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CHAPTER 1 – INTRODUCTION

If certain experts are to be believed, we are currently facing a crisis the likes of which we have never seen before: a global obesity epidemic. Since 1980, the number of people suffering from obesity has more than doubled, with there being 1.4 billion overweight adults, and 500 million who may be considered obese.

As far as children are concerned, the numbers just keep on climbing, with certain countries seeing more than a quarter of their youngsters suffering from obesity. Long story short, if things keep on going the way they are presently, most of the world's population will be obese in a few years, if, of course, we even manage to survive that long. In order to fight this great plague, it is important to know what it stems from. Just like with any other huge problem, there are numerous causes in play here.

For starters, we are leading increasingly sedentary lifestyles. Long gone are the days when we ploughed fields twelve hours a day or dug up coal in mines. Long gone are the days when most people had to dedicate their working time to physical labour. These days, most people work while sitting, or perhaps standing still, and needless to say, there isn't much effort involved in that, at least in a physical sense. The problem, however, is that even though we have reduced our level of activity, we keep on increasing how much we eat. As a result, our bodies simply aren't subjected to enough exercise to burn all the excess calories we gain, which leads to a noticeable weight gain. However, a lack of exercising coupled with overeating is not the only source of this problem.

Another cause for what we are observing today may be traced to economic fluctuations with regard to food prices. As it happens, in most cases, the cheaper a food item is, the more filling and unhealthy it is. Here, the fast food industry is being specifically referenced. Junk food restaurants have established themselves in countless poorer countries and economically disadvantaged areas, providing people

with cheap and fattening alternatives that allow them to save money. What's more, these alternatives are sometimes even tastier. In the end, the point is that the cost of healthy foods exceeds that of unhealthy ones.

Now, with what we've just covered and as we begin this guide, it's important to realize that the world is in a bad state, health-wise. But you don't have to accept what is happening in society. You are about to learn the 7 keys to transform your body and they will quite literally transform your life! So dive in, read, absorb and put into practise what you learn here and just see the change happen. You have the power to improve your health and live the life you want. Rest assured that in the end, your body will thank you for it.

KEY 1- MUST EAT BREAKFAST

When losing weight, most individuals skip their breakfast, thinking that it is an effective method of reducing weight. What they do not realize is that this technique is not effective and may even affect their bodies negatively. When dieting, one of the most important things to be aware of is the importance of eating breakfast. Breakfast is called “breakfast” simply because it breaks the long fast. People sleep for many hours during the night, so in the morning, it is necessary to eat something in order to have the energy to face the new day. More importantly, having breakfast is vital for a fat-burning diet. If you want to lose weight fast, be mindful to eat breakfast every day.

Given below are some of the key reasons for eating breakfast when dieting:

- Breakfast will allow you to control your hunger and avoid eating snacks later on during the day. What would be the use of dieting when you would eventually eat more because you are hungry, seeing that you skipped breakfast? If ever you skip breakfast, just make sure to have a healthy snack so that you can still lose weight effectively.
- A healthy breakfast aids in increasing your body’s metabolism. Eating breakfast can actually boost one’s metabolism. If you skip breakfast, you would tend to place your body into starvation mode, and the body tries to conserve the energy reserves it has. Now, when you eat breakfast, you are also telling your body that you are awake and are not fasting anymore. This means your body is ready to burn fat and utilize that energy during the day.
- A healthy breakfast also helps you consume enough calories. Having enough calories is essential because this is responsible for increasing your energy levels. When you regularly skip breakfast, you are not consuming the calories that would

end up dropping off your energy levels. This would also slow down your metabolism rate. Losing weight would be that effective.

- Eating breakfast is essential to losing weight, as it helps the body attain its weight loss goal faster. According to research and studies, individuals who miss breakfast are four times more likely to be overweight. If you do not want to risk gaining weight, make sure not to skip breakfast.

These are some of the main benefits of eating breakfast when dieting. Breakfast is the most essential meal of the day; therefore, it must never be skipped. Of course, when dieting, just make sure you follow a healthy breakfast regime so that you can lose weight effectively and achieve your weight loss goals.

Eating breakfast is good for your body's health, so do not think that skipping breakfast will help you lose weight. It will just leave you feeling weak and unhealthy, and this will not tie in well with your goal of losing weight. Have a healthy breakfast every day and follow the right diet. In no time, you'll be surprised to see the positive results with your health and body.

KEY 2 – OPTIMIZE HYDRATION LEVELS

Drinking water plays a key role in dieting. If you ever find yourself stuck in a weight-loss plateau despite following your diet program strictly, it could be that you are not drinking enough water. Studies have shown that a lot of people unsuspectingly suffer from severe or mild dehydration and you could probably be affected as well. Your body requires water for various biochemical processes. Given below are the benefits of drinking sufficient water when dieting:

Water assists the body in the conversion of fat reserves into energy. When the body is dehydrated, the body's metabolic processes slow down, and this impedes the breakdown of fats in the body, and in effect, your weight loss. If this happens, your weight loss curve hits a plateau.

Water naturally holds back your appetite. The hypothalamus region in your brain serves the role of controlling cravings and appetites, with the control centres for thirst and hunger situated next to one another. This means that drinking enough water not only quenches your thirst, but it takes away the feelings of hunger as well. A study by Washington University found that drinking a glass of water before going to bed reduces mid-night cravings.

Water also helps in the prevention of sagging skin, which is a common side effect of weight loss. It gives the skin a healthier and youthful look by helping in the reconstruction of destroyed skin cells.

Water assists in the elimination of waste products from the body. When dieting, the body loses weight and there are extra by-products to be removed. This means that the body requires sufficient amounts of water into which the unwanted products will be dissolved and successfully excreted from the body.

Water is effective in dealing with constipation. If the body does not get enough water, it is compelled to siphon it from its internal reserves, normally the colon, resulting in constipation. Normal bowel function will resume once the body receives adequate water.

In general, mild dehydration leads to a number of health complications. Mild dehydration is characterized by the following symptoms: fatigue, cravings, headaches and constipation. However, as soon as you drink balanced amounts of water, you achieve what diet experts refer to as a breakthrough point. At this point, as fluid retention in the body eases, the liver and the endocrine systems start to operate more effectively, helping to reinstate your natural thirst while significantly reducing your cravings. This eventually results in heightened metabolism rates which facilitate the breakdown and loss of fat in the body.

How Much Water Does The Body Need?

In conclusion, the above benefits clearly demonstrate the importance of drinking water, particularly if you are on a diet. Nonetheless, everyone should make it a habit to drink water. You shouldn't drink water only when you are thirsty, as thirst in itself is an indication of dehydration. Hence, every adult ought to drink at least eight glasses of water every day during cold weather. Since there is a lot of perspiration and loss of body liquids during the hot weather, additional glasses of water must be taken. Lastly, if exercises are part of your dieting plan, make sure that you drink 6-12 ounces of fluids after 15-20 intervals. This way, you will be able to maintain the most favorable fluid balance during your exercises.

KEY 3: PROPER SLEEP AND RECOVERY

To consider sleep as an activity is difficult. One assumes sleep to be a phase of inactivity or rest. But the matter of fact is that sleep is that active phase in our daily routine when numerous bodily functions are expedited. The sales data of sleep-inducing tranquilizers and sleeping pills prove that the rising cases of sleep deficiency owe a lot to the modern lifestyle. While profound research is available on the importance of exercise for the body, few venture to learn about rest and sleep. Yet, it is one of the most important factors for our overall health and well-being.

What Is Sleep?

Firstly, it's important to understand that while the body rests, the mind and the brain go on a restorative hyper-drive. Bodily signals are sent to the various organs of the body to begin its buildup for the next hour of optimum action. The more sleep deprived a person is, the greater the chances of deficient physical and mental activity, as your body has not recovered from the previous bout or prepared for the next. Sleep is a period of nerve and muscle relaxation, which begins a period of repair and rejuvenation of all the tissues and organs, much needed after a day of hectic or strenuous activity. Sleep is determined by a certain biological cycle called as the "circadian clock." It depends on the intervals of certain number of hours of being awake followed by sleep, and so on. Other elements affecting it may include the amount of light, stress levels, metabolic levels, and even the medication we may be taking.

The Power of Sleep

Sleep is a powerful energy booster owing to the fact that, while we sleep, the process called "anabolism" gets underway. Anabolism may be understood more simply as the recovery process for cells and tissues through the production of enzymes and proteins. In fact, it counteracts the effect of "catabolism" or the

process that occurs as you exercise or work out during the day, which produces an action whereby energy is released from cells. This affects the molecular components of the body. If your catabolism exceeds anabolism, little growth will happen. Thus, those who strain themselves with a tougher workout or play an extra hour must give their body the extra rest to sustain their growth of muscle mass, which is directly proportionate to fitness.

There is no contention to the fact that mental alertness, concentration levels, communication, creativity, emotional balance and the productivity levels of an individual are also affected by the amount of sleep they get.

The Recovery Process

Prolonged sleep deprivation has been linked to anxiety and depression. Sleep induces the release of certain hormones that affect the central nervous system of the body, thereby affecting mood and emotional stability. Less sleep increases Cortisol, a catabolic hormone which decreases testosterone levels that are directly related to muscle mass gain. Less sleep also means a higher insulin level that increases your body's resistance to nutritional absorption.

While one cannot contest the importance of fitness training, including weight training, one must understand the mechanics of what really happens to the body while facing this physical stress. While we exercise or lift weights, the muscle contracts or crunches, thereby becoming compressed or compacted.

This happens when the muscle microfibers compress. With every stimulus you give your body, the muscle is strained to respond. What must, however, be realised is that, between the phases of stimulus, the muscle needs to recover by building new bridges across the new muscle groups that are slowly forming. This growth is only possible when the body rests.

Another disturbing consequence that comes with compromising on the amount of sleep is the raised levels of cortisone, which have been linked directly to more abdominal fats. While there has been encyclopaedic quantum of research on the benefits of fitness programs, very little attention is paid to the importance of the body's sleep requirement.

Balancing heavy workouts with milder exercises and adequate breaks from strenuous routines is not only the best antidote for perfect health, it's the best way to gain optimal benefits from your exercise routine.

KEY 4 – HIGH INTENSITY CARDIO TO BURN FAT FASTER

Using high intensity cardio to burn fat faster is an approach that has been used by a number of people. Its benefits are huge and numerous, but it should always be done in a controlled environment and via a well-set plan. There is no doubt this particular type of exercise does indeed burn fat a lot faster, but how does it actually work?

The reason why it works is that your body is being asked to produce more energy than it has stored in order to deal with the intensity of the workout, and it does this by burning off the fat reserves being kept for a rainy day. Your body then has to keep producing energy even after you stop, as it needs this to start repairing the muscles and resettling your body after your strenuous workout.

It is also important to point out that this particular type of workout focuses on burning a different type of fat than what you would get doing a cardio workout. The problem with lower intensity cardio work is that it only gets your heart working to around 60% of the maximum heart rate, but this is not high enough for optimal fat burning in your body. Instead, you will only burn off the easy stuff, but the harder fat will still be there, so by increasing the intensity, you burn off both types, resulting in quicker weight loss.

There are other reasons why you should look at using this approach. One major reason is that you will then be able to deal with lactic acid far more easily. It is this lactic acid buildup that results in muscles becoming tired and burning. So by learning how to deal with the buildup, you can work out for longer periods of time, burning off more calories and fat and losing weight faster.

This does take some time, but at least you know that, while building up this resistance, your body is burning off fat as quickly as needed in order to give you the energy to keep on working.

Finally, this approach results in improving the sensitivity of your body to insulin, and the outcome of this is that the muscles absorb the glucose and use it to repair themselves and to get energy. This does mean that when you burn off the fat and then lose weight, it should stay that way rather than things fluctuating depending on how much you've been exercising during the week.

Using high intensity cardio to burn off fat faster does indeed work, but you must be prepared to put in a lot of work in order to achieve the best possible end result. By using this approach, your body will burn off fat as it needs that sudden surge of energy and you will also build lean muscle quicker. Therefore, not only will you get fitter, but you'll also notice a difference when you step on those scales—and this, after all, is the important part.

KEY 5 – LEARN HOW TO READ FOOD LABELS

In order to effectively experiment with your everyday eating habits and still choose nutritionally excellent foods, you must understand the nutrition labels on packaging. Quite often, companies that manufacture different foods claim that these foods are low-fat or healthy, but the truth of the matter is that these products carry hidden dangers for people who are following different diets. Being able to read the labels can, therefore, prove a big step for somebody who is trying to lose weight.

First, you must look at the serving size on the label, because the nutritional information listed there tends to portray the serving size as being smaller than the overall size of the food item. A number of companies mention a portion of, say, 30g and list the nutritional information for that amount, but they know most people tend to take double so, in actual fact, it is nowhere near as healthy as you'd think. What you need to do is to look at the serving size and then, if you eat double, you must double those figures to see how healthy the product actually is.

Another key area to pay attention to is when companies discuss the percentage of the daily recommended amount a portion covers, as this can tell you a lot about the ingredients of the product and how it may affect your diet plan.

Yet again, you need to look at the serving size, because if the serving size is 30g, giving you 25% of your daily recommended allowance for salt and you take 60g, you need to double this 25% in order to get a true reflection. Also, take a look to see if they mention the amount of calories per day this recommended amount is based on, since the majority will be for 2000 calories, but you may be taking less than that so you should calculate it accordingly.

Finally, you should know how to read the individual ingredients, as they will tend to use terms like sodium instead of salt or talk about carbohydrates instead of simply listing the sugar quantity. It may be a good idea to study different food labels and

develop an understanding of the terms they include, so you'll know if unsaturated fats are good or bad for you, how much vitamin B12 you can intake, what type of sugars the foods include and what type of natural nutrients they contain.

So this is how to read nutrition labels to help lose weight, and there is nothing really complex about it as long as you take time to read things properly. As long as you have an understanding of the amounts of food items you should eat under your diet plan, you should find it easier to read labels properly and lose the extra weight.

KEY 6 – TONE YOUR BODY WITH RESISTANCE TRAINING

Excess weight is one of the most common problems affecting multitudes of people across the globe. There is a need to lose this unwanted weight so as to avoid health complications such as heart attacks. In this chapter, we will uncover resistance-training exercises to help you lose excess fat. Examples of some of the common resistance-training activities include weight lifting, sporting activities like basketball and javelin, and isotonic resistance training which entails the use of barbells and dumbbells. Here is a detailed guide of the importance of resistance training in losing weight:

Increases Metabolic Rate - The metabolic rate refers to the rate at which the body converts fats into energy for various purposes. Resistance training helps to increase the rate at which fats are metabolized and this, in turn, helps to reduce body fat significantly.

Improves Body Posture - Since virtually every physical activity in this category involves the use of all the body muscles, it helps in strengthening and increasing muscle mass. This, in turn, helps you improve your body posture.

Increase Blood Circulation - For the body organs to operate optimally, they need to have sufficient and uninterrupted blood supply rich in various nutrients such as proteins and carbohydrates. Resistance training helps to ensure that the blood circulation in the body is optimal. This, in turn, helps to ensure all vital body organs are operating normally.

Decreases The Risk of Injuries - Losing weight involves a number of physical

activities which may lead to injuries, especially during the first stages. For example, new members might experience joint and muscles pains, but this problem fades as the body becomes acquainted with the activity. Resistance training will help decrease your susceptibility to injuries since the body parts will be able to withstand the pressure effectively.

Prevents Cardiovascular Diseases As well As Arthritis and Diabetes - Excess weight has been closely linked to a number of health complications. Because these exercises reduce and prevent accumulation of fats in the body, the risk of cardiovascular diseases, diabetes and arthritis will be significantly reduced.

Boosts Self-Esteem - In most cases, people suffering from excess weight problems are often stigmatized by the society. Fortunately, resistance training will help reduce this stigmatization and boost your self-esteem.

Improves your Sleep Patterns - Excess weight can distort your sleeping pattern, especially if the issue is troubling you too much. With the help of these physical activities, you will be able to solve this problem entirely. This, in turn, will help you sleep much better at night and also boost your productivity at home and at your workplace.

Increases Bone Density and Strength - As the name suggests, this training not only helps you lose weight, but also increases your bone density and strength. Increased bone strength will reduce your susceptibility to injuries as well as boost your performance of various physical tasks.

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

Common Misconceptions of Resistance Training

1. Women who do strength training become bulky and muscular

This myth has been around for many years, and unfortunately a lot of women believe it. Women do not have the ability to bulk up when they do resistance-training exercises to increase their metabolism. Those who bulk up take male hormones and inject anabolic steroids into their bodies. These women are mostly professional body builders. Therefore, if you want to achieve that bulky look, it is very clear what you have to do. However, if you just want to achieve a lean and toned body, resistance-training exercises will give you just that and no bulky shoulders or arms.

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

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

3. When you grow old, you cannot build muscle

This is not true because studies show that even people who are in their 70's can build muscle. In addition, people who are in their 50's or even 40's can build adequate muscle mass with just a few training sessions per week.

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

This takes the crown for being the biggest misconception about resistance training that can help boost your metabolism. Experts believe that, as long as you aren't suffering from any disease and eat a well-balanced diet, you only need about 20- to 30-minute sessions per week to achieve desired results.

It is not the hours you spend training at the gym that count, but how often you train and how hard you push your body. It has been established that when you add even a pound of muscle, your metabolism will increase and you can burn up to a maximum of 50 calories per day.

Imagine how many calories you can burn when you add 10 pounds of muscle!

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

If you train every day, you are likely to build more muscle and speed up your metabolism, right? Wrong! It has been proven that the people who achieve phenomenal results are those who take breaks in between their workout days. Muscles are built when our bodies are resting and not when they are active, as most people are likely to believe. The body also needs to recover after an intense workout session.

KEY 7 – BODY TRANSFORMATION IS A LIFESTYLE

Whenever a special occasion or a holiday draws near, people often scramble for quick weight loss products or programs. While looking good in swimwear during summer is a great idea, looking for a short cut to weight loss can backfire.

Truth is, weight loss is a lifestyle and not a fad. It is the result of consistent efforts that involve exercise, proper food intake and the right amount of rest. This key will reveal how to achieve a healthy lifestyle that helps shed pounds permanently.

First, you have to change your perception about weight loss. It's not just a matter of watching your weight on the scales. Weight loss should be about changing your body composition by having lower body fat content and acquiring more muscles. For women, this means losing side handles and toning of thighs. For men, it basically means decreasing of the waistline. Lately, health experts are associating heart disease risks with large waistlines. Hence, the need for ripped abs is not just for aesthetic reasons but also for longevity. Weight loss is a goal to achieve good health; looking good should only be a consequence.

Second, you have to exercise on a daily basis if possible. Start with brisk walking if you're overweight in order to prevent knee injuries. Perform this activity consistently by spending at least twenty minutes a day on it. Or you can try a high intensity interval training (HIIT) to jumpstart your metabolism; some of its samples are burpees, body squats, push ups, and mountain climbers. This is far quicker to perform but requires cardiovascular health and a lower body weight. It shocks the body to drastically increase metabolism which results in weight loss. However, this is not advisable for people who are just beginning to exercise.

Third, educate yourself on proper food intake. People who need to lose weight should consume less than their total energy expenditure. Plus, macronutrients like

protein take centre-stage along with complex carbohydrates. Reducing consumption of sugary food products does a lot of good to your body. Hyperlipidemia, a condition wherein the body suffers from high levels of cholesterol, is often triggered by obesity and diabetes.

Avoid eating fast food. Prepare meals and bring them with you to work. Choose lean ground meat and season them with spices. Further, make sure you have a side dish of vegetables to add more fibre into your diet.

Lastly, minimize stresses in your life through effective management. Again, you can resort to exercise to shake off work-related stress. Listen to relaxing music. Enjoy time with your family and friends or pursue a hobby you love. Also, get enough sleep so your mind and body can function optimally. Stress produces hormones like cortisol that sabotage our attempts at losing weight.

As you can see, weight loss is a lifestyle and not a fad. It means prioritizing exercise over a sedentary lifestyle. It means choosing the right food to fuel your body. Most of all, it means a healthy perspective of what life is all about—taking care of yourself and your loved ones.

CONCLUSION: TIPS TO BEGIN THE TRANSFORMATION TODAY

As we conclude this guide, we will cover a few extra tips and tricks that will help tremendously in transforming your body. Some tips might require you to adjust your lifestyle entirely. However, they are of great assistance in losing weight.

Exercise

It's the surest and most natural way to lose weight. Exercises can be done in countless ways to fit in with your daily activities. For instance, you may decide to cycle to and from your workplace or the shopping centre instead of taking a bus. Or you may opt to use the stairs instead of the elevator. Other activities like walking, jogging and running will also contribute to weight loss.

You can also make exercising fun, like playing basketball with your kids or friends, going on long walks with your loved ones and many other fun activities that will eventually burn calories. On the other hand, you can structure a daily exercising routine involving at least 30 minutes of cardiovascular exercises. Remember, exercising on top of burning fat and calories also helps in building a lean muscle mass, which is essential for the body's metabolic rate.

Consume the Right Drinks

If it's not possible to quit alcohol entirely, limit yourself to a maximum of two on isolated cases when you intake alcohol. Alcohol has no nutritional value for the body, and the body usually utilizes it as its first energy source. Eventually, the food consumed ends up being stored as fat in the body. Alcohol also influences you to eat the wrong type of foods, particularly junk foods high in calories. It is, therefore, essential to avoid alcohol consumption, or to limit it as much as possible.

Similarly, avoid fruit drinks and soda. Instead, opt for diet drinks and plenty of water. Water suppresses regular urges to eat and, consequently, helps you lose weight. It also keeps the body hydrated, which is ideal for the release of nutrients in the body.

Green tea is another favourite beverage for people on a weight loss regime. Studies have demonstrated that consuming green tea helps burn off calories at a high rate.

Consume the Right Foods

Eat the right foods that will not contribute to weight gain but rather support weight loss. Grapefruit has been found to be effective in helping people lose weight.

Consuming half a grapefruit three times a day burns more calories by boosting the body's metabolism. On the other hand, avoid or minimize on the consumption of fats, especially animal fats, as they are high in cholesterol. Opt for skimmed milk and low-fat cheese. Similarly, consume lean meat, preferably white meat. In addition, opt for unprocessed foods as they contain fewer calories and lower fat content. However, if you need to consume processed food like bread, opt for the whole grain bread, as it is high in dietary fibre content. Fibre assists in burning calories.

Also, try to avoid junk food and products that contain refined sugar. Look for sugar substitutes that are healthier. Junk food is low in nutritional value and high in caloric content, so avoid or minimize its intake as well. However, make sure you consume plenty of fruits and vegetables and cut back on eating starch products for an almost ideal body weight.