

FIND YOUR WAY *Weigh*

RENEW YOUR MIND & WALK IN FREEDOM

COMPANION
PDF



FIND YOUR WEIGH

QUOTED, VISUAL AND & INTERACTIVE MATERIAL

CHAPTER 1

Page 7

Each year, Americans shell out around \$40 billion dollars on weight loss plans and products.¹

However, even after all the shakes are consumed and the calories are counted, The New England Journal of Medicine estimates that most people regain one-third of their weight back within the first year and return to their baseline within three to five years.²

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The \$40 billion Americans spend on diet plans each year is a weighty amount, for sure. But those billions represent aspirations rather than effort. Dieters who want to fit into thinner jeans for more than a few months or years need to find a diet plan that will fit into their lifestyle for just as long. If we're wasting billions of dollars on fruitless diets, it's likely the fault lies not with Jenny but with ourselves.³

CHAPTER 2

Page 14

In one of the New Testament's best known narratives, the Apostle Paul lists 9 essential character qualities for holy living, commonly referred to as the fruits of the Spirit: love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.⁴

CHAPTER 3

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Healthy body fat percentages for men range from 8-20% (age 20-39 yrs) and 11-22% (age 40-59 yrs). For women, healthy body fat percentages range from 21-33% (age 20-39 yrs) and between 23-34% (age 40-59 yrs).⁵

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I did a little research on a sports car. The 918 Porsche Spyder costs \$845,000.00 plus a \$2,975.00 delivery fee.⁶ At 6%, the sales tax would be \$50,878.50. This brings the total to \$898,853.50. According to CNN Money, the average American household had a median income of \$53,657.00 in 2014.⁷

To maintain this body type, fitness models maintain a daily regimen of exercise, diet, and nutrition supplements. Many practice "extreme" weight-loss methods, such as water restriction, crash dieting, and purging as they prepare for an upcoming shoot or appearance. These practices are inherently unhealthy and should not be an example of how to lose weight or maintain a fit and healthy body weight.⁸

CHAPTER 4

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In their book *What Really Sank The Titanic*, the metal experts contend that the vessel's manufacturer was under great pressure to secure enough iron to make three million rivets to stitch the ship's metal plates. In the rush to beat competition from Cunard, the White Star liner was constructed with substandard materials.⁹

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Food that's clean is food that's for the most part real food... It's not about banishing any particular type of ingredient," said Katz. "It needs to be a holistic concept. There's a real danger in placing it on just one ingredient."¹⁰

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Processed foods are cheap to produce, have a long shelf life, and are easy to store and distribute. Most foods that have a long shelf life have to be colorized to keep them looking fresh. They also have to be combined with various preservatives to stop them from degrading. This does not mean that you can never buy foods that are processed or convenient, but rather, you have to be diligent in reading the ingredients labels to fully understand what you are purchasing. The ingredient label is just as important, if not more so, than the level of calories, fat grams, etc. that is displayed above it.¹¹

CHAPTER 5

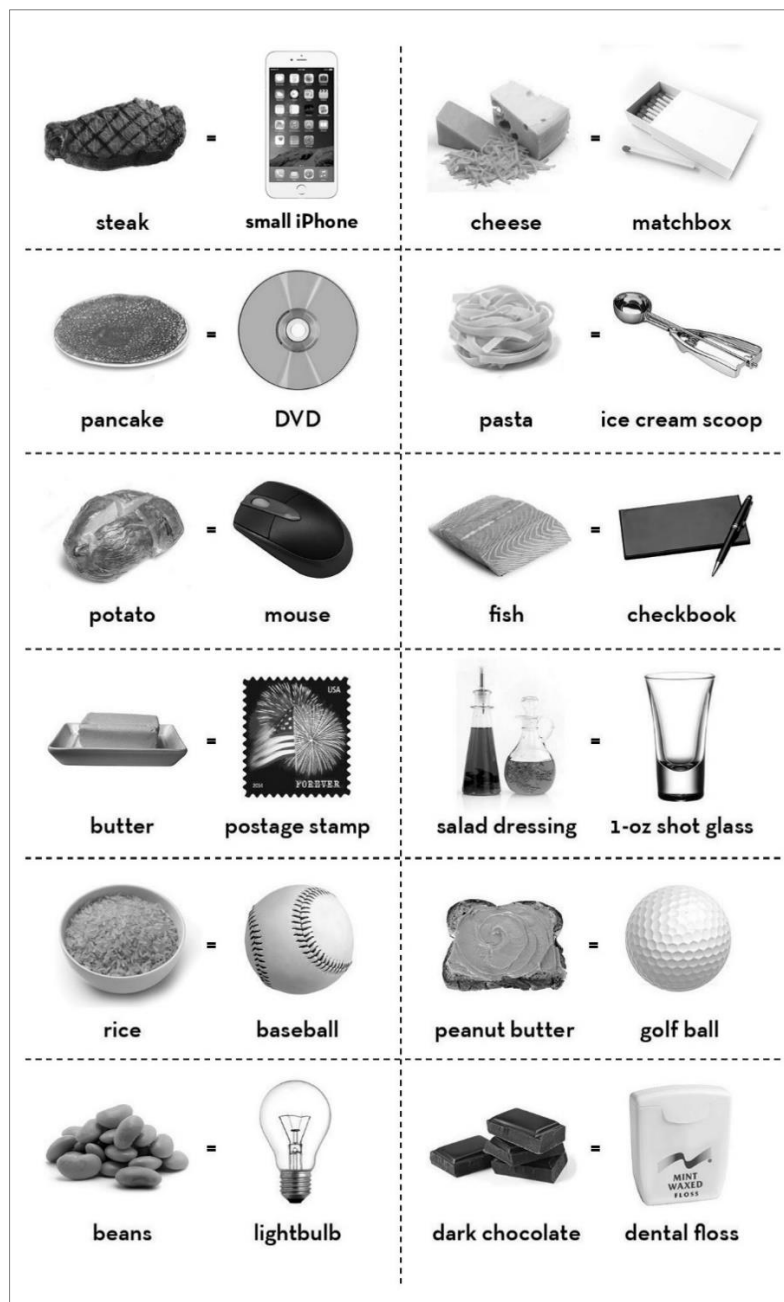
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According to the Centers for Disease Control, two out of three American adults are either overweight or obese.¹² WebMD places the average American at 23 pounds over his or her ideal body weight.¹³

	20 Years Ago		Today	
	Portion	Calories	Portion	Calories
Bagel	3" diameter	140	6" diameter	350
Cheese-burger	1	333	1	590
Spaghetti with meatballs	1 cup sauce 3 small meatballs	500	2 cups sauce 3 large meatballs	1,020
Soda	6.5 ounces	82	20 ounces	250
Blueberry muffin	1.5 ounces	210	5 ounces	500

VISUAL COMPARISON

A guide (based on standards that most nutritionists follow) of what a typical serving should look like.²⁰



"If the rituals of eating out have become less grand for the mass of people, it still retains its aura as an "event."... Even the necessary lunch for workers who cannot eat at home has been made into a ritual event by the relatively affluent among them.¹⁴

Couple this with the statistic from the United States Healthful Food Council that claims the average American adult buys a meal or snack from a restaurant almost six times per week.¹⁵

...in a study conducted at a health and fitness camp... This suggests that not only could large dinnerware cause us to serve and eat more; it can do so without us noticing and trick us into believing we have eaten less.¹⁶

CHAPTER 6

The reward signals from highly palatable foods may override other signals of fullness and satisfaction. As a result, people keep eating, even when they're not hungry. People who show signs of food addiction may also develop a tolerance to food. They eat more and more, only to find that food satisfies them less and less.¹⁷

Studies have shown that hormones play a role in elevating the desire to eat foods ... This, in turn, causes a craving for foods rich in carbohydrates—e.g., comfort foods.¹⁸

Average portion sizes have grown so much over the past 20 years that sometimes the plate arrives and there's enough food for two or even three people on it. Growing restaurant portion sizes have affected what Americans think of as a "normal" portion at home. We call it portion distortion.¹⁹

CHAPTER 7

We all know sleep is important. The typical adult needs between 7 to 9 hours of sleep a night... Americans reported receiving less than six hours per night in response to a National Health Interview Survey.²¹

Stop and Think: Recognize and Acknowledge Your Mental Blocks

1. We have looked at three common mental blocks to success with weight. Write down some specific examples (as you notice them in your journaling) of how these mental blocks affect or have affected your food choices.

a. Learned Helplessness

b. Short-Term Mentality

c. Entertainment vs Fuel Dilemma

2. Have you uncovered a mental block other than the three mentioned? If so, what have you discovered? (Other possible mental blocks: starving children / clean your plate mentality or the idea that food is love)

3. Come up with a personal phrase you will say to yourself when you come up against a mental block.

4

4. What are some specific actions you can take to counter your mental block (these can be ones I've suggested in this book or another that's better suited to you)?

Action Steps to Conquer My Mental Block

What Is Your Mental Block?

Action Steps

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

"You are eating more, plus your metabolism is slower when you are sleep-deprived," Breus says.²²

Feeling lightheaded during a workout is a sign of dehydration and a signal to tone it down a notch... water in blood, both blood volume and blood pressure drop, resulting in dizziness.²³

A review on the topic, which summarized numerous studies on the subject conducted over nearly 40 years ... So there you go; caffeinated beverages definitely "count" when it comes to meeting fluid needs.²⁴

Using your body clock as a guide for when to go for a walk or hit the gym might seem like a good idea. But, of course, there are other important considerations, such as family and work schedules, or a friend's availability to walk with you.²⁵

Utilizing data from the National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey, researchers measured the physical activity level of more than 10,500 Americans between 1999 and 2004... those who did muscle-strengthening activities like sit-ups had 44% lower risk of death than those who didn't.²⁶

CHAPTER 8

Over the 12 weeks, the participants chose a new habit and reported each day how automatic the behavior felt. At the end of the period, Lally analyzed the results and found the average time it took for the participants to pick up a new habit was 66 days.²⁷

CHAPTER 9

Feeling full is a result of your brain reacting to chemicals released when you put food or drink in your stomach. Your brain takes around 20 minutes to register these chemicals. After your meal, the levels continue to rise over 10 to 30 minutes. They stay elevated for three to five hours following the meal, keeping you sated.²⁸

1. Replace sugared beverages with water or unsweetened tea.

The term "soft drink" refers to any beverage with added sugar or other sweetener, and includes soda, fruit punch, lemonade and other "ades," sweetened powdered drinks, and sports and energy drinks. People who drink sugary beverages do not feel as full as if they had eaten the same calories from solid food, and studies show that people consuming sugary beverages don't compensate for their high caloric content by eating less food.²⁹

A 12-ounce can of coke contains 39 grams of sugar and 149 calories, while a Snapple Lemon iced tea has 23 grams of sugar and 100 calories. Compare these numbers with the American Heart Association's recommendation of no more than 6 teaspoons of sugar for women (25g) and 9 teaspoons for men (37.5g) per day.³⁰

Habits and Action Steps

Habit: _____

Specific Action Steps: _____

Habit: _____

Specific Action Steps: _____

Habit: _____

Specific Action Steps: _____

Notes

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Journals

50-Day Journal ~ 169

Journal
Entry | DAY 1

Shellie's Entry (November 17)

DAY 1. *I just decided last night...I am doing this thing! Originally, I told myself that I would wait until after the New Year to start the process. I mean, who wants to be on a diet through the holiday season! But then it hit me...if I wait until then I will most likely have at least an extra 5 pounds to deal with! I just can't bear going through numerous photos of worthy occasions only to look back on the pictures and think, "I don't want to be that round, middle-aged woman!"*

FURTHER REFLECTION

Journal
Entry | DAY 2

Shellie's Entry

DAY 2. *I just caught myself thinking, "Thank goodness I almost made it through Day 2. Obviously I am not in autopilot mode yet, but I did come to an interesting and helpful realization today. If I chose to cheat on "the diet," then I am actually making the choice to cheat on myself...on my goals. "The diet" is only a tool for me to reach my goals, so it won't care whether I cheat or not. My goals, on the other hand, can be completely derailed by cheating. I need to see cheating as something personal.*

FURTHER REFLECTION

Journal Entry		DAY 3
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Shellie's Entry

DAY 3. *Ok, my munchie time is definitely in the evening after dinner. That compelling urge to snack hits me about 3 hours after the meal. It is essential to be prepared and that's where almonds really come in handy. Here is where I give a shout-out to the almond as the king of snacks. Almonds are full of nutrients, fiber, and protein, as well as healthy unsaturated fats. One serving of 23 almonds is about 160 calories. For now, I have been eating about 6 almonds to tide me over till dinner and then I have been eating 10 almonds and 10 chocolate chips in the evenings. This girl needs just a pinch of chocolate to get through the day.*

FURTHER REFLECTION

Journal
Entry | DAY 4

Shellie's Entry

DAY 4. *Half way through Week One...I am putting in all the work, but have yet to see any visible reward....at the same time I know this is the most crucial time for a successful cutback. Any future success will be built on the foundation of this week. My body is going through a withdrawal from excessive carbs, sugar, and fat. I need to visualize a better, more healthy, and yes, thinner future.*

FURTHER REFLECTION

Journal
Entry | DAY 5

Shellie's Entry

DAY 5. *Ok, so tonight was pizza delivery night...I love pizza! With Herculean effort I restricted myself to the smallest piece and the crust of a second piece. I will count this as a victory. That's the thing with cutting back; it's a collection of small victories that will win the battle of the bulge.*

FURTHER REFLECTION

**Journal
Entry** | **DAY 6**

Shellie's Entry

DAY 6. *An entire day at home can be a scenario for a diet disaster. I am aware that I often eat out of boredom. This does not pose as much of a problem on busy days, but when I am just hanging out at home, it can become a real issue. Here's the thing...there is no magic remedy or piece of advice that's keeping me from raiding the refrigerator now at 3 o'clock in the afternoon. It comes down to a simple decision. Who or what is in charge of the food I put in my mouth today? Am I in charge or am I leaving the food to make the decisions for me?*

Well, today also proves that there are times when you do not have a choice over the food. Then, you just have to play with the hand you're dealt. We attended a community festival this afternoon and I ended up eating something I would not have eaten at home.

FURTHER REFLECTION

Journal
Entry | DAY 7

Shellie's Entry

DAY 7. *I made it to the end of Week One! All in all I would call this week a huge success. One thing that stands out to me is that it is ok to feel hunger. So much of the time I work overtime to make sure I never feel it, but I have realized that a little hunger will not kill me. To be honest, I still do not prefer to feel hunger, so I am learning to keep healthy, low-calorie snacks on hand. But, I also do not have to abandon all self-control when I find myself too far between meals.*

FURTHER REFLECTION

Weekly Reflection: Week 1

1. What time of the day are you most vulnerable to snacking? You need to be aware of those times when you are more likely to fall to temptation.
2. Describe how you felt physically this week. This is an important step in learning to listen to your body.
3. Take a moment to think back on any of your successes or failures with food. Jot them down here.

4. If you did experience a failure this week, take a moment to write down the scenario. Can you recall any special circumstances or any self-talk before or after?

5. Think back over your week. What was the biggest factor that would send your thoughts straight to food?

**Journal
Entry** | **DAY 8**

Shellie's Entry

DAY 8. *One week under my belt and I am so tempted to step on the scale to check my progress. BUT, I am staying away. I took some time to think back on my last few attempts to shed some weight and I realized that the scale has been my primary cause of failure...but why? Nothing is quite as discouraging as soldiering through a successful week of self-control only to look down at a number that represents little or no progress!*

You see, the scale can only measure your actual weight at any given moment. It doesn't take hormones into account. It doesn't know that you are retaining water because you took in a little too much sodium. Regardless of the reason, middle-agers are constantly fluctuating in weight, which means you can never know what to expect from the scale. This time I am avoiding the scale for a full 3 weeks.

Journal
Entry | DAY 9

Shellie's Entry

DAY 9. *It just occurred to me that I did not think about “the diet” once today. I ate right and stayed on track, but I didn’t feel like I was depriving myself in any way. This means I am hitting the sweet point when my body starts to go on autopilot and the worst is behind me. Now, I just need to keep this ship on course and follow the game plan.*

FURTHER REFLECTION

Journal
Entry | DAY 10

Shellie's Entry

DAY 10. *As I mentioned yesterday, there is a point when you eventually hit autopilot because your body is no longer rebelling against the new, sleeker diet. At this point it can be tempting to further restrict calories in order to speed things up. This can actually be counterproductive because too few calories can send the body into starvation mode. In essence, your body will start holding onto its fat stores in order to protect you from starving. Um, I definitely do not want to hold onto anything extra when it comes to fat! I need to remember that slow and steady will yield the best results.*

FURTHER REFLECTION

Journal Entry		DAY 11
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Shellie's Entry

DAY 11. *So, today was Thanksgiving and no, I was not a paragon of self-control. There will be days like this when you do not succeed despite your best intentions. So, what does this mean? Do I give up? The answer is a resounding no! I will not allow one day to define my whole effort. Quite frankly, I can speak with experience on this point because I have fallen to this exact scenario in the past. But maybe this is the time when I should put some of my "maturity" to good use, pick myself up and just keep on going.*

FURTHER REFLECTION

Journal
Entry | DAY 12

Shellie's Entry

DAY 12. *Alright, today I am back on track. It is becoming clearer to me that the true key to weight loss and management is in the mind. Of course, weight gain is caused by excess food; however, I am the one who ultimately makes the choice of what, when and where I eat. I like this idea... I have a choice. If I overeat one day, I can choose to right things the next day without heaping on unwanted feelings of failure and discouragement. Just get back on track: finished and done.*

FURTHER REFLECTION

Journal
Entry | DAY 13

Shellie's Entry

DAY 13. *I had an encouraging moment today. I put on a blouse that felt considerably looser than it was a few weeks ago. Clothes are really the best gauge of dieting success. Unlike the scale that can be affected by many different factors, clothes respond to inches lost, which is the true indicator of weight loss.*

FURTHER REFLECTION

**Journal
Entry** | **DAY 14**

Shellie's Entry

DAY 14. *Here I am at the end of Week 2! I feel quite accomplished to have made it this far. So, what kernels of wisdom have I garnered over the last weeks? It is not insignificant that the United States ranks number one in obesity in the world. Americans have expendable income, which allows them to spend more discretionary funds on entertainment. Consequently, this leads them to seek out further ways to be entertained. What does all this have to do with food and me? Plainly put, I eat to be entertained, rather than for nourishment.*

I eat when I am bored. I eat to celebrate. I eat to socialize. I want to be entertained and dazzled by my food! It's time to shift my thinking and stop looking for food to be the star of the show. When I am bored, I need to read a book. Now, it is unrealistic to say that I can replace the celebratory or social function of a shared meal, but I can teach myself to focus more attention on the company than the entree.

Weekly Reflection: Week 2

1. Have you stayed away from the scale this week? If not, how did you feel when you looked down at the number?
2. How did your body feel this week? Did you notice any positive changes?

3. Were you tempted to overly restrict your calories this week (this is common for people after they have gotten past the initial week of physical withdrawals)? If so, do you think this is a pattern you can sustain for the long haul to reach long-term success?
4. Have you had any setbacks this week? If so, what can you learn from them?

Journal
Entry | DAY 15

Shellie's Entry

DAY 15. *The dawn of week three...Today I endured a particularly strenuous day at the gym. Mondays are typically lethal because the instructors want to make sure that everyone starts out the week on the right foot. I always give my all when I exercise, so that I can receive maximum benefits because if I slack off, I am only cheating myself.*

For me, it has always been easier to exercise than to cut back on food. Now, I am trying to teach myself to see both practices as a package deal, rather than mutually exclusive.

FURTHER REFLECTION

Journal
Entry | DAY 16

Shellie's Entry

DAY 16. Tonight I hosted a get-together with some friends who all brought snacks to share. This was my first opportunity to put my new resolve to the test. I actually found it quite enjoyable to focus my time and attention on my friends and the conversation instead of the food. But, that doesn't mean that I couldn't eat anything, I just chose to sample a few things and I found that I was quite satisfied with that.

FURTHER REFLECTION

Journal
Entry

DAY 17

Shellie's Entry

DAY 17. *I felt a little more munchie today than usual. I was hit by the perfect storm of a 2-hour exercise session this morning and holding off dinner for my daughter to return home from a late practice. However, my morning exercise easily burned an additional 500-calories, so I think I am still on good footing.*

There are some important lessons I should keep in mind from today. First, I should plan ahead to eat some additional protein on my heavy exercise days. Second, if I want to have a "little" splurge now and then, I should do it on the days that I have had some good exercise. Third, I need to realize that it's ok to eat a little more on days like this without second-guessing myself.

FURTHER REFLECTION

Journal
Entry | DAY 18

Shellie's Entry

DAY 18. I was awakened last night with night sweats, a relatively new condition in my bag of tricks. Thankfully, I am not waking up in a pool of sweat as I've heard some do, but I was uncomfortable enough to remain awake for about an hour and a half. Then, on top of that, my discomfort was compounded by screaming hunger pangs. I just ignored them and comforted myself with the thought that the growling signified that my digestive system was operating at optimum efficiency.

FURTHER REFLECTION

Journal
Entry

DAY 19

Shellie's Entry

DAY 19. *I played mental ping pong today as I passed by a fast-food restaurant. It's a feeling I recognize all too well; a craving comes to mind and then I volley the thought back and forth trying to justify it to myself. Of course the craving was intensified by the fact that I was starving on my way home from the gym. In the end I did not cave in, largely because I realized that tonight would likely be pizza night.*

I think that today's experience may be a good way for dealing with future moments like this when I am no longer cutting back. I considered the craving in light of what I would be eating for the rest of the day. If I had decided that I could eat less in the evening to compensate for the mid-day splurge, I would have indulged. I feel that give-and-take and balance will be an essential part of maintaining my weight loss.

**Journal
Entry** | **DAY 20**

Shellie's Entry

DAY 20. *Today I need to address a huge culprit for the expanding waistlines of middle-aged women...stress eating. So, what do we have to be stressed about? How about empty nest and the major life changes that this can bring or aging parents to name a few. While the list is long I will mention one issue that is especially real for me. This year I said goodbye to my firstborn as he left home to go to college. At this point it has been almost four months since I have seen his smiling face.*

Yes, this has caused significant emotional stress for me, at times on a very conscious level and at others it rumbles just below the surface. Unfortunately, I have turned to food to bring me comfort over the last few months. Now, I am trying to address my feelings and emotions about this new transition as it relates to my eating. I have to internalize the fact that food will never fill the void left by his absence.

Journal
Entry | DAY 21

Shellie's Entry

DAY 21. *I just saw a picture of myself that was posted on a social media site. The picture was taken yesterday and I am pleased to say that I could visibly see the difference these three weeks have made. So, tomorrow will be my first scale day in three weeks. Regardless of the number I see, I need to remember that my body is changing and embrace the progress I have made. Ha, can you tell that I'm scared?*

FURTHER REFLECTION

Weekly Reflection: Week 3

1. Go try on an article of clothing that was too tight when you started your journey 3 weeks ago. How did it fit and how do you feel?
2. Are you too entertainment focused with your food? Describe some times when you looked to food to entertain you.

4. Are you developing any new habits that you think you could sustain for good? If so, what makes them workable for you?

**Journal
Entry** | **DAY 22**

Shellie's Entry

DAY 22. *I weighed today and the scale showed a mere 2 pound loss after three weeks of hard work. Normally, this would have sent me into a downward spiral of negative self-talk, but I can tell this journey is really starting to change my mind set. Realistically, I know that I am on my menstrual cycle this week, which translates into serious water retention. What's more, I am slowly conditioning myself to rely more on how my clothes feel, rather than looking for the magic number on the scale. And yes, it would be nothing short of magic to stand on the scale at the precise moment that I am not retaining water either because I am at the end of my cycle, the middle of my cycle, or because I had too much sodium for dinner last night!*

FURTHER REFLECTION

Journal
Entry | DAY 23

Shellie's Entry

DAY 23. *Today I had to eat fast food for lunch, which definitely makes things more challenging. But difficult does not mean impossible. Regardless of the place, I am learning to make the best choice wherever I am. Since I am a carb junkie I know I need to eliminate bread whenever possible, so I ate my burger with only half a bun, no mayo and no cheese. I find it easier to stick to a diet plan by modifying foods that I enjoy from time to time, rather than limiting myself to a really narrow range of foods day in and day out.*

FURTHER REFLECTION

Journal
Entry | DAY 24

Shellie's Entry

DAY 24. *My son is flying home from college tonight for Christmas break. We haven't seen him for four months and I am bursting with anticipation. In celebration of his return I baked his favorite chocolate layer cake. It's sitting on the counter awaiting his return. I guess you could say it is filled with a mother's love.*

Baking a cake in the middle of a diet may seem counterproductive; however, I am really not feeling an intense draw to dive in. I have already thought it through and I will have a few bites to join in the fun, but I won't indulge. Ultimately, this scenario brings home an important point for this journey. Life does not stop because I am on a diet, nor do I have to isolate myself from food or the enjoyment it brings. Instead, I will choose to stay away from the cake after my initial bites and watch my son enjoy his taste of home.

Journal
Entry | DAY 25

Shellie's Entry

DAY 25. *Busy schedules can really make it tough to get to the gym, but there are still ways to incorporate exercise into your daily routine. I had to go to the mall today, so I intentionally parked my car in the parking space that was the farthest from the entrance.*

FURTHER REFLECTION

Journal
Entry | DAY 26

Shellie's Entry

DAY 26. *I am away from home today on a company retreat. For lunch, the retreat center prepared a buffet lunch for our group. There weren't a lot of diet items available on the buffet, so I did my best to make the best choices I could. Unfortunately, our bodies are not wired to give us credit for what we could have eaten. Although I may have shown great restraint by not going for the alfredo pasta, my body is still going to register the calories of the fried fish I ate instead. But this is just part of the real-life journey. Life cannot always be lived in perfectly controlled situations.*

FURTHER REFLECTION

Journal
Entry | DAY 27

Shellie's Entry

DAY 27. *Today, I was again away from home and in a situation where I did not have control over the menu. There really weren't any diet friendly choices available, so I chose to hold off on lunch rather than eating really fatty foods. My head was pounding by the time I finally found something to eat. That was a tough one. I am still unsure if I should have made a different decision. I made it this time, but I definitely don't think depriving myself of food is the best choice and my body made sure to let me know that it did not appreciate it.*

FURTHER REFLECTION

Weekly Reflection: Week 4

1. Have you learned to find the silver lining when you are required to exert yourself (Fit people find ways to naturally work movement into their days.)
2. How is your mental game going (are you still battling with negative self-talk)? Do you still find yourself going back and forth with whether to eat something that you know you shouldn't?

4. Are there still emotional situations that immediately trigger thoughts of food as a way of escape or comfort?

Journal
Entry | DAY 28

Shellie's Entry

DAY 28. *Here I am at the end of the month. There is a distinct feeling of accomplishment with making it this far, but I still have further to go. I took my measurements today and I am making progress. I have set goals based on my measurements at this point rather than a goal weight. The important thing about my goal is that it is attainable. I am not trying to match any particular size from years gone by. Instead I am targeting a size that will allow me to be fit and no longer look heavy in pictures. I will stop dieting when I reach my target measurements regardless of what my weight is at that point.*

FURTHER REFLECTION

Journal
Entry | DAY 29

Shellie's Entry

DAY 29. *Today, I made chicken pot pie for my son's first home-cooked meal since returning home from college. In keeping with my cutback approach of adjusting my portions instead of making separate food for myself, I ate some pot pie for dinner, but avoided most of the crust.*

One of the biggest lessons I am learning on this journey is that the biggest weight loss battles are won in your head. Here is one trick that works for me: determine how much you would want, if you could have all you want, then eat a fourth of that. This allows you to go back for the other fourth. In the end, you have still only eaten half the amount you would have originally eaten. This trick really works. That pot pie was so good and going back for seconds just made me feel more satisfied.

Journal
Entry | DAY 30

Shellie's Entry

DAY 30. *I bought some large gifts today at the mall. I didn't really think about how I was going to get them to the car until they were bagged and ready to go. Unfortunately, the car was parked a long way from the store, so I had no choice but to load up and carry them. By the time I finally reached the car I was sweaty and exhausted. However, I soon realized that the experience had given me an unexpected burst of exercise. Daily exercise is a necessary element of weight loss, but that doesn't always require a sports bra and a class at the gym. We can actually build in opportunities to move more by doing simple things like parking our car in the farthest parking space from the door.*

FURTHER REFLECTION

Journal
Entry

DAY 31

Shellie's Entry

DAY 31. *My body has adjusted to considerably lower amount of sugar. However, I am not really a proponent for doing away with it all together. I see yummy sweets as one of the good things in life, so I have no desire to give them up entirely. Instead, I am trying to teach myself to enjoy them in manageable amounts.*

I just had the three yummiest bites of apple pie and ice cream tonight after dinner. It is surprising to me how satisfying this small amount was. This practice is commonly called the Three Bite Rule and it is an extremely effective way to get the pleasure from food without the guilt. The rule operates on the idea that the first two bites activate the pleasure centers in the brain; however, by the third bite, the pleasure response begins to weaken.

Journal
Entry | DAY 32

Shellie's Entry

DAY 32. *There is really nothing exciting to report today and that is something that characterizes this whole journey. After the initial jumpstart, there really aren't any real bells or whistles. Instead, it's just a daily choice to make the right decision despite daily temptations. It does get easier, but it still boils down to willpower and a decision to take control of your own body.*

FURTHER REFLECTION

Journal
Entry | DAY 33

Shellie's Entry

DAY 33. *Tonight, I knew we were hosting an office dinner complete with a seafood buffet. To keep the calories down I concentrated primarily on the salad bar and grilled fish instead of heavy sauces or carbs-laden side dishes.*

FURTHER REFLECTION

Journal
Entry | DAY 34

Shellie's Entry

DAY 34. *So tonight was pizza night again. I have already mentioned that pizza is difficult for me to resist and tonight was no exception. It is very hard for me to stop at two pieces. Pizza is definitely a trigger food for me.*

It's good to know what your trigger foods are because it helps you to develop strategies to keep from overindulging. For example, I intentionally choose the smaller pieces and I eat mine with a fork and knife. Above all, I try to maintain perspective. If pizza really is one of my favorite foods, then maybe it's ok for me to eat a little more of it than I should as long as I am towing the line with my other food choices.

FURTHER REFLECTION

Journal
Entry | DAY 35

Shellie's Entry

DAY 35. *We enjoyed a lovely evening out with several other families tonight. I found it wasn't too hard to make a lighter choice for dinner. The basket of tortilla chips was a little harder to resist; however, I did find it easier to manage by taking out a few and eating them from a plate. This helped me avoid mindless eating and gives me a better idea of how much I ate.*

FURTHER REFLECTION

Weekly Reflection: Week 5

1. What ways have you learned to modify the food on hand to make it a healthier option?
2. Are you finding that the scale is rewarding your efforts from the last month? Do you still feel like the number on the scale somehow measures your self-worth?
3. At this point, have you learned any lasting lessons the hard way?

5. You have been going long enough now to see some results. At what point do you think you will be satisfied with your size? Are you still focused on a particular number?

Journal
Entry | DAY 36

Shellie's Entry

DAY 36. *Some days, my appetite is really strong, while I seem to find myself quite satisfied with small amounts of foods on other days. I am learning to be more in touch with what my body needs on any given day. If I don't feel particularly hungry, then I don't force myself to eat. Likewise, I allow myself a little more grace on the days I feel hungrier. Still, I make sure that I eat three times a day with little snacking, which helps me maintain consistent blood sugar levels.*

FURTHER REFLECTION

Journal
Entry | DAY 37

Shellie's Entry

DAY 37. *Yesterday, we had family pictures taken and today I got to view some of the proofs. Unlike the picture that propelled me into this journey over five weeks ago, this picture made me smile. I did not look at the picture and immediately see the weight. Instead, I saw a happy mama surrounded by those she holds most dear...great moment!*

FURTHER REFLECTION

Journal
Entry | DAY 38

Shellie's Entry

DAY 38. *So, today was Christmas Eve and do you want to know what I did? I ate the foods I enjoy eating at Christmas! I don't think this will hurt me one bit. Did I go crazy? No I didn't, but I also didn't count every bite either.*

I am finally wrapping my head around the fact that food is not my enemy, nor does it have any power over me unless I choose to let it. Instead, food is a necessary fuel for my body on most days, as well as a fun and exciting element of important life and family occasions on others.

FURTHER REFLECTION

Journal
Entry | DAY 39

Shellie's Entry

DAY 39. *Today, we celebrated Christmas. I did eat moderate amounts of some special foods, but I did keep my eating in check. However, I also had some significant intestinal issues to contend with. It is amazing how fast the body adapts to clean eating! Even in small amounts, some of these rich holiday foods have really wreaked havoc on my body. This really hits home how damaging a steady diet of fats and sugar can be to the body.*

FURTHER REFLECTION

Journal
Entry | DAY 40

Shellie's Entry

DAY 40. *It just occurred to me that I seldom have to reach for the antacids these days. Before I started on this journey, heartburn was a constant companion, especially when I laid down at night, not to mention the times I would be awakened from my sleep by a wave of indigestion. Actually, my indigestion had progressed to a point that it was causing me significant pain. Yet another incentive to keep moving forward!*

FURTHER REFLECTION

Journal Entry		DAY 41
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Shellie's Entry

DAY 41. *One technique has been particularly helpful over the last weeks of my journey. I call it bite trading. This is a technique that I have started using when I go out to eat with my family. I have always found it difficult to pick from the lighter items on the menu when I know that I could choose something much more satisfying (i.e., rich and calorie laden) for the same price.*

With bite trading, I do choose the more sensible item, but then I trade a small portion of it with someone else in my family in exchange for a few bites of their food. That way I still get a taste of the richer food without all the unwanted calories. Tonight, our family went out to a BBQ restaurant. I ordered the grilled chicken breast and then traded some for a few bites of my daughter's pulled pork.

Journal
Entry | DAY 42

Shellie's Entry

DAY 42. *I have been suffering from hormone headaches the last few days. It is really tempting to want to snack more when my head hurts in a misguided attempt to ease the pain. In the end I did discover one thing that would help and that was a cup of tea. I am currently away from home and my normal routine. I have been drinking mostly water to offset any extra snacks I may have eaten. While this is an excellent move, it also means that I have not been drinking as much unsweetened tea as I do at home...end of story, worse headaches. It's not always easy.*

FURTHER REFLECTION

Weekly Reflection: Week 6

1. Have you discovered any new mind hacks that help you feel more satisfied with your new portions?
2. List your trigger foods. Can you realistically be around your trigger foods without losing control or do you need to stay away?
3. Have you been listening to your body for cues of when to eat or are you still eating by the clock? If so, take note of how you feel at “mealtime.” Are you really hungry or eating by habit?

4. Rate how you are dealing with entertainment eating (great 10 – 1 (not in control). If you are scoring on the low end, what habits do you need to develop (e.g., decide what you will eat ahead of time, eat a healthy snack, always eat salad first with dressing on the side, etc.) to be more in control?
5. Have you found yourself making any excuses this week? Are you owning your decisions and your behavior with food?

Journal
Entry | DAY 43

Shellie's Entry

DAY 43. *I got a new wrist fitness tracker device for Christmas. I have used it for two days now and I really like having a visual reminder of my activity level. It gives me a little extra boost to move around a little more each day. The typical trackers set a 10,000 step goal, which translates to roughly 5 miles depending on your height. This doesn't mean that I don't have to watch what I eat, but activity will be the key to keeping it off.*

FURTHER REFLECTION

Journal
Entry | DAY 44

Shellie's Entry

DAY 44. *An essential element of this journey is learning to take responsibility for myself and my own decisions. In doing this I now say that there are no excuses, but bad excuses. Yes, I will inevitably make mistakes that I must own up to and move on, but I don't have to make excuses for them.*

Over the last two weeks I have been unable to meet my normal gym schedule due to family obligations and gym closures. In the past I would have allowed these days to pass with hardly any exercise; however, I am not making excuses this time. I have been out walking almost every day. Sometimes it has been more intentional and other times I have capitalized on shopping trips or outings to get moving.

FURTHER REFLECTION

Journal
Entry | DAY 45

Shellie's Entry

DAY 45. *A new year has dawned and I am so thankful to have started this journey! I have come a long way and my mindset has really shifted. I could actually look at a table of calorie-laden snacks without feeling overwhelmed. What's more, I enjoyed a moderate amount of food without feeling guilt or shame. Food is a blessing meant to be enjoyed!*

FURTHER REFLECTION

Journal
Entry | DAY 46

Shellie's Entry

DAY 46. *I ate lunch at a friend's house today. It did not occur to me until after the fact that I had not even considered the amount I was eating. However, the good news is that I ate and enjoyed a well-balanced, healthy portion without calculating or planning every bite. This is the goal! I want to be aware of what I eat without having to keep every single bite in my mind. The old me would immediately revert to old, poor habits the second my attention was diverted, so this is real progress.*

FURTHER REFLECTION

Journal
Entry | DAY 47

Shellie's Entry

DAY 47. I decided to do something new and challenging today. I started my first blog about the weight journey. I think this will be a great way to build accountability into my life. Also, it will take some of the emphasis off of myself, which is a danger with this whole enterprise. There is nothing wrong with turning some of your focus toward yourself and your own well-being, but you don't ever want to get to the point of self-absorption.

FURTHER REFLECTION

Journal
Entry | DAY 48

Shellie's Entry

DAY 48. *Yesterday and today are good examples of knowing when to eat for fuel and when to eat for entertainment. Yesterday, I did not feel exceptionally hungry. So, I ate small portions at each meal to fuel my body for the day. However, this evening we had friends over for dinner to celebrate one of my son's last night's home before returning to college. We had a nice meal and I was able to enjoy it with my friends and family. I also knew that my light day yesterday would help to balance out my calorie intake.*

FURTHER REFLECTION

Journal
Entry | DAY 49

Shellie's Entry

DAY 49. *Today was my son's last day with us before returning to college. I won't see him again for another eight months. No amount of food is going to ease that pain and I know that. Tomorrow, it will be time to pick back up with my gym routine. Exercise is actually a better stress reliever than food.*

FURTHER REFLECTION

Journal
Entry | DAY 50

Shellie's Entry

DAY 50. Interesting that my milestone day would also be a day of heartbreak as well. This morning we put him on the plane back to college on another continent. I won't get to see him again for another eight months. Of course, the tears have flowed freely, but then I had to pick up and move on. I did go to the gym for a strenuous workout and, yes, it did help to relieve some of my stress and it gave me something positive to do with my restless energy. When stress arises, get moving!

FURTHER REFLECTION

Weekly Reflection: Week 5

1. Take time to list some positive habits you have developed over the last weeks.
2. Are your new habits becoming more automatic?
3. Now, list any weaknesses you still need to deal with.

4. How do you feel emotionally? Are you optimistic about your future with food?
5. Be honest with yourself. Are you invested enough in your new habits to stop journaling? If the answer is no, then you may want to consider repeating the journaling process.

Journal
Entry | DAY 133

Shellie's Entry (April 1, 6 months later)

DAY 133. *I am feeling more at home in my skin as I approach 6 months. I am far less consumed by weight, food, or thoughts of food. One thing I have realized is that my body only needs food when it needs it. That may sound strange, but it is a huge departure from how I used to think about food. I used to think it inconceivable not to eat exactly at prescribed eating times and I also used to think I had to have certain amounts to feel satisfied. I am finally starting to listen to my body cues from it.*

FURTHER REFLECTION