

# LOSE WEIGHT

*for  
life*



Ditch dieting & lighten up  
with NZ nutrition expert  
**Claire Turnbull**



Have you been on a million diets and still feel no healthier? Lost and regained weight a hundred times? Feel like you know what you need to do to get in shape but just can't do it?

If this sounds like you, boy, are you reading the right book! If you are sick of going round in circles and want to make some changes to your health and wellness that will stick with you, read on . . .

## Knowing what to do isn't enough

It will be no surprise to you that, as a nutritionist, I spend most of my days (and nights) thinking, talking and reading about food and nutrition. I speak with friends, family, clients, groups, teams and in workplaces. Also, I often get accosted at dinner parties and grilled about my thoughts on various aspects of food and nutrition.

Amongst the hundreds or thousands of conversations, there are a handful of things that always come up, like: 'Is it okay to eat carbs?' and 'How do I shift those last few kilos?' However, there is one thing in particular that comes up every single day from someone, somewhere, and this particular question has become my passion and has led me to write this book. So, what is the question?

'Claire, I have tried so many things to get my eating and nutrition on track, lose weight and keep it off and I really feel like I know what I need to do, but I just can't seem to do it and stick at it. What am I doing wrong?'

We get so many people calling us at Mission Nutrition (my nutrition clinic) saying a similar thing. They have tried everything and are just OVER it! They are looking for a solution that works and lasts.

Barbara is a perfect example of someone in this situation; here is an email we received from her:

### **Subject: Mission Nutrition – HELP**

I need your help. I feel like I know everything there is to know about nutrition, I understand calories, I realise fitness is a big part of getting results, but somehow, for some reason, I struggle with pulling it all together, which is really annoying as I should know what to do. I sometimes overeat and find that food controls me rather than the other way round, which just seems ridiculous – PLEASE can you help!

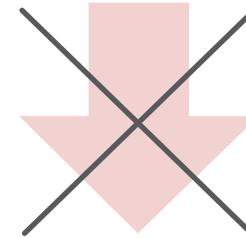
The truth for Barbara, as for the rest of us, is that just because we know something, it doesn't mean we can apply it to our lives. Yes, I know this seems to defy logic, but that's part of the human condition.

We know that alcohol gives us a hangover and we know how bad that can feel, but often this doesn't stop us from having that fourth glass of wine or eighth beer if we are having fun. We know that eating a packet of Tim Tams after a terrible day at work will provide only temporary pain relief and that afterwards we are likely to feel guilt, self-hatred and disappointment. Still, we eat the biscuits.

Of course, knowing what to eat, understanding nutrition, and being clear on what constitutes a healthy balanced diet is very important (and I will be sharing everything you need to know about that in Section Three) but it's vital to note that just because you know something doesn't mean that you can or will do it! Knowledge alone does not get you what you really want.

### **Knowledge**

What you know about eating well, exercise and keeping healthy



### **The desired outcome – what you really want**

Happy with weight, size and feeling fit and healthy

## **SO, WHAT'S THE ANSWER TO ACHIEVING YOUR GOALS AND GETTING RESULTS THAT LAST?**

If learning all about nutrition, calories, portions, vitamins and minerals doesn't necessarily get you the results you are hoping for, then what is the answer? I asked this very question of a group I was talking to a few weeks ago in a gym, and here were their responses:

**Jane:** People just need more willpower.

**Ben:** I reckon people need to be weighed every week and be accountable to someone.

**Theo:** It is best when someone tells you off when you haven't eaten as you should have done so you know not to do it again.

**Hannah:** I would enter a 12-week challenge to get focused.

Do these sound like things you would say or you have heard before? On the surface, they sound very logical and in the short term may get you results, help you to lose weight and get your nutrition on track – but, if you are reading this book you have probably tried to do these things before. Did they really work?

If you have tried to get healthy and lose weight before, I have no doubt that, at some point, you will have had those internal conversations about 'trying harder', 'being more focused', 'doing better tomorrow' – but you know as well as I do that they make very little difference in the long run. When you try to make changes to the way you eat, old habits can replay themselves, and even after completing a '12-week challenge' or being 'weighed in and accountable' to someone for a while, within a few weeks, months or years of finishing the programme, you are very likely to be right back where you started.

So, why is that? Well, it is because none of these approaches provide the answers to making changes that last. In fact, I would go as far as to say that some of these things will fuel the cycle of failure and, for some people, lead to disappointment and self-destruction.

Beating yourself up, negative talk and being angry with yourself for not having applied what you 'know' can lead to a dysfunctional relationship with food and, in some cases, a brutal cycle of emotional eating. Having to be 'told off' by someone, needing to be weighed and judged, will only work for as long as you see this person in authority. Ultimately, the only person to who you need to be accountable is YOURSELF and if you never learn that skill, you are unlikely to get to where you want to be. As for 12-week challenges, they vary in quality and some may indeed be a good way to get you focused, but the notion that your health and wellness has a start and a finish date, in itself, sets you up for failure. I don't need to tell you how many people revert back to their original ways of eating and drinking when these challenges are over – let's just say, lots. So, there must be a better way!

## MAKING CHANGES THAT LAST

There are hundreds of reasons why we might want to make changes to the way we do things. It might be that we want to change the way we work, the way we act in relationships, the way we cope with stress or, as we are discussing here, the way we eat.

When it comes to making changes on the food front, in my experience there are often three main reasons why people just can't do it, even when they know what they need to do. These reasons have very little to do with willpower or not being good enough. For some people, all these things have impacted on previous attempts to lose weight. For others of you, it might only be one or two of these things.

- 1. Deeply embedded eating habits and behaviours** that are your 'default mode', which hold you back from making changes that last. This is addressing things like picking at food, eating when you are bored, not planning meals and so on. To make changes

to these habits and behaviours requires time, practice and reprogramming the way you do things.

- 2. Changes to routine or challenging times arrive**, and any plans, good intentions or healthy habits go right out the window! Holidays, weekends, stressful times and any change to your normal routine can send you into a frenzy.
- 3. An emotional or dysfunctional relationship with food.** This is when, quite frankly, food messes with your mind. Maybe you end up sabotaging your own efforts (eating a tub of ice cream all at once because you didn't go to the gym in the morning and are now mad at yourself) or maybe you feel that food controls you (you think about it all the time) and you have a love/hate relationship with what you eat.

## WHAT'S STOPPING YOU?

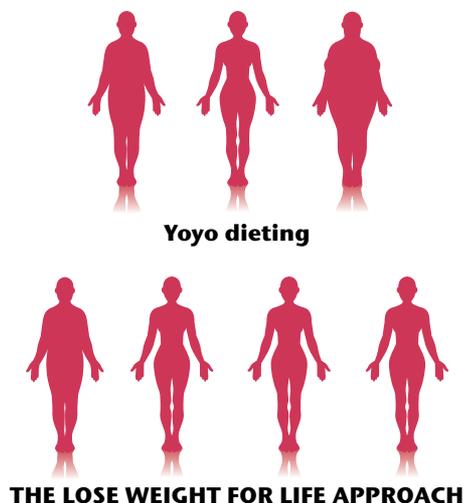
This diagram demonstrates that knowledge is not directly linked to outcome. It shows you that there are a whole heap of STEPS in the way to work through before you can make a change that lasts.



## GETTING TO WHERE YOU WANT TO GO

Now, don't get me wrong, knowing what to eat and when to eat it is still a very important part of the process in helping you lose weight, and we will be looking at this more in Section Three, but the difference with the Lose Weight for Life approach is the application of this knowledge – that is, dealing with the habits and routines, overcoming challenges and managing emotions around food. In doing these things, you will have a road map to achieving your wildest dreams! The Lose Weight for Life approach helps you overcome the barriers that have previously stopped you from getting results and, even more importantly in my view, maintaining them. After all, it's not that hard to lose weight; it's keeping it off that's the challenge.

Here's the normal weight-loss pattern for about 95 per cent of people:



## YOUR HABITS AND BEHAVIOURS LET YOU DOWN AND THINGS CAN GET CHALLENGING

As human beings we are creatures of habit and when we learn to do something a certain way it can be VERY hard to unlearn it. This principle absolutely applies to the way that we eat. Although it may seem logical to want to eat more healthily, drink less alcohol and exercise more, the outcome of your 'want' will depend not only on what you learn about the topic (kilojoules, serving sizes and so on), but also on the habits and behaviours you have to permanently alter to get the outcome you want.

To eat more healthily, you have to shop more healthily, cook more healthily and monitor your portions – so far, so good. But what about when you get busy? What about when your routine changes? You start a new job? You go on holiday? It comes to the weekend? Conceptually, it is pretty straightforward to eat well (more good stuff, less junk), but to actually eat well (and by that I

mean balanced, not eating only lettuce) 365 days a year, you need to be able to cope when things get tough, not just on a quiet week at work or when the kids are being well behaved!

People often seem to wait for a good time to change the way they eat, a good time to start cooking healthy meals . . . but like cleaning out the garage, painting the front room or getting round to planting a herb garden, there is never a good time. Now, right now, is as good as it is going to get. Making changes to the way you do things is a journey, a process, and ideally should have a positive, lasting impact on your life.

## HAS FOOD MESSED WITH YOUR MIND?

For some people, food is just food. It fills a gap and eating is something they do simply to live. For the rest of us, this is so far from the reality. Despite knowing that food is essentially 'just food' and that bread or cake can't bite us or talk to us, somehow food can still mess with our minds and make us feel quite uneasy. It can control how we feel about ourselves! How odd is that? It's just food, isn't it?

For most people, eating is about enjoyment, taste and sharing, but in our society it can also be used as a reward and as a punishment. Along the way, from the situations and experiences in their lives, for some people food has acquired an additional meaning and, in some cases, food can actually end up controlling them.

Feeling guilty after eating, sabotaging your weight-loss efforts by eating cake in private when you are angry at yourself, skipping meals to try to lose weight and then bingeing later on, hitting the booze when you walk in the door from work to help get rid of the stresses and pressures of the day – these are all examples of using food to do something that it was never designed to do. If this sounds like you, no amount of learning about the concepts of 'good nutrition' will help you reach your desired outcome. You need to deal with the situations and circumstances around food first.

But panic not . . . that is why I am here and, in the coming sections, I will work with you to help you overcome these obstacles so that you can Lose Weight for Life. To break the cycle and get results, the answer is changing or, more precisely, transforming your food habits and behaviours at the same time as dealing with your thoughts and feelings about food. I aim to show you how to work on all three parts of the diagram on page 13.

Getting the results you want is not about following a nutrition plan for a set number of days or going in to be weighed week after week, but instead is about creating long-term healthy habits and behaviours which will allow you to eat and apply what you know about eating well to your life, every day. It is also about being able to overcome challenging days, busy times and any emotional connection that you have with food.

From here, all you need to do is forgive yourself for any unsuccessful previous attempts, acknowledge the things you have learnt and enjoy this moment right now . . . because, from here, anything is possible. I can't wait to show you how.

## Part 2: Where EXACTLY do you want to be?

After looking in detail at who you are, why you eat and exploring the concept of change, the exciting part has now arrived where we put together a road map for you with specific instructions to help you get started on your weight-loss journey.

### DOING THINGS DIFFERENTLY THIS TIME

#### 1. Creating a vision

I would like you to think for a minute about what you would really love your life to be like. Shut your eyes and think about how you would look, how you would like to feel when you wake up in the morning. What things that bother you right now would no longer be issues for you? Create a very clear vision in your mind and stick with it for a minute or two. How do you feel? What is it that is so different to the way you are living right now?

Now, write down everything you see, and everything you feel. Part of this may be that in your vision you are wearing smaller clothes. You are fitter and feel more energised. Get real about what it is you are aiming for, the best *you* that you can imagine yourself to be.

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Next I want you to write a description of your life in one, two or five years' time (whatever feels right for you) as if you were living the life you most deeply wanted. Where are you? What are you wearing? How often are you exercising? What kind of foods are you eating? How do you feel about yourself? What are you doing every day? How are your relationships? Write in the present tense – it is incredibly powerful for rewiring your brain and thoughts. PLEASE don't skip this; it is one of the most important things you can do. It may feel odd to start with, but it is vital to help you get where you want to go.

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As well as writing your thoughts down and being clear about where you want your life to go, collect some pictures of how you would like to look and feel, things that motivate and inspire you. Put them in your notebook, on a board, or somewhere you can see them. Without bursting your dream bubble, be realistic if you can. If you are 157 cm tall and have an hourglass shape, however many pictures or images you collect of someone who is 183 cm tall with a natural pencil-thin figure, that's not really the best YOU, is it? You would need a miracle and a lot of painful surgery to get there.

Got your vision? Good.

#### 2. Setting yourself goals

Okay, now it's time to move from the vision to your goals. How are you going to get you from where you are right now to where you want to be? You can choose as many goals as you like, but my suggestion is that you start with three things you would really like to achieve. Try to make your goals not just about numbers and sizes, such as 'I want to lose 10 kilograms and I want to be a size 10', but rather about how you will feel: 'I am feeling comfortable in my clothes' or 'I feel confident when I am wearing togs'. Also, maybe think about a goal related to energy levels, fitness or self-confidence.

You will see here that I am writing these goals in the PRESENT tense! Please do the same – it is critical. For you to reach these goals and get to where you want to be, you have to truly believe in them, integrate them into your being and feel like they are part of you. If it is very difficult to do this, start with 'I wish I was', 'I would like' and 'I should be able to' and so on. Here are some examples of goals you might want to set – all written in the present tense.

- I feel confident in my clothes.
- I am okay with letting my partner see me naked (with the lights on).
- I feel super energetic.
- I fit into clothes which make me feel good.
- I can walk/run 5/10/15 km (or whatever is right for you).
- I can finish an exercise class without feeling like sitting down halfway through.
- I am able to buy clothes from wherever I like, rather than plus-size stores.
- I enjoy food without guilt.
- I don't rely on food to make me feel better after a bad day.
- I stop eating when I feel full.
- I trust myself around food.
- I don't panic when I have to go out for dinner or go to a buffet where I will be surrounded by food.
- I am okay with who I am and don't judge myself.

### YOU TIME: What are your top three goals?

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Now that you have identified your top three goals, we need to look at these in a bit more detail and be really clear about what it is that you want to achieve. Being specific is vital when you are setting goals, as any vagueness means you will readily come up with excuses to not follow through with your plans. You may not be able to fill all these things in now; that is fine – you can come back to these goals throughout the book and redefine them, tweak them and get clear about what it is that you really need to be doing differently – but it is a great start to work on this now.

For each goal, I would like you to think about these things:

1. What do you need to DO differently to reach your goal? Do you need to shop differently? Cook differently? Eat smaller portions? Are there any unhelpful thoughts you might need to work on? Is there anything in your environment you can change to help make reaching this goal easier?
2. WHEN would you like to have achieved this goal? Put a timeframe on this. Be realistic, and put down a date and time in your diary when you can assess how things are going. This is NOT something for you to use to judge yourself and feel bad if you don't get there on time. It is just a good starting point so you have something to aim for.

#### GOAL 1:

1. What might you need to change?

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2. When do you want to reach your goal?

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#### GOAL 2:

1. What might you need to change?

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2. When do you want to reach your goal?

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#### GOAL 3:

1. What might you need to change?

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2. When do you want to reach your goal?

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### 3. What are the consequences of not reaching your goals?

This is a VITAL STEP in goal setting and vision planning which is so important but easy to miss. It is helpful to have a good think about what it will be like if you don't follow through with your goals. It might be that you stay the way you are and nothing changes. It might be that you continue to gain weight. Whatever it is, write it down and think clearly about what your life will be like if you don't make some changes.

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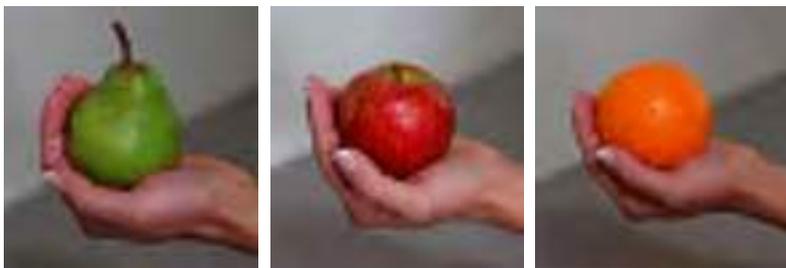
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By eating this combination of foods each day, your body will have what it needs to work well: it will supply the right amount of carbohydrate to your brain, the right amount of protein to your muscles and a healthy balance of vitamins and minerals to every cell in your body.

Within each food group you do, however, need to be looking for the healthier option if your goal is weight loss. Let's say you are looking at eating around 6000 kJ a day and you blow 2800 kJ of this on a piece of battered fish and chips; it's going to be pretty tricky to get the remaining food that you need for good health when you only have 3200 kJ to spare! The other thing to remember is that the exact amount you need to eat will vary depending on age and stage, and some of you may have medical conditions or health situations which means this will need to be adapted.

## FRUIT

Aim for 2 servings a day. 1 serving is: 1 medium-sized apple, orange or pear, 1 large or 2 small kiwifruit or plums, 1 large slice of pineapple or ½ cup of chopped or canned or stewed fruit.



## Lose Weight for Life favourites!

As with most things nutrition-related, depending on what you read and who you talk to, you will get different advice on fruit: some are referred to as 'super fruits', others I have seen on 'best to limit' lists. The truth is that fruit does vary: some have higher levels of certain vitamins, minerals, antioxidants and phytochemicals than others and some have a higher GI than others, meaning they make your blood sugars rise more quickly. But as with everything I have said so far, think bigger picture when it comes to fruit.

The best thing you can do for your body is to eat a variety of different fruits to get a mix of the different nutritional goodies. It can be easy to get into the routine of always eating the same few fruits: apples, oranges, bananas . . . so do mix it up!

Here are some ideas for getting more fruit into your diet:

- ✓ Try using frozen berries or raspberries in a smoothie or on cereal.
- ✓ Kiwifruit is great to get things moving in your gut, and fab on cereal, in a smoothie or by itself.

- ✓ Cherries, peaches and nectarines – their season might be short but they just taste fabulous.
- ✓ Apples and pears grated or finely chopped on top of porridge or Bircher muesli with a sprinkle of cinnamon or mixed spice.

It is always best to eat fruit as fresh as possible and in season is ideal; this maximises the nutritional value of the fruit you are eating. Grow your own where you can – it can save you money and means you can eat fresh every day. I have apples, pears, lemons, limes, feijoas, figs, grapes and strawberries, with raspberries as my latest addition! Frozen fruit can be great, too.

## Be mindful

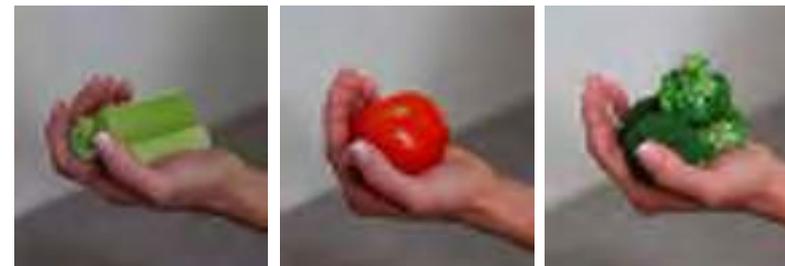
You can have too much of a good thing. If you are having more than three or four pieces of fruit a day (unless you are super active) there may be other important foods you are missing out on. Are you having enough dairy? Enough green veggies? Enough whole grains? I have met many women who definitely eat too much fruit and struggle with their weight because they are just getting too many kilojoules from the one place without balancing everything else out.

As fruit is high in sugar, it is best for you to spread it throughout the day rather than sitting down and eating, say, a whole bunch of grapes in one go – grapes, by the way, have more kilojoules than you may realise and more sugar than your body likes to deal with in one go . . . and may have you heading for the loo later on!

## VEGETABLES

The current stats in New Zealand (from the National Nutrition Survey) indicate that around 45 per cent of adults (with men being worse than women) report that they do not have the minimum recommendation of 3 servings of veggies each day.

## What is a serving?



You will have noticed with the well-known 5+ A Day campaign that the plus sign is there, indicating that 5 servings of fruit and veg a day is actually the

## Overcoming excuses and barriers

In the same way that there never seems to be a good time to start a healthy eating regimen, there is never going to be a perfect time to start exercising if you don't already. Today is as good a time as any. There will always be a list of reasons why it is too hard and excuses to hide behind. Maybe it's because you have got a big project on at work, or deadlines to meet or the kids take up all your time – but that's life. Even if you don't think you can make changes, you *can* – you have choices. If you were told it was a 100 per cent life or death situation, that you would die tomorrow at 8 a.m. if you didn't start exercising, I can guarantee that most people would be able to stop wasting time on something, shuffle their day around a bit and just make things work to fit in that 30 minutes a day – if your life depended on it. I know what you might be thinking, that right now it's not life and death for me – but in some way, it really is.

If you are currently very unfit, it can be extremely overwhelming to start being more active: often it hurts, you may feel irritated that you can't walk or run as far as you used to and you may have a list of excuses which you use to justify why you can't get moving. The truth is, though, you can get over all of those things – if you choose to. It is all about starting somewhere and building on that.

If you have always hated exercise and never been fit at all, you can still do something to change this and you are never too old to begin. If you are always comparing yourself with a fitter you 10 years ago before you had children, or you are angry at yourself for letting your fitness slide, these negative thoughts will get you nowhere. It is time to forgive yourself for anything from the past, accept 100 per cent responsibility for yourself right here, right now and choose to make a change – that's my challenge to you.

It is a really good idea to think now of all the excuses you use, all the reasons why it may be too hard to exercise or all the barriers that you might come across and find some solutions. Here are some examples:

Excuse	Solution
I don't have time!	Look at your diary, identifying at least three 30-minute time slots where, if you moved things slightly, you would be able to at least do something towards getting fit. Monitor your daily activities for one week.  Make exercise a part of your daily routine. Maybe walk or cycle to work. Walk to the shops, take the dog for a longer walk, take your trainers to work and go for a walk at lunchtime. Whoever you are, there will be something you can do.  Always take the stairs when you can.
My friends and family don't exercise.	It doesn't necessarily mean they won't; talk to everyone you know and see if there is someone who would be keen to walk, run or go to gym classes with you.

Excuse	Solution
Lack of energy and motivation.	Work out what time of the day you are most energetic and plan to exercise then.  See if you can exercise with other people by joining a sports club or group exercise class.
I travel a lot.	Fear not, so do !! It doesn't mean that you can't be active. My exercise gear is the first thing I pack when I head away, anywhere. Pack a skipping rope in your suitcase.  Wherever you are, you can walk or run. Look online to see if there is a swimming pool or gym near to where you are staying and build some time into your schedule for exercise. Communicate this to the other people you are travelling with, if necessary, so they know what your plans are when you arrive at your destination.
I have injuries.	I know how hard and frustrating it can be when you want to exercise but certain injuries make it difficult. Most of the time, though, there will be SOMETHING you can do. Seek the advice of a qualified fitness professional to help you come up with a plan.
I can't afford to join the gym.	Walking, running, skipping, squats, press-ups, sit-ups and similar exercises don't have to be done at the gym. Check out the exercise plans on page 120 onwards for tips on how to exercise without needing equipment.
It is raining and cold outside.	You can actually exercise in the rain you know! That's what raincoats and umbrellas are for. Alternatively, find something else to do. Have a plan for things you can do if the weather turns against you: indoor cycling, swimming, stair climbing, skipping, dancing or gym work.
I have a busy family life and no time!	Exercise with your kids. Walk together, play running games or tag. There are also fitness computer games you can do as a whole family.  Trade babysitting time with a friend, neighbour or family member who also has small children. Offer to look after their kids for an hour so they can have some time out, and they can then return the favour and you can get active in this time.  Exercise when the kids aren't around or when they are sleeping – there are lots of things you can do in your own home.

**YOU TIME:** Is eating lean something you need to work on? If so, tick here

What do you need to do to make this plan happen?

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## WHAT SHOULD I EAT BEFORE AND AFTER EXERCISE?

When you boldly embark on an exercise regimen, it can sometimes mess with the structure of your day. It may be that you can only exercise early in the morning before your day starts, at lunchtime or at the end of the day. Sometimes it can be tricky to work out when to eat. Do you eat a snack before you exercise and your meal after? Or have an early meal and then nothing after? Do you need extra snacks? A minefield, I admit!

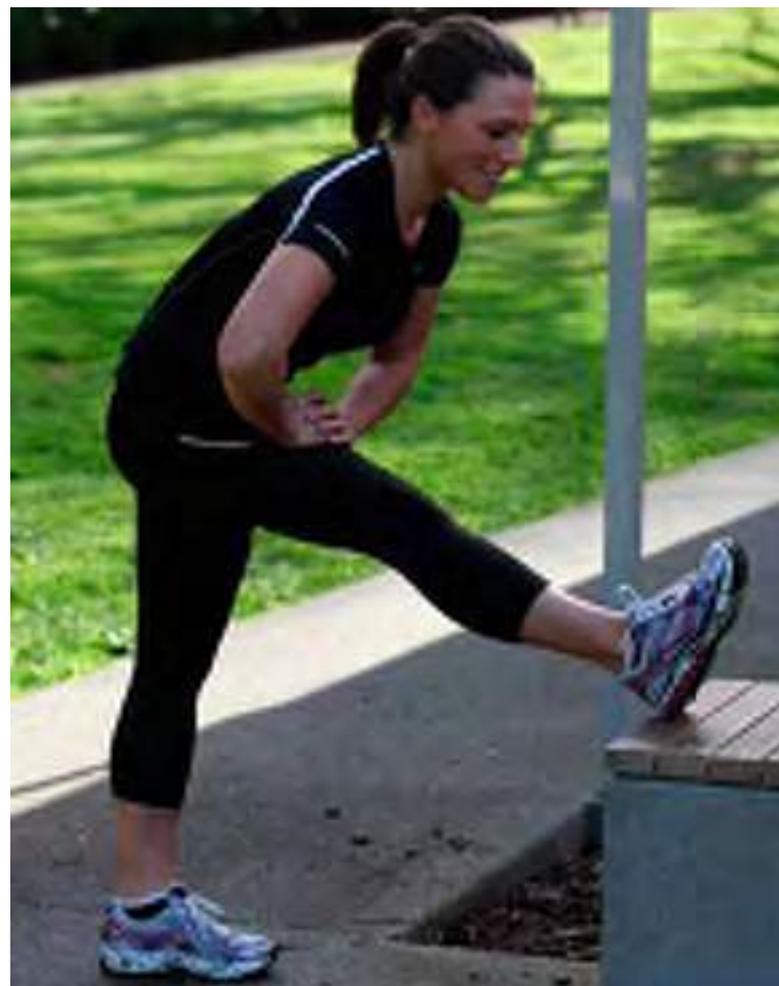
### *Solution: plan your eating around exercise*

If you are trying to lose weight, the biggest thing to remember is that you don't want to end up eating more food (i.e. having EXTRA snacks) on top of what you are already eating on a normal day. When you have a handful of extra crackers or an additional serve of fruit and yoghurt, you are just adding extra kilojoules to your day which you are trying ultimately to burn off by doing exercise! So, instead, you need to redistribute the food you would normally eat in a day around your exercise. Here is how it works.

#### **For a morning workout**

If you are exercising for an hour or less doing something like a morning walk with the dog, a gym class or cycling which is at a low to moderate intensity, then your body will have enough stored fuel (called glycogen) for you to complete this workout without the need to eat beforehand. Here, though, you just need to eat your breakfast as soon as possible after exercising to help your body refuel and recover. Cereal and milk is fine, but a smoothie made with low-fat milk, yoghurt and fruit is often a great idea after exercise because it gives you a nice dose of carbs and protein to help with recovery.

If you do like to have something in your stomach before a morning exercise session, my advice is to have a small amount of your breakfast before



and the rest when you finish. So, let's say you normally have cereal with milk and a small banana; you would have the banana about 30 minutes before you go (to allow it to be digested before you start exercising) and the cereal and milk afterwards.

In both cases you aren't eating more overall.

#### **For lunchtime exercisers**

The same applies here; you don't want to add any more food to your day, so, if you normally have a small morning tea (say a piece of fruit) and your lunch is maybe a tuna and salad sandwich with a low-fat yoghurt, I would have your fruit and the yoghurt (from lunch) at morning tea, and then the sandwich after your exercise.





- Keep up your fluids when you aren't feeling well – it can be all too easy to forget about this. Herbal teas are fantastic if you are looking for something hot. Chai tea is great with a teaspoon of honey if you are wanting something a little sweet. Or try hot water with lemon juice and honey.
- If you are injured, check with your GP or physio to see if there is anything you are able to do to keep active, even if it isn't the usual thing you do. Maybe you can still walk, swim, aqua-jog or do work on your upper or lower body at the gym without creating any issues for your injured area.

## IS SOMEONE SABOTAGING YOUR SUCCESS?

I hate to break this to you, but you may also find that someone is sabotaging your weight-loss journey. It won't necessarily be a deliberate thing, but I am really sorry to tell you that it is incredibly common to find that someone you know, probably someone you know very well, may be making it difficult for you to stick to your goals. Do any of these comments ring a bell with you?

- 'Go on, one slice of cake won't hurt you!'
- 'Let's go out and grab a coffee and maybe a muffin, too; we deserve to treat ourselves.'
- 'I have baked your favourite biscuits; you have to have one.'
- 'I will bring some chocolate home; I think we need it after today!'

Has anyone said something like this to you before? Something that makes you feel like you are being led away from your goal rather than heading towards it?

It is a terrible truth (particularly with women) that sometimes we sabotage other people's success or weight-loss goals. If you are honest with yourself, you may have done it to someone else before.

So, why does this happen? It is not because you or your friend or partner is a horrible person, it is just very hard for them to see you losing weight successfully when they aren't at a point when they can do it themselves, or simply that they feel threatened by you changing.

So, subconsciously, without any malicious intent, they will try to sabotage your success, expose your weaknesses and encourage you to go off track to make themselves feel better about the fact that they aren't ready to change or for you to change.

There are also the cases when someone might say to you, 'I really feel like a glass of wine, but I can't have one if you aren't drinking.' Sound familiar? A lot of people feel uncomfortable eating or drinking something considered naughty or a treat food on their own; it makes them feel guilty. If you go along with it, you are relieving them of the guilt.

### *Solution: work on your relationship with food*

Before you file for divorce or dump your best friend, remember a lot of this is subconscious and they aren't doing it to hurt you. They just haven't dealt with their issues – but, as harsh as it sounds, that is their problem, not yours.

What you can do is work on your own relationship with food and look at creating habits and behaviours which help you reach your goals. Your job in this world is not to relieve other people's guilt by damaging yourself and my advice is not to eat food or have a drink because other people want you to. If you really think about it, you aren't helping yourself, or them.

Ideally, there shouldn't be guilt around food, even wine, chocolate and other treats. You should be able to include these in small amounts and really enjoy them. To do this, you need to disregard the notion that food is somehow 'good or bad' – after all, it's just food. But some of us need to unpack our emotional responses to food. And that brings us to the next section.

## Part 4: When food has messed with your mind

Food messing  
with your  
mind



**DEALING with  
food used for the  
wrong purpose:**

Emotional eating  
Self-sabotage  
Eating for comfort  
Eating for punishment

For some people, food is just food. It is the fuel and nourishment that the body needs to make it function and that, quite simply, is that. For those who see food in this light (including my husband), it is common for them to enjoy eating and drinking without guilt, to stop eating when they are full and they find it impossible to even conceptualise that you could in some way have an emotional relationship with bread, ice cream or cake – after all, it is just food, isn't it?

Do you know someone like this? How lucky they are, living in a blissful existence where food is just, well, food. For the rest of us, to varying degrees, food can have so much more meaning. Food can control the way you think, the way you feel and can have the ability to make or break your day – how irritating!

So, why is that? Because of specific experiences and circumstances, eating and drinking can become linked with certain emotions and, over time, food is given meaning and power – and sometimes it seems that it can control you.

Here are some examples of what I mean:

- It could be that you were given dessert or ice cream when you were good and it was taken away if you were naughty – you learnt that food was linked to how you behaved.
- If you have been on and off diets your whole life, you may see certain foods as 'good' or 'bad' and feel guilty when you eat too many bad foods.
- You may have got yourself into a cycle of semi-starving and then bingeing when you have a bad day or something goes wrong and you just don't know how to eat normally anymore.

All these things (and so many hundreds and thousands more) can have an impact on the way you feel about food and the role food plays in your life. Whatever you have been through, and whatever issues you now face, the truth

is that if food is not just fuel and nourishment to be enjoyed, you are likely to be using food for something food wasn't designed for! If this is the case, food may seem to have some kind of power over you, and even though you should technically be able to control what you put in your mouth, it doesn't feel like that at all. Fear not, though, this is my area of passion and interest in a big way, and I have some solutions coming up. First, though, let's work out how food may have messed with your mind.

### A DYSFUNCTIONAL RELATIONSHIP WITH FOOD

Last night I was at a dinner function and got chatting about food to a lovely lady sitting next to me. We got onto the topic of eating behaviour and she confessed to me that even though she was a very healthy weight and size she had a very dysfunctional relationship with food and had never really known who to talk to about it. She had gone on diets when she was younger, but realised they weren't really long-term solutions. In the last five or so years (she was in her fifties) she had taken a new approach: trying to be really 'good' and strict six days a week and having one day when she ate whatever she liked and had a blow-out if she wanted. She didn't see this as a diet as such, just a way to cope and keep her weight in check – fair play, I guess. However, there was still a problem. Even though her approach did kind of work in terms of keeping her food intake in check, she had really got this notion of food being 'good' and 'bad' stuck in her head. She described to me the awful days when she felt like she had eaten a bit too much the day before, so tried to hardly eat anything that day so she wouldn't gain weight but then, without really knowing why, she ended up bingeing at random times of the day. It wasn't always on junk food, but there were times when she just couldn't stop eating once she had started.

There are so many examples of dysfunctional relationships with food and you don't have to be underweight or overweight to struggle with these issues. I meet people every single day who you would think from looking at them that they have nothing to worry about when it comes to food. They are a healthy weight and size and look okay, and yet these same people worry every minute of every day about food and situations involving food. They just can't seem to escape their own minds – and it is making them miserable. I was one of those people. I know this life all too well – it's not pretty.

Whether you can't commit to full meals and pick all day, starve and then binge, spit your food out after eating (more common than you might think), eat in private when you are meant to be on a 'diet' or have major anxiety when it comes to eating out or sharing food with other people – do not panic! I have met SO many people who give themselves a really hard time about these things, because they feel like their behaviour is stupid, illogical and that they should be able to stop it. Let me reassure you, you are NOT stupid, dumb, ridiculous or different. All that has happened is that somewhere along the way food has acquired power, meaning and control over you. There are solutions though. You don't need to live like this forever, I promise.

## LIVELY LUNCHES

Some people don't mind eating the same thing for lunch day-in and day-out, but, personally, I have to mix things up. I always like to have something to look forward to when it comes to my lunch, as well as knowing that what I eat will be ideal nourishment for my body and mind!

Recap: an ideal balanced lunch is:

- 1–2 servings of veggies
- 1 serving of meat/fish or a protein alternative
- Some healthy starch
- Small amount of healthy fat.

## SALADS

First up, we have some fabulous salad recipes which I just love for lunch. You can often make these using leftovers from your evening meal if you plan ahead. Don't be afraid to mix and match ingredients to make your own versions of these salads!



## Spinach, lentil and celery salad *(Serves 2)*

This is a colourful salad which is great for lunch any day of the week.

- ½ cup Puy lentils (French green lentils)
- 2 cups boiling water – in a spray bottle
- 20 g sliced almonds
- 2–3 large handfuls of baby spinach
- 2 sticks of celery, thinly sliced on the diagonal
- 1 small red onion, very finely sliced
- 8 cherry tomatoes, cut in half
- 30 g goat's feta cheese

Wash lentils in a sieve until the water runs clear. Place in a saucepan with boiling water and boil for 15–20 minutes or until lentils are soft and tender but not mushy. Drain and rinse with cold water. Set aside.

Heat a non-stick frying pan, spray with a few pumps of oil and add sliced almonds. Toast for a minute until light golden brown – be sure not to burn them! Remove from the heat and set aside.

Mix remaining salad ingredients together in a large bowl.

Mix all ingredients for the dressing together in a small jug and pour over the salad. Toss gently to combine.

### Balsamic dressing

- 2 tsp olive oil
- 2 tbsp balsamic vinegar
- 1 heaped tsp honey
- 1 tsp wholegrain mustard
- ground black pepper

### Serve it up!

- Divide the salad between two plates and enjoy.

### Adapt it

- Add lemon juice as a dressing rather than the balsamic dressing.

### Nutrition information per serve (without dressing)

kj = 1301	Carbs = 35 g	Protein = 19 g	Fat = 11 g	Fibre = 18 g
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### Nutrition information per serve (with dressing)

kj = 1537	Carbs = 39 g	Protein = 19 g	Fat = 15 g	Fibre = 18 g
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## Thai-style prawns with crunchy veggies

(Serves 4)

This is an impressive-looking salad which is very easy to prepare.

1 red capsicum,  
deseeded and  
thinly sliced

1 yellow capsicum,  
deseeded and  
thinly sliced

1/3 large cucumber,  
thinly sliced

2 handfuls of baby  
spinach

2 large tomatoes, cut  
into chunks

1 red onion, thinly  
sliced

oil – in a spray bottle  
500 g frozen prawns,  
defrosted,  
deveined and  
washed

Place sliced capsicums, cucumber, spinach, tomatoes and onion in a large bowl and mix together. Set aside.

Mix all dressing ingredients together and set aside.

Heat a few pumps of oil in a wok over a high heat.

Add prawns to the wok and cook for 2–3 minutes or until cooked through.

Put prawns straight into the bowl of salad veggies, pour dressing over and serve on a large platter.

### Dressing

juice of 2 limes  
2 tbsp fish sauce  
1 tbsp honey  
2 cloves garlic,  
crushed

### Serve it up!

- You can serve this dish on its own or with brown rice or grainy bread.

### Adapt it

- Use chicken or tofu instead of prawns.

Nutrition information per serve (with dressing but without rice or bread)

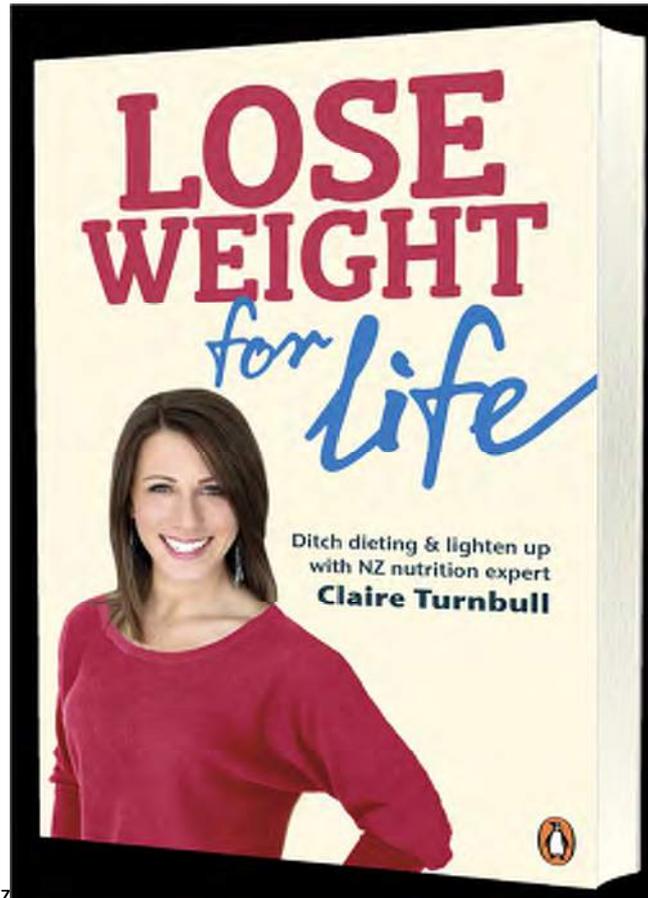
kJ = 745	Carbs = 11 g	Protein = 28 g	Fat = 2 g	Fibre = 3 g
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## Wait, there's more...

I hope you enjoyed reading a sample of some of the pages in my book.

This is just a sneaky peek to show you what the real book is like.  
To get your own copy, head to [www.claireturnbull.co.nz](http://www.claireturnbull.co.nz) or look out for it  
in your local book store!



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