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Waist Away

The Chantel Ray Way

Special Thanks

I would like to thank God for helping me write this book. Every day, I woke up and prayed for Him to give me the words to write.

Thank you to my family, who has been so encouraging during the writing process.

I would like to thank Jalen Barnes for helping me put my thoughts on paper; Ally Hansen, Bethany Hamlin, and Lauren Carranza for all their hard work in putting this book together; Adam Sikora for all of the layout and design work. Special thanks also to Lisandrea Wentland for editing this book.

Foreword

A lot of people asked me why I was writing a second edition. As you know, I've interviewed over 1000 women about their daily eating habits. People ask if I really interviewed over 1000 women, and honestly, its way over that. I've been doing these interviews for over 20 years; I do about four interviews a week, times 52 weeks in a year, times 20 years, and the real total is about 4160 interviews. I just say over 1000 to account for the odd weeks when I may not have gotten to do four interviews. The majority of my closest friends have come from me randomly going up to them and asking what they ate for breakfast, lunch, and dinner. My friend Jen, whom I adore, I met over 15 years ago when she was an aerobics instructor at a local gym. I went up to her one day after a step aerobics class, (remember when step aerobics was all the rage), told her how much I enjoyed her class, and asked about her food and diet. Then I asked her if she'd text me some of her favorite foods and what she ate. She is so kind and generous and from that point on became one of my closest friends. I've learned so much from the different people I've interviewed, but I have also built such amazing relationships. The reason I'm writing the second edition is to make clarifications. I summarized what these amazing women told me, but I didn't give details of exactly what they said. I wanted to give you their exact words in the interviews, and I would love for you to actually watch them because it's a magical process to watch thin eaters describe how they eat and actually watch them eat. To watch these full interviews, go to chantelrayway.com/interviews.

Since the launch of the first edition, I've received thousands of letters and emails from people thanking me for writing the book and telling me about the success they've had with intermittent fasting, but one letter, in particular, really stuck with me. It was from a woman who said, "Thank you so much for writing the book. I've already lost 12 pounds, but I was confused by parts of your book. You talk about not depriving yourself and eating what you want, but then in the Chemical City section you also talk about really looking at

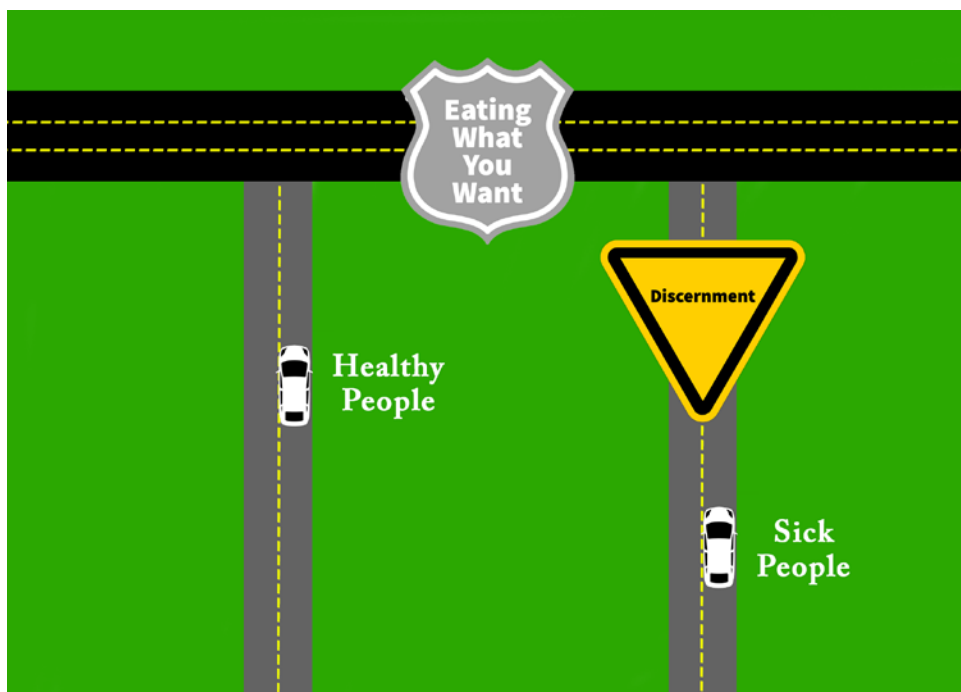
the food you're eating and whether it has chemicals or will be good for you. That seems to contradict the idea of eating what you want and not depriving yourself." After I read that email, I realized that I really need to clarify the balance between eating what you want while still using discernment about which foods are going to make you feel your best.

This second edition will clarify the fact that there are two types of people: the first type is very healthy meaning they don't have many health issues. The second type of people are sick meaning they have some sort of underlying health issue, such as:

- Crohn's disease
- Rheumatoid Arthritis
- Diabetes
- Autoimmune Disease
- Thyroid Issues
- Lupus
- Food Allergies/ Sensitivities
- Multiple Sclerosis
- Psoriasis
- Inflammatory Bowel Disease
- Hashimoto's Thyroiditis

Later in the book, I talk about how these two types of people travel in two different lanes. If you're in the healthy lane, you will be able to eat whatever you want, and the only boundaries are the confines of hunger and fullness. However, if you're sick, you travel in a different lane with the same confines but with an extra dimension or additional bridge to cross when it comes to eating. Crossing that bridge involves discerning ways to eat the foods you crave while not exacerbating your illness. For example, if you want chips, you'll still get to eat chips but probably organic gluten-free ones cooked in coconut oil. If you want a cookie, you might be making that cookie with honey and almond flour. If you're sick, you're still not going to deprive yourself of the things you love, but you'll just have to navigate over an extra bridge because of your health issues and food restrictions. I will show you that you can still satisfy your craving because it's not about deprivation, it's about discernment.

In this second edition, I'm also committed to being more vulnerable than in the first. About six months after the launch of the first book, I'd gained about 6 to 8 pounds, which doesn't sound like much, but when you write a weight loss book, you feel like all eyes are on you and your appearance all the time. Almost all weight loss books for women are written by someone who is a size 0. I don't ever want to be a size 0. I'm still wearing a size 6. I think we all have a weight or size where we feel our most comfortable. I'd prefer to be a size 4, honestly; that's the size where I feel most comfortable with myself. My husband prefers when I'm between a size 6 or 8 because when I'm thinner, my boobs and butt are the first things to go, and he is a man who loves a big butt. So, I tend to hover somewhere between sizes 4-6, and we are both happy. One of my favorite interviews, which taught me so much, was with a friend who said yes to being recorded and yes to having her words written, but she wouldn't allow me to use her real name or show a picture of her. She said it was because she didn't want to put it out there that she was some sort of weight-



loss guru in case she ever gained weight because people would judge her for it. Before she said that to me, it had never even occurred to me that I would be facing those exact same critiques once my book came out. Once she said that to me, I realized this is exactly how I feel. I feel like because I wrote a weight loss book, if I gain even an ounce of weight, I will be judged for it. That criticism is sometimes hard to bear, but there is not a question in my mind that I am still glad I wrote the first edition. I've received so much positive feedback from the first book and so much gratitude from the people I've helped, that it makes the scrutiny over my weight worth it. I hope this second edition, along with my clarifications, the added full-length interviews chapter, and the bonus recipes will have an even bigger impact on others.

Note

When I was in college, and I was choosing a major, I picked math because I didn't like to read or write. I actually hated reading and writing, so the fact that I wrote a book is very comical. If you had asked me in college if I wanted to write a book, I would have said, "I have no desire to do that because I hate reading and writing." But after interviewing thousands of thin women and learning all this information, I knew I needed to put it into a book. Because I hate writing, I literally recorded my voice and had somebody else write my words down, but these are 100% MY words. Hopefully, you can hear my tone and see that I'm talking to you. I made it very clear to my ghost writers that I wanted the book to be grammatically correct, but I also wanted to keep it edgy, so it wouldn't lose my tone or voice. All my friends who read my first edition said, "It's funny, this book sounds just like you," which is exactly what I wanted. I hope my voice shines through for you, as you're reading it as well!



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INTRODUCTION

As you pick up this book, you may be asking yourself some questions.

Who is Chantel Ray?

Why should I take advice from her?

Good questions! So, let me tell you a little bit about myself.

My name is Chantel Ray and I run a multi-million-dollar real estate company. I'm not a medical doctor or a nutritionist; I actually have my degree in mathematics. I'm a 44-year-old mother to a 17-year-old daughter and an eight-year-old son. I have a loving husband who owns a competing real estate company and has always called me beautiful even at my highest weight.

"Yeah, that's great Chantel, but what makes you qualified to write this book?"

I may not be a doctor, nutritionist, fitness trainer or anything like that, but I am someone who, like you, has spent most of her life obsessing over diets and struggling with her weight. If I could gather up all the pounds I've gained, lost, and gained again, I could build a whole new person.



I have tried almost every weight loss strategy that's out there. I've read almost every weight loss book. The topic of weight loss is something I have always been passionate about even when success escaped me. I'm the kind of person to walk right up to a thin stranger in the gym and ask, "What did you have for breakfast?" You can see how direct I am! What you're reading is the result of my passion to solve the mystery of my own weight loss once and for all.

A lot of this book is a combination of information I wrung out of my thin friends, personal research, and the "secret sauce" that finally cracked the code for me and my weight loss. That "secret sauce" is heavily based on the technique known as **intermittent fasting**. You see, I was raised to believe that I could do anything I set my mind to, but for some reason I just couldn't seem to lose weight. This plan that I developed around fasting got rid of all of the complicated dieting rules I struggled with and gave me back control in the one area of my life I didn't have it.

Who am I? I'm the woman who lost so much weight doing diets that people thought I was anorexic, and then I gained it all back. I'm the woman who met over three quarters of her friends at the gym asking them to text me pictures of what they ate for every meal. I'm the woman who got sick and tired of being in bondage to diets that made me so obsessed with food and counting calories! To be honest, I'm probably you!

You are not going to see any meal plans in this book. I was talking to friend, and she told me she was doing a new meal plan diet. She said it told her exactly what to eat, how many cups, exact measurements, and how to track exact number of macros. In my opinion, meal plans require you to eat too much food to the point that you're saying, "I'm stuffed." These meal plans are telling you to overeat which is ridiculous. The Bible is clear that you should not overeat. A traditional meal plan has exact foods, exact amounts, and exact times.

Here is an example:

- Breakfast at 7:00am 3 scrambled eggs, 1 cup of vegetables, 1 piece of whole grain toast, 1 cup of coffee, 1 glass of water
- Morning snack at 10:30am 1 protein bar, 1 apple
- Lunch at 1:00pm 6oz chicken breast, 2 cups of salad, 1 cup of fruit
- Mid afternoon snack at 4:00pm 1 protein shake
- Dinner at 7:00pm 6 oz grilled chicken, 1 cup of broccoli, 1 cup of quinoa

There are absolutely no meal plans in this book. You might get excited about starting a meal plan or a new shiny diet, but the reason meal plans are tough to follow is because you're not eating what you want. It's always someone's birthday, or holiday, or you get sick of eating the same things over and over again, or you get busy. You follow the plan for a little while then think, "This is awful! I never want to see another piece of grilled chicken or broccoli again in my life." You conclude eating healthy stinks, and you quit.

We are going to teach you how to eat whatever you want. These naturally thin friends never said, "I at 8oz of something." They never said, "I had ¼ cup of almonds." Now they might have said, "I had approximately 10 almonds." This plan teaches you to eat what you want in smaller portions and real foods that are going to fuel your body.

Here are some of the questions I asked:

- What do your meals look like in a typical day?
- How many meals would you say you eat in a day?
- Do you prefer one meal over another? Lunch? Dinner? Breakfast?
- How quickly do you eat?
- Do savor your food? (Give a specific example)
- How do you choose what to eat?
- Is the level of enjoyment a consideration?
- Do you have any tricks you use to help you eat less?
- What percentage of the time do you eat lean, natural foods?

- Do you take into consideration what else you've eaten that day?
- Name some foods you love to indulge in.
- Do you try to satisfy your craving with a healthy option? Or do you eat a small portion of something unhealthy in order to satisfy the craving?
 - When was the last time you overate?
 - Do you count calories or carbs?
 - Do you deprive yourself of certain foods?
 - What is your go-to when you're stressed or upset?
 - Do you ever use food for something other than fueling your body?
 - Do you carry any snacks with you?
 - How do you determine when you're physically hungry?
 - When do you stop eating (on a scale of 0 to 5)?
 - What "foods" are non-negotiable? What do you refuse to eat/drink under any circumstances? Are there any chemicals you avoid?
 - What is your workout plan?
 - Do you have a window of weight you allow yourself? Is it 5 pounds?

Explain this?

- After a good day, do you ever reward yourself with food?
- Do you ever say, "I worked out, I should go eat brownies or ice cream?"

If you're sick of trying to find the perfect diet that fits you, and you're ready to finally move over and do it God's way, then this is the plan for you! On this plan, you're not going to deprive yourself of the foods that you want. You're going to learn how to listen to your body and regain self-control in your life when it comes to food. When you're finished with this book, you're going to be empowered with the tools to never stress about losing weight again!

If you're sick of trying to find the perfect diet that fits you and you're ready to finally move over and do it God's way, then this is the plan for you! On this plan, you're not going to deprive yourself of the foods that you want. You're going to learn how to listen to your body and regain self-control in your life when it comes to food. When you're finished with this book, you're going to be empowered with the tools to never stress about losing weight again!

Waist Away: The Chantel Ray Way

One thing you have to understand about *The Chantel Ray Way* is that it's **not a diet**. That's a good thing! I believe diets are the worst thing ever when you're trying to lose weight. They actually make you *more* obsessed with food. "What am I eating? What's in it? What are the ingredients?" All of the rules and restrictions diets place on you make them too hard to stick to. Here's the thing: any diet works if you can stick to it. However, that's the problem. No matter how many diets you commit to, you always seem to gain all of the weight back. Diets are NOT sustainable.

In the first edition of *Waist Away: The Chantel Ray Way* I presented 10 *Chantel Ray Way Rules, 10 Biblical Principles* with the practice of intermittent fasting. My readers told me twenty concepts was too much to memorize, and I want to help make this easy for you! So, now everything you're going to learn in this book is still based on those twenty concepts, but I've slimmed everything into five easy-to-remember parts, using the acronym FIRES: **F**ast on a regular basis; **I**dentify True Hunger; **R**educe sugar and white simple carbs; **E**njoy real food without deprivation; **S**top before you're full. Then, you'll be on fire, girl!

F—Fast on a regular basis

I—Identify True Hunger

R—Reduce sugar and white simple carbohydrates

E—Enjoy Real Food without deprivation

S—Stop before you're full

What is Intermittent Fasting?

Intermittent fasting is a pattern of eating where you restrict the number of hours that you eat rather than track every calorie that you consume. In my research, I interviewed over 1,000 thin people and most of them did not have a **specific hour** of the day that they ate (e.g. lunch at 12, dinner at 6). They all ate *naturally* based on when they were actually hungry. Most of them eat one or two meals a day in a window of time we call an **eating window**.

You open your eating window when you consume your very first meal, snack, or caloric drink of the day. You close your eating window after you consume your very last calorie. When you're fasting you can only drink water, coffee, and unsweetened tea. There is no magic number of hours that every person should use for their eating window. Eight hours works great for some and six hours is better for others. Some people choose to eat only one meal and a snack a day in a window of four hours or fewer. The length of your eating window should be what works best for you with consideration to the portion sizes you eat.

The basis of this lifestyle is this: you don't restrict what you eat, but when you eat. You can eat what you like when you are physically hungry, as long as you only eat in your eating window and follow the FIRES Principles. These Principles work together with intermittent fasting. If you think you can lose weight by eating non-stop for eight hours straight, then you're sadly mistaken! FIRES will teach you to **never overeat** and to **eat only when you're truly hungry**.

F—Fast on a regular basis

I—Identify True Hunger

R—Reduce sugar and white simple carbohydrates

E—Enjoy Real Food without deprivation

S—Stop before you're full

Below is a chart with examples of sample eating windows:

Examples of Intermittent Fasting

Fasting **Eating**

8 Hour Eating Window [16 Hours Fasting]



6 Hour Eating Window [18 Hours Fasting]



4 Hour Eating Window [20 Hours Fasting]



If your eating window is 8 hours long, then that means you're fasting for 16 hours. If you're eating for 6 hours, then you're fasting for 18. This is also called the **clock approach** as seen in the image below.

Clock Approach Examples

4 Hour Eating Window



2-6pm, 3-7pm, 4-8pm

6 Hour Eating Window



3-9pm, 2-8pm, 1-7pm

8 Hour Eating Window



1-9pm, 2-10pm, 3-11pm

When using the clock approach, I recommend starting off with an 8-hour window while following the FIRES Principles. If you don't see yourself losing weight, start reducing your window. As you can see from the chart, if I'm doing the **20-hour fast**, then I'm only eating from 2-6, 3-7, or 4-8 p.m. I'm fasting the rest of the time. With the 6-hour window, I'm eating from 3-9 p.m. and, again, fasting the rest of the time. The beauty of this approach is that you get to choose the window when you want to eat that works with your schedule. I have tons of friends who like to eat at night, and some who eat during the day like me. The bottom line is that the fewer hours you eat the more weight you melt away. My eating window is determined by how much weight I want to lose and the sizes of my meals.

The other way you can look at intermittent fasting besides watching the clock is what I call the **meal approach**. The meal approach involves skipping one or two meals a day. If you want to melt fat away faster, look to the example of my many friends who only eat just one meal a day. The meal approach is great because you end up picking the meals that you want to eat each day. Here's a sample week of yours truly using the meal approach:

Meal Approach Examples

	Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner	Details
Day 1	✗	✓	✓	I skipped breakfast because I wasn't hungry and ate a medium-size lunch and dinner.
Day 2	✗	✓	✗	I went to one of my favorite Italian restaurants. I had a big lunch because I was very hungry from an intense work out earlier that day. That was my only meal for the day.
Day 3	✓	✓	✗	Because I had my last meal at 1pm the day before, I was very hungry the following day. I decided to eat breakfast and lunch. I wasn't hungry by the time dinner came around, so I skipped it.
Day 4	✗	✓	✓	I skipped breakfast like I normally do and had my usual lunch and dinner as my two meals.
Day 5	✗	✗	✓	I knew I was going to a late dinner with friends, so I decided to skip breakfast and lunch altogether.

Day 1, I skipped breakfast because I wasn't hungry and ate a medium-size lunch and dinner. Day 2, I went to one of my favorite Italian restaurants called Aldo's. I had a big lunch because I was very hungry from working out earlier that day. That was my only meal for the day. Because I had that meal at 1 p.m., I was very hungry the following day—Day 3. So, I decided to eat breakfast and lunch. I wasn't hungry by the time dinner came around, so I skipped it. Day 4, I skipped breakfast like I normally do and had my usual lunch and dinner as my two meals. Day 5, I knew I was going to dinner with friends, so I decided to skip breakfast and lunch altogether. That's a sample meal approach week for me. Of course, yours might look different.

I typically use the clock approach with my favorite eating window of noon-6 p.m. I like to eat in that timeframe with a medium-size lunch and dinner, but it doesn't always work out that way. Lately, I've gone a little rogue, and that meal approach sample is what my last couple of weeks looked like.

The number of pounds I lose is directly related to the size of my meals and the hours I eat. The reason the number of hours you fast and eat have such a dramatic effect on your weight loss is because of how your body fuels itself. Your body has two options for fuel: glucose (sugar), from the food you recently ate, or fat that's already stored in your body. Your body will always burn sugar first. If there's so much sugar present that your body never needs to burn fat, you won't lose weight because fat-burning is what results in weight loss.

To help you understand what I'm talking about, imagine you have cash in your pocket and cash in the bank. You're not going to drive all the way to the bank to withdraw money if you have some already in your pocket. You're going to use up everything in your pocket first before you ever touch what's in the bank. That's how your body works with sugar (pocket money) and fat (money in the bank). After 18-24 hours of fasting, your body has burned up all of the sugar and starts attacking the fat. That's what you want! This is called transitioning from a sugar-burning mode to a fat-burning mode and I will cover this critical phase in more detail later in the book.

F.I.R.E.S.

Here is a list of the original twenty *Rules and Principles* from the first edition of *Waist Away*, which have been reordered and reorganized for this edition. I leave them here as a reference for second-time readers, and so that you can see them laid out in detail. Following this list will be the new formatting—**FIRES**: **F**ast on a regular basis; **I**dentify True Hunger; **R**educe sugar and white simple carbohydrates; **E**njoy Real Food without deprivation; and **S**top before you're full. FIRES uses every one of the original Rules and Principles in a more compact way.

The 10 *Chantel Ray Way* Rules:

1. Savor the Food
2. Never Eat Past 4 on the Hunger Scale
3. Don't Eat Your First Meal of the Day Until Your Stomach Grows
4. Pick an Eating Window and Stay in it
5. Eat the Best First
6. Eat What You Really Want
7. How Big is the Differential?
8. Remember the Law of Diminishing Returns
9. Portion it Out
10. Use the Three-Bite Rule

The 10 Biblical Principles

1. Never Overeat
2. Recognize True Hunger
3. Fast on a Regular Basis
4. Don't Eat Too Much Sugar
5. Don't Make Food an Idol
6. Turn Around with True Repentance
7. Focus on Real Food
8. Quote God's Word When You Want to Eat but You're Not Hungry
9. Listen to the Holy Spirit for Guidance
10. Practice Self-Control

F.I.R.E.S.

The 5 Principles of *Waist Away: The Chantel Ray Way*:

F—Fast on a regular basis

I—Identify True Hunger

R—Reduce sugar and white
simple carbohydrates

E—Enjoy Real Food without deprivation

S—Stop before you're full

These days, when I run into people who haven't seen me in a while, they tell me, "Oh my goodness, you're wasting away!" Hence the name of this book, *Waist Away: The Chantel Ray Way*.

Even though my friends noticed the weight loss, I always felt like I hadn't lost much because it was just one or two pounds each week, but it adds up. Then I realized that a pound of fat is about the size of a can of diced tomatoes. That's actually a lot! I want to encourage you not to dismiss your progress even when it doesn't seem like much. Every pound counts and it's a testament to your hard work. Throw yourself a mini party and reward yourself (not with food). Get a massage, enjoy a hot bath, or do something to congratulate yourself. You deserve it!

Why Diets Fail

I tried every diet known to man, and they gave me more issues with food than I had had before. I kept reading all of these diet books instead of going to the Bible to find out what God said. When I went to the Word, I found out God had so much to say about fasting! I'm anti-diet because diets force you to focus more on food. They make a big greed problem because instead of addressing the problem of overeating they encourage you to have larger amounts of food. They justify it by labeling some foods as "good" and others as "bad."

Mindlessly Thin

As I've interviewed all these thin women, I've noticed that they don't overeat anything—not carrots, not celery...nothing. It's like they don't think about it. It's completely mindless.

You *can* lose weight on some of these low-carb, low-calorie, low sugar-diets even if you're overeating, but the Bible instructs us to refrain from gluttony. Diets put you in a position where you're almost worshipping food because it becomes such a focus. Thin eaters don't focus on food that much. Thin eaters

can even forget to eat.

These diets don't last because, at some point, you will go back to the foods you really want. This is because you never addressed the main issue: overeating. You never learned to listen to your hunger and fullness.

How Thin Eaters Eat

For the past two years, I've literally asked people who are thin: "Tell me what do you eat for breakfast lunch and dinner," and asked them to tell me all their secrets for how they stay thin. A couple of people have actually sat down to lunch with me, and we've spent a whole day together, so I could see every bit of food they ate for a 24-hour period. If you go to chantelrayway.com/interviews you can see transcripts of actual people who I've asked every single question and actually watch some of the live videos, so you can see them first hand pick up each morsel of food and see the size of the bite and even how they choose their food and what exactly they order.

My aunt has weighed 90 pounds for most of the past 30 years. She has weighed as much as 129 pounds, which at 5'4" was heavy for her. Her favorite



burger place is Burger King™. We went to lunch, and she got a Whopper™ Junior no cheese, and I got the big Whopper™ with cheese and fries. Before she even finished eating half of her burger, I was completely done with mine and still feeling kind of hungry because I ate so fast. The whole time she yelled at me “SLOW DOWN . . . no one’s taking the food from you. Enjoy it!” I asked her why she didn’t eat the whole thing, and she said, “I’m full I’ll save the rest for later if I’m hungry.”

Another time, I went to a salad bar with a thin friend. My office is right across from Whole Foods, so my friend came to visit me, and we walked over. I decided she was thin, so I would get the exact same thing she was eating and eat the exact same amount. She added beets, pumpkin seeds, and broccoli to her lettuce, and so did I. I copied her amounts exactly. She didn’t even know what I was doing; she assumed we just liked the same foods! We sat down to eat and my salad was gone in four minutes. I looked up and she had only eaten half of hers because she was busy talking. She took the rest home to eat later. While she ate, she practiced all of the principles: She prayed before she ate, paused to talk, ate slowly, and dissected her food. I saw her pick up pumpkin seeds and pop them in her mouth.

Watching thin eaters eat is very powerful. It’s something you should try. However, don’t get the wrong idea when you see a thin eater eat a big meal. Thin eaters will change how much they eat day-to-day based on what their body calls for. Some days they eat more than others, but they *never overeat*.

FIRES: Fast on a Regular Basis

The Power of Fasting

There's a story I love about two men, one young and one older, who work for eight hours cutting down trees. The young guy chops down tree after tree and never stops for the entire day. The older man takes a break every hour for 15 minutes. The young man is proud and figures he will definitely beat the old man. However, at the end of the day the young man is surprised to see that the older man has chopped down more trees than he did. He asks the old man how this is possible when he took so many breaks.

The old man replies, "I did take breaks, but when I did, I took time to sharpen my ax."

I believe fasting is a spiritual discipline that "sharpens your ax." You strengthen or "sharpen" your ability to take control of your body when you fast.

The Intermittent Fasting Plan

The Chantel Ray Way is based on the practice of intermittent fasting (IF). It's really based on learning to eat when you are hungry and stop when you're full, but intermittent fasting is the tool that helps assist with teaching you what true hunger is instead of emotional hunger. There are many diets that use IF with varying rules of what you can and can't eat. *The Chantel Ray Way* is different than others you may have heard about. To understand what intermittent fasting is and how we're going to do it, you should know about all of the different kinds of fasting.

The Five Kinds of Fasts

- **Normal Fast.** On a normal fast you are going without food for a defined period of time. You can still have liquids, but with no sugar: water, unsweetened tea, coffee (black), etc.
- **Juice Fast.** A juice fast is liquids only (without sugar or calorie restrictions). You're drinking mostly green juice but not having any solid foods whatsoever.
- **Absolute Fast.** When you're on an absolute fast, you are having no food or water at all. I don't think anyone should do this kind of fast for more than 3 days outside of an instruction from God where He promises to supernaturally sustain you.
- **Partial Fast.** Partial fasts specifically omit certain foods. A good example of this is a Daniel fast where you can eat fruits and vegetables among other things but meats are prohibited.
- **Rational Fast.** On a rational fast, you omit certain families of foods of nutrients for designated periods of time. For example, you might only eat protein every fourth day.



Theoretically, you could do any one of these fasts intermittently, but *The Chantel Ray Way* is strictly a **normal fast**. We'll be alternating between eating windows and fasts. While you're fasting, all food is off limits. That includes drinks with sugar and artificial sweeteners. The best way to put it is to say that, while you are fasting, you should not be consuming any calories at all.

True Fasting

Fasting is the Greek word *nésteia* meaning “not to eat.” I take that literally, so I'm not a fan of people abusing partial fasts like the Daniel Fast. I see people refraining from meat but overeating on everything else. If you're still eating burritos with cheese and refried beans and salads with more dressing than salad, I don't call that fasting. If you're scarfing down huge portions of bean burgers and bread, I think you're missing the point. The point of fasting is to not eat. When you fast, you make a sacrifice to God first by giving up food for a period of time.

When Daniel chose not to eat meat and wine for ten days, it was because the food was being offered to idols and eating it would have been a sin. So, he ate vegetables and **drank** water.

Why Intermittent Fasting?

Intermittent fasting is exactly what it sounds like: it's alternating between eating and fasting for set periods of time. These periods of time are called **eating windows** and **fasting windows**. The secret sauce to *The Chantel Ray Way* has nothing to do with restricting what foods you can eat—in fact you can eat what you want. The secret sauce is reducing the number of hours a day you spend eating, eating what you are craving, and eating less because you are savoring food in the confines of hunger and fullness.

You have to understand that the human body wasn't meant to be scarfing down food non-stop throughout the day. In fact, you're going to learn about people who eat just once a day and are perfectly healthy and thin. Our biggest problem is overfeeding ourselves; intermittent fasting solves that problem.

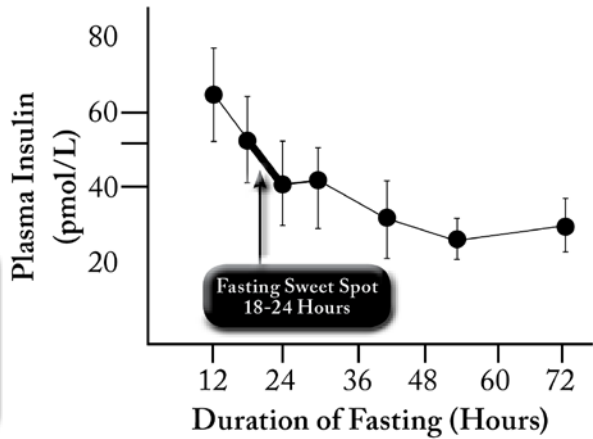
There are new studies every day that continue to prove the benefits of intermittent fasting. However, the main reason it's so effective for losing weight has everything to do with **insulin**. We're not going to get too scientific here, and I encourage you to do your own research to verify what I'm saying, but I want you to know that if you're someone who deals with diabetic issues, this plan can still be for you. I'm someone who, at my highest weight, was pre-diabetic, and I still have ongoing blood sugar issues. However, intermittent fasting has greatly impacted my blood sugar to the positive. If you have the same health issues I do, then you'll fit right in. Of course, consult your physician before starting a new dietary plan.

I check my blood sugar on a regular basis, and I believe that's an important practice to begin. I've learned a lot about insulin and its role in regulating your body's glucose. When you eat, your blood sugar is available to either be burned as energy or stored as fat. In order to lose weight, you have to lower your insulin levels so that your body can access your stored fat effectively. The very act of eating, regardless of what you're eating, causes insulin to be released from your body. Fasting, on the other hand, lowers insulin, which contributes to weight loss.

Anytime insulin increases, it can inhibit fat breakdown, which is what you need for fat loss. Like I said before, anytime you eat, your insulin increases. How much it increases depends on several factors like the food taken in and the individual person eating it, but now you should be able to see how fasting has a positive impact on fat loss. A scientific study actually revealed that the greatest drop in insulin and the greatest increase in fat breakdown take place between 18-24¹ hours of fasting. Dr. Ted Naiman of burnfatnotsugar.com has a great graph that illustrates this. I've included it with his permission:

“Plasma insulin decreased by ~50% between 12 and 72 hours of fasting. Of the total decline in plasma insulin, 70% occurred within the first 24 hours of fasting.”

“Of the total increase in lipid kinetics, 60% occurred between 12 and 24 hours of fasting; the greatest interval change occurred between 18 and 24 hours of fasting.”



Everything that we're talking about with intermittent fasting rides on insulin. You need your insulin to be low enough to promote fat breakdown so you can be in a fat-burning mode and not a sugar-burning mode.

¹ Progressive alterations in lipid and glucose metabolism during short-term fasting in young adult men., S. Klein, Y. Sakurai, J. A. Romijn, R. M. Carroll, American Journal of Physiology - Endocrinology and Metabolism. Published 1 November 1993, Vol. 265 no. 5, E801-E806

Helpful Fasting Tips

Build up to fasting. Intermittent fasting is the only plan that gets easier as you go. So, one thing you can do wrong in the beginning is fast for too long and binge afterwards. We know that in order to lose fat you have to have a caloric deficit, so if you binge you're going to ruin the whole point of fasting. If you fast too long in the beginning of this journey, it's going to make you very vulnerable to losing control and binge eating. It's better to start out slow. An eight-hour eating window is very, very easy to start with. While you should ultimately want to follow the schedule I laid out for you, it's okay to work your way there.

Stay busy. It really doesn't matter if you're playing video games, working, or reading a book. During your fasting time, especially when you start getting really hungry, you want to make sure you stay really, really busy. Sunday is a hard day for me because I'm more relaxed and that gives me room to eat. What I like to do is go to the mall and window shop or get my hair or nails done to stay busy.

Hunger comes in waves. When you're fasting, there's going to be a point when you get ravenously hungry, but after a little while it passes. You won't stay starving for hours. Hunger comes in waves. If you can keep busy and pass that first couple of waves, you'll have more fat loss. People who are really thin are able to "ride that wave." It's just like a wave in the ocean that peaks up and then goes back down. Thin people understand that they can ride that out because they know the hunger will eventually go down.



Break your fast with whole, clean foods. When I'm breaking my fast, I try not to break it with anything but really clean and nutrient-dense foods. I definitely don't break my fast with chemicals. You need to listen to what your body is wanting, but with whole foods. You can't feed your body a bunch of processed junk foods and then allow it to tell you what it wants. The chemicals in that food throw your body off making you want more and more junk food. You also want to make sure that whatever your first meal is, it's not filled with sugar. Otherwise, you'll end up overeating.

Use Potassium. I feel the best when I have plenty of potassium and without enough of it I feel I have no energy. My favorite sources of potassium are avocados, coconut water, bananas, and sweet potatoes. If you like avocados like I do, watch your intake. They're high in calories and you can consume a whole lot without even realizing it. The same goes for the sugar in coconut water.

Walk Away. Learn how to walk away from the food when you're done with it. It's okay to put away leftovers. When you know you can only eat once or twice a day you have a tendency to want to overeat. Make sure that you're eating foods that you actually like so you're not feeling deprived.

Get Extra Sleep. Sleep is very important. Your insulin decreases while you're sleeping and cortisol, which helps with blood sugar regulation, increases.



Get Active. I've taken to **going on** nightly walks with a friend. It's helping me lose weight and giving me something to do besides eat.

Drink Water. I drink a tall glass of water when I get really hungry. If that doesn't work, I'll have coffee with coconut oil or unsweetened tea.

Get Productive Early. I get annoyed if I eat before noon because I know I'm most productive in the morning when I haven't eaten yet. After eating, my productivity drops. Try to prolong your fasting window so that you can be more productive. See if you can push yourself one more hour even when you think you can't.

Find a Friend. Find a friend you can do intermittent fasting with so you can hold each other accountable.

Eat More Protein. Getting more protein in your body leads to greater appetite control. Find a way to get it in while still eating what you want.

Read the Bible. Draw strength from Scriptures. The Bible tells us to fast, so it's something we know we can do.

Remember It Doesn't Happen Overnight. One thing you have to remember when you start this plan is that you may not lose weight as fast as you want to. I personally didn't lose any weight for the first two weeks. This plan has to be looked at over the course of a month. On my third week, I lost 6 pounds. My fourth week, 4 pounds. Intermittent fasting is not a get skinny quick scheme. It's not overnight, but that's okay because you want this to be lasting. You didn't gain the weight overnight, and you can't lose it overnight. We are making a lifestyle change that's forever. In the book of Exodus, you can read about the Israelites' trials in the desert. There are going to be times when you feel like you're in the desert and aren't losing weight. The thing with this plan is, you'll lose fat, but not muscle. So, there will be some weeks when you feel like you aren't losing weight. But instead of feeling miserable like you're in the desert and depriving yourself, take it as an opportunity to ask God, "What are You going to show me today? What are You going to teach me?"



Another tip is to save your coffee for later in your fast, not first thing in the morning. If you choose to set your fast for the morning hours, you'll notice that you're usually not hungry when you first wake up. That's one of the reasons I prefer morning fasts. There's a myth out there that breakfast is the most important meal of the day, but it's simply not true. You can choose to fast whenever you like and get results. You're already in a fasted state when you first wake up in the morning, so save your coffee for when your hunger starts to creep up so the caffeine can suppress your appetite.

Fasting: It Works!

There are benefits to intermittent fasting that I haven't found with any diet I've tried. First, I believe intermittent fasting is a solution for the "willpower factor." I think we all have a limit to our willpower. We can get excited about a diet for a little while, but, when we want a brownie and the diet says we can't, most times we end up failing. We move on to the next diet since the last one was "too hard" and when that one fails we move on to another one. We blame the diets, but it's really our inability to stick with them that's the problem—

but that's okay! Trying to live by a diet is unrealistic and unsustainable. Diets that restrict foods get harder the longer you do them while intermittent fasting is the only plan that I believe gets easier with time. It doesn't put pressure on your willpower because you're still allowed to eat what you want. You're simply changing the time-frame when you eat.

The second major benefit is that I'm finally eating less. I'm at the point where I'm eating only two meals just about every day, and they're small meals at that. See, my struggles with eating are just like my troubles with skiing. I do great while I'm in motion, but I'm atrocious at stopping. They had to stamp a big, red "X" on my ticket and threaten to kick me off the slope if I didn't stop running into people! Well, stopping once I start eating is just as real a challenge for me. Intermittent fasting has helped me control and stop my eating when I need to.

Now, I'm even snacking less. I literally had a snacking addiction to the point where my family made up a song to tease me: it's called "All I Do is Snack" to the tune of "All I Do is Win" by DJ Khaled. Yes, it was that bad. Thankfully, my snacking addiction is broken now, and you won't find me snacking all day anymore.

Finally, when it comes to my health, my hormones feel regulated, my immune system is stronger, and I have more mental clarity. There are so many different cleanses out there, but I believe fasting is God's way of doing it. It's like a self-cleansing process. Don't waste your money on cleanses when you can just fast. Your body gets a chance to repair itself while you fast. Fasting works!

Alternative Intermittent Fasting Methods

If you've never heard of intermittent fasting before now, you're probably going to Google it to learn more. When you do, you'll find out there are a lot of different versions and suggestions about how to do it. Here are a few that I've seen but don't recommend that you follow.

5-2 Diet. This diet involves eating a normal, healthy diet five days of the week, and then eating only 500 calories for two days of the week. Those days would be your fast days. My problem with this diet is that I believe it requires too much calorie counting and could ultimately leave room for you to be tempted to binge.

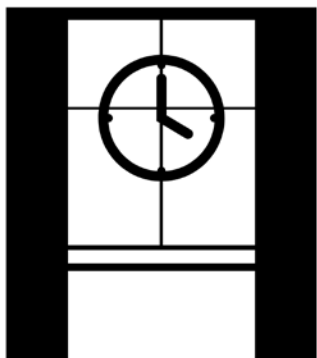
Heavy Eating. There's a myth that you should eat a ton of food at your meals in your eating window to avoid snacking in between. I disagree because that would cause you to overeat.

Early Dinners. There's a commonly held belief, whether you're doing intermittent fasting or not, that you should never eat dinner late at night. I have a ton of friends who have late eating windows and even eat carbs right before bed, and they're still very thin. Most of the girls I interviewed who are thin ate a small lunch or a small snack for lunch, and then a medium-sized dinner of whatever they wanted, and that's it.

The Eating Window

Pick an Eating Window and Stay in it

An eating window is a specific period of time in which all of your caloric food and beverages must be consumed. Your eating window opens as soon as you take your first bite/sip of food of the day. The eating window closes after you've taken your last bite/sip of food for the day. If that's six hours after your first meal, then that was a six-hour eating window.



Let's say it's Monday and you have a six-hour eating window scheduled. You decide to eat your first meal at 1 p.m. The clock starts after you take your first bite of food at 1 o'clock. Everything you eat after that has to happen before 7 p.m. After that, you're finished eating until tomorrow when you start your next window. Now, suppose you finished eating dinner by 7 p.m., but you decide to have a glass of wine or a bowl of ice cream at 9 p.m. Well, you just extended your

window into an eight-hour window. You can't mark that day as a successful six-hour eating window. No calories can be consumed outside of your eating window. Everything counts.

I first heard about intermittent fasting from my trainer, Chris Sykes. He lost 20 pounds in two weeks, and we had a mutual friend who lost 30 pounds in 60 days. Chris explained to me that I could eat whatever I wanted. All I had to do was confine myself to an eight-hour eating window. I thought that didn't sound too hard at all. That was because I was already used to eating nine hours a day even though I didn't know it at the time. After two weeks of trying the eight-hour window, I didn't lose any weight. I realized that cutting

my eating down by one hour wasn't having an effect on me. So, I decided to reduce my eating window to six hours. By the third week, I lost 6 pounds total.

Pay attention to how you respond to the eating window and how you can transition over time. Some people are going to start with the eight-hour window, realize that it's too easy for them, and jump to six hours. Others will start with eight, move to seven, and then down to six. I moved from eight to six quickly when I realized eight hours wouldn't cut the mustard for me to lose weight like I needed to. Now, my normal eating window is from noon-6 p.m. I listen to my body and learn the days that I'm hungry and the days that I'm not. It'll vary from day to day. For instance, the week before my period I'm a lot hungrier.

What you want to avoid is eating more than your body needs. No matter how long your eating window is, you can't overeat. If you eat from 12-6 (a six-hour window), but you consume a huge lunch, a snack in the middle, and a huge dinner then you're still eating too much. I learned quickly that if you overeat, you still won't lose weight no matter how short your window is. All of these FIRES components must work together for you to see success.

You'll find out what works for you and that will change over time. I think the window that works best for most people is a five to six-hour window with one medium-sized meal and one small meal.

The wonderful thing about fasting is that your body learns to expect food at a certain time of day. Around 11 or 12 o'clock, my stomach growls because it's used to eating around that time. Because of this I'm not constantly thinking about food and that's one of the major goals of *The Chantel Ray Way*. Once my eating window is closed, it's closed! At that point, I have mentally shut myself down from thinking about food and it's so peaceful! If you've never experienced this before it may sound unbelievable, but trust me when I say it's a much better way to live.

I feel much more productive now that I'm not constantly thinking about food. I get so much more done and I don't even want to start eating because once I do, I know I'm going to slow down. There's a myth that you get tired if

you don't eat, but the opposite happens. I'm not at all tired when I fast. I have more energy when I don't eat than when I have frequent meals all day. I think it's because the body takes so much energy to digest food. When I fast it's not doing digesting food all day long.

Believe me, there are going to be days when you get tired of this plan and think *this is too much!* The first couple of months on this plan have a lot of moments like that. Find the eating window that works for you and remember that you don't have to restrict anything in your diet. This isn't a plan that deprives you.

Get rid of the concept of the "cheat day." Remember that you aren't depriving yourself. Once in a blue moon, usually when I have a special event like a wedding to attend, I'll have an eight-hour eating window and eat less throughout the day. You may have days like that too, but you're not going to need "cheat days."

There's definitely an adjustment period, but it's something you can do. I had a lot of friends who thought they could never do this, but once they saw me lose weight they changed their tune.

The Flexibility of the Eating Window

Different people like to do different things when it comes to the timeframe of the eating window. Some prefer to start eating in the morning and others in the afternoon. I prefer to fast in the mornings and so I get push-back from people who insist on telling me that skipping breakfast is *soooooo* bad for me. I haven't seen any negative consequences yet.

When you do find the timeframe for your eating window, stick with it. The people I know who are the most successful with this plan pick a designated time of day for their eating window that they keep consistent. If you do it the same time every day, your body gets used to it and it makes it easier.

If you ever get off track, you may need to make adjustments. One day, I had an early lunch at 11:30 a.m. Since I chose to eat, I ended up eating in a

seven-hour window instead of the six-hour window I was scheduled to have. I balanced myself back out by swapping in an additional four-hour eating window day in place of one of my six-hour windows. This also helps me on days when I overeat. My body benefits from the “cleanse” of a shorter window.

As an additional note, I do a lot of four-hour windows when I really want to jumpstart my weight loss after I’ve hit a plateau. If you do this, don’t overdo it or you’ll struggle to keep it up and be tempted to binge.

Eating Window Alternatives

An eating window isn’t the only way to employ the principles we discuss in this book and get results. You can simply wait until every stomach growl to eat, but I think it becomes difficult to plan your life around the growls when unexpected events and outings with friends come up. However, that method will most certainly result in weight loss just like eating windows will.

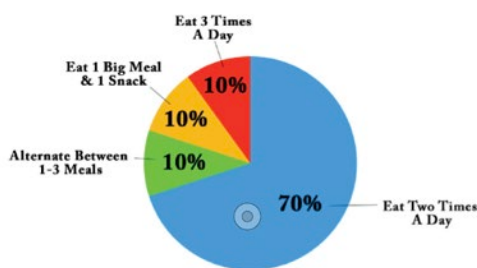
I interviewed over a thousand thin people for this book, and I learned that while not all of them participated in intermittent fasting, their eating behavior contained one or more of the following attributes:

- Eating one meal a day (sometimes two)
- Eating in a six-hour window
- Eating in an eight-hour window, very clean
- Eating only when the stomach growls or is empty
- Eating 100 calories or fewer in the morning (most ate nothing for breakfast, only coffee)
- Eating what they truly wanted

Every single person I interviewed did at least one of these things. They all got themselves to a fasted state at some point in the day. Whether they know it or not, there’s an element of intermittent fasting in the way they eat.

How Many Times A Day Do You Eat?

I would say 70% of the people I interviewed said they ate only two meals a day, and most of those people skipped breakfast and ate lunch and dinner. Ten percent of those people only ate once a day. Ten percent of those women ate three times a day, but whatever they ate in the morning was very, very small such as a piece of fruit, a small 80-calorie yogurt, or one or two boiled eggs. Something that was almost always 150 calories or fewer. Another 10% sometimes ate one time a day sometimes two times a day and sometimes three times a day. They were really all over the map—it all depended on when they were hungry.



The Whoosh Effect

You should google *The Whoosh Effect*. I was doing intermittent fasting for three straight weeks, and I didn't lose any weight. After those three weeks, I lost 6 pounds. Then it just started really coming off, but for those first three weeks I thought, "This is ridiculous; I'm not losing any weight." I want to explain to you what is happening even though it isn't registering as a loss on the scale. When you're losing weight, your fat cells hold onto water, and your body fills those different cells with water. In the beginning, if you get on the scales, and you aren't seeing the results you are looking for, it could take another week or two weeks. In my case, it was three weeks, and it's really bizarre because all of a sudden you can just lose 6 pounds. I don't know why it was so sudden for me, but, all of a sudden, WHOOSH, your body just releases some of the water weight that it has been storing, and then boom you've lost a

lot of weight. My weight loss pattern with intermittent fasting is usually in the beginning it seems like I stay the same, then 3 weeks later I lose 6 pounds, and then I may lose a little more. From there I may go up a little or down a little. If you look at my weekly average, I generally lose between 1-2 pounds per week, but there may be a week I don't lose any, and then the following week I might lose 2 pounds.

A lot of what i'm saying will come to life, if you go to chantelrayway.com/videocourse, and watch what I am teaching instead of reading it.

Scales

Two days ago, I got on the scale and I had gained two pounds. Today, I got on the scale and I had lost three pounds. Did I really lose three pounds? No. That's why the scale isn't a good indicator. **Don't freak out over the scale.** It will drive you up the wall, mentally. It could be something as simple as water that makes your scale weight fluctuate. I recommend weighing once a week, and **only when you're feeling thin.** If you're feeling bloated, then don't get on the scale. I only get on the scale if I think I've lost weight. Otherwise, why am I going to get on the scale just to feel bad about myself? No way. Most of the girls I interviewed either weigh themselves once a week, weigh themselves three times a week, or never got on the scale.

One Meal A Day (OMAD)

Of the women I interviewed, 10% of them ate one meal a day. I am going to be calling *one meal a day* "OMAD" from here on. Even though 70% of the girls I interviewed ate two meals a day, for a lot of them it was more like one meal and a snack. You may think eating OMAD sounds absolutely ridiculous, but it actually can save you a ton of time, a ton of money, and, once your body gets used to it, it's not nearly as hard as it sounds. When I am in a maintenance mode, I like to eat in a six-hour window, but when I have gained a few pounds and really want to lose weight, eating in a one-hour window and eating OMAD is what really works for losing weight.

Now, let me explain what happens in that one hour for me. That meal is almost always at night around 6 p.m. For a while, I started eating my OMAD at lunch, which I like doing, but I have so much more energy, and I am so much more productive during the day when I don't eat, so I really enjoy that OMAD at dinner, and I like eating dinner with my family. When I was doing the OMAD at lunch, I sat down at the dinner table one night to actually eat, and my son, who always sets the table, put just a glass of water in front of me. I said, "Hun, I'm eating dinner tonight," and he was so shocked because it had been so long since I had actually eaten dinner with them, so I switched my OMAD to dinner.

In my opinion, the reason intermittent fasting is so effective is because you are always in a fed state or a fasted state. The only way you could eat something while your body would still think you are in a fasted state is if you just ate straight fat. So, if you ate just a tablespoon of ghee, your body would still think you were in a fasted state. As soon as your body starts digesting all the nutrients from whatever you eat, and for several hours after depending on the food you eat, your body is basically creating insulin. When it creates insulin, the insulin signals your body to store the food it has taken in. Your body has a choice: it can take the food in as body fat or as glycogen. If your glycogen stores are totally full already because you are not hungry and have enough already stored up, then your body is not ever burning fat, because it is in complete storage mode.

Let me go back and explain why OMAD is so effective by telling you what my meal looks like in that hour. The very first thing I do in that hour is usually eat some sort of high-fat something. I am usually very hungry after 23 hours, and this helps calm my body down. I maybe have $\frac{1}{4}$ piece of avocado or some almonds—just some sort of fat because it helps fill me up. It is almost like an appetizer. If I am out to dinner, I will order chicken lettuce wraps or something like that so that I can be a little bit fuller; then I eat my meal, and if I am going to have a dessert, I will wait a little bit and have a little desert. This is all happening in a one-hour period. I don't suggest that you go from eating 3 or 4 meals a day to going into just straight OMAD. It's great if you decide

you're going to start intermittent fasting beginning with an 8-hour window, then 6-hour window, then 4-hour window and work your way down.

You must decide when you do best with your OMAD. Some people who I have talked to like to do lunch, but the majority like to do dinner. I just feel like I am so much more productive during the day with the number of things I can get done when I don't eat. I'm very, very busy and have so much on my plate, and I love feeling like I am accomplishing as much as possible.

We eat a very early dinner in my family. I had a girl call me at 4:45 p.m.

one time, and she asked, "What are you doing?" I said, "Oh I'm finishing dinner." She was surprised and was like "At 4:45?!" You can eat an earlier dinner; you don't have to wait until 7:00. I feel like the nice thing also is that at the end of the day I'm more relaxed, and my digestion in the later part of the day is better. I can take my time; I'm not worried about work or other things, and I can kind of slow down a little bit. Just remember that even if you decide to eat a big meal at lunchtime, there's no reason why you can't participate in family dinner or go to dinner party because you don't *have* to eat to enjoy the experience. That is the biggest thing: people who are thin feel no pressure to eat just because they are at a dinner or function. A lot of times, I'll go to different lunch meetings or parties, and people will say, "Oh, eat something small," but I'll sit there and not eat. You must get out of your mind that you have to eat just because you've been invited to: Eating has nothing to do with enjoying someone's company ... NOTHING. In fact, not eating actually makes the time more meaningful because you aren't shoving food in your face, and you are able to talk more.

Let me tell you some reasons why I love doing the OMAD lifestyle:

- **It Saves You Money**

You will actually save money. If I'm not saving money, it's because I'm eating really healthy, clean food for that one meal. I might pick something up from somewhere, and it might be a 30-dollar meal. Some people spend \$10 on breakfast, lunch and dinner all the time, but I choose to spend \$30 collectively on one single meal and get way better food. You can either save money and eat a \$10 meal or get something more expensive and of higher quality.

- **It Improves Digestion**

When you fast for so long, it gives all of your systems a way to rest. It can give your pancreas, your gallbladder, and large bowel a rest. It can really help people who have IBS and other issues like that.

- **It Helps You Stop Thinking About Food**

The weird thing is, when I put in my mind that I'm not eating for that whole day, I literally do not think about food. I keep myself busy and focus on other things. You might think that if you're only eating once a day you're going to be ravenous, but when your body transitions from a sugar-burning mode to a fat-burning mode you are less hungry.

- **It Increases Energy**

I'm telling you, when I eat OMAD, I just feel lighter and bubblier. The amount I can accomplish is just so much more when food isn't weighing me down. Another reason I like eating dinner instead of lunch is that I avoid the three o'clock slump. People are generally finishing their lunch around one or two o'clock, and that is when they start getting tired and sluggish, and their blood sugar starts dropping, but I avoid that when I eat OMAD.

- **It Decreases Inflammation**

I have a lot of issues with joint pain and inflammation; my knees swell up, and my joints hurt. But when I am doing OMAD, really making sure that the food is of high quality for that one meal, it really helps with all of those things.

- **It Saves Calories**

I don't count calories, but I know just from the amount of food that I'm eating that I don't eat as many calories in one meal as I would eating 3 meals in a day. Some days, when I am eating just one meal, I eat more than other days, but sometimes, because I haven't eaten all day, I get full really quickly, so my portion sizes are smaller. If you're listening to your hunger and fullness cues and your satiety signals when eating OMAD, you're going to eat less food. In the beginning, because they are waiting all day to eat, some people over-eat. You must make sure you are still eating to the point right before you're full and not passing that point. The other thing I want to say about OMAD during a one-hour window is that you aren't just shoving food in your mouth constantly over and over again for that entire hour.

If you are going on an extended fast, then you need to get my book *Fasting to Freedom*. The things I suggest, if you are doing a longer fast, are going to be different than if you are just going to do OMAD.

List of things you can have when fasting with OMAD:

Great

- Water
- Black coffee
- Tea unflavored with no added flavors
- Herbal tea unflavored and not fruity
- Unflavored sparkling water like San Pellegrino, Perrier, and La Croix

Okay

- Organic Stevia
- Regular Creamer (unsweetened)
- Coconut Milk
- Almond Milk (to make it home-made, see my video at chantelrayway.com/recipes)
- Homemade bone broth—*I use this for extended fasting, but if you are just fasting for 23 hours, you should be fine. If you need to use this as a crutch in the very beginning that's okay but only for a couple days to help you. You shouldn't need it continuously, and at the max have one cup and that's it.*

Good

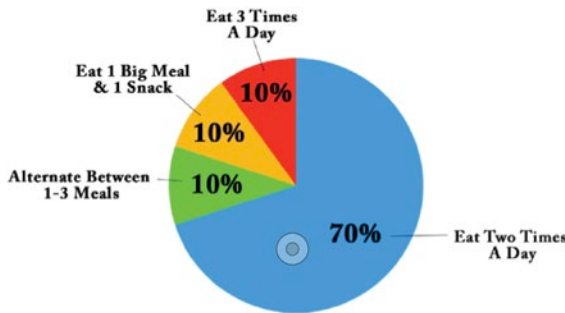
- MCT (medium chain triglycerides)
- Oil
- Coconut oil
- Ghee
- Heavy Cream (if not allergic to dairy)
- *(These are all good options to add to your coffee, if you need to have a creamer.)*

Absolutely Not

- Artificial sweeteners
- Saccharine
- NutraSweet
- Aspartame

In Weight Watchers, you know there is something called “free foods,” which you can eat as much of as you want—you don’t have to track or measure these foods. They are considered fine. The thing is, you shouldn’t be eating any foods at all during your fasting period, even if they are considered “free foods.” Of the ladies I interviewed, at least 90% drank coffee in the morning, and a huge majority had coffee with creamer in the morning and didn’t count that as eating. Many used almond or coconut milk, and if they did use sugar at all, it was just a teaspoon. Most of the ladies just had black coffee with heavy cream.

As I interviewed all of the women, not a single person actually said, “I do intermittent fasting.” It’s not a conscious decision on their part, they just do it. The graph below reveals that 70% of the people I interviewed felt true hunger and ate twice a day. 10% of them ate three times a day. 10% ate one big meal and a snack and 10% alternated between 1-3 meals.



One of my favorite places to go is the The Ritz-Carlton in Key Biscayne, Miami. The last time I visited, I interviewed thin ladies as usual, to find out what they were eating for every meal. It was surprising to learn that a higher-than-normal percentage of women were eating three times a day. I dug deeper and realized that they were eating clean for 95% of their diet or higher; they also ate very small portions. One other thing they told me is that they ate a high-protein snack 20 minutes before a meal to keep them stable. These snacks included raw nuts like cashews and almonds (usually 10 at a time) or peanuts (usually 20). It kept them from getting Hungry Hungry Hippo™™ Hungry and helped them control their eating.

The Fasting Schedule

Now that you have a better understanding of intermittent fasting and its benefits, it's time to learn how to put it to work. The tables below detail the length of your eating windows and how many days a week you should be using that window to get you started. Notice that you can choose any day of the week that you like. Create your own schedule that works for you.

Sample Phase 1

# of days	Eating Window
Every day	8 hours

Sample Phase 2

# of days	Eating Window
Every day	6 hours

I recommend starting with an eight-hour window. If you aren't losing weight as aggressively as you would like, move onto Phase 2.

Sample Phase 3

# of days	Eating Window
4	6 hours
2	4 hours
1	8 hours

Extreme Weight Loss Phase

# of days	Eating Window
2	0 hours
2	4 hours
3	6 hours

All of the days in Phase 2 have six-hour eating windows. If you're eating for six hours, then you're fasting for 18. Eighteen hours of fasting gets you right into that fat-burning zone you want to be in. In my experience, a six-hour or smaller eating window gets the best results. If you get comfortable with the six-hour window, you can step it up to Phase 3 and maximize your fat-burning.

I want to make a note about the four-hour eating window—also called the Big Power Fast. A four-hour window only gives you time to eat one meal for the day. This is essentially a 24-hour fast. Once you start your next window the following day, it will have been almost 24 hours since your last meal. I recommend doing the Big Power Fast on days when you know you're going to be very busy and not tempted to give in and break your fast.

What is a Power Fast?

A power fast is when you fast for 24 hours or longer, at least two times per week.

Getting Too Hungry with the Big Power Fast

Years ago, my church participated in an eight-day corporate fast. It was the longest I had ever fasted and I kept up my regular exercise and work schedule. Because I didn't build up to it, I was ravenous by the end of the fast. Once it was over, I overate big time for the next five days and gained weight.

You may never find yourself fasting that long, but it is possible to let yourself get too hungry. This is the reason you should build up to the Big Power Fast. Like I've said before, fasting is like running. You don't go outside and run 10 miles when you've never run before, and you can't expect to do a 24-hour fast without some fasting experience. Take a measured approach to your fasting so you don't feel like you're starving and want to binge.

After you do a Big Power Fast, you *will* feel hungrier for the next couple of days. You're going to eat a little bit more because of that. However, if you get to the point that you're just shoveling it in, then it's better to stick to a six-hour eating window for a little bit longer. Day-by-day, start making that window smaller. Five hours one day, four hours the next, continuing until you reach your goal.

If you fast for 24 hours and then eat 3000 calories in one sitting, you're defeating the purpose of the fast. You're not to eat past a 4 on the Hunger Scale no matter what.

Hunger and Fullness

You have to get in tune with your body and ask, “How hungry am I? How full am I?” This is the only way you’re going to successfully lose weight with intermittent fasting. When you learn how to evaluate **true hunger**, you’re going to discover you don’t need to eat as much food or as many meals as you think you do. You might end up only eating one or two meals a day.

Now, don’t look at that and think, “That’s crazy! I might as well give up now.” You’re going to find out what works for you, and as you learn how to recognize true hunger you’re going to find yourself eating less and less. Start with learning not to eat more than what your body needs. To help you do that, I developed the **Hunger Scale**. The next time you think about eating food, locate your level of hunger on this Hunger Scale first (detailed in the next section, “I,” for **I**dentify True Hunger).

The Fed State vs. The Fasted State

At any given time, your body is in one of two states: the **fed state** or the **fasted state**. Your body behaves very differently in both states. In the fed state, your body is actively digesting food and absorbing nutrients. How long it lasts depends on how long it takes for your body to digest food.

One of the factors that impact your digestion time is the kind of food you eat. Some foods digest faster than others and there’s even a topic called **food combining** that explains how different foods digest better or worse when they’re eaten together. I want to discuss food combining for just a minute because I did a popular food-combining diet years ago. It made me crazy!



The diet centered around eliminating, separating, or combining all kinds of different foods. I learned the hard way that it made me focus too much on what I was eating instead of how much I was eating. However, it wasn't all bad because I did learn a few things about my digestion. I learned that if I eat smaller portions, my body can digest most combinations of food. If I'm ravenously hungry and need to eat a little more, protein and vegetables digest together well for me.



The other state, the fasted state, technically begins when your body has finished digesting food. However, that's hard to track, so, for the purposes of this book, we're doing a tweaked version of the fasted state. When I mention being in a fasted state, I'm simply referring to the period of time after you closed your eating window. It's not technically accurate, but it's easier to track and it will work for the plan we're doing.

Getting to a true fasted state is something everyone should experience. The Big Power Fast allows you to do that with its OMAD window. I believe that if you're constantly feeding your body and making it digest food pretty much 24/7, you're "hogging up" all of its time, so to speak. Your body never has a chance to renew itself. I believe fasting gives your body that opportunity and there's ongoing research to suggest intermittent fasting could help you live longer. Doing the Big Power Fast for 24 hours, twice a week, can deliver massive weight loss.

What Can I Eat While I'm Fasting?

While you're fasting, you are not to have any food whatsoever. The only things you can drink are liquids that don't have any calories. So, you can have black coffee, tea, water and sparkling unflavored water. Don't have any caloric drinks like diet soda or tea with stevia. You also can't pop mints, chew sugared gum, take cream in your coffee, or have a hard candy. There is no sugar whatsoever allowed on your fast! Whenever you have sugar—truthfully, whenever you eat anything at all—your insulin spikes. Spiking your insulin during your fast will lock away your fat stores and that's the opposite of what you want to happen. Accessing and burning that stored fat is a primary goal of fasting. Besides, if you're constantly eating little things during your fast you're going to counteract your ability to hear your body tell you when it's actually hungry.

It may sound obvious, but, when you're fasting, you're not eating. No exceptions. Some diet books talk about “free foods”—foods that have zero calories—as exceptions to the rule. Free foods can include diet Jello, pickles, carrots, plain celery, and more. Intermittent fasting, however, doesn't allow free foods, either.

Now, some people feel they can't survive without having something while they're fasting. They feel they have to have at least a diet soda or tea with stevia or something. If this is a real struggle for you, then I'd much rather you take baby steps and transition into full fasting. If you're one of those people, then you can start with **Crutch Foods**: we'll discuss this topic in detail below. Crutch Foods technically break your fast, but you can start with them if going cold turkey is too hard. I'd rather you start there than not start at all.

Don't use this as an excuse to cheat on fasting! Know what you can handle, but don't be afraid to challenge yourself. It's a rewarding experience to be able to say “no” to food for a good chunk of your day. Don't rob yourself of that victory. You can do this!

Crutch Foods

For people who are beginning intermittent fasting for the first time, cutting out all chemicals and artificial sweeteners can be a challenge. Drinking only water, unsweetened tea and black coffee during your fast may even seem impossible at first.

If cutting out all the things you're used to is a major hang-up that's keeping you from starting this plan, then you might need to start with **Crutch Foods**. Crutch Foods are foods that I normally don't recommend you consume while you fast. These foods are only allowed as a starting point until you can progress to a point that you can commit to the fast completely.

Crutch Foods

-Bone Broth: If you're going to drink bone broth, make sure it's homemade. Those bone broth bouillons are Chemical City.

-Coconut Oil or Heavy Cream in Coffee

-Diet Sodas

-Sugarless Gum/Breath Mints

-Fruit-Flavored Sparkling Water

Remember, this is just a starting point. These kinds of foods will spike your insulin and counteract the purpose of the fast, so you don't want to remain here.

Coffee: The Appetite Suppressant

Coffee is a great way to get you through your fast. Coffee and unsweetened tea act as appetite suppressants. We have to discuss coffee for a minute because the biggest problem people have with this is that they don't want to drink black coffee under any circumstances!

"I have to drink coffee with cream in the morning," they tell me. "That is just a must! If I can't have coffee with cream in the morning, this diet is not for me."

You should not consume any calories while you're fasting and that includes coffee with cream. That being said, remember this is *not* a diet. I know plenty of people using this approach to eating who are drinking coffee with cream in the morning. Believe it or not, you can still get results. I have an aunt who is 5'4" and 90 pounds and eats exactly this way. She drinks coffee with cream multiple times a day until about 1 p.m. However, she only ever has 1-1 ½ meals after that. She eats very, very little.

I don't recommend coffee with cream because I believe it will slow down your progress and keep you from discovering true hunger. I prefer you dig in and learn to take it black or try unsweetened tea instead. Eighty percent of the fat loss battle is controlling your hunger, and coffee is a great way to delay hunger until you're ready to eat.

There is a timing to when you should drink coffee as well. Don't drink it as soon as you wake up. You're not usually starving when you first get out of bed. Save it for later on when you feel hunger setting in, but you need to push on with your fast a little longer. That's when coffee and tea are a great help.

I recommend no more than 2-3 cups of coffee a day. If you drink more than that, it won't be as effective in suppressing your appetite.

Biblical Foundation for Fasting

Matthew 6:16-18 (NIV)

When you fast, do not look somber as the hypocrites do...

All over the Bible there are mentions of fasting. In fact, fasting is mentioned in Scripture, in some form, over 70 times. Notice how in Matthew 6:16 (above) that Jesus says "*when* you fast" (emphasis mine). Apparently, God never intended for fasting to be optional in our lives. It's something He actually expects us to do, and God never tells you to do something you can't do.

I believe there are some walls in life that we won't break through without fasting. What you have to understand is that this weight loss battle isn't a natural fight. It's a spiritual one. Spiritual battles require spiritual weapons and fasting is one of the most powerful tools in your arsenal. So, don't count it out!

A good analogy for the power of fasting is SCUBA diving. When you're just looking at the surface of the water from the outside, you can't really see what's going on underneath the surface. It's only after you dive underneath that everything changes. You can see the coral and all the different colors and kinds of fish. It's like everything comes alive! Fasting does that for your spirit. The body is hungry, but the spirit is sharp and everything comes into focus. It makes it easier to hear from God. Fasting definitely needs to be a part of our Christian practice.

The purpose of fasting is not so that you appear spiritual. It's so that you *are* spiritual. It's something you don't have to tell everyone about except for your spiritual partner. You don't need to make a big deal out of it and have a "poor me" attitude. Sometimes, you might just have to tell people, "I'm not eating right now." In the beginning, fasting is NOT a pleasant experience simply due to the fact that you're denying yourself. However, the results are so incredible that once you get past some of the discomforts, you'll see that breakthroughs can happen. Every major breakthrough I've gotten in my life has been a result of fasting. I don't ever get into a serious project or make any major decisions without prayer and fasting first.

It's important to know that fasting doesn't move God. It moves *you* closer to God. It makes things clearer. When you eliminate food, your spirit becomes uncluttered and more tuned in like an antenna. It's like turning the dial and getting a real clear frequency.

When we fast, we're denying our bodies of food for a spiritual purpose. It's not dieting. You also have to take that time where you would normally be eating and commit it to a spiritual activity. Pray, meditate on the Word of God, or worship. While you're fasting, your body is going to throw a fit and tell you that it's hungry, but this is a time when you're denying your physical

needs so your spiritual needs can be met.

Fasting also makes a lot of extra time available to you that you used to spend preoccupied with food. While you're fasting, you're not thinking about food, going to the store to get food, or preparing food. Maximize that spare time by spending it with the Lord and see how big of a difference it makes. Take advantage of this time to lean on Him for the strength you need to make it through the fast. Around the same time most days, my assistant, Ally, and I will start to feel really hungry like we want to break our fasts early and eat. So, we stop what we're doing and pray together, asking God for the power we need to push through.

Something that's really important in someone's spiritual growth is the habit of solitude with God. As an early riser, I find my best time to be alone with God is in the morning. I can go to the gym and then have 30-45 minutes alone with God. I ask him for strength to help me not overeat and meet my goals for the day. Your time of day may be different, but it's important to have that time set aside. There are so many different things you can do during that alone time with God. You can read a Christian book or listen to Christian music, but the absolute best thing you can do is have total solitude with God and His Word. You want to listen to what He's saying. The back of this book has every Bible verse that we mention in these pages. You can use that as a tool, and read them over and over.

You can quote God's Word for any situation in life. Again, use the Resources in the back of this book for ammunition. Whatever verse is appropriate for you in the situation you're dealing with is what you need to feast on and carry with you.

Here is the key to what should be happening while you're fasting: You're not just saying "no" to food. You're saying "yes" to God. You're choosing Him and His Word to fulfill you instead of food and snacks. Here's a prayer you can pray while you're fasting:

"God, you say in your word that I should be filled with Your words and that is what I'm asking right now; fill me up with Your words from my head to my toes."

It may seem a little tacky, but you can write verses on your hands with a marker to keep them in front of you. It's actually a great testimony because people will ask what it is. I'm going to write Colossians 3:16 on my hand right now. Today, I'm going to a Mexican restaurant for lunch and I know that one of my weaknesses is the chips. I'm going to ask God to give me the strength to not overeat and choose instead to be filled with His Word.

Lastly, there's one thing you should know about making the decision to fast: some people are going to give you kickback. They'll tell you all about how you're ruining your metabolism by not eating or how it's bad that you're missing breakfast because it's the most important meal of the day. You'll definitely encounter opposition, but remember what I said about dipping beneath the surface. God can speak to you in a still, small voice and you see things clearer when you're not eating. I believe that God speaks to you more clearly when you're fasting. That's not to say He doesn't speak to you when you're not, but it's like gaining clarity. It increases the intensity and focus of your prayers. There is POWER in fasting.

What Fasting Does

People fast from many different things, but when it's mentioned in the Bible it's all about food. Some of the most important reasons we should fast are for healing, protection, and wisdom.

In this passage of Scripture, God is rebuking the people for fasting incorrectly. However, if we pay attention, we see the important purpose for fasting: to have our voices heard by God. By fasting, we come into God's presence in a really powerful way. Much of my life is "go, go, go!" and "do, do, do!" Fasting is the opposite, though. I'm really focused on the Lord during that time, and it bonds me a little bit closer to Him. I feel like I'm really in His face, and He's listening.

Fasting is an activity that humbles us. It sharpens our mind and we can see clearly in a way we couldn't before. I tell people all the time that fasting is like

running. It's something you work at and progress with over time. If you're not a runner, running a block will leave you winded. However, if, every day, you increase your distance block-by-block and mile-by-mile, you will get stronger. Once you're up to two miles, running a block is easy. Give yourself that time with fasting and let your body build up to it.

A typical Biblical fast is probably over a 24-hour period. In that time, you reach out to God and say, "Lord, I can't do this on my own. I've tried every diet and every method to break free of this eating struggle. I realize I have put food over you. I'm putting my inability and failure at your feet. I need you to get involved and help me because this is a massive area of struggle for me."

That's humbling yourself before God. We try to live the Christian life in our own power when we don't humble ourselves. Fasting breaks the chain of addictions and problems that we can't seem to break on our own.

2 Corinthians 12:8-9a (NIV)

Three times I pleaded with the Lord to take it away from me. But he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness."

Here, Paul talks about a physical issue he suffered and the conversation he had with God about it. Like many of us, Paul pleaded for God to take the problem away. We all have something in our lives—a struggle or health issue—that we can't beat without God's help. He is the One who can save us. There are times when we're sick, but God is still the Great Physician and Healer today.

God is your healer! In 1st Samuel 1, a woman named Hannah fasted in grief because she was unable to bear children. She prayed and asked for God to remedy the problem and remove the stigma of not being able to get pregnant.

Daniel 1:12 (NIV)

Please test your servants for ten days: Give us nothing but vegetables to eat and water to drink.

If someone restricts herself to just vegetables for ten days, I do see that as a sacrifice. But there's a difference between doing that and finding other ways to overeat and indulge your flesh with everything that falls into the "not-meat" category. A lot of Christians do a version of the Daniel Fast that they say is based on the second time Daniel fasted in Daniel 10:2-3.

Daniel 10:2-3 (NIV)

At that time I, Daniel, mourned for three weeks. I ate no choice food; no meat or wine touched my lips; and I used no lotions at all until the three weeks were over.

So, people avoid meat and wine, but overindulge in other things like bread. I'm sorry, but bread is a **choice food!** I've seen people eat processed bread with more chemicals in it than the meat they're avoiding.

The purpose of fasting is to deny your flesh's desires for a time. In order to really hear God, your flesh has to be silenced. By fasting, you tell your flesh who is boss. You tell your body that you're taking charge with the help of Christ. I believe that true power only comes when you fast 100%. Take all the time you spend preparing, eating, and thinking about food and focus it on God: that's when you get results!

Talking About Your Fast

Matthew 6:17-18 (NIV)

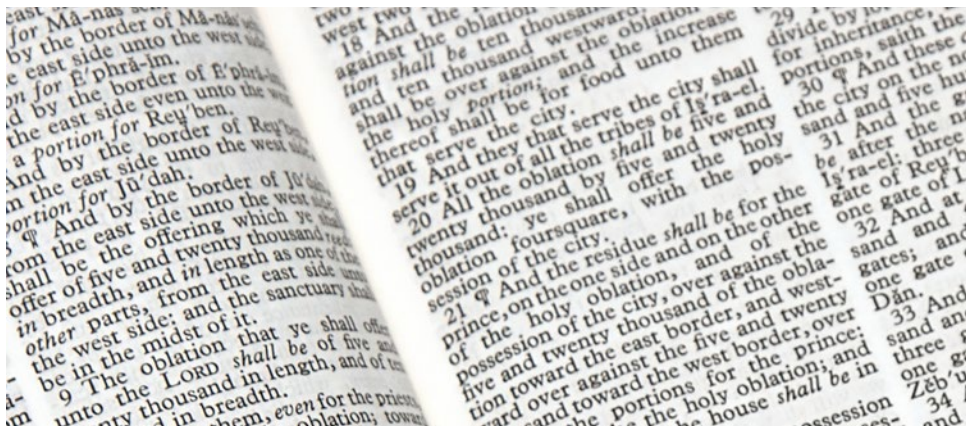
But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, so that it will not be obvious to others that you are fasting, but only to your Father, who is unseen; and your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.

Some people take this passage to mean that you can't tell anyone that you're fasting. I don't believe that to be true. You can tell people, but you should never show off. Don't behave like you're so weak from fasting and you're such a saint for doing it. Fasting, by its nature, is an act of humility.

Matthew 9:15 (NIV)

Jesus answered, "How can the guests of the bridegroom mourn while he is with them? The time will come when the bridegroom will be taken from them; then they will fast."

I will touch on Biblical fasting, but for a more in-depth perspective, go to fastingtofreedom.com.



Jesus made it clear that fasting would be a priority for us in His absence. We can't see Jesus and speak with Him face-to-face, but when we fast, it's like the next best thing. Fasting brings you as close as you can get to Him. It's a special bond between you and God.

Exodus 15:22-24 (NIV)

Then Moses led Israel from the Red Sea and they went into the Desert of Shur. For three days they traveled in the desert without finding water. When they came to Marah, they could not drink its water because it was bitter. (That is why the place is called Marah.) So the people grumbled against Moses, saying, "What are we to drink?"

I thought of this verse because of a friend of mine who was trying to stop using Splenda and sugar in her tea. She kept complaining about how bitter tea was without sweetener and I told her she reminded me of this Scripture. Over time her body got used to it and now she drinks unsweetened tea all the time. It was the same for me. I didn't think I could drink unsweetened tea because I found it so disgusting at first. In the beginning, you will grumble a little bit, but keep the Israelites in mind. It's funny because they were only three days into their freedom from Egyptian slavery and already they were complaining! This is going to happen to you when you start fasting. You'll want to grumble and complain, but that's where faith has to kick in.

FIRES: Identify True Hunger

Defining Hunger

The crux of this entire book is the proper understanding of hunger. To understand hunger, you have to properly define it. **Hunger is the physical need for fuel.** It's something that comes in cycles. You're never hungry all the time. Hunger is also something that we often confuse with appetite. **Appetite is your mental desire for food.** You can have an appetite all the time. If you come back to work after your lunch break and someone brings in donuts, you might eat one. That's not hunger; that's appetite. Most people never know their true hunger because they don't let themselves get hungry. The goal with intermittent fasting is to let yourself get hungry. We want to be excited about getting hungry!

When you're truly hungry, you know exactly what your body is craving and what you want to eat. On the flip side, when you're not hungry, a friend can ask you what you're in the mood for and you have to decide. That opens the door to unnecessary eating.

When you eat according to true hunger, you're not eating when the clock tells you to. There is no more, "It's 12 o'clock; that's lunch time!"

It takes about a week to figure out true hunger. For some people, it's because they've never heard their stomachs growl and they've gotten so heavy that they could probably go without eating for days. Hunger can also be confused with dehydration. You can think you're really hungry when actually you're thirsty. Staying hydrated will help you learn your hunger.

The Hunger Scale

Hungry Hungry

Hippo Hungry

0

Stomach Growling

1

Hungry

2

Neutral

3

Satisfied

4

Stuffed

5

You should only ever eat at a level 3 or below. You don't eat because the clock says it's lunchtime and everyone else is going out to eat. You wait until your stomach growls and your body is physically hungry for food.

Here's a perfect example of thin eating: One of my favorite desserts is coffee crumb cake. One of my friends knows that I love this, so she made a homemade cake just for me and brought it to the office. The way that I used to be, I would have eaten that cake just so I wouldn't hurt her feelings.

The new me doesn't do that. "That is so sweet of you to make a coffee crumb cake for me," New Me says, "But I'm not physically hungry right now. So, I'm going to save this for later. I'm sure I will love it and I'll text you as soon as I eat it to tell you how much I do." She might press me to try it, but I'm going to stand firm.

Psalm 63:5 (NLT)

You satisfy me more than the richest feast.

I will praise you with songs of joy.

The Hunger Scale

Never Eat Past 4 on the Hunger Scale



0 – Hungry Hungry Hippo™™ Hungry: Starving, ravenous, weak, grouchy. All you can think about is what to eat and how you can get it. You may get a headache, struggle to concentrate, or get “hangry” (hungry + angry).

1 - Stomach is Growling: Empty stomach. You can physically hear your stomach growling and feel an empty sensation. It’s important that you feel both sensations because your stomach can growl for other non-hunger reasons like digestion. Be sure that it’s growling because it’s empty. Everything sounds good to eat at this point of hunger.

2 - Hungry: You’re starting to think about food and certain things sound good to you. You’re deciding what your body is craving.

3 - Not Hungry/Not Full: Neutral. You sense that there is some food in your stomach and you’re at peace. Your stomach feels comfortable.

4 - Satisfied/Full: Comfortably full. You might want to eat more, but you shouldn’t.

5 - Stuffed: Uncomfortably full. You’re getting tired because your body is using all of its energy to digest food. You may want to take a nap or need to unbuckle your belt. You feel as if you’ve overeaten.

Don't Eat Your First Meal of the Day Until Your Stomach Growls

1 Corinthians 9:27 (NLT)

*I discipline my body like an athlete,
training it to do what it should.*

Wait for Your Stomach to be Empty

When I asked the majority of people when they ate on the Hunger Scale, I would say 70% of thin eaters ate when their stomach was growling, (Level 1). But 30% said they ate at a level 2 because they didn't like to let their hunger get to a point that would make them eat too much. The key is to get your stomach to where it's fully empty. (A small percentage of people said even when they were hungry, they didn't hear their stomachs growl, but the majority of the women I interviewed did hear it growl.) A lot of times, people who struggle with their weight have a hard time knowing when they are hungry, so the growling is a good indicator of when they are physically hungry not just mentally hungry. It's like a fuel gauge on a car. Your body will let you know when it's time to eat the same way a car does when it's on "E" for empty. The drop in blood sugar that occurs when you're truly hungry sends a message to your stomach to produce that empty "growling" sensation. I hear people all the time comparing their hunger to the gas tank on their car, but the better analogy is if your tank was completely full of gas and then you took your car to get more gas it would start spurting out everywhere and make a huge mess, and no logical person would do that, and that's what thin eaters say, "Why would I go put more food in when its already full?" But people who keep putting food in their tanks justify somehow eating when they are full:

- “I never eat like this.” My aunt would make Iranian food, and every time she’d make it, I would always overeat. I’d justify it by saying I can’t cook kabob like this or rice this good. I only eat this every couple of months, I might as well overeat.
- “It’s a holiday.”
- “I’ve been good all week.”
- “Even though I’m not hungry, it’s healthy.”
- “I can have five slices of pizza because I’m going to the gym tonight.”
- “I hate to waste this food, It’s expensive.”

That’s the biggest thing I learned about thin eaters—They never eat before that stomach growl, unlike emotional eaters who eat for any reason at all. When you want to eat before you’re truly hungry, that’s the time to quote your Scriptures. You have to learn to eat when you’re *physiologically* hungry (your body is hungry), and not when you’re *psychologically* hungry (your emotions are hungry).

[Turn to the interview chapter to read an interview with my friend Lindsay who explains how she waits till her stomach growls and she actually feels a drop in her blood sugar before she eats.]

I congratulate myself when I successfully wait for true hunger to eat.

“Great job, Chantel, you waited until you were physically hungry to eat!” Reward yourself with positive self-talk when you make the right decisions.

This eating plan is all about when you eat rather than what you eat. Your stomach growl is your signal to start your eating window. You’ll train your body to an eating schedule as you continue to do this. If you don’t get a growl when you’re supposed to, then you know you ate too much at your last meal. It’s possible to go 48 hours without a stomach growl when you overeat, because you ate too much on your last binge. If you’re overweight and a chronic overeater, you might not have a real sense of hunger because you’re running on fat and your last meal. Keep the amount of food that you’re eating small so that you’re hungry the next time you eat. Don’t delay your eating window indefinitely if you don’t hear a growl. I don’t recommend you go longer than 36 hours without eating something small.

I found that there's a stigma with people about letting their stomachs growl. Stomach growling is a good thing! Getting hungry is okay! We act like being hungry is the worst thing in the world when it isn't. It's your body's natural signal to eat. Let your body get hungry, and then feed it. If you don't hear your stomach growl at least once a day then, *Houston, we have a problem!* I can't stress this enough. Your first meal of the day doesn't begin until your stomach growls.

God designed your body to teach you when it needs food. The sad thing is there are people who have never heard their stomachs growl because they never let themselves get hungry. Every chance they get, they're shoving food in their mouths.

You can start your eating window only after your stomach growls, but you still shouldn't eat immediately. This is because you're in fat burning mode when your stomach growls. That's your time of maximum weight loss potential and you want to prolong that for a little while. When your stomach first starts to growl, I suggest you have a cup of black coffee or unsweetened iced tea to get you at least an hour past that growl.

Recognize True Hunger

Psalm 81:10 (NIV)

*I am the Lord your God,
who brought you up out of Egypt.
Open wide your mouth and I will fill it.*

Let Your Stomach Growl

You want to be at a Hunger Level 1 (Stomach is Growling) when you eat your first meal of the day. You don't have to wait for your stomach to growl to eat your second meal, but you do need to make sure that you are at least at a level 2 (Hungry).

Learning to wait for your stomach to growl is one of the most important aspects of this entire plan! I even debated naming this book, *True Hunger* or *Thin Eater!* A thin eater only eats when she's truly hungry. If you put food in front of her, no matter how amazing it is, she won't eat it if she's not hungry. My friend, Christy, is a perfect **example** of a thin eater. I've tested her several times with some amazing food.

"Try this! Taste this!" I said while putting food in front of her. She responded the same way every time. She told me she wasn't hungry and could save it for later.

The term Hungry Hungry Hippo™ Hungry (Level 0) came from when I was a kid and I used to love the game Hungry Hungry Hippo™s. If you are a millennial or very young, you may not know it. It's a table top game for 2-4 players, and the object is to eat as many marbles as possible with your toy hippo, and whoever eats the most wins. This is what happens when you let yourself get too hungry.

That's hungry! I allow myself to get to a Level 0 when I'm on a Biblical fast, but I have to control myself and not overeat. **Never overeat, even when you're Hungry Hungry Hippo™ Hungry.** In this book you'll learn how to cry out to God and ask Him to remove the urge to run to food and overeat.

I only eat when my stomach is growling because that's when I know my body is actually hungry. It's like a fuel gauge on a car. You fill up your car when it hits "E" and you eat when your stomach growls. I've learned that thin people wait for the stomach growl because they associate that with true hunger. Emotional eaters eat because they're tired, bored, stressed, or whatever! You want to eat when you're *physiologically* hungry not when you're *psychologically*

hungry. In other words, eat when your body is hungry, not just when your brain is hungry.

There's a difference between the growl of your stomach digesting your food and the growl of your stomach being empty. When you feel that second growl, be excited!

“Great job, Chantel, you waited until you were physically hungry to eat!” I say things like this to myself to encourage good eating habits. Every time you wait until your stomach growls to eat you should reward yourself with positive self-talk.

“(Insert your name here), you did a great job!”



You're capable of bypassing your initial hunger pangs and waiting until true hunger to eat. In fact, wait until a couple hours after the growl, if you can. The longer you wait to eat, the further you're pressing into that fat-burning zone. You'll eventually train your body to get used to an eating schedule—mine is noon-6 p.m. Obviously, I don't always keep that schedule because if I go to a nice dinner, then it's usually going to be after 6 p.m. On those days, I might extend my window to an eight-hour window, or I might start my window at 2 p.m. with a light snack and be done by 8 or 9.

If you're not hearing a growl, then that more than likely means you ate too much at your last meal. It's possible to go as long as 48 hours before reaching “stomach hunger” when you come off of a binge. Most people never hear their stomach growl simply because they're constantly eating; they never actually reach an empty stomach. Keeping this in mind, you should make smaller meals so that you can reach that point of true hunger. If you eat the right amount of

food, you will be hungry when it's time to eat again. It's important to create a habit of getting hungry. All of that being said, if you reach 36 hours without hearing a growl, you should go ahead and eat something small.

There's one small thing you should avoid when you're eating: don't drink too much water. Drinking too much water while you're eating your meal can actually dilute your stomach acid and interfere with your digestion. You want everything working properly so you can sense hunger and fullness. However, outside of your eating window, you can drink as much or as little as you want. Let your body tell you when it's thirsty just like when it's hungry. When your body is hungry, eat. When it's thirsty, drink. Rocket science, right?

Save Your Food for Later

Proverbs 25:28 (NIV)

*Like a city whose walls are broken through
is a person who lacks self-control.*

I was talking to one of my friends about this plan and she said it would never work for her because her favorite thing in the world is breakfast at Chick-fil-A™. If you live on the West Coast you may not be so familiar with Chick-fil-A™, but it's a really good fast food restaurant where I live. Unlike McDonald's™, Chick-fil-A™ only serves breakfast food during morning hours. I reassured her that she didn't have to give up Chick-fil-A™ breakfast food. She could schedule her eating window to start in the morning when Chick-fil-A™ was serving breakfast or she could pick up the food in the morning and save it for when she's ready to start her window. There are times when I've been craving breakfast food all day, so I cook it for dinner for my family. There's no rule that says you can only eat breakfast food at breakfast time! Also, you could eat breakfast and lunch, then skip dinner.

Today, I scheduled myself to eat from 12:30-6:30 p.m. because I have people coming over for dinner at 5:45. For lunch at my office we **catered** from a place I had been dying to try called Zoe's Kitchen™. The food arrived around 11 a.m., so I went and took exactly what I wanted to eat—beef skewers. I made my plate and let it sit on the edge of my desk until 12:30 when I was ready to eat. Then I heated it up and ate it.

My naturally skinny friend, Christy, does that. We have something called Thursday Fundays when everybody brings food. Christy loves my guacamole (I make the best guacamole in town). After a couple of Thursday Fundays, I noticed that Christy would take a big scoop of guacamole and stick it in the refrigerator. I was confused about what she was doing. Was she hiding the guacamole? I finally asked her what was going on and she told me that she was putting the guacamole away until she was hungry. It was a good plan because whenever I bring guacamole, it goes in 20 minutes!

The same thing happened with my lunch today. I took the beef skewers and made my plate early because I wanted to make sure I could have them later. I went to check out the buffet again around the start of my eating window just to see what would have happened if I had waited to fix my plate. Sure enough, only kernels of food were left.

Recently I was on a walk with my friend, Stephanie, and she told me she is the heaviest she's been in a long time, about 15 pounds heavier than normal. She told me one of problems is that she attends two Bible studies a week and some other kind of church function at least once a week. These functions always involve food, and she thinks it's rude not to eat at them.

In her mind, she believes that when she goes to someone else's house and the hostess has made food, she shows love and gratitude to that hostess by eating the food. I told her she has a choice: either eat less at lunch so that when she goes to these functions she is truly hungry, or not eat at the functions at all and save the food for when she is truly hungry. I told her that food is for fuel not for showing love. My friend Christy has mastered the art of not eating at functions if she isn't hungry, but still showing gratitude and love for the food.

She once was given a dessert by one of her students, but she wasn't hungry at the time, so she told the student, "Thank you so much!! I'm not hungry right now, but I cannot wait to take this home and eat it!!" Then she brought it home and ate it later in the evening, once she was actually hungry, and it was delicious. I told my friend Stephanie that she can practice this same technique at her church functions. She can thank the hostess for the food, and then save it and eat it when she's truly hungry, and it will still be showing that hostess love.

You have to believe that you can control yourself around food. Recently, I had a breakfast meeting from 10 a.m.-noon. At 10, everyone ordered and ate. I waited until 11:30 and ordered and ate after everyone else. Even when I got my food, I wasn't hungry. I set it aside for about 20 minutes and ate it later. It's really empowering when you do stuff like that! There are a bunch of times I go to breakfast or lunch and sit with everyone and don't eat. IT'S FINE!

Social Scenarios

Let me give you a scenario: you have a breakfast date with friends in the morning and then a dinner for work at night. You're committed to a six-hour window so there's no way you can eat at both. What do you do? These social scenarios pop up all the time and you have to make a decision. When am I going to eat, and when am I going to say no?

I went out to breakfast with some friends the other day and I knew I had a dinner to go to that same night. So, I chose not to eat at breakfast. I wasn't even hungry, but my friends kept pushing me to eat and telling me to "get something small," because "we hate to eat without you."

I put my foot down and refused to eat because 1) I wasn't hungry and, 2) I could sit there without being worried about the "pull" of food. I was at breakfast to enjoy my friends' company. I could even talk more with them because I wasn't stuffing my face with food. Remember, you can always order food and save it for later.

Let's talk about "not worth it" moments. Let's say you ate from noon-6 p.m. on a Friday, and later that night, one of your girlfriends invites you out for dinner and drinks. That is a "not worth it" moment! If you can't handle the temptation, then it's better not to go. If you can, then go and enjoy yourself without food. Have a soda water or something without any calories. Something I like to do is have a glass of soda water with the juice of five lemons and five limes squeezed in.

What is Your "Go-To?"

One of my favorite things to do is pray before getting on a plane. I say, "God I pray that you would let me sit next to a thin eater, so I can pick her brain on what she does for breakfast, lunch and dinner." And inevitably, every time I would get on a plane, I just happened to be sitting next to somebody who was very thin. It would give me the opportunity to ask her, "What did you eat for breakfast, lunch and dinner, and how do you stay thin?" The funny thing is that almost every person I ever asked was very, very open in sharing with me how they did it.

One of the questions I ask all of the thin eaters when I am interviewing them over and over is, "Do you ever eat food for other reasons besides physical hunger?" They reply that food is not their "go-to." I have asked several people that, and over and over they will say, "You know food is not my 'go-to'." I love the way that sounds.

Let me clarify what I mean by what is your "go-to?" It is eating that is motivated by positive and negative feelings, rather than hunger. I have also interviewed a lot of people who have struggled with their weight, and what they say to me is, "I eat when I am happy, sad, bored, celebrating special occasions, a holiday or even out of habit." A lot of times it's not just when people are sad or happy; food also becomes a reward.

Make Your “Go-To” Something Besides Food

When people are stressed what can they do instead of eating? If you run to food when you're happy, sad or for any other reason besides true hunger, then food is probably your “go-to.” Here are the things that the thin eaters tell me they “go-to” instead:

Top 10 Things Thin Eaters “Go-To:”

1. Talk on the phone or go out with a friend or relative
2. Change their scenery. They may go for a walk. They are *not* going to stay in the kitchen.
3. Have a glass of wine
4. Relax by taking a bath or a nap
5. Read a book
6. Go to the gym, workout or take a yoga class
7. Clean the house
8. Watch a movie
9. Read the Bible
10. Pray

The whole point is that you must find something else in place of snacking or eating when you are not physically hungry. For example, if you are on a diet you may decide “Okay, I am going to have nothing but veggies and lean meats for a week and nothing else.” Then you get a call at work and are completely stressed out, and your first reaction is: “I’m stressed; I need to go eat carrots!” Even though carrots are healthful, you have still trained your body to go to food, even if you aren’t hungry. You must retrain your brain to know that if you aren’t physically hungry, you aren’t going to eat or snack, even if it is just a carrot stick. If you eat carrots, broccoli, a kale smoothie, or whatever it is every time you’re stressed, you might end up losing weight because you are reducing

your caloric intake, but you still are training your body to run to food anytime you are feeling a negative emotion. I would say that half of thin eaters reported that their “go-to” is a glass of wine. With that being said, the people who I interviewed are not alcoholics. They might have a glass or two of wine and aren’t doing it every single day. I’m definitely not advocating switching from food to wine, but from my interviews this was a big “go-to.” Of course, you must drink wine in moderation!

One of my good friends, who wishes to remain anonymous, told me two stories, and I really got a lot out of them. She said that on Saturday night, she went to a friend’s 50th birthday party where she didn’t know that many people and didn’t really like the venue. She also had a headache and felt a little out of sorts, so she started drinking wine. Now I believe everyone has a natural go-to when they’re stressed. For many people, their “go-to” is food. When they feel stressed, or sad, or any sort of strong emotion, they turn to food. My friend said her “go-to” is a glass of wine. Thin eaters do not use food as their “go-to.” When thin eaters feel negative emotions, they don’t turn to food; they channel their emotions into other things like working out or creativity.

Control Yourself, Not the Food

If you are a *healthy thin*—someone without health issues—you should have the mantra: “I need to control myself, not the food.” If you are letting food and everything about it control your every thought, then you are basically worshipping food. Instead of trying going to control the food, control yourself.

If you are *healthy* and try to eat too clean, you’re likely going to end up *gaining* weight. However, if you are sick and eat clean, it isn’t because you are trying to control the food to lose weight—it is because you have a food allergy and sensitivity. The key is to ask yourself why you are controlling the food and if you are truly sick.

Now with that being said, we are still talking about real food. If you do have a food allergy or sensitivity, then you must create some boundaries that are necessary. It's hard to know if something is a food allergy or something is a food sensitivity, so here are some common symptoms of food intolerances: headaches, bloating, mucus build-up, stomach aches, brain fog, hives, psoriasis, eczema, and fatigue.

Now let's talk about enzymes. Due to different toxins in the body, stress, and medications, people are missing enzymes needed to digest their foods fully. For example, my husband is lactose intolerant, which means he doesn't have the enzyme that breaks down lactose (milk sugar) in the stomach, so when he eats dairy he gets bloated, has diarrhea, and massive gas. The gas is instantaneous, so what he should do is take an enzyme to help with breaking down the lactose or avoid it altogether. There are a couple of things that make me feel awful when I eat them. I limit those foods so that I can feel my best, instead.

Quote God's Word When You Want to Eat but You're Not Hungry

Matthew 4:4 (NIV)

Jesus answered, "It is written: 'Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.'"

Feasting on God's Word

You're going to experience great challenges as you desire to eat while you're fasting. You have to know how to fight temptations when they come. We're going to talk about fighting temptation in detail later in this section, but first I want you to understand just how important God's Word is to the success of your fast.

Psalm 119:103 (NIV)

*How sweet are your words to my taste,
sweeter than honey to my mouth!*

I particularly love this verse because, if you haven't noticed by now, I love sweets! I want you to take this verse and substitute honey for whatever your weakness is. Is it cake? Brownies? Pizza? Whatever it is that tempts you, use this Scripture to declare your love for God's Word over that food.

"God, I love your words! They are sweeter than ice cream to my mouth! Sweeter than chocolate cake! Sweeter than bread!"

Substitute the Word of God in place of the food. Suddenly, this verse takes on a new meaning because you're feasting on God's Word. Speaking His word is the best tasting treat you could ever have.

You have to change your mindset because most people don't say "Mmm, you know what I would love to have right now? A big dose of Psalms! I am really craving a big taste of Proverbs right now. I think I'm going to stop this car and read the book of Matthew right this second. I want it so bad that I can't even stand it!" Right?

We want to get to the point that we understand that running to food for the answer makes things worse. Turning to anything besides God to fill a void is the wrong answer. Human beings fill their voids with all kinds of vices: gambling, drinking, drugs, illicit sex, and more. As a society, we've been slow to realize that we're doing the same thing with food today. You have to break the cycle. Develop a hunger for the Word like a baby has for breast milk. When my son was a baby, he would go absolutely crazy if he couldn't get to my milk!

Say to yourself, "I know right now that I am not physically hungry. I want to eat for reasons other than nutrition and those are the wrong reasons."

The Word of God is the answer when you need to find your way. It's the answer when you're weary and stressed out. There are blessings that come from seeking out the Word instead of other idols. There are so many things that God's Word does for you and it's truly the only thing you need. You need to speak Scriptures during your fast. I have a prayer that you can use as a template to overcome your challenges. Personalize it to fit you:

"God open my eyes and my ears to hear when my stomach is growling. I only want to eat the amount of food today that I require to live. I want to learn how to eat to live, not live to eat. Help me to be sensitive to that exact amount of food so I'm not eating beyond it. Help me take my focus off of food so that I'm not thinking about food constantly. Fill my thoughts with love, joy, and peace instead of fast food and burgers. I'm going to come to you when I'm sad, depressed, anxious or upset. I'm only going to come to you and spend time in Your Word instead of running to brownies."

Hunger Drinks and Hunger Snacks

Hunger Snack



High Protein, High Fat Snacks

Hunger Drink



Water



A Splash of
Lemon/Lime

Hunger Drinks

Let's talk about a hunger drink. Sometimes you can think that you're hungry, but you're misreading your body's cues, and you're actually thirsty. The hunger drink is usually water with either a splash of lemon, lime or orange (fresh orange juice). I know one girl, Missy, who will have a half of a small glass of orange juice filled with half water every morning because she always had a fiber drink in the morning. She takes fiber with that little bit of orange juice with water to keep her regular. She only does that in the morning. Missy does a 50/50 mix of water and orange juice, but most people just do water with a splash of orange, lemon or lime juice. I would hear that over and over again from others, too: "First thing I do is just have some water with a splash of lemon or lime to make sure that I am really hungry." When I ask people why they would have the water with lemon or lime they would say that they often would mistake the feeling of dehydration for hunger, so they would drink that water with lime or splash of lemon and wait 10-15 minutes and then see if they were really hungry or if they were bored, and it kind of gave them something to do and calmed them.

Another hunger drink is hot tea. My friend Jennifer, who is a nutritionist, says that she drinks about four cups of hot black tea every day. I'll never forget her saying that if she didn't get her four glasses of hot tea every day, she would definitely be at least 10 pounds heavier. After she eats, she will have a cup of hot tea to close that meal out. At around 2 o'clock instead of having a snack she will have hot tea. The other kind of tea she always drinks is called Pau d'Arco™, which is supposed to help cure your sugar cravings. In the afternoons, if I want something sweet, I will drink Pau d'Arco™ tea instead of a snack, and it really takes the sugar edge off.

Hunger Snacks

As I interviewed different women almost all of them had a solution for curbing their appetites before it was time to eat. I asked, "When you're hungry what do you do to keep yourself from bingeing and keep yourself from getting so ravenously hungry?" All of them said that they either use a hunger drink or a hunger snack. One of the things that my mom and aunt used to say to me all the time was, "Slow down!" Because I would get myself to the point that I was so hungry that once I actually did get the food in front of me, I would eat too fast.

If you look in my mom's purse at any given time, she always has snacks in her bag: raw almonds or dry roasted almonds with no oil, walnuts and cashews. And usually when you are in the car with her, within 30 minutes to an hour before lunch, she pulls out her bag of walnuts, and she has each kind of snack in different little Ziploc™ bags. She's got the almonds in one bag, the walnuts in one bag, and she literally pulls out each bag and says, "Who wants walnuts?" "Who wants almonds?" She's sounds almost like the people at the baseball games selling the snacks in the stands or the people at the carnival who say, "Peanuts! Soda! Popcorn!" She sounds exactly like them. She says it to everyone in the car: "Walnuts! Cashews!"

I would say a good 50% of the people I interviewed carry some sort of hunger snack with them at all times. Nuts, fruit or dried fiber cereal are the top three things that people say they carry with them. It varied, but nuts were the number one thing that people carried. Some people, like Kim, said she carries Crackling Oat Bran cereal with her at all times in a little snack baggie, or some kind of fruit. Some might bring a little bag of carrots, but they almost always would eat some sort of snack about 30 minutes to an hour before they were going to eat, so they wouldn't be ravenously hungry.

Hunger snacks can only be consumed inside your eating window. They're meant to be high-protein, high-fat snacks that keep you from feeling ravenous. The best hunger snacks you can pick are nuts like cashews or almonds. If you can't find something high in fat, then look for a high-fiber food. Good options are an apple with peanut butter, half of an avocado, a pickle, or an egg. Don't make your hunger snack a processed, high-carb food.

We All Get Tempted

The fact is, every one of us struggles with temptation. You'll never be so great a person that you stop struggling with it. So, that means you shouldn't be surprised or shocked when temptation comes. Instead be prepared.

When temptation comes we usually react with frustration and discouragement.

“Why do I keep falling in this same area?”

“Why isn't this getting easier?”

“I'll never change!”

“I'm always going to struggle with food!”

You have to stop beating yourself up for being tempted. Being tempted is not a sin! Sin is when you **give in** to the temptation. Even Jesus was tempted, though He never sinned. You can't stop the devil from bombarding your mind with ideas, but you can decide to speak to and get rid of those thoughts.

Have hope! You can get to the place that you're no longer tempted in the area of food. Years ago, I was a smoker. When I was 22 years old, I met a pastor, Vince Antonucci, who invited me to his church, Forefront Church. I told him that I smoked, and I wasn't going to give it up. I asked him if he was okay with that, and he told me he was. I quit not long after that! Now, there's nothing you can do to get me to smoke. It wasn't that way at first, but now nicotine is not a temptation for me anymore. The same goes for overeating. You can get to the point that you don't like the way overeating feels. Believe that, one day, it won't be a struggle for you anymore.

When you gave your life to Christ you became a target for the devil. Satan put out a contract on you and has been after you ever since. He wants to see how he can get you to slip, misstep, or fail! Right now, food is a weakness for me, but I'm confident that one day this won't be an area of temptation for me any more than cigarettes used to be.

In Matthew 26:41a NIV, Jesus said, **“Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation.”**

So, be prepared! Be watching for it. Be ready for it. Don't be surprised. Know where it's coming from: the devil! When God gives you an idea in your mind, we call it inspiration or revelation. When the devil gives you an idea in your mind, we call it **temptation**. You get to decide! Which one are you going to be about?

Fighting Temptations

You're going to be tempted to make excuses as to why it's okay to eat when you're fasting.

"It's my son's birthday."

"I have a group breakfast to go to."

"The family is going out to dinner tonight."

Don't fall for it! Cry out to God instead:

"God, what I want to do right now is eat this entire:

- Bag of chips
- Pan of nachos
- Bag of M&Ms™
- Cake
- Gallon of ice cream
- Pizza
- Burgers and fries

But I'm coming to you because I know that I'm not truly hungry right now, and it's not my window to eat." I want you to say to yourself, "As soon as my body is physically hungry, I can sit down, eat slowly and eat what I want; however, when I'm not physically hungry, I'm not going to eat."

Here are the 4 things to say/do:

- I am going to find real hunger. I might be hungry for a relationship, or praise, or comfort, but I realize that food cannot give me any of these things.
- Remind myself of the consequences. I know that if I eat when I'm not hungry, I will feel disappointed, uncomfortable and bloated. It may feel good for a few minutes, but it's not worth the rest of the consequences
- Flee the scene. I need to get out of the kitchen, I need to get out of the area, so I won't give into my temptation. One of my favorite things to do is take a soothing bath or go for a quick walk

- Have a conversation with the food. You will think this is stupid but here's the question to ask yourself, "Chocolate mousse, will you be my friend? Chocolate mousse, will you love me? Chocolate mousse, will you get rid of my stress? Chocolate mousse, will you cure my loneliness?"

Ask yourself before you eat:

- Am I tired?
- Am I stressed?
- Am I sad?
- Am I lonely?
- Am I powerless?
- Am I angry?

Let's use a comparison to show ways that you can resist temptation. Let's compare proper eating with faithfulness in marriage. One thing I know that I would never do is cheat on my husband. There are a few things that I do to ensure that I won't ever do this:

- I never ride in the car alone with someone of the opposite sex.
- I never have lunch alone with someone of the opposite sex.
- When making plans with someone of the opposite sex, I will always make it a group chat and include my husband in it.
- I never flirt.

These same practices can be applied to the way you eat. For example: somebody who is an alcoholic should avoid going to the bar. If you struggle with overeating on donuts, you should stay far away from Krispy Kreme™. I wouldn't go and buy a dozen Krispy Kreme™ donuts and leave them in front of me. I would get one donut, throw half of it in the trash, and take half of it home to savor. If you want to avoid the appearance of evil, one of the suggestions I would give is I would not go out to lunch with a coworker of the opposite sex. I have a friend named Keith who I go to lunch with at least once or twice a month, and he gives me business advice, but I always bring another female coworker with me. That way, even though I know my intentions are pure, it just gives a better appearance. For example, I never drive in a car with just another person of the opposite sex without my husband present, or a friend.

It's Sort of Like Marriage

If you're married, there should be certain rules and boundaries that you and your spouse have in place to guard against infidelity. Those same rules apply to how you eat.

1. Set healthy boundaries

I don't go out to eat with or drive in the same car alone with another man. To prevent problems with eating, I create time limits.

2. Avoid vulnerable situations

I don't flirt or have intimate talks with other men. To avoid vulnerability with food, I make sure that I get my sleep and remove the different "stressors" in my life that can cause a problem. And I stay far away from BUFFETS! I just do not do buffets. They are way too overwhelming.

3. Flee the scene

Believe it or not, sometimes I get Facebook messages from strange men.

"Oh my goodness, you are drop-dead gorgeous!"

"I would love to get to know you!"

Can you guess how I respond? That's right, DELETE and BLOCK! Right away! It's the same thing with food. If I feel like eating outside of my eating window, I flee the kitchen. I go to my bedroom because that's one of the places I just do not eat. Have safe havens like that in your own home.

4. Don't get cocky.

When you first begin intermittent fasting you might say, "I got this! I'll never go back to eating all the time!" Be careful of getting cocky. One of the seasons when we're most vulnerable is after we've had a lot of success. That's when Satan comes in and tempts you big time. Jesus' three temptations by the devil came right after His baptism, a huge success where God came down to support Him publicly. Be alert when things are going really well.

5. Never blame other people.

You need to accept responsibility for your actions and not blame other people. If you cave in and eat too many brownies, admit that it's your own

fault. I believe our society lives with a victim mentality. We blame everything and everyone but ourselves for our faults and failures. I can admit that most of my problems were self-inflicted. That's true for me and it's true for you, too. The number one person I blame is my husband because when he's not around, I don't have to plan as much food.

6. Pray immediately.

As soon as you feel tempted, seek God's help in prayer. Don't ponder it. God has a 24-hour hotline system. You can call Him anytime! Some of the greatest prayers for help often look like this:

“God, it's me again. This is the fourth time today I'm coming to you. I had a bad day and I want to go and eat everything in the refrigerator right now, but I know that I can't. Help me to have self-control.”

Why does God want you to come to Him? Because He wants you to depend on Him.

We can come boldly without any hesitation or embarrassment because Jesus sympathizes with us. He knows what we're going through. Jesus had the same temptations you do, so you can go to Him with confidence that He can help. Some of you reading this might think this is weird. Maybe it doesn't make sense to you, but it's true. This is what you have to do to succeed at this.

Maybe you think the thing you're missing is more willpower, but willpower only goes so far. It works for a while, but it doesn't last forever. It's not the permanent solution. You can do anything for a little while, but diets can only last for a little while before your willpower fails. You want this to be autopilot. You want it to be your natural tendency to only eat when you're hungry and never eat beyond fullness. Your goal should be to get your body out of willpower mode and into autopilot mode. Get to a place where you aren't thinking hard about every little thing you eat.

When you're face-to-face with your favorite dessert, you're going to call “9-1-1” immediately. You're going to say, “Lord, come help me!”

7. Surround yourself with accountability partners.

You don't have to stand up at work and yell out, "Hey everyone I'm struggling!" but you do need someone you trust. You need someone who will love you, accept you, and pray for you without bringing you down.

If you don't have someone, we can be that for you:

Coach@chantelrayway.com

Anybody who is anybody has a coach! Think of your favorite tennis player. Think of your favorite golf pro. They all have coaches to help them get to the next level! Don't lie to yourself and say you don't need help and that you don't really have a problem with food. The fact that you're afraid to admit your weakness in this area is what prevents you from going to the next level. Why do you think people don't want to share their problems with others? It's pride. Pride makes you insecure.

Those secret sins in your life that you're embarrassed about aren't exclusive to you. I promise you, someone else is facing those exact same problems! In fact, God wants us to help each other with these problems. He even made sharing our faults with another person a prerequisite to healing.

James 5:16

*Confess your sins to each other and pray
for each other so that you may be healed.*

This isn't something you need to hold in. Tell somebody about it and gain control. Talking about your problem with someone you trust provides support and accountability. You need both of these to be healed of your overeating.

8. Avoid tempting areas.

Stay away from places and scenarios that cause you to stumble. It's common sense that if you don't want to get stung, you stay away from the wasp's nest!

A fool thinks she can handle everything on her own. Don't be a fool. Recognize your patterns. Where are you most tempted? Is it a certain time of day? Is it on vacation? Business trips? Do you struggle when you're home alone and the kids are gone? Be aware and prepare for these traps.

The Bible instructs us to flee—run away—from temptation. Physically remove yourself from the scene if you have to! Be like Joseph who, in Genesis 39, left his coat and split when Potiphar’s wife came onto him. He said, “Sayonara, Satan!” and took off. Be like Joseph, and don’t be a fool.

“I can’t help myself.”

“I have to have a late-night snack.”

“I have to have something early in the morning.”

You’re calling God a liar every time you say “I can’t.” He promises that He’ll always provide a way out.

9. Memorize GOD’S WORD.

This is your secret weapon right here. Without a doubt, the #1 single most effective method to combat temptation is to memorize Scripture. This is something that you CAN do. My son is eight years old and he has about 150 Bible verses memorized. That’s because he recites them every single night. Write Scriptures down on little cards or stick them to your mirror. Make yourself a program of memorization. If you have kids, have them memorize verses with you.

This is going to be important when you have the devil in front of you attacking with temptation. If you have no Scripture to fight back with, it’s like having a gun with no bullets. When Jesus was tempted in Matthew 4, what did He do? He quoted Scripture! He was showing us how to resist the Devil.

Set up a goal to learn one or two verses a week. If you can’t do that, your priorities are messed up. You don’t have a time problem; you have a priority problem. I don’t think there’s anybody in the world busier than I am, but I still have time to memorize God’s Word.

You are on the battlefield here! You’ve got to have on the proper armor and you’ve got to fight for this! This isn’t going to be easy.

If you haven’t received Christ in your heart, you can’t use the Word of God as a weapon in this battle. The first step you need to take is to move over and let God be the pilot in your life. Take the co-pilot’s seat and have Him do the heavy lifting. What does a helmet do? **It protects your mind.** Your weapon in this fight is “the Sword”—those Scriptures you memorize from the Word of God.

Say, “Jesus, come into my life. I want to move over and I want you to be the pilot. Give me Your power to use instead of my own. I believe you died on the cross and I want to accept you as Lord of my life. I want to accept responsibility for the temptations that I’ve been giving into in my life. I want to stop making excuses and stop blaming other people. I ask you to help me not eat when I’m not hungry. I want to accept Your salvation today. I want to put on the helmet that will protect my mind. Jesus, I want You to come into my heart and into my life to save me. Forgive me and help me start a brand-new life. In Your name, I pray, Amen.”

4 Steps to Flee Temptation

Don’t Stay! Run and Pray

Try to get yourself down to the level of hunger where you are totally at empty. You want to be hungry when you eat. When I’m not hungry but I want to eat, I quote this scripture, and it’s one you should memorize:

1 Corinthians 10:13 (MSG)

No test or temptation that comes your way is beyond the course of what others have had to face. All you need to remember is that God will never let you down; he’ll never let you be pushed past your limit; he’ll always be there to help you come through it.

Step 1 – Flee the scene of temptation immediately.

My routine used to be that I would come home from school or work and have a snack. Now, I stay away from the kitchen when I get home, and I go do something else. If you’re at a party with tempting food, don’t stand next to the food table. Get yourself away from the scene of temptation.

Step 2 – Remind yourself of your goal.

Keep your eyes on the prize. Tell yourself that you’re not eating until your stomach growls.

Step 3 – Immediately pray and quote Bible verses.

Use the Scriptures in this section and in the back of this book and start reading out loud. Jesus said that we live by the Word of God and not just bread (Matthew 4:4). Never depend on eating for joy and satisfaction.

Step 4 – Find something else to do.

Start getting your mind off of your own desires. Ask yourself if you're actually hungry. Check to see if your stomach has even growled. Describe your symptoms of hunger and see if you're in the right spot on the Hunger Scale. True hunger is going to come approximately 1 to 2 times a day depending on how much you eat. You need to change your mindset and delight in being hungry.

God Likes to Help

My mom had a saying: "Once the fire gets out of the trash can, you can't put it out!" If you have a small fire in a trash can, you can just dump water on it and it's out. If it's all over the house, then it's like a fireball, rolling from room to room. My family had a fire when I was younger that burned down the entire house. It wasn't until the firemen showed up that we discovered it all started from one little spot in the garage.

It's like saying, "I'm just going to kiss this guy," and the next thing you know you're naked! You can't quote Scripture at this point. The fire's already gotten all over the house and you can't put it out. Often, we'll make one bad decision with our food and decide to keep eating badly the whole day. "I'll start again tomorrow," becomes the mantra and the fireball keeps growing. That's why it's important to seek God's help before you make the mess.

God uses lots of distractions and even mishaps with me. I was recently at a meal with friends during my fast. I justified my desire to eat by extending my eating window to eight hours even though I had committed to six. I ordered chicken tacos, but the restaurant mixed up my order and brought me fish tacos instead. I can't stand fish! The waitress offered to bring me the right food, but

I refused. I saved money and I didn't violate my fast!

One time, I was struggling with sticking to my fast, and I asked God for help. I was having a Bible study and one of the girls brought vegan cupcakes. I knew these things were delicious and I really wanted one, but I was still in my fast. Suddenly, I smelled smoke. I didn't know where it was coming from at first, but I called 9-1-1. The fire department came and guess where it came from? The garage! Thankfully, nothing burned, but after all of that drama I didn't want the cupcake anymore! We did have to pay for a new hot water heater, but I didn't eat the cupcake! *Priorities, right?*

Distractions are great! I can put ice cream that I know I don't need to be eating in a bowl and my son will call my name before I can take my first bite. That happened once before, and when I got back the ice cream was melted to mush, and I didn't want it anymore.

I had a similar incident this past weekend at a Cubs reunion party at my home. In this case, I wasn't in the middle of my fast, but I was being tempted with some Chemical City cupcakes. If it was a cake made with real ingredients like fresh fruit and real sugar, I would have been happy to eat two or three bites of that. But these cupcakes were just artificial and *blech!*

At this party, there was something like 20 kids in my dining room. In the dining room, were these pretty linen chairs. Right after I prayed for God's help, I looked over and saw blue icing all over my beautiful linen. The sight of that took my mind right off of eating cupcakes! I was consumed with cleaning now. I was going to disobey, but He made it so I would obey. Instead of getting frustrated, I chuckled.



One of my friends, named Jo, makes a birthday cake that is to absolutely die for. It is perfectly moist, has whipped cream frosting, and layers of strawberries. It was my daughter's 16th birthday, and we'd order a cake that was literally three feet by two feet! It was three times the size we needed. The kids ate none of it, so we were stuck with so much leftover, and I'd been eating it for two days. There was one piece that was on the counter next to the sink, and I was planning to eat it even though I wasn't hungry, but I said that prayer: "God help me to not overeat." Then I accidentally ended up knocking the cake over into the sink full of dirty dishes. Even though it was an accident I started laughing and thanking God because I wasn't hungry and didn't want that cake after it had been in the sink with dirty dishes.

God has a sense of humor and helps us with the little things in life. A lot of people think God is only concerned with big things, but that's not true! He wants to be a part of every little thing in your life including what you eat. This kind of relationship with God strengthens us as we learn to trust Him more and more. Involving him in what you eat is like inviting Him to your every meal! If you earnestly pray in the morning, "God protect me from myself, and make it so I don't eat these kinds of things." He will help you.



Listen to the Holy Spirit for Guidance

All Food is Acceptable

There are many Scriptures in the Bible that make it clear that all foods are acceptable to eat. In my mind, that means any real foods (not chemicals or processed sugar) are free to eat and shouldn't be altogether restricted from any person's diet. I believe that there is so much FAKE food now being made. For example, cheese that is highly processed when you put it under heat it will just burn, but if you put real cheese under heat it will melt.

Now, I don't go so far as saying that everyone who promotes a diet is *demonic*, but I do believe that it's wrong for anyone to call it a sin to eat a particular food. My goal with this book is to free you from being too focused on food and to help you stop being a diet-chaser.

We all have personal convictions on how we should eat. For me, it's very important to eat real foods with no chemicals. On top of that, as I've mentioned, there are certain foods like dairy and gluten that I have to eat in limited amounts because they have a negative effect on my health. However, I would never call my eating habits a law that everyone else must follow. You can eat however you're led to eat. Some people may feel the need to eat vegan or vegetarian, but no one can require that of another person. The only restriction God places on food is concerning the amount that you eat.

Mark 7:18-20 (NASB)

And He said to them, "Are you so lacking in understanding also? Do you not understand that whatever goes into the man from outside cannot defile him, because it does not go into his heart, but into his stomach, and is eliminated?" (Thus He declared all foods clean.) And He was saying, "That which proceeds out of the man, that is what defiles the man."

FIRES: Reduce Sugar and White Simple Carbohydrates

Focus on Real Food

The 80/20 Rule

Because of my autoimmune disease (I'll discuss this in more detail later), I feel my absolute best when I'm eating clean—for me, that means meats (poultry, beef and seafood), fruits, non-starchy vegetables, nuts and seeds, and natural oils (olive oil, palm oil, etc.). I don't eat a lot of grains, dairy, beans, refined sugar, or processed oils like canola oil, vegetable oil, or soybean oil. This is **80%** of my food intake; the other **20%** is whatever I want.

I didn't come by this mathematically. How I eat boils down to, "How do I feel?" For example, last week I ate probably more 60/40 and I can tell that I'm feeling tired and sluggish now because of it. This week, I'm back on track and feeling much better because of it.

The question you're going to ask is, "Why not eat clean 100% of the time?" I know that if I did that I would feel absolutely FANTASTIC! But I also know that if I go down that road I'm going to go crazy. Trying to eat "perfectly" is what made me obsessed with dieting. That's something you have to avoid. Eating 20% "non-clean" foods is enough that I don't feel deprived and not so much that my body is suffering because of it.

I am against diets that deprive you of food because they leave you feeling overwhelmed. A 2011 New York Times study² on "decision fatigue" discovered that prisoners who appeared before a particular parole board in the morning received parole 70% of the time. In the afternoon that number dropped to 10%. I think the decision makers on that parole board heard one excuse after another and just got tired. It's what's called "decision fatigue." We as humans get overwhelmed when we have too much information coming at us.

There's no truer instance than when you're searching for the right diet. One book says, "Food A leads to cancer and you should never eat it under any circumstances! But eat lots of Food B." However, the second book tears down Food B and champions Food A as the most healthful food in the world! Does that sound familiar?

Instead of driving myself crazy with diets that changed with the direction of the wind, I decided to focus on eating whole foods and as few chemicals as possible. I didn't ban the foods that I liked; I just made it my mission to find a way to satisfy my cravings without taking a trip to Chemical City.

Chemical City

"Chemical City" is a phrase I use around my home to describe foods that I think are loaded with chemicals and are way unhealthy for you. If my son asks for something that I think crosses that line, my response is, "No way! That's Chemical City!" These are the foods I actively avoid. Let's take a look at your average coffee creamer for example:

Coffee creamer. The coffee creamer you have in your refrigerator or cabinet could be full of corn syrup solids and something called diglycerides. Diglycerides alone can contain trans fats even if the nutrition label says there are no trans fats. Instead of coffee creamer, I'll use coconut milk if I absolutely need something extra in my coffee.

If I want a boost of energy, I'll have a green juice instead of an energy drink. Some of the ingredients found in energy drinks include sucralose and acesulfame potassium. Green juice is a much healthier option. I make mine with spinach, celery, kale, lemon, cucumber, and ginger.

A little side note about green juice: I think it's GREAT! If you're someone who doesn't like it, just give it a chance. Green juice replenishes you with vital nutrients and vitamins and counteracts cravings.

I use a Breville brand juicer for my green juice. It's a **masticating juicer**, which is the most efficient kind. The other most popular option is a **centrifugal juicer**. This type of juicer is usually cheaper but not as effective at extracting all

of the nutrients you want from fruits and vegetables.

Now, I think this goes without saying, but when I'm talking about juice in this section I am NOT referring to pasteurized juices you can buy from the store.

Another drink to mention when discussing chemicals is wine. We discuss wine in detail in this book, but, in short, I'm not against it if you can find an organic wine. If I drink two glasses of wine with chemicals, I feel terrible the next day. The #1 chemical you can find in wine is **sulfur dioxide**. It can cause migraine headaches, skin irritations, breathing problems, and more. On top of that, wine has a lot of added sugar, and pesticides are sprayed all over the grapes before they're pressed. The workers who spray pesticide wear protective clothing like hazmat suits. Shouldn't that be a major red flag? If you drink organic red wine, you can avoid the pesticides. Visit ChantelRayWay.com/wine to see what brands of wine, and to see some of the other products I love with no chemicals go to ChantelRayWay.com/things-i-love-2.

On the topic of alcohol, I need to state that I am personally anti-beer. Besides the fact that I can't stand the taste, beer is full of chemicals. Most beers are filled with high fructose corn syrups (HFCS), a lot of artificial flavors, and carrageenan.

1 Corinthians 6:19-20 (NIV)

Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your bodies.

In whatever you eat, remember that your body is a temple—it doesn't belong to you, it belongs to God! If I were in someone else's house, I would be very careful with everything. If it's a temple, why would you put chemicals in it?

Artificial Sweeteners and Preservatives

I'm big on not drinking my calories, but I have a ton of super thin friends who do. For them, it comes mostly from wines and mixed drinks. If you keep it in your eating window, that's fine. However, I recommend staying far, far away from sodas. If you take 10 teaspoons of sugar and lay it on a table, you're looking at the amount of sugar in a 12 oz can of soda. That's ridiculous! On top of that, it's not even real sugar! You're drinking something called high-fructose corn syrup (HFCS). It's a chemical derivative of corn syrup and you can find it in bread, yogurt, crackers, cookies, and more. HFCS is not real sugar. It's basically just straight chemicals. Now, I'm not anti-sugar. I just recommend real sugar. Raw sugar, raw honey, coconut sugar, dates, and maple sugar are all great options, but I avoid HFCS like the plague.

If you're on the lookout for artificial sweeteners, check the backs of the packaging on the foods you eat and look for these kinds of ingredients:

- aspartame
- sucralose
- saccharin
- acesulfame potassium (acesulfame K)

I prefer that you use real sugar rather than these ingredients or any artificial sugars. As an alternative to sugar, I believe stevia leaf or powder is OK.

There are also preservatives to look out for. For this reason, I try to eat very little packaged food. I prefer fresh foods as opposed to anything canned, jarred or boxed. If I'm eating corn, I want corn on the cob instead of corn from a can.

Another chemical I'm really against is **dimethylpolysiloxane**. Yes, that's a long word and it's probably present in a lot of the food you eat. It's a type of **silicone** with anti-foaming properties that's used in a wide variety of products including silly putty. Unfortunately, you can find it in mashed potatoes, and most fast food chicken sandwiches and French fries.

Azodicarbonamide, also called the "yoga mat compound," can be found in commercially baked bread. It's in almost 500 food products! As you could guess from the nickname, it's used in yoga mats and it's added to bread to maintain "texture." It's an unnecessary chemical.

You even have to watch out for the “healthy foods.” You can find a chemical called carrageenan in almond milk. It’s basically a thickener that keeps liquids from separating. It’s allowed in organic foods and it’s been linked to colon cancer, IBS, and gastrointestinal problems. I’ve started making my own almond milk because I haven’t found any that doesn’t have loads of chemicals in it.

Just about everyone knows about MSG, or, monosodium glutamate. It’s in everything from restaurant foods to chips and frozen dinners.

If I look at a food label and I don’t know what one of the ingredients is, then that’s something I’m going to try to keep out of my diet. Take a look at the nutrition labels on the foods you eat every day and see what you find. Here are a few common foods and snacks and the suspicious ingredients you can find in them. It’s eye-opening what you’ll discover from a quick web search:

- **Honey Wheat Enriched Bread.** Contains dough conditioners including diglycerides, monoglycerides, and sodium stearoyl lactylate.
- **Deli Turkey Breast.** Contains carrageenan.
- **Cheese-flavored Nachos.** Contain MSG, corn syrup solids and artificial colors like Yellow 6 or Red 40.
- **Cereal Bars.** Contain high fructose corn syrup.
- **Diet Colas.** Contain sucralose and acesulfame potassium.
- **Frozen Dinners.** Contain maltodextrin.
- **Nonfat Greek Yogurt.** Contains sucralose and acesulfame potassium.

Let’s talk about dairy for a second. I do love dairy, but only when it’s clean dairy. Most dairy products are filled with so many chemicals and hormones; I just don’t feel good when I eat them. Most of the time, I don’t eat much dairy at all and that’s hard since I love ranch dressing! If you’re drinking milk, go for raw dairy from a cow. On the topic of raw milk, I know that certain states have made it illegal, which I think is ridiculous. Virginia, Maryland, New Jersey, West Virginia, North Carolina, Ohio, and Tennessee are just a few. I’m not telling you to do anything illegal, but if you can’t drink raw milk it might not be a good idea to have it at all. Use homemade almond or cashew milk for coffee. It’s not hard; I recommend using a 2:1 ratio of water to nuts to make

sure it's thick enough. Again, there's nothing wrong with dairy if your body can process it. My body struggles with it, but if there's a day that I really want a bowl of nachos, I'll have it.

Use the Three-Bite Rule

When you cut out entire food groups and limit the number of calories you consume, you have to rely on your willpower to succeed. At some point your willpower kind of gives up! Anytime I go the route of completely banning a particular food from my life, I go crazy and I start losing my willpower. One day, I just explode and eat everything in sight! But when I have one or two bites of decadent foods I can say, "OK, I had it, it was fine, the end." It makes me feel like I can still have what I want.

I've discovered that the magic number for me to have the decadent foods I want is three bites, two times a day. Eating three bites of dessert doesn't make my body respond negatively. This is something I can do and maintain my weight. If I'm aiming to lose weight, then I might do this once a day or even not at all. However, I never ban myself from eating any particular food. That behavior leads to a binge somewhere down the road. Allowing myself three small bites satisfies the craving.

Once again, if you don't have physical ailments, you can eat whatever your body craves. I have tons of skinny friends who eat whatever they want all the time, but because they fast, they still maintain and lose weight. I have one particular friend that weighs 100 pounds and drinks 1-2 sodas a day! She's an intermittent faster and she only eats OMAD. This proves that the amount of food you eat is the most important factor in your weight loss. You can overeat on any diet and still be overweight.

Too Clean

On average, I would say most thin eaters I interviewed eat clean about 70-80% of the time because their bodies naturally craved clean foods. However, I want to talk a bit about whether you are healthy or sick. Most of the people I talked to are very healthy, but the people I talked to who said they ate clean 90-100% of the time were all sick with some sort of autoimmune or thyroid disease, and they said they felt terrible when they ate something not good for them. They combatted the issue of feeling deprived because of feeling awful when they ate it. It's important to understand that there is a healthy-thin and a sick-thin. Don't try to overdo it by eating 100% clean all the time—it can lead you to obsessiveness, false senses of security, and then your buckling and eating foods you crave outside of your eating window. Give yourself a room to enjoy your food!

I interviewed 40 women specifically on this topic, and the chart below shows how often they ate clean.

Now, I know what you're thinking; you're looking at that chart and asking how I got to 80%. The chart is just based on those 40 women, but, in general, the average for all the thin eaters I interviewed came out to about 80% clean eating and 20% unclean eating.

A lot of dieters have blacklisted certain foods with the belief that, if they eat them, they won't lose weight. In my experience, trying to eat super-clean prevented me from losing weight. What happened was that I ate perfectly Monday through Friday, but when the weekend

% of the Time	# of Women
50%	5
60%	5
70%	10
75%	10
80%	10
90%	5

came along, I completely lost it after depriving myself all week long. Instead, I suggest writing in a food diary the things you eat. People who track their food in a journal lose more weight than those who don't. It's not something you have to do forever, but it's a good idea when you start.

Red Light, Yellow Light, Green Light Food

What I am saying is that you can eat whatever you want, but you must create a list for yourself that asks, "How do I feel when I eat these foods?" No one is ever telling you that you cannot eat something. You can eat anything you want. However, I have learned that for me personally, and for about 10% of the people, I must be very careful about what I eat because I have an autoimmune disease to consider.

If you don't have any issues and are healthy, then you should follow the principles of the thin people who I interviewed and eat whatever you want, and you should not deprive yourself. Now, if you are sick like me, then you have to be discerning in what foods you put in your body because if you eat these foods, you will feel so terrible that it's just not worth it. The difference is that I make substitutions. If my body wants a cookie, I eat it, but I eat it with the foods that my body likes. I'll make myself a cake or buy a cake with all the ingredients that my body loves, so I am not depriving myself. When I want cake, I eat cake. When I want a cookie, I eat a cookie. When I want a chip, I eat a chip. I am changing what I am eating only for one reason, and it's not because I am on a diet, and it's not that I can't have those foods. It's because of my gut and because of food allergies, sensitivities and the way my body responds, so I must make discerning decisions not deprivations. For 90% of people, everything is a green-light food. We only need red lights if we have some kind of food allergy or sensitivity.

Here are the things I don't feel good eating:

- Gluten: gluten is in wheat, rye, barley; it is not in things like quinoa, rice, millet or oats. Most oats are not considered gluten-free because they are processed in factories that have tons of gluten products. So, you want to be careful and make sure they are gluten-free.

- Legumes (peas, red beans, black beans, kidney beans, white beans, lentils, chickpeas)

- Grains (some)

- Corn

- Oats

- Whole wheat

- Rice (brown, white, wild)

- Dairy (milk, cheese, yogurt, ice cream)

The American diet is based so much on grains, gluten and dairy. A typical breakfast is a piece of whole wheat toast, a low-fat Greek yogurt and granola, or a bowl of Cheerios or shredded wheat. Dinner often consists of white rice, mac and cheese and a steak. I'm not telling you to cut out any food groups at all. But I believe everyone needs to create a personalized list of what we will call a red-light foods, yellow-light foods, and green-light foods. For me, here are some of the red-light foods that I cannot have.

Red-light foods

Gluten (bread, pasta)
Dairy
Soy milk

Yellow-light foods

Corn
White rice
White potatoes
Goats' milk cheese

Green-light foods

Fruits
Lean Meats
Non-Starchy Vegetables

Cooling foods after cooking increases their resistance starch. When I eat white rice, especially if I cook it and then the next day cool it, I do not feel bad. If I have a couple of corn chips, I'm not going to feel terrible.

Starches are made of long chains of glucose, and are in all kinds of grains like potatoes, corn and beans. For whatever reason, starch doesn't do as well when it passes through your large intestine, so when I eat rice, I cook it then cool it and then warm it up again—same thing with potatoes. For whatever reason potatoes digest through my body so much better after they are cooled, and then I can eat them. Seems strange, but it's true.

I read an article online at www.healthline.com called *Cooling Some Foods After Cooking Increases Their Resistance Starch*. There have been many debates about whether potatoes are healthful or not as they are a popular starch used in many diets around the world. "While higher potato consumption has been associated with an increased risk of diabetes, this could be caused by processed forms like French fries rather than baked or boiled potatoes. How potatoes are prepared impacts their effects on health. For example, cooling potatoes after

cooking can substantially increase their amount of resistant starch. One study found that cooling potatoes overnight after cooking tripled their resistant starch content.”

If I want a chocolate smoothie, I'll make it with fresh cocoa powder and frozen bananas. So, I'll satisfy my craving of a chocolate milkshake by making a version that's cleaner for me.

Again, this is just my list of the foods I eat, limit, or avoid. You have to discern for yourself which foods are your own red-lights, yellow-lights, or green-lights!

Drinking Calories

I noticed that I don't lose weight when I drink my calories. I have to even be careful with juice because there are calories in that too. The rare times that I drink alcohol I drink it with zero calorie mixers like diet tonic and soda water. With wine, I only suggest low sugar organic wines without a ton of preservatives. Keep in mind that all of this still has to happen in your eating window. **A lot of people think skipping meals and getting a smoothie instead is better for them, but some smoothies can have up to 880 calories and up to 132 grams of sugar. That's like eating 6 Snickers™ bars!** The point is, just because the calories are in a drink doesn't mean they don't count!

Not Too Much Sugar

Proverbs 25:27 (NLT)

It's not good to eat too much honey, and it's not good to seek honors for yourself.

Now we'll tackle the topic of sugar in more detail so you can understand the importance of avoiding too much sugar in your diet.



Sugar-Burning vs. Fat-Burning

It's very important that you understand the two modes your body can be in at any given time: **fat-burning** or **sugar-burning**. You have to be in a fat-burning state to lose weight. The ultimate goal is to create a system of eating where you're consistently in a fat-burning state without cutting all sugar out of your diet.

As soon as you eat food, the storage hormone called insulin starts to rise. It signals the cells in your body to absorb glucose. When we stop eating, insulin levels fall and after so many hours of fasting we use up all the sugar and switch over to fat for fuel-burning. This is similar to why you don't have to eat while you're asleep. Your body is using stored energy to survive.

Think of a hybrid car. Some hybrids use only electricity for fuel until there's none left. At that point, it switches over to gas consumption to keep going. That is what it's like in the human body. You want to use up all that sugar and get to the fat because burning fat results in weight loss.

Your body won't bother going to fat stores for fuel when there's plenty of sugar present. When you start your fast, your body is burning only sugar at first. After 18-24 hours those stores start to run out, so your body is forced to get energy from your fat. That's the key! Now you know why low-carb high-fat diets work so well. There's less sugar for your body to pull from when you're eating that way. Like all diets, though, it's hard to sustain, so we want to find a way to have balance.

Blood Sugar

GRADE	Blood Sugar While Fasting	Blood Sugar After Eating
A	70-90	100 or less
B	91-100	101-110
C	101-110	111-120
D	111+	121+

An ideal blood sugar level is between 80-100 while you're fasting. That's when I feel the best while I'm fasting. If I'm starting to fall into a slump, I use exercise or caffeine to perk me up. Since you shouldn't be consuming calories during your fasting window, you can drink unsweetened tea or black coffee to get your caffeine.

Your body gets its fuel from three kinds of food: carbohydrates, proteins, and fats. Carbohydrates (carbs) come from breads, fruits, vegetables and more. Fat and protein come from meat, dairy, nuts, and fatty vegetables like avocados. Your digestive system breaks down each food and basically sends it

to your digestive tract. Your body uses insulin to process the sugar from the carbs you eat. So, the amount of insulin your body creates really depends on how much sugar you're taking in. When you hear the word "sugar" you might be visualizing table sugar, but sugar also comes from the breakdown of carbs.

When I eat a meal that's high in sugar, I immediately crave a snack afterwards. It's not that I'm still hungry; I just feel the need for something sweet. This is because the high-sugar meal I ate caused my blood sugar to shoot up high. So, when that blood sugar drops even just a little, I start craving something sweet to balance me out. This is a major reason to avoid eating too much processed sugar.

Glycemic Index/Glycemic Load

A lot of the diets you've tried before pushed the rule of restricting carbs to lose weight, but not all carbs are created equal. Fifty (50) grams of carbs from bread and 50 grams of carbs from broccoli don't release the same amount of sugar into your bloodstream. These differences in foods can be determined by the **glycemic index** or **glycemic load** of a particular food. There is a difference between those two terms, but they both are used to determine what effect the food you eat has on your blood sugar.

Should you spend a lot of time obsessing over the glycemic load of the foods you eat? No, not at all. I don't think there are thin people out there calculating the glycemic load of two cups of spaghetti versus a corn on the cob. That sort of stressful calculation will drive you crazy just like dieting. That being said, I do think you should be conscious of the amount of sugar you're eating. All of the thin eaters I talked to really watched the amount of processed sugar they consumed. I consciously keep 80% of my meals full of foods that don't drastically raise my blood sugar. It's not hard to see that an apple isn't going to raise your blood sugar the same way a donut will, right? Keep your blood sugar under control or it's going to make you want to keep eating more.

I'm Stuck in My Weight-Loss

A lot of people have said to me, *“Don't you think, with these skinny girls you interview, that it's just their metabolism?”*

I do think that is the case with very very few people. As I've spent time with these thin eaters, I've realized that people see them eat this huge lunch, but they're only seeing part of the picture. What they don't realize is, yes, these women have that big lunch, but guess what? They didn't eat dinner. If you were to you eat with them, you might think, “Wow, look how much they eat for lunch!” But you don't see the entire picture of everything else they've eaten (or not eaten).

As I interviewed all these women, one of the questions I asked them was, “What is your limit on the scale?” In other words, “When do you start saying, ‘Ok, I need to start cutting back?’” For most of them, their range was somewhere between 3-5 pounds. Some got on the scale every day. Most got on once a week, and some just gauged how their clothes fit. I also asked, “If your clothes are feeling a little tighter, or you've gained 3-5 pounds on the scale, what is your next move?” Remember, the majority of the women I interviewed had NEVER read a diet book in their lives. They never needed to read a diet book because they never wanted or needed to go on a diet. The #1 answer I got was, “I need to cut back on sugar.” Some people would say, “I would cut my portion sizes even smaller.” Others would say, “I cut back a little on my carbs and sugar.” Then I would ask, “Are you going to cut out all sugar or just cut back on sugar?” Most would say, “I'm going to significantly cut back.” When these ladies were gaining weight they would switch from eating twice a day all week long to OMAD at least twice in a week.

For example, read this excerpt from the interview with my friend, **Missy**:

Chantel: How often do you get on the scale?

Missy: Not often. Once a week or every other week. I can tell when I look at myself.

Chantel: So you can tell just by looking at yourself in the mirror, or by how your clothes are fitting?

Missy: Yes, the clothes tell me, or I can just look in the mirror and can see if I'm 112 pounds, 115 pounds, 117 pounds.

Chantel: What are the top three things you would do to lose the weight?

Missy: I felt like I needed to lose some weight recently, and I needed to cut back on alcohol. I added more leafy greens to my diet, and I cut down on pasta and heavy carbs.

Chantel: What about sugar?

Missy: I don't cut back on sugar. Wine is the most sugary thing I have. I don't eat a lot of sugar.

Chantel: Do you cut portion sizes?

Missy: I do try to eat a bigger late-lunch and a very light dinner. I try not to eat late at night. If I do have dessert, I eat ten dark chocolate chips from the freezer.

Chantel: Would that be your total sugar for the day?

Missy: Other than wine, yes. The creamer for my coffee has sugar. I'm not a huge sweets person; I'd rather have nachos. If you put a plate of cake in front of me or nachos, I'd rather eat the nachos. I think it's just the different tastes people have.

Chantel: How often would you say you have sugar? Every night? Every other night?

Missy: When I want it. Not every night. If I crave a sweet, maybe 3 out of 7 nights, I'll have a little bit of dessert, which would be like ten chocolate covered peanuts, or 10 chocolate covered raisins, or dark chocolate chips that I get from the freezer. The freezer makes them last longer and taste better. You can savor it more than if it's at room temperature. I like all my chocolate frozen.

Chantel: So you're saying that normally you do a small lunch and medium dinner?

Missy: Yes, but I'm trying to flip-flop that. If I'm trying to lose weight, I'll do a medium lunch and small dinner. Yesterday, I woke up and had my orange juice and coffee, and then I was busy all day, so I had a wrap with maybe a cup of arugula, ranch, sriracha, and tuna. I think the tuna was 500 calories. But I wasn't even hungry at dinner after that. I did have dinner because that wasn't enough calories for me, and I had sriracha-ranch cucumbers, veggie nuggets, and a glass of wine before bed (that's my wind-down).

Chantel: Any other tips?

Missy: Savor your food. Get a good night's sleep, and make yourself work out. Even if it's just 15 minutes, convince yourself to do it. Right now, I'm at the gym, so I won't walk the dog today. But the other day, I ran for 15 minutes and took the dog for a walk. Just get active, even if it's just 10 minutes. Don't overcommit; just fit in where you can. It's a momentum thing.

Personally, I have a very big sweet tooth. I really love sweets, so I have to be very careful about what I do with sugar. Before I started doing intermittent fasting, I was pre-diabetic. I have seen people who were pre-diabetic or type 2 diabetic do my program, and the intermittent fasting helped their condition. If somebody is pre-diabetic or has type 2 diabetes, there is a fairly standard marker that is called the A1C. That is the 3-month average of your blood. You can go to your general practitioner or chantelrayway.com/bloodwork and get an A1C bloodwork test done to see how your blood sugar is doing. My blood sugar now is perfectly stable, but I did buy a blood glucose monitor from a local drug store. Occasionally, I like to check my blood sugar levels before I eat. After I eat, I check it again, and then again two hours later. A lot of people will say, "I don't know if this will spike my insulin," or, "Is this going to get me out of ketosis?" One thing I do is take my blood sugar before I've had a cup of coffee with MCT oil and coconut oil. Before drinking the coffee, my blood sugar is usually around 85, and it immediately goes down after I drink it. Sometimes it goes down 10 points!

Go to chantelrayway.com/hacks for other hacks and to learn some of the other things I do to substitute sugar and lower my insulin levels.

FIRE: Enjoy Real Food without Deprivation

Psalm 63:5 (NLT)

*You satisfy me more than the richest feast.
I will praise you with songs of joy.*

Don't Make Food an Idol



The Idol of Food

Exodus 34:14 (NLT)

*You must worship no other gods, for the Lord,
whose very name is Jealous, is a God who is
jealous about his relationship with you.*

You may be wondering what idol worship has to do with weight loss. When we hear the word “idol” we think of it as Exodus 20 describes it:

Exodus 20:1-6 (MSG)

God spoke all these words:

“I am God, your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of a life of slavery. No other gods, only me.

No carved gods of any size, shape, or form of anything whatever, whether of things that fly or walk or swim. Don't bow down to them and don't serve them because I am God, your God...”

However, an idol can be more than just a carved object. An idol is **anything we place in a position of worship over God or His commandments**. I believe one of the chief idols in America today is food. Most Americans are in love with food—heart, mind, and soul.

“That's not true,” you might say. “Food isn't my idol. I'm just overweight because I'm eating the wrong food and I don't exercise enough.”

That is just not the case! It's your being in love with food that's the problem. Think about what it's like when you first fall in love with someone. I remember what it was like when I first started dating my husband, Rhyan. I always had my nails and hair done and I had to have the perfect outfit when I knew I was going to see him. He was all I thought about. When you're in love, the object of your affection is the number one thing on your mind and every plan you make revolves around it. That's what I see happening with people and food. We're not even done with breakfast and we're thinking about what's for lunch. If there's no good food at a party, then we don't want to be there. A wedding with bad food is considered a bad wedding. EVERYTHING revolves around food.

This obsession with food usually starts in childhood. Growing up, food was given to me as a reward for good behavior. These are things I try to do differently with my son. I don't tell him that he won't get any ice cream if he doesn't finish everything on his dinner plate. These kinds of statements seem innocent at first, but they become ingrained in us and shape how we look at food when we get older.

Stop Worshipping Food

If you want to find out what a person loves, see what they worship the most.

I was listening to a sermon by Lon Solomon, pastor at McClean Bible Church, about what we worship and he told a story about a guy in NASCAR racing who, at the time of this sermon, had the most starts. It was Ricky Rudd, with 156 starts. The closest he ever came to missing a start was when he tore his MCL and the orthopedic surgeon wanted to operate. He was supposed to be in a cast for weeks, but instead he went to physical therapy, and his team built him a hand operated clutch. He was back in the car in a couple of days. Once he ruptured all the capillaries in his eyes. When he went around corners, his eyes would puff up and fill with blood. So, they duct taped his eyelids to his forehead. To find out what a person worships, look at how they act and their priorities. As you can see Ricky Rudd worships NASCAR racing. What I love the most is my kids. So much of what my husband and I talk, think, and plan about is them. Think for a second: how much of your daily conversation is about food? How much do you think about it? Are you constantly counting calories? How many of your social activities are scheduled around your eating? Once again, this is why I'm so against diets. As a dieter you have to constantly read labels, count every little calorie, read every book on what to eat and what not to eat. It's a never-ending cycle of obsession.

Exodus 32:2-4 (MSG)

So Aaron told them, "Take off the gold rings from the ears of your wives and sons and daughters and bring them to me."

They all did it; they removed the gold rings from their ears and brought them to Aaron. He took the gold from their hands and cast it in the form of a calf, shaping it with an engraving tool.

The people responded with enthusiasm: “These are your gods, O Israel, who brought you up from Egypt!”

In times past, when I read this story about the Israelites worshipping the golden calf, I always said, “What is wrong with these people? Are they really that stupid that they would make this golden calf themselves and then bow down to it?” But if you think about it, that is what we’re doing with food and it’s almost worse. We’re bowing down to a piece of pizza or an ice cream cone.

It’s weird for us because none of us makes a gold calf and worships it, but we have our own false god that we turn to for comfort. If you’re reading this book, it probably means that you made food your false god.

When I was in my 20s, I noticed all of my thin friends were eating candy and junk food and staying thin. I ate grilled chicken and broccoli and couldn’t lose a pound. Because I wanted to be like them I ended up in a bulimic lifestyle. I ate whatever I wanted and threw it up later. At this point in my life, I was obsessed with food. Every decision was between being thin or eating what I wanted and purging later. I used laxatives, water pills, and exercised compulsively. I knew I was in bondage and I was scared it would last forever. Finally, I prayed and declared that no matter what I ate, I wasn’t going to throw up again. God answered and delivered me.

Now, I recognize that food had become my idol during that season of my life. It was something I worshiped, and it dominated my every decision. You can be vegan if you want to be vegan, and you can eat paleo if you want to eat paleo. What you should never do is be in bondage. Analyzing every label, counting every calorie, and measuring every meal is stressful, and it’s idolatry.

We were all born to worship something, and God put a worship pacemaker in each and every one of our hearts. If we don’t know God to worship Him, then there’s a God-shaped hole in our hearts that we try to fill with other things. It can be food, sex, money, drugs, work, or just about anything. This is what idolatry is. It used to be statues and animal heads, but now it’s these subtle things we make our obsessions.

When you idolize these other things, it's like committing spiritual adultery. Striving to be healthy is good, but when you become obsessive and set that pursuit ahead of God then there's an issue. You can't love something God made more than you love Him, and no one can serve two masters (Matthew 6:24). We never set out to make idols out of our diets. However, if you're living life scared to eat and you're up all night feeling guilty about what you *did* eat, then that's exactly what you've done.

Intermittent fasting has helped me take charge and overcome all of this craziness. Pray and ask the Holy Spirit to grant you wisdom to make good choices and be balanced.

The Three Signs of Worship

I believe there are three major signs of worship that can be identified in every person. When you worship something you-

1. FOCUS ON IT

Hebrews 12:2 (NIV)

... fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

Our focus is meant to be on Jesus, but when we become fixated on diets and losing weight to the point of obsession we are out of focus.

2. GIVE YOURSELF TO IT

Romans 12:1 (NIV)

Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship.

We're meant to give ourselves to God, not to donuts! It sounds almost silly, but how many times have we surrendered our wills to the desire for food?

3. FIND JOY IN IT

Psalm 16:11 (NIV)

*You make known to me the path of life;
you will fill me with joy in your presence, with
eternal pleasures at your right hand.*

While I believe God means for us to enjoy the food we eat, food was never meant to be the source of our joy.

God's Rules vs. Diet Rules

Fad Diets (Shiny Ball Diet Syndrome)

If you ever get unfocused or anxious about your weight loss, don't follow the temptation to try another of the world's man-made quick fix diets. You have to go back to the Biblical principles for eating whenever this happens. If the diet doesn't encourage you to refrain from gluttony, not make food an idol, and operate in balance and self-control then it's not for you.

If you talk to a friend who's doing a low-carb diet and losing a ton of weight overnight, you may be tempted to do the same.

We have to focus our minds on God's way for our lives and not man's way. After reading every Scripture on food there is over and over again, I discovered that they all fall into the Biblical principles that I've incorporated into the FIRES acronym: Fast on a regular basis; Identify True Hunger; Reduce sugar and white simple carbs; Enjoy Real Food without deprivation; and Stop before you're full. That's *God's* way.

Don't let yourself get sidetracked, no matter how hard it might be to stay focused. If you lose three pounds this week, don't decide that you've "earned" the right to not work as hard next week. That's a textbook trap right there! Pray every day that God will keep you focused.

The devil is going to tell you different lies, but you can't listen to them. He'll say things like:

"You had a rough day, and you deserve to eat."

"You're not feeling well, so you need food to make you feel better."

"You have so much weight to lose that it's hopeless!"

"You're full, but one or two more bites won't hurt."

"Don't wait too long to eat or it'll mess up your metabolism."

When you hear these kinds of things you have to combat them with Scripture.

John 15:5 (NIV)

"I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing."



Combine Scripture with positive statements that combat the negative ones you hear in your mind.

“I am always able to recognize true hunger vs. mental hunger.”

“I always recognize when I’m full vs. stuffed.”

“I understand that I’m free to eat what I want, and I choose to eat real, whole foods.”

“I wait until my stomach growls to eat.”

“I’m not a slave to food anymore.”

“I always leave a little bit of food on my plate, so I know food doesn’t rule me.”

“I don’t eat according to the clock. I eat when I’m physically hungry.”

I want to address a couple of common myths people believe about eating that just aren’t true. These are things you need to drop from your thinking.

God’s ways are always better. When you do it His way, He’ll come in and reward you. You may read this book and feel led to try to eat mindfully and with intention. But, be prepared to be tempted by other diets. I call this the Shiny Ball Diet Syndrome. This is my made up, fun phrase for describing someone who loses focus easily. For example, a shiny ball rolls by and you go chase it no matter what else you are doing at the time. You have to pray and commit to eating *The Chantel Ray Way*, and not be led astray but that shiny ball!

Diets and restrictions are all part of the Shiny Ball Diet Syndrome designed to keep you in bondage. I have been on fad diets my whole life; I have tried the Atkins diet, the South Beach diet, the Keto diet, the Zone diet, the Suzanne Somers diet, etc. I know the Shiny Ball Diets well. I used to chase after those Shiny Balls.

Fad diets will always be popular. The problem with them is that even though they address people’s desire to lose weight quickly, they aren’t sustainable for the long term. You must figure out something to do for life, and everyone

who is mindlessly thin has figured out what works for them. Another problem with these Shiny Diets is they limit what you can eat and force you to eat the same things over and over again. One of my friends once came over when my daughter was eating cottage cheese. My daughter offered my friend some, and my friend said, “Years ago when I was on the Body for Life Diet, I ate so much cottage cheese that to this day I still can’t eat it!” As a child, my mom made me tuna fish sandwiches every single day because one time I told her it was good. Well in middle school there was a boy named Art who I didn’t care for at all but who was obsessed with me. He was very wealthy and got money for lunch every day, so every day I would throw away the tuna sandwiches and have Art buy me lunch. To this day I can’t eat tuna fish sandwiches. (Sorry mom!) What’s my point? Shiny Diets require you to eat the same foods over and over, until you just get sick of it. You want to eat what your body is craving. When you’re cutting out so many foods, the more you can’t have something, the more you think of it and become preoccupied with it. Why submit yourself to that bondage? Dieting—the practice of restricting what you can and can’t eat—is slavery. It’s creating a false god.

Recently, I went to Chipotle™ with my family. Everyone ordered food but my stomach wasn’t growling so I ordered a side of chicken to take home. Thirty minutes after I got home, I was hungry. My food was still warm, so I ate and I felt rewarded for making the right decision.

The Fear of Food

I finally lost the obsession of what to eat when I began intermittent fasting. I finally lost the weight even though I wasn't eating perfect with every single meal. I lost the fear of food that dominated every diet that I ever tried.

When I was growing up in school, I was taught about the food pyramid. The way I remember it, there were basically four categories of food: dairy, grains, fruits and vegetables, and meat. Do a web search today on any of those food groups and here's some of the things you'll see people saying about them:

Dairy:

THE MEDIA SAYS: Dairy is SO bad for you! Cow's milk is only meant for baby cows and humans should never drink it. Dairy products have no place in your diet. Period!

Grains and Bread:

THE MEDIA SAYS: Grains are killing you as you speak! They can destroy your intestinal tract and gluten has detrimental effects on your brain. Grain is poison.

Fruits and Vegetables:

THE MEDIA SAYS: There's a whole group of vegetables called nightshade vegetables that includes potatoes, tomatoes, eggplants, bell peppers and more. These vegetables are deadly and include over 2,000 different species.

Meat:

THE MEDIA SAYS: Red meat has too much fat and too many calories. Fish is good, but then it actually isn't because it has too much mercury in it. Don't eat poultry because it has salmonella.

You can find dozens of articles condemning every possible food you can think of including water! It's gotten to the point that you don't know what to eat or drink anymore. There's always a new fad and dieting trend to chase. Tell me you haven't seen these headlines before:

"Top 10 Superfoods to Keep in Your Kitchen!"

"3 Foods to Make You Lose Weight Right Away!"

"Eat These Foods to Lose Belly Fat Fast!"

This culture of fearing food is a form of idol worship sustained by the media, self-proclaimed diet gurus, and even doctors.

Real Food is Not the Problem

There are a lot of people who view food as the source of their problems. They decide to eat nothing but celery and carrots and ban wheat and eggs and just restrict, restrict, restrict. As a result, they still end up eating large portions of whatever it is they do allow themselves to eat.

Colossians 2:20-22 (NASB)

...why, as if you were living in the world, do you submit yourself to decrees, such as, "Do not handle, do not taste, do not touch!" (which all refer to things destined to perish with use)

In my opinion, there is nothing in the Bible that tells you that you can't eat this or that. But I do think the food should be real food and not a package filled with tons of chemicals.

Binging

I went to college for a degree in math, and during that time I was under an extreme amount of stress. In fact, my third and fourth years of college were the most stressful times in my life. In high school, I made straight As and never studied. I never had to work hard at anything. But then I went to Virginia Wesleyan University because I wanted to be a math teacher. Your first two years of math are reasonable. It's when you become a math major that you get to the point where you aren't even dealing with numbers anymore. It gets out there! It was so far beyond me that I felt like I didn't even know what I was doing.

All of this stress drove me into bulimia. I would binge eat and then throw up because I didn't want to gain too much weight. I had all of this anxiety, and I would just eat, eat, eat, and get myself to the point where I was so sick I would force myself to throw up. For two years I was this way—binging and purging repeatedly. It was a really bad time for me. When I wasn't throwing up, I was using laxatives. I was going to the gym and would work out for 2-3 hours a day. I was just consumed with worry about my weight. It was really just a horrible, stressful time in my life.

If any of this sounds like your life and if you're struggling with bulimia, then here's something you need to do:

1. No gluttony. Repent and ask God for help. I had to recognize that I had a food addiction and needed to set boundaries. I could never binge. I could never overeat.
2. Discernment not deprivation. The reason why people purge like this is because they are dieting so much. During my struggle, I was telling myself, "I am only going to eat broccoli and cucumbers and carrots and grilled chicken." You can only do that for so long. Because I was depriving myself, the second I got in contact with a donut I couldn't just eat half of it. I had to eat it because I hadn't had anything sweet in two weeks. Tell yourself, "I am not depriving myself of anything. If there is anything

I want to eat, I may eat it. I am going to make wise choices and I'm not going to eat everything at once. If I want half of a donut, I can have half of a donut. I'm not going to be afraid of eating certain things."

3. Gorge on the Word. Every time you feel like you're going to overeat or binge, spend that time with God. You have to go to God and ask for help when you're tempted to bypass the boundaries you set for yourself. Ask Him to fill you up better than food ever could. Instead of binging on food, gorge on the word.

You DON'T have forbidden fruits. As soon as something is a forbidden fruit in your mind, you crave it. There is no forbidden fruit in this lifestyle. There is NOTHING you can't eat. You are re-introducing yourself to food and you are CHOOSING to eat healthy foods much of the time. I eat a little bit of something every day that would be considered "off-limits" on a traditional diet.

There is almost a sense of peace when you get hungry and it's in that time frame where you know you can eat again. If you listen to your body, it will tell you what you want to eat. My favorite treat used to be Twizzlers™, but at one time, everyone was giving me all of these Twizzlers™ so for a couple of weeks I couldn't even eat a Twizzler™! I had too much and my body knew it. I don't eat Twizzlers™ now because they have gluten in them, and my body doesn't feel good when I eat gluten, but go to Things I Love at ChantelRayWay.com to see which which Twizzlers™ I love.

You don't have to try to completely ignore your cravings. If you're craving salt, don't buy unsalted chips. If you're craving salt your body probably needs it for whatever reason. You just want to remember to rate your foods and only eat what you really want. If someone brought in blueberry muffins and someone else brought in Krispy Kreme™ donuts, I would want the muffin. However, I would only eat the muffin top because that's my highest rated thing. Just eat the best things!

Turn Around with True Repentance

Repentance is easily defined as “turning from your old ways.” It’s something the Bible talks about often and it’s very important. True repentance means doing a 180-degree turn. It’s turning away from sin and turning back to God. It’s loving Him and making Him who you turn to instead of food.

I used to live for food. I planned my entire day around eating. I overindulged myself at breakfast while getting excited about lunch. I finally realized that my desire for food could never be satisfied because in a couple of hours I was going to want something else. *The Chantel Ray Way* keeps your mind off of eating and forces you to turn to God when you’re hungry instead of turning to food.

This goes back to acknowledging that overeating is a sin. As long as you’re pretending that gluttony is fine, you’re never going to repent and turn away from your behavior.

1 Corinthians 10:31 (NIV)

So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God.

Understand that when you commit the sin of gluttony you’re harming your body, God’s temple.

John 8:34 (NIV)

Jesus replied, “Very truly I tell you, everyone who sins is a slave to sin.”

Sin leads to slavery. Overeating, just like any other sin, can be addictive. You become a slave to your own habits. It’s a vicious cycle because the more you overeat the more you want to overeat.

When someone is truly repentant, they're sorrowful for what they've done and they're not pointing the finger at somebody else. Many of us constantly blame others when it comes to our weight.

We say, "It's my husband's fault that I'm fat because he always brings junk food into the house." Or, "I blame my kids because they don't eat their half of the food."

That's not what real repentance looks like. Real repentance says, "I, and I alone, am the reason that I'm overweight."

It's not because your job is stressful or because your husband is mean to you. All of these crazy things people come up with are just excuses to overeat. This journey can only begin once you finally stop passing blame.

Eat What You Really Want

No Restrictions

Dietary restrictions kept Jewish Christians from initially accepting Gentile Christians into their fellowship. Peter's vision in Acts 10:9-16 presented the new rules of eating.

Acts 10:9-16 (NIV)

About noon the following day as they were on their journey and approaching the city, Peter went up on the roof to pray. He became hungry and wanted something to eat, and while the meal was being prepared, he fell into a trance. He saw heaven opened and something like a large sheet being let down to earth by its four corners. It contained all kinds of four-footed animals, as well as reptiles and birds. Then a voice told him, "Get up, Peter. Kill and eat."

"Surely not, Lord!" Peter replied. "I have never eaten anything impure or unclean."

The voice spoke to him a second time, “Do not call anything impure that God has made clean.”

This happened three times, and immediately the sheet was taken back to heaven.

This removed the dietary restrictions that God placed on Israel through the Mosaic Law as seen in Leviticus 11:

Leviticus 11: 1-8 (NIV)

The LORD said to Moses and Aaron, “Say to the Israelites: ‘Of all the animals that live on land, these are the ones you may eat: You may eat any animal that has a divided hoof and that chews the cud.

It goes on even longer than this in Leviticus and in Deuteronomy 12 and 14. Under the New Covenant, the restrictions were lifted, and we were instructed not to try to force anyone else to eat a certain way.

Romans 14:2-3 (NIV)

One person’s faith allows them to eat anything, but another, whose faith is weak, eats only vegetables. 3 The one who eats everything must not treat with contempt the one who does not, and the one who does not eat everything must not judge the one who does, for God has accepted them.

We have to respect each other enough to let each other eat the way we think we should. If you want to be vegan, be vegan. If you want to be vegetarian, be vegetarian. Do you want to be paleo? Be paleo. You have to decide for yourself. I am not going to judge people who eat differently from me, and they shouldn’t judge me. Our focus should be to take care of our bodies because they are God’s temple.

We can serve God effectively when we're healthy. Chasing after fad diets is like chasing the wind. We need to control our appetites and let the Holy Spirit direct our decisions.

Discernment Not Deprivation: Don't Gorge on "Good" Foods

I kept reading all of these diet books instead of going to the Bible to find out what God said. When I went to the Word, I found that God had so much to say about fasting! I'm anti-diet because diets force us to focus more on food.

They create a big greed problem because instead of addressing the problem of overeating, they encourage us to have larger amounts of food. They justify it by labeling some foods as "good" and others as "bad." Think discernment, not deprivation. We need to fix the root of the problem, not the food choice.

It's all about self-control. Even if you're eating healthfully, you can still overeat and consume too many calories. We can still gorge on "good" foods. When I was trying to eat really clean, I found these healthy chips that I loved to eat. They were dairy-free, gluten-free and every other type of free. They were only 160 calories a serving. The problem was that I would eat the entire bag in one sitting. That was five servings! Just like that, I had consumed 800 calories. I could have just had 200 calories of Doritos™ and been better off!

I have another friend who cut out all dairy and grains from her diet. When she got hungry, she would eat a ton of carrots and celery. She wasn't losing weight, and she finally realized that it was because she was still overeating, but instead of eating too many sweets and crackers, she was eating too many carrots, celery sticks, nuts, avocados and peanut butter! You need to go to the root of the problem, not the fruit! When you don't fix the root of the problem, you go after chemicals, artificial sugars, and all of this low-calorie fluff! We create habits of eating more food instead of waiting until we're hungry. Tell yourself this "Go to the root, not the fruit." Or maybe talk to an accountability partner

and tell yourself, “Share it, don’t run to the carrot.” You can still eat the foods you love while losing weight, and nothing is unacceptable to eat, although you will do best if you avoid sugars and chemicals: Keep those in the realm of the Three-Bite Rule.

How Am I going to Feel When I Eat This?

One thing I want every reader to understand is that as long as you eat in your eating window, you can’t make a mistake no matter what you eat. But remember, if you are a healthy-thin eater, you’re going to be able to eat more than a sick-thin eater. Yesterday, I had half a donut and didn’t feel guilty about it one bit. The problem with dieting is people don’t want to control how much they eat, so they make their food behave. They overeat on things like carrots or celery and say that because it’s healthy food it “doesn’t count.” That’s not what the Bible says at all. The Bible says to put a “knife to your throat” if you’re being gluttonous. Period. The End. You have to practice self-control.

I’ll ask a thin eater, someone who is very healthy, what she ate yesterday, and she will say, “A slice of pizza and brownie for lunch and steak, vegetables and some pasta for dinner,” and in my head because she’s drop-dead gorgeous and super skinny, I will say to myself, “See how skinny she is, and she ate a brownie and pasta.” Then I will talk myself into eating that, and I can eat it, but only if it’s gluten-free, or I’ll feel awful! My body can’t process gluten because of autoimmune issues, but I don’t have to deprive myself. My body cannot handle it, just because hers can. If I eat gluten, my joints hurt, I can’t walk, my head gets inflamed with psoriasis and chunks of skin fall off, and I get massively constipated and exhausted. So yes, I can eat them, but I must remind myself that I have an autoimmune disease, and I’m not depriving myself, but I must discern what I should eat. So, I’ll say it again, if you have no food allergies or sensitivities, but you avoid certain foods because you think you’re being good, then you’re trying to control the food but aren’t focusing on hunger and fullness.

Three Phases of Dealing with Food Allergies

Food Allergies vs Food Sensitivities:

A true food allergy is when your immune system reacts when you eat something, and it affects different organs in your body. Some reactions can be severe. A food intolerance is less serious and usually results in something like gas, bloating, cramping, exhaustion, and low energy. If you have a food allergy, your body can swell up, become itchy, get hives, or go into anaphylactic shock.

I want you to think about three different phases if you have food sensitivities. (Obviously if you have a food allergy, don't touch any of the foods you react to with a ten-foot pole.)

Phase 1: Complete Food Freedom

If you are unsure whether you have any food sensitivities, allow yourself to eat whatever you want. Let me explain. I've had tons of people say, "I have a gluten sensitivity." Then they read my book and start incorporating a little bit of gluten into their meals. Why? Because they are not overeating it. Once they learn to eat normally, and they're eating until just before being full, then they realize, "Oh I don't have a sensitivity!" Go ahead and allow yourself food freedom.

Personally, I've tried to incorporate gluten back in my life, but I just feel miserable, so when I have bread, I make sure it's gluten-free.

Phase 2: Minor Eliminations That Don't Deprive You

I found this verse, Phil. 1:9-10: (NIV), and this is my prayer: ". . . that you may be able to discern what is best and be pure and blameless in the day of Christ."

You must figure out how you can be discerning of what you can eat. I just finished eating an oatmeal cookie that was non-GMO, gluten-free, and I feel great!

Phase 3: Maintenance

Eat what makes you feel your best. My husband recently lost 10 pounds, and he told me, “I just really finally learned that there are certain things that make me feel so bad when I eat them, so I made the decision not to eat them anymore. I’m not depriving myself; I’m just being discerning.” He’s hilarious and really likes to make jokes and take specific parts from my book and throw them back in my face.

For the last 20 years I have had different chronic illnesses, but I was even worse after I had my son Kyle, who is now 8 years old. I was just really, really weak and tired. My doctor told me I was totally fine, so I just went from doctor to doctor to doctor. One told me it was Chronic Fatigue Syndrome. Another told me I’d had Chronic Fatigue Syndrome, but it had healed. My blood work showed that it had been in my system at one time. Then I was told it as my thyroid.

Some of my different symptoms were:

- Massive joint pain
- Psoriasis
- Fatigue
- Eczema
- Muscle pain
- Digestive issues
- Gas
- Bloating
- Constipation
- B12 deficiency
- Swollen and painful joints

I was getting blood work done constantly, but every time I got it done, my numbers would come back normal. One of my doctors literally said, “Chantel, I have never really seen anyone that had such great numbers.” So, I started to feel like I was just crazy because most doctors would say my numbers were normal. Now looking back, I know this was because the ranges of what a physical doctor says are good numbers are completely different than what a naturopath doctor would say are good numbers.

The numbers on the left in the chart below are from a conventional doctor. The numbers on the right are from a naturopathic doctor.

	Conventional Standard Normal	Naturopathic Normal
TSH	.5 - 5.0	1.8 - 3.0
RT ₃	10 - 24 ng/dl	8-15 ng/dl
3T ₃	2.3 - 4.2	3.0 - 4.0
3T ₄	5.0 - 12.0	6.0 - 12.0
TPO	< 9 IU/mL	< 4 IU/mL
ANTI-TPO	< 4 IU/mL	< 1 IU/mL
TGAB	< 20 IU/mL	< 20 IU/mL
Ferritin	Males 12-300 ng/mL Females 12-150 ng/mL	70 - 150 ng/mL
Iron	60 - 170 mcg/dL	50 - 150 mcg/dL

My doctor even told me, “I think it is just stress or anxiety. I think I should put you on anti-anxiety medicine.” Even though I told her I was not anxious at all and definitely did not need to be on anti-anxiety medicine. She said to me, “Well, if you have 7 offices and over 200 people who work for you, you must have some anxiety, even if you don’t think you do, and so I definitely want to put you on anxiety medicine,” which, of course, I absolutely refused and never took. Another doctor wanted to put me on HUMIRA™ for my psoriasis and joint pain. HUMIRA™ is an immunosuppressive drug and has massive side effects that I just did not want to take either. This was all before I finally found out that I had autoimmune disease.

As I did my interviews, I would hear women say something like, “I eat whatever I want.” “I never go on a diet.” “I just eat when I’m hungry and stop when I’m full.” When I’d hear that I would think, “Yes, that’s it!” and would go back to eating whatever foods I wanted and then felt awful.

Know the Differential

Caloric Intake

Maybe you heard the story that came out a few years ago about John Cisna, the science teacher who ate only McDonald's™ for six months and lost 56 pounds. He did this on a 2000 calorie diet while walking 45 minutes a day. Moral of the story? Caloric intake is a BIG deal!

You need to start eating what you want and not what you think you should eat. One time I went to lunch with my friend, Allison. I don't eat pizza very often, but that day I was craving pizza, so we went to Uno's Pizzeria and Grill™. I ordered a small personal-sized pan pizza with onions pepperoni, and veggies. Allison said, "Mmm that pizza sounds tasty, but I'm going to be good and just get the grilled chicken Caesar salad." Well her salad came out, and the plate was literally a foot long. It was huge! It had tons of Caesar dressing, croutons, grilled chicken, and parmesan cheese. If you look up the calories in a Caesar salad that size, it's at least 1000 to 1200, but in her mind, Allison thought she was "being good" by ordering the salad, even though she thought the pizza sounded good. Meanwhile, I ate $\frac{1}{2}$ of my personal-sized pizza and was satisfied and planned to just save the other $\frac{1}{2}$. Well, after Allison finished her salad, she saw my leftover pizza and said, "I tried to be good with the salad, but I really want pizza. Can I have the rest of yours?" So, she ended up eating her entire salad plus $\frac{1}{2}$ of my pizza.

This is exactly what a lot of people with a weight problem do; they order what they think is better for them or healthier, but it's not what they really want, so they end up eating that plus what they really want. Allison would have been better off just ordering the pizza in the first place because it was what she really wanted. Cheese pizza from the average restaurant is 950 calories, while a Caesar salad can be as much as 1280 calories. Crazy, right? You can get so caught up on trying to eat healthfully and think you're doing well, when really, you're missing out on eating what you really want, and there's no reason for it. So I'll say it again: Eat What You Really Want!

My trainer told me that people trip themselves up in a similar way when it comes to exercise. You can work out at the gym and overestimate how many calories you actually burned—treadmill calorie counters are not accurate! So, say that you think you burned 400 calories in a workout when, in reality, you only burned 200. If you go out and devour 400 calories based on that misperception, you're suddenly in a bad place. I'm not an advocate for counting calories. I *am* an advocate of getting yourself to a place where you eat less food. That's the whole idea. We've fed our bodies too much and too often. Now, we're limiting the amount of times that we're eating and the amount of food that we're eating with this plan.

Although I don't *count* my calories, I do recognize that caloric intake is very important. My aunt weighed 125 pounds for the longest time before she dropped to 90 pounds and stayed there. Using the calorie calculator at calculator.net, I can estimate that she only had to go from eating about 1800 calories a day to about 1524 to maintain that weight loss. It's unbelievable! Just a small change in your caloric intake can make such a difference.

It's not very hard to reduce calories and still eat what you love. You can do it easily with sandwiches. In my opinion, there's never really a time you should be eating two pieces of bread. One is more than enough. If you can get away with it, have an open-faced sandwich with just one slice of bread. To reduce the bread on an English muffin, scoop out the middle part. It tastes better that way, in my opinion, because I like the crunchy part anyway. You can do a similar thing with a bagel and take out the entire middle part. This way, you get rid of a lot of calories but still feel like you have a nice sandwich.

On the other hand, there are times when you're craving something and you need to let yourself feel satisfied. In Virginia, there's a restaurant called Baker's Crust™ that has something called the "Gotta Have It™" burger and sometimes I GOTTA HAVE IT! That kind of burger isn't quite as good without the bun, so, when I eat it, I eat the whole thing. You don't want to make every meal a mental battle. It's really exhausting. People who are naturally thin don't do that to themselves; counting calories, asking, *Can I?* or, *Should I?* based only on caloric intake? All of that is just mentally exhausting.

Are All Calories Created Equal?

When you do this intermittent fasting plan correctly, you're going to consume fewer calories, and that equals weight loss. If you're worried that eating the decadent foods you want is going to counteract that, check out this story.

Mark Haub is a professor of human nutrition at Kansas State University who, for a class project, ate junk food for the majority of his diet and lost 27 pounds in two months . The key? He restricted his calories to fewer than 1800 a day. It didn't matter that he was eating mostly Twinkies™, Doritos™, Oreos™ and more. The calorie deficit led to his weight loss.

Now, if you had one person eat 1800 calories of Twinkies™ vs. 1800 calories of grilled chicken, I do think you would see a difference in muscle definition. However, if your focus is weight loss, proper intermittent fasting helps you get where you want to be. Also, because intermittent fasting involves eating windows, and, as a result, fewer meals a day, it removes the need for being overly focused on counting the actual calories. If you eat OMAD, for example, it's very difficult to eat more than 1200 calories in one sitting.

Macronutrients

Macros (short for macronutrients) are nutrients your body needs to survive. They are fats, proteins, and carbs. All three of these are needed for cognitive function, energy, and more. Protein really ties into lean muscle mass and satiety (the feeling of being satisfied). If you're deficient of protein, it can contribute to weakness, mood changes, lack of concentration, and joint issues. By simply listening to your body, evaluate if you're getting enough of everything you need. Don't get obsessive with trying to count every last gram.

Know Yourself

Let's say I really wanted some chocolate mousse, but in an effort to be healthy I tell myself, "I'm just going to have this apple with almond butter instead because that's the healthier option." Sometimes, that will work, but often times it really depends on how badly you want it. Because what you don't want to do is eat that apple with almond butter, say, "That just didn't do it!" and go eat the mousse anyway. Now, you've eaten the apple, almond butter, and the mousse! You've eaten all those calories! It's better to just eat the mousse in a small amount rather than overeating.

In my opinion, no one ever needs an entire donut. It's way too much sugar. But doesn't everyone need a couple of bites of donut every once in a while? Absolutely! In the beginning, it takes time because you have to tell yourself that you can eat just three bites and be done. When you're starting out you're probably going to have to throw away half of the donut to keep yourself in check.

Deciding How to Eat

Among Christians, there are many different opinions on veganism and vegetarianism. Some of them can be extreme. I have a friend who we'll call "Corey." Corey is so passionate about not eating meat that she believes anyone who does is a sinner. There can be a lot of emotion surrounding this topic, but intolerance for the different ways people eat bothers me.

I feel there is scriptural support for people who want to eat a vegan, vegetarian, or meat-inclusive diet. You have to pray and get wisdom from the Bible and find out what God wants you to do. The New Testament makes it very clear that every individual needs to follow his or her own conscience when it comes to eating. Make your own decision even if others disagree.

Many Christians who are vegan or vegetarian believe that they follow God's original plan and purpose for how we ought to eat. They model their eating habits after particular Scriptures.

The passages above (Mark 7:18-19) as well as those below clearly allow for the consumption of meat as well as revealing foods God wants you to avoid.

Finally, we see Jesus doing away with all of the previous rules about food. God delivered a similar message to Peter in the Book of Acts while he was on the rooftop of Simon the Tanner's house in Joppa (Acts 10). Peter was told

Acts 10:15 NIV

"...Do not call anything impure that God has made clean."

The Bible also addresses how we should treat each other in regard to the foods we eat:

Romans 14:2-3, 6 (NIV)

One person's faith allows them to eat anything, but another, whose faith is weak, eats only vegetables. The one who eats everything must not treat with contempt the one who does not, and the one who does not eat everything must not judge the one who does, for God has accepted them.

...Whoever eats meat does so to the Lord, for they give thanks to God; and whoever abstains does so to the Lord and gives thanks to God.

It's worth mentioning that some Christians recommend a vegetarian diet not because of Scripture, but because of the treatment of animals in the food industry. This is a point worth considering. God gave us dominion over all the earth (Genesis 1:28), but He also expects us to behave responsibly and be accountable for the way we treat His creation.

Proverbs 12:10a (NIV)

The righteous care for the needs of their animals

I think animal rights groups have a very valid point that we need to treat animals with respect, but, unfortunately, many of them have forgotten that animal life cannot be given priority over human life. I know some people who would rather starve to death than eat animal meat. If that's you, I respect that! You should also respect those who choose to eat meat.

Pros and Cons of Vegan and Vegetarian Diets

I feel my best when I eat tons of fruits and vegetables. There are vitamins, fiber, and vital nutrients that only come from plant sources. Simply put, the more vegetables you eat the healthier you're going to be!

A **vegetarian** diet tends to be lower in calories and fat. Most of the fats encountered in the vegetarian diet are the “good” kind. To be specific, they are **monounsaturated** fats. In practical terms, this means that they lower LDL (the “bad” cholesterol) and may raise HDL (“good” cholesterol).

On the other hand, strict vegetarians and vegans may fail to get enough protein and essential amino acids in their diets. If you're going to be on a vegetarian or vegan diet, you should definitely consult a registered dietitian or your doctor to make sure you're getting all the nutrients your body needs.

What Works for Your Body

At this point, it's clear that the Bible says there aren't any foods you're lawfully restricted from eating. In fact, in Genesis 18, God sat down with Abraham and ate red meat, butter and raw milk! However, that doesn't mean you should still eat anything and everything. Because s

You have to find out what you can and can't eat for your body specifically. The Bible says I can eat bread and milk, but I don't eat a lot of it because my body doesn't process gluten and dairy very well. I just eat it in limited amounts and I feel fine.

Enjoying Food Isn't a Sin

As we talk about being disciplined and having self-control, I don't want you to think that food is the enemy. In fact, putting whole groups of food in a "hands off" zone makes you want them more. It's kind of like with Adam and Eve when God said, "You can't have the fruit of this one tree," then all Eve could think about was eating fruit from that one tree, and she allowed temptation to get the better of her, rather than practicing obedience. As soon as someone says you can't have something, that's all you think about.

Enjoying food is not a sin. I don't believe your attitude has to be "I can only eat to live, and I can't enjoy anything that I eat." I disagree! I think you can enjoy whatever food you want—there is nothing you can't have. You're simply learning how to eat "non-clean" foods in moderation. You don't want to have this frantic mentality that obsesses over every detail about food:

"OK, what am I going to have for lunch? I don't want a sandwich (but I do) because it has too many carbs. I don't want to have this croissant with chocolate (but I do) because it has too much sugar. I don't want a frittata (oh, yes I do!) because it has too many eggs and they have cholesterol."

1. You can just get so crazy about it! Chocolate is not from the devil and God hasn't restricted you from eating it. I believe you can have both healthy and yummy together. It's just all about portion control. A lot of people pray a general prayer when they sit down to eat—

2. "Thank You for this food and help it to be nourishing to my body."

3. Instead, pray with a purpose:

4. "Thank You for the food You put in front of me. Help me not to feel guilty about eating any of it, but to eat in moderation. Help me to know when my body is full. Help me to stop before I overeat and give me supernatural power to show restraint and self-control."

5. The Holy Spirit should be your personal nutritionist. Invite Him to your meal! By the time you're done with this book, if nothing else, you should be praying much more honestly.

Nutritionally Dense Foods

I want to take a moment to discuss the **paleo diet**. I don't think anyone should be on a diet. I do think you should make food choices that make your body feel amazing. As I was interviewing thin eaters, they told me that they don't follow any diet. But they would say to me a big bulk of my diet is non-starchy vegetables, lean meats and fruit--*paleo*. The paleo diet involves eating non-starchy vegetables, lean meats and fruits! Even the Bible tells you to eat like that. I know when I eat mostly paleo food choices, I feel better and have more energy. Please hear me loud and clear, you are not on a diet, you are making food choices that make you feel like a million bucks. Like veganism or vegetarianism, I absolutely don't think eating this way should be a requirement for anyone. However, I would highly recommend at least a version of paleo for anyone suffering from an autoimmune disease like me. I have Hashimoto's disease, an autoimmune disease that attacks the thyroid. Whenever I ate 100% paleo, my condition got drastically better. Now, I do an 80/20 style of paleo combined with my intermittent fasting.

Choose Real Food

The modern American diet isn't very good. It's full of chemicals and foods that lead us into autoimmune diseases, thyroid problems, cancer, digestive disorders, and heart disease. How and what you eat affects your health, and my personal health problems are what led me to eat what I call **paleo-ish**.

NOTE: This section is for people who suffer from an autoimmune disease and would like to know what I did to cure my condition. If you don't suffer from any of these problems, then you have no reason to eat paleo-ish. The 80/20 rule is just fine for you. As always, talk to your doctor before making any decisions.

Paleo-ish is simply paleo with a few personal differences. The paleo diet basically tells you to eat lean meat, fruits and non-starchy vegetables. Very simply, paleo is clean eating.

Now, there are three different ways I think you can do this:

Pure Paleo - no grains, dairy, soy, refined, or processed foods.

80/20 Paleo - 80% of the time you're eating paleo; 20% of the time you're eating whatever you want.

Autoimmune Paleo

For people with chronic autoimmune disorders like fibromyalgia, psoriasis, lupus, IBS and more, there are certain foods in the paleo diet that can't be eaten. Depending on your health issue, you will have to test out different foods and find out what you respond well to.

Before I came across paleo, I was overweight with dry skin, debilitating fatigue, and brittle hair that was falling out. My doctor told me that I had autoimmune hypothyroidism caused by Hashimoto's Thyroiditis. Paleo is how I healed that.

I started out doing paleo 100% without even knowing how much effect it would have on my thyroid. I actually felt terrible at first because my thyroid kicked into overdrive and reacted to my medication. I could physically tell that I needed to back off of my medication. I lowered it and stopped doing paleo 100%. That sent me on a roller coaster for a while until I found my balance of an 80/20 paleo diet or paleo-ish.

I began at 125 mg of Synthroid medication for my thyroid, but I was able to bring that down incrementally until I didn't have to take it at all. My doctor was surprised that my eating was the only change that I made. My psoriasis even got better. This all happened because of eating paleo-ish combined with intermittent fasting. The two worked together and I wouldn't have gotten these results without both of them.

The foods that make my body feels best are my green-light foods:

1. Meats of any kind (grass fed or pasture raised)
2. Seafood (wild caught)
3. Vegetables (organic and local)
4. Eggs
5. Fruit (organic)
6. Nuts and seeds of all kinds (in moderation)

7. Fat (preferably avocado oils, coconut oils, extra virgin olive oil, and ghee)
8. Paleo-friendly sweeteners (raw honey, maple syrup, coconut sugar, coconut nectar, and dates).

Foods I limit (yellow-light foods):

1. Grains (gluten and non-gluten)
2. Legumes (all beans, soy, and peanuts)
3. Dairy (milk, creamers, cheeses, and yogurts)
4. Processed and refined foods

I have friends who choose to eat only raw, unprocessed dairy and that seems to work for them. Personally, I love dairy, but the less I have, the better I feel. I can only have dairy here and there and in small portions. If I have any more than that, my body just can't handle it. Some people, like me, who have food allergies to dairy can tolerate ghee better than butter because it's pure fat.

Once again, none of these restrictions apply to you if your health isn't negatively impacted by any of these foods. You're free to eat whatever you want. Nowhere in the Bible does it say, "Thou shall not have dairy or gluten!"

I'm not here to tell you what you can and cannot have. I can tell you what works for me, and you have to find out what is beneficial for you. Ask yourself, "When I eat this food, how do I feel?" I have tons of friends who go to France, Germany, and Italy and eat gluten. When they eat gluten here in the United States, they feel terrible, their skin breaks out, and they are exhausted. Unfortunately, the way our country is processing foods prevents us from being able to digest it.

FIRES: Stop Before You're Full

“Stop Eating” Cues

My son, Kyle, is my absolute pride and joy, and he eats like a true thin eater. At eight years old, he knows not to eat any more than it takes for him to be full. His sense of satiety is very strong. **Satiety** is the feeling of being satisfied.

To help yourself recognize when you're satisfied and not overeat, you need to develop “stop eating” cues. It's like training a dog to go potty. I got a new puppy, Coco, and we had trouble potty training her at first. So, we took her to a trainer, named Dorie, who told us that dogs need cues to learn to relate certain things with new behaviors. The cues can be hand signals, gestures, or sounds. For example, to make Coco stay, we held up a hand up and said, “Stay.” To potty train a dog, Dorie told us to put a bell by the backdoor, and every time we took Coco outside to go potty, to put her nose in the bell and make it ring. This taught Coco that when she needed to go potty, she should ring the bell to let us know. It's the same with our bodies; we need cues to tell us to stop feeding our bodies! Since I have trouble knowing when to stop eating, I have ways to signal my body that it's time to call it quits. Give these a try:

1. Chew a piece of gum
2. Brush your teeth
3. Have a cup of tea or coffee
4. Flee the scene of the food

Coffee is a good way to end your meal, but you have to be careful because it can have a lot of sugar in it. A coffee from one of the popular coffee shops can have 48g of sugar! I make my coffee with cream and either a little bit of sugar, no sugar, or sugar-free flavorings.

Savor Your Food

The best thing you can do to help you decide when to stop eating is to eat what you really want. Savoring your food is easier when you're eating what you really want to eat. I used to consider taking what I thought was an “easy route” to lose weight—taking a weight loss pill or doing a fad diet—but I realized that the true solution was to eat real food and never deprive myself. In order to do that, I have to savor my food.

Looking back, I'm shocked at how often I used to eat without even thinking about whether or not I was actually hungry. I ate based on how much food was on my plate. No matter how much food filled the plate, I always ate it all. So, I realized that the problem wasn't with the food itself. Thin eaters eat any kind of food they want and don't deprive themselves.

I also noticed how slowly some thin eaters eat. It can take up to 45 minutes for them to eat their food while it's not hard for me to finish in two minutes! When you eat slower, you taste and **savor** the food. I personally LOVE chocolate mousse. Since I particularly like the whipped cream, all I do is take a little whipped cream and a little bit of the mousse and just skim the top of it. I use a fork and just take razor thin slices. I'm savoring it. The goal is to savor your food and not deprive yourself of it. One day I was talking to my friend Catherine, who is a former Miss Virginia. We were talking about this concept, and she told me that even though she is a dentist, she loves candy, especially Skittles. She has always loved them since she was a little girl, but she doesn't just sit down and eat an entire bag of Skittles without noticing it. She really takes her time and enjoys each and every individual Skittle! Because she takes her time and really enjoys her sweet treat, just a few Skittles is plenty to satisfy her craving!



In the interview, she said, “They say to lose weight you’re supposed to savor your food.” I used to make this little game when I was a kid where I would sit in front of the television, and I would put a Skittle in my mouth and not look at what color it was. Then I would try to figure out what color it was, and then I took it out of my mouth and see if I was right. I have this little secret mentality that I can eat a Skittle, and I can figure out what color I was just eating. I don’t know. You can’t do it with M&Ms. They all taste the same. Anyway, when I eat skittles, I’ll literally suck on the Skittles. I can tell you what flavor it is because the flavor typically comes from the outside, and so I’ll suck on the Skittle for a while and be like hmm, “Is this red? Oh yeah, it’s red.”

Really enjoy the taste. See, you’re not depriving yourself! Don’t rip the bag open and dump the whole thing in your mouth. Take your time and enjoy it.

Eat the Best First

Psalm 81:16 (NLT)

“But I would feed you with the finest wheat.

I would satisfy you with wild honey from the rock.”

Thin eaters only eat what they really, really love. I interviewed tons of thin eaters and they told me that they actually **taste** and **rate** each food on their plates. The average eater tastes something she doesn’t like and eats it anyway because she feels she has to “clean her plate.”

Imagine a plate of steak, mashed potatoes, broccoli, and a salad. The average eater eats the foods she likes least first and saves the best for last. The thin eater eats whatever she likes the best *first* because she knows that she’s going to stop eating once she gets full. If she likes the steak and mashed potatoes, she’s going to eat that instead of feeling forced to eat the broccoli and salad she doesn’t want. She eats what she craves.

Usually, a salad is served before the main course of any meal and we eat it

not because we enjoy it, but because it's there. When the main course comes out—and, be honest, that's the food you showed up for—you eat more of that to satisfy your craving and end up eating past full. Afterward, you blame it on the meat and carbs in the main course when it's actually the salad that's the problem. You could have refused to eat that entirely and waited on what you actually wanted and eaten less overall.

Start rating not just the foods on your plate, but even the parts of each food. I like edges of brownies instead of the middle. So, I should just eat the edges. I don't have to eat the whole thing, just the best part. This is why thin eaters always leave some food on their plates. They are not part of the "clean your plate" club.

Some people say you're required to eat everything on your plate because there are starving children in other parts of the world. I don't believe that. All of the extra food we eat is causing heart disease, diabetes, and more. Is it better to get health problems because you're overeating or to just throw the food away?

Exodus 16:1-5 (NIV)

The whole Israelite community set out from Elim and came to the Desert of Sin, which is between Elim and Sinai, on the fifteenth day of the second month after they had come out of Egypt. 2 In the desert the whole community grumbled against Moses and Aaron. 3 The Israelites said to them, "If only we had died by the Lord's hand in Egypt! There we sat around pots of meat and ate all the food we wanted, but you have brought us out into this desert to starve this entire assembly to death." 4 Then the Lord said to Moses, "I will rain down bread from heaven for you. The people are to go out each day and gather enough for that day. In this way I will test them and see whether they will follow my instructions. 5 On the sixth day they are to prepare what they bring in, and that is to be twice as much as they gather on the other days."

What's key in that passage is that God said to only eat what fills you up for that day. You don't need to be greedy and continue to eat more. That doesn't mean that you can't have leftovers. It means you're only eating enough to fill your body.

To make sure that you're only eating what you really want, use the **enjoyment scale**.

Enjoyment Scale:

On a scale of 1-5, you want to only eat foods that are a 4-5 level of enjoyment. You shouldn't even waste calories on anything beneath that. If the steak and potatoes are your 5s, eat them first. Once you're full, you don't have to eat anything more. You're done!

My friend, Christy, went on vacation to Italy. When she got back, I asked her if she gained or lost weight. She ate pasta every night, and she lost four pounds! How is that possible? Well, she never ate breakfast, and they walked everywhere they went. She ate pasta every night for seven nights, but she never overate. Christy likes pasta, but on average she only eats it 1-2 times a week when she craves it. She doesn't eat anything that's not a 4 or 5 on the enjoyment scale.

How to Be a Skilled Thin Eater— Stopping Before You're Full

1- Stop Eating Before You Feel Tired. You should still have energy when you're **finished** eating. If you're dozing off on the couch after dinner, you ate too much.

2- Get the Food Out of Sight. When you're full, stop eating and get the food away from you. If you're at a restaurant, ask for a to-go box. If you're at

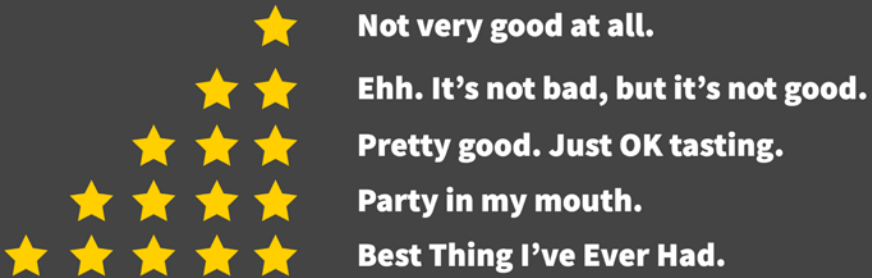
home, put the leftovers in your fridge. Pray for God to remove the desire to eat any more food.

3- Change Your Definition of Full. Fullness shouldn't feel uncomfortable, and your stomach shouldn't be distended.

4- Understand the 20-Minute Principle. Understand that it takes 20 minutes after eating to realize that you're actually full. Always stop before you're satisfied, so your body signals can catch up.

5- Remember the Consequences. You know all of the negative

The Chantel Ray Way Enjoyment Scale



consequences overeating brings. You know how uncomfortable it makes you feel. You don't want to go back to that ever again.

“I-Might-As-Well” Syndrome

For a lot of overweight people, one of the things I hear them say is “I ate one cookie, I might as well eat 14.” A thin person never says that. Someone with a food obsession feels that one cookie blows her diet. One medium chocolate cookie is 78 calories, so even if she ate three would only be 234 calories, but to the food obsessed they believe that once they have fall off the wagon, they might as well just keep falling. Or as my husband used to say. “She didn’t fall off the wagon; she fell off the train!” You want to do whatever it takes to get rid of that reflex. It is the devil’s tactic to put that reflex into your mind, and you must combat it. Fight the negative self-talk. Quote Scripture. Don’t think that just because you’ve already blown it you might as well keep going down the backslide. Say it’s not a big deal, and get back on track. Eating anything you deem as “bad” is not the problem. The real problem is gluttony, and that is what we’re trying to avoid at all costs.

Thin Eaters Know Food Won’t Solve Their Problems

One of the things that people who are food obsessed do is use food as a coping mechanism. People who are naturally thin have found other ways to deal with stress, anxiety, and overwhelming emotions. People who are thin realize that a dozen fresh baked Krispy Kreme donuts might taste great but won’t solve their problems. People who are food obsessed still know it won’t solve their problems but feel comforted by it in the short term. People who are thin don’t expect comfort from a cookie.

5 Steps for Slowing Down When You Eat

1. *Pray. Before you eat, quote Psalm 81:10 (NIV).*

*I am the LORD your God,
who brought you up out of Egypt.
Open wide your mouth and I will fill it.*

Then say, “Lord, you know that I want to eat really fast, so I ask you to help me to slow down. Help me chew every bite. I ask you to fill my heart and mind so that I’m not ravenous. Help me to feel calm, slow down, put my fork down after every bite. In Jesus’ name, amen.”

2. **Take a Break.** Pause in the middle of your meal to do something else. Go to the bathroom or get a refill on your drink. Ask if anyone needs something from the kitchen. Find a way to step away from your food. My friends used to tease me all the time for not taking a breath when I ate. Don’t be like that!

3. **Use a fork and knife.** Eat your meals with utensils so you can cut up your food into small bites. Set down your utensils between each bite. Ten years ago, I did an interview with my friend, Marty, while we ate pizza, and in between giant bites, (with my mouth shoved full), I asked her what she did to eat slowly. She laughed and said, “Well, for one, that pizza you’re eating—I’d probably be eating that with a knife and a fork. So, I’d eat it much slower than you were just eating it. I think, what probably helps me a lot... everything I eat, I eat with a knife and a fork. So I cut it in small pieces. I cannot take big bites. I think that’s what makes me eat so slow, because I take small bites. And I chew my food really well, so that makes the whole process slower, that’s what I think might help a lot.”

4. **Dissect your food.** My thin friends start to pick apart their food and eat only what they enjoy when they approach that “satisfied” feeling. Everyone has their 3 things that they have a hard time refusing. I always ask different people, some people say nachos, some say Krispy Kreme donuts. You could

put a dozen fresh glazed Krispy Kreme donuts in front of me, and I'd have no temptation. It just doesn't do it for me. The way that a thin person eats food is like the thing she's eating is always a decadent delight. Like it's luxuriously amazing. A good example is when I went out to eat with a friend for sushi, I ordered two rolls without rice with avocado, tuna, green onion, wrapped in soy paper. She ordered one roll with rice. She would pick out individual grains of rice and individual sesame seeds to taste. She ate tiny pieces of the ginger, as though she was deciding which food tasted good enough to put in her mouth. She only ended up eating four of the six sushi pieces before she was full; whereas I ate both of my rolls and still felt hungry. A lot of thin eaters also call themselves picky eaters or food snobs because they won't eat things that don't completely appeal to them. They will dissect a sandwich and pull out wilted lettuce.

5. Savor Every Flavor. If you eat a piece of dessert or decadent chocolate, take a single square or piece of it and savor it. Don't chew and swallow it right away. Let it sit there. Notice the different textures and how it melts in your mouth. Let it linger as long as you can. Even when you're drinking coffee, take a sip of it and savor it. Take one of my favorites, a chocolate mousse, for example. I like the whipped cream but I don't care for the crust on the bottom. It just doesn't do it for me. So, I'll barely skim the edge of the whipped cream and chocolate. I dip my fork so it's barely full and put it in my mouth. I skim for the best parts. Do the same thing. Use slow, "up and down" repetitive motions and take your time to enjoy it.

Thin eaters know how to eat just beneath what their bodies are calling for. That's how they stay the same weight **every day**. I have an aunt who's been wearing the same clothes for 30 years because of this! Don't eat a single bite more than what you need. The difference in you being thin and overweight can be determined by just a few calories a day.

Using the calorie calculator at calculator.net, you can see the difference a few calories a day can make. A 40-year-old woman at 5'4" eating 1940 calories a day weighs 130 pounds. The same person eating 1877 calories a day weighs 120 pounds. That's a difference of only 63 calories!

Remember the Law of Diminishing Returns

Proverbs 27:7 (NIV)

One who is full loathes honey from the comb, but to the hungry even what is bitter tastes sweet.

Everything tastes amazing when you're really hungry! Notice that often when you take the first bite, food tastes really great; the second bite is kind of good, and the third bite isn't very good at all. Every bite after the first goes down in quality. If you were to rate taste on a scale of 1-10, the first bite is a 10, second bites are a 9, third bites an 8 and on and on. When it gets to a 7, you should be ready to stop eating. Absolutely at 6, you shouldn't be eating it anymore.

Thin eaters eat only what they love. Everyone else eats the entire plate no matter what. We don't even pay attention to whether it still tastes good or not.

Thin eaters say, "This doesn't taste that good anymore. I've had enough."

Picture a donut and see how you can divide it into 8 pieces. The maximum you should be eating is 3-4 bites. You got the taste, you got the flavor, you're good now! You don't need to eat the whole thing. Literally, throw the rest of the donut away. In the beginning, you have to do that. Maybe later on in this journey you can keep the rest for later, but in the beginning you just need to throw it in the trash can. And if you're the kind of person to go into the trash can later and dig it out, then throw it farther away! Completely get rid of it!

Tracking Calories?

“Chantel, I’m fasting and eating in my window and doing everything just right, but I’m STILL not losing weight! What’s wrong?”

If you’re not losing weight, then you’re eating too many calories. You can fast and eat in a six-hour window all you want, but if you’re still consuming a massive amount of calories, you won’t lose weight. The whole idea is to get a total daily calorie deficiency.

Today, I did the You Pick Two™ from Panera Bread™. I got half of a chicken panini and a cup of broccoli and cheddar soup (600 calories) and I ate some of the bread that comes with it (200 calories), plus two Chia bars™ (100 calories each), which puts me at 1000 calories so far today. That was a very big meal—bigger than I usually eat—so now I only want to have 400-500 calories for the rest of the day. In fact, because I’m so satisfied now, I might not eat at all for the rest of the day.

Now, while I roughly calculated those calories in my head, you know I don’t recommend counting calories as a practice. This is only something you want to do if you’re not seeing results. But let’s not get consumed with calories unless we’re not seeing results. It’s at that point that you need to be honest with yourself and admit that you’re eating more than you should be.

It’s important that you decide what a reasonable amount of food to eat is beforehand and decide to put the rest away. Restaurants typically give you way too much food. Your stomach is the size of a fist. Most restaurants give you four or five “fists-full.” Get yourself down to two fists and take the best parts of whatever you’re eating. Remind yourself that you’re going to get hungry again and don’t think you have to just eat, eat, eat!

Don’t have the attitude that I only have six hours to eat! I have to eat as much as I possibly can because I’m not going to be able to eat again until tomorrow. Approach your food like a thin eater. It’s about balance. If you used to eat a big pasta dish for lunch, balance it out by adding vegetables or protein. I try to have protein with every meal. Almost half of everything I eat is one-half protein. It keeps me satisfied.

Never Overeat

Proverbs 25:16 (NIV)

If you find honey, eat just enough—too much of it, and you will vomit.

Proverbs 23:21 (MSG)

Drunks and gluttons will end up on skid row, in a stupor and dressed in rags.

You have to stay on track with this one important aspect of intermittent fasting: it's all about not overeating. You can spend most of the day fasting, but if you gorge yourself on a ton of food when it's time to eat, you won't lose any weight. That's because you've eaten way more calories than you needed to. I want to make this very clear: do not overeat at any time!

11 Ways to Avoid Overeating

1. **Order an appetizer.** When you're eating out, ordering a small appetizer to share is a good idea. Have your appetizer 15-20 minutes before your meal arrives. Once you start eating your meal, you can eat with a lot more control because you'll already be approaching that full feeling.

2. **Talk, talk, talk.** Try putting your fork down and have a conversation with the people you're eating with. It's easy to overeat when you eat so fast that you're basically inhaling your food.

3. **Ask God to help you slow down.** Ask for help before you start eating. I believe God has a great sense of humor because any time I say that prayer, something always happens to slow me down. One time, my son asked me for carrots, so I had to get up from the table to get them. Once I got back, I could only take one bite before my husband asked for ketchup. After I got the

ketchup, the doorbell rang! It was funny, but the Lord answered my prayer.

4. **Set a timer.** Set a timer for two minutes, take a couple of bites, and then stop. Look up from the food and give it time to hit your bloodstream. Take the time to talk or take a bathroom break. This will give your brain time to register that it's full before you clean your whole plate.

5. **Use a knife and fork.** Think of all the food you ate today. Did you use a knife and fork at any point? We eat a lot with our hands, which can contribute to overeating. Start using a knife and fork with your meals to control your portions. If you're eating a pizza, cut it up into tiny pieces. You can do this with just about any food.

6. **Sip hot tea.** Sip hot tea in between bites of your meal. It breaks your eating rhythm and slows you down.

7. **Take smaller bites in general.** I'm someone who likes to do everything big, so I used to take big bites, too. Now, I find that it's actually fun to take a sandwich and cut it up into tiny pieces and eat it that way.

8. **Get the food out of sight.** The second you start feeling a little bit full, you need to get rid of the food in front of you. Call the waitress and get a to-go box right away. If you're at home, move your plate to the kitchen and start boxing it up immediately. The longer you sit there with the food, the more you're going to be tempted to take another bite and another bite and another bite even though you're not hungry.

9. **Dissect the food.** Let's pretend you're eating sushi. Visually dissect the sushi and pick what you consider to be the best parts. Is it the little sesame seeds? Is it just the meat? Pick it apart and eat the parts you actually want and enjoy. Nibble and savor each little pinch until you're full. Don't eat all the things you don't want just because you feel like you have to.

10. **Use a Smaller Plate.** Filling up a small plate tricks your brain into thinking you're getting a lot more food than you are. At the same time, you're downsizing your portions. Your brain thinks you're piling it on, but you're eating less because it's a smaller plate.

ii. Find a Meal Finisher and Switch Lanes. Whenever we eat at home, I feel like I don't love what I'm eating as much as if I go out to eat. This is because when you go out to a restaurant, you can have whatever you're craving. If you're craving a burger or a grilled shrimp salad, you can have those things. When you are at home, you can only have whatever you want if you have the groceries to make whatever you want. This is a perfect scenario of something that happened to me. We didn't have many groceries at home. I had enough to make a kale salad, sliced avocado, and roasted broccoli. I didn't have any protein that I wanted at the house, so once I was done eating, I wasn't fully satisfied. I just felt like I wanted something else. I ate a couple of pomegranate pieces and gluten-free coconut rice crackers, but because they tasted really good I felt like I was starting to eat too many. Then my husband came up and said, "Chantel, stop snacking; we just finished eating lunch!" I had to find a meal finisher and switch lanes. The second I started eating too many of those coconut rice crackers, and with my husband's gentle reminder, I decided to just quickly go get one of the Pau d'Arco teas. I have a massive sweet tooth; every time I'm done eating, I always want something sweet. I have a lot of friends who have massive sugar cravings right after they finish eating, too, and the things that help with their cravings are:

- Eating more fat
- Eating more protein
- Adding cinnamon to everything
- Having decaf or regular coffee
- Having Pau d'Arco or peppermint tea

The Automatic Pause vs. The Automatic Action

A friend told me that one day she'd gotten a new puppy, so she googled different dog training techniques. As she was browsing, she came upon psychologist Evan Pavlov's classical conditioning experiments with dogs. Basically, he discovered a way to create external associations with food: he would ring a bell or metronome, and every time it rang, he would give the dogs food. Eventually, the dogs learned to associate the sound of the chime with an expectation of food, and would start drooling every time the bell rang even without food present. My friend, Mitchell, loves to eat when he's sitting and watching TV. In fact, he cannot sit at the TV without having a bowl of pretzels, popcorn, etc. He's not actually hungry; he's just conditioned himself to associate sitting on the couch and watching TV with needing a snack. To break this cycle, he needs to get to a place where every time he sits on the couch, he pauses before automatically reaching for a snack and realizes that 1) he's not truly hungry and, 2) he must begin to associate hunger with fuel and disassociate food with TV (he's like Pavlov's dog!).

Food as an Excuse to Procrastinate

One of the things I would do when I was younger in my 20s and was not big on deep cleaning, (cleaning toilets or doing laundry), was to develop a routine where I made deep-cleaning day Saturday. So, I would eat on Saturdays as a way to procrastinate from cleaning. I would snack until I was literally so full that I couldn't clean. To solve that problem, I would call a friend and keep her on speaker while I cleaned as we talked, or call a friend and ask her to come over and help me clean and then I would swap—help her clean her place. I'd also go to the gym first and work out because it would give me energy to come home and clean.

Proverbs 23:2 (NIV)

*... and put a knife to your throat
if you are given to gluttony.*

Do you want to know the #1 reason losing weight is so complicated for all of us? It's because we're eating too much food! We literally eat every hour and that includes snacking. If you look back at our ancestors, they didn't do that. Food wasn't as easily accessible for them as it is for us in 21st century America. Back then, food had to be found, taken, prepared, and then eaten. They weren't eating four to five small meals a day like some diets out there suggest. They didn't have refrigerators to store that much food. I honestly believe that our bodies are hardwired to be able to go without food for a much longer time than we allow ourselves to. Overeating is what's made us sick and fat. Overeating is such a major issue that the Bible mentions it quite often. In Scripture, it's called **gluttony**.

Gluttony and Laziness

Words like “gluttony” and “laziness” aren't very popular in the Christian world. The reason we shy away from these topics is because so many Christians are lazy and gluttonous.

Deuteronomy 21:18-21 (NASB)

If any man has a stubborn and rebellious son who will not obey his father or his mother, and when they chastise him, he will not even listen to them, then his father and mother shall seize him, and bring him out to the elders of his city at the gateway of his hometown. They shall say to the elders of his city, “This son of ours is stubborn and rebellious, he will not obey us, he is a glutton and a drunkard.” Then all the men of his city shall stone him to death; so you shall remove the evil from your midst, and all Israel will hear of it and fear.

Ouch! Sounds harsh right? In the Old Testament, you could stone someone for being this rebellious! Obviously, we don't live under Old Testament laws anymore thanks to Jesus, but I like that this passage points out how serious we should be taking these issues. This is important to God, but we don't take it seriously in the Church today and we have overweight leaders who won't touch the subject. We all just laugh it off like it's not a big deal. That has to stop. Gluttony is **sin**, and it's something we **MUST** talk about!

Practice Self-Control

Portion it Out

I want to explain two different concepts. One is called mindlessly thin and the second is rigidly thin. The difference between somebody who is mindlessly thin and someone who is rigidly thin is that when I asked the mindlessly thin eaters, who were the majority of the eaters I interviewed, what they ate and how they ate it, they really didn't think about what they ate, and they just happened to be thin. *They really didn't focus that much on every little piece of food that went into their mouth, they ate when they were hungry, they stopped when they were full, they never counted calories, they didn't count carbs and they ate what their body wanted.*

People who are rigidly thin are thin, but they are thinking so much about what they are eating and how they are eating to the point that it gets a little bit obsessive, and can even lead to an eating disorder. They are extremely finicky about every little thing they put in their body; they do look at calories and have more rigid rules.

Regardless of whether they are a rigidly thin or mindlessly thin, both groups are passionate about the portion sizes that they are eating. My grandmother is 98 years old. One day my mom and I were visiting her in New York. She lives by herself in an apartment. We were going through all her stuff, and she said to us, "I'm getting older, and I feel like I have all this stuff that I am not using

anymore.” She said, “Instead of giving it to you when I die, I’d love to give it to you now,” and she wanted to give us her antique china plates. It was so funny because both my mom and I don’t really use china plates often. The plates I use on a regular basis are more heavy plastic, so when she offered it to me, I pulled out one of the plates and asked, “Is this an appetizer plate?” She said to me, “No, that size of the plate is a dinner size plate.” The plates we use for appetizer or salad plates today were the size of dinner portion plates, and the appetizer plates were the size of the bread plates we use today. I remember my mom and I looking at each other like, “WOW! These plates are REALLY small.” It just goes to show you that we keep making plates bigger and bigger. When I look at the size of our plates here at our house and the size of those plates, they are literally TWICE the size of the older plates!!

Since our stomachs are the size of a fist, we want to be eating meals that are no bigger than that—not so much that they fill a big plate. Now, if you’re eating one meal for the day, your portions will be bigger, but they should always be reasonable.

Portion Control

When I have gone out to eat with thin eaters, one of the things they usually do is order off the appetizer menu. Read the interview with Kim, at the end of the book, about how her lunches are usually smaller and how she will order off the appetizer menu or order something to share because the regular size meals are too big, and she isn’t into leftovers.

Now, let’s talk about more on portion control. Almost without fail, when I went out to eat with different thin women, they would cut their food in half. Let’s say they got a burger or some sort of sandwich, they always cut it in half, and I guess it was so that they could eat less. When I asked different women why they cut their food in half or in quarters, some of them would give me different answers. Some of them would say that when they cut their food in half or in quarters, they were able to eat the middle of whatever the sandwich was and then they could not eat the outside of it. One girl even said, “I feel

when I cut my food in quarters it makes the sandwich taste better.” I would say that at least 80% of the people cut their sandwiches in half and another 50% of that cut their sandwiches into quarters.

Reasons for Cutting Food in Half or in Quarters:

- Makes it easier to eat the sandwich
- Makes it not so messy
- Let's me eat the inside of the sandwich that tastes better while leaving the outside section.

I had one friend, Allison, who worked with her husband in real estate and had been about 30 pounds heavier 20 years ago. She told me she used to always eat her entire sandwich. She then started cutting her food in half and only eating half her sandwich. She had a sandwich every single day. And when she made a sandwich, as I sat and watched her, she toasted the bread, added avocado, sprouts, tomato, cucumber, fresh turkey, and a little bit of spinach. She really made an amazing sandwich. She would put the sandwich in the office toaster oven every day, then when it was ready, she would cut it in half. Then she would give one of the halves to her husband and cut the other half into half again, and just eat that quarter. She said that just cutting her sandwich in half every day and eating a smaller portion allowed her to lose the 20-30 pounds.

Another reason people will cut a sandwich in quarters is so they can eat one quarter and then the other quarter only if they were still hungry, and they don't feel the need to eat that entire other half. A lot of times the thin eaters would eat half the sandwich and then evaluate and say, “Okay, do I want the extra half of the sandwich?” Most of the people said they either ate half the burger or three quarters of the burger/sandwich. If they were really, really hungry, sometimes they ate the whole burger/sandwich. The other thing I have seen some of the women do is eat half with the bread and then just pick

at the rest of it. They would pick a quarter of it and just pull out the meat or a slice of tomato or pickles. So, they may eat half the burger with the bun and all the toppings, and then they would take a quarter of it and just pull out pieces and pick at it.

God's Power vs. My Power

The excuse many people give for why they can't stick to this plan is a lack of willpower.

"I don't have the willpower to only eat half a candy bar. I can't eat just five M&Ms. I don't have the strength to stop eating and put my food away."

Instead of relying on your self-discipline, you need to rely on *God's* discipline. Many of us were taught to live the Christian life wrong. I was taught about this "Christian wheel" method when I first became a Christian. The idea was that, if you wanted to be a good Christian, there were certain things you had to do. You had to go to church every Sunday, pray, fellowship with other Christians, evangelize, and spend time in the Word of God. If you did those things, then you would have a fruitful Christian life. The part people miss is that you have to live your life through **the power of the Holy Spirit**. You have to do everything with the Lord's help.

True Christian discipline sounds like this, "God, will you please help me get through this? I can't do this without you. I realize I am completely weak in this area. Without You, I can't turn from my old ways. I need Your help to do this."

Living your life with the help of the Holy Spirit is the only way to succeed. While all the things in that wheel are good, they're tools. They're not a substitute for the power of God.

Accountability and Strongholds

In order to overcome gluttony, you have to be honest with yourself. In

today's society, we call just about everything a disease. It may not be a popular point of view, but I don't see overeating and alcoholism as diseases. These things are avoidable. If you never have a drink, you can never become addicted to alcohol. So, it's the same with overeating. There are choices you made that put you in the position you find yourself in now. You have to learn to take personal responsibility for where you are and learn self-control.

Accountability and self-control are a huge part of this journey. If you don't stop blaming others for where you are, you're never going to take responsibility for your life and overcome your struggle.

To take control of your actions, you have to start with taking control of your thoughts. The Bible talks about taking thoughts captive in 2 Corinthians 10:5. It's one of the most important things you can do when it comes to weight loss. Your mind is a battlefield. It's where you fight those battles of *should I?* or *shouldn't I?*

I know I shouldn't overeat, but that pan of brownies looks really good right now!

A thought left uncaptured eventually becomes a stronghold. We get a picture in our minds of the thing that we want and then we can't seem to get free from it. Biblical fasting is so powerful because it can free you from your strongholds.

Let's look at examples of different strongholds we develop in our lives:

Scenario 1:

Pizza, your favorite food, pops up in your mind. You think about it for a while and now you can't get the image out. Now, all you can think is pizza, pizza, pizza until you finally eat it.

Scenario 2:

You go to a buffet and eat six times what you normally do. You do this because you rationalize that you have to eat your money's worth.

Scenario 3:

You decide you can't fast in the morning because someone told you a long time ago that you have to eat breakfast to have enough energy to survive the day.

Scenario 4:

You don't fast because you have a firm belief that if you ever get hungry, you'll get cranky.

2 Corinthians 10:5b (NIV)

... take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.

Second Corinthians instructs us to take these thoughts captive and bring them to the Lord. If fasting is mentioned 77 times in the Bible, then I think it's meant to be a major part of our Christian lives. If God told us to do it, then it's something we can do successfully.

Philippians 4:8 (NIV)

Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things.

We have to think positively and overcome negative thoughts. Start with prayer and ask God to bring negative thoughts to your attention, so that you can get rid of them. Pray for a mind that thinks thoughts like Philippians 4:8 and actually quote the Scripture. Start your day with a devotional in God's Word to equip yourself to win. In your idle time, when negative thoughts start to creep in, listen to praise and worship music or to our podcast. Cancel those thoughts out immediately when they arise.

Defining Fullness

I never really understood what the definition of full was before I began this journey. I always felt like I was hungry and could eat all day. Sometimes, I would come home from work and, if I was wearing a tight dress, I would change into pajamas so I could eat more at dinner. I don't do that anymore! Now, full is a "polite feeling" for me. Instead of eating until I'm full, I eat until I'm "barely full," or "satisfied." Stuffed and satisfied feel different. If you're eating to the point that you have to take off your belt or change into your pajamas, then that means you're eating **beyond** full.

I learned my biggest lesson on fullness from one of my thin friends—my hairdresser, Danielle. One day in conversation, I discovered that she only eats one slice of pizza for lunch every day. I asked her if that really filled her up and she told me it didn't. She explained to me that when she finishes that slice, even though she's not full, she will be 20 minutes later.

Thin people don't eat to get full. I've learned that they actually hate being full. They don't like the way it feels. You have to adjust your definition of full and not expect the kind of "full feeling" you're used to. Don't be the kind of person who eats faster so she can taste more food before she's too stuffed to eat anymore. There's a real science to understanding when you're truly full and truly hungry, but it's something you'll learn intuitively.

Thin Eaters and Fullness

In all of my research, I learned that "thin eaters" have certain eating characteristics that revolve around how they perceive fullness. Thin eaters wrap up their food when they're done eating and do it without arguing, pouting or complaining. They know that they'll get hungry again eventually and they don't want to feel stuffed.

It's also important to learn to eat slower so you can sense when your body is full. If you eat too fast, you'll blow right by "just enough" before you realize it.

There's a balance to figuring out when you're full. On days that you're only eating OMAD, you're tempted to get really, really full to compensate, but you can't do that. Even if you're someone who works out and has more muscle mass, you can't use the fact that you need more calories as an excuse to binge. It's important that you create a habit of getting hungry. If you're feeling especially hungry when you sit down to eat, take time to calm yourself so you're not going wild on your food. Use a timer and measure how long it takes you to eat your food.

One of the things that was a recurring theme over and over and over, which I 100% agree with, is that every single one of the girls, no matter if she was sick or healthy, would say one of the following. See if you recognize support for each element of our *FIRES* theme: (**F**ast on a regular basis; **I**dentify True Hunger; **R**educe sugar and white simple carbs; **E**njoy Real Food without deprivation; **S**top before you're full):

- “I like the feeling of getting myself all the way to empty. It's feels like my stomach is kind of hollow and gurgles.”
- “I always try to make sure that I am not actually thirsty, so I first drink a big glass of water sometimes water with lemon or a splash of lime, and if I am still hungry, I know its legitimate.”
- “The thing that I do if I'm really stressed is go for a walk. Anything that is going on wrong in my life, instead of running to food, I put on my walking shoes and go for a quick walk.”
- “I never eat because it's a certain time of the day or because it's lunch time or dinner time or even if there's food just in front of me. I don't eat because of the time on the clock. I ask myself if I am hungry, and then I eat, or I will take something and save it for later.”
- “When I am not hungry nothing sounds good for me to eat. So, if someone says, ‘Hey, where do you want to go to lunch?’ And I'm not hungry I really can't think of anything because food doesn't sound good until my body is hungry.”

- “When I get hungry these are some of the signs that I feel, I start getting a lack of energy, I get a little grumpy, my head starts hurting a little, stomach growling, I have an empty feeling, and I start getting a little shaky.”
- “After I eat different bites of food, I actually check my body and see what my level of hunger or fullness at the time. I rate my level of hunger, and I want to make sure that I am never full. I hate the feeling of being full.”
- “I love the feeling of getting hungry. I like having growling and a feeling of emptiness, and for my stomach to have a little bit of a queasy feeling. I know when that happens my body is eating its own fat. I get excited when that happens. I’m not like, ‘Oh gosh what if I get hungry?’ I’m not panicking if I get hungry. I love the feeling of being hungry because I know it’s eating fat off my body.”
- “I ask myself am I craving something or am I physically hungry? If I am craving something, I usually know that within 10 minutes that craving will go away, so I just wait 10 minutes and go, ‘Okay was I physically hungry, or was I just craving something for another reason besides physical food?’”
- “It’s not just about looking thin, it’s about eating foods that make me feel my best.”
- “Food is my fuel, not something I do when I am bored or lonely!”
- “Since I’m never turning to food when I am stressed or when I am bored, it’s easier to make choices for food that are actually going to be good for me and actually fuel my body. I don’t have any need to binge because I always know that if I am hungry, I can eat and there’s just no reason for a binge.”
- “I never do meal plans. I don’t have any food rules. I don’t track my macros. I don’t do any calorie counting. I eat what I want, and I eat just until I am full.”
- “I’ve never been on a diet. Diets don’t work!”
- “You don’t have to diet in order to feel great.”
- “Instead of following a ton of rules, I eat what my body is truly craving.”
- “People ask me all the time why I am so thin; I basically tell them I eat when I am hungry, I stop when I’m full. It sounds really simple but it’s exactly what I do. It doesn’t seem like rocket science to me but for some people it really is.”

- “My husband is always thinking about food. I almost feel like he’s been disconnected to his hunger because all he wants to do is think about food, eating food, even if he’s not hungry he’ll eat it. When he’s bored, he eats, when he’s sad or happy he eats. He literally eats for any reason. For me I am really in tune with my hunger and fullness.”
- “I try not to wait until I am starving and ravenous because then I get weak and grouchy. So, I try to wait until I am very hungry, and I know I am ready to eat now. I don’t even eat when I am a little bit hungry. I like to eat when I am very hungry but not when I’m starving, ravenous or uncomfortably hungry. I try to eat when I am comfortable but not even slightly full. I like to be comfortable and I hate the feeling of being full. If I feel like I need to unbutton my belt or unbutton my buckle, which never happens. It happens maybe a couple times a year and I really hate that feeling.”
- “I always eat everything with a fork and a knife. Even pizza I eat with a fork and a knife. When I eat soup, I never cover more than half of the spoon when putting soup or dessert on my spoon. When I eat chocolate cake, I eat it with a fork, I don’t eat it with a spoon because I feel like I can eat less and I can get the bites that are smaller and with the parts of the chocolate cake that I really love like the frosting. Using a fork, my knife and cutlery it helps me to eat smaller bites. I try not to use my hands as much when I’m eating. I just try to put my fork or spoon down after every single bite and I try to slow down the automatic down, up, down up. I put my fork down and then I wait.”
- “Everyone jokes with me about the size of the bites I eat. The way that I look at it is my stomach doesn’t have any teeth so I have to chop up my bites as much as I can with my fork and knife and then I try to really chew up my food as much as I can so I feel like my body is having better digestion.”
- “I could never tell you a time I was uncomfortably full or felt sick from eating too much. It just doesn’t happen. It’s kind of like something you would never see me doing.”

MYTH: Late night eating will stop you from losing weight.

I have a ton of friends who don't eat anything all day long. They wait until 8:30 at night to eat with their spouses because they get home late. These girls are stick thin and disprove this old myth!

MYTH: You have to eat every couple of hours.

We're watching people not eat breakfast and go long periods of time without eating and still lose weight. The Bible doesn't say anything about breakfast being the most important meal of the day. Your body knows just how much oxygen it needs to live, and it knows how much food it needs, too. Listen to it!

Tell yourself that there is no alternative. Instead of being enslaved by a diet, take all of that energy and focus on obeying God and his system of eating. Stop running from self-control. Even with the Weight Watchers diet's point system you can still overeat if you're not careful. Your own self-control needs to be a part of this equation.

One week, I lost focus on my hunger and fullness and tried to eat very, very clean. I ate so clean that I justified eating more than I needed. Want to guess what happened? I gained two pounds! I lost focus and fell into a dieting trap.

Dieting produces drastic weight swings. When I was dieting, I was constantly gaining and losing 10-15 pounds. You could find sizes 6-10 in my closet because I never knew where I was going to be. Intermittent fasting is the only system I've found that has me consistently losing weight.

Mindful Eating

Maintaining your weight loss isn't just about what you eat, it's about why you eat. There are plenty of times that we eat when we aren't actually hungry.

We eat because we're tired, sad, or angry. We're using food to tranquilize our emotions. If you can't admit to that kind of behavior you will never, ever get free from the addiction of overeating. Emotional eating is a habit we have to break. Your new #1 habits should be to listen to your physical hunger and stop eating when you're full. If you learn these habits, then you'll have what you need to succeed.

I love intermittent fasting because it has taught me to be a more mindful eater. The mindful eater asks herself the right questions, and the most important question she asks is, "Why am I eating?" We should only eat for physical hunger and not because we're angry, lonely, bored, stressed, anxious, or depressed. Those emotional cues override your internal signal of actual hunger and fullness. Those cues teach you to view food as a comfort.

You don't even know when to stop eating because you weren't hungry when you started! You just keep going until the food is gone. This is a huge deal. The "*Why am I eating*" question is a speed bump that makes you slow down and take a moment to recognize what's going on. It makes you identify the emotional cue that's driving you to eat.

Another important question a mindful eater asks is this:

"Am I physically hungry?"

Learn to recognize the physical signs of true hunger. Is your stomach growling? Does it feel hollow and empty? If not, you need to redirect your attention with one of the following activities:

- Pray
- Read God's Word
- Play Christian music
- Brush your teeth
- Take a shower/bath
- Take a walk
- Pet your dog/hug your children
- Talk on the phone with a friend
- Drink a glass of water or tea

Once those questions are answered in the right way—you're eating because you're hungry—then ask yourself these questions while you eat:

1. Am I eating distracted? Don't be a distracted eater. Watching TV is an activity that can distract you from listening to your body's signals and lead to overeating. While you're eating, focus on the food and listen to your body. Sit at the table and take your time.

2. Am I fueling my body with real food? Stay on track with eating real, whole foods that aren't full of chemicals.

3. Am I stopping right before I'm full? You should never stuff yourself. Ask yourself how you want to feel when you're done eating. Good, energetic and satisfied? Or tired, stuffed and bad like you want to take a nap? I don't want to feel bad, so I don't want to supersize my portions. I want to make sure that I'm eating 30-50% less than what I was eating before.

Exercise

1 Timothy 4:8 (NIV)

For physical training is of some value.

That Scripture above, in my opinion, means that you should be exercising in some form as long as you are physically able. You should be doing some sort of exercise at least three times a week, and I personally think weight training is the way to go. I have lots of friends who don't do any cardio at all but are in great shape and great health. I personally workout every single day because I feel so much better when I do. However, your weight loss is 90% food intake, and 10% exercise. That's why this book is focused on your eating. My number one goal is to get you eating right!

The one thing I want to warn you about exercise—especially cardio—is to never use it as an excuse to eat more. If your only justification to eat something is that you'll "work it off" later, then don't eat it!

Triggers

My mom is coming into town this week, and I was reminded that when I'm with my mom, I tend to overeat a little bit. My mom eats so healthfully. She is one of those people who has two boiled eggs for breakfast, a grilled chicken salad for lunch and salmon and vegetables for dinner. So, I think I try to be healthier when I'm with her and end up not eating enough to be satisfied, which leads to overeating. If she gets a grilled chicken salad, I'll get one too even though that's not really what I want. Because it doesn't satisfy me, I snack on dark chocolate and nuts and fruit when I get home. Eating with Mom can be a "trigger" for me, so I have to be very aware of it and not fall into that trap.

One of my other triggers is when I visit my aunt. My family is from Iran and Iranians have this thing where they want you to EAT, EAT, EAT! You want them to think you like it, so you eat as much as you can. That's another scenario where I have to be careful not to overeat.

Other Types of Triggers

I. **Behavioral Triggers.** Behavioral triggers are things you do that make you want to eat. Every night my son and I watch at least two episodes of his favorite show "Good Luck Charlie." Every night, he always says, "Let's get a movie snack." That's an example of a behavioral trigger. In his mind, when it's time to watch the show it's also time to get a snack. So, I have to ask him, "Are you really hungry? We just ate dinner a little while ago." I used to have a behavioral trigger when I was younger where right after I got home from school or work I would go straight to the kitchen and get something to eat. Now, I don't go to the kitchen first when I get home. Set up rules and boundaries that will circumvent those behaviors. I can decide that, instead of going to the kitchen, I'm going to go and take a hot bath, first. If you're truly hungry, then eat, but you need to challenge your behaviors and ask yourself what's really going on first.

2. **Emotional Triggers.** Emotional triggers can come from a bunch of different sources. My main emotional triggers are anger, bad news at work, feeling down in the dumps, or even just feeling like I deserve food because I worked so hard. An example of a work frustration happened very recently. My web designer for Chantel Ray Real Estate was offered from a different company for \$40,000 more than what he was making with us. It was so frustrating because we had finally found a great web guy but we couldn't afford to keep him. That was an emotional trigger for me.

3. **Environmental Triggers.** An environmental trigger can be anything from seeing a TV commercial of people eating to coworkers bringing in brownies to everyone going out to happy hour. These unexpected scenarios pop up and make you want to be a participant and not feel left out.

1 Corinthians 10:13 (NIV)

No temptation has overtaken you except what is common to mankind. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can endure it.

What you have to do is really pay attention and ask yourself, "What is my trigger?" When the trigger shows up, immediately quote 1 Corinthians 10:13 and make a decision:

"Am I going to run to God, or am I going to run to food? If I run to God, I will gain a lasting satisfaction that truly fulfills me."

Self-Talk

Positive self-talk is, in my opinion, one of the greatest things you can ever learn how to do. Even when I was heavy, my friends always told me you'd think I was a runway model just because I carried myself with so much confidence. Anyone can walk with this sort of confidence no matter what they look like. I

have a friend who says that when he walks into a room, in his mind, he's 6'3" and 200 pounds of pure muscle. He's actually 5'4" and bald!

We're all our own toughest critics, but we also lie to ourselves more than we do anyone else. You tell yourself things that are not true and you believe them! Your consciousness influences your identity, so if you're constantly telling yourself things like:

“You're no good!”

“You're fat!”

“You'll never amount to anything!”

“You're never going to lose weight!”

then your mind is going to end up believing them.

Whatever you think of yourself is how you will turn out.

If you want to run in a different direction, you have to **change your thoughts**. There's a phrase my husband tells me all the time (probably several times a week). He says, “Just because you feel that way doesn't mean it's true.” If you keep saying negative things to yourself and thinking them in your mind over and over, these fears and thoughts become self-fulfilling. You're sabotaging yourself! You have to be really careful with what you're saying. Here is something positive you need to tell yourself:

“The reason I didn't lose weight before is because I didn't have the right plan. Now, I have the right plan, and I'm going to lose weight. Now, I'm committed to eating less food, and the less food that I eat the more I'm going to lose weight.”

Running to God

The reason that people really struggle during their fast is because they aren't running to God during that time. That's the number one problem! You can do the fast all day, but if you're not going to God, it's not going to work.

We want to eat and think like a thin eater. A thin eater doesn't eat diet food. She eats when she's hungry and she stops eating when she's full. You

want to eat 30-50% of the amount of food you used to. If you shorten your window but eat the same amount of food as you always did, you won't lose as much weight as you want to. You have to consume less food.

I went to the doctor's office the other day and I saw a very thin lady with a big bowl of candy on her desk. I thought to myself that in most cases having that candy just sitting there would be a huge issue. That's not the case for someone with self-control. She can have that candy there and it won't affect her in any way, shape, or form.

I'm not a big alcohol drinker. I probably drink 3 times a year, if that, because I don't like to drink my calories. So, I could have every kind of liquor at my desk and not be tempted to touch it. While that wouldn't be the case for someone else, it just doesn't have a pull on me. That's a sign that you no longer have that magnetic attraction to food when you can have something like a jar of candy on your desk and not even be moved by it.

You want to get to the point where, unless you're hungry, you're not thinking about food. That means you have to turn to God for comfort when that temptation arises to eat outside of your window. You want your body to talk to you about what you're craving and what you're eating. You want to learn to listen to God's voice instructing you what to eat and what not to eat.

The question you always have to ask yourself is this: "Does my stomach need food or do my emotions need food?" Here's the truth: **you will never be able to give yourself enough food to satisfy your emotions.**

Image Ethic, Work Ethic, and Eating Ethic

There are certain things in life that just come naturally for certain people. Personally, I've always been a hard worker and having a good work ethic is something that's really important to me. That's where I got my "attaboys" from when I was young.

I was employee of the month 6 months in a row at the Burger King™ I worked at when I was 14. It all happened because I was really good at math. This particular Burger King™ had two drive-thru windows, but they were too cheap to put a register at the second window. So, on busy weekends when they opened the second window, I was the only one able to take orders there because I could do math in my head. If a meal came out to \$13.56 and the customer gave me \$20 I could calculate the change mentally without a register telling me how much to give back to the customer. My **work ethic** made that Burger King™'s numbers and drive-thru times really good. The manager treated me like I was the best thing that ever happened to him!

Some women have developed a strong **image ethic**. Their "attaboys" were *oh, you're so pretty!* or *you've got such a great little body!* They give a lot of time and attention to how they look and present themselves.

I have a beautiful friend who won Miss Virginia a couple of years ago. She is drop-dead gorgeous, and she spends a lot of time on her image. One night, we were going out together and it literally took her two hours to get ready! I'm thinking to myself, *for the love of Pete, let's go!* It would drive me crazy to spend two hours to get ready for anything! But she's in there doing her hair, her eyelashes, and the whole nine yards. I can only stand to do that a couple of times a year for special events. Here we were just going to dinner on a Friday night and she spent hours getting ready. She spends a lot of time and energy on how good she looks, and that's her *image ethic*.

For me, when I really want to look my best, there's a lot that goes into making me look good, too I get my hair colored since I'm getting gray hair now. I get my eyebrows done and I get a spray tan because I'm so, so pasty white. (Without a spray tan, I look like Casper the ghost.) I'm getting older now, so I get Botox for my forehead and I constantly go in for scalp treatments for the psoriasis on my scalp. These are just different things I spend a lot of time and energy on for my appearance. That's my image ethic.

When it comes to my work, nobody has to tell me to get up and go to work because I've created work habits in my life. Every Monday through Friday, even though I'm my own boss and I don't have anyone standing over my shoulder telling me what to do, I get up and go to work. If I wanted to take the entire week off I could, but I don't because my work ethic is so ingrained in who I am. My *work ethic* is based on the habits I've created. I get up and go to work every day, make it happen, and don't finish until it's done!

If I don't pay enough attention to my image because I'm working too hard, my eating suffers. I don't take care of my image when I'm consumed with work, and I'm likely to just grab a pizza and keep it moving if my appearance is a mess.

When it comes to your **eating ethic**, overeating can create the wrong kind of momentum for the rest of your day. After you overeat, you're tired and sluggish and you can't get your work done. If you're someone who goes out and drinks every night, you're creating a habit that makes you less efficient the next day. You want to create positive **momentum habits**. These are habits that create momentum in your life. If I go to the gym first thing in the morning, that's a momentum habit because it propels me forward for the rest of the day. Exercise makes me feel better, so I'm going to be more productive. See? Momentum habits feed into the other parts of your life.

In order to create new momentum habits, you have to identify your unhealthy habits and break them. These habits begin with a trigger that kickstarts a routine and ends with a pleasure you use to satisfy your emotions.

I have a trigger that activates right after lunch. If I eat too much at lunch, 30 minutes later my blood sugar drops, and I want something sweet to eat (**trigger**). So, I walk across the street to Whole Foods (**routine**) and get a piece of chocolate with almonds and eat it (**pleasure**). Now, I have this habit that every day at 2:30 I really want some chocolate.

Honestly, identify the pleasure. Is it the chocolate? Is it the energy that comes from the sugar? Is it that I'm taking a break because I'm exhausted from working? Or, is it just fun? Whenever I go across the street to Whole Foods, I take my friend, Heather. During that time, we get to chit-chat, talk about our day and make each other laugh. You have to identify what that pleasure is and then determine **how do I change my pleasure?**

If I'm not really hungry, then I can walk to Whole Foods and get a cup of coffee or just go to the office coffee bar and save money. If it's about spending time with my friend, I could just go along for the walk and let her buy something. I could even walk to her desk and have a cup of water or green tea. This is also a great opportunity to spend time with the Lord. Try setting an alarm for 15 minutes and see if you still want the food when that time has passed. Set the alarm a second time and see if the craving is still there.

I've told you about my routine of eating every time I walk into the house. I developed that habit when I was younger. My school served a small lunch really early. I ran around like a chicken at school and when I got home from school at 3 p.m. I was starving and ate everything. My mom, being a healthy eater, would make gross things like turkey enchiladas with tofu for dinner. Yuck! Since my mom was not a great cook, I think I felt that I needed to eat as much as I could and fill up before she got home. However, I would still eat a little something at dinner because I felt I needed to eat even though I wasn't really hungry. If she did make something that was good for dinner, I would eat all of that!

I recognized that coming home was my trigger that started the routine of snacking for the pleasure of eating. You have to realize what your trigger is and come up with a new routine. My new routine is to take a bath with Epsom salt when I first get home because that is a big pleasure for me. It lets me relax and not go crazy.

No Quitting

My mom really did a good job of instilling in me a no-quit attitude. I signed up for softball when I was 12 years old because all my friends did. My first game, I hated it! I wasn't good at it and everyone else was so much better. I got hit with the ball a couple of times and I totally ran into the fence coming into home plate and got a bloody lip.

"I don't like this," I told my mom. "I quit!"

But my mom said, "You are not quitting!" She never let me quit the team, and I'm not a quitter to this day.

If I go on a real estate listing appointment, but don't get the property, I don't say, "That's it I'm not doing any more listings!"

It didn't work out, so what? I'm moving on to the next one.

How do you respond after one bad day of eating? Do you say, "I did terribly today and I'm just not going to do this anymore. I'm done with this. It's not working."

Suppose you have a day where you eat beyond your eating window? Fine! Get back up the next day and get right back on the plan. If you have one bad day at your job, do you just quit? No! You're going to have good days and bad days, but you have to keep going no matter what. The great thing is that you're not restricted in what you can eat, so you can never say you failed. Your only guideline is to abide by the 80/20 Rule and not overeat. Even so, if you have a day where you eat 70/30 or 50/50, pick yourself back up and start again. It's not the end of the world. You are **not** going to give up and say, "This plan doesn't work for me."

I recently went out for Mexican food and they gave us chips and salsa to eat while we waited for our meals. I ate more than I should have and was feeling full by the time my meal came. I ate it anyway because that old mindset that I always have to eat what's in front of me was in my head. So, I ate too much. Do I throw away the whole plan and all of my progress over that one meal? No, I keep going!

Closing Thoughts

I have a friend named Alison who has to be extremely strict when she's dieting because, if she ever slips, the whole thing goes down the drain. Are you that kind of person? Do you feel like if you indulge yourself even a little you're going to lose control? Well consider what I said before about diets not being sustainable. Think about it: even when you were on your strictest diet, did you stick to it in the end? So, what was the point of denying yourself the foods you like if the diet wasn't sustainable anyway?

When I was getting married, I wanted to lose a bunch of weight to fit into my little wedding dress. So, for 30 days all I had was a protein shake for breakfast, and chicken and broccoli for lunch and dinner. I lost 15 pounds in those 30 days and dropped from a dress size 8 to a 4. However, on my honeymoon I gained seven pounds back in seven days! See my point?

Intermittent fasting with *The Chantel Ray Way* is different. It's meant to be something that lasts. As you continue reading, you'll learn that there are no restrictions on eating the things that you want; that's something you don't have to be afraid of! You're going to learn how to eat intuitively. You're going to learn how to listen to your body, eat only when you're hungry, and stop when you're full. This plan isn't going to restrict you. It's going to give you back control over your food like you've never had before. You're not going to have to plan all of your meals and worry about whether the party you're going to has food that fits in your lifestyle.

Conclusion

At the time that I'm writing this, it's about 11 o'clock in the morning and I haven't eaten at all since my one meal yesterday. I felt my hunger rising but I don't want to eat just yet, so I decided to open my Bible to the book of Daniel.

Daniel 9:3-5 (NASB)

So I gave my attention to the Lord God to seek Him by prayer and supplications, with fasting, sackcloth and ashes. I prayed to the Lord my God and confessed and said, "Alas, O Lord, the great and awesome God, who keeps His covenant and lovingkindness for those who love Him and keep His commandments, we have sinned, committed iniquity, acted wickedly and rebelled, even turning aside from Your commandments and ordinances."

The word "supplications" stood out to me in the first verse. I looked it up and learned it comes from a Latin word that means "to plead humbly." Then I started to write down the things I saw Daniel doing in this Scripture and I found four:

1. He prayed
2. He fasted
3. He supplicated
4. He confessed sin

I did those four things this morning. I pleaded humbly to the Lord that He would help me through this eating challenge. In this passage, we can see what the attitude of Daniel's heart was when he fasted. He sought the Lord earnestly, and that's the attitude we should have when we fast.

When we deny our cravings for physical food, we're telling God, "I am craving more of you and more of Your Word. I want to read it and understand it." It's not easy. You have to really go to God and ask him to remove the blinders when you read the Word.

Pray, "God, please let me know what this means and how I can apply it to my life."

One thing people constantly ask me about The Chantel Ray Way is "What can I eat? I need an exact diet plan. I'm the type of person who needs to know exactly what to eat for breakfast, lunch, and dinner."

I see commercials for different diet plans, and I think these things are a trap. Diets had me bound for many years and I finally understand how to be free. This book is designed to set you free with a totally new vision of how to eat and how food fits in your life.

This plan will work no matter what's going on in your life. People use excuses all the time to keep from getting started:

"This is a stressful time."

"My schedule is crazy."

"We're planning a vacation next week."

I don't care if it's the week before your period! This plan will work for you because you're making this decision:

I'm not going to eat because I'm tired, bored, or cranky. I'm no longer eating for any other emotional reason. I'm only eating when my body is physically hungry.

Q&A

You can find my Waist Away podcast on iTunes and the Google Play Store. On the podcast, I answer questions from listeners about The Chantel Ray Way. I have included the most commonly asked questions in the section below to help you along your journey.

Q: Do I need to always leave food on my plate? What if I'm giving myself smaller servings of food?

A: In the beginning of this journey, I think it's a good practice to leave at least one bite of food on your plate to mentally free you from bondage to food. The truth is that when you wait 20 minutes, you're going to realize you're already full anyway. Practice letting go of the "clean your plate" mentality. You're learning to listen to when you're hungry and when you're full.

Numbers 9:15-23 (NIV)

On the day the tabernacle, the tent of the covenant law, was set up, the cloud covered it. From evening till morning the cloud above the tabernacle looked like fire. That is how it continued to be; the cloud covered it, and at night it looked like fire. Whenever the cloud lifted from above the tent, the Israelites set out; wherever the cloud settled, the Israelites encamped. At the Lord's command the Israelites set out, and at his command they encamped. As long as the cloud stayed over the tabernacle, they remained in camp. When the cloud remained over the tabernacle a long time, the Israelites obeyed the Lord's order and did not set out. Sometimes the cloud was over the tabernacle only a few days; at the Lord's command they would encamp, and then at his command they would set out. Sometimes the cloud stayed only from evening till morning, and when it lifted in the morning, they set out. Whether by day or by night, whenever the cloud lifted, they set out. Whether the cloud stayed over the tabernacle for two days or a month or a year, the Israelites would remain in camp and not set out; but when it lifted, they would set out. At the Lord's command they encamped, and at the Lord's command they set out. They obeyed the Lord's order, in accordance with his command through Moses.

This passage almost seems comical, but I love it and it's so applicable to how we should eat. The Israelites started and stopped whenever the Lord told them to. I start eating when I feel my stomach growling and that to me is like that cloud. When my stomach growls, God is giving me permission to eat.

Q & A: Your Questions Answered!

Q: What if I'm plateauing and not losing weight?

A: There are four things you need to do in conjunction with intermittent fasting to lose weight. If you feel like you're stuck and not losing weight, check these things off the list and make sure you're actually doing them.

1. **Use a Shorter Window:** One of the first things I do to escape a plateau is decrease the length of my eating window. I'll add a few more 24-hour fast days to my week to increase my results. A 24-hour fast is easy for me to do. I can eat a meal at 1 p.m. and not eat again 1:30 p.m. the next day; that's a 24-hour fast.

2. **Wait for Stomach Growl or wait for your stomach to get empty—**Don't lose track of getting to true hunger. Your first meal of the day should never come before your stomach growl. There is a very small percentage of people who will be physically hungry, but won't hear a growl.

3. **Eat When You're Hungry:** While you may not wait for a stomach growl to eat your second meal of the day, you should still be waiting until you're actually hungry to eat. We never eat unless we're hungry. Pay attention to your Hunger Scale. You should only eat your first meal at a 1 and your second meal at a 1-2.

4. **No Overeating:** This is the most important factor that you have to be honest with yourself about. You can not overeat no matter what. If you're still eating too many calories you're not going to lose weight no matter how much you fast.

You should only start looking at calories after you've confirmed that you're doing those four things. Take one week to evaluate what you're eating and what number of calories you should be consuming to lose the weight you want to lose. You might be surprised by how many calories are actually in the foods we eat. For example, there are 90 calories in just one tablespoon of peanut butter. That can add up if you're not careful.

Q: Can I be paleo as a vegetarian or vegan?

A: You can, but you're going to have very limited sources of protein. You need to eat a lot of nut butters and things like pea or hemp protein. You'll need to drink protein smoothies, for example, to get what your body needs.

Q: What if I'm reaching the end of my six-hour window and my stomach isn't growling? Can I eat?

A: Let's say you waited for your stomach to growl and you began your window at 12:30 p.m. Your window ends at 6:30 p.m., but maybe your stomach hasn't growled by the time your family is eating dinner at 5 p.m. Let's go back to that Hunger Scale. For the very first meal you need to be at a 1 before you start your window. At your next meal (like the 5 p.m. family dinner), you can be a 2 and eat something really small. This way your stomach doesn't growl just after your window closes leaving you feeling tempted to eat.

Q: What if I like to have coffee with cream in the morning?

A: If you're the kind of person who lives for their coffee with cream every morning, you're going to have to make an adjustment for a little while. It is possible to have coffee with cream and no sugar every morning and still get results. If you decide to do that, just know that you may not get results as fast as someone else. This is because you're elevating your blood sugar when you drink that. I personally recommend you don't do it. However, if that is your one hang up that's keeping you from starting this plan, then keep your coffee with cream. To be honest when I was interviewing all of the thin eaters, almost all of them had coffee with a little creamer, some had it black, but most had it with cream no sugar. Whatever you decide to do, it's best to wait and drink coffee 3-4 hours after you wake up or at least until you start

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getting hungry. Caffeine is an appetite suppressant, so when you drink it, it pushes you so that you can fast a little longer. On days when you're fasting but you feel like you just have to eat, that's when you drink the black coffee or unsweetened tea. Coffee can be very high in acid, so people who have a lot of digestive issues should try a low acid coffee, or just drink water if you have stomach acid issues.

Q: Once I break the seal, I get out of control. Once I have one chip, I have to have 20. Once I eat one French fry, I'm going to eat the whole thing! What if I don't know how to stop eating?

A: The reason you're out of control is because you've deprived yourself of the foods you want and you told yourself that these are "bad foods."

Yesterday, I went to Ocean Breeze Waterpark with my family. One of them got pizza, one got a hot dog, one got French fries, and they all got ice cream. I asked my husband for one bite of his pizza and it tasted disgusting. It was like the worst thing! Then I had a French fry and I thought these are the worst fries ever! It was very easy to stop eating. The most I ate was three bites of ice cream. That goes back to the rule of decadent foods—just have a few bites.

The point is this: if I didn't have that stuff I would have been sitting there thinking, I want that pizza! I want those fries! Instead, I had one bite of all of them and thought ehh. I decided that the food was so disgusting that I wasn't going to eat. I wasn't starving-hungry, so it wasn't a problem. I've made a decision that I'm only going to fill my body with things I truly love. Why am I going to waste my calories on foods that are just ehh?

Q: I have low blood sugar. Can I do intermittent fasting?

A: I have had a major problem with low blood sugar, so I absolutely understand what it's like. I woke up this morning not feeling well, so around 8:30 I decided to take my blood sugar. It was 63. Anything under 70 is considered low, and when you're fasting your blood sugar should

be between 80-100. I don't feel good when I'm in the 60-70 range. Now, remember, I'm not a doctor and this entire book is based on my personal experiences and what works for me. This is just my personal advice based on being someone who's had low blood sugar for a very long time. Consult your physician before making any change to your regular eating habits.

1. Get a monitor. First you need to find out if you indeed have low blood sugar or if you're just constantly spiking and crashing because of a high-sugar diet. Get yourself a monitor and actually test your blood sugar. If this is truly a problem for you, then you might want to eat smaller meals so that your stomach growls sooner and you can eat again.

2. Move Around. Typically, when you exercise your blood sugar drops but I have found in my own experience that when my blood sugar is really low and I exercise and have some caffeine it actually goes back up. Do a little research and you'll find there are other people who have a similar reaction.

3. Drink unsweetened tea. Like I said before, I woke up this morning with my blood sugar at 63. I got up, walked around the house and drank a glass of unsweetened tea. By 11 a.m., my blood sugar was 104, which is actually considered pre-diabetic. I went to Lucky Oyster later and had egg whites with spinach and onions as well as an egg and cheese biscuit with half of the biscuit removed. Twenty minutes after that meal, my blood sugar had only risen to 125. That's pretty good for it to only rise that much after eating a whole meal.

Unless your blood sugar is below 70, you shouldn't be eating when you're in your fasting time. Look, you're talking to the low blood sugar queen! If I can do it, so can you. You just have to check your blood sugar to see where it really is. Also, confirm you actually have a low blood sugar problem and that you aren't just addicted to sugar!

Q: I want to try intermittent fasting, but I have low blood sugar. Can I go that long without eating?

A: I had low blood sugar as well, so I absolutely understand what it's like. The crazy thing is intermittent fasting will actually help regulate your

Q & A: Your Questions Answered!

blood sugar. If you hang in there, you'll notice it gets better. If you begin Intermittent Fasting while having blood sugar issues, you'll need to do a good job of gradually weaning yourself off of a long eating window. You may have to start with a 12-hour eating window, then step it down to 11, then 10, and so on. Intermittent fasting's effect on blood sugar is really fascinating.

Q: Is intermittent fasting bad for my blood sugar?

A: If you've read this far, then you already know that answer to that! One of the biggest benefits of intermittent fasting is the positive effects it has on blood sugar. Keeping insulin from being introduced to your system for 18-24 hours helps you burn fat and keep your weight down. Always check with your doctor before you start a new dietary plan, but I've learned that much of the time people don't experience low blood sugar as often as they think. Sometimes people are just fatigued because of something other than low blood sugar. My blood sugar is more stable now than it was when I was eating foods with a low glycemic index.

Q: I'm really concerned about doing intermittent fasting because I have low blood sugar. I'm afraid I'll pass out.

A: First, you need to determine if you actually have low blood sugar. If it's just a fatigued feeling and not a doctor's diagnosis, it's probably what you're eating that makes you feel lethargic. If you eat a huge, carb-heavy lunch, it'll raise your blood sugar so high that when it comes back down, you "crash." Adjusting how you eat is important. More protein and fewer carbs is how I like to eat with intermittent fasting. Also, getting fiber into your meals will help your digestion so your body isn't working overtime and making you tired while it's digesting food.

Q: I'm a Type 2 diabetic, and I have been off of medication and on a LCHF (low-carb/high-fat) diet for eight months. When I try fasting for multiple days, my blood sugar drops to the low 60s. I've been taught this range is too low and it means I need to have food. Is this drop a normal short-term effect?

A: Your blood sugar will be lower while fasting, but it shouldn't be low to the point of affecting you negatively. I think maybe the combination of fasting and the LCHF might be too much. You could try cycling in higher carb days, but that's a guess without seeing the foods you're eating. Again, always check with your doctor if your blood sugar is running too low.

Q: Aren't you going to eat so much more when you're in your eating window?

A: In the beginning, I think you will. You'll have to remind yourself not to overeat. However, one of the benefits of fasting is that it gets you out of the habit of eating just because it's a certain time of day, and into the habit of eating only when you're hungry. It gets rid of the "I'm bored" snacking habit. That was a big deal for me. You have to be very careful not to eat out of boredom even if you are in your six-hour window.

Q: What should I do if I'm having really bad bouts of being "hangry?"

A: When I'm hangry (hungry and angry) I become a bear. One of the things that makes you hangry is your shift in ranges of blood sugar. When you're doing intermittent fasting, believe it or not, your blood sugar is more stable. I feel amazing right now—or super-duper really good as my son likes to say—so I'm going to go ahead and take my blood sugar for you guys and see what it is. I'm at 97. I feel the best when I'm fasting and my blood sugar is in the range of 90-100. It's when I'm in the 70-80 range that I'm not feeling good.

Q & A: Your Questions Answered!

Q: What if I'm not seeing results?

A: If you're not seeing results, the first question you need to ask yourself is, "What am I drinking?" Are you drinking Diet Coke, coffee with cream, flavored water with sugar in it? These are little things that can slow your weight loss. Believe it or not, they spike your insulin and that's something you don't want to do.

Keep in mind that losing weight takes time. I didn't lose anything for the first two weeks. That's why I don't recommend weighing yourself on a scale every day. Only weigh yourself once a week and at times when you're feeling really thin. Weighing yourself every day can discourage you.

Q: Does this diet include a vegan option? If it doesn't, I'm not trying it. If it's not vegan, it can't be healthy!

A: As long as you're following these other rules, you can be vegan if you want to be. Remember: The Chantel Ray Way is not a diet, so you can eat whatever you normally eat and that includes vegan. Genesis 9 makes it clear you can eat meat, but if you feel you need to eat vegan, then that is perfectly fine. The Bible tells us to be tolerant toward each other in what we eat (Romans 14:5).

Q: Can I do this vegan?

A: You absolutely can keep a vegan lifestyle with this plan. You can do whatever you want as long as you're following the principles of fasting, never overeating and only eating when you're hungry. If you're trying to do 80% paleo like me, then you're going to have to eat a lot more avocados and other vegetable fats.

I believe God calls different people to different things. For example, God called me to give 90% of my income and to live on 10%, but he didn't call everyone to do that. If you want to be vegan, I'm 100% on board with that. I believe the Bible is saying eat whatever you want. I believe that eating meat and

avoiding a whole lot of dairy and gluten is the best thing for my body. If you feel like God is calling you not to eat meat, who am I to say to eat meat? You have to decide what is best for you.

Q: How does the fasting window begin?

A: If you're having trouble figuring out the beginning of your fasting window, remember that you are free to determine when you start and stop eating. The second you start eating, you're in your eating window and you are considered to be in the fed state. Your eating window is closed the minute you stop eating and the fasting window begins.

I talked to a girl this weekend who told me she wakes up in the morning starving but is not a dinner person. If you're like that, you may want to do a 9 a.m.-2 p.m. eating window. That's fine; that's your eating window. Your window is closed when you eat your very last bite.

Now, some people argue that when your fasting window begins, you're not really in a fasted state. For example, if you finished eating at 2 p.m., you're not immediately in a fasted state at 3 p.m. because your body is still fueling itself off of the food you just ate. That's true, but it's not what we're talking about for the fasting window. We're dealing with the time you're eating vs. the time you're fasting. You get yourself to the fasted state by waiting until your stomach growls the next day. It's an accomplishment when your stomach growls because now you're really starting to burn fat.

Q: What if I'm required to take food with my medication in the morning?

A: Obviously, you'll have to break your fast in the morning, so you need to find something that will not cause your insulin to spike. Look for a high-fat food: something with cream or with a lot of butter. An egg is good as well. The yolk is very high-fat, low-carb. I would eat anything I could think of that was high-fat and low-carb, and I would eat as little of it in the morning as I could. Then I would wait for my stomach to growl before

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eating again. I definitely wouldn't try to have a whole meal. I wouldn't stress about it, but I would just make sure I had enough in my body so the medicine wouldn't mess up my stomach.

Q: What about body odor?

A: I had a friend tell me that once she started fasting she was getting more intense body odor. She said her armpits and breath smelled more. That is just a matter of your body detoxing. Use a lot of mouthwash if your breath smells bad. Carry an extra deodorant with you in your purse for your armpits. It gets better, but right now your body is trying to get used to it. It may be kind of unpleasant, but you should really look at it as something that's good. It means you're doing a good thing for your body. Also, it causes an unexpected positive side effect: more showers! If you have a problem with eating impulsively, showers and baths are really good for you. It de-stresses you. If you're having an issue with body odor, use it as an opportunity to bathe instead of eat and increase your weight loss!

Q: What if I'm not losing weight doing the eight-hour window?

A: I've found that women have a hard time losing weight if they're only doing eight-hour eating windows. It's not enough fasting time and they're usually eating too much at each meal as well.

If you're working out, though, there may be another explanation. You may not be losing weight on the scale, but your body composition could be changing. Take me, for example: I am such a muscle builder. My mom used to smack me on the butt and call me the Rock of Gibraltar because I am just a solid piece of meat! There's a lot of muscle in my body. So, I have a jacket that I used to never be able to clasp both buttons, but now it fits just right! I'm not seeing the results I want when I get on the scale, but these other signs let me know my body is actually changing. Ultimately, you want to change your body composition more than you want to lose weight.

Q: Are artificial sweeteners harmful?

A: Here's the bottom line: you will not get the best results if you consume artificial sweeteners. The biggest area of struggle for most people is with drinking water. I have so many friends who say they hate water. They never drink it unless it's zero-calorie flavored water. However, I believe that when you do something for a few days, you just get used to it. For example, I used to always need some sort of Splenda in my tea because I thought unsweetened tea was disgusting. Now, I can drink my tea with no sweetener at all. It's something you'll get used to.

Q: Can I have artificial sweeteners during my eating window?

A: Once you're in your eating window, you can have them as much as you want. Do I like it? No! Go back to the section on Chemical City. For me, artificial sweeteners are not good, and I'll never eat them. I don't like the way they taste, and, if I'm going to eat something sweet, I want it to be real, live sugar. If you want to eat them, you're free to do so, but your results won't be as good.

If you'll do a web search on the effect of artificial sweeteners on blood sugar, you'll see competing results. I think it varies for every individual. Forget the studies and try it for yourself. If you're considering having artificial sweeteners in your diet, check your blood sugar before and after having them and see what happens.

Q: What do I do when I'm not getting the results I want?

A: Do more Big Power Fasts. That's my technique to step up my weight loss. I wait a little later in the day to eat, and I drink more caffeine to get me through. Sometimes I'll eat 95% paleo instead of my usual 80/20 in order to move toward my goal.

Q: What do I do when I go on vacation?

A: I'm going on a four-day vacation in a couple of weeks and I'm going to extend my eating windows to eight hours. If you're doing an extended vacation—like a month—I would suggest starting your window later in the day. You could do something like 1-9 p.m. I definitely recommend that you don't weigh yourself as soon as you get back from vacation. Like I've said before, I weigh myself when I feel skinny.

Now, if you want to continue to lose weight while you're on vacation and not just maintain, then stick to eating OMAD, while being lenient on the 80/20 rule. Personally, I eat less while I'm traveling because jet lag throws me off and I don't do as good a job. A note about the enjoyment scale: you are never going to find something at the airport that's a four. Airport food is just nasty! Even though you're on vacation, stick to 4s and 5s on the enjoyment scale. If it isn't good, just don't eat. You're going to have more fun on your vacation if you're feeling lean, so don't abandon the plan just because you're traveling. When you're on the beach in your bikini you want to feel good!

Q: Are you getting enough calories when you eat one meal a day?

A: I'm sorry, but my aunt weighs 90 pounds and she is never worried if she's getting enough calories! You're not going to ruin your metabolism by eating OMAD; that's a myth. You need to get this sort of thinking out of your mind. You are not overweight because you don't eat enough calories. Let's be real honest with ourselves. That excuse is ludicrous and it came from the diet industry.

As always, eat when you're hungry and eat until you're satisfied on your Big Power Fast. Don't use the Big Power Fast as an excuse to get stuffed. This is very, very important.

Q: I'm not seeing my weight change on the scale. What's wrong?

A: I learned about something recently called the “whoosh effect.” It explains why you don't always see a consistent change in your weight every day while you're burning fat. Because of the law of thermodynamics, burning more calories than you consume results in weight loss as your body gets the energy it needs from your fat reserves. This isn't a theory; it's actual physics. If you don't give your body food, it has to use the fat in your body. So, you may wonder why you can go a whole week and not lose weight when you know you were burning fat. That's where the “whoosh effect” comes in. It has to do with water retention. The idea is that your fat cells become filled with water as you're burning fat. Because of this, the scale doesn't change even though you did in fact burn fat. However, once your body finally drops that water (maybe 1-2 weeks later or more depending on the person) you lose a bunch of weight at once. That's called the “whoosh effect.” It's like the sound of your pounds being flushed down the toilet. Get it? It's not that you actually lost that many pounds overnight. It's that your weight loss finally “caught up” with your fat loss.

I lost no weight at all during my first two weeks of doing this plan. My third week I lost six pounds and my fourth week I lost four. WHOOSH! I lost all this weight! That's why I don't like getting on the scale every day. You're getting yourself worked up for no reason. Here's what I suggest as a better way to measure your weight loss: get a pair of pants that you don't ever wash or dry and try them on regularly to see how you're progressing. I even prefer this method to measuring your inches with measuring tape. When you use measuring tape, you have to be sure to measure the same exact spot and pull the tape just right every time or your reading won't be accurate.

Q: I'm doing intermittent fasting and now I don't feel well. What am I doing wrong?

A: Don't make the mistake of overdosing on the wrong foods just because you're allowed to eat whatever you want now. I've seen a lot of people who were eating really clean but then went the complete opposite direction when they started intermittent fasting. Your body isn't going to feel well if you do that. This is why I focus on eating clean foods even if they're not "healthy." I know I have a high-fat diet. I don't worry about fat. I eat nuts that are high in fat, steak with butter and all that stuff because the more fat I eat the better I feel. It's chemicals that I stay away from because I like to feel my best.

Q: How do I know if I'm getting enough nutrients in my body?

A: I take a lot of vitamins because I feel like the food we eat doesn't have as much as I need. Visit chantelrayway.com/vitamins.

Q: What are your thoughts on having a cheat meal?

A: I don't call it a cheat meal because I eat what I want every day. On days when I'm not feeling great, I fill my body with super healthy foods to get my energy up.

Right now, I'm craving Baker's Crust's Gotta Have It burger. Since I want to keep it clean today, I'm going to take away the bun and wrap it in lettuce. When I need a lot of energy, I don't eat as many carbs. I'll eat red meat because my iron levels are lower than the average Joe. So, I'm going to have this burger wrapped in lettuce with some fries for potassium, and that will be my one meal for the day.

Q: What are your thoughts on alcohol and wine?

A: I went to a pool party last night and someone asked me if I wanted champagne. I told her no because I don't like to drink my calories. I have a ton of friends who do intermittent fasting and they really like to drink. The Bible says that Jesus drank wine, and I believe drinking is fine as long as you don't get drunk. There are also health benefits to drinking red wine. I'm a proponent of drinking wine if the Holy Spirit leads you to. I'm just not a drinker. I probably drink two to three times a year and I don't love it. I actually have this mental block against drinking because of all my years of dieting. It's this thought that if I don't drink my calories, I can have more to eat. I have plenty of friends who are very skinny and would much rather drink their calories than eat them. The main thing is that if you're drinking you're doing it during your eating window.

Q: But doesn't alcohol make you gain weight?

A: I have this group called the Thursday Funday group. I look at how much they eat and drink and they definitely increase their calories with alcohol. However, they are still as thin as they can be. Keep in mind most of those girls only eat one meal a day and maybe a snack. Most of them don't start eating before two or three in the afternoon, and they stay in that six or eight-hour window. Keep looking at the line between eating and overeating. If you are eating and drinking in your window, the alcohol should be fine.

Q: What are the benefits of red wine?

A: There are all kinds of studies explaining why you should drink red wine. They say it regulates your blood sugar. I don't really know because I don't drink it, but if Jesus drank it, I'm not going to look at you negatively for doing it. If you want to be literal, I suppose you could say you drink it to be more like Him. HA HA!

Q & A: Your Questions Answered!

Q: How strict do I have to be on the 80/20?

A: The 80/20 is important. It's 100% clean eating that I don't recommend. Yesterday, I had nothing but grilled veggies, grilled shrimp, and salad. However, I ate a large volume of food and I ate so clean because I was surrounded by people who were eating that way too. I really wanted a potato and pasta and I should have gotten that. I could have done that and only eaten a few bites. Instead, I tried to do 100% clean and ended up feeling deprived. So, when I got home I went a half an hour over my eating window and ate a bite of pudding and ten mini peanut butter Ritz crackers. That was a mini-binge for me. When I try to be perfect with my eating, I get in a bad place and lose control a little bit. When I eat what I want in the 80/20 system, it doesn't affect my body negatively. You want to make clean choices, but you don't want to overdo it. Not overeating is the #1 thing. Remember everything in moderation.

Q: What's the ideal number of times to poop?

A: Most of the people I talk to feel their best when they have 2-3 bowel movements a day. At that number, you're cleaning out your gut and getting rid of toxins in your body. Keep in mind that if you're eating only one meal a day then you're probably going to be running to the bathroom less often.

I've done a lot of study on gut health and I think it's one of the most important things for you to work on. Your bowel movements are influenced by what time you're eating and by something called the gut microbiome. The healthier your microbiome, the better your digestive system will work. What tears up your microbiome is eating too much processed food. When your gut is out of balance you have inflammation, excess fat, and insulin resistance. If you find yourself feeling constipated a lot, you can take probiotics to clean out your gut. I take between 100-180 million probiotics every day, but it can be very expensive.

Candida—or yeast infection—can give you chronic fatigue, digestive

problems, bloating and more. While cutting down on sugar in your diet can help stop the overgrowth, candida actually makes you crave sugar more! Avoid these kinds of conditions and stick to your 80/20.

I've seen some people say they have runny stool or constipation from intermittent fasting. If you have problems with constipation, magnesium can be good for you. You can take it in powder or oil form. You also need to look at how much fiber you have in your diet. I don't think the American diet includes very much fiber, so I take a fiber supplement every day.

Q: Should I be eating low-carb?

A: I try not to focus on eating a low-carb diet. Even if you cut down your carbohydrate intake, you could still easily eat 3,000-4,000 calories in a day. I've seen people actually gain weight on a low-carb diet because the foods they were eating were high in fat. My answer to how to eat is always this: eat in your window and never overeat. You shouldn't be counting calories and you shouldn't be counting carbs. Eat high-quality, real foods you love, eat only when you're hungry, and stop eating when you're full.

Q: How do I decide the length of my eating window each day?

A: It depends on your schedule and what you have going on. For example, I have company at my house today, so I sat down with them when they were eating breakfast but I didn't eat with them. I'd rather skip breakfast because that's easier for me than lunch and dinner. Since I still need to maintain my six-hour window, I'm going to eat from 1-7 p.m. so I can have that meal time with my visitors. Although it's better to use the same timeframe for your eating window every day, you can make adjustments on the fly depending on your schedule and how you feel.

Q: When does my window begin? Do I track my eating or do I track my fasting?

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A: In this book, we track our eating with eating windows. Alternatively, you can choose to track the number of hours you fast instead of with a fasting window. Your eating window begins as soon as you consume your first calorie for the day, and it ends when you consume your last calorie. A fasting window begins after your last calorie of the day and ends when you consume your first calorie. For advice on tracking, visit chantelrayway.com/tracking.

Q: What if I want to have a beer while watching football on a Sunday night but I finished eating earlier at 7 p.m.?

A: When that last drop of beer is consumed, that's when you've begun fasting. You have to count that beer. If you are consuming drink or food, then you are still in your eating window, no exceptions.

Q: How long should I fast?

A: We have suggested schedules to get you started, but ultimately this is individualized in the long-term. Men seem to do better with 14 or 16-hour fasts (10 or 8-hour eating windows) and women do better with 20 or 18-hour fasts (4 or 6-hour eating windows). Personally, I like to do 4-hour eating windows two or three times a week.

Q: How obsessive should I be on the eating window? If I started my window at 12:06 p.m., do I have to close it at exactly 6:06 p.m.?

A: Don't get obsessive! You don't have to pinpoint it to the exact minute. What you want is a consistent window to help you develop a routine, but this should never be stressful. Intermittent fasting is a tool that takes the stress out of your eating. If you start getting obsessive, then you're on the wrong track.

Q: If my eating window just opened, but I'm not truly hungry should I eat anyway?

A: No. If you're trying to lose weight, you definitely don't need to be forcing yourself to eat. Remember, we eat when we're truly hungry.

Q: I've read before that you should eat before you get hungry to avoid binging. Is that true?

A: If your car doesn't need gas, you don't put gas in it. If your bill isn't due, you don't pay money on it. I believe the same principle should apply to our bodies. I get the idea of trying to avoid binging, and, honestly, the first couple of weeks of intermittent fasting you'll probably overeat some. However, you will adjust.

Q: What are some tips to not overeat on your first meal of the day? Sometimes my work schedule is so busy that I can't take a break to eat. When I do finally begin my eating window, I'm starving.

A: Stay away from simple carbs and sugars on your first meal. Keep your digestion in mind and eat slowly. You're going to be full 20 minutes before you realize it, so don't rush through your meal just because you're hungry. Another great tip is to drink a glass of water an hour before you eat. This will take the edge off of the hunger so you can sit down and enjoy your meal without overeating. In fact, whenever you're feeling overwhelmed by hunger throughout the day, try drinking water. If it's been 45 minutes since your last drink, you could actually be dehydrated. Don't drink a ton of water while you're eating, though. You could dilute your stomach acids and hinder digestion.

Q: I'm so tired after eating my first meal of the day. Why am I so exhausted from fasting?

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A: Are you eating too much? What are you eating? It's more likely that what you're eating is the source of the problem rather than the fasting. If you're eating whole, clean foods I have a hard time believing you're constantly tired, but perhaps you have an underlying health concern like anemia. Always stay in touch with your physician when you make any major change to your eating patterns if you have a health condition.

Q: I don't have enough energy to workout in my fasted state.

A: There are a lot of possibilities. Are you getting enough of all of your proteins, carbs, and fats? Are you getting enough sleep? Maybe switch your workout time to be closer to your eating window so you can eat right after. Or, eat right before. I personally like to work out fasted, but everyone is different.

Q: Are you allowed to lift heavy weights while fasting?

A: I lift heavy weights every single morning in a fasted state. I've lifted heavier weights fasted than men in my gym! My trainer, Chris Sykes, tells me he does all of the same workouts he did before he started intermittent fasting and he hasn't lost any steam.

Q: Can you still build muscle with intermittent fasting?

A: Yes. Nothing changes. If you need to get in a certain number of macros every day, you can still do that just in an eating window. You don't have to choose between the two. A lot of people who want to build muscle hear that you need to eat no more than 30 minutes after your workout to get the benefits from your food. While it's true that your cells can take in more of what you eat within 30 minutes of your workout, that's not the only time. You can eat 20-30 hours after and still get the benefits from your food.

Q: How do I decide on the length of my eating window? Should I be eating whole meals or half meals?

A: You have to figure out what works for you because everyone is different and our windows won't all be the same. There are some people who only eat one meal a day (also called OMAD). Some people eat in a five-hour window and have one snack and one meal a little while later. If you're someone who's going to do OMAD, just be sure you're not binging. You may need to spend time practicing it until you regulate.

Personally, I couldn't lose weight in an eight-hour window. I don't believe many women can unless you're eating really clean, really small portions. When I'm trying to maintain my weight, I do a six-hour window with one medium sized meal around 12 p.m., and something small around 5:30 p.m. That works really well for me. When my goal is to lose weight, I try to stick to that OMAD. It's usually in a four-hour window where I'm eating a nice meal that gets me to a 4 on the Hunger Scale, and then I may have another small snack. You'll need to tinker with your window to find out what works for you. If your goal is weight loss, you may need to tighten your window and the amount of food you eat. If you're maintaining, you have more flexibility. Some people want a rigid plan with someone telling them exactly what to do, but with *The Chantel Ray Way*, you get to modify everything to fit you.

Something you want to pay attention to is your satiety signals—the signals your nervous system gives you to communicate that sense of fullness. Now that I'm doing intermittent fasting, my satiety signals are so good. Yesterday, I went to lunch and I tried a lot of different foods; I had a little bit of this and a little bit of that, and, when I was done, I was 100% satisfied with no desire to eat anything else for the rest of the day.

Q: How do you know when your body starts using fat storage for fuel?

A: You'll never really know the exact moment your body is attacking your fat, but I like to use my stomach growl as a general gauge. That's why I

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like to wait a couple of hours after I hear my stomach growl to eat. I feel like it's when my stomach starts growling that my body is out of food and starts using my fat for fuel. There's a chance that it's all just mental, but I love that feeling of my body eating away at my fat; I like to prolong that for as long as I can.

Q: Why not do a calorie-restricted diet?

A: Trying to manage the total number of calories you need to eat for weight loss is too restrictive. We want to stop counting calories, stop focusing on food, and do away with the restrictions. Instead of listening to a program, we're listening to our bodies. God wired our bodies to tell us exactly what we need. We should be able to eat what our bodies crave in the amount that they need and be satisfied. I am never going to tell you that you have to eat this or that. What's optimal, though, is following the 80/20 rule.

Q: What should I do when I go out and everyone else is eating except me?

A: I went to dinner with friends just the other night. I had already eaten a big lunch and I wasn't hungry, so I didn't eat or drink any calories. Guess what happened? I had a fantastic time! Eating and drinking is not the only point of hanging out with friends! I had fun just sipping on water and club soda. I was able to talk more and have deeper conversations with my friends. All it takes is a mental adjustment. You can even have fun with it! When the waitress asked me what I wanted I responded, "Oh, I'm not eating. I've got to keep this skinny body of mine." That got a laugh out of everybody!

If you have real friends, they won't pressure you non-stop to eat. If someone is trying to push you to eat, just say something like, "I appreciate it, but I didn't come here to eat. I came to enjoy my time with you." Let your friends know that their understanding will help you achieve your goals the same way you help them achieve theirs.

Q: I've already lost 10 pounds! Now that I've reached my goal, should I continue intermittent fasting or stop?

A: Continue! Do it to maintain and do it because intermittent fasting has so many benefits beyond weight loss. It's a positive lifestyle change, and, personally, I can't imagine going back. There are plenty of stories of the hormonal and brain benefits people have experienced with intermittent fasting.

Q: Is intermittent fasting good for thyroid issues?

A: Always check with your doctor before you start any new dietary change. My personal experience has been stellar! I was taking 115 mg of Synthroid when I started this journey because my thyroid wasn't functioning well at all. Now, I've weaned myself off of it completely by eating using the principles of FIRES.

One note about my thyroid improvement is that I also eat paleo for the 80% of my 80/20 food intake. I believe that this 80/20 combination with intermittent fasting has had a huge impact on my thyroid improvement.

Now, this isn't about the thyroid, but my trainer, Chris, suffered from ankle pain for a long time from a surgery for a previous injury. He used to have pain five days out of the week, but now that he's been following the FIRES principles of The Chantel Ray Way he's pain-free. He doesn't even need a leg brace when he plays sports anymore.

Q: I'm really confused. All of my trainers have always told me that eating 5-6 small meals a day will keep my metabolism elevated. Is intermittent fasting bad for my metabolism?

A: That claim about eating 5-6 meals a day is a myth. Your metabolic rate is not based on how many meals you eat. It's based on what type of foods you eat, your digestive health, how much you exercise, and what body type you have. For example, if I eat six meals of pancakes and fast

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food burgers, I'm not going to have six-pack abs! Intermittent fasting is not bad for your metabolism. Intermittent fasting has gotten me results, where eating 5-6 meals a day in the past did not.

Q: I can only train in the morning before work. Should I eat after? How do I handle this?

A: Ideally, you want to take in protein and carbs after your workout. Post-workout, your cells are open and more of the good stuff can get in. However, not eating immediately after your workout isn't a death sentence to results. I work out in the morning and don't eat until 1 or 2 p.m. My trainer, Chris, usually doesn't eat until six hours after his workout. If you find yourself dragging during the day, though, maybe that isn't for you. Move your eating window to accommodate your body.

Q: Should I shift the time of day I have my eating window so my body doesn't get used to it?

A: Having your eating window at the same time everyday won't really affect your metabolism. The length of the window has a greater effect. You could mix up the length of your eating windows each week to keep your metabolism from getting used to a pattern. For example, one week you might alternate each day between six and eight-hour eating windows. The next week you might throw in three Big Power Fasts. Your body does adapt to changes quickly, so mixing up the length of your eating windows is a good idea.

Q: I love having wine at 8 or 9 p.m. after putting the kids to bed. How can I still have my wine at night?

A: Time your eating window so that it closes after your drink. If it's a six-hour window day, maybe eat from 3:30-9:30 p.m. If you need to have an eight-hour window to be able to have your wine, you can do that. Just

remember that for women, an eight-hour window is not very effective for losing weight unless you're eating very clean, very small portions for every meal.

Q: Can I break my fast with alcohol?

A: You should break your fast with some sort of protein. Alcohol on an empty stomach isn't a great idea. Alcohol, like other high sugar drinks, can spike your insulin very harshly if you drink it at the start of your window.

Q: Can I eat a ketogenic diet with intermittent fasting and still drink alcohol?

A: The ketogenic diet is a very low-carb/high-fat diet. It's designed to keep you burning fat for energy instead of glucose. Like I've said before, alcohol has a lot of sugar. Consider losing the mixers to cut out some of those carbs. Most pure spirits are low carb; the mixers are what rack up the calories.

Q: Does drinking alcohol completely halt my fat burning?

A: No. Like anything else you eat, it's all about the nutritional value of what you're drinking. Beyond that, there's nothing inherent in alcohol that makes it more restrictive to fat burning than any other food with the same nutritional content. My thin friends use sugar-free mixers with vodka and tequila and love to drink all the time. It hasn't affected their ability to burn fat or maintain their weight.

Q: I am brand new to intermittent fasting and I miss my wine. Is it okay to drink in my eating window?

A: You can definitely drink wine in your eating window! Just be careful to notice the sugar content in what you're drinking. There's a lot more sugar

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in wine than most people realize. There are also 70-80 additives in wine that you wouldn't know about without reading the contents. Find natural wines that are low in sugar. After you drink, watch your eating activity because you can start getting cravings that have nothing to do with true hunger. You don't want your eating to take a nosedive after you drink!

Q: Is intermittent fasting safe for women?

A: Well, I am a woman so...yes! Women respond to fasting differently than men because we have different hormones. For example, when I first started fasting, my menstrual cycle was 20 days late. I've read reports of this kind of thing happening for the first couple of months of fasting, but usually it returns to normal. Fasting is perfectly safe for women barring any specific medical issues you discuss with your doctor.

Q: Is there a certain caloric intake I should have with intermittent fasting? Is there such a thing as too few calories? Some days I'm just ravenous!

A: How many calories you consume depends on your goals. If you're trying to lose weight and you haven't been getting strong results, then you might need to decrease your calorie intake. Of course, if you want to gain weight then you're going to need more. There is such a thing as too few calories. You can't go three weeks eating only 500 calories a day. My desire is that you learn to listen to your body. If you're a person who exercises, some days you're going to work out harder and your body is going to be hungrier. Listen to your body and eat. Eating is not a bad thing; overeating is.

Q: I always heard about calories in vs. calories out. If I'm watching my calories, does it matter what I eat? Is there a difference between eating 1800 calories throughout the day versus eating 1800 calories in a 6-8 hour window?

A: I believe you would be leaner in the window because of the insulin response in your body. If you're eating all day, you're filling up your

glycogen cells, and, at the end of the day, they're being stored as fat. When you eat in a window, however, your insulin is turned off for the rest of the day and you burn the glycogen and get to fat burning mode faster.

Q: I've been told I have to eat carbs before working out. So, is it safe to exercise during my fasting window?

A: Your body stores a lot of glucose and carbs. If you had carbs the night before working out, then you could still have enough to get you through your workout the next morning. Personally, I'm always in a fasted state when I exercise and I'm always fine. When you're in a fasted state your endurance and stamina can actually increase. My trainer, Chris, believed the same myth about having to eat before exercising and was surprised to discover that once he started intermittent fasting, he actually had more focus and stamina.

Q: I typically eat a high protein meal after my morning workout, but I want to start my eating window later in the day. Should I start skipping my post-workout meal?

A: I haven't eaten anything post-workout since I started doing intermittent fasting. When you're intermittent fasting, your workouts are going to primarily be fueled by fat and that's a good thing. It's true that, post-workout, your cells are more open to absorbing protein, but that window of time can be as long as 36 hours. You don't have to eat immediately after your workout to take advantage of that benefit.

Q: What is the longest amount of time that it's safe to fast? I'm going on vacation in less than a month and I want to speed up my weight loss.

A: 24 to 36-hour fasts are ideal. Anything longer than 48 hours is something your body might not be prepared for. However, it sounds like you're trying to rush for a short-term goal. Don't overdo it! A couple of 24-

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hour fasts a week are a good way to kick up your weight loss, or you could use a couple days of Big Power Fasts.

Q: I'm pregnant and already freaking out about my post-baby body. Is it safe for me to start intermittent fasting while pregnant?

A: This is something you'll want to talk about with your doctor. I would've been fine fasting during my pregnancy because I would have still made sure to get in all of my nutrients. Remember that intermittent fasting isn't about restricting what you eat, but about changing the timing of when you eat. Still, fasting does affect your hormones and you want to be sure you don't do anything to affect the baby negatively, so please talk to your doctor.

Q: I always wake up starving in the morning. Could I eat dinner and breakfast, but just skip lunch?

A: Unless you're someone who works a night shift, this would be hard to do. You wouldn't be able to ever have a long enough fasting window to maximize the benefits. If you're waking up starving, maybe adjust your window so that you're eating closer to your bedtime. Try drinking coffee early in the day and drink plenty of water between meals to help suppress your appetite.

Q: Can I drink my coffee with MCT or coconut oil or does that break my fast?

A: I'm a big fan of both oils. My blood sugar goes down when I drink them. Now, these oils have calories, and I would prefer you fast without consuming any calories. However, if this is the only way you can get through your fast, then this is the second-best way. It wouldn't sabotage the entire fast. Ingesting pure fat or oil doesn't spike your insulin and MCT oil requires little digestion. If you're going to eat something, this is the best option.

Q: Can I eat some low-carb foods during my fasting window to take the edge off? They're healthy right?

A: The nutritional content of the food doesn't matter. If you're taking in calories, you're breaking the fast. If you're new to this and struggling, maybe you're fasting too long. Back it down if you have to and work your way up.

Q: How much water do you recommend I drink during my fast?

A: If you're thirsty then drink. If you're not, then you don't need to be guzzling water. You can dilute the stomach acids needed to digest food when you drink too much water. Drink just as much as you need and no more.

Q: My breath smells really bad when I fast. Is this normal?

A: Yes, it could possibly be related to the fasting. Fasting encourages detoxification in your gut and that could have smelly effects on your breath. If you're eating a lot of protein in your diet, your body could be going into ketosis and that can cause bad breath. Try taking peppermint oil to fix the smell.

Q: Should I stop fasting if I feel shaky?

A: Check your blood sugar if you're physically shaking. It could be different things but that's a good place to start.

Q: I heard I should break my fast with protein but I recently learned meat spikes your insulin. What's the deal?

A: I was surprised to discover this, but, yes, meat can spike your insulin.

Q: I learned about the food pyramid when I was young. Are those principles still true?

A: NO! We now know that the food pyramid is not based on nutritional value. When you're eating, you need to decide what's good and what works for you. They used to say we should drink three cups of milk a day decades ago, but now we know that's not the best for you.

Q: I think I'm ready to try out my first 4-hour eating window. Should I eat breakfast, lunch, or dinner?

A: That's a matter of personal preference. Don't try to force yourself to eat at a certain time of day you're not comfortable with. Fasting for 20 hours is challenging enough on its own.

Q: I've been hearing a lot about the importance of gut health.

A: The process of digesting food is what they're talking about. The gut microbiome has a lot to do with how you feel. When your gut health is off, you're not digesting your food and nutrients correctly. You can have what are basically pounds of feces sitting in the lower part of your stomach. If you struggle with digesting food well, you can take digestive enzymes.

Thin Eater Interviews

Interview with Lindsay

Chantel: As you guys know, I've interviewed over 1,000 women who have been thin, they've always been thin, they've not struggled with yo-yo dieting, and going back and forth. So, we're going to do an in-depth interview with Lindsay about how she eats. So, tell me, what does a typical day look like for you?

Lindsay: Well, I get up around 7:00. I have coffee in the morning. My husband's so dear, he makes my coffee every morning, just the way I like it, with half and half and a bit of coconut sugar, which I've used to replace regular sugar. And then I get my son ready for school, get myself ready for the day, and drop him off. I don't eat in the morning. I can't stand eating in the morning. I'm just not hungry. I don't like to eat when I'm not hungry. So, I probably eat when I pick my son up and he's hungry. I tend to plan my meals around other people.

Chantel: So, it's 12:00. You've had your coffee in the morning, here it is noon. Now, first of all, talk about how do you know that you're physically hungry?

Lindsay: I may hear my stomach growling, or I just go, "Gosh I feel a little whew. I think I need to eat." But my blood sugar maybe drops. I don't know if that's a good thing, but that's what happens.

Chantel: So, you are thinking, "Okay my stomach's growling, I'm feeling a little ugh, now it's time for me to eat?" How do you decide what you're to eat right now? Do you say, "What is my body craving?" What are you thinking at that point?

Lindsay: Well, there are certain things that are always off-limits to me; therefore, my choices are always fairly healthy, even if it's dependent upon the situation, or the time, or where we are. So even if I take my son to lunch, it's not going to be something unhealthy. We don't do fast food. If I'm eating leftovers

from the night before out of the fridge, it's not going to be something unhealthy.

Chantel: So, talk about lunch. A typical lunch for you that you eat all the time would be what?

Lindsay: Well, a lot of times my lunches consist of snacking. So I'll have a packet of tuna, or I'll have an apple and peanut butter. I may have the leftovers from the night before, or if I take my son to lunch, I'd have what you'd consider a meal.

Chantel: And do you like the feeling of being full or would you say you don't?

Lindsay: I cannot stand being full. I love being satisfied, but when it crosses over to that feeling of being uncomfortable, I don't like that.

Chantel: Chantel: What would be the signs that you would say indicate that you feel full?

Lindsay: That's such a good question, because they're so subtle, aren't they, the physical feelings of it. Well if you eat too fast, you're going to miss it. I think that's super key. I know some people who wolf down food, and they're able to finish everything before they realize that they're full. I do tend to savor my food a lot, so I'm a slow eater. And I think part of it is when I'm still eating, and I have plenty of food left and people are finished, I realize the meal's ending. I actually think I'm full.

Chantel: I love that. That's so cool. So, let's say you were really craving M&Ms or Skittles. Let's just say you were really craving that. Number one, would you eat that, or would you say, "No, I'm just not going to eat that," or would you say, "I'm going to eat one or two." How does that work for you?

Lindsay: Okay. Well, I don't crave those things. I don't crave candy. I do like some good chocolate once in a while, but I much prefer a baked good. So, if that's something that I really want, I'll get it. I don't eat it all, though. I'm a squirrel. You can ask my husband. I will squirrel things away. In fact, I'll have



to hide them from him, so he doesn't get them. So, I like a seven-layer bar from Taste Unlimited. Once in a while, he will bring one home for me, and I'll eat a little of it, and wrap it up, and I hide it away in a cabinet. I can nibble on that for several days.

Chantel: So, do you say, "I don't eat wheat, I don't eat dairy, I don't eat sugar"? Is there any of that? I know you say, "I try to have high quality foods." But as far as the type of foods that you eat, is there anything that you limit or don't eat?

Lindsay: I definitely limit carbs, specifically white flour. I try to limit corn because I just don't feel that my body responds well to corn. And sugar. Or if I feel like the scale has crept up—and I keep an eye on that—If the scale creeps up two or three pounds, I go, "Okay. You know, maybe I've been really enjoying the holidays," so then I may cut out sugar entirely. I don't cut out dairy. I have full-fat dairy.

Chantel: Okay. What does your middle of the day look like? Are you having snacks or are you just saying, "No, I already had a small snack. I don't need to eat anything else"?

Lindsay: I'm busy and I may not realize I'm hungry until I realize I'm hungry, and then I have a snack. I will pack snacks with me so that I have things when I'm hungry. I pack little snacks.

Chantel: Any other tips that you would say, "This kind of helps me to eat less, or helps me to not overeat"? Like, when the waiter comes, do you take half the food and say, "Here you go, take it," or any tips like that?

Lindsay: I guess when you are in that battle in the moment of—Should I eat it or should I not? If you're even thinking about it, then you're probably full. Just put it down and then push it away.

Chantel: Now, have you ever had a problem with your weight?



Thin Eater Interviews

Lindsay: No. I have always gone a little up and then a little down, and a little up and a little down—well a five to ten-pound range. I gained 50 pounds in my pregnancy, and it took a long time to come off, but I didn't do a crash diet.

Interview with Catherine

Chantel: Talk to me about when you want something sweet. I just have a sweet tooth—right now! But when you have that sweet tooth, what do you do to curb it?

Catherine: Everyone always jokes with me because I love candy. I love it. I have since I was little. I literally used to stick chocolate bars in my pocket when I was little and they would melt, and I had brown stains on my pants. Ask my Mom. But I have always loved Skittles since forever. My boyfriend used to run to my house when I was in middle school and bring me a bag of Skittles, and I thought it was the cutest thing. But my Mom jokes too. I literally have Skittles in my purse. I think that you shouldn't deprive yourself of the things that you like because I think then sometimes it makes you eat other things. Whenever I have a sugar craving, I try to eat things that I know still don't have that many calories if I completely engorge myself with it. For example, if you're eating a meal, and you eat an entire plate of vegetables—you can eat, and eat, and eat, and eat and still only eat a couple hundred calories. And you're engorged with it. You're like, "I can't even possibly eat anymore vegetables if I tried." I have the same thing with Skittles. I can't eat an entire bag of Skittles, even



if I tried. I'll eat a couple Skittles, and after I have a couple Skittles, I'm like, "That's too much sweet. I'm over it now."

Chantel: Describe as detailed as you can how you eat Skittles.

Catherine: Okay. I mean, some people say to lose weight you're supposed to savor your food, and I agree with that. I used to make this little game when I was a kid where I would sit in front of the television, and I would put a Skittle in my mouth and not look at what color it was. Then I would try to figure out what color it was. Then I took it out of my mouth to see if I was right. I have this little secret mentality that I can eat a Skittle, and I can tell you what color I is just by eating it. I don't know. You can't do it with M&Ms. They all taste the same. I'll suck on the Skittles. I can tell you what flavor it is because the flavor typically comes from the outside, and so I'll suck on the Skittle for a while and be like, "Hmm, is this red? Oh yeah, it's red."

Interview with Ferri

Chantel: Alright, well today I want you to talk a little bit about your journey and how you were heavier, and now you're very thin. Kind of talk to us about that journey.

Ferri: Oh well, when I was 18/19 years old, I was gaining weight like crazy. When I first came here to the U.S. I weighed 128 pounds. Within six months, I went to 132 pounds. I was crazy going shopping, coming home crying because I was gaining so much weight.

Chantel: What size clothes were you?

Ferri: I was wearing a size six when I got here, and then I went up to size 10. I know that six to eight pounds should not have made that big a difference, but it did. Anyway, I started thinking and worrying about my weight, and started eating vegetables. Instead of food, I was eating celery, carrots, cauliflower and broccoli for two out of three meals a day. I started exercising twice a day. Once in the morning, once at night with Jane Fonda's video tape. So I lost the weight, and since 1983, I stayed the same weight: 110 pounds, which was good

enough. I wasn't worried about it. I didn't go up and down because I carried on my eating habit. One of the things that I do, that a lot of people might not believe it, I am a very slow eater. I eat whatever I want, whenever I want, but I don't snack during the day. I start my day drinking coffee all morning. I eat when I'm hungry. Sometimes it's eleven in the morning, sometimes it's two in the afternoon. So I don't eat because it's breakfast time, lunch time, dinner time. I just eat when I'm hungry. Sometimes I eat one meal a day. If I eat late in the afternoon, I'm not hungry. I just have a glass of milk or something in the evening. I started within the last six months or so, drinking a lot of fruit shakes. I like mixing bananas, strawberries, blueberries, whatever fresh fruit I have at home. I use the Nutribullet and add a little bit of orange juice to it. I don't take vitamins on a regular basis and I'm not on any kind of prescription. I feel healthy enough. I keep telling everybody eat when you're hungry, eat slow, and make sure you get enough nutrition from natural, healthy food. Don't think about taking vitamins to help you. I don't believe that. I'm healthy. Thank God.

Chantel: So talk about how many meals you eat in a day. Would you say sometimes you eat one meal a day? Sometimes you eat two meals a day, and you don't snack. I know that you never eat breakfast. For as long as I've known you, you don't eat breakfast. You just have your coffee in the morning. But how many days a week, if you had to estimate, would you say you just eat one meal a day? How many days would you say you eat two meals a day?

Ferri: I want to say 75% of the time I eat two meals a day. But like I said, I don't eat a lot. I kind of portion myself. Sometimes they say your eyes are hungrier than your stomach, you put so much on your plate. I don't do that. I put enough so I can eat it. Like I said, eating slow, slow, slow.

Chantel: Let's talk about that eating slow because you have been telling me to eat slow since the inception of time. The thing you always say to me is, "No one is going to steal the food away from you. Slow down. No one's taking it from you." But I want you to talk about the time that we went to Burger King together. Do you remember that story?

Ferri: Yes, I will never forget any of my time that I spent with you.

Chantel: Talk about the time we went to Burger King.

Ferri: I don't eat out a lot but, when I do, it's very small. I can never, ever eat a Whopper at Burger King—I just eat half a Whopper, or I usually get a Junior Whopper, Whopper Junior, whatever they call it, and a small fry. I'm fine with that. That time that we went to Burger King, I asked for a Junior Whopper and you said, "Yeah, I want the same with cheese, and the same thing for Kyle, and fries." We sat down. Before I even took one or two fries, you were done with yours.

Chantel: But I got the Whopper with cheese. I didn't get the Whopper Junior. You got the Whopper Junior. I got the entire big Whopper and, before you were done with half of your burger, I had already finished the big Whopper.

Ferri: Every meal that I remember eating with you I keep saying, "Chan, slow down." Sometimes, before I sit down, you're done with your meal.

Chantel: When we all sit down if we're at home, you're getting the ketchup or cutting up something else. That's why it usually takes me less than a few minutes. So I'd already be done and you'd literally just be sitting down to start your meal.

Ferri: Sometimes I don't know if it's psychological or if that is really true because, when everybody else is done and you're still eating, you feel like, "Oh my God, why am I eating so much?"

Chantel: Because I've seen you eat; I see exactly what you eat and kind of how you eat. You really don't deprive yourself. So, if you want something, you eat it. You kind of started talking about eating a lot of vegetables and fruits, and that's fine, but talk about when you want a burger or you want fries. You don't deprive yourself, so talk about that for just a little bit.

Ferri: I don't. Like I said, I eat what I feel like eating. I don't eat sugar-free stuff, fat-free stuff, gluten-free. I eat what I want to eat. But again, having limits on how much you eat of the same thing. Again, slow down. I don't open the refrigerator and put everything that I take out in my mouth. I try to set up the table to make sure everybody is taken care of. By the time I sit down, like

you said, you're almost done with your food.

Chantel: So five days a week, you said approximately you're eating twice a day. Then probably two times a week, you're just eating one meal a day. I want you to talk about how you know that you're satisfied and not stuffed. Do you feel like you ever overeat at all?

Ferri: Once in a while, yes.

Chantel: But if you had to estimate, how often would you say you overeat?

Ferri: Maybe once or twice a month when I don't eat—I get busy with work and everything; I start shaking. That's when I just feel like I eat so much, and then I feel like, "Oh my God, I'm stuffed. Why did I eat so much?"

Chantel: What are some of your weaknesses? What are some things that you're like, "This is something I don't have very often, but if I really want it, I have it?" What are some of the foods that you love, and how often would you say you eat them?

Ferri: My weakness, the top of the line, is glazed fresh donuts. My husband, gets what I want. One day, he surprised me. The night before, I said I feel like I haven't had a fresh donut in a while. The next morning, by 10:00, he had crispy fresh donuts on my desk. I eat that, as much as I love it, maybe once a month. That would be too much, but that's my favorite that I can't resist. If it's sitting on my desk, I cannot resist. I eat it. But like I said, I don't eat it every day.

Chantel: So, let's say that he went out on Monday and got you those fresh donuts. Would you have one donut, two donuts?

Ferri: One maximum.

Chantel: So, would you say sometimes you might have a half of a donut, or three quarters of a donut?

Ferri: It depends on the size. I'm not saying I watch myself, but I can. Candy, I eat candy maybe once every other month. I feel like I have a sweet tooth. I have candy and sweets around the house all the time because my husband has a sweet tooth. The other day I said, "Why did you get these donuts?" He said, "Then don't eat them." I said, "I can't!" But I didn't touch them. I waited, and

then I ate only one out of the dozen donuts he had got. One donut.

Chantel: One of the things I've watched you do is really savor your food. Even when you eat rice, normal people eat with a spoon and kind of take big bites. I want to talk about the way that you eat candy. If you were going to eat an M&M or Skittles, I want you to describe how you eat it and how you savor it, and really eat slowly. Can you try to, as detailed as you possibly can, describe how you eat it?

Ferri: It depends on what I'm eating. I don't put a whole jar of M&Ms on my desk. I take the jar out of the cabinet and take a handful and put it on a plate. As I'm working, I just put a couple in my mouth. I don't take more than one or two M&Ms at a time.

Chantel: Would you say that you suck on the M&Ms and really kind of let them melt?

Ferri: Yeah. I enjoy eating slow. Like rice, a lot of people say how can you just use a fork? I've always used a fork, because I feel like that's what I've gotten used to. A lot of people, like 99% of the people, use a spoon to eat rice. Rice is my favorite food, but recently within the last five, six years, I want to say every other week I might make rice.

Chantel: What happens if you go to Iran and you visit your family, and they literally have rice at every single meal? Do you feel like you gain weight when you go to Iran to go visit?

Ferri: Not within the last 20, 30 years. Like I said, I stayed the same weight. I fill myself up with coffee in the morning. I want to say three to five cups a morning. Then I drink water all afternoon. People say, "Oh you fill yourself up with coffee and water," but I don't think so because I eat enough. I get enough nutrition. So again, eating slow and eating when you're hungry.

Chantel: So, talk about that for just a second how do you know when your body is physically hungry? How do you feel when you go, okay now I know I'm hungry?

Ferri: I don't even think about it. I just feel like, okay I feel like eating something. Like I said, it's not the timing. Yes, sometimes I do forget about eating, and then all of the sudden I start shaking. I get the hunger shake. But

that doesn't happen that often. Again, coffee fills me up and I always have water at my desk. One or the other will fill me up, but I eat when I'm hungry.

Chantel: So, if you want to stop when you're satisfied, what are some signals that you know, say, "Hey I'm starting to get full?"

Ferri: Again, like I said, when I fix myself something to eat, I fix enough. When I finish my food, that means I'm full. I kind of look at how much food I put on my plate. I work from home. I don't take lunch. I fix something for myself and I sit at my desk. As I'm working, I'm eating too. So, like I said, know your limit and how much you think you can eat. I don't know if this is true or not, but my sister always tells me that, since you haven't eaten for so many years, your stomach has shrunk. You eat a little bit and you say, oh that's it, I'm full. When I'm full, you can't force me to eat anything. I can't even take one extra spoon if I get full.

Chantel: Well you've trained your body so much that you don't like the feeling of being full. So, like you said, once a month you might eat a tiny bit more than what you normally do, and you don't like that feeling. Your definition of stuffed and someone else's definition of stuffed is probably different as well, but you don't like that over-full feeling. So maybe once a month you get there and then you go, no I don't want to do that ever again. I want to make sure I eat just enough so I don't feel like I'm overly full. One of the things I've noticed with you is you spend a lot of time, when we're sitting around at the family table, talking with everyone, and focusing more on the people and enjoying their company. I'm not focusing on talking with everyone. I'm so focused on the food while you're more focused on talking with everyone. Talk about that for a second.

Ferri: Again, it comes down to thinking about what you're doing. If you're just sitting down to eat and get it over with, yes you can do that. But you're sitting around the dinner table; you need to kind of communicate and network. At the same time, you can enjoy your food more; it's a part of our customs. How we grew up is to make sure everybody's getting enough. Not that everybody's shy and they're not going to eat enough, but you keep pushing the food, making sure Kyle has enough food, or making sure Rhyan can reach

and eat more. But having that communication, you're not concentrating on just eating. You're concentrating on other things. I do believe in multitasking in everything. It's just become part of my life.

Chantel: Well, I would say, out of everyone, you talk the most at the family table for dinner, because most of the people are eating. Instead, you're the one doing most of the talking. I want to talk about one of the things that you've taught me is to literally cut my sandwiches or burgers in half. I think one time we got sandwiches from Taste Unlimited or somewhere like that. The sandwiches are big now, and almost every time I've seen you cut your sandwich in half and you've only eaten half of the sandwich. What got you into that habit of as soon as you start you kind of push that other half of the sandwich away.

Ferri: Because I believe that wasting food is not good. Also, again, I look at the portion that is in front of me, and I try to cut as much as I can eat. I don't take a bite just out of the sandwich—Somebody else might eat the rest of it later. I don't know if this is a habit. There is no way I can go out to eat and not come home with leftovers because I always end up with leftovers. Again, cutting my sandwiches in half is how much I can eat. My eyes can tell me how much my stomach is going to hold, and I don't want to waste the food, so I always cut it. Again, cutting it and enjoying the food is better than just taking bites out of the whole big sandwich and thinking, "Oh nobody else is going to eat the rest. Let me finish it."

Chantel: So, we've been eating lunch. I'm like, "Okay, we haven't even finished lunch yet and I'm already talking about dinner." So I'm going, "Okay, what do you guys want for dinner?" You've pointed out. You're like, "Chantel, we're not even done with lunch and you're literally talking about dinner. You're constantly focused on food. You're so in love with food that you're constantly talking about it," and you don't focus on it at all. So talk about that for a second—how you don't even really think about eating until the second you become hungry. Then you start thinking about it. For me, I'm planning it even while I'm full from the last meal.

Ferri: I know, and it's not just you. I have that issue and I've heard that

from my sister-in-law in California. The moment they wake up, they're thinking about what are we going to have for lunch, what are we going to have for dinner? I'm going, "Stop thinking about food."

Chantel: It's not just me. You're right. They're always like, "Okay, well what are we going to do for dinner?" You always have that same response. "Let's stop talking about food. Let's stop planning everything of our day around eating. Stop focusing on it."

Ferri: If you're hungry, you can grab something to eat. You don't have to always worry about it. That's the thing that I don't understand why everybody has to kind of worry, worry, worry about food. I don't. I don't even think about it—like you said—until I'm hungry. I always try to find something.

Chantel: One of the things you've taught me is you get more obsessive if all I'm thinking about is food or what am I going to eat, or what can't I eat, or I can't have this, or I can't have that. You kind of fall in love. One of the things you've said to me is, "You're falling in love with food because that's all you're focused on." Because I don't have to be obsessive about it. So, talk about that for just a second.

Ferri: They say when you're hungry, don't go to the grocery store because you grab more than what you need. I've been there. I've been at the grocery store right before lunch or before I'm kind of hungry. I don't just grab everything. I get what I need. I guess, I don't know; I'm different. I can't describe it, but that's the way I am. I can be disciplined. I can think about other stuff. I don't constantly think about food. If I do think about food, I try to eat healthy. Again, a lot of times people just eat because they have to eat, like my husband. It's morning; it's breakfast time. Come noon; it's lunch time. Five o'clock; dinner time. Sometimes I eat dinner at nine at night. I don't go with the time.

Chantel: You go with hunger.

Ferri: Go with the hunger.

Chantel: I want you to talk about fasting. I know that your family is Muslim. I want you to talk about Ramadan and how that has impacted you. First of all, explain what Ramadan is, and explain what Muslims do for fasting in that month.

Ferri: Ramadan is a month during the year when the Muslims believe that after eating for 11 months you need your body to kind of go through cleansing. That means fasting from sunrise to sunset. You don't eat anything before the sunrise, and you don't eat anything after the sun sets. Not even water. Eating, drinking, nothing. I used to do it for the whole 30 days in a month. I used to fast, and yes, I was getting dizzy. Yes, a lot of people fast and they sleep most of the day because they can't eat. I don't believe in that. But as I get older, I have to be honest, I haven't fasted in the last few years. Actually, Ramadan just finished last week or so, but I haven't fasted because I feel like my body doesn't need cleansing. They came up with that Ramadan fasting because they want your body to cleanse and not eat for 12, 13, 14 hours a day.

Chantel: If you think about it, you do fast every day. If you think about the hours that you actually eat. My book is all about intermittent fasting. You would never say, "I do intermittent fasting," but you actually do because most days you eat one meal a day. Sometimes you eat two, but if you think about the hours that you eat, usually you'll eat around 1:00 or 2:00, and then you're only eating in a six-hour window. If you started eating at 2:00, by 8:00 you're not eating again. So, if you actually look at the hours that you are physically eating, you're really only eating in a six-hour window for the most part.

Ferri: Let's take this as an example. Yesterday I had some errands to run. It was like almost 12:00, and I wanted to watch the U.S. women's soccer team playing in France at 12:00. So, I felt like, "Do I really want to eat?" I made myself a fruit shake. I had that around 12:00/12:15 while I was watching the soccer game, and they did a great job! Go U.S.A. Women! At 5:30/a quarter to six, I was kind of feeling like I want to eat something, because that's all I had had. By six, I fixed a chicken fajita sandwich. I ate that at 6:30, and what time is it now? Almost 11:00, I haven't had a thing.

Chantel: Right, but you eat in a six-hour window. You said you ate around 12:15/12:30. You had your shake ... that was your first little snack or whatever, like a little mini meal. Then the next meal was a bigger meal, and you had it at six. So 12:30 to 6:30 was your eating window. It was six hours. So again, what I've noticed that you do is you eat kind of small ... if you eat twice a day,

you're eating something small at one meal, and then you're eating something medium-sized at your second meal. If you only eat once a day, you eat one large meal that day, and that tides you over for the full 24 hours. So sometimes you eat 12:00 to 6:00. Sometimes you eat 2:00 to 8:00. Sometimes you might do 4:00 to 10:00. It just depends on the day, but it depends on hunger. But if you look at your track record, because I've watched you, you pretty much, without even mentally knowing it, you're eating—it's either one small and one medium, or one large meal—every single day. Would you agree with that?

Ferri: Absolutely.

Chantel: So, this is exactly how I've kind of gotten all my data for my book is people like you who I've interviewed in detail, and doing what do you do breakfast, lunch and dinner. Let's talk about ... In books, people say you should wait 20 minutes to decide if you're full or if you're hungry. The reason why you can sense that you're full is because you usually do take a full 20 minutes to eat. Would you say you take about maybe 15 minutes sometimes, 10 minutes? How long would you say it really takes you to eat?

Ferri: Sometimes I do look at the clock because there's certain things I want to do, certain shows I want to watch. I look at the clock to see how much more time I have. Sometimes it takes me 15 minutes. The minimum time that it takes me is 15 minutes to eat.

Chantel: So, between 15 to 20 minutes.

Ferri: It takes me like 30 minutes, but it depends on what I'm eating.

Chantel: So, one of my friends, Catherine, talks about how she eats ice cream. When she says she eats ice cream, she says she takes the top of the ice cream, brushes over the top, and then eats it. Then she literally says, if you look at her ice cream, it looks like rail road tracks because she went like this, took a little bite. She savored it. I want you to kind of really think about anything that you eat and how you savor it, to describe it in as much detail as you possibly can.

Ferri: Again, I feel like, if you eat slow and chew your food, first of all, you're going to taste the food a lot better. Sometimes you put the food, spoon of rice in your mouth, and the next thing you're swallowing it. You're not

chewing the food to enjoy it. Eating slow causes you to chew before you put the next spoon, fork, whatever full of rice in your mouth. When I eat, like ice cream—very seldom I eat ice cream—I put one scoop in an ice cream cone, and I try to enjoy it. Take one lick at a time. Don't take a big bite out of the whole ice cream cone. Take a lick, make sure you're enjoying it, eating it slow. Like I said, eating slow, small portions, enjoying the food.

Chantel: One of the things you said to me, that I've really never forgotten, is you said your stomach doesn't have teeth. You can't chew your food in your stomach. If you think about that, it really is powerful because I watch you, and how many times would you say do you chew your food? If you were going to take a bite of steak, how many times would you say you're really chewing that food before you actually swallow it?

Ferri: How big a bite do you put in your mouth?

Chantel: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Ferri: Sometimes, like I said, I cut my steak pieces into small pieces and chew it five, six times to make sure I get the taste of the food. When, like you said, if I chew it, I can digest it better. So again, eating slow, small portions, and chewing it helps a lot. I started losing some weight, and now I stay the same. I don't go up and down. I don't take any kind of supplement vitamins. I don't take any medication. Thank God, I'm as healthy as I can be.

Chantel: That's great. (pause) Last question. So a lot of times when people are stressed, they eat for different reasons. One of the things about you that you've said is that you only eat for physical hunger. If you're happy or if you're stressed out, you don't run to food when you're stressed. Why do you think that that is? Do you feel like before, when you did have a weight problem and you were heavier than you wanted to, do you feel like when you were stressed you did eat?

Ferri: A little bit, yes. That comes into play a lot, because I know people who, when they are stressed, they constantly think that they can reduce their stress by eating. I work with people— They go, "Oh I couldn't take that call anymore. I had to have chocolate." But I just take a deep breath, and that does cause a lot of people to gain weight because they keep thinking they're stressed

and they make everything a big deal. They don't take a deep breath and say, "Slow down." You constantly create more stress for yourself, and that causes you to eat more.

Chantel: Well, you truly have been an example for me. I would say that there's been tons of times where we've all sat down as a family to eat lunch, and you've looked at everyone, and you've said, "I'm not hungry, so I'm not going to eat." Everyone's like, "Oh just eat. Come on, just have a small plate." You're very adamant. You go, I'm not hungry. When I'm hungry, I'm going to eat." I've heard this from lots of people; they go, "I know I'm not hungry, but I just feel guilty. They made all this food." So handle that objection. So, when someone says that to you— because you're so good at it. You're like, "No, I'm not hungry. I'm not going to eat." So how do you process that when someone says that. Well, do you feel like you're being rude? How would you answer that question?

Ferri: I feel like I have tried to be honest. If I'm not hungry, I can't eat. If I don't enjoy the food, I shouldn't be eating it. I can sit there and pretend I'm eating, but why? I am the type of person who eats when I'm hungry. I enjoy the food when I eat. I know sometimes people take it personally, thinking that I'm not eating because I don't like their cooking... but I do eat when I'm hungry, and they do realize that, and thank God most of the people around me have gotten to know me. When I say I'm not hungry, I mean it.

Interview with Christy

Christy: There's absolutely no secret to how I eat. It's just when you're hungry, you eat. When I'm out with my friends, it's a social experience for me, so I'm eating and talking, eating and talking. I'm not really concentrating on the food or how much I've had. It's just my body tells me when I'm not hungry anymore. As far as eating slow, when you're out with friends, you're enjoying the moment. You're enjoying the experience. It's a little different than maybe if you're grabbing a quick lunch at work, and you only have five minutes to scarf something down, but in general that's not how I do things.



Chantel: Do you have any tips for me? Everyone who knows me, they know I talk fast. I do everything fast. It's very, very hard for me. I would say the one thing that really does help me is literally to take my timer on my iPhone and go, "Okay, I'm going to eat this. I'm going to take 15 minutes," because I literally can eat in about three minutes.

Christy: I mean, I honestly, Chantel, I think that might be a good behavioral way to kind of train yourself to start eating slower, but really if you're enjoying the food and enjoying the experience and enjoying your company, I think naturally you'll just start to eat slower. You have to savor those moments that you have with your friends and your family. When you have family dinner and you're sitting around, you're talking to Kyle, you're talking to Rhyann, you're enjoying that. You're

not necessarily thinking about how fast you're shoveling it in. You have to calm down and relax.

Chantel: Well, one thing that does help me is if I do have an appetizer. If I order a cup of soup or a side salad or something to have in the beginning because then I eat that, and then I've got to wait another 10 or 15 minutes. Then by the time the food comes, I'm not so crazy. Sometimes having an appetizer does help things.

Christy: You know what, though? Sometimes, and I don't think I've ever mentioned this to you before, but sometimes I'll go out for a late dinner, like 8:00/8:30, or 9:00 p.m., even. I can't wait that long for dinner, so before I leave my house, I will have a couple of almonds or something like that, so like a little healthy snack, not a candy bar.

Chantel: In my book, I talk about the enjoyment scale. I want to make sure that whatever I'm eating is a four or a five on the enjoyment scale. Christy, what do you do?

Christy: Again, it's not rocket science. It depends on what I feel that day. I have my favorite restaurant in Virginia Beach. It's an Italian restaurant. Nine times out of ten I go there.

Chantel: Which one is it?

Christy: Il Giardino down at the oceanfront.

Chantel: Okay.

Christy: Well, you know, when I'm feeling like I'm starving, and I'm really hungry, then I get a giant bowl of penne pasta with marinara sauce, and I throw a ton of cheese on it. I eat a ton of bread. I drink a ton of wine, and then I'm happy. But every time I go there, though, that's not what I want. Sometimes I want salmon and zucchini noodles. It really depends, again, on how busy I've been that day, what I've eaten, if I'm hungry. I just kind of listen to my body, and I decide what my meal's going to be.

Chantel: You don't always get the pasta, do you?

Christy: Right. Also, you have to remember, 90% of the time I am a really clean, healthy eater, so pasta would be a cheat meal for me, if I was to think like that. I'm never going to get a hamburger and fries.

Chantel: Well, here's a perfect example. Today, we went to a pizza place, and I went with a friend of mine. She ordered the salad, and then she ate the salad. I didn't; I had a couple slices of the pizza. I ordered a small pizza, had a couple slices, and had a bunch left over. She said, "Can I have some of your pizza? I ordered this salad, and it didn't satisfy me. I really wanted the pizza. I should've ordered the pizza." Now instead, she ate the salad, which she didn't want, then she ended up eating my leftover pizza, instead of just eating the two slices of pizza because she was never satisfied with the salad that she got. Figure out what you really, really, really want.

Christy: If I want the pasta at all, I get the pasta. If I feel like, "Oh, it's a pasta day," then I'm getting the pasta because why wouldn't I? I don't go to Il Giardino every day. It's one of those things again when food is an experience for me, and I'm enjoying every bite of my pasta. I don't necessarily finish the bowl of pasta, and that's something you and I have talked about before. You saw me at lunch the other day for your birthday lunch. I had a bowl of soup, and I barely ate it because I wasn't as hungry as everybody else who was finishing it up. Just because you get the pasta, you still listen to your body. You don't stuff yourself just because it's there and it's in front of you.

Chantel: Well, okay. Let's just talk about this for a second because it's really important. I just saw a friend of mine that I hadn't seen in, I don't know, maybe a good year, okay? We were going to lunch. She literally had gained about 80 pounds in this one-year period.

Christy: Wow.

Chantel: I talked to her and I said, "Well, what are you doing?" She's like, "Oh, I'm real happy. I'm doing the keto diet right now."

Christy: It's not working.

Chantel: Here's what I'm trying to say with that. I agree with you, Christy. Whatever you are truly wanting to eat; you have to eat that food. It's never, "I'm going to deprive myself of this. I'm going to deprive myself of that." I'm going to eat that food. I'm going to eat it in small portions. I'm going to eat it slowly, and I'm going to eat it until I'm comfortably full. Have you ever eaten more than two slices of pizza in your entire life?

Christy: I mean, no.

Chantel: Yeah.

Christy: Not even in Italy with Italian pizza in Rome, I don't think I had more than two slices.

Chantel: Yeah.

Chantel: Yeah, but in general, I've noticed that people who are thin don't have an issue with food. They just don't deprive themselves of what they want. If they want it, they eat it, and they eat it in just small portions. Because like I said with her, she was like, "Oh, yeah, I'm real happy about the keto diet." I'm thinking to myself, "This is what's going on with you." She just kept going on all these diets, then as soon as she'd get off, she was eating twice as much as she was before. In literally over a year, she's now gained 80 pounds from all these crazy diets she's doing.

Christy: "Just because food is in front of you, does not mean that you have to eat it" is the answer to that question. If you're not hungry, don't eat. Does your kitchen close at 6:30 so you can't go into your kitchen and get a sandwich at 7:30 when you're hungry?

Chantel: I have the best story about you.

Christy: Uh-oh. I'm nervous. No.

Chantel: One time I came over—and I make really good guacamole.

Christy: You make it from scratch, and you're like pouring out the avocado and mashing it.

Chantel: Yeah, it's really good. Anyway, I brought the guacamole over, and I saw you look at it. Everybody kind of was swarming it.

Christy: They take it all. There will be none left.

Chantel: Yes. Yeah. They were like, "Oh my gosh, Chantel brought guacamole. Let's go right after it." As soon as you saw it, you went to get a bowl, and took my guacamole, took some chips on the side ... and then put it in the refrigerator. It wasn't like it was that much longer. It was really weird. It was probably maybe 45 minutes to an hour later, I look at you and I'm like, "What are you doing with the guacamole?" Your like, "I don't want it to all be gone, and I'm not hungry right now. I'm gonna save it. I'm gonna put it in

the refrigerator.”

Christy: Mm-hmm (affirmative), and that’s exactly what I did. Then later when I was hungry, because everybody was still coming in and it wasn’t a good time for me to eat because we were having a party that day. It was like a daytime fun party, so I just, I wouldn’t have enjoyed it if I scarfed down guacamole. I would’ve been hungry an hour later too probably because I wouldn’t have even remembered eating. Later when everybody was there, I was relaxed, then I could eat my guacamole.

Chantel: You are so in tune with your body—really knowing when you’re hungry/when you’re full. The reason why I love intermittent fasting is because it allows you to get hungry. I feel like so many people, they don’t even know what true hunger is because they never, ever let themselves get to that point of being hungry. How do you handle sweets? Do you eat them, do you crave them, or have you cut them out completely?

Christy: I have a story from over the holidays. I think it was probably last Christmas. I woke up. I had a couple of glasses of wine, and I woke up the next morning and I had cookie crumbs underneath my boobs. I don’t know if I can say that or not. There were cookie crumbs, so I must have had too much to drink and then just decided I was eating Christmas cookies. I woke up the next morning. It was like a massacre, all the crumbs on me. So, yes, I do eat sweets, but I don’t eat sweets every day, and I don’t think about sweets really ever. I know for my birthday I want a really special birthday cake. It’s a special treat.

Chantel: If you had to say when you do eat sweets, would it be like two times a day?

Christy: No.

Chantel: I mean, like two times a week, three times a week, four times a week?

Christy: I couldn’t put a number on it, to be honest with you. Before I go to bed, I like having a handful of chocolate chips sometimes. I might do that a couple times a week, but that would be my sweets—like a handful of chocolate chips. I love pasta and I love bread. Chocolate cake, like my mom’s devil food cake, if that’s in my house, that has to go.

Chantel: But see how powerful that is? It's like in your mind, you're thinking, "I can always have that later. I don't have to have it right now, and I don't have to have it every time." My big thing is after I finish eating, I almost always want something sweet to eat, so that's an issue for me. What does help me is, you know those Hershey Kisses?

Christy: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Chantel: Just to have those in your purse, like one or two, and then having literally one Hershey Kiss. How would you feel about having one Hershey Kiss?

Christy: If I wanted one, I would have it; but I have to be honest with you, just the idea of putting a Hershey Kiss in my mouth right now after I ate, I'd feel like, "Ew, I've got to brush my teeth because I've got all that sugar sitting." No. I wouldn't have a Hershey Kiss. I could walk by the bowl of Hershey Kisses.

Chantel: Do you have sweets, like a bowl of sweets in your house at any time?

Christy: I mean, maybe around Halloween when you pass out candy, but no, not in general.

Chantel: I had this assistant one time. She had this little pack of doughnuts. You know, those little mini six-packs? She had it sitting on her desk for literally a week and a half. Every day, I walked by and I saw those.

Christy: And it was driving you crazy?

Chantel: I'm like, "God, she still hasn't eaten those doughnuts."

Christy: "When is she going to eat them?"

Chantel: Every day I'd come by her desk, they'd be sitting right there. Finally, she called out of work sick, and that day I was like, "I'm eating those damn doughnuts."

Christy: That's horrible.

Chantel: I went and I ate three, and then I put the cover back on, and then I went back and I ate the other three. I told her. Actually, I went and replaced them.

Christy: Aw, that's so honest.

Chantel: I went to the store, got the same ones, and put them on her desk. Then she kept them there for another couple days, but this is what I'm talking about. For somebody who is a thin eater like that, there's no magnetic pull on those doughnuts because in your mind you could have the doughnuts whenever you wanted.

Christy: You yourself know there's no shortage of doughnuts. Any time you want a doughnut, you can go. Krispy Kreme, Dunkin' Donuts, Duck Donuts, they're all around. Better quality doughnuts than the junky ones that you ate, to be honest with you.

Chantel: Yes.

Christy: You wasted your calories on junk doughnuts that might've been stale because they'd been there for a week, when you could've had a really quality, yummy doughnut.

Chantel: That is such a great point because for the thin eater like you, if you are going to have something sweet, it has to be a four or a five on the enjoyment scale.

Christy: Yeah.

Chantel: If it's less than a four or five, you're not even going to waste your calories on that.

Christy: Or my time, right? I'll have a bite of it, and if it's not good, I'm done because I've already eaten a meal too by that point, because it's dessert. And I don't care what everybody else around me is doing. If everybody else is sitting down eating, unless it's like a special occasion, just because we're having lunch . . . if I'm not hungry yet, I'm not eating right now.

Chantel: Well, a perfect example was when we all went to Missy's birthday lunch.

Christy: I didn't even order anything.

Chantel: You didn't order one thing because you said, "You know what? I'm not hungry."

Christy: I had no appetite.

Chantel: And you're saving money too.

Christy: Yeah, right. I didn't even think about that.

Thin Eater Interviews

Chantel: You're saving money. (Pause) Awesome. Well, thanks again for joining us.

Christy: Thank you. I had fun.

Interview with Logan

Chantel: Alright, Logan. So, tell me what do your meals look like on a typical day?

Logan: On a typical day, I do not eat breakfast. I have a moderate-sized lunch, and then dinner is where I kind of go and eat really whatever I want to, whatever I'm craving for the day.

Chantel: Perfect. If you had to say what size your lunch is, would you say it's like small or medium?

Logan: Typically, my lunch portion size would be like a medium-sized lunch.

Chantel: Okay, so your lunch would be medium sized, your dinner would be large?

Logan: Correct.

Chantel: Okay. Tell me what you ate yesterday. So you didn't eat breakfast, what did you have for lunch?

Logan: For lunch I actually ate Taco Bell.

Chantel: Okay. And how many tacos did you have?

Logan: I had two tacos from Taco Bell. I was kind of in a hurry.

Chantel: Okay. And would that be about the portion size you'd have is two tacos?

Logan: Yeah, roughly.

Chantel: Okay. And then did you have any snacks in the afternoon?

Logan: I did. I had dried fruit, it's like the tropical mix, so that's a normal kind of snack.

Chantel: Okay. And then for dinner, what did you have for dinner?

Logan: For dinner I had— which is honestly typical for me because I work

nights, so I eat at work—I had a chicken sandwich with a garden salad.

Chantel: Okay. And did you eat the entire chicken sandwich?

Logan: I did eat the entire chicken sandwich.

Chantel: Okay. And then just a side garden salad?

Logan: Correct. And I typically put ranch dressing on the salad.

Chantel: Okay. And then do you ever count your calories or count the number of carbs that you're eating?

Logan: No, I do not usually count calories or count carbs of any sort.

Chantel: Okay. And would you say you overeat at all, or would you say that you just eat when you're hungry, and stop when you're full?

Logan: There are times that I do overeat. If I'm working a lot, I kind of catch up a little bit for the day if I haven't eaten. I'll do a little bit more than I probably should.

Chantel: So, let's say that on a scale of 0 to 5—4 would be that you're full; 3.8 is you're not that full, but you're almost full, and then 5 would be like Thanksgiving Day stuffed—okay? So, using that metric, would you say that when you stop eating, you're stopping at 3.8, stopping at 4, stopping at 4.2? Where would you stop eating at on a normal basis?

Logan: Okay. On a normal basis of a scale to 1 to 4, 4 being full, I usually try to go to like a 4.1 and get in all my food for my lifestyle. I'm always super busy, so I have to eat when I can eat.

Chantel: Okay. Are there any foods for you that you would say are not negotiable? Meaning like this is not a food that I'm going to eat, and why would that reason be?

Logan: Really, I'm very open with anything that I eat. I love trying new stuff. The only foods that are super non-negotiable for me are the allergy foods that I have, obviously.

Chantel: Okay. Describe those for me.

Logan: I have an allergy to blue cheese and certain mushrooms, so I have to stay away from anything with mushrooms. Actually, I saw a study one time that they tested all the shiitake mushrooms in restaurants and stores, and a large percent of them came back to be a different species. So I avoid those at

all costs, kind of cuts out a lot of pasta. Other than that, I have some texture issues. I don't really like avocados. I don't like things that are solid for one second and then mush out.

Chantel: Give me an example of that.

Logan: Like avocados or Jello or certain types of sushi. Other than that, I'm very open. I love exploring foods and trying everything.

Chantel: Good. And then do you feel like you ever have a window of weight? Do you say, "I feel like my clothes are getting a little bit tighter, maybe I'll back off of sugar?" How much weight is that for you? Would you say it's like, "When I gain more than three pounds, then maybe I'll kind of cut back my portion size," or is it five pounds? What is that window of weight for you?

Logan: My optimal window of weight that I kind of stay at is about 127. My concerns are usually when I go lower, like if I hit 125. That's when I'm like, "Oh I need to incorporate some protein shakes or some extra bulk." The only thing I am kind of concerned about is my salt and alcohol intake because I notice I get bloated. So that's the one portion of my diet that I really do keep track of because I retain a lot of water weight in my face and places.

Chantel: Got you. Now what is your workout plan? Do you work out a lot or not work out a lot?

Logan: My workout plan is almost nonexistent because as a bartender, my job is a super big workout. I'm on my feet anywhere between eight to seventeen hours a day, moving kegs, pouring drinks. So when I say I don't work out, really my lifestyle is super active.

Chantel: Got you. So, when you are stressed, what would be some of the things, besides food, that you would do to kind of eliminate stress?

Logan: My biggest stress eliminator that I love to do is just sit in the bottom of my shower for like an hour. Just enjoy it. I do aromatherapy. I love doing those with lavender and tea tree essential oils. Those help me a lot, especially with stress headaches. Other than that, I don't really do much for stress.

Chantel: Okay, perfect. And then name some of the foods you love to indulge in. So if you said, "Here's the foods that I love to indulge in," what would they be?

Logan: My favorite indulgence food, I'm a super big country girl, so I call it the Irish diet. I love meat, cheese, and potatoes. If I've had a big week, that's my go to. I want a nice steak dinner. I want baked potatoes. I want mac and cheese.

Interview with Katlyn

Katlyn: My name is Katlyn. I am a wedding hair and makeup artist. I do hair and makeup freelance, and I own my own business.

Chantel: Awesome. Tell everyone what your meals look like? What'd you eat yesterday for breakfast, lunch and dinner?

Katlyn: I just had a bowl of strawberries, maybe five. Then for lunch, I didn't really have time to eat too much, and I saw a bag of chips in my car, so I ate a few of those. Not too many. Then for dinner, my man and I went to a Chinese buffet, and we went all out.

Chantel: So, if you had to describe extra small, small, medium and large, how many times would you say you eat in a day? Would you say you eat two times a day generally, three times a day?

Katlyn: I would say I have a large to extra-large meal once a day.

Chantel: Okay. So one of your meals is large or extra-large? Just depending on how hungry you are?

Katlyn: Yes.

Chantel: And would you say mostly that's dinner?

Katlyn: Yes.

Chantel: Is there ever an exception to that?

Katlyn: Maybe like once every two months, and then I wouldn't have a very big dinner. So, maybe just lunch.

Chantel: So, let's say you guys were doing a big breakfast where it was a big family brunch, would that be your big meal for the day?

Katlyn: Honestly, I still wouldn't eat that much.

Chantel: You wouldn't? Because you enjoy eating at night?

Katlyn: Yes. If I was having a big family brunch or something, I would only eat maybe a croissant or something. I wouldn't eat that much.

Chantel: Got you, because at the time your body really wants a large meal is around the 5:00?

Katlyn: I only eat when I'm hungry. Yep.

Chantel: You eat when you're hungry. So from what I've heard you say, you would say if you're going to eat breakfast, it's going to be something extra small.

Katlyn: Yes.

Chantel: Four strawberries. What's some other things that you would have?

Katlyn: Any kind of fruit. Definitely. I love to eat fruit.

Chantel: So, either it's going to be extra small or nothing? And then for lunch, is it extra small or small?

Katlyn: It's more on the small side.

Chantel: Small side.

Katlyn: Yeah. Yeah. Nothing too crazy, though.

Chantel: Okay. Describe some things that you would have for your small meal for lunch.

Katlyn: Sometimes I would go out with my dad. I love to have lunch dates with my dad, and we would go out to Chick-Fil-A or something or McDonald's because he loves McDonald's. And I would have a four-piece chicken nugget and a small fry and that's it.

Chantel: Okay. And would you eat the entire four-piece chicken?

Katlyn: Yes.

Chantel: Okay. And the whole small fry?

Katlyn: Yeah.

Chantel: Great. And then to drink—water?

Katlyn: Yeah. Water or sweet tea. I like sweet tea.

Chantel: Okay. And then what does your dinner look like? Dinner would be your large meal?

Katlyn: Yes, dinner would definitely be a large meal. I eat almost anything.

I love to go over to my parents' house for dinner, you know? Just to be with them a lot because I love them. And Mom would cook a huge meal and stuff. So, we would have at least four to five sides and a meat and stuff. And I would eat it all and have seconds.

Chantel: Okay. And how do you choose what to eat?

Katlyn: I don't really, I just eat whatever.

Chantel: But whatever your body wants?

Katlyn: Yeah.

Chantel: So. recap for me one more time the size of your meals and what you eat.

Katlyn: Alright, so for breakfast I usually have an extra small meal or nothing at all. Lunch, I have a small meal or, honestly, nothing at all depending on my workday. And then for dinner I have a large to an extra-large meal.

Chantel: That's great. So would you say you eat slowly?

Katlyn: Yes, I eat very, very slowly. Usually I'm the last person to finish eating at the table.

Chantel: Name some of the foods you love to indulge in.

Katlyn: Like for snacks?

Chantel: Yeah.

Katlyn: My favorite snacks are pretzels.

Chantel: Okay.

Katlyn: Fruits. I have a weird obsession with Lay's original potato chips.

Chantel: My son loves Lay's original potato chips.

Katlyn: Yeah, I can eat a family size bag in two days. We have to keep three in the pantry, and we have to go buy more every week.

Chantel: You just love Lay's potato chips.

Katlyn: Oh my gosh. It's ridiculous.

Chantel: That's funny.

Katlyn: Yeah.

Chantel: Now, you eat a very small breakfast, if at any at all. Chips, very small lunch. Your big meal is dinner. Would you say though that you ever overeat?

Katlyn: No, I don't normally overeat. I just eat until I'm full.

Chantel: Okay. And let's just pretend that you were at Burger King.

Katlyn: Okay.

Chantel: I love when you said you got a four-piece kids' meal with a small fry at Chick-fil-A. What would you order if you went to Burger King? What would you eat?

Katlyn: If I went to Burger King for lunch, I would probably just get a small nugget. I think it's either a six or a four. I would get that, and then small fries. That's it.

Chantel: Do you usually leave food on your plate?

Katlyn: Sometimes, yes. Yeah.

Chantel: And do you ever count calories or count carbs?

Katlyn: Nope. I have never counted calories and never counted carbs. Never looked at how much sugar, cholesterol, or any of that. Nope.

Chantel: And do you deprive yourself of any foods at all?

Katlyn: No, I never cut back on food or think, "Oh, I shouldn't eat this, or I shouldn't eat that." I just eat whatever I'm craving.

Chantel: How do you know that you're physically hungry? What are some of the symptoms that you have?

Katlyn: Some of my symptoms are I feel tired or grumpy. Very grumpy. I can get hangry, and my stomach starts to hurt. And usually, if it's not close to a big meal, I just find a granola bar or just a small snack that I can eat to hold me off until my next big meal.

Chantel: Got you. I've heard different people talk about that. Let's say you were going to eat dinner at 4:00, and you were going to have a big dinner. But at 2:00, you start getting hungry. What are some things that you would do to keep you from being hungry?

Katlyn: I wouldn't eat at all.

Chantel: You wouldn't eat?

Katlyn: No. If I knew I was going to have a very big meal, or going out with family, or going to a big buffet or something, and I was starting to be hungry at 2:00 or even 1:00, I wouldn't eat at all.

Chantel: Okay. Do you ever have any kind of snacks in your purse, like almonds or a granola bar or anything like that?

Katlyn: I usually have some pretzels and a granola bar.

Chantel: In your purse?

Katlyn: Yeah.

Chantel: And are there any foods for you that you just refuse to eat under any circumstance?

Katlyn: Oh, my goodness. I am such a picky eater. I only eat what I like, so if somebody puts something in front of me, and I don't like it, I'll maybe have a few bites to be nice, but I won't eat it. And after I leave, I would go get something that I do like. So I can name so many things that I don't like. I don't like cauliflower. I don't like spinach. I'm not a big smoothie person. Just honestly, a lot of things. I don't like certain kinds of steak. I won't eat brown rice.

Chantel: Okay. But there's no food that you ever say, "I can't have this food because it's too many calories." You've never said that?

Katlyn: Never. I will never say, "Oh, I can't eat this because there's that many calories in it."

Chantel: Got you. Do you ever feel like you are preoccupied with food? Or do you only think about food when you're physically hungry?

Katlyn: I only think about food when I'm hungry. I'm never thinking about my next meal or thinking, "Oh, when am I going to eat again?" No, I have other things to focus on.

Interview with Kim

Chantel: So, tell us about your weight, and does it fluctuate at all? Do you go on diets a lot?

Kim: My weight fluctuates. I'm about 130 pounds, I would say. Depending on what's going on, I might maybe go down. I don't go lower than about 127. I might go up to 135.

Chantel: What size clothes do you wear?

Kim: Obviously, it depends. It's usually a two or a four. So, 26 in jeans, typically.

Chantel: And how tall are you?

Kim: I am 5'6."

Chantel: Okay, perfect. Today, we're getting ready to order from the menu, so let's look at the menu and then decide. How do you decide what you want to eat?

Kim: I usually don't drink alcohol, so that's easy. How do I decide? Okay, I'm a pretty boring eater. I usually don't step out of the box too much. I like a Caesar salad. I'm always a little bit worried about ordering something that I hate.

Chantel: Okay.

Kim: I know that no matter what I get, I don't eat a lot at a time in one sitting. So unless I'm with my family, or I'm splitting something, I'm kind of gravitating towards—

Chantel: Something smaller?

Kim: Smaller, yes.

Chantel: Okay. And are you asking, "Okay, what's my healthiest choice?"

Kim: No. I'm just looking at what sounds appetizing to me right now.

Chantel: Okay.

Kim: Sometimes when I'm out with all four of us, my family, I'll just not order anything because I know the kids will have leftovers. I'll just clean up.

Chantel: Clean up what they don't eat?



Kim: Yeah.

Chantel: Let's talk about what you've eaten so far today.

Kim: Today, I have had an iced coffee. I had that at about 9:00 AM.

Chantel: And what was in it?

Kim: It was just an espresso concentrate, half and half, and a little bit of sugar.

Chantel: So right now, what time is it?

Kim: It is 1:41.

Chantel: What time would you say you normally start your first meal? Is it around the 1:00 time?

Kim: Yes.

Chantel: What's the reason for that? Is that what you've always done?

Kim: No. As long as I drink coffee when I wake up, I'm just not that hungry before about 1:00. Also, I'm far more productive in the morning. When I first wake up, I'm ready to just do this to-do list I have around the house.

Chantel: So, you're like, "I don't want to load up on a bunch of food?"

Kim: And it's distracting. And if I stop and sit, sometimes I don't get back up, if that makes sense. I might stop and sit, you know, to grab something to eat in front of a show and be like, "Oh, this is really good. I want to watch another episode." In the morning, that's when I have the most energy.

Chantel: Okay, that's really good.

Kim: Sometimes I'm running errands, too. Right, so I got up. As long as I have coffee in the morning, I usually do not eat anything till about 1:00 in the afternoon, which is not intentional. I'm aware of intermittent fasting. I've read about it, but the way that I do it comes naturally to me. It works with my schedule. It's never been an intentional thing where I'm trying to lose weight, or I'm trying to achieve anything in particular. It's just, I'm more productive in the morning, I'm running errands, I'm distracted. You know. I don't know if my body has gotten used to that just being the way it is.

Chantel: You're now start getting hungry because you're so used to eating at one o'clock?

Kim: Yep.

Chantel: Say that again.

Kim: Yeah. So, it wasn't intentional. It's just that's what my body is accustomed to because of my life and my schedule. And for, you know, sixteen years, I got up with my kids, and the morning was spent either getting them to school, or whatever. Once I dropped them off at school, I ran errands. So, you know, my body over time just kind of knows this is how it is, and so I don't get hungry before one o'clock.

Chantel: Okay. Now let's look at the menu. I want you to really say out loud what you're thinking. Are you ever thinking, "Should I get something low calorie?"

Kim: No.

Chantel: Or anything like that?

Kim: No.

Chantel: "What am I craving?"

Kim: Yes. My thought process is just, "What sounds good to me? What am I craving?"

Chantel: So, what are you craving?

Kim: In general, I don't like heavy foods, especially not at 1:00. Maybe occasionally at dinnertime. I crave salads. I flip to the small, or the lunch-size entrees. Everything I'm looking at just seems too heavy. You know? And that's not a weight issue, that's not a caloric issue. It just doesn't appeal to me. So yeah, right now I'm thinking Caesar salad.

Chantel: Caesar salad sounds good.

Kim: Yeah.

Chantel: Maybe that grilled chicken Caesar salad?

Kim: Yes. I'm at appetizer salads right now. There we go. Chopped salads.

Chantel: Appetizer salads?

Kim: Here's the grilled chicken Caesar. I'll probably do the grilled chicken Caesar so that I know I've had some protein.

Chantel: So, you don't worry about butter, bread, or carbs? Talk about that for a second. Do you ever in your mind go, "Well I had bread for lunch, I'm probably not going to have it again for dinner?" Or how does that thought

process go for you?

Kim: When I see this bread that comes out, first of all, I'm hungry. Second of all, it's good. I like it. I've had it before. I don't think twice about the butter, as long as it's butter. If I think we are somewhere where it might be margarine or whatever garbage, I won't touch it. So that's my main concern. It's not calories, it's just what's in that. And then, you know, if I were to eat a bagel, I might stop before dinnertime, and think, "Okay, what are we going have?" I think, "Maybe I shouldn't have straight pasta." But usually, I don't give it a whole lot of thought.

Chantel: Because if you've already had bread, then you're probably not going to be craving it again?

Kim: Right.

Chantel: Because you've already had it for the day, so it's kind of like, "Okay, I've already had it?"

Kim: Right.

Chantel: "I'm not dying for it again."

Kim: Right.

Chantel: That same day.

Kim: Yeah. Honestly, there's not a lot of thought that goes into. There is a lot of thought that goes into the nutritional value, but not in the sense—

Chantel: Of carbs?

Kim: Of carbs versus protein versus calories, fats, or weight.

Chantel: It's just what kind of quality is this?

Kim: Or how it's going to affect my weight.

Chantel: "How is this going to make me feel?"

Kim: It's, "How this is going to make me feel," it's, "What is in this? Is this something that is—"

Chantel: Real food.

Kim: Real food, exactly. Is this real? My kids joke when we go to my mom's for dinner, and she puts lite sour cream on something. They're like, "Grandma, you know that we don't eat that." And we don't. We don't eat lite cream cheese, sour cream, or artificial sweeteners. Because I understand that

on a label, it might look better because it's a lite product. It has fewer calories or less sugar, but you know, you're compromising your health because it's not real. A lot of time there are additives. That's not for every lite product, but you know what I mean. I just want real.

Chantel: What do your meals look like in a typical day? What did you eat yesterday?

Kim: Let me think, yesterday was Sunday, so I woke up, and had my iced coffee. At about noon, I ate a half of a bagel with cream cheese. I was around the house cleaning and doing various chores. Abby had volleyball try-outs. We left the house at 3:30, so did I eat? I remember I had another coffee on the way out the door, and I don't think I ... I'm trying to think if I ate anything else. Oh, I did. I had made a sandwich for lunch that she didn't finish. I used regular sourdough bread with chicken salad and tomato slices on it. She didn't finish it, so I ate probably a third of the sandwich that was left. I ate that before we left. Then for dinner, what did we do for dinner? We ran to the grocery store after tryouts and had BLT sandwiches, just Abby and I, because Keith and Emily were doing other things. I had a whole sandwich.

Chantel: Did you have any dessert or anything?

Kim: I had about a half a pint of Ben and Jerry's.

Chantel: Okay.

Kim: That's it.

Chantel: Is Ben and Jerry's ice cream one of your kind of things, you love to indulge in?

Kim: It is. Ice cream in general.

Chantel: Why do you choose Ben and Jerry's? Because it's pretty clean?

Kim: Well, it's just the flavor.

Chantel: But Ben and Jerry's is one of the healthier ice creams.

Kim: That's good to know. If it says frozen dairy dessert, I'm like, "No, that's not." Sometimes I'll have Häagen-Dazs. I probably don't read the ice cream labels like I should. And I've had more ice cream lately because, I don't know, maybe because it's summer time, and because the kids are. Normally I don't. Normally it's like maybe once a week.

Chantel: How often would you say you eat sweets?

Kim: Most days I'll have something. Whole Foods, and I think Fresh Market does too, carries this line of small desserts. I'm trying to think of the name of them. They're in the refrigerator section. They make these little tarts. They have Key lime, lemon, chocolate espresso, and chocolate almond butter. It's made with almond flour.

Chantel: Mmm!

Kim: It's all real food.

Chantel: Ooh, that sounds good.

Kim: Yeah, and it's rich, too, so it really kind of hits the spot, if that makes sense. But I'll say just about every day I'll have something. It might just be dark chocolate at night. I call it meal closure. It's just something when I finish eating. Not lunch, so much, but at the end of the day, at dinnertime.

Chantel: I feel like I always need a meal closure, as well. If I'm going to eat two meals in a day, I want something as a meal closure for my lunch.

Kim: Okay.

Chantel: And a meal closure for my dinner. Do you feel like at lunch you don't need a meal closure?

Kim: Not really.

Chantel: So, you like to have something sweet after dinner?

Kim: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Chantel: But after lunch you're okay? You don't need more?

Kim: Yeah. I don't need it. But after dinner, it sounds weird, but it's like my body knows, "Okay."

Chantel: Talk about how quickly you eat, and do you feel like you savor your food? Give an example.

Kim: I normally eat faster than this. I'm just distracted right now. No, I don't really savor my food, because typically I just eat because I'm hungry.

Chantel: How long would you say it takes you to eat? We'll time it, and we'll see. So just try to eat your salad like in the normal amount of time.

Kim: Okay.

Chantel: Do you feel like you eat kind of fast?

Kim: I would say if there is an exact average, that would probably be me.

Chantel: So, you're not like the first person to finish, and you're not the last person to finish?

Kim: Right.

Chantel: You're just right in the middle.

Kim: Mm-hmm (affirmative). Not like Keith.

Chantel: Do you think he's super slow?

Kim: Oh my gosh. Every bite, he has to have a perfect proportion of sauce or condiment. "I'm going to take this shoestring French fry and it's going to be three bites."

Chantel: But that's good. Whenever I'm with him, I'm like, "Oh my gosh, I am eating too fast." But he does eat very slow.

Kim: He eats excessively slow. He pushes forward. If he likes the taste of something, he will ignore every body-signal he's getting. I mean, he'll say, "Real champions press on." Because the girls ask, "Dad, are you still hungry? Why are you eating?" And he's like, "It tastes so good."

Chantel: Oh gosh. Let's talk about any tricks you have that you feel helps you eat a little less.

Kim: I feel like I eat less in part because I cannot stand the feeling of being full, or overeating. Or just being full. It feels gross to me. I just, it's uncomfortable. And it's not like, "Oh no, I feel like I'm going to get fat." It's just, it doesn't feel comfortable. So, I will stop eating when I feel no longer hungry.

Chantel: Would you say you stop eating before you're full?

Kim: Yes.

Chantel: Because you know?

Kim: Oh, absolutely.

Chantel: Okay.

Kim: I stop eating when I'm not hungry anymore, if that makes sense.

Chantel: So right before?

Kim: Right before I am full, I stop eating. I stop eating once my body feels, "Okay, I'm not hungry anymore. I'm not full. I'm comfortable." And that's when I'll stop eating.

Chantel: How do you know when you're full? Describe in detail as much as you can. So now you had that little piece of bread. How do you feel as far as your hunger and fullness?

Kim: I'm still hungry, but I don't feel as—

Chantel: Ravenous.

Kim: Ravenous, exactly. Because when I get really hungry, that's uncomfortable too. I'll start to feel nauseous. I don't feel like that anymore, but I can tell I'm still hungry.

Chantel: What other feelings do you feel when you're full?

Kim: Full?

Chantel: Or not full, right before you're about to get full.

Kim: I also get bored. I get bored with my food as well. Just the way something tastes, you know. After I've eaten a certain amount, I don't really want the taste of it anymore, if that makes sense.

Chantel: Okay, so talk about how you might say, "Okay, well I'm not as hungry anymore." So, talk about that feeling, like the taste. Like the first bite is really, really good, but then it's like, "Okay, this isn't as good anymore."

Kim: Right. This isn't as—

Chantel: "Now I'm getting bored with it."

Kim: Yeah, and that could also just go along with the fact that my body's telling me, "Okay, we're good now." But yeah, I just, after a little bit, I just, yeah, bored. It doesn't taste as good.

Chantel: Let's say you had a plate that had multiple items on it. Like, not just this salad.

Kim: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Chantel: Let's say that's steak, vegetables, and mashed potatoes. How would you decide what to eat first on that plate?

Kim: If I have a plate in front of me with several different items, I would probably combine them. Not all on the plate, but I'll cut off steak and put it with some, whatever, onions, peppers, green bean. You know. I'll eat it with, you know, something else that's on my plate. I don't necessarily eat things alone. I mean, depending on what it is. My mom has this Jello that she makes

as a side dish for certain meals. I'm not going to mix that with chicken. But, you know, the more savory items I will combine.

Chantel: Have you ever counted your calories or measured how many calories you've eaten in a day?

Kim: I have not, ever, counted my calories or measured. Sometimes I will be aware, like, "Oh, we went to brunch today and had, you know, French toast or this." So, I would naturally not be as hungry later in the day, anyway, but I would be mindful of the fact that I had French toast earlier today. So, I would not eat ice cream that night.

Chantel: I've heard this many times from many people. They basically say that they allow themselves a five-pound window, meaning that they're 130 pounds. Once they get to 135, they start dialing it back a little bit. Would you agree with that?

Kim: Yes. I don't weigh myself usually. I mean, we have a scale. I might get on it once every several months. I'm more conscious of how my clothes fit, so if I start to notice, like, "Oh, it kind of looks like I have a pooch in this outfit," or, "These jeans are really tight," that's when I'll go, "Hmm. I wonder what I weigh right now." You know. So I'll get on a scale, and if it's higher than 135, 136, I'm like, "Oh, okay. I need to be more conscious."

Chantel: So what would you then do to dial it back a little? What would be some of the steps that you would take to say, "Okay, I'm a little bit heavier than I would like to be. I'm going to dial it back."

Kim: That would probably be, "I'm probably having too many sweets at night." I just need to be more conscious of that.

Chantel: So, sweets is where you dial it back?

Kim: Yeah, I would dial it back on sweets. And rather than having a dessert, I would have just a square or two of dark chocolate, if that makes sense, rather than eating a bowl of ice cream. Because I'm so accustomed to eating the way that I am, and it just works with my schedule and everything, that keeps things in check quite a bit on its own. And just because I naturally don't like feeling full. I don't like feeling gross. Yeah, sometimes I eat fast food because I have to. We're on the go. But if I have to do that repetitively, I'm like, "Ugh, this just

doesn't feel good."

Chantel: So, you ate all of your bread. Are you going to have any more bread?

Kim: No.

Chantel: If you had to estimate the percentage of time that you eat clean, meaning fruits, vegetables, lean meats, what would you say that percentage looks like for you?

Kim: It depends on how strict your definition of clean is, probably, but I would say 60% of the time. 60-70% of the time.

Chantel: Talk about fast foods. Are there some fast foods you will eat, some fast foods you won't, and why?

Kim: I'll eat Chick-fil-A™. I like Zoe's Kitchen™. I like Chipotle™. Panera™ I'll do—I don't love Panera™. I just won't eat McDonald's™.

Chantel: What about McDonald's™?

Kim: I won't eat it. I mean, if I am literally going to die of starvation I would eat it, but short of that, it just—

Chantel: Just the amount of chemicals that are in McDonald's™.

Kim: Yeah, just not knowing what it is. I'd rather be hungry. I mean, I won't eat Burger King™ or McDonald's™. Or Wendy's™. If I had to, I would get a salad. I don't want meats from, you know, some of the fast food chains.

Chantel: Is food ever your go-to when you're stressed?

Kim: No. Food is never my go-to when I'm stressed. It's quite the opposite. I struggle to eat when I'm stressed. Because, I think, when I'm stressed I feel it in my stomach. Yeah, I can't eat when I'm stressed. If I'm stressed, and depending on the girls' schedule, if we're not sitting down to a meal, or I'm not making anything for everybody, I'll just eat a bowl of cereal. That's the one thing I can usually stomach eating when I really don't want to eat.

Chantel: What is your go-to? When you're stressed, what is your go-to?

Kim: What do you mean? Like, my go-to food, or otherwise?

Chantel: Otherwise.

Kim: Otherwise, okay.

Chantel: Would you go for a walk, take a bath, or go out with friends?

Kim: No, I would not go for a walk or take a bath because then my mind would still be on whatever is making me stressed. So whatever is going to distract me and kind of be an escape. I might go call up a close friend and just say, “Hey, I’m coming over,” and goof off with her. I’m trying to think. Sometimes I will put on a podcast and clean like crazy to try to just distract myself. If I’ve got a podcast on, then that’ll usually kind of occupy my mind.

Chantel: What are some other things that would be your go-to?

Kim: Reading. I like to read, too.

Chantel: So, are you done with your salad now?

Kim: I am.

Chantel: You probably ate about, what, a quarter of that salad, maybe?

Kim: A third?

Chantel: So maybe a third of the salad.

Kim: I’m just not hungry anymore.

Chantel: It would be good if we could get a dessert, and you eat a couple bites of it.

Kim: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Chantel: Are you craving a couple bites of something?

Kim: Sure.

Chantel: Okay, good.

Kim: I’ll have a couple bites of something.

Chantel: Perfect.

Kim: Yeah.

Chantel: When was the last time that you can remember that you overate, and when or how often do you eat your entire plate of food in a restaurant?

Kim: The last time I overate, I have no idea.

Chantel: That’s so good.

Kim: I don’t know. I ate my entire plate at a restaurant over the weekend.

Chantel: Okay, what was it?

Kim: It was a salad. It was smaller than that.

Chantel: You were just really hungry?

Kim: I was really hungry. It was probably three o’clock.

Chantel: You hadn't eaten anything?

Kim: It was a spinach salad with grilled tuna, and it had onions and tomatoes and this yummy dressing.

Chantel: And you weren't that full when you were done because you were so hungry?

Kim: I was really hungry. It was bigger than an appetizer salad, but it wasn't huge. Normally I need to split a meal, or if it's something that I know I'll eat the leftovers. I'm not good about eating leftovers, but if I know I'll eat the leftovers, I'll get an entrée that's normal or bigger size, but it's typically a waste of food if I do that.

Chantel: How do you determine when you're physically hungry?

Kim: First my stomach will just feel kind of empty. Nauseous, I would say. I mean, that's the best way to describe it.

Chantel: Just like you feel your stomach being empty?

Kim: Yes. Whenever my stomach is really empty, it makes me nauseous. Then I'll get a headache, and I'll just get very moody if I'm really, really hungry.

Chantel: When we're looking at this dessert, what kind of stands out to you?

Kim: Usually, I don't like anything with fruit in dessert. Not always, but just typically, if it's got banana in it, forget it.

Chantel: What about the salted caramel crème brûlée?

Kim: I kind of like simpler desserts.

Chantel: Okay.

Kim: Like I don't want the salted caramel Heath, bla bla bla. You know, Keith will get this loaded, something with Reese's, and I'm just like, "Ugh." So typically, I'd like—

Chantel: Oh, they also have just single things, like chocolate covered strawberry, cheesecake lollipop, candy walnut turtle, or chocolate truffle.

Kim: Oh, there we go. Nice. Yeah. Like a turtle, for instance, is a little, it's too much going on.

Chantel: Too much going on. Out of all of these, you can whichever one you want, which one sounds the absolute best?

Kim: I would say either the chocolate cake or the Key lime pie, probably.

Chantel: Those two.

Kim: Yeah. One of those. You want me to make a choice, or are you gonna

...

Chantel: Yeah, I'll eat a bite of the Key lime pie if you want

Kim: Yeah, that looks good. The Key lime pie looks good.

Chantel: Okay.

Kim: Let's do that.

Chantel: Okay.

Kim: Yeah, it's funny. We don't go to Cheesecake Factory often, but whenever we do, there's always this battle because Keith's like, "Well, we're not buying four pieces of cheesecake." You know, just 'cause it's too much and it adds up. But I'm always like, "I just want plain." I just don't like all the—

Chantel: So what I'd like you to do is, when we get the Key lime pie, I want you to describe as in detail as you can how you're eating it.

Kim: Okay.

Chantel: You know, Catherine Muldoon, who's Miss Virginia, she describes, like when she eats ice cream, she says that she just makes railroad tracks in it.

Kim: Okay, so when I eat ice cream—

Chantel: Yeah, describe how you eat ice cream.

Kim: I can relate to that. If I am not eating ice cream in the really weird way that I eat that I told you about, where I like to pour milk over it—

Chantel: So, describe to everyone, 'cause they don't know. Describe how do you eat ice cream.

Kim: Okay, so my ideal ice cream set-up is, I've got like a ... what is it—

Chantel: Pint.

Kim: A pint? Is that what it is? Of like, Ben and Jerry's or whatever it is. And I will open it up. I'll take about the top half of the ice cream out, put it in another container, put it back in the freezer. So, then I've got the bottom.

Server: Are we ready for dessert?

Chantel: Yes, we're gonna share a Key lime pie.

Server: Great choice, I'll let them know.

Chantel: Is it made homemade?

Server: Yes.

Chantel: Great. Perfect. Thank you.

Kim: Yeah, so I take the top half out, and that's just so I have room in the container, and then I'll pour, I don't know, milk in over it. Maybe a fourth to a third of a cup of milk. I won't mix it, I'll just eat. Each bite of ice cream will have some milk in it. Almost like it's cereal or something. I don't know why I do that, but I really like to eat it that way. But if I am just eating straight from the pint, I like to keep the top layer even. Like, whatever. If it's ice cream, I'll keep it even. If it's somebody's birthday cake that's been sitting on my counter that I made for one of the kids and I really want some, I will just go in and—

Chantel: So, would you say you eat a quarter of the pint, a half of the pint, a third of the pint?

Kim: Probably about a third.

Chantel: And then do you eat all of it? So, once you take it, do you eat all of that one third of a pint?

Kim: Yeah, I'll eat all of the one third with milk. Yeah, so I might take two thirds out.

Chantel: Talk about determining, like saving room for that. Talk about that. 'Cause like if in your mind you were gonna ... You know how people say, "Save room for dessert." If you know you're gonna have that, are you gonna be eating a little bit less at dinner?

Kim: Probably not, because I just don't eat that much anyway at dinner. And I don't like to have dessert right after dinner. Normally, I like there to be a little bit, if I'm getting a dessert-dessert. If I'm just—

Chantel: If you're gonna have a couple bites, that's fine.

Kim: Yeah, if I'm gonna have a couple bites, that's fine. But if I'm gonna sit down with my whole ice cream—

Chantel: And make a production out of it.

Kim: You know, my routine. When I say routine, it's still only like once a week. Right, then I need some time there.

Chantel: So, would you say, would there ever be a time where four nights in a row, you're having this ice cream routine?

Kim: Probably not four. There might be a time when ... Like I said, especially during the summer, because we're more likely to go out and do something. You know, "Let's go whatever," and while we're out, Keith inevitably suggests ice cream. Sometimes I don't get anything, and of course, everybody orders too much, so I'll just eat some of theirs. Yeah, normally it's not ... It might be two nights in a row. It won't be four. 'Cause that's when this conscious part of me, when it comes to my eating, kicks in and is like, "I don't want any more. That's too much ice cream. I'm not gonna do it a third night in a row."

Chantel: Let's talk about snacks. Do you carry snacks with you, and why?

Kim: I do.

Chantel: And what kind of snacks?

Kim: Yeah, I do carry snacks for the occasions when I am really, really hungry and starting to feel sick, and I don't have time to stop. I'm running the kids here or there, or whatever I'm doing. So I'll carry, like in my car sometimes I'll have a bag of raw almonds or the peanut butter filled pretzel bites, or dry cereal like Frosted Mini Wheats or Cracklin Oat Bran™ or something. Just so there's something that I can put in my stomach, until mealtime. 'Cause once I start to feel sick, if I let that go too long, then my head is pounding, and I really am not feeling well and I'll have to just—

Chantel: Lie down.

Kim: Yeah, lie down or something.

(The Key lime pie arrives)

Kim: Oh, that's pretty.

Chantel: Okay, so let's talk about this. You eat it first, and do it as much as you want, and then I'll have a bite. So, I want you to really talk about the cool whipped topping, how you eat it.

Kim: Okay.

Chantel: So, describe it in as much detail as you can.

Kim: Okay, what am I describing? Just the dessert. My thought process with what I'm—

Chantel: Yes. Explain like, “Okay, I like the graham cracker part the most.” For me, if I was looking at that, my favorite part would be the topping. I like the topping part, so that’s the part that I’m gonna focus on. And the graham cracker part is not, I don’t like that that much, so I would actually kick that out of the way.

Kim: I like whipped cream, so I’m just gonna eat some of that.

Chantel: Is it good?

Kim: It’s good. It’s like whipped cream but thicker. It’s like if whipped cream and ice cream had a baby, there it is. Yeah, so then I’m just kinda trying to get all of it in a bite, just to see. It’s really good altogether. It’s really good. Anyway, so now I’m just eating it all. ‘Cause I like—

Chantel: Yeah, ‘cause you want the whole flavor of all of it.

Kim: Mm-hmm (affirmative). Yeah. I don’t know if it’s an OCD thing, but I do like to do it in a—

Chantel: A nice fashion.

Kim: Yes.

Chantel: If you had to estimate how many bites of dessert, would you say when you have something that’s really sweet, how many bites of that are you probably gonna have?

Kim: Hmm. If it’s after dinner, I might have six bites.

Chantel: But after lunch ...

Kim: I just typically don’t eat dessert this time, yeah. This is really good, though. So yeah, that was good.

Chantel: What foods, to you, are non-negotiable?

Kim: What foods are non-negotiable? I won’t eat them. Is that what you’re saying?

Chantel: Yes.

Kim: Okay. So, something that’s just totally processed garbage, like a Campbell’s™ soup, or like a Totino’s™ frozen pizza, which Keith likes. I mean, now he doesn’t buy them hardly ever now, but when we were first married, that was his go-to, and I was just like ... I won’t touch margarine, or Cheez Whiz™, or Velveeta™. I’ve thrown his Cheez Whiz™ away, and he

gets so angry with me. If he brings Cheez Whiz™ into the house, I will throw it away. Because growing up, if he had cheese on a sandwich, it was Cheez Whiz™.

Chantel: Wow.

Kim: Yes. Which I can't ... Anyway. I won't even go there.

Chantel: What about a Twinkie™, would you ever eat that?

Kim: Never. I would never eat a Twinkie™ or a Little Debbie™ product.

Chantel: And what would be the reason?

Kim: Just 'cause I don't know what's in it, I don't wanna know what's in it. I know it's not good. I know it's not, you know—

Chantel: Well they have videos that you could eat a Twinkie™ six months later, so.

Kim: Oh, gross. Yeah. Yeah. So just the idea of whatever that is, just putting it in my body, just it grosses me out. And knowing that, if I really wanted ... Okay, if I want to have dessert, I just want real food.

Chantel: Like you could tell this Key lime pie was homemade?

Kim: Yeah, it was good.

Chantel: You can tell, like this is a homemade dessert.

Kim: Yeah.

Chantel: It's made with fresh ingredients.

Kim: And those little things I was telling you about that I get at Whole Foods are perfect, 'cause they have little bites that you can get.

Chantel: I have to pull that up.

Kim: Or they can get tarts that are that big, in which case I would eat a third of. And then they also have these little packs of two, like this. So they're perfect. Yeah, they're made with, it's all whole foods, and it's kinda the perfect amount to kinda meal closure. Yeah. I'm trying to think if there's any other non-negotiables. Like any of those Stouffer's™. I mean, maybe it's better 'cause it's frozen, I don't know. I just don't ... Sometimes we do like the Amy's™ burritos, the frozen, we will do those. The girls and I like those sometimes. But yeah. The worst thing I eat is probably cereal.

Chantel: Some of the cereal is terrible.

Kim: Yeah, some of it.

Chantel: Especially the ones made with wheat, because they talk about, you know, they put so much RoundUp™ on that wheat.

Kim: Oh, I know.

Chantel: And so, if it's not an organic cereal, you gotta be careful.

Kim: Yeah, so cereal's probably the worst thing, and I eat a lot less than I used to.

Chantel: What is your work out plan?

Kim: For the past several years, I've worked out with a friend. She has a gym in her house, and a trainer that comes, and ideally, it's like two mornings a week. It's mostly strength training. I used to be more consistent with that than I am now. Lately, that friend is moving away, and just various things. So I mostly get ... I try to just do work outs in the house, 'cause I've been to enough classes. I know the exercises that I like. So I'll do some lunges, some squats—

Chantel: Would you say you work out like two days a week, three days a week?

Kim: Probably two or three days a week, and it's never like a, "I'm going to work out." It's more like, "Okay, so I'm standing here waiting for this load to finish up in the dryer. It's got three more minutes. I'm gonna just do some squats."

Chantel: Gotcha.

Kim: Like it really is. I try to just incorporate—

Chantel: What about walking? Do you do a lot of walking?

Kim: I do a lot of moving around. Like actual walking, I try to walk the dog, but when it's really hot outside, or you know . . . So, I don't walk as much. Sometimes I'll go do the Nolan trail. I really like doing that, but that's not as often as I'd like. Most of my exercise comes from just being busy. I don't have a cleaning lady. I do all that stuff. I do a lot of the yard work. We have somebody that does the grass, but I'm the one that pulls the weeds and sweeps. So, a lot of my exercise just comes from being busy and maintaining the house.

Chantel: Let's talk about what you drink, because I don't think she refilled that at all the whole time.

Kim: No, she didn't. Yeah.

Chantel: So, focus on that drink. So, it looks like you probably took like three sips of the drink, and one of the things they say is that you shouldn't drink a lot with your meal because—

Kim: Interesting.

Chantel: ... it dilutes the stomach acid of your stomach.

Kim: Interesting.

Chantel: So, you shouldn't be drinking a lot.

Kim: So, you should?

Chantel: Shouldn't, because it—

Kim: Shouldn't! Oh really? Okay.

Chantel: Because it'll dilute the stomach acid in your stomach. So, would you say that, like did you notice that? Talk to me about why you only—

Kim: I don't usually drink a lot while I'm eating. It's more between meals. You know, while I'm—

Chantel: 'Cause that's good for you that you don't.

Kim: And see, I didn't even know that. It's just—

Chantel: Instinctively.

Kim: Yeah. I just, you know, like I said, when I'm driving, I usually like to have one of those stainless ... It's not a Hydro Flask but it's like it, that's in Keith's car right now, which is driving me crazy 'cause I feel lost without it. 'Cause normally that's always with me, and I have ice water in it. And so, when I'm driving, I always like to be drinking water. Yeah.

Scripture References

Genesis 1:28-30 (NIV)

God blessed them and said to them, “Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky and over every living creature that moves on the ground.”

Then God said, “I give you every seed-bearing plant on the face of the whole earth and every tree that has fruit with seed in it. They will be yours for food. And to all the beasts of the earth and all the birds in the sky and all the creatures that move along the ground—everything that has the breath of life in it—I give every green plant for food.” And it was so.

Genesis 9:3 (NIV)

Everything that lives and moves about will be food for you. Just as I gave you the green plants, I now give you everything.

Exodus 15:22-24, 26 (NIV)

Then Moses led Israel from the Red Sea and they went into the Desert of Shur. For three days they traveled in the desert without finding water. When they came to Marah, they could not drink its water because it was bitter. (That is why the place is called Marah.) So the people grumbled against Moses, saying, “What are we to drink?”

... He said, “If you listen carefully to the Lord your God and do what is right in his eyes, if you pay attention to his commands and keep all his decrees, I will not bring on you any of the diseases I brought on the Egyptians, for I am the Lord, who heals you.”

Exodus 16:1-5 NIV

The whole Israelite community set out from Elim and came to the Desert of Sin, which is between Elim and Sinai, on the fifteenth day of the second month after they had come out of Egypt. In the desert the whole community grumbled against Moses and Aaron. The Israelites said to them, "If only we had died by the Lord's hand in Egypt! There we sat around pots of meat and ate all the food we wanted, but you have brought us out into this desert to starve this entire assembly to death." Then the Lord said to Moses, "I will rain down bread from heaven for you. The people are to go out each day and gather enough for that day. In this way I will test them and see whether they will follow my instructions. On the sixth day they are to prepare what they bring in, and that is to be twice as much as they gather on the other days."

Exodus 20:1-6 (MSG)

God spoke all these words:

I am God, your God,

who brought you out of the land of Egypt,

out of a life of slavery.

No other gods, only me.

No carved gods of any size, shape, or form of anything whatever, whether of things that fly or walk or swim. Don't bow down to them and don't serve them because I am God, your God...

Exodus 32:2-4 (MSG)

So Aaron told them, "Take off the gold rings from the ears of your wives and sons and daughters and bring them to me."

They all did it; they removed the gold rings from their ears and brought them to Aaron. He took the gold from their hands and cast it in the form of a calf, shaping it with an engraving tool.

The people responded with enthusiasm: "These are your gods, O Israel, who brought you up from Egypt!"

Exodus 34:14 (NLT)

You must worship no other gods, for the Lord, whose very name is Jealous, is a God who is jealous about his relationship with you.

Leviticus 11: 1-8 (NIV)

The LORD said to Moses and Aaron, "Say to the Israelites: 'Of all the animals that live on land, these are the ones you may eat: You may eat any animal that has a divided hoof and that chews the cud.

"There are some that only chew the cud or only have a divided hoof, but you must not eat them. The camel, though it chews the cud, does not have a divided hoof; it is ceremonially unclean for you. The hyrax, though it chews the cud, does not have a divided hoof; it is unclean for you. The rabbit, though it chews the cud, does not have a divided hoof; it is unclean for you. And the pig, though it has a divided hoof, does not chew the cud; it is unclean for you. You must not eat their meat or touch their carcasses; they are unclean for you."

Numbers 9:15-23 (NIV)

On the day the tabernacle, the tent of the covenant law, was set up, the cloud covered it. From evening till morning the cloud above the tabernacle looked like fire. That is how it continued to be; the cloud covered it, and at night it looked like fire. Whenever the cloud lifted from above the tent, the Israelites set out; wherever the cloud settled, the Israelites encamped. At the Lord's command the Israelites set out, and at his command they encamped. As long as the cloud stayed over the tabernacle, they remained in camp. When the cloud remained over the tabernacle a long time, the Israelites obeyed the Lord's order and did not set out. Sometimes the cloud was over the tabernacle only a few days; at the Lord's command they would encamp, and then at his command they would set out. Sometimes the cloud stayed only from evening till morning, and when it lifted in the morning, they set out. Whether by day or by night, whenever the cloud lifted, they set out. Whether the cloud stayed over the tabernacle for two days or a month or a year, the Israelites would remain in camp and not set out; but when it lifted, they would set out. At the Lord's command they encamped, and at the Lord's command they set out. They obeyed the Lord's order, in accordance with his command through Moses.

Deuteronomy 12:15, 20, 21, 26 (NASB)

“However, you may slaughter and eat meat within any of your gates, whatever you desire, according to the blessing of the Lord your God which He has given you; the unclean and the clean may eat of it, as of the gazelle and the deer . . .

“When the Lord your God extends your border as He has promised you, and you say, ‘I will eat meat,’ because you desire to eat meat, then you may eat meat, whatever you desire.

If the place which the Lord your God chooses to put His name is too far from you, then you may slaughter of your herd and flock which the Lord has given you, as I have commanded you; and you may eat within your gates whatever you desire . . .

Only your holy things which you may have and your votive offerings, you shall take and go to the place which the Lord chooses.”

Deuteronomy 21:18-21 (NASB)

If any man has a stubborn and rebellious son who will not obey his father or his mother, and when they chastise him, he will not even listen to them, then his father and mother shall seize him, and bring him out to the elders of his city at the gateway of his hometown. They shall say to the elders of his city, “This son of ours is stubborn and rebellious, he will not obey us, he is a glutton and a drunkard.” Then all the men of his city shall stone him to death; so you shall remove the evil from your midst, and all Israel will hear of it and fear.

1 Samuel 1:19-20 (NIV)

Early the next morning they arose and worshiped before the Lord and then went back to their home at Ramah. Elkanah made love to his wife Hannah, and the Lord remembered her. So in the course of time Hannah became pregnant and gave birth to a son. She named him Samuel, saying, “Because I asked the Lord for him.”

Psalm 16:11 (NIV)

*You make known to me the path of life;
you will fill me with joy in your presence,
with eternal pleasures at your right hand.*

Psalm 63:5 (NLT)

*You satisfy me more than the richest feast.
I will praise you with songs of joy.*

Psalm 81:8-10 (NIV)

*Hear me, my people, and I will warn you—
if you would only listen to me, Israel!
You shall have no foreign god among you;
you shall not worship any god other than me.
I am the Lord your God,
who brought you up out of Egypt.
Open wide your mouth and I will fill it.*

Psalm 81:16 (NLT)

*But I would feed you with the finest wheat.
I would satisfy you with wild honey from the rock.*

Psalm 119:103 (NIV)

*How sweet are your words to my taste,
sweeter than honey to my mouth!*

Proverbs 12:10 (NRSV)

*The righteous know the needs of their animals,
but the mercy of the wicked is cruel.*

Proverbs 23:2 (NIV)

*and put a knife to your throat
if you are given to gluttony.*

Proverbs 23:21 (MSG)

*Drunks and gluttons will end up on skid row,
in a stupor and dressed in rags.*

Proverbs 25:16 (NIV)

*If you find honey, eat just enough—
too much of it, and you will vomit.*

Proverbs 25:27 (NLT)

*It's not good to eat too much honey,
and it's not good to seek honors for yourself.*

Proverbs 25:28 (NIV)

*Like a city whose walls are broken through
is a person who lacks self-control.*

Proverbs 27:7 (NIV)

*One who is full loathes honey from the comb,
but to the hungry even what is bitter tastes sweet.*

Isaiah 58:5a (NIV)

*Is this the kind of fast I have chosen,
only a day for people to humble themselves?*

Daniel 1:8, 11-12, 15 (NIV)

But Daniel resolved not to defile himself with the royal food and wine...

Daniel then said, "Give us nothing but vegetables to eat and water to drink," ... At the end of the ten days they looked healthier and better nourished than any of the young men who ate the royal food.

Daniel 9:3-5 (NASB)

So I gave my attention to the Lord God to seek Him by prayer and supplications, with fasting, sackcloth and ashes. I prayed to the Lord my God and confessed and said, "Alas, O Lord, the great and awesome God, who keeps His covenant and lovingkindness for those who love Him and keep His commandments, we have sinned, committed iniquity, acted wickedly and rebelled, even turning aside from Your commandments and ordinances."

Daniel 10:2-3 (NIV)

At that time I, Daniel, mourned for three weeks. I ate no choice food; no meat or wine touched my lips; and I used no lotions at all until the three weeks were over.

Matthew 4:4 (NIV)

Jesus answered, "It is written: 'Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.'"

Matthew 6:16-18 (NIV)

When you fast, do not look somber as the hypocrites do, for they disfigure their faces to show others they are fasting. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward in full. But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, so that it will not be obvious to others that you are fasting, but only to your Father, who is unseen; and your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.

Matthew 6:24 (NIV)

“No one can serve two masters. Either you will hate the one and love the other, or you will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money.

Matthew 9:15 (NIV)

Jesus answered, “How can the guests of the bridegroom mourn while he is with them? The time will come when the bridegroom will be taken from them; then they will fast.”

Matthew 26:41a (NIV)

Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation.

Mark 7:18-20 (NASB)

And He said to them, “Are you so lacking in understanding also? Do you not understand that whatever goes into the man from outside cannot defile him, because it does not go into his heart, but into his stomach, and is eliminated?” (Thus He declared all foods clean.) And He was saying, “That which proceeds out of the man, that is what defiles the man.”

John 8:34 (NIV)

Jesus replied, “Very truly I tell you, everyone who sins is a slave to sin.”

John 15:5 (NIV)

“I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.”

Acts 10:9-16 (NIV)

About noon the following day as they were on their journey and approaching the city, Peter went up on the roof to pray. He became hungry and wanted something to eat, and while the meal was being prepared, he fell into a trance. He saw heaven opened and something like a large sheet being let down to earth by its four corners. It contained all kinds of four-footed animals, as well as reptiles and birds. Then a voice told him, “Get up, Peter. Kill and eat.”

“Surely not, Lord!” Peter replied. “I have never eaten anything impure or unclean.”

The voice spoke to him a second time, “Do not call anything impure that God has made clean.”

This happened three times, and immediately the sheet was taken back to heaven.

Romans 12:1 (NIV)

Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship.

Romans 14:2-6 (NIV)

One person's faith allows them to eat anything, but another, whose faith is weak, eats only vegetables. 3 The one who eats everything must not treat with contempt the one who does not, and the one who does not eat everything must not judge the one who does, for God has accepted them. 4 Who are you to judge someone else's servant? To their own master, servants stand or fall. And they will stand, for the Lord is able to make them stand.

5 One person considers one day more sacred than another; another considers every day alike. Each of them should be fully convinced in their own mind. 6 Whoever regards one day as special does so to the Lord. Whoever eats meat does so to the Lord, for they give thanks to God; and whoever abstains does so to the Lord and gives thanks to God.

1 Corinthians 6:19-20 (NIV)

Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your bodies.

1 Corinthians 9:27 (NLT)

I discipline my body like an athlete, training it to do what it should.

1 Corinthians 10:13 (MSG)

No test or temptation that comes your way is beyond the course of what others have had to face. All you need to remember is that God will never let you down; he'll never let you be pushed past your limit; he'll always be there to help you come through it.

1 Corinthians 10:31 (NIV)

So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God.

2 Corinthians 12:8-9a (NIV)

Three times I pleaded with the Lord to take it away from me. But he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness."

2 Corinthians 10:5-6 (NIV)

We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ. And we will be ready to punish every act of disobedience, once your obedience is complete.

Philippians 4:8 (NIV)

Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things.

Colossians 3:16a (NLT)

Let the message about Christ, in all its richness, fill your lives....

Colossians 2:20-23 (NIV)

Since you died with Christ to the elemental spiritual forces of this world, why, as though you still belonged to the world, do you submit to its rules: “Do not handle! Do not taste! Do not touch!”? These rules, which have to do with things that are all destined to perish with use, are based on merely human commands and teachings. Such regulations indeed have an appearance of wisdom, with their self-imposed worship, their false humility and their harsh treatment of the body, but they lack any value in restraining sensual indulgence.

1 Timothy 4:8 (NIV)

For physical training is of some value

Hebrews 12:2 (NIV)

... fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

James 5:16

Confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed.

Bonus Recipes



Açaí Bowl

INGREDIENTS:

- » 1 unsweetened Açaí frozen packet
- » ½ banana, frozen
- » 1 scoop vanilla protein powder
- » ¼ cup almond milk
- » 1 teaspoon spirulina ice

DIRECTIONS: Blend the ingredients above until smooth, thick and creamy. Top with granola, ½ sliced banana, blueberries and sliced strawberries.



Bonus Recipes

Baked Eggs In Avocado

INGREDIENTS:

- » 2 small eggs, separated
- » 1 avocado, halved and pitted
- » 2 slices cooked bacon, crumbled
- » 2 teaspoons chopped fresh chives
- » 1 pinch dried parsley
- » 1 pinch sea salt and ground black pepper to taste

DIRECTIONS: Preheat oven to 425 degrees F (220 degrees C). Crack the eggs into a bowl, being careful to keep the yolks intact. Arrange avocado halves in a baking dish, resting them along the edge so avocado won't tip over. Gently spoon 1 egg yolk into the avocado hole. Continue by spooning egg white into the hole until full. Repeat with remaining egg yolk, egg white, and avocado. Season each filled avocado with chives, parsley, sea salt, and pepper. Gently place baking dish in the preheated oven and bake until eggs are cooked, about 15 minutes. Sprinkle bacon over avocado.



Quiche

INGREDIENTS:

- » 10 eggs, scrambled
- » onions, chopped
- » kale, chopped
- » bacon, chopped

DIRECTIONS: Scramble eggs, sauté onions, sauté kale, cook bacon crispy and chop. Bake it for 20 minutes.



Bonus Recipes

Best-In-Town Granola

INGREDIENTS:

- » 1 cup pecans
- » 1 cup pumpkin seed
- » 1 cup cashews
- » 1 cup almonds
- » 3 scoop chia seeds
- » ½ cup hemp
- » 1 cup coconut flakes
- » ½ cup coconut sugar
- » 1 teaspoon salt
- » ½ teaspoon nutmeg
- » ¼ cup coconut oil
- » ¼ cup honey
- » 1 teaspoon vanilla

DIRECTIONS: Mix together in a bowl. Set the oven to 350 degrees. Leave in oven for 15-20 minutes stirring every 5 minutes. Take out and cool for 20 minutes and stir while cooling. Then 8-10 minutes back in oven stirring every 5 minutes.



Vegetable Beef Soup

INGREDIENTS:

- » 1 lb. ground beef
- » 1 can of corn (drained)
- » 1 can of green beans (drained)
- » 2 cans diced tomatoes
- » 4 cups beef broth
- » 2 tablespoons Montréal steak seasoning

DIRECTIONS: Combine all ingredients in pot and cook at least 30 minutes or until ready to eat. All the ingredients need to cook together to flavor the soup.



Bonus Recipes

Champagne Vinaigrette

INGREDIENTS:

- » 1 tablespoon chopped shallot
- » 1 tablespoon Dijon mustard
- » 2 tablespoons sugar
- » 1 teaspoon minced garlic
- » ½ cup champagne vinegar
- » 1 ½ cups salad oil
- » ¾ teaspoon salt
- » ½ teaspoon white pepper

DIRECTIONS: In a medium bowl, use a whisk to combine all ingredients.



Cucumber Salsa

INGREDIENTS:

- » 3-4 baby cucumbers, diced
- » ¼ cup red onion, diced
- » 3 scallions, thinly sliced, green parts only
- » ¼ cup rice wine vinegar
- » 1 teaspoon sesame oil
- » 1 lime, juiced
- » 1 jalapeño chili, minced
- » ½ cup cilantro leaves
- » 2 tablespoons agave

DIRECTIONS: In a large bowl, combine all ingredients. Refrigerate for 30 minutes. Adjust seasonings to taste.



Bonus Recipes

Poppy Seed Salad

INGREDIENTS:

- » ¼ cup white wine vinegar or champagne vinegar
- » ¼ cup sugar
- » 1 small shallot
- » 1 to 1½ tablespoons poppy seeds
- » ½ teaspoon salt
- » ½ teaspoon ground mustard
- » 2 teaspoons mayonnaise
- » ½ cup olive oil or grapeseed oil

DIRECTIONS: Whisk the white wine vinegar and sugar until the sugar is mostly dissolved. Peel the shallot and grate it on a microplane or the smallest holes on a box grater directly into the bowl. Add the poppy seeds, salt, and ground mustard and whisk to combine. Transfer to a covered container and store in the fridge for several weeks. The dressing will separate as it sits; shake to recombine before using.



Very Creamy Cilantro Avocado

INGREDIENTS:

- » 2 cups cilantro
- » 2 garlic cloves
- » 1 avocado
- » 3 scallion stalks
- » 1 cup Veganaise
- » 6 tablespoons raw cashews
- » 2 tablespoons fresh lime
- » ½ teaspoon balsamic
- » ¼ cup almond milk
- » 1 tablespoon olive oil
- » ½ teaspoon salt
- » ½ teaspoon pepper

DIRECTIONS: Cut and pit the avocados, wash cilantro, and juice lime. Put all ingredients into vita mix blender and blend on high until smooth and creamy. Add salt and pepper to taste.



Bonus Recipes

Avocado Cilantro Vinaigrette

INGREDIENTS:

- » 1 cup onions
- » 4 garlic clove
- » 1 cup cilantro
- » 1 cup olive oil
- » ¼ cup champagne vinegar
- » ¼ cup white balsamic citrus
- » 1 teaspoon salt
- » 1 teaspoon pepper
- » 2 whole avocados

DIRECTIONS: Cut and pit the avocados and wash cilantro. Put all ingredients into vita mix blender and blend on high until smooth. Add salt and pepper to taste.



Almond Joys

INGREDIENTS:

- » 3 cups unsweetened shredded coconut
- » 4 tablespoons maple syrup
- » 6 tablespoons extra virgin coconut oil
- » ¼ teaspoon salt
- » 2 sugar free chocolate bars from trader joes
- » ½ cup natural almonds

DIRECTIONS: Combine the coconut, maple syrup and coconut oil in a food processor. Blend for 2 minutes, pausing halfway to scrape down the sides. Spoon the mixture into a 16-slotted plastic ice tray and press down. Place in the freezer while you prepare the melted chocolate. To temper the chocolate, place 1 cup of the chocolate chips in a glass bowl over a simmering pot of water. Stir constantly with a rubber spatula until melted or between 110-115 F. Remove from heat and place on a towel, let the chocolate cool to 95 F and add the remaining ½ cup of chocolate chips. Stir until smooth with the rubber spatula. Break the coconut candy from the ice trays then dip the bottom of each one in the melted chocolate and place on a wire cooling rack. Place a dot of the melted chocolate on top of each candy to serve as glue, then place an almond on the dot. Grab a spoonful of the chocolate and pour it over each candy, smoothing it over each side until totally covered. Transfer the candies from the wire rack to parchment paper then place the refrigerator for one hour or until set.



Coconut Sugar Cookies

COOKIE INGREDIENTS:

- » ¾ cup Nutiva® organic shortening
- » ¾ cup Nutiva® organic coconut sugar
- » 2 eggs
- » 2 teaspoon vanilla extract
- » 2½ cups almond flour
- » ½ cup Nutiva® organic coconut flour, sifted
- » ½ teaspoon sea salt
- » ½ teaspoon baking soda

DIRECTIONS: Preheat the oven to 350 degrees F. In a large bowl, combine the almond flour, coconut flour, sea salt and baking soda. Set aside. On a medium speed, using a stand-up mixer, hand mixer or food processor, combine the shortening and coconut sugar until creamy. Add the eggs and vanilla extract. Add the dry ingredients and beat until just combined. Form the dough into a ball and chill for 30 minutes. Place the dough between two layers of parchment paper, dusted with coconut flour, and roll about to ½-inch thick. Use cookie cutters to create desired shapes. Place cookies on a parchment lined baking sheet. Bake for 12-13 minutes, until golden. Let cool before you start frosting.

FROSTING INGREDIENTS:

- » 2 cups Nutiva® organic shortening
- » 2 tablespoon Nutiva® organic virgin coconut oil
- » 2 cups powdered sugar
- » 2 teaspoon vanilla extract

DIRECTIONS: Using a stand-up mixer, hand mixer or food processor, combine the shortening, coconut oil and powdered sugar until smooth and fluffy (2-3 minutes). Add the vanilla extract. Add natural food coloring, or leave white. Ice cookies using a pastry bag.



Grain-Free Cookies

INGREDIENTS:

- » ½ cup Nutiva ® shortening
- » ¾ cup coconut sugar
- » 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- » 1 tablespoon molasses
- » 1 egg (or substitute with flax seed + water or ¼ cup applesauce)
- » 2½ teaspoons ginger
- » 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- » ½ teaspoon salt
- » 2 teaspoons baking soda
- » 1 cup super fine almond flour
- » 1 cup almond flour
- » 1 cup tapioca flour

DIRECTIONS: Mix ingredients together and place into refrigerator for one hour. Roll into balls and flatten out like a pancake. Place onto a cookie sheet and bake for 8-10 minutes at 350 degrees F.



Bonus Recipes

Almond Milk

INGREDIENTS:

- » 1 cup raw organic sprouted almonds (soaked overnight)
- » 4 cups pure filtered water (3 cups if you want it extra-smoothe)
- » vanilla bean (optional)
- » dates, honey or stevia (optional)

DIRECTIONS: Soak almonds for at least 12 hours in pure water with ½ teaspoon of sea salt. Soaking is an extra step. If you have a Vitamix™, you don't have to do it. Rinse almonds well. Mix almonds with pure water in blender. Blend several minutes until smooth and creamy. Strain mixture into a large bowl through a sprout bag, cheese cloth or kitchen towel. Put mixture back into blender with vanilla, soaked dates, or other sweetener. Pour into glass jar and store into fridge for up to one week.



Tropical Coconut Smoothie

INGREDIENTS:

- » 1 banana
- » ½ cup pineapple chunks
- » ¼ cup coconut cream
- » ¼ cup coconut milk
- » 4 ice cubes
- » pinch of shredded coconut for topping

DIRECTIONS: Place all the ingredients in a high-speed blender and mix until smooth. Serve and drink immediately.



Bonus Recipes

Refuel Smoothie

INGREDIENTS:

- » 8 ounces banana
- » 2 ounces blueberries
- » 1 cup kale
- » 1 tablespoon peanut butter powder
- » 1 teaspoon vanilla protein
- » 1 teaspoon honey
- » 1 tablespoon protein powder (optional)

DIRECTIONS: Place all the ingredients in a high-speed blender and mix until smooth. Serve and drink immediately.



Don't-Feel-Blue Smoothie

INGREDIENTS:

- » 10 ounces banana
- » 1 cup kale
- » 1 tablespoon vanilla protein
- » ½ teaspoon blue spirulina
- » 1 cup almond milk
- » 1 tablespoon protein powder (optional)

DIRECTIONS: Place almond milk in a high-speed blender, then add in all other ingredients and mix until smooth. Serve and drink immediately.



Bonus Recipes

Orange-You-Tasty Smoothie

INGREDIENTS:

- » ¼ cup carrot juice
- » ¾ cup coconut water
- » 1 teaspoon ginger
- » ¼ cup pineapple
- » ¼ cup mango
- » ¼ cup banana
- » 1 cup kale
- » 1 tablespoon protein powder (optional)

DIRECTIONS: Place all the ingredients in a high-speed blender and mix until smooth. Serve and drink immediately.



Oh-So-Zen Smoothie

INGREDIENTS:

- » 1 ¼ cups frozen bananas
- » 1 cup kale
- » 2 tablespoons cocoa powder
- » 1 tablespoon almond butter
- » 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- » 1 teaspoon maple syrup
- » 1 cup almond milk
- » 1 tablespoon protein powder (optional)

DIRECTIONS: Place almond milk in a high-speed blender, then add in all other ingredients and mix until smooth. Serve and drink immediately.



Bonus Recipes

Simply Sunshine Smoothie

INGREDIENTS:

- » ¼ cup strawberries
- » 1 cup banana
- » 1 cup kale
- » 1 tablespoon almond butter
- » 1 teaspoon acai powder
- » 1 teaspoon honey
- » 1 cup almond milk
- » 1 tablespoon protein powder (optional)

DIRECTIONS: Place almond milk in a high-speed blender, then add in all other ingredients and mix until smooth. Serve and drink immediately.



Great Greens Smoothie

INGREDIENTS:

- » 2 cups spinach
- » 1 cup kale
- » ½ cup pineapple
- » ½ cup mango
- » ½ teaspoon spirulina
- » 1 cup coconut water
- » 1 teaspoon coconut oil
- » 1 tablespoon protein powder (optional)

DIRECTIONS: Place coconut water in a high-speed blender, then add in all other ingredients and mix until smooth. Serve and drink immediately.



Bonus Recipes

Nooks-And-Crannies Smoothie

INGREDIENTS:

- » ½ banana
- » ¼ cup cranberries frozen
- » ½ cup cherries frozen
- » 1 cup almond milk (homemade)
- » 1 cup kale
- » ¾ scoop pink protein powder

DIRECTIONS: Place almond milk in a high-speed blender, then add in all other ingredients and mix until smooth. Serve and drink immediately. Look for my recipe for Homemade Almond Milk at ChantelRayWay.com/recipes.



Going-All-In Smoothie

INGREDIENTS:

- » ¾ cup banana
- » ⅓ cup mango
- » 2 cups spinach
- » 2 cups kale
- » 1 teaspoon spirulina
- » 1 cup almond milk
- » 1 tablespoon protein powder (optional)

DIRECTIONS: Place almond milk in a high-speed blender, then add in all other ingredients and mix until smooth. Serve and drink immediately.



Bonus Recipes

Chocolate Almond Butter Protein Shake

INGREDIENTS:

- » 3 cups ice
- » 1 cup almond milk
- » 1 ½ scoops chocolate protein powder
- » 2 tablespoons chia seeds
- » 2 teaspoons cinnamon
- » 1 tablespoon almond butter
- » optional: 1 tablespoon fiber powder

DIRECTIONS: Mix all ingredients in blender and enjoy.

