busting. You may find



out some things that will surprise you, leaving you a little skeptical. That's a good thing. Be skeptical enough to read more books and research results as I have, to find an increasing volume of work that backs up what I'm about to reveal. One of the most consistently reliable sources of information for what we should be eating comes to us from the field of successful treatment of diabetes. It turns out, the proper diet for a Type II diabetic is very close to what we all should be eating to maintain muscle mass and control body fat accumulation. Both camps (diabetics and healthy fat loss lifestyle people) need to control blood sugar levels through what is on their plate, and how they time their eating.

Unprocessed foods are: raw fruits, raw nuts, raw seeds, meats, fish, eggs and raw vegetables. (Lean toward organic, grass-fed, free-range, wild-caught as much as you can. Sometimes it's hard to find, and more expensive [not government subsidized], or seasonal if locally grown. Do your best.)

Unprocessed foods are satisfying, making you feel physically full and completely nourished, take metabolic work for your system to digest and utilize, and make you feel energized instead of sleepy. You won't want to keep eating and eating like we do with potato chips or cookies. Plant fiber, complete protein, natural oils, phytonutrients, vitamins, minerals, protein, and unrefined, plant-based sugar. Eat your fill.

Unprocessed foods are recognized by the body immediately as real food. Your body knows what to do with an organic apple. It uses every molecule to feed you and restore you. It doesn't know

how to fully metabolize a bag of potato chips. Confusion creates bloat and acidic stomachs. When I was in college I helped my boyfriend clean out his car at the end of the school term. Under the front seat were several escaped McDonald's French fries. They had been there for over a year! They were PERFECTLY PRESERVED. Not a scratch! Not a speck of mold. They looked like they did the day we bought them. Yikes! How did my body experience them when I had eaten the others? Mummified, food-like objects!

This brings me to my last point on what unprocessed foods behave - they spoil quickly. All of these foods (except nuts and seeds) degrade quickly because they are alive when harvested and brought to you. They have no preservatives for you to ingest. No reconstitution into flakes, chips or puffs. Just nutrients. You have to shop in smaller quantities, more often. That's a new habit to acquire: be patient. You'll learn how if you just decide you're going to do it.

I'm not going to tell you what exactly to eat, and how much. That is what people hire me to do. As promised though, these are general guidelines you can apply now.

Unprocessed foods do not have a nutrition label. Yes, egg cartons do have info, and sometimes you will find bananas have a little nutrition tag, but you get what I'm saying.

Unprocessed foods are not in a box, jar, or can. These are containers that are used when something is processed away from its original shape or natural state. Ok, oatmeal is lightly processed for you so you don't have to grind your own oatmeal. Plain oat-

meal with no added sugar, maple flavoring and junk, is fine to keep in your plan. There are some other exceptions. Almond butter used to be almonds and now they're ground up. Look at the label. Almonds, a little salt. That's it. If it has a longer list of ingredients, it's a spread. And it will support your "spread." If any of these containers has more than two or three ingredients, they are questionable. One will usually be a form of refined sugar. Instead, eat the real food they started out to be.

Center Aisles



Spend most of your time and money on the perimeter of the store. The center aisles are only for natural nut butter, oatmeal and quinoa.



Perimeter



Habit 4

Pick Heavy Things Up

The most effective way to keep the muscle you have, and to add muscle back that you've slowly lost since your 30's, besides proper nutrition, is to engage in resistance training. There are so many additional benefits that we won't cover in depth: bone mass retention, improved circulation, flexibility, stability, and more. Those topics will be in a future book. In this chapter, we will uncover the resistance training practice and basic benefits. Resistance training done properly will help you gain muscle mass, raise metabolism, and lose the excess fat. Examples of some of the common resistance training activities include weight lifting using fixed weights and cable machines, and isotonic resistance training which entails use of barbells and dumbbells. Here is a guide of the benefits of resistance training for losing weight.

- **Increases metabolic rate:** The metabolic rate refers to the rate at which the body converts fats into energy for various purposes. Resistance training helps to increase the rate at which the fats are metabolized, which helps to significantly reduce excess body fat. The activity itself burns calories, but the longer-lasting benefit after the workouts are done is that the body gets a strong signal to keep the muscle you already have and add a little more if you are consistent over time. Five pounds of muscle burns 250 calories a day at rest. (Five pounds of fat - 10 calories. Muscle wins!!)



- **Improves Body Posture:** Since virtually all the physical activities in this category involve all the body muscles, they help to strengthen and increase the core and the posture muscles. Posture is one of the first things that passively signal how old you might be. A confident, graceful posture makes you look younger than you are, as you age.
- **Increases Blood Circulation:** For the body's organs to operate optimally, they must have a sufficient and uninterrupted supply of blood rich in oxygen, as well as proteins, carbohydrates and fats. Resistance training helps to ensure that the blood circulation in the body is optimal. This helps to ensure that all vital body organs operate normally.
- **Decreases the Risk of Injuries:** Your flexibility, balance, stability, and gradual fat loss all support you not getting injured. Anyone new to resistance training may experience minor discomfort in their joints and muscles that comes from new effort, new stimulation, and the brief inflammation that encourages muscle recovery and growth. This discomfort (not injury pain!) is part of the process. As your muscles become conditioned the initial soreness is less common, yet more recognized for what it is when it does occur. You recognize it as a body signal that something beneficial is happening instead of the foreign feeling of being sore as an annoyance. Resistance training will help decrease your susceptibility to injuries, since the body parts will be able to withstand the unpredictability of living life more effectively. Your joints will improve their coordination and range of motion so that everyday stresses on the body, hauling groceries out of the car and into the house, climbing stairs with

luggage, yard work, etc., become less taxing and less prone to causing injuries. Your tennis or golf swing is more steady and powerful. Your balance and stability make it less likely for you to lose your balance and fall. If you do fall (we all fall sometimes), you will "fall better." In other words, you are more resilient to get through a hard knock with nothing more than a scrape or bruise. No broken bones.

- **Lowers the likelihood that you will get diseases such as cardiovascular disease, arthritis and diabetes.** Being sedentary is a life-threatening habit. Moving and offering resistance training to your body lowers the risk of these lifestyle diseases. Excess weight has been closely linked to a number of health complications. Due to fact that these exercises will reduce and prevent accumulation of fats in the body, your chances of suffering from various cardiovascular diseases, diabetes, and arthritis will be reduced significantly.
- **Boosts Self Esteem and a sense of personal power.** Unfortunately, people suffering from excess weight problems are often stigmatized by society. Fortunately, resistance training will help reduce this stigmatization and boost self-esteem. Additionally, life at home and at work is full of daunting challenges that crop up. Sometimes they pile up into an avalanche can be painfully frustrating. Overwhelm is paralyzing if it takes hold of your mind. Going to the gym and lifting weights expends the brain chemicals associated with frustration and daily stress and replaces them with chemicals of well-being and confidence to face anything that comes up. And nothing compares to lifting something really heavy for the first time - heavier than you've

ever lifted, putting it down and feeling INVINCIBLE! This creates a new mindset for you to carry with you out into the world. A positive mindset with an “I can do anything!” attitude is life changing. There are studies that now show lifting weights, especially with the larger muscles in the legs, makes a measurable positive difference in brain health, slowing the advance of brain diseases and alleviating depression. You’ve heard the expression, “Friends don’t let friends skip leg day.” Well, it should be “Friends don’t let friends skip brain day!”

- **Improves your Sleep Patterns:** Excess weight can wreak havoc with your sleeping pattern. Through these physical activities, you will notice an increase in deep sleep, and dreaming. This will allow you sleep much better at night, as well as boost your productivity at home or at your workplace. The sheer effort of pushing or pulling a heavy barbell or cable releases the brain chemicals that improve your mental state. Endorphins, dopamine, serotonin, these make sleep comes easier. In fact, better sleep is one of the first things my training clients enjoy once they start a workout program with me. They sign up to get stronger, build a little muscle, and lose body fat, but first, they sleep better!!
- **Increase Bone Density and Strength:** As the word “bodybuilding” suggests, this training will not only help you lose weight but will also increase your bone density. Increased bone density will help greatly reduce your susceptibility to injuries, as well as enhance your performance of various physical tasks. For my seniors, this is a huge boon! Moving heavy objects safely, creating a moderate stress on the muscles, pulls on the bones and en-

courages the bones to stay rather than fall into decline through osteoporosis. Weight-bearing exercise is the king of bone retention!

Be sure to consult a professional medical practitioner before enrolling in a particular program, so as to avoid any health complications. Last but not least, ensure that you follow the instructions given by your trainer so you can achieve the full benefits from your training.

Myth-Busting Time:

Common Misconceptions Of Resistance Training

1. Women who do strength training will become bulky and muscular. I want to look feminine.



This myth has been around for so many years, and unfortunately a lot of women believe it. I have a favorite saying, “Not lifting weights because you’re afraid of looking like a bodybuilder is like not driving your car because you’re afraid of becoming a Nascar driver.” Women do not have to be concerned that they will build large muscles when they

do resistance training exercises to increase their metabolism. Bodybuilders who lift

weights to become very muscular eat and exercise strategically, and differently than I am suggesting here.

These athletic women are usually professional competitors. Therefore, if you want to achieve that bigger look, you need to train and eat specifically for that. However, if you want to achieve a lean, toned body, resistance training exercises will give you just that.

(Pictured: Josefina Monasterio, Age 70+ Masters Bodybuilding)

2. Weights and expensive gym equipment are necessary for resistance training exercises.

While free weights and other gym equipment are necessary to speed up your progress, they are not necessarily the only things that you can use to build muscles. There is a variety of ways that you can build muscle and they include resistance bands, barre method, Pilates, using your own body weight, and isometric training. There are many programs for resistance training that do not use any equipment, yet they help people to achieve excellent results.

3. When you grow old you cannot build muscle.

This is not true because studies show that even people who are in their 70s can build muscle. In addition, people who are in their 40s or even 50s can build adequate muscle mass with just a few training sessions per week. Not only is there plenty of physical evidence out there to disprove this myth on muscle building, but I am living proof! I have built considerable muscle mass, and

I'm over 60 years old at this writing. I'm not planning on stopping, either! I could be the woman who will show the world that you can build muscle in your 90s!

(Bud Ravenscroft, Age 70+ Masters Bodybuilder)



4. Resistance training requires hours and hours of training per day.

This takes the crown for being the biggest misconception about resistance training that can help boost your metabolism. People ask me, “Janet, how many hours do you train per day to get that look?” Well, take the plural out of that time - it’s “hour” not “hours.” Experts believe that, as long as you eat a healthy well balanced diet and you do not have any diseases, you will only need about 45-60 minutes two to three times per week for you to realize results. I do recommend some kind of movement every day, in addition to resistance training. Some sort of walking, sports, hiking, just getting outside and moving supports your vibrant longevity by staying active. Resistance training two to three times per week as a focused activity is excellent, and provides a reasonable balance. Spread the two to three days out so that your body has some recovery time, too. (More on this in Myth #5.)

After all, it’s not just the hours that you spend at the gym training but how often you stay moving and how hard you challenge your body that’s important. Five pounds of muscle burns 250 calories a day at rest. That’s even sitting on the couch burning calories. Now, get off the couch and move, and imagine how much you are burning. Then, think about more than five pounds of muscle on your body. It’s money in the bank for your metabolism!!

5. You will need to constantly lift heavy weights in order to maintain muscle mass.

If you train every single day you're likely to build more muscle and speed up your metabolism, right? Wrong! It's been proven that the people who achieve phenomenal results are the ones who take breaks in between their workout days. Muscles are built when our bodies are resting and not when they are lifting weights, as most people would like to believe. The body also needs time to recover after an intense workout session. Depending on the intensity of your workout, 36 - 48 hours in between focused weight lifting workouts is a good rule of thumb. If you

aren't making acceptable

Why You Aren't Seeing Results

1. Poor preparation
2. Not drinking enough H₂O
3. Not getting enough protein
4. Consuming too many liquid calories
5. Not getting enough ZZZ's
6. Skipping breakfast
7. Shopping the center aisles
8. Poor record keeping
9. Not lifting weights
10. GIVING UP

progress, experiment with frequency, intensity and recovery time.



Habit 5

HIIT Cardio vs LISS Cardio

High Intensity Interval Training, or HIIT Cardio, is a strategy that acts as a catalyst for burning body fat, when paired with a sound nutritional plan.* This means that it will speed up your progress, **if** done correctly and with proper nutrition. Any type of cardio will raise your metabolic rate. HIIT cardio in particular will not only raise it but keep it at a higher level even after your workout, so that you continue to burn calories and fat at a higher rate for a period of time following your workout. Low intensity sustained cardio, or LISS, only raises your metabolism WHILE you are doing the cardio activity and then drops back to your normal set point soon after you finish.

HIIT cardio is a high intensity/short duration approach. (Short duration = 20 min. max) There are many timing combinations you can try, but if you are a beginner start here: for 15-20 minutes, you may run/cycle/jog/stair step for one minute, as fast as you can. This speed will vary, depending on your level of fitness going in. You will want to get sweaty, burning, and breathless, so once you are in a state where talking is impossible and breathing is getting difficult, drop back to a slow recovery pace for two minutes. Once your breath recovers, punch it back up to the higher level for another minute, and then slower for two minutes. If you do this for 15-20 minutes, three to four days per week, you will see noticeable results if you are being consistent and **IF YOU ARE ALSO EATING PROPERLY.**



*You can't "out-cardio" bad nutrition. I used the word "catalyst" for a reason.

If you justify this intense cardio as a free pass to eat a fast food cheeseburger and fries, you will sabotage your progress.

I want to clarify something, though. HIIT cardio is powerful, but this is not to say that low intensity sustained cardio of walking, hiking, or leisurely bike riding isn't worthwhile. It is. Lower intensity cardio is something you can do every day. And you will be chipping away slowly at the fat-burning game on any day of the week. Low intensity cardio is excellent for relieving stress, elevating your mood, clearing your thoughts, and keeping your body in motion rather than being sedentary. This supports your heart and brain health.

I can't talk about cardio without bringing up the unfortunate tendency for some to use cardio as their **only** means of exercise, along with a starvation diet. That combo is a recipe for disaster when it comes to adrenal health and metabolic balance. Over time, copious amounts of cardio and too low of an intake in calories puts the body in a catabolic state (muscle burning), so that body fat can keep you alive. Even marathon runners know that they need to rest, recover and eat plentiful, nourishing calories to be able to function and sustain their long distance performance. Eating junk food, or binging on rich foods and then punishing your body by doing 1-2 hours of cardio a day to make up for the calories eaten is an unhealthy, inefficient and ineffective way to sustain fat loss. In the short term, it is what I call "Atonement Cardio." As a habit, it is a damaging, even life-threatening disorder.

On a happier note, the HIIT cardio approach results in improving the sensitivity of your body to insulin; the outcome of this is that your muscles are going to absorb glucose and use it to repair and get energy, rather than storing fat. This means that as you burn off fat and lose weight, it should stay more stable, rather than yo-yo-ing, depending on how you exercise and feed yourself during the week. More muscle saves the day!

Using high intensity cardio for short durations to burn fat faster does indeed work, if you practice it consistently. By using this approach your body will burn off fat for energy, and you will also build lean muscle more quickly. So, not only will you get fitter,

but you will also notice a difference in your energy and recovery after resistance training.



Habit 6

Sleep is Repair, Recovery, Rebuilding Time

Sleep is so key to a healthy lifestyle that it has become my newest soapbox topic. Recently I hit a plateau for building muscle, even though I was eating 100% on plan. As I thought through my routine, I realized that I had slipped slowly into a habit of only getting six hours of sleep each night. Not terrible, but not great, and certainly not enough as prescribed by the research. I made a vow to get to bed one and a half hours earlier, consistently. Within a month I saw my body respond with the progress I was working so hard to attain. I'm a new believer. Remember, Your TV or laptop does NOT build muscle. Turn them off early. Sleep will do it every time!

Like you, I've always been taught that getting enough sleep is important, but in my younger years I seemed to have the vitality to power through a stretch of inadequate sleep without seeming to pay for it. As we age, each decade brings a new level of awareness to the cost of missed sleep. Sometimes life happens and we get out of balance and have to rein things in. But as a day in and day out habit, it's absolutely key to mental sharpness AND repairing and building muscle you work so hard to get in the gym. If the body doesn't repair muscles, they don't grow. The muscle repair operations occur at night, while you are sleeping. Six hours isn't long enough to complete the repair job. Give seven to eight hours a solid try if you are stuck on a plateau.



What Really Happens During Sleep?

It's important to understand that while the body rests, the brain restores itself. Chemical signals are sent to the various organs to begin repairing and setting up for the next day. The more sleep-deprived a person is, the more the chances of deficient physical and mental activity they experience. There are real consequences when you've not allowed your body to recover from the previous day's challenges or prepare for the next.

Sleep is an interval of nerve and muscle relaxation which begins a period of repair and rejuvenation of all the tissues and organs. This is especially needed after a day of hectic, often strenuous activity. Sleep is determined by a biological cycle called the circadian clock. It depends on proper intervals of a certain number of hours of being awake followed by sleep. Other elements affecting the sleep cycle are sunlight exposure, stress levels, metabolism levels, and even the medication we may be taking. Recently, it has been determined that exposure to the blue light of the TV or computer screen after dark can interrupt the natural brain signal to fall asleep. The brain is still stimulated enough to keep it in its active phase, and makes falling asleep right away difficult. If you have trouble falling asleep, pay attention to your screen time as your bedtime approaches and step away from the blue screen ahead of time.

The Power of Sleep

Sleep is a powerful muscle-building booster, owing to the fact that while we sleep the process called 'anabolism' is at work, un-

derstood more simply as the recovery and repair process for cells and tissues through the production of enzymes and proteins. Anabolism is the process that builds muscles, which in turn boosts the metabolism. (More calories are burned, even passively, to maintain muscle tissue, than fat tissue.) It counteracts the effect of "catabolism," the process that occurs during the day as you exercise, work, and otherwise expend energy. If catabolism exceeds anabolism in your body's cells, then there is more breaking down of tissues than building up. Thus, those who strain themselves with a tougher workout or play an extra hour must give their body the extra rest to sustain their growth of muscle mass, which is directly proportional to fitness.

We've all experienced the effect a bad night's sleep has on mental alertness, concentration levels, calm communication, creativity, emotional balance, and the productivity levels of an individual. Now you know it also can slow muscle growth, which affects your metabolism.

The Consequences of Sleep-Deprivation

Prolonged sleep-deprivation has been linked to anxiety and depression, and eventually death. Sleep induces the release of certain hormones that affect the central nervous system of the body, affecting mood and emotional stability. Inadequate sleep increases the production of Cortisol, which is a catabolic hormone that decreases testosterone levels, an anabolic hormone. It sets you up for losing muscle mass.

One of the most undercover consequences that comes with lack of sleep is in the raised levels of the stress hormone Cortisol, which has been directly linked to more abdominal fat storage. Getting an average of seven to eight hours of sleep per night, consistently, signals to the body that excess Cortisol production is unnecessary.



Habit 7

Transformation is a Mind-Body Event

Whenever a special occasion or a holiday draws near, people often scramble for quick weight loss products or programs. While looking good in swimwear during summer is not a bad idea, looking for a shortcut to weight loss can backfire. The truth is, weight loss is a lifestyle and not a quick fix. It is a result of a consistent effort that involves exercise, proper food intake, and the right amount of rest. This combination is the master key to achieving a healthy lifestyle that helps shed fat pounds permanently.

First, work on changing your perception of fat loss not being just about weight loss.

Weight loss should be about changing your body composition (fat loss, muscle gain), which in turn improves your health long-term. Your body will be made up of more muscle and less fat, so you will literally change its composition. It will be shaped differently. People who just drop weight without following these habits may achieve temporary results of losing weight, having a smaller version of the body they have now. An apple-shaped person becomes a smaller apple. Health experts are reporting that one indicator for early onset of disease can be seen at a glance. A waistline larger than your hips shows up as a higher association



to the risk of heart disease. A flatter stomach increases your chances for a longer, healthier lifespan. Abdominal fat (that sits on top of and hides your ab muscles) and visceral fat (the fat inside the abdominal cavity that coats your organs) are both features that increase the likelihood of lifestyle-caused diseases and illnesses - cardio vascular disease, metabolic dysfunction, diabetes, stroke, and heart failure. Fat loss is a way to achieve good health and longevity. But it also makes you look good and feel good now.

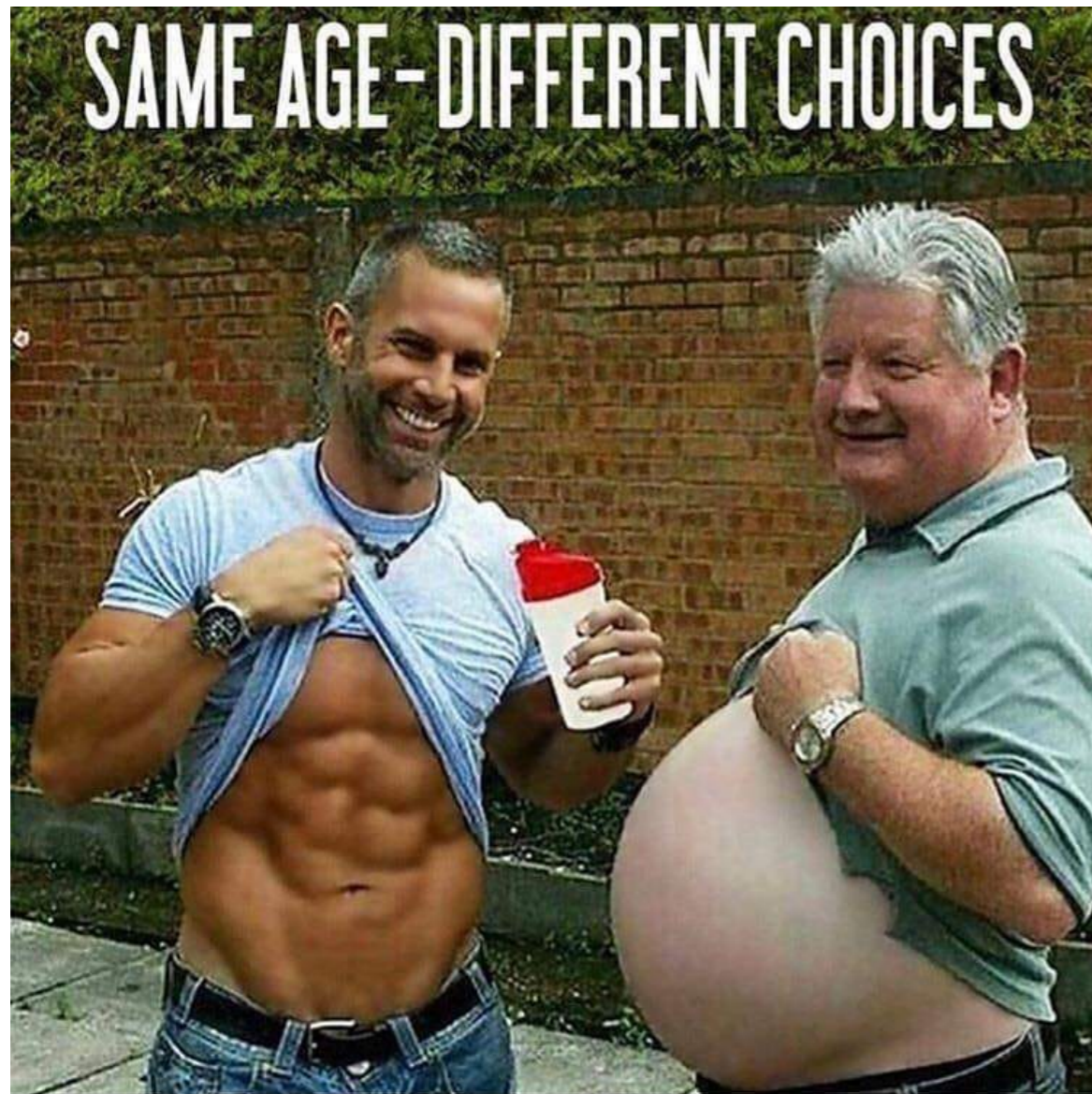
Second, start by gradually upping your game. Pick one of the habits in this book and just focus on that. Get that down to a science. Then add another. This book is written in a sequence, so that if you start with the first one it's a pretty easy adjustment. The next one is a little more challenging, and so on. Honestly, getting the nutrition right is the next-to-hardest habit for my training clients to learn. The hardest one? Getting enough sleep! But maybe you're most motivated by that one, so if you are, then start there!

Third, take "before and after" pictures. This lean and healthy lifestyle is just that. It's a long journey. It's not a 30-day cleanse. There will be times that you will make progress and times that you will plateau, feel like it's hopeless, and feel like giving up. That's when you have your pictures and your journey to reflect on. It keeps you going. Look at where you were! It gives you a way to inspire a friend with your story so far, and then suddenly you're inspired again with new determination to continue. Realize that people are watching you from afar. You may be inspiring someone without even realizing it.

Fourth, seriously consider hiring a good trainer. Not a cheap Groupon trainer. No offense, but you get what you pay for. If you're all in with both feet, you need someone who will professionally and seriously hold you accountable and offer smart and useful midcourse corrections. Make your time in the gym and out of the gym count. They'll keep you from hurting yourself and having a setback. They'll pick you up and dust you off, or they'll shake you by the shoulders to get you moving. Find one who fits your needs and who has chemistry with you. This trainer is worth what they charge you. (The price of a top-notch trainer is far less expensive than the treatment of heart disease, diabetes, or cancer caused by a poor lifestyle!) If you really mean it this time, then this will be the clincher for you. I am a personal fitness trainer and I **HAVE A PERSONAL FITNESS TRAINER**. There is absolutely no way I could have achieved winning a trophy at a national competition at age 60 and at 62 without an ace trainer by my side. You don't have to be a competitor to be serious about your goals and to have a trainer by your side, helping you make it happen.

Fifth, be prepared to have your life change. If you decide you deserve to live life to the fullest, and practice these habits consistently, your body will change. I can guarantee you this, that when your body fundamentally changes, your life changes with it. You will become a different person...a better version of you. You will raise your confidence, you will learn deeply about yourself, you will confront fears, conquer milestones you used to think were impossible, and along the way shed the old skin of "I can't," "I'm too old for that," "I just want to blend in," or "This is too hard for

me.” What comes into your life is, “Why not?” “Of course I’m capable,” “I want to be seen and heard” and “Yes!” Be ready for it! It will happen to you. If I ever meet you in person, I want to hear your story because you will have one!



About the Author

Janet McConnell is a personal fitness trainer, longevity coach, and a competitive bodybuilder who retired from Corporate America eleven years ago to pursue her passion for healthy longevity. She works with a new generation of men and women who want to live a healthy life, get and stay fit, and age powerfully. Janet's personal fitness coaching business is transforming the way people grow older as she challenges the long-held belief that people of "a certain age" decline, Atrophy, and die while burdening the healthcare system. Janet and her clients are proof that it's possible to live vigorous, vibrant lives and glowing health in a way not experienced by previous generations.

"Aging is inevitable, but decay is optional!" -Janet