



Fit For Sisters

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Columnist

Obstacles to diet and weight loss

The weight loss desire of our nation is insatiable, and despite our purest intentions, many health and fitness professionals are still getting it wrong, wondering “Why can’t these people see how simple it is?” Or “why can’t they give up the late-night binges of ice cream? Don’t they see all those extra calories?”

What goes wrong?

The Depletion-Binge-Depletion Cycle: This is most common with highly-motivated dieters. They stick to a diet, no carbs, no sugar, no this or that. Their body gets depleted, screaming for enough calories to function, yet their advisory

begins to resist after a life of indulgence. By the end of the day, it can go on no longer. Out comes the ice cream, the wine, the brownies. Out the window go all the diet restrictions

Sound familiar? The reason why this happens is because the body requires a minimum amount of nutrients, and calories to exist. Our dieter is well below the threshold — skipping breakfast and eating celery and peanut butter for lunch. Handfuls of snacks throughout the day.

Better to make sure that calories total is not below 20 percent of maintenance. This means that if a person needs 2,400 calories a day, they can aim for around 2,000. This is not a rapid six-week weight loss miracle of social media glory, but they will be left with ego intact and keep the train rolling well beyond six weeks. Dieting is about simple changes over the long haul.

Over-exercising: A person starts a diet, and begins exercising much more than usual at the same time. Here is the problem: training with intention requires increased metabolism, muscle recovery, and regeneration, which all require more energy. This isn’t to say one can’t diet and exercise in harmony, but the level at which one does so will

be compromised. A person training to run a marathon and lose 20 pounds will have some choices to make. Either they get smarter about exercise fueling and recovery (beneficial to performance) or they ease the training to very simple parameters (allowing them to lower calories for weight loss).

If exercise is more for activity and general fitness there is no issue — but know the difference between training and diet for the best results.

Mindless Snacking: Coffee for breakfast, a sandwich with hummus and veggies at lunch, and a salad for dinner. You’re lucky to get 1,000 calories there (about half of a sensible diet). What’s that? No weight loss? Look deeper. Handfuls of peanuts between calls? A bowl of chips beside you while watching TV? A spoonful of almond butter here and there? There’s around 1,000 calories of less-than-noticeable eating. This will surely lead to the weight-loss plateau many are lamenting.

Over-analyzing: Articles about fad diets, avoiding gluten, or toxic dairy convolute simple nutrition. This pressures a person to

conform to trends around minutiae before establishing the basics. Does anyone know a person who may only buy organic, yet 50 percent of their meals consist frozen prepared meals? Or the person who scrutinizes toxins in certain foods yet barrages their body with boozy drinks? “Stay away from fast food,” they say; yet the freezer full of “Trader Jeff’s” frozen spinach and cheese enchiladas is righteous because, certainly a major corporate food producer has its customers’ health and wellness above it’s profits, unlike fast food chains.

Weight gain is a creep of excess that manifests over time; the palette adapts to salty, sugary, and sweet treats. To undo this, a person needs to decrease calories, and improve the nutritional quality. This means scaling back, while still nourishing the body, and getting one’s mind wrapped around the tenants of simple nutrition. Eat simple foods, with the least amount of processing, and enjoy the tastes and flavors without worry. When whole grains and complex carbs, lean meat, veggies and fruits make up 80 percent of the foods consumed, you have a good start.

AFRICA: Photographer caught in the open with lioness

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number of rash decisions and mistakes I’d just made and knew there was no good way out. I had become an overly exuberant zebra foal caught out in the open and attempting anything would be utterly futile. You sickeningly freeze in place.

Her gaze shifted, went from scanning about to tightly focused. Those eyes locked in on me, and, in particular, my eye looking through the viewfinder no more than four feet from her.

I’d never been this close to a bear, wolverine, or sea lion. A heartbeat skipped by. My mind ceased undertaking further thoughts; the body released itself from performing many of its functions. I had begun the process of letting go.

Unfortunately, one of the functions my body undertook was holding onto that camera directly above her. With no conscious awareness of doing it, my hands released their grip and it began a tumbling arc towards the forehead of the lioness.

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