



APPLIED**FITNESS**SOLUTIONS

SCIENCE ▲ SYSTEMS ▲ RESULTS



WELLBEINGWORKBOOK



HOW WE GOT STARTED



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Like so many of us, I struggled with my weight as a kid. A childhood of getting picked on and feeling lonely left me with little self-confidence.

Everything changed for me when I discovered the power of lifestyle transformation. My confidence returned and I felt better. I loved life! Most important, I discovered my purpose: to share this gift with the world.

My passion led me to become an exercise scientist and personal trainer. But it didn't take long for me to lose faith in the "big box" gym model, which left members struggling because they couldn't afford to pay for proper guidance.

I envisioned a much different experience. One where everyone has access to the guidance they need. This simple idea is how AFS came to life.

Our promise: Every member has a coach, every step of the way.

Lead Agent of Change,

Michael Stack



FOREWORD

You are not alone. All of us (even health and fitness professionals) struggle to maintain a healthy lifestyle. Between fast food, technology, and just the general busyness of daily life, our environment creates a nearly insurmountable challenge to remain healthy. Most of you who are reading this have struggled with staying healthy. You've tried to lose weight several times and you've failed, sometimes losing and gaining back the same weight several times in your life. You've started an exercise program and you've stopped, only to start again and stop again. You've started eating healthy, got all geared up for your new diet, only to have it "go to hell in a handbasket" on the weekend. You've vowed the diet starts on Monday time and time again, only to find you struggle to maintain Monday's healthy eating by midweek. It is okay to admit you've struggled and it's certainly okay to admit your confidence might be rattled. Admitting these things is the first step to making real lasting change.

I do have good news for you. Despite your struggles, there's hope. Despite the unhealthy environment, there's a way to lead a healthy lifestyle. There's a chance for you to do more than live; there's a chance for you to thrive. There's a chance for you to become the best version of yourself possible. In order for that to happen, something has to change.

This time has to be different. The reality is that all your life you've done different versions of the same thing: Paleo, South Beach, Atkins, Weight Watchers, or whatever the name of the diet – all different versions of the same thing. You've done interval training, circuit training, weight lifting, jazzercise – all great forms of exercise, but still there's something missing. You've done a lot of "stuff" over the years, but you've forgotten the most important part of the process. Believe it or not, you've forgotten you!

You've been so busy looking for answers from gurus and experts, you have forgotten the most important expert of all: you. Quite simply you're the expert on you. In fact, who else is better at knowing you than you? The thing you've been searching for all along (through diets, exercise programs, and gurus) has been sitting so close you've missed it. It's okay, don't feel bad, many people are so close to the forest they can't see the trees. The exciting news is that you actually hold all

the answers to leading a healthier lifestyle; they are right there inside of you and they've always been there waiting to get out, you've just been conditioned to listen to "the experts" rather than listening to "THE expert" on you – you!

This 12 week program is designed to get you to listen to your internal expert. You definitely have the answers inside of you, but you have to learn to unlock and connect with those answers, and that requires a very systematic process. It also requires a little bit of "mental" exercise. If you think about everything you've done in the past, it's largely been physical in nature; exercising hard, eating healthy, and so on - all very physical/tangible tasks, a bunch of rules to follow rather than things to skillfully learn. No one has told you to exercise the most important muscle in your body – the brain.

Now "brain training" might not sound as hard as 45min on treadmill, but it's actually pretty challenging, just in a different way. Training your brain to harness your expertise takes some hard work. It takes time, consciousness, compassionate self-reflection, and a true desire to learn. It will probably add an additional 30-45min to your week. What's the payoff for all this extra work? You'll create a series of automatic health behaviors that will allow you to get in shape and stay in shape for the rest of your life. You'll have your own "live in" expert trainer, nutritionist, and wellness guru – right inside your own head. The extra time you'll spend up front will save you time and money in the future because you'll get in shape and stay in shape – forever. This time will be the last time.

Don't expect perfection, because this isn't going to be easy. Going through this 12 week progression will actually make physical changes to the neural circuitry of your brain, and that takes a little time. It also takes you trying and failing, struggling and being challenged, running into an obstacle and thinking of ways to overcome it. Brain change takes time but once it's there, once those new circuits for new health behaviors are formed, they're there forever.

Be patient, be persistent, and be confident that you have all the answers inside of you – I promise they are really there. I look forward to being your guide for the next 12 weeks to help you better discover how much of an expert you really are on you.

Let's begin the process of mastering your mindset, your fitness, and your health forever!

WEEK 1: WEEKLY PLANNING & DEBRIEF

Weekly Planning

As the old saying goes, “failing to plan is planning to fail.” The below weekly planning worksheet will help you plan your week out in order to increase the likelihood of successfully implementing exercise into your routine. This chart should be filled out prior to starting your week (Sunday is normally a good day). This is a tool you’ll use every week over the course of the next 12 weeks.

Key Question	Example	Your Answer
What type of exercise do I want to perform this week?	<i>Yoga and walking</i>	
When and where do I want to perform it? How long do I want to perform it for?	<i>Yoga for 60 min. at the YMCA on Monday & Friday. Walking for 30 min. at work daily on my lunch.</i>	
What obstacles do I foresee to being able to successfully perform my planned exercise?	<i>Getting stuck in traffic prevents me from getting to the gym for my yoga class.</i>	
What is my plan to overcome those obstacles?	<i>I'll leave work 15 min. earlier, that will give me enough time to get to the gym to do my exercise class.</i>	
What is my continuum of success for exercise (what's the low, middle, and high end of the range)?	<i>Low: Yoga once, walking twice Middle: Yoga twice, walking 3 times High: Yoga twice, walking 5 times</i>	
What type of healthy eating behaviors do I want to focus on this week?	<i>I'd like to eat fewer sweets when I get home from work.</i>	
What's my plan for implementing these healthy eating behaviors?	<i>Have fruit cut and washed already in the refrigerator so I'll eat those instead.</i>	
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Weekly Debrief

Learning from your experiences (both positive and negative) is the best way to excel in the future. A weekly debrief will help you identify things that went well during your week, things that didn't, and then allow you to take what you've learned and apply it in the future to be more successful. At the conclusion of week one, fill out the following chart, being very honest with yourself on what went well and what didn't. This is a tool you'll use every week over the course of the next 12 weeks.

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What did I do well this week with regard to leading a healthy lifestyle?	<i>I did two yoga workouts, walked twice, and ate more veggies.</i>	
What didn't go so well with regard to leading a healthy lifestyle?	<i>I missed my walk 3 times on my lunch hour.</i>	
Why do you think the think things that didn't go well occurred?	<i>I let my work get in the way of taking a walk.</i>	
What did you learn from what didn't go well?	<i>I just need to stop working, realizing it's going to be there when I get back, and I'm going to feel better because I walked.</i>	
What's your plan for next week?	<i>I am going to put a note on my computer reminding me to walk on my lunch hour, no matter how much work I have to do.</i>	

Other notes from week:

Use this section to record other important notes and information about your week that you learned and don't want to forget.

WEEK 2: PRIORITIZING SELF-CARE

Our society values sacrificing self in the effort to help others (family, friends, co-workers, etc.). This self-sacrifice is often looked at as a positive, even desirable, trait. Certainly being there for your family and friends, as well as meeting your job responsibilities, is important, but it has its limits.

When caring for others comes at the expense of our own personal well-being it is (at the very least) draining, and at its worst detrimental to our health and happiness. One of the keys to long-term health behavior change is realizing that prioritizing self-care is a vital first step to ensuring you are consistent with health habits (eating right, exercise, etc.). In order to do this, we must identify what gets in the way of our self-care, who is involved, and determine strategies to ensure a balance of caring for ourselves and caring for others.

Complete the chart below to see where your self-care is being pushed to the backburner in an effort to care for others. Identify all the areas of your life where you prioritize others over your own self-care: note the negative physical, mental, and emotional consequences of doing this, who's involved, why you think you do it (take your time to answer this question honestly), and then (most importantly) determine a strategy to reprioritize your self-care. Keep in mind after you reprioritize you may need to communicate to people in your life that you're reprioritizing. This will eliminate the surprise when you choose self-care over them.

Area of Life	Consequence	Who's Involved?	Why I Do It?	How to Reprioritize
<i>I work late often to meet deadlines or work on projects.</i>	<i>This causes me to miss my workout and go home exhausted and frustrated.</i>	<i>My boss, members of my team.</i>	<i>I assume if I don't do the work, no one will.</i>	<i>Communicate to my boss and co-workers when I have to leave, and ask for their help.</i>

Weekly Planning *(continued on next page)*

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Weekly Planning *(continued from previous page)*

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What's your plan for next week?	<i>I am going to put a note on my computer reminding me to walk on my lunch hour, no matter how much work I have to do.</i>	

WEEK 3: CREATING AN ACCOUNTABILITY NETWORK

Having a strong support network is critical to making lasting behavior change. Whether you're quitting smoking, going to Alcoholics Anonymous, or trying to eat healthier and exercise, going in alone greatly increases the chances of failure, whereas doing it with others increases your likelihood of success. An accountability network is a group of trusted people you spend a lot of time around, who are willing to help assist you in reaching your goals. The more people in your accountability network the better, but minimally try to find one person you live with (ideally a significant other) and one person you work with to be part of your accountability network.

Complete the chart below to determine who should be in your accountability network, what you will ask of them, and then when you commit to asking them by.

Who?	What Will You Ask?	When Will You Ask?
<i>My husband</i>	<i>To not bring junk food in the house and to be supportive and encouraging of my attempts to lose weight</i>	<i>Tuesday night, after work, when we're eating dinner</i>

Weekly Planning *(continued on next page)*

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What did you learn from what didn't go well?	<i>I just need to stop working, realizing it's going to be there when I get back, and I'm going to feel better because I walked.</i>	
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WEEK 4: FINDING YOUR WHY

Sustained success and achievement requires being able to stay motivated through “tough times.” Indeed, you won’t always be excited to eat healthy and you won’t always be fired up to get to the gym. If your reason for doing either is very superficial (like just losing weight) you are likely to give up or give in when motivation is low. Having a deeper, more meaningful reason for leading a healthy lifestyle greatly increases the likelihood of sticking with your plan even when your motivation is low.

Complete the exercises below to begin to craft your WHY. It is important to note that your WHY may evolve over time, so please feel free to go back and update it as often as necessary. The best and most compelling WHY’s have meaning for you and others in your life, and they should not only help you achieve some long-term objective, but make you feel good in the short-term as well.

Question	Me: Short-Term Benefit	Me: Long-Term Benefit	Others: Short-Term Benefit	Others: Long-Term Benefit
<i>Why do I want to lead a healthier lifestyle?</i>	<i>I'll have more energy, feel better, and have more patience with others.</i>	<i>I'll be able to stay healthy and active, setting a good example for my kids.</i>	<i>I'll be more patient with others and have more energy to do things.</i>	<i>My kids will be healthier adults and we'll be able to spend more time together as I age.</i>
<i>Why do I want to lead a healthier lifestyle?</i>				

State Your WHY

From the work you’ve done in the chart above, write a succinct statement of your WHY including short and long-term benefits for you and others. Once you’ve done this, cut the bottom of this page out and put it in a prominent place. Read your WHY once when you wake up, and once before going to bed, every day to keep it in the forefront of your mind.

My WHY for Leading a Healthy Lifestyle

Weekly Planning

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What's your plan for next week?	<i>I am going to put a note on my computer reminding me to walk on my lunch hour, no matter how much work I have to do.</i>	

One Month Reflection

Congratulations, you're one month into a life changing process. With as busy as life is, and with this program added in to make life even busier, it's easy to not be aware of the changes we've made and things we've learned. It's time to turn off the autopilot in your life and reflect on all the positive things you've accomplished over the last 4 weeks. Spend some time reflecting below on all the new healthy behaviors you've added into your life and how they've made you feel. Don't just focus on physical changes made; open your mind to everything you've experienced (improved mood, energy levels, reduced pain, or whatever it may be). Think deeply and write about how these behaviors have impacted your life for the positive.

If life has made it difficult for you to commit as fully to this program as you would like, or you're having a hard time thinking of things to put here, that's okay! Don't beat yourself up. We still have plenty of time left to make healthy change. Don't give up!

This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.



WEEK 5: AFFIRMING YOUR POSITIVE QUALITIES & BEHAVIORS

Affirmations

I'm sure this is not your first rodeo. Many people fail many times over to achieve their fitness goals. This can erode confidence and cause you to question if you have the ability to actually achieve your goals. Fear not though — you do have the ability to do it, and this time will be different. One of the reasons it will be different is that we're going to start recognizing your positive traits, qualities and behaviors. You have many of them, trust me; they're what make you a highly functioning parent, friend, professional and adult. Sometimes we just need to be reminded of them, and more importantly, be reminded how they can be applied to implementing and sustaining health behaviors.

Complete the chart below, listing as many positive qualities about yourself as you can think of and how those positive qualities apply to the health behaviors you are currently trying to implement. Try to re-read this chart once a week to keep these positive qualities in the forefront of your mind.

Positive Quality	Application to Health Behavior Implementation
<i>I'm a loving, caring person.</i>	<i>Loving and caring needs to start with me. I need to love and care about myself enough to prioritize my health behaviors and my self-care.</i>

Weekly Planning *(continued on next page)*

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WEEK 6: BEING MINDFUL OF NEGATIVE SELF-TALK

Negative Self-Talk

We all have an inner-critic that is ready to beat us up about our bad decisions — sometimes obsessively so. Have it be skipping a workout, eating pizza, or not spending enough time with our kids, this critic stands vigilant waiting to tell you how much you've screwed up. This inner-critic, when directed properly, is very functional: it helps us be self-aware and constructively critical when we make mistakes. It helps us learn, problem-solve, and get better. The problem is that it sometimes goes too far and spirals into self-deprecating, negative mind chatter that can affect our mood, our performance, our health, and certainly the ability to persevere through the challenges of implementing new health behaviors. Think about it: if every time you “fail” to successfully integrate a health behavior you beat yourself up and feel bad for a day or two, pretty soon you'll stop trying.

In order to stop this cycle, you must be aware these thoughts even exist. Our inner-critic is sneaky, operating at nearly a subconscious level. To take its power away you must be mindful it exists, recognize what it says, and put the message into context. For the next week, be aware of your negative self-talk around health behaviors. Complete the chart below daily to shine a spotlight on the inner-critic and start to diminish its power.

Day	What I Did	My Inner Critic Said	How I Felt	What's The Reality
<i>Example</i>	<i>Had cake in the breakroom at lunch</i>	<i>I'm lazy, undisciplined, not motivated, and I'll never reach my goals</i>	<i>Ashamed, sad, unmotivated to eat healthy the rest of the day</i>	<i>One slice of cake isn't the end of the work. I'll make up for it by eating less a dinner</i>
<i>Monday</i>				
<i>Tuesday</i>				
<i>Wednesday</i>				
<i>Thursday</i>				
<i>Friday</i>				
<i>Saturday</i>				
<i>Sunday</i>				

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“ You shouldn't expect a positive outcome when you have a negative thought process. Only positive thoughts can create positive results. ”

Debasish Mridha

WEEK 7: REFRAMING

Reframing

Ok, last week was tough, I'm sure. Starting to really pay attention to that inner-critic can definitely be a little uncomfortable. Thank you for being opened to that exercise; I assure you it will pay off. Now that you've increased your awareness of your inner-critic and objectively looked at the reality of what your critic says, you can start the all-important task of reframing.

Reframing is a technique we use all the time without realizing it. Whenever we have a preconceived notion about something or someone and then change our view, we have essentially reframed. Reframing the thoughts of our inner-critic is not quite as simple. First we have to be aware that the inner-critic is even talking, then we have to confront the painful message our inner-critic is saying. Once we do, we can reframe it into something more constructive and positive.

In order to do this we need to follow a specific process laid out in the chart below. Over the next week remain intensely mindful of your inner-critic — when it starts up, go through the following process and record it in the chart: (1) what the camera captured or the objective view of the situation with no biases or emotions involved, (2) what your emotional reaction was and what your mind chatter was afterward, (3) reframing to an alternate story, and (4) how you will use that reframe in the future. Going through this very deliberate process several times will start to turn it into an automatic process and tune out your inner-critic.

What the Camera Captured	My Reaction & Mind-Chatter	Reframe	Commitment in Future
<i>I skipped my workout because I had to meet a deadline for work</i>	<i>Once again I put work before myself. I'm not assertive, I'm lazy, I'll never be able to get in shape. Why can't I stand up for myself?</i>	<i>I value meeting deadlines and do a great job at work. Sometimes that causes me to miss a workout. That's okay as long as I don't do it often.</i>	<i>I'll objectively look at decisions I make regarding work and weigh the importance of the deadline. If I choose to work I will not feel guilty about doing it and I'll reschedule my workout.</i>

Weekly Planning

Key Question	Example	Your Answer
What type of exercise do I want to perform this week?	<i>Yoga and walking.</i>	
When and where do I want to perform it? How long do I want to perform it for?	<i>Yoga for 60 min. at the YMCA on Monday & Friday. Walking for 30 min. at work daily on my lunch.</i>	
What obstacles do I foresee to being able to successfully perform my planned exercise?	<i>Getting stuck in traffic prevents me from getting to the gym for my yoga class.</i>	
What is my plan to overcome those obstacles?	<i>I'll leave work 15 min. earlier, that will give me enough time to get to the gym to do my exercise class.</i>	
What is my continuum of success for exercise (what's the low, middle, and high end of the range)?	<i>Low: Yoga once, walking twice Middle: Yoga twice, walking 3 times High: Yoga twice, walking 5 times.</i>	
What type of healthy eating behaviors do I want to focus on this week?	<i>I'd like to eat fewer sweets when I get home from work.</i>	
What's my plan for implementing these healthy eating behaviors?	<i>Have fruit cut and washed already in the refrigerator so I'll eat those instead.</i>	
What obstacles do I foresee to being able to successfully implement these healthy eating behaviors?	<i>The temptation to resist all the junk food that's in the house.</i>	
What is my plan to overcome those obstacles?	<i>I'll ask my husband to put the junk food in a cabinet in the basement so I don't have to see it.</i>	
What is my continuum of success for healthy eating (what's the low, middle, and high end of the range)?	<i>Low: Eat fruit instead of sweets 2 nights Middle: Eat fruit instead of sweets 4 nights High: Eat fruit instead of sweets 6 nights.</i>	

Weekly Debrief

Key Question	Example	Your Answer
What did I do well this week with regard to leading a healthy lifestyle?	<i>I did two yoga workouts, walked twice, and ate more veggies.</i>	
What didn't go so well with regard to leading a healthy lifestyle?	<i>I missed my walk 3 times on my lunch hour.</i>	
Why do you think the things that didn't go well occurred?	<i>I let my work get in the way of taking a walk.</i>	
What did you learn from what didn't go well?	<i>I just need to stop working, realizing it's going to be there when I get back, and I'm going to feel better because I walked.</i>	
What's your plan for next week?	<i>I am going to put a note on my computer reminding me to walk on my lunch hour, no matter how much work I have to do.</i>	

“ It is not always possible to do away with negative thinking, but with persistence and practice, one can gain mastery over them so that they do not take the upper hand. ”

Stephen Richards

WEEK 8: DEALING WITH SETBACKS

Setbacks & a Growth Mindset

We are not perfect and life certainly isn't perfect. Setbacks and temporary failures are inevitable. As Thomas Edison said (of creating the lightbulb), "Many of life's failures are people who did not realize how close they were to success when they gave up." Edison, like all successful people, had a critical mental tool in his arsenal – a growth mindset. That is, he had the ability to learn from his mistakes rather than have those mistakes and failure drive him to give up.

The concept of a growth mindset was formalized by Carol Dweck, a psychologist and education research. The growth mindset is a simple concept to understand but difficult to practice. Essentially it's the notion that we are not hardwired in terms of our abilities or born with skills that can't evolve and improve (this is referred to as a fixed mindset). Rather, we are a learning, growing, evolving organism every day that can get better by trying, failing, and learning. That is a growth mindset. People with a growth mindset see setbacks as an opportunity to learn for next time rather than a sign they're a failure and they just don't have it in them to succeed. The reality is the human brain is NOT hardwired; it is a learning organ that constantly changes based on our experiences – provided we allow it to. To have a growth mindset you have to shift your thinking from issues to opportunities. It's not that you have issues eating healthy (which sounds pretty demoralizing), but every day you have the opportunity to learn things about yourself and your diet to help you eat healthier. The distinction is subtle, but important. A growth mindset leads to a sense of control and empowerment, whereas a fixed mindset leads to lack of control and discouragement.

For the next week use the chart below to assist in progressing towards more of a growth mindset with regard to a healthy lifestyle. You can certainly apply this concept to other areas of your life as well, but for the purposes of this try to really focus on health behaviors such as eating healthy or exercising.

Opportunity for Growth	What I Learned	How I Will Apply It
<i>I ate 4 slices of pizza at dinner tonight because I was so hungry.</i>	<i>If I don't eat something around 3 p.m., I'm starving and I'll overeat when I get home.</i>	<i>I'll add in a small snack in the afternoon (like a protein bar) and see if that fills me up so I don't eat so much when I get home.</i>

Weekly Planning

Key Question	Example	Your Answer
What type of exercise do I want to perform this week?	<i>Yoga and walking</i>	
When and where do I want to perform it? How long do I want to perform it for?	<i>Yoga for 60 min. at the YMCA on Monday & Friday. Walking for 30 min. at work daily on my lunch.</i>	
What obstacles do I foresee to being able to successfully perform my planned exercise?	<i>Getting stuck in traffic prevents me from getting to the gym for my yoga class.</i>	
What is my plan to overcome those obstacles?	<i>I'll leave work 15 min. earlier, that will give me enough time to get to the gym to do my exercise class.</i>	
What is my continuum of success for exercise (what's the low, middle, and high end of the range)?	<i>Low: Yoga once, walking twice Middle: Yoga twice, walking 3 times High: Yoga twice, walking 5 times</i>	
What type of healthy eating behaviors do I want to focus on this week?	<i>I'd like to eat fewer sweets when I get home from work.</i>	
What's my plan for implementing these healthy eating behaviors?	<i>Have fruit cut and washed already in the refrigerator so I'll eat those instead.</i>	
What obstacles do I foresee to being able to successfully implement these healthy eating behaviors?	<i>The temptation to resist all the junk food that's in the house.</i>	
What is my plan to overcome those obstacles?	<i>I'll ask my husband to put the junk food in a cabinet in the basement so I don't have to see it.</i>	
What is my continuum of success for healthy eating (what's the low, middle, and high end of the range)?	<i>Low: Eat fruit instead of sweets 2 nights Middle: Eat fruit instead of sweets 4 nights High: Eat fruit instead of sweets 6 nights.</i>	

Weekly Debrief *(continued on next page)*

Key Question	Example	Your Answer
What did I do well this week with regard to leading a healthy lifestyle?	<i>I did two yoga workouts, walked twice, and ate more veggies.</i>	
What didn't go so well with regard to leading a healthy lifestyle?	<i>I missed my walk 3 times on my lunch hour.</i>	

Weekly Debrief *(continued from previous page)*

Key Question	Example	Your Answer
Why do you think the think things that didn't go well occurred?	<i>I let my work get in the way of taking a walk.</i>	
What did you learn from what didn't go well?	<i>I just need to stop working, realizing it's going to be there when I get back, and I'm going to feel better because I walked.</i>	
What's your plan for next week?	<i>I am going to put a note on my computer reminding me to walk on my lunch hour, no matter how much work I have to do.</i>	

Two Month Reflection

Congratulations, you're now TWO months into a life changing process. With as busy as life is, and with this program added in to make life even busier, it's easy to not be aware of the changes we've made and things we've learned. It's time to turn off the autopilot on your life and reflect on all the positive things you've accomplished over the last 8 weeks. Spend some time reflecting below on all the new healthy behaviors you've added into your life and how they've made you feel. Don't just focus on physical changes made; open your mind to everything you've experienced (improved mood, energy levels, reduced pain, or whatever it may be). Think deeply and write about how these behaviors have impacted your life for the positive.

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WEEK 9: INSTANT GRATIFICATION

Dealing with the Loss of Instant Gratification

Now that we're into week nine of this journey your rate of physical change is starting to slow — don't worry though, this is normal. What's also normal is loss of motivation due to loss of the instant gratification of seeing physical changes occur.

As human beings we are “wired” for instant gratification. In fact, one of the most powerful chemicals in the brain drives our desire to seek instant gratification. Dopamine regulates the brain's reward and pleasure centers and spikes of dopamine are highly addicting. Dopamine effects are strong enough that it can cause us to eat 8 cookies (for an instant reward) rather than stick to our diet and delay gratification (even though we're smart enough to know we will benefit significantly from our healthy eating). Our society only exacerbates this desire for instant gratification with the ability to buy anything, at any time, or connect with anyone in the world at any time via the internet. It's why we'll sign-up for a “lose 20 pounds in 20 days” plan even when we know it won't work. The chemical pull in the brain is just too strong.

So what are our choices? Fighting brain biochemistry seems hard, and it is. Rather than fight against it, how about we use it to our advantage? If we can connect exercise and eating healthy with some degree of immediate gratification, as something essential we can't live without (like oxygen, food, or water) then we can channel that dopamine response to reinforce (and even crave) healthy behaviors. Sound too good to be true? ...Well it's not! You just need to attach a source of instant gratification to the healthy behaviors in your life. We'll do this in the chart below. List all the healthy behaviors you're currently engaged in. Once you've done that, take the time to consider the immediate benefit you derive from that healthy behavior and list it as well. Then the important part comes in: every time you do that health behavior, stop (for at least 10 seconds) and acknowledge the immediate benefit it provides you with. After doing that for a while, your dopamine levels will start to naturally rise in response to your healthy behaviors and then you're hooked, maybe even “addicted” to being healthy.

Health Behavior	Immediate Benefit/Gratification
<i>Getting up in the morning and walking for 30 minutes.</i>	<i>My energy levels and mood instantly increase. I feel better about myself and more confident. I feel like I have the ability to succeed in my day.</i>

Weekly Planning

Key Question	Example	Your Answer
What type of exercise do I want to perform this week?	<i>Yoga and walking</i>	
When and where do I want to perform it? How long do I want to perform it for?	<i>Yoga for 60 min. at the YMCA on Monday & Friday. Walking for 30 min. at work daily on my lunch.</i>	
What obstacles do I foresee to being able to successfully perform my planned exercise?	<i>Getting stuck in traffic prevents me from getting to the gym for my yoga class.</i>	
What is my plan to overcome those obstacles?	<i>I'll leave work 15 min. earlier, that will give me enough time to get to the gym to do my exercise class.</i>	
What is my continuum of success for exercise (what's the low, middle, and high end of the range)?	<i>Low: Yoga once, walking twice Middle: Yoga twice, walking 3 times High: Yoga twice, walking 5 times</i>	
What type of healthy eating behaviors do I want to focus on this week?	<i>I'd like to eat fewer sweets when I get home from work.</i>	
What's my plan for implementing these healthy eating behaviors?	<i>Have fruit cut and washed already in the refrigerator so I'll eat those instead.</i>	
What obstacles do I foresee to being able to successfully implement these healthy eating behaviors?	<i>The temptation to resist all the junk food that's in the house.</i>	
What is my plan to overcome those obstacles?	<i>I'll ask my husband to put the junk food in a cabinet in the basement so I don't have to see it.</i>	
What is my continuum of success for healthy eating (what's the low, middle, and high end of the range)?	<i>Low: Eat fruit instead of sweets 2 nights Middle: Eat fruit instead of sweets 4 nights High: Eat fruit instead of sweets 6 nights.</i>	

Weekly Debrief *(continued on next page)*

Key Question	Example	Your Answer
What did I do well this week with regard to leading a healthy lifestyle?	<i>I did two yoga workouts, walked twice, and ate more veggies.</i>	
What didn't go so well with regard to leading a healthy lifestyle?	<i>I missed my walk 3 times on my lunch hour.</i>	

Weekly Debrief *(continued from previous page)*

Key Question	Example	Your Answer
Why do you think the things that didn't go well occurred?	<i>I let my work get in the way of taking a walk.</i>	
What did you learn from what didn't go well?	<i>I just need to stop working, realizing it's going to be there when I get back, and I'm going to feel better because I walked.</i>	
What's your plan for next week?	<i>I am going to put a note on my computer reminding me to walk on my lunch hour, no matter how much work I have to do.</i>	

**“ Patience and perseverance
have a magical effect before
which difficulties disappear and
obstacles vanish. ”**

John Quincy Adams

WEEK 10: THE TRANSITION – PART 1

Essential Fuel

With 3 weeks left in our program, it's time to start thinking about the transition process. Indeed, the end of these 12 weeks doesn't represent an end at all; it very much represents the beginning for you. We need to start discussing a time in the very near future when you won't be getting a weekly video or doing workbook exercises; a time where you'll be left on your own to sustain the healthy lifestyle you've started to lead. Don't worry, you CAN do it, we just have to be smart about the transition.

Last week we alluded to eating healthy and exercising as essential fuels that we can't live without. As Dr. Michelle Segar (a motivation and behavioral sustainability scientist) points out in her book *No Sweat*, this is the long-term key to success. If we come to see a healthy lifestyle as something that is the very fuel that powers us every day, our resolve will become much stronger and our implementation much more automatic.

To do that, we need to go a layer deeper than we've gone with our weekly planning and debrief. We're going to start with our weekly planning. In the chart below we've added two additional key questions, now the first two on the chart. This will begin to cement your healthy lifestyle as an essential fuel that you cannot live without. Think hard, be honest, and start to transition eating healthier and exercising from a chore to a fuel.

Weekly Planning *(continued on next page)*

Key Question	Example	Your Answer
This week I'd like have the following feeling/experience to fuel my week and enhance my sense of well-being:	<i>I'd like to feel more confident in my own skin.</i>	
What areas of my life do I want to fuel by being more physically active?	<i>I want to be able to have more energy to play with my kids when I get home.</i>	
What type of exercise do I want to perform this week?	<i>Yoga and walking.</i>	
When and where do I want to perform it? How long do I want to perform it for?	<i>Yoga for 60 min. at the YMCA on Monday & Friday. Walking for 30 min. at work daily on my lunch.</i>	
What obstacles do I foresee to being able to successfully perform my planned exercise?	<i>Getting stuck in traffic prevents me from getting to the gym for my yoga class.</i>	
What is my plan to overcome those obstacles?	<i>I'll leave work 15 min. earlier, that will give me enough time to get to the gym to do my exercise class.</i>	
What is my continuum of success for exercise (what's the low, middle, and high end of the range)?	<i>Low: Yoga once, walking twice Middle: Yoga twice, walking 3 times High: Yoga twice, walking 5 times.</i>	

Weekly Planning *(continued from previous page)*

Key Question	Example	Your Answer
What type of healthy eating behaviors do I want to focus on this week?	<i>I'd like to eat fewer sweets when I get home from work.</i>	
What's my plan for implementing these healthy eating behaviors?	<i>Have fruit cut and washed already in the refrigerator so I'll eat those instead.</i>	
What obstacles do I foresee to being able to successfully implement these healthy eating behaviors?	<i>The temptation to resist all the junk food that's in the house.</i>	
What is my plan to overcome those obstacles?	<i>I'll ask my husband to put the junk food in a cabinet in the basement so I don't have to see it.</i>	
What is my continuum of success for healthy eating (what's the low, middle, and high end of the range)?	<i>Low: Eat fruit instead of sweets 2 nights Middle: Eat fruit instead of sweets 4 nights High: Eat fruit instead of sweets 6 nights.</i>	

Weekly Debrief

Key Question	Example	Your Answer
What did I do well this week with regard to leading a healthy lifestyle?	<i>I did two yoga workouts, walked twice, and ate more veggies.</i>	
What didn't go so well with regard to leading a healthy lifestyle?	<i>I missed my walk 3 times on my lunch hour.</i>	
Why do you think the things that didn't go well occurred?	<i>I let my work get in the way of taking a walk.</i>	
What did you learn from what didn't go well?	<i>I just need to stop working, realizing it's going to be there when I get back, and I'm going to feel better because I walked.</i>	
What's your plan for next week?	<i>I am going to put a note on my computer reminding me to walk on my lunch hour, no matter how much work I have to do.</i>	

WEEK 11: THE TRANSITION – PART 2

Lasting Permission

Very early on in this process (week 2) we talked about the importance of prioritizing self-care. We discussed this is an essential first step to ensure you don't let life's "typical" priorities (work, kids, etc.) get in the way of leading a healthy lifestyle. I'm confident you've been doing that over the past 10 weeks. Now we need to make sure we develop the lasting permission to prioritize self-care. Now and forever you need to make taking care of yourself a top priority – you deserve it!

It's important to remember that making self-care a priority will help fuel you and give you more energy to help take care of others and meet the other demands of your life. To continue to engrain the mindset of self-care prioritization, we've added some questions to the charts below (the first question in the planning chart and the first question in the debrief chart). Again, take your time to answer these questions honestly, furthering the transition to a lifestyle the prioritizes your self-care.

Weekly Planning *(continued on next page)*

Key Question	Example	Your Answer
What permissions do I need to give myself this week to prioritize my self-care?	<i>I need to have my husband and kids cook dinner on Monday night so I can go to my yoga class.</i>	
This week I'd like have the following feeling/experience to fuel my week and enhance my sense of well-being:	<i>I'd like to feel more confident in my own skin.</i>	
What areas of my life do I want to fuel by being more physically active?	<i>I want to be able to have more energy to play with my kids when I get home.</i>	
What type of exercise do I want to perform this week?	<i>Yoga and walking.</i>	
When and where do I want to perform it? How long do I want to perform it for?	<i>Yoga for 60 min. at the YMCA on Monday & Friday. Walking for 30 min. at work daily on my lunch.</i>	
What obstacles do I foresee to being able to successfully perform my planned exercise?	<i>Getting stuck in traffic prevents me from getting to the gym for my yoga class.</i>	
What is my plan to overcome those obstacles?	<i>I'll leave work 15 min. earlier, that will give me enough time to get to the gym to do my exercise class.</i>	
What is my continuum of success for exercise (what's the low, middle, and high end of the range)?	<i>Low: Yoga once, walking twice Middle: Yoga twice, walking 3 times High: Yoga twice, walking 5 times.</i>	

Weekly Planning *(continued from previous page)*

Key Question	Example	Your Answer
What type of healthy eating behaviors do I want to focus on this week?	<i>I'd like to eat fewer sweets when I get home from work.</i>	
What's my plan for implementing these healthy eating behaviors?	<i>Have fruit cut and washed already in the refrigerator so I'll eat those instead.</i>	
What obstacles do I foresee to being able to successfully implement these healthy eating behaviors?	<i>The temptation to resist all the junk food that's in the house.</i>	
What is my plan to overcome those obstacles?	<i>I'll ask my husband to put the junk food in a cabinet in the basement so I don't have to see it.</i>	
What is my continuum of success for healthy eating (what's the low, middle, and high end of the range)?	<i>Low: Eat fruit instead of sweets 2 nights Middle: Eat fruit instead of sweets 4 nights High: Eat fruit instead of sweets 6 nights.</i>	

Weekly Debrief

Key Question	Example	Your Answer
Where did you succeed and fail (if anywhere) to give yourself permission to prioritize self-care?	<i>I succeeded in having my family cook dinner. Failed to tell my boss I couldn't work through my lunch.</i>	
What did I do well this week with regard to leading a healthy lifestyle?	<i>I did two yoga workouts, walked twice, and ate more veggies.</i>	
What didn't go so well with regard to leading a healthy lifestyle?	<i>I missed my walk 3 times on my lunch hour.</i>	
Why do you think the things that didn't go well occurred?	<i>I let my work get in the way of taking a walk.</i>	
What did you learn from what didn't go well?	<i>I just need to stop working, realizing it's going to be there when I get back, and I'm going to feel better because I walked.</i>	
What's your plan for next week?	<i>I am going to put a note on my computer reminding me to walk on my lunch hour, no matter how much work I have to do.</i>	



WEEK 12: THE TRANSITION – PART 3

Connection with Feeling and Emotions

As we've talked about several times throughout this 12 week journey, we tend to be wired to seek pleasure and short-term gratification over short-term sacrifice and long-term benefit. There are all kinds of feelings and emotions wrapped up in that decision, far more than we'll unpack in this 12 week course, and the good news we probably don't have to in order to take the final step in our transition process: the connection between DOING and FEELING.

If we can reinforce the good feelings and emotions around prioritizing and accomplishing self-care and diminish the negative, judgmental thinking when things don't go as planned, the net effect will be a more positive emotional state around self-care. Doing so is our last critical step to make your healthy lifestyle stick. We've already established that eating healthy and exercising can be an essential fuel and that prioritizing self-care takes continual effort. The last step now is ensuring our feelings and emotions are in lockstep with our actions. So often drivers behind feelings and emotions operate on subconscious level — we know we feel bad, but we don't know why; we know we lack motivation, but aren't sure where that comes from. By taking one final step of shining the spotlight on those emotions and letting our conscious mind work with them, we can create a very positive space for lasting behavior change.

To do this we've added two questions to the beginning of the planning chart below and two questions to the beginning of the debrief chart. Doing so folds in the emotional aspects of this process, which can be a little more abstract. Because of that it might be wise to journal a little bit every day on these questions so you can summarize your journaling when you get to the end of the week. One way or another, take your time to be introspective when answering these questions, even if they're uncomfortable or hard to answer; this is the final, all-important step to lasting health behavior change.

Weekly Planning *(continued on next page)*

Key Question	Example	Your Answer
What positive feelings and emotions did I have around my health behaviors last week that I need to remember going into this week?	<i>Remembering how empowered I feel after my weight lifting workout.</i>	
What negative feelings and emotions did I have around my health behaviors last week that I don't want to negatively influence me this week?	<i>Not being so judgmental with myself if I miss a workout. I just need to realize life gets in the way sometimes and I can always make up the workout tomorrow.</i>	
What permissions do I need to give myself this week to prioritize my self-care?	<i>I need to have my husband and kids cook dinner on Monday night so I can go to my yoga class.</i>	
This week I'd like have the following feeling/experience to fuel my week and enhance my sense of well-being?	<i>I'd like to feel more confident in my own skin.</i>	

Weekly Planning *(continued from previous page)*

Key Question	Example	Your Answer
What areas of my life do I want to fuel by being more physically active?	<i>I want to be able to have more energy to play with my kids when I get home.</i>	
What type of exercise do I want to perform this week?	<i>Yoga and walking.</i>	
When and where do I want to perform it? How long do I want to perform it for?	<i>Yoga for 60 min. at the YMCA on Monday & Friday. Walking for 30 min. at work daily on my lunch.</i>	
What obstacles do I foresee to being able to successfully perform my planned exercise?	<i>Getting stuck in traffic prevents me from getting to the gym for my yoga class.</i>	
What is my plan to overcome those obstacles?	<i>I'll leave work 15 min. earlier, that will give me enough time to get to the gym to do my exercise class.</i>	
What is my continuum of success for exercise (what's the low, middle, and high end of the range)?	<i>Low: Yoga once, walking twice Middle: Yoga twice, walking 3 times High: Yoga twice, walking 5 times.</i>	
What type of healthy eating behaviors do I want to focus on this week?	<i>I'd like to eat fewer sweets when I get home from work.</i>	
What's my plan for implementing these healthy eating behaviors?	<i>Have fruit cut and washed already in the refrigerator so I'll eat those instead.</i>	
What obstacles do I foresee to being able to successfully implement these healthy eating behaviors?	<i>The temptation to resist all the junk food that's in the house.</i>	
What is my plan to overcome those obstacles?	<i>I'll ask my husband to put the junk food in a cabinet in the basement so I don't have to see it.</i>	
What is my continuum of success for healthy eating (what's the low, middle, and high end of the range)?	<i>Low: Eat fruit instead of sweets 2 nights Middle: Eat fruit instead of sweets 4 nights High: Eat fruit instead of sweets 6 nights.</i>	

Weekly Debrief

Key Question	Example	Your Answer
How did you feel during and after you participated in exercise this week? How did you feel when you made healthy eating choices?	<i>During I felt carefree, not worried about life and just kind of got lost in the moment. Afterward I felt tired, but strong and alive.</i>	
If you didn't make the "right" choice that aligned with your healthy lifestyle plan (exercise or nutrition), how did you react? With understanding and acceptance or with a negative emotion?	<i>Mostly I found myself fighting being negative — I worked hard to look at my shortcomings as opportunities to learn rather than reinforcement that I was not capable of achievement.</i>	
Where did you succeed and fail (if anywhere) to give yourself permission to prioritize self-care?	<i>I succeed in having my family cook dinner. Failed to tell my boss I couldn't work through my lunch.</i>	
How did you feel about your successes and failures (if any) to give yourself permission to prioritize self-care?	<i>I was proud that my family stepped up and cooked dinner. I was a little disappointed I couldn't tell my boss I wasn't working through my lunch.</i>	
What did I do well this week with regard to leading a healthy lifestyle?	<i>I did two yoga workouts, walked twice, and ate more veggies.</i>	
What didn't go so well with regard to leading a healthy lifestyle?	<i>I missed my walk 3 times on my lunch hour.</i>	
Why do you think the think things that didn't go well occurred?	<i>I let my work get in the way of taking a walk.</i>	
What did you learn from what didn't go well?	<i>I just need to stop working, realizing it's going to be there when I get back, and I'm going to feel better because I walked.</i>	
What's your plan for next week?	<i>I am going to put a note on my computer reminding me to walk on my lunch hour, no matter how much work I have to do.</i>	

Three Month Reflection

Congratulations, you're now THREE months into a life changing process. With as busy as life is, and with this program added in to make life even busier, it's easy to not be aware of the changes we've made and things we've learned. It's time to turn off the autopilot on your life and reflect on all the positive things you've accomplished over the last 12 weeks. Spend some time reflecting below on all the new healthy behaviors you've added into your life and how they've made you feel. Don't just focus on physical changes made — open your mind to everything you've experienced (improved mood, energy levels, reduced pain, or whatever it may be). Think deeply and write about how these behaviors have impacted your life for the positive

This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and extend across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

***“ Make yourself a priority once in a while.
It’s NOT selfish. It’s NECESSARY! ”***

Karen A. Baquiran

WHERE TO GO FROM HERE

You've completed the 12 weeks of this course, but this isn't the end for you — it's just the beginning. You have set yourself on a path to a healthy lifestyle that will be a part of your life forever. The work isn't done, however, not by far. Healthy lifestyle change takes time to engrain as a habit and 12 weeks is a good start, but by no means are these habits solidified. Your brain is still rewiring these habits into its circuitry and that will take a little longer. Even once the circuitry is well-wired, occasionally there will be a "short" in the system that causes you to go back to your old behaviors. Fear not: you have all the tools you need to keep the wiring strong.

First and foremost we recommend you continue to use the weekly planning and debrief charts for some time. We've include a blank copy of that chart in the back of this book for you to photocopy and use over and over again. We would strongly suggest you use it until all of your healthy lifestyle behaviors are occurring without you thinking of them; that's how you'll know they're a habit. If you find you start to slip back into your old, unhealthy habits, go back to the planning and debrief sheets for a month or so — that should help re-engrain those healthy behaviors.

Finally, all of the mental tools developed in this 12 week program are critical and must remain a part of your consciousness to remain successful in leading a healthy lifestyle. With that said, take the time to go back and re-read this entire workbook at least once every 3 months — that will keep these concepts at the forefront of your mind and in doing so reduce the likelihood you fall back into the attitude and behaviors that you were in when you started this 12 weeks.

We wish you all the best in leading a more fulfilled life through fitness and nutrition. Remember, you have all you need inside of you to continue to be successful: continually harness your amazing innate potential and nothing can stop you from leading the life you want to lead!





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