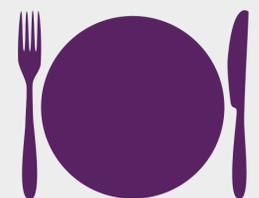


TOP 7 MISTAKES

(EVEN) HEALTH CONSCIOUS PEOPLE MAKE

BY CAROLYN COFFIN

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3

DISCLAIMER, FOREWORD, INTRODUCTION

6

CHAPTER 1 — FALLING INTO THE “NOT ENOUGH” TRAP

9

CHAPTER 2 — GOING IT ALONE

11

CHAPTER 3 — ALLOWING LIMITING BELIEFS TO PREVAIL

13

CHAPTER 4 — STALLING IN THE NAME OF PERFECTION

16

CHAPTER 5 — CLINGING TO THE STATUS QUO

19

CHAPTER 6 — CHOOSING THE WRONG REWARDS

22

CHAPTER 7 — EQUATING SIMPLE WITH EASY

25

FINAL THOUGHTS, ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Notice to Readers: The ideas, concepts, and opinions expressed in this book are intended to be used for educational purposes only, and are not meant to replace specific medical advice. It is imperative that before beginning any diet or exercise regimen, you receive full medical clearance from a licensed physician.



Foreword As a naturopathic doctor I see people everyday who want – and need – to improve their health. Some succeed tremendously, and others do well and feel better for a while, yet fail to sustain their results. If this sounds like you – or someone you care about – and you want to know why it happens and what to do about it, then it is time to read this book!

Carolyn explains the most common mistakes that health conscious people often make and aren't even aware of. She also offers practical tips to overcome these mistakes. If you are ready to step up and take total responsibility for your health, Carolyn is here to help.

This book is a must-read for anyone wanting to change their health for the better! Even more, it should be a prerequisite in any healthcare practitioner, coach, or personal trainer's repertoire.

by Dr. Michelle Durkin, ND



Introduction: Hey there and welcome to our real food community. My name is Carolyn Coffin and you found this e-book because although you're already super committed to your health (virtual high five!), something deep inside of you senses that it should be paying off more by now. And your intuition has never let you down in the past.

You've made some incredible strides already. You eat well, you get your body moving regularly, you practice meditation (okay, it's a bit sporadic, but at least it's on your radar!), you soak up loads of information...BUT you still carry some extra weight around the middle, need a pot of coffee to get going in the morning (and afternoon!), and have the urge to eat everything but the kitchen sink most evenings around eight o'clock.

You see other people getting killer results with their grass fed beef and organic veggies but you've already tried that and are still patiently waiting for the 'effortless weight loss' and 'brimming vitality' they speak of.

Well, I'm here to help and I like to be straight up. Killer health is not only possible...it's your birthright! You have the recipe for brimming vitality built right into your very being, and my job is simply to get you out of your own way so it can bubble on up to the surface.

Got that? Excellent health is simple. We just choose to make it complicated.

But not you. Not anymore, at least. Starting today, feeling lousy will be a thing of the past. A figment of your imagination. Something you'll laugh about in retrospect with your friends. "Remember when we used to waste tons of unnecessary time and energy chasing better health? That was soooo 2014. LOL!"

Are you ready to put your lousiest feelings behind you? Are you ready to step up, take responsibility, and reclaim the health and vitality you deserve so you can make the most out of your amazing life?

My dream is to create an epidemic of excellent health, one committed person at a time. It gets me out of bed every morning (I enjoy coffee too!). I firmly believe it's my purpose (My passion. What I was put on this earth to do.) And I also believe it is possible (with a bit of help). As Mother Teresa famously said,

"I alone cannot change the world, but I can cast a stone across the waters to create many ripples."

How cool would it be to create your very own ripple effect in this health epidemic?

Ever since I was a little girl, I've had an undeniable passion for health and wellness. At the age of 14, I can remember somehow persuading nine family members to exercise with me during our summer vacation. Within minutes, there was quite a sight to see as I led a hi-lo aerobics class on the top deck of our houseboat rental! Inspiring others to exercise and take care of themselves has always come so naturally to me that it was no surprise when I pursued a career in physiotherapy.

But my day-to-day reality as a front line healthcare worker was not always what I imagined it would be. Despite my best attempts to educate and inspire, many of my patients seemed to want me to 'fix' them – with ultrasound, acupuncture, or my hands on treatments. Deep down, I knew I couldn't 'fix' anyone unless they were willing to take responsibility for their part in the rehabilitation process.

Despite my firm belief that there are no shortcuts to good health – that we simply must put in the work – I didn't always feel overly healthy myself. I struggled with intense sugar cravings that I could



sometimes overcome, but oftentimes gave in to. Most of my high complex carb, grain based meals finished with dessert – cookies, cake, or my favourite...jelly beans. I really believed that I could exercise away my mediocre diet because, for most of my life, I could! Running was my go-to activity to burn off the sugar calories, but in 2011 at the age of 33, my luck ran out when I became the patient.

I started having aches and pains in joint after joint. It began in my feet and ankles. "Well that's because I'm a runner," I thought. It made perfect sense. Then the pain moved to my shoulders. "That's because I do a lot of push ups." Next it was my wrists and thumbs. "That's because I work with my hands." And then I woke up with an inflamed finger joint and, given that there was no rational explanation, my doctor suspected rheumatoid arthritis!

I began the process of being worked up for this progressive inflammatory disease resulting in often crippling joint pain and deformity – blood work, specialist visits, and the terrifying place your mind goes when you imagine living the rest of your life with a condition like this. How could this happen to me, the girl who had taken such good care of herself her entire life?

Then it hit me. Maybe I hadn't taken care of myself as well as I thought I had. From a weight management point of view I had always been able to outrun my fork, but from an inflammation point of view, those days were becoming numbered. I came to realize that excellent health comes from a combination of simple things, and you can't opt for doing your most favourite (in my case, exercise) while ignoring your least favourite (healthy eating). There really are no shortcuts.

As soon as I began addressing my inflammatory diet (disguised as 'healthy' food in a lot of cases), my joint symptoms completely settled and, much to my surprise, so did my intense sugar cravings. I have never felt healthier in my entire life!

Of course, this just fuelled my passion for preventative healthcare. I now envision a world where people experience extraordinary health – AND maintain it. Absolutely everything I do is about empowering others to make intuitive daily choices leading to liberation around their health.

This book is my gift to you. It contains the roadmap to extraordinary health that I wish I had read so many years ago.

We are living in a time where chronic disease has reached epidemic proportions. Diabetes, heart disease, cancer, gut problems, arthritis, anxiety, depression, and so many other conditions are spreading like wildfire with no signs of letting up. Chronic disease is so common nowadays you'd almost think it was normal.

I'm here to tell you that common and normal are NOT the same thing. Most chronic diseases are both preventable and reversible, which means they can come and go based on the choices we make.

This will come as empowering news to anyone courageous enough to take total responsibility for their choices (blaming others for our problems is a chronic disease epidemic of its own, but I digress!). Mediocre health is a choice; extraordinary health is also a choice. And if you're reading this book, extraordinary health is what you're after.

That's why it's imperative that you stop letting these mistakes keep you stuck for even one more day. If you notice you're doing any or even all of these mistakes, please DO NOT PANIC! I've included a quick Try This At Home tip for each chapter that you can implement immediately to get you pointed in the right direction.

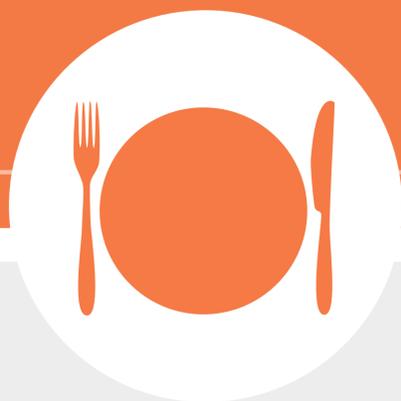
So, without further adieu, let's dive in!



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Falling into the "Not Enough" Trap



Everything you need is already inside. Just do it. - BILL BOWERMAN

How many times have you been down this road?

Felt lousy -> vowed to eat healthier -> bought the latest health books -> stocked up on whole food -> prepped like crazy in the kitchen -> enjoyed three blissful weeks of fabulous energy, and then...

...Bee lined it straight back to your familiar comfort foods as soon as the going got tough?

The stats would suggest that most people who've been on any type of health kick are familiar with this cycle.

Whenever the goal is to eat kale chips instead of potato chips (and it's not going according to plan), it's tempting to fall into the 'not enough' trap - not enough willpower, not enough discipline, not enough motivation, not enough time, not enough energy, not enough patience, not enough money, or not enough support.

It's so enticing to think that we're missing something critical to our success - something that everybody else has but us. Why? Because it makes us feel justified when we don't get the results we want.

Does this thought scenario sound familiar?

"Karen from payroll lost 25 pounds last year AND kept it off, but it's only because her kids are grown up and out of the house, she has a really amazing husband, and it's no secret how much money they have. Geez, I bet they even have a private chef! No wonder she can stick to it. Must be nice to be Karen."

But here's the lowdown on Karen. She doesn't have anything that you don't have. She has simply chosen to find a way instead of an excuse.

The reality is that nobody has it all. On paper, we're all missing something that could make it easier to reach our health goals. We reason that we'll get started once work slows down, after the kids leave home, or some other magical time in the future. If you go looking for a reason why better health eludes you, I guarantee you will find it.

So how about all the people who do manage to achieve killer results then? What if we became really curious about what they do differently than everybody else? For starters, they realize that what they may lack in resources can be more than made up for in resourcefulness.

The people who get on in life are the ones who are driven by a crystal clear sense of purpose - or WHY. They understand not just what they're doing, but WHY they're doing it.

When I say WHY, I don't mean to lose 20 pounds or look good naked - those are results. By WHY, I mean the deep-seated values and beliefs that made them want to take care of themselves in the first place. That made them want to buy organic veggies and grass-fed beef, get up early to hit the gym before work, or pack it in after two glasses of wine. Without a compelling WHY that really excites them, it will be pretty near impossible to carry out any desired behaviour over the long term.

Who do you think will keep on buying and eating organic veggies and grass-fed beef over the long term?

The person following the how-to advice in the latest bestseller, or the person who believes that whole food and humane farming practices are worth the extra money?

Who do you think will actually hit the gym instead of the snooze button?



Everything you need is already inside. Just do it. - BILL BOWERMAN

The person white-knuckling their way through the 30-day workout challenge, or the one who believes that showing up and doing their best is destined to pay off?

Who do you think will be the moderate drinker?

The person who tells themselves they're 'only allowed' two glasses of wine, or the person who believes in consuming mostly nutrient-dense food and drinks?

Can you see how being clear on your WHY helps you to look beyond your own (clever) excuses about not having enough of this, that, or the other thing so you can conduct yourself in a way that aligns with your values and beliefs?

What I can say for sure is that once you tap into your own personal WHY— one that really speaks to you – gone will be the days of wishing for more frequent visits from the willpower and self-control fairies!

Bottom line: Having a clear sense of WHY is your only hope when the potato chips come calling on a particularly stressful day!

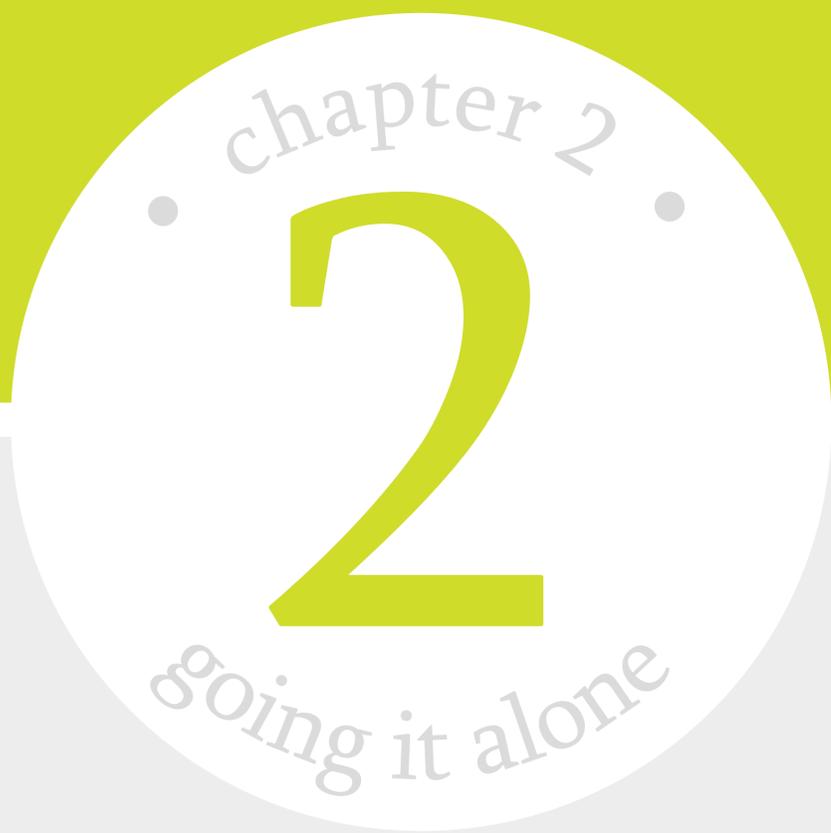
Try This At Home:

It's time to get uber clear about WHY your health matters so much to you. What values and beliefs drive your desire to eat real food, be active, get enough sleep, and manage your stress? When completing this exercise, it's very helpful to keep the following areas top of mind: your energy, vitality, relationships, happiness, mood, financial security, time, confidence and self-worth.

Let these questions guide you:

What do you fear will happen if you don't take care of your health?
What do you stand to gain by taking care of your health?

BONUS POINTS: Share your WHY with three important people in your life and ask them to keep you accountable.



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Going it Alone



— Imperfections are not inadequacies; they are reminders that we're all in this together. - BRENÉ BROWN —

Let's face it. Falling off the health bandwagon from time to time is practically part of the modern human experience.

Despite our better judgment, we've all engaged in mindless eating or drinking, chosen the couch over the gym, or stayed up surfing the net instead of going to sleep. Why then, are we so afraid to talk about it with each other? Or worse still, why do we beat ourselves up when it happens?

Many of us reason that self-criticism is the master motivator; exactly the kick in the pants we need to set us on the straight and narrow. Research suggests that nothing could be further from the truth.

Being vulnerable and courageous enough to share your imperfections is more likely to result in, "Oh thank goodness it's not just me!" than "How could you possibly lose control of yourself like that?" Realizing that we're all in this together has a strange way of bringing about not only self-compassion, but also solutions.

In one of our local Eat Real Food Academy courses, someone courageously spoke about how she found it difficult to eat healthy meals during the week when life pulled her in a million different directions. Weekends were better when she had more time to prep. In the next moment, five other people were breathing a sigh of "Me too!" relief, and by the end of the meeting we had come up with a creative solution – a weekly meal exchange group.

Every Sunday, we'd each make one big, real food meal and divvy it up five ways so everyone in the group would have a great weekday lunch. We'd get together, exchange, and come home with five different real food lunches all packed and ready to go. The bonus, of course, was being able to forge deeper social connections with other like-minded people.

This brilliant solution would never have presented itself if it weren't for one woman having the courage to share (not hide) her imperfections.

It's worth highlighting the drawbacks of social media here. A quick perusal of Facebook, Pinterest, or Instagram can leave us feeling as if we're the only ones without picture-worthy meals. Trust me when I say that 90 percent of my meals are anything but picture-worthy, but I'll be damn sure to choose from the other 10 percent for my Facebook food posts. It behooves us to remember that social media profiles represent only a tiny snapshot of someone's true reality.

Try This At Home:

The next time you feel the urge to hide whatever's challenging you, try connecting instead. Confide in a close friend, family member, or spouse. Join a Facebook or Meet Up group. Meet a friend for a walk. Start your own meal exchange. The possibilities for connecting with (and learning from) others are as limitless as your own creativity.



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Allowing Limiting Beliefs to Prevail



— Whether you think you can or you think you can't... you're right. - HENRY FORD —

The longer I work with and teach others, the more I realize what a profound impact our personal beliefs have on our results.

If you've invested piles of time and energy into getting healthy but still aren't seeing the results you so badly want, I can guarantee that one or more limiting beliefs are holding you back.

Do any of the following sound familiar?

I'm not a good cook
Healthy food is boring
I'm big boned
I have bad family genetics
I deserve to eat what I want because I workout so hard
People who eat/drink healthy aren't fun
My kids, spouse, or friends are making it hard on me

If these are the beliefs we hold at our very core, then one thing is for sure – they'll show up in how we think, how we feel, and how we act. Put simply, our beliefs create our reality.

If you truly believe you don't have what it takes or that the world is out to get you, you'll wind up creating loads of evidence to prove yourself right, even if it means sabotaging whatever it is you say you want. Beliefs are self-fulfilling prophecies.

Trying to force your behaviour in a way that's contrary to your beliefs is like swimming against a current. You work twice as hard and make half the progress.

How much easier would it be if you just swam with the current? The good news is that you can, and it begins with an awareness of the beliefs that run your life, so you can rewrite a script that actually serves you over the long term.

I firmly believe that if you've ever eaten one healthy meal and felt pleasantly satisfied, you have the power to do it again. And again. And again. But it only counts if you believe this for yourself.

Try This At Home:

Let's nail down the beliefs that have been holding you back from being your healthiest self.

Imagine a typical scenario where you stray from healthy habits. What do you say in that moment to let yourself off the hook (e.g. "My family and friends are making it hard on me, I don't have what it takes, healthy food is boring, etc.")? These are your limiting beliefs!

Now start to create evidence to the contrary.

Re-write an empowering belief by negating each statement (e.g. "My family and friends are making it hard on me" becomes "My family and friends aren't making it hard on me").

Come up with as much supporting evidence as possible for the new belief (e.g. "I ultimately decide what goes in my mouth," "They served plenty of healthy food at their last gathering.").

Go through life gathering more and more evidence to prove the new belief true, knowing that whatever you look for, you will find.

Repeat steps 1 through 3 over and over again.

A word of caution: Adopting empowering beliefs and really integrating them into your life – especially if you've been living with limiting beliefs for some time – can be the hardest part of any journey to great health. It is not a sign of weakness to accept help with this part (see Chapter 2).



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Stalling in the Name of Perfection



A good plan implemented today is better than a perfect plan implemented tomorrow. - GEORGE PATTON

I totally get that nutrition can seem like a super confusing topic.

One week eggs are given 'healthiest food on the planet' status, and the next week they're worse for you than cigarette smoking.

Some swear that organic food is the surest path to feeling well, and others claim it's a waste of your hard earned dollars.

Your doctor advised you to eat more fiber from whole grains, but an expert on talk radio said you should avoid grains altogether.

Is it really any wonder why we're confused? Who are we supposed to believe when the experts don't even agree?

When faced with conflicting advice, it's natural to want to dive in and do your homework. You reason you'll get started as soon as you've thoroughly researched the perfect plan and examined your options from all sides. You hunker down for an entire weekend with the latest bestsellers, podcasts, and of course Dr. Google. You're getting educated, baby!

In next to no time you're comfortable with terms like glucose, insulin, and cortisol – and the starring role they play in your mid-afternoon crankiness. You're so enamored with your newfound knowledge that you find yourself slipping it into casual conversations with acquaintances. The initial information-gathering phase can be quite exhilarating.

But despite all the great information you've learned about cholesterol, organic food, and gluten, you still have some lingering hesitations.

How do you eat healthy without breaking the bank or alienating your friends?

Where do all the cholesterol and saturated fat go if they're not clogging up your arteries?

Why would some foods we've eaten for centuries all of a sudden be off the menu?

Sometimes when you come down from your initial research high, you realize it's actually generated more questions than answers. So what do you do? More research, of course.

Here's the deal. Research is only beneficial if you're taking action. For example, let's say your research has uncovered the possibility that gluten is causing all those unpleasant digestive symptoms you've been experiencing. If you eliminate all gluten-containing foods and notice that your insides are much happier, then the research phase has served its purpose.

In contrast, I've met a lot of people who claim to be researching a healthier way of eating as they gobble up whatever communal tray of desserts have been donated to the office lunch room. Chances are they already know that the veggie tray is a better choice than the dessert tray, so their choices have nothing to do with needing more research, and everything to do with delaying action.

In many ways, the research card is a socially acceptable stalling technique. A distraction from doing what's necessary. Something we hide behind to fool ourselves into thinking we're getting somewhere when really we're just spinning our wheels. Ironically, health research can make us more confused and less healthy than ever.

The bottom line: You don't need to be perfect; you just need to get started.

How can you tell if your research phase has dragged on a little too



A good plan implemented today is better than a perfect plan implemented tomorrow. - GEORGE PATTON

long? If you're more committed to reading about eating healthy than you are to putting that knowledge into action. If that's the case, then it's time to turn off the podcast and just get started.

Try This At Home:

Brainstorm three real food* breakfasts, lunches, dinners, and snacks that meet the following criteria:

Yummy
Easy to make
Ingredients are usually in your house

Don't overthink it. Just write whatever comes to mind. And keep it handy (posted to the fridge seems to work for most people).

This will act like a map when you're lost in the woods. Something to refer to when you're feeling stuck, confused, or running for the dessert tray against your better judgment. You can always add onto it as your research uncovers new information, but these go-to meals will keep you progressing in the right direction.

*When I refer to eating real food, I mean nutrient dense food that our bodies were designed to eat: plants and animals. As a framework, it's helpful to think about what early people would have been able to hunt and gather – vegetables, meat, poultry, eggs, fish and seafood, nuts, seeds, and fruit. Compared with modern food (grains and processed food products) this food is easy for our bodies to digest and generally provides us with more efficient, longer-lasting energy that aids in burning fat.

chapter 5

5

clinging to the status quo

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Clinging to the Status Quo



— Insanity is doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results. - ALBERT EINSTEIN —

We all get that it makes no sense. But we all continue to do it anyway.

I'm talking about this widespread and wildly fascinating aspect of human nature where we do the same things we've done in the past and expect them to produce different (aka: better) results.

We prepared for bathing suit season last year by eating less and exercising more. Despite the fact that it made us ridiculously hungry and tired (not to mention feeling compelled to steal candy from young children to calm our sugar cravings), what do we do this year? The same thing...only with more willpower and intensity!

If you can stand another great Albert Einstein quote, "We cannot solve our problems with the same thinking we used when we created them."

When we're not seeing results somewhere in our lives, we absolutely must be open to trying a new approach.

Is there any room to think that simply eating less (of the same food) or exercising more might be the cause of our hunger and fatigue? Could it be that the quality of the calories may matter more than the quantity?

The biggest breakthroughs I've ever had in my life have come about by setting my pride to the side and getting curious instead – is my way really the best way? This can be downright humbling, especially for people who hate being wrong (know any Type A's out there?). It can also be scary to take the leap of faith that an unfamiliar path may actually lead straight to our destination.

For years I had clung to the status quo in my quest for good health. I followed the government food guidelines to the letter, kept careful tabs on my fat and calorie intake, and tried to be moderate about my treats and cheats. Despite all this, I always felt "hangry" (a term recently added to the Oxford Dictionary to describe that angry or irritable feeling so many health conscious people get as a result of hunger). I thought my cravings were my own fault – just more painful evidence that I wasn't trying hard enough.

Then I came across some information that called mainstream nutrition advice into question. Instead of using the same approach and trying harder, I started trying differently instead.

I started eating more fat (gasp!), fewer carbohydrates, and dropping all attempts at balancing my calories in with my calories out. Much to my (pleasant) surprise, this unfamiliar path turned out to be so very worth it. At first it was a bit foreign to navigate through uncharted territory, but just like anything, it became much easier as soon as I got the hang of it.

In my experience, it takes more than just compelling information to inspire people to take a chance on a new path though. Why? Because it means trusting the unknown, challenging long-held beliefs, and conducting ourselves in new ways that don't feel comfortable (or, in many cases, even logical!).

But as Thomas Jefferson famously said, "If you want something you've never had, you have to be willing to do something you've never done."

How receptive are you to trying differently to reach your health goals?



— Insanity is doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results. - ALBERT EINSTEIN —

Try This At Home:

Think of a time in your life when it paid off to approach a stubborn problem with a fresh, new approach. In retrospect, check off the feelings that were present when you embarked on that change:

Courageous
Daring/brave
Vulnerable
Badass
Uncertain
Scared
Other: _____

If any of these feelings are present for you as you grapple with the idea of trying differently to achieve your health goals, you can rest assured that they're completely normal.

The real question is, are you willing to act in spite of them?



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Choosing the Wrong Rewards



The reward for work well done is the opportunity to do more. - JONAS SALK

When it comes to building good health habits, I have noticed an almost universal phenomenon that knocks so many of us off our game, and that is choosing rewards that directly undermine the very habit we're trying to strengthen.

I've met many health conscious people who proudly exercise so they can have a cold beer on the patio, eat clean all week so they can pig out on the weekends, or seek out "special occasions" to justify another piece of guilt-free cake.

Why do we feel the need to reward ourselves with unhealthy food for sticking to our healthy habits? It's ludicrous! And not only that, research shows that it ... just ... DOESN'T ... work!

Rewards, in general, tend to shift where our motivation comes from. Instead of being motivated to eat healthy for the sake of feeling healthy (intrinsic motivation, from the inside-out), the introduction of a reward trains us to eat healthy for the treat (extrinsic motivation, from the outside-in). Rewards may nudge our behaviour in the right direction as we're taking up a new habit, but the evidence is downright dismal when it comes to keeping that habit going. As soon as the reward stops, the behaviour tends to stop as well.

Assuming that health conscious people want to eat healthy food forever, and not just until some point in the near future (daughter's wedding, beach vacation, or next 5k race), who do you suppose has the advantage: The person who goes to the gym in order to earn a glass of wine? Or the person who works out because they love the strength gains that follow?

It turns out that rewards are very tricky because they require a critical judgment call – Do I deserve this reward?

Will the person in the above example still earn their glass of wine if they didn't go to the gym, but did some heavy yard work instead? After all, they just read about how heavy yard work is as good as – or even better than – the gym. Wine granted! We never have to look far for the perfect excuse to let us off the hook. Just this once. But every judgment call we make, no matter how tiny, is like making another withdrawal from our limited stores of willpower and self-control.

Are you coming around to the idea that extrinsic rewards might not be all they're cracked up to be? In particular, empty calorie food and drink rewards have been shown to be the granddaddy of ineffective ones. The irony is that our intentions to use them come from a good place – to shape our habits and behaviours in a positive direction – but they can ultimately sabotage our health faster than we can say "chocolate cake."

Food rewards glorify the tempting food, essentially elevating it to the top of the proverbial pedestal. We suffer through the "grunt work" of healthy eating for the highly processed light at the end of the tunnel.

Does this really sound like the recipe for lifelong healthy eating to you?

For the love of all things healthy and good, stop using junk food as a reward for your good health habits. Just STOP IT. Right now!

Try This At Home :

What intrinsically motivates you to eat well and exercise? This is usually a feeling (e.g. energetic, strong, confident, mastery), and may be strongly linked to your WHY from Chapter 1. Maybe it's setting a good example for your family or living with integrity.



The reward for work well done is the opportunity to do more. - JONAS SALK

Write these down, put them in your heart, and let them guide your everyday decisions.

If you really must use extrinsic rewards (particularly as you're trying to foster a brand new habit), consider non-food-related ones that take you deeper into your healthy habit.

Perhaps your reward for brown bagging your lunch this month can be the awesome designer lunch bag you've had your eye on. Can you see how this reward actually makes the habit of packing your own lunch more appealing?

Perhaps your reward for sticking to your new jogging habit can be a great GPS watch that stores your data for you. Or if that's too expensive, a running app that keeps track of your mileage and pace. Again, these kinds of rewards help to pave your path to healthier habits, and make that journey much more enjoyable.



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Equating Simple with Easy



I'm not telling you it's going to be easy, I'm telling you it's going to be worth it. - ART WILLIAMS

In my introduction, I proposed to you that healthy eating is simple. It boils down to getting nutrient dense food onto your plate and into your belly meal after meal.

Is that simple? Yes.

Is that easy? No way. (Not in the modern world, anyway.)

Simple and easy are not the same thing. If they were, we'd all be walking around fabulously fit and healthy, wouldn't we?

But here's the real question we ought to be asking. Is it worth it? My answer to that is hell yes! And can I assume that if you're reading this book, you (at least partially!) agree?

The desire for great health is practically universal, but only the truly committed ones will do what it takes day in and day out. Why? Because here's what it takes:

- Integrity
- Responsibility
- Patience
- Determination
- Discipline
- Planning
- Follow-through
- Delayed gratification
- Self-compassion
- Resilience
- Faith
- Perseverance

As you can see, being committed is not for the weak or faint of heart.

It takes guts to hold ourselves to a higher standard.

It takes grit to choose what is right over what is fun, fast, and easy.

It takes courage to practice our values instead of just professing them.

It takes a special person to truly commit – not just at the beginning when motivation is high, but long after the novelty has worn off.

The results we get in life are a good indicator of what we're truly committed to. So here's a tough question that requires loads of courage and self-reflection to answer honestly:

Could it be that we're more committed to busyness, frustration, excuses, dissatisfaction, complaining, struggling, playing the victim, or tolerating mediocre results than we are to transforming our health and our lives?

Most of us would say, No way. Impossible. Not me! But are you ready for some tough love? If we keep repeating a behaviour, we're getting something out of it!

The harsh reality is that even health conscious people put up with all kinds of sub-par results to avoid having to truly step up to the plate and become responsible. And that's because great health doesn't always come easily.

But imagine the possibilities if we allow our daily decisions to be driven by whether actions were worth it.

I dare say we might have an epidemic of health on our hands!

It's my dream for you, and I believe that it is possible.



I'm not telling you it's going to be easy, I'm telling you it's going to be worth it. - ART WILLIAMS

Are you with me?

Try This At Home:

Have an honest discussion with yourself about the following questions.

Are you tolerating mediocre results with your health?

Are you ready to become more committed?

Where could you make changes? (Hint: Have you really tried everything? Really?)

Do you really not have enough time? Is there anything less important that you could drop from your schedule and replace with a habit that would forward your health game?*

Is there anything you could remove from your grocery cart each week and replace with something healthier?

*I've had people miraculously find hours per day after allowing themselves to get curious about this question!



I really wish I didn't eat so healthy today. - SAID NO ONE. EVER.

Final Thoughts: So there you have it! Those are the top seven mistakes I see health conscious people making over and over again – everywhere I go. Or maybe I'm just hyper-aware because they're also ones I used to make on practically a daily basis. Did any of them resonate for you?

If so, don't worry because awareness is the crucial first step. We can't even begin to overcome a problem if we don't know it exists, right?

But let's say you have awareness about the mistakes you're making, yet you still can't seem to get yourself to do what's necessary to turn your health around? That's called being human!

Most of us thrive on structure, which is precisely why we make it such a priority to build routine into our children's lives. But guess what? We adults benefit from structure as well. And accountability. And guidance. And being surrounded by a community of like-minded people. As I mentioned in Chapter 2, there will never be a medal awarded for 'going it alone.' Even individual pursuits, such as eating good food and getting your body moving regularly, can be made easier with the structure and accountability that a friend, a coach, or a community provide.

To drive this point home (and because distance running is my 'thing'), consider this personal example. I could write a pretty thorough guide on training to run your fastest 10K. I understand everything from the exercise science to dressing for minus 30-degree temperatures. I am more than capable of designing my own training program and seeing it through.

Why, then, do I hire a coach and belong to a running club? Because the structure, accountability, support, guidance, and sense of

community are absolutely invaluable to me. There is no doubt in my mind about this: I would not be the runner I am today without my tribe.

Knowing what to do and acting on it are two totally different things. If you want to keep charging ahead toward your health goals, my #1 piece of advice is to start surrounding yourself with the right people.

At the Eat Real Food Academy, we offer several different ways to engage with our community – from social media, to free articles and TV shows on our website, to our online courses and one-on-one coaching services. There really is something for everyone, and we look so forward to having you join our tribe.

With much love and gratitude,

Carolyn Coffin

Website: eatrealfoodacademy.com

Email: info@eatrealfoodacademy.com

Facebook: [Eat Real Food Academy](#)

Twitter: [@Carolyn Coffin](#)

YouTube: [Eat Real Food Academy](#)



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About the Author

Carolyn Coffin specializes in helping people experience – and maintain – extraordinary health and wellness. Ten years of rehabilitating injured patients as a physiotherapist drove Carolyn to hang up her ice pack and design her own fulfilling career around this core belief: An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. Now a Health Coach & Educator, Author, Blogger, TV Personality, and Keynote Speaker, Carolyn empowers people to make intuitive daily choices leading to liberation around their health.

Carolyn graduated with Bachelor of Kinesiology from McMaster University (2000) and Bachelor of Science in Physical Therapy from Queen's University (2003). In 2012, she founded her online Eat Real Food Academy business and coaching practice centering around real food, lifestyle modifications, and a focused mindset.

An avid and accomplished long-distance runner, Carolyn operates Eat Real Food Academy from Belleville, Ontario, where she lives with her spouse and two children.