

## WORKSHOP #1 - HEALTHY HABITS

- 1 Eat small meals throughout the day** - Have breakfast within the first hour after rising. Remember, your first choice of the day sets the tone for the rest of your day. As long as you make healthy choices and feed your body every three to four hours, you allow your body to get into the "ZONE". In the zone your body will optimally function, create energy and prevent cravings for the wrong foods.
- 2 Drink plenty of water** - Have the recommended 8-10-glasses of water each day to increase energy, stay young and to detoxify your body. Sounds like the fountain of youth, doesn't it? Want motivation, pick up the book. You're Not Sick, You're Thirsty by F. Batmanghelidj.M.D.
- 3 Exercise/Get Active** - Being able to stay active is a gift. Don't take it for granted. The government is now recommending 30 minutes of moderate activity level most days of the week, compared to the previous recommendation of more intense activity for 20 minutes 3 times each week.
- 4 Cut back on sugar** - Some sugar is fine. Like the sugar we get in fruits that provide tremendous health benefits. However, limit the sugar from sodas, candy, etc., where there is no nutritional benefit. If you are concerned about the sugar from fruits, eat a few almonds or walnuts with it. The good fats from the almonds will slow down any potential spike from the sugar.
- 5 Reduce artificial sweeteners** - Artificial sweeteners are chemicals. Warning labels already lay out the potential side effects from them. For many, artificial sweeteners over stimulate the appetite and can cause a host of other problems including headaches, migraines, joint pain, and inflammation.
- 6 Greatly reduce or eliminate trans fats** - All the potential side effects from trans fats is unknown, however, the government is starting to take note. You will continue to hear of more cities imposing a trans fat ban in all their restaurants. Be careful, labels may still say "0" trans fats, but still include them. Watch for any ingredient label that says partially hydrogenated anything.
- 7 Get plenty of rest** - So many people continually cut short their sleeping time, because they perceive their awake time as more productive. The truth is our bodies do amazing work while we sleep. All the nutrition and exercise in the world cannot make up for a continuous loss of sleep time. 7 - 8 hours of sleep is still the recommended amount for most.
- 8 Stress Reduction** - Some believe that stress is at the root of all illness. It has a tremendous impact on your health over time. Chronic stress suppresses the immune system. Since stress is a part of life, finding ways to manage it is critical. Try this breathing exercise when you find yourself in a stressful situation. Inhale deeply through your nose for 5 seconds, hold for 5 seconds and blow out slowly for 10. Repeat at least three times. Do this anytime you feel tense. It can also help you to fall asleep at night.
- 9 Choose one or two new habits each month** - When we attempt to make too many changes at once, we can set ourselves up for failure. Also change, "good or bad", is a stress on the body. Too many changes can cause rises in our cortisol levels, igniting our fight or flight response designed to protect us. Sometimes this internal protective mechanism can actually delay the positive changes we are trying to make.
- 10 The Stupid Rule** - The stupid rule states, "For the next 30-days, I will completely commit to \_\_\_\_\_. If at the end of 30 days I decide this is the dumbest thing I have ever done, I give myself permission to quit." It takes 21 -28 days to create a new habit. Hopefully, the new habit you have implemented will have provided some positive results and be easier to keep as part of your daily life. This can be a great way for the whole family to start new habits. Everyone just picks one new habit each month and then each family member helps the other to stay accountable.

**One additional thought:** We have completely lost perspective of portion sizes. Just cutting your portions in half can be a great start. At restaurants, buy one meal and split it with someone or have the server box up the other half at the beginning of your meal. This should help you to not overeat. Plus you will save calories, money and have another meal for later.



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