

HARVEY DIAMOND

Coauthor of the #1 *New York Times* Bestseller *Fit for Life*
Over 12 Million Copies Sold



FIT
FOR
LIFE
**NOT
FAT**
FOR
LIFE

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People Throughout History Would Have Loved *Fit for Life Not Fat for Life . . .*

“People who like this sort of thing will find this the sort of thing they like.”

—**Abraham Lincoln**

“Life is not just being alive, but being well.”

—**Martial**

“Every great advance in natural knowledge has involved absolute rejection of authority.”

—**Thomas Huxley**

“All truth passes through three stages. First, it is ridiculed. Second, it is violently opposed. Third, it is accepted as self-evident.”

—**Arthur Schopenhauer**

“Never allow schooling to interfere with your education.”

—**Mark Twain**

FIT FOR LIFE **NOT FAT** FOR LIFE

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Coauthor of the
#1 *New York Times* Bestseller
Fit for Life



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The body is a machine for living. It is organized for that, it is its nature. Let life go on in it, unhindered, and let it defend itself. It will do more than if you paralyze it by encumbering it with remedies.

—*LEO TOLSTOY*
WAR AND PEACE

INTRODUCTION: THE MIRACLE OF LIFE

Emblazoned across the front cover of *Newsweek* magazine, below a picture of a very obvious overweight child, the caption asks in large block letters:

“FAT FOR LIFE?”¹

This book answers that question with a resounding no! Not *fat* for life—*fit* for life.

As I looked at the picture of this child on the cover of the magazine, a child so noticeably overweight, I could not help but be moved by his predicament. Certainly, he would much prefer to be singled out for a scholastic or athletic achievement, rather than for having to go to a “fat farm” to try to bring his weight under control. It is well established that if he does not figure out how to do so, not only will his childhood be riddled with health problems, but his adult-hood as well.

Furthermore, I could not help but reflect on the problem of overweight that also continues to exist within the adult population. Nearly two-thirds of the American population is considered to be overweight to some degree. At any given moment, over 80 million people are said to be on special diets, spending billions of dollars every year on weight loss.

And I could not help but reflect on my own long-running and ongoing effort to keep my weight on check. I have been living on this planet for nearly sixty trips around the sun, and for my entire adult life, I have wrestled with my addiction to food and my desire to eat.

I cannot recall the number of times I have wondered, sometimes with amazement and sometimes with envy, how there can be people who can eat their own body weight in any kind of food they like, any time of day or night, and not gain a single ounce, while others can put on five pounds merely by walking through the deli section of the grocery store. Those of us who dwell in the latter category know all too well that in order to maintain a reasonable body weight, we have to be ever-vigilant and diligent if we don’t want to wind up blocking out the sun for those around us.

Except for programs that involve surgery and/or drugs, both of which I have an extreme aversion to, I have tried more weight-loss plans and “diets” than I care to recount. Not until I came to realize that there are certain fundamental truths that govern *all* human bodies—regardless of shape, size, genetic makeup or rate of metabolism—was I able to discover how to eat the foods I like and still keep my weight down.

These truths I refer to—you can call them laws, rules, principles or whatever you choose—*exist and are real*. And until they are acknowledged and respected, you can read all 500 or so diet books at your local bookstore; you can count calories, calculate grams of carbohydrates, fats and proteins, and measure portions; you can take appetite suppressants and starve yourself; you can drink powdered meal replacements and eat boring prepared diet foods that taste like straw; you can do all these things until the pyramids turn to dust, and it all will be to no avail. After all, aren’t these the things people have been doing for years, even decades, and isn’t the problem of overweight still as prevalent as ever?

The fact is, it doesn’t matter if you are aware of the laws to which I am referring but choose

ignore them, or if you have never even been made aware of them: The end result will be the same. The effort to lose weight will be met with the same frustrations with which you are, in all probability, all too familiar.

Consider the law of gravity. No matter who you are, no matter if you are rich or poor, big or small, educated or not, male or female, and no matter where you live—be it in the United States, Asia, Africa or Europe—the law of gravity applies to all of us equally. Even if you don't believe in gravity, don't care for it and refuse to acknowledge it, if you don't respect it, the repercussions of violating it are the same. If a man falls, or even leaps, from a five-story building, he will be splattered on the ground whether he is aware of the law of gravity or not. Someone might say, "Well, no wonder he's all smashed up. He broke the law of gravity." In actual fact, he didn't break the law of gravity; he *illustrated* it.

Other laws, equally as unyielding as the law of gravity, govern the human digestive tract and the process of eating food. Not being aware of them will not save you from the results of violating them. After reading this book, at least you will be aware of the principles to which I am referring, and you will be able to avoid the usual pitfalls and frustrations that customarily accompany attempts to lose weight.

You will be glad to learn how few of these truths there are, how marvelously easy they are to incorporate into your eating lifestyle, and how wonderfully simple it is to live in harmony with them, so that the eating experience remains a joyous one *while* you lose the weight you desire to lose.

There is no wealth but life.

—JOHN RUSKIN

What would you say is the one thing that is more precious to you or more valuable to you than anything else? Isn't it life? Glorious, magnificent, abundant life. How special and dear life is. All the money, all the diamonds, rubies, emeralds and sapphires, all the gold, all the riches the Earth can yield, all of it combined is but dust compared to a single moment of life.

The Hubble telescope is, by anyone's standards, an astounding conquest of science in action. It floats out in space taking pictures of stars, planets and galaxies that are billions upon billions of miles from Earth—so far away that we cannot even fathom the distances this remarkable piece of equipment manages to put before our eyes with crystal clarity.

What is it that differentiates our planet Earth from the billions of heavenly bodies that stretch out into the boundless expanse in every direction? Life. If the Hubble should happen to discover a single blade of grass a billion trillion miles from here, it would be heralded as the greatest, most monumental discovery of all time. And yet here we are on this tiny little orb floating out in the great void, and that little orb is teeming and bursting with life at every turn. It is a veritable island of prodigious superabundance—containing more life than all the rest of the known universe *combined*. How uniquely special and fortunate we all are to be here. What an indescribable gift life truly is. Yes, life is in a category all its own as it reigns supreme over all else.

As we look around at the limitless splendor and grandeur that is everywhere to be seen, it is impossible not to marvel at the incomprehensible intelligence that governs and directs all of everything that is life. Is it possible to think about these things and not simultaneously reflect on the nature of God? I don't think so. To me, it is impossible to think about or discuss life to any degree and not exclude God from the process.

“Uh-oh,” you may be saying, “looks like ol’ Harv is drifting on me here. This is supposed to be a book on how to lose weight, and here he is talking about God. What gives?” My goal with this book is not only to show you how to shed unwanted weight from your body, but also to instill in you a brand new reverence, admiration and respect for your body and the forces that preside over its well-being.

My desire is to write something that appeals to everyone and offends no one. That is a daunting challenge, even in the best of circumstances. No matter what subject someone may write about—be it health, money, politics, relationships or whatever—he/she is bound to ruffle some feathers somewhere along the line. Nowhere, it seems, is that more so than when the subject of God comes up. So I know I am treading on some delicate territory here. But the plain fact is more people the world over believe in some kind of God than do not. That means that in all likelihood, *you* believe in God. I would never *ever* be so arrogant, bigheaded and foolhardy as to think I could tell you what God is or how you should view God. What I *am* asking is that whenever I mention or say anything about God, whatever it is in your heart, mind and soul regarding your own personal belief in God, see that. In no way is my aim to push my beliefs about God on you or to try to change your mind as to what your beliefs are or should be. But I could no more discuss life and not mention God than I could discuss the ocean and not mention water. There are 6.5 billion people on Earth, and that is precisely how many valid, worthwhile and accurate depictions of God there are. Call it God, the Grand Creator, Mother Nature, the Almighty, the Life Force or any other term to which you are partial. It is your own special, unique and personal view of God that I’m asking you to bring to the fore and reflect on.

God enters by a private door into every individual.

—RALPH WALDO EMERSON

When I talk about the unparalleled intelligence that governs our lives down to the last, most infinitesimal detail, I am talking about God. Only God could figure out the mind-boggling intricacies that make life the grand spectacle it is. There is an old saying that I absolutely love and have pondered more times than I can recall. It has been of great solace to me on numerous occasions. I have no idea where I first heard or read it; it’s just one of those irresistibly captivating sayings that has been with me and has been the subject of contemplation for many years. “There is no place where God is not.” Do not take this statement literally. There is not an event, situation or occurrence that is not God-directed. There is not a leaf that falls to the ground, not a song warbled in the throat of a songbird, not a flower that blooms and releases its scent, not a breath or step you or I take that is not touched by God’s hand. And since God is, in my opinion, wholly loving and purely good, I am convinced that God did not drop us down on this planet, make us susceptible to every possible malady imaginable, not the least

which is obesity, and not also provide us with the means and ability to overcome any and all of it. God is more kind, loving and compassionate than that! No, in my mind God *wants* us to be happy, healthy and fulfilled, and has seen to it that whatever we need to be successful is here and available to us. The information you need to lose weight and keep it off while enjoying the eating experience and improving the overall health of your body exists. The question of the moment is, where is it and how do we find it? That, dear friends, is the subject of this book.

CHAPTER ONE



WHAT'S GOING ON HERE?

There's nothing new under the sun, but there are lots of old things we don't know.

—AMBROSE BIERCE

When I was in my late twenties back in the mid- 1970s, I had already learned and put into practice with startling success the surprisingly simple tool that helped me lose, and keep off, the weight I had been wrestling with for years. Shortly, that very tool will be in your arsenal as well.

At that time I had been studying health and well-being for about four or five years, and because of the phenomenal success I had experienced, not only with weight loss, but also with other health problems I was facing, I was starting to have quite a high opinion of myself. Actually, I was a real know-it-all. Then, much to my great good fortune, I met and became friends with a gentleman in his eighties who brought me down to Earth. I think one of the very first things he ever said to me, which was only about a half-hour after we met, was, “You think you're pretty smart there, don't you, Sonny? Well, you don't know diddly.” It took me a few weeks to get my ego in check enough to go back and talk to him some more. Thank heavens I did. After all, he was over eighty years old, was in tip-top shape, strong, witty, vibrant, sharp as a tack and “healthy as a horse.” Ultimately, we took a real liking to one another, much to my benefit.

Mr. Bremmer lived in the mountains outside of Los Angeles, grew a good percentage of his own food and was truly one of the most outstanding people I have ever been fortunate enough to know. One of the reasons I loved hanging around Mr. Bremmer was that he was always dropping these little juicy tidbits of wisdom, and I learned a great deal from him during the time I knew him. Including, and thankfully, some humility.

Now I'm in my late fifties, and I still recall with clarity many of the choice nuggets he imparted me. ~~One in particular stands out and is as true and relevant today as it was back then. We would be discussing some new breakthrough that was supposed to be the next great "miracle cure," which was instead proven to be just one more in a long procession of failures, and he would ask, "Why is it that people invariably try every incorrect remedy possible before relenting and trying the correct one? That is the question that reverberates in my head whenever I reflect on the weight-loss industry in our country. And, oh, what an industry it is—an industry that generates astronomical profits for itself while leaving in its wake false hope, failures galore and a titanic junk heap of cast-off pills, potions, and powders, devices of every type and design, and a countless number of temporary diets that offer such promise but ultimately deliver only disappointment.~~

In 1985 when the original *Fit for Life* was first published, the amount of money spent on weight loss in the United States was around \$30 billion. Has it done any good? Is there less of a problem today than there was then? Have people figured out how to eat and still maintain a healthy weight? Has the weight-loss industry brought forth anything of lasting worth for the billions of dollars it has reaped? The answers to these questions are no, no, no and no. Today the money spent on weight loss is a mind-boggling \$40 billion a year.¹ Good grief, that's over \$100 million every day of the year—including weekends. Let's look at that figure with the full complement of zeros, shall we? It's \$100,000,000 every single day.

Never in history has the situation been more dire. Not only are 60 percent of American adults overweight²—but, sadly, now even millions upon millions of children are also seriously overweight and all indications are that it is becoming progressively worse both for adults and children. Why? I'll tell you why. Because people continue to allow themselves to try every incorrect remedy possible instead of the ever-elusive correct one that is rooted in common sense, physiologically and biologically sound, and provides permanent results as a lifestyle, not some hit-or-miss scheme that is temporary at best.

Do you happen to know what a cashectomy is? Oh! You don't? Well, brace yourself, because whether you're aware of them or not, cashectomies are performed on you every day of your life with the precision of brain surgery. Most people have no idea whatsoever that cashectomies are being regularly performed on them. That's because cashectomies are so common in our society. They are going on everywhere, all the time. They are such an ingrained part of the very cell structure of our culture that precious few people even have a clue as to what's being perpetrated against them. They are simply viewed as the normal, natural process of commerce.

Advertising may be described as the science of arresting the human intelligence long enough to get money from it.

—STEPHEN LEACOCK

Here's the definition of a first-rate cashectomy: the process of convincing you to hand over fistfuls of your hard-earned cash for a product or service you are convinced will in some way improve your life and well-being, but receiving instead something that hurts you, makes you sick or kills you.

My friends, there are experts in the field of cashectomology who have you permanently fixed their crosshairs. They work day and night to figure out new and innovative ways to get you to unload the contents of your purse or wallet for something worse than worthless—something harmful or life threatening. They are hard at work this very moment, and *you* are the object of their efforts. Brothers and sisters, listen, and listen well. Any time \$100,000,000 is tossed around *every single day*, the professional cashectomists are going to be climbing all over one another to get their piece of the pie. And for the cashectomists plying their trade in the weight-loss industry, no scheme, ploy, ruse or subterfuge is off-limits in trying to separate you from your cash. Or as George Gurdjieff put it, “They will milk you of your oof.”³ Whatever they have to do to cajole, entice and ensnare you, they will. Sound heartless and cold, I know, but it is high time the truth be told. Those who are desperate to lose weight *will* be preyed upon with one of the three D’s: a diet, a device or a drug.

1. **DIETS.** The first chapter in the first *Fit for Life* book ever published was entitled “Diets Don’t Work.” Here it is nearly twenty years later, and I’m saying it again: *Diets don’t work!* They are temporary measures that reap temporary results. Do you want to be temporarily rich? Do you want to be temporarily in love? Do you want to be temporarily healthy? No? Then why temporary weight loss? Is it fun taking off weight only to put it back on and then repeat the cycle? Do you like measuring portions, counting calories, being deprived and taking the joy out of the eating experience? Of course not. I know that. And you will never have to again once you have learned the ageless secret of success that renders diets obsolete, which I will reveal to you in the next chapter.
2. **DEVICES.** There are no devices that will magically take weight off your body. Do you remember those ab machines that used to be for sale? They promised that all you had to do was attach some electrodes to your body and sit around and watch TV, while the machines magically gave you a washboard stomach. So absurd was the idea that the government had to step in and put a halt to the sham, but not before millions of dollars were made for the cashectomists who I’m sure were high-fiving one another as they danced all the way to the bank.

We put drugs of which we know little, into bodies of which we know less, to cure disease of which we know nothing at all.

—VOLTAIRE

3. **DRUGS.** The cruelest of the cruel. It’s one thing for a diet or a device to not fulfill its promised results. It’s frustrating and annoying to put in effort with no reward. But drugs can *kill* you. We live in a fast-food, quick-fix world where we want what we want, and we want it right now! Those who push drugs for a living prey on that mentality.

Whether it’s Fen-Phen, Meridia or any number of other pharmaceuticals that come on the scene amidst proclamations of being the latest “miracle cure” for weight loss, only to be found to be dead-end and then withdrawn from the market, all drugs are poisons. *All!* There isn’t one that does not have side effects. A student in medical school takes numerous classes on toxicology. Do you know the meaning of the word *toxicology*? The study of poisons. These drugs make billions of dollars for the

cashectomists before it's revealed that they kill people, only to be replaced by the next one in line.

Unfortunately, drugs have become a way of life in this country. You can no longer turn on the TV without being deluged with slick, expensively made commercials that go over the top in extolling the possible benefits while minimizing the possible harm. Law requires that a drug commercial has to list the *most common* side effects, so the most destructive needn't be mentioned. It's one thing to hear "the most common side effects are headaches, nausea and abdominal pain." As unappealing as that is, what if you heard, "can cause angina, liver failure and death"? You wouldn't be so quick to pop those pills, then, would you?

More die of the remedy than of the malady.

—FRENCH SAYING

Here's a little tidbit you may not be aware of. Did you know that every year 2 million Americans become seriously ill and 106,000 die from prescription drugs?⁴ The study bringing this to light clearly states that the cause of illness and death is from "toxic reactions to correctly prescribed medication taken properly." These are not accidents or overdoses or the improper mixing of different drugs. The deaths are from taking the *correct* drug, in the *correct* dose, at the *correct* time, in the *correct* way. In other words, taking drugs in the exact proper way they were intended to be taken kills more people every year than breast cancer, prostate cancer and AIDS combined. And guess how these deaths are classified? No, they're not simply called "deaths" just because that's what they are. That's too cold and harsh. They're referred to as "adverse drug events."⁵ Ah, yes, that's so much more genteel. So let's say, for example, that you succumb to one of the advertisements for a prescription appetite suppressant, and after taking it for a while you become violently sick and are taken to the hospital. Your loved one could show up to check on you and be told, "Oh, he/she's had an adverse drug event."

"Really, well, how adverse was it?"

"He/she's dead."

I don't mean to be flippant or callous here, but what I'm telling you is *real*, and looking the other way is not going to serve you very well.

What I find to be most lamentable about the \$40 billion spent each year—whether it's for some regimented, temporary program; surgery to make someone's stomach smaller; meal-replacement drinks; or drugs that can kill—is that none of these measures address the problem at the core. None remove the *cause* of overweight. And that suits the weight-loss industry just fine. After all, the only way to make another \$40 billion next year, and the year after that, is if people remain overweight. If the cause of overweight were to be understood and eliminated, look at all that lost income.

Do you know why the people making billions of dollars at casinos in Las Vegas and Atlantic City don't hold classes teaching the public how to beat the house? It's the same reason why the weight-loss industry is not particularly interested in your learning how to lose weight and keep it off, or how to avoid becoming overweight in the first place. It's one thing to gamble and lose money. It's something altogether different to gamble and lose your life, don't you think?

I'm not going to bore you with the long list of statistics around the problem of obesity; you wouldn't be reading this book if you weren't already familiar with a good number of them. But a few are worth mentioning.

What did you do today? Did you go to work, play with your kids, spend time with a loved one, walk in the park, read a book, exercise, watch a sunset, enjoy a meal with a friend, sit and marvel at the world around you and thank God for the gift of life? All these activities and more are available to you every day. Let me tell you what more than 800 people in the United States did today. They died⁶—as a result of obesity. And more than 800 died yesterday, and the day before that, and more than 800 will die tomorrow and the day after that. Every day, 365 days a year, more than 800 people die—300,000 a year. Most of these deaths are from cardiovascular causes. The heart can't take the extra weight.

As regards other causes, obese individuals have a 50 to 100 percent increased risk of death from other causes, compared with normal-weight individuals.⁷ In the 1990s, obesity increased in every state in the United States in both genders and across all races/ethnicities, age groups, educational levels and smoking statuses.⁸ Recently the World Health Organization stated that obesity has reached such epidemic proportions that world health officials have decided that they need to take a more aggressive approach if they are to head off a global explosion of fat-related diseases.⁹

In the largest and most comprehensive study of its kind ever conducted, reported in the *New England Journal of Medicine*, more than 90,000 cancer deaths per year could be prevented by losing weight. The study reflects a tenfold increase from the largest previous study (900,000 people studied over a sixteen-year period). One researcher stated, "Because of the magnitude and strength of this study, it's irrefutable, it's absolutely convincing."¹⁰

We've heard these ominous reports in the past, but the one factor that is different now, indeed the factor that sends home the message more than any other that the situation has reached a critical stage unlike any other time in history, is the degree to which children are overweight or obese. It is estimated that 22 million of the world's children *under five* are overweight or obese.¹¹ Here in the United States, where we take such pride in being a beacon of inspiration in all areas of life, the prevalence of overweight children is a national disgrace. The number of overweight children in the 1990s more than doubled, in fact nearly tripled, since the 1960s and 1970s.¹²

I'd say the time has come for us to get serious and rededicate ourselves in a direction that actually produces some long-term results. How about you? How much proof is needed to see that the entire course of what has been attempted to date has failed? Not only has the situation gotten progressively worse year after year, decade after decade, for adults, but now, as a result of the choices made over the years, our children are being forced to deal with the consequences of those nonproductive decisions.

Common sense is very uncommon.

—HORACE GREELEY

Nothing could possibly be more obvious than the fact that something brand-new is needed. A

entirely new and different approach is called for. It is time for a voice of reason and common sense to rule the day as regards the challenge of losing weight, comfortably, intelligently and permanently. We're not just talking about dropping a few pounds so we can fit into our bathing suits for summer. *The crisis has now filtered down to our children.* Nothing will ever convince me that this is what the Grand Creator intended for us. It is time to shut the door on the mistakes of the past. No more mindless crash diets that fly in the face of reason. No more "seventy-two-hour wonder diets" or "four week miracle cures." No more tummy tucks, liposuction, stomach stapling or other surgical procedures that attack the symptom while ignoring the cause. No more toxic drugs that poison the body and put life at risk. *No more!* All of the incorrect remedies have been fully explored over and over, and time has proven them all to be ineffectual. It is now time to embrace the correct remedy—the one that is in alignment with life, is based in common sense, resounds with logic and reason, and definitely proves its own worthwhileness.

There is a gigantic, mind-numbing irony in all of this—an irony so striking there are not words to describe it in the dictionary. As millions of people chase after outlandish, unrealistic remedies that have failure built right into them, spending fortunes on them only to find out they have been taken on a fanciful, promise-laden road to nowhere, the simple solution to the problem of overweight sits like a shining jewel, unnoticed, unutilized and unfulfilled right before our eyes. Irony of ironies.

The challenge facing me now is not how to organize the information you yearn for into a cohesive program that reaps results. Nor is the challenge for me to be able to relate the information to you in a comprehensive fashion that will be easily understood. Frankly, that's the easy part. The solution is literally so simple, obvious and straightforward that it just cannot be denied by any fair-minded person willing to give it a fair hearing.

It is actually the simplicity of the message that may elude you, not the grasping of it. Remember my friend Mr. Bremmer lamenting that he wondered why people try all the incorrect methods before settling on the correct ones? Well, I think I know why. It's because the correct remedy is *too* simple and obvious. I know how ridiculous that must sound, but I'm serious. And that is the task that lies before me: to overcome the mind-set, the belief system that the gargantuan problem of overweight that affects too many millions of people and costs so many billions of dollars could actually be remedied by something totally uncomplicated, practical and accessible.

No statement should be believed merely because it has been made by an authority.

—HANS REICHENBACH

People have been systematically convinced that there are no easy answers, so that becomes the reality. This way of thinking is supported and solidified by the scientific community. There is no shortage of so-called experts in the field who are constantly offering up the latest theories. All manner of conjecture, supposition and speculation are put forth by reasonable-sounding, highly credentialed authorities who differ completely with other reasonable-sounding, highly credentialed authorities, so the beleaguered seeker in the middle is bounced around like a tennis ball, not knowing what to think or what to do.

If it's not some gene that is deemed to be the culprit in putting on weight, it's some newly discovered appetite-boosting hormone secreted by the stomach.¹³ Or it's some other impossibly complicated, jargon-laden theory that no one except those who spend their days filling and emptying beakers and petri dishes in a laboratory can understand. The explanation invariably ends up with the same tired old refrain of "a lot more research will have to be done before we can . . . blah blah blah. . . ." It then regularly ends up with "hopefully there will be a new drug in the next few years."

If it's *not* on the molecular level, then it's what body type you are or emotional type you are or blood type you are. It's all lots of graphs and charts, height and weight distinctions, categories and groups, all designed to pigeonhole you into just the right classification so you can know what your jumping-off point is in the grand battle against the always-advancing enemy that is bound and determined to make your clothes too tight.

After years and years of the same old stuff that never ever brings anything forth that works and lasts; after trying the latest breakthrough with great resolve only to have your efforts dashed on the rocks of disappointment; after failure piled on top of failure—I can see where my contention that the solution to the entire mess is as simple and straightforward as falling off a log might be met with some skepticism.

When you think of the strongest animals on Earth, which do you perceive to be the very strongest of all? Most people rightly name the elephant and, aside from some whales, the elephant is also the largest. These impressive beasts can stand over ten feet tall and weigh more than 12,000 pounds. The largest-known elephant measured over thirteen feet tall and weighed more than twelve tons! Elephants can perform phenomenal feats of strength, carrying cargos of 600 pounds with ease or moving logs that weigh up to two tons. When lions were proclaimed "King of the Jungle," there must have been some weight and size restriction to enter the running, for elephants are truly the masters of the animal kingdom in terms of size and sheer power. An enraged elephant on a full run can strike fear into the heart of *any* animal in its path.

Elephants in India have been used extensively for centuries to perform heavy tasks after they are tamed and trained. The process of taming begins at a young age when they are shackled to huge trees with very heavy iron chains. No matter how hard the young elephant tries to break away, it can't. Finally, it gives up trying. As soon as it reaches the full length of its chain, it simply stops right there and makes no other attempt to go further. As time goes by, both the size of the tree and the strength of the chains are decreased until the elephant cannot escape from even a flimsy little rope tied to a small branch. Having grown up with the inability to wander further than the length of its restraints, the moment the elephant feels resistance upon its leg, it stops, thinking it can go no further. Even though it could easily pull away from the flimsy rope that has it tethered to a peg in the ground, it has been convinced that it does not have the power to do so, and so it remains captive even though it could easily go anywhere it wanted whenever it pleased.

Whatever, pray tell, could all this have to do with the subject at hand? Good question. I can't help but compare the plight of the elephant, which, although possessing extraordinary power and strength, is effectively subdued, to the plight of those seeking to lose weight. The elephant's belief system is that it can't move beyond the length of its tether. The weight-loss seeker's belief system is that the answer to successful, long-term weight loss cannot be simple. Both are mistaken.

I have long been labeled an idealist. I've worn that label as a badge of honor. I pride myself on always expecting the very best of everyone. However, I am also a realist, especially in matters such as the content of this book. The idealist in me wants to think that anyone who has ever struggled with his or her weight, be it with ten pounds or fifty pounds, will, upon learning the simple message this book imparts, rejoice at discovering the long-awaited answer and immediately put into practice the newfound information. The realist in me knows better.

The plain fact is that regardless of how sensible and promising this book or any other book on the subject is, it will only appeal to some and not to others. That's just how things are. Permit me to help you clarify which category you are in. If you are hoping to find within these pages a temporary, quick-fix dietary regimen that is adhered to for a while until you drop the desired weight, only to return to the same old habits that made you overweight in the first place, I can tell you right now this book is definitely not for you. Or if you are hoping for a breakthrough pill or potion that will magically do for you what only a sensible, logical and reasonable effort on your part will achieve, again, you will find nothing like that here.

You can't cross the sea merely by standing and staring at the water. Don't let yourself indulge in vain wishes.

—SIR RABINDRANATH TAGORE

However, if you are one of those people who have had your share of disappointments and are fed up with riding the merry-go-round of yo-yo diets that promise everything and deliver nothing of permanence; if you genuinely want to finally, mercifully, learn a permanent, lifelong eating lifestyle that allows the eating experience to remain a joyous one (not a clinical endeavor of denial and frustration) that proves itself with visible, clearly defined results and is remarkably easy to grasp and implement, and so uncomplicated and forthright that you can confidently explain it to anyone, even a child—then this will be your Holy Grail.

As an ex-pudgy myself, I have tried more diets and schemes than I care to recall. So I want you to know that I completely understand if you are reading this and experience just a tad of skepticism. If you're anything like me, you've heard assurances similar to the ones I am making, charged headlong into a new approach with great resolve, only to find out that it wasn't as simple or obvious as promised.

All I can tell you is that *this* time you are going to be pleasantly surprised because you are about to see the truth of what I've been saying about its simplicity. Many times in situations like this you're told you only have to follow "six simple steps" or only "three simple steps" to be successful. Well, I guess how many simple steps you will be called upon to follow through on here? One! Yes, that's right, one! It can't be simpler than that, can it? No joke, there is only *one* concept for you to grasp

Only *one* action to take, and the problem of overweight will become a thing of the past.

Have I aroused your curiosity? Well, turn the page, and let's get right to it.

CHAPTER TWO



LIVING OR DEAD? YOU CHOOSE

That greatest miracle of all, the human being.

—MARYA MANNES

Do you recall that this book started with me praising the magnificence of life? Therein lies the secret of success. You're looking for a miracle? *You* are a miracle. The life that animates every cell in your body is a miracle, the grandest miracle of all.

Nothing could be more elemental and more self-evident than the statement, "Life begets life, and death begets death." You might be saying, "Gee, no kidding. Tell me something I don't know." But as obvious and brimming with truth as that statement is, there are those who have allowed themselves to be misled through advertising, propaganda and conditioning to lose sight of that simple truth.

Everything that lives is holy, life delights in life.

—WILLIAM BLAKE

What if I posed the title of this chapter to you in the form of a question: "Living or dead, what is your choice?" It's almost laughable to think anyone would choose death over life in *any* circumstance. Whether you are consciously aware of it or not, you are called upon to make that choice every single day, and you might be shocked to learn what your decision is more often than not.

Whatever could I be talking about? I am referring to your food choices. What are our most urgent

necessities for life? Air, water and food. We have scant, if any, control over the air we breathe, not that it's air that makes us fat. We are water beings living on a water planet. Both our bodies and the surface of Earth are approximately 70 percent water. We have far more control over the type and quality of water we drink, and we must be diligent in seeking out the purest available. But, again, it's not the water we drink that makes us fat. So, what is it? Let's see . . . what's left? Oh yeah, *food!* We will each eat approximately seventy tons of food in our lifetimes, and it is the quality of that food that will be the greatest determining factor in the quality of our lives—the greatest determining factor whether we will be overweight or not.

Remove any one of the three primary necessities of life and we die. Without air, life will end in about six minutes. Without water, life can go as long as two to three weeks, although most would succumb in about a week to ten days. Without food, death would occur in about six to eight weeks, although there are extraordinary cases of people surviving longer. One thing is for certain: Depriving the human body of food will result in death. We've all heard the old saying, "You are what you eat." A truer statement has never been uttered.

The living human body is made up of living cells. Lots of them. I've heard estimates ranging from 75 to 125 trillion cells. Each and every cell is bursting with life. Seen under a microscope, a single cell bustles with unimaginable activity. Tens of thousands of chemical actions and reactions take place every moment, taking in nutrients, performing the activities of life and eliminating waste. Every day approximately 300 billion cells die off and are replaced by living ones that are produced at the impressive rate of about 200 million every minute.¹ Guess what the new replacement cells are made from? *The food you eat.* It is an absolute, unassailable fact that our bodies are made of the food we eat, and if food is withheld, we die. This isn't conjecture. This isn't open for debate. No food, no life.

We come now to the very heart of the matter—the heart of this book. The health and the *weight* of your body are entirely based on the type and quality of the food you eat. So here it is my friends: the simple, obvious, straightforward answer to the problem of overweight that I have been alluding to. This is the one concept you need to grasp and the one action you need to take to end the battle for the rest of your life. Don't blink because it can be revealed in its entirety with one short sentence, which appears in bold to the right.

That's it. That is the cornerstone of this book, and everything else is merely commentary.

EAT MORE LIVING FOOD THAN DEAD FOOD!

Now that I've stated it, after all the build-up, I can understand if you are a bit unsatisfied. Perhaps you were expecting it to be something more esoteric or momentous. Questions may be coming to the surface such as, "Oh, come on, man, that's all you have to tell me?" Or, "What in blazes does he even mean by that?" Or, "Huh?" But remember, I have told you all along it is so uncomplicated and straightforward that the simplicity of the message is what has eluded people. If you *are* feeling a bit let down, yes, I want you to know that I understand because no matter how much I tried to prepare you for the fact that it was something astonishingly simple, I think the tendency is still to expect something super-extraordinary that would blow your mind—some totally unexpected revelation that would magically, miraculously ring true like nothing else ever had before.

I am asking you to please hang in there with me—you won't be sorry. I have been familiar with and worked with and seen the results of people eating more living food than dead food for nearly thirty-five years. You have had but a few moments to give thought to and contemplate the concept. I want t

assure you that the more familiar you become with it, the longer you have to ponder it and, more importantly, the longer you have actually incorporated it into your lifestyle, the more it will reveal itself to be the momentous and extraordinary concept it is.

All great ideas are controversial, or have been at one time.

—GEORGE SELDES

I promise you that by the time you have finished the book, you will have a brand-new understanding and appreciation for what eating more living food than dead food means. And all questions and concerns you may have now as to how doing so will help you lose weight will be answered.

If you desired to play the piano, it is extremely unlikely that you would realistically think that after learning all the keys and taking a couple of lessons you would be ready to give a concert at Carnegie Hall. If you want to become good at something, you have to practice it—whether it's playing the piano, operating a computer or riding a bicycle. It's the same thing here. As I stated earlier, you have just learned of the concept of eating more living food than dead food so you understandably have no familiarity with it. Over the course of this book, that will change.

Everything you need to know about what living and dead foods are, why it is important to eat more living than dead food, what can be expected upon doing so, and how to intelligently and comfortably incorporate more living food than dead food into your eating lifestyle will be revealed in detailed unencumbered plain talk. Then, after seeing the wisdom of the concept itself, it will just be a matter of experiencing firsthand the results that automatically ensue once the principle is put into practice.

The first step in this process is to define what living foods are and what dead foods are. Twenty years ago, prior to the release of the original *Fit for Life*, I counseled people one-on-one. They felt sick or couldn't take off the weight they desired, so I would familiarize myself with their personal dietary background and then design a personalized program for them to follow in order to achieve their goals. This played a huge role in my own education and understanding of the relationship between diet and health. I was then and am today astounded at how few people can describe the difference between a food that is living and a food that is dead.

Usually the first thing that would come to mind when they thought of a dead food was some kind of meat because an animal had to die to provide it. "You mean like a hamburger or something?" It is amazing how oriented we are to eating meat in this country. You'd be stunned to know how many people, upon my asking them how much living food they ate, would ask, "You mean like raw meat or fish?"

The very first thing I would ask of those who came to me for advice was to describe to me what their diet was, not in generalities but in meticulous detail. Then I would ask them to describe what they put into their bodies on one average day, leaving out absolutely nothing no matter how small an amount. I can't recall a single instance where those I was helping were not shocked and dismayed, nearly to the point of embarrassment, upon learning the huge disparity of living food over dead food that predominated their diets. It turned out to be about 10 percent living. Occasionally it was more, but

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