



What is a Healthy Eating Attitude?

One of the topics that I spend the majority of my time discussing with clients is nutrition. This makes sense as nutrition is a major factor to creating a healthy and balanced lifestyle. A lot of people make the assumption that they're eating healthily because they don't eat junk food every night. Most of the time that's not the case, being healthy is about looking at everything that you choose to eat (yes that includes the incidental things as well). Nutrition also plays a vital role in your energy levels. I know in the past (before PT days) when I used to read something that was talking about "energy levels" I would conjure up images of an athlete who has a nutrition coach and needs boundless amounts of energy to do the gruelling training sessions, so it was never relevant to me. I couldn't have been more wrong! Nutrition matters if you want more energy to run around with the kids, be able to go for a jog and if you want to feel generally better about yourself. It's also important if you want to lose weight. What you eat on a day to day basis will effect (or impede) your energy levels, so I encourage you to read on and let me challenge your thinking around nutrition.



People have a lot of misconceptions about healthy foods, diets, quick fixes and fads (*which we sorted out in our last newsletter*) but at the end of the day; I believe people know what they should be eating. As a rule we know that breakfast is one of the most important meals of the day. We also know that sitting down on the couch and eating a packet of Tim Tams every night is not good us. We know that junk food is ok – as long as it's in moderation. However somewhere along the line, as a society, we have made the 'healthy eating' concept difficult. The media claims "You should eat this, or take this pill or eat this magic carrot and you'll lose 10kg!" Enough! As a rule of thumb you know what's right so don't make it complex and don't let yourself get caught up in it - instead Keep it Simple!

I'm going to give you a system that is REALLY easy to follow. Before I tell you what it is, I must tell you about the catch (yes I know there's always one). This system is not exciting, it's not stimulating and it takes consistency. That means that you can't go flat out at it for a couple of weeks and expect results then slack off (no all or nothing attitudes accepted here!) This method is really easy but it takes time. If you follow it and stick with it, I GUARENTEE, you will get results!

So what's the secret...? You must be aware of what you are eating. I can't begin to count the number of times clients have come back to me after a couple of weeks of keeping a food diary and being surprised at the "amount of extra food" that they were snacking on and didn't even realise. It's



the couple of bickies with your coffee, and then the cake that's been bought into the office, at home it's the extra serving at dinner. It all adds up and trust me, it adds up quickly! When you're overeating (and that does not mean to a point of feeling sick – it means going over your calorie allowance) it does affect your weight. The only time it won't affect your weight is if you are doing enough exercise to compensate for the EXTRA food. Realistically

most people are not doing enough to counteract this. Overeating can also have a negative on effect your energy levels and your mental focus and attitude.





In an earlier newsletter we talked about how many calories you should be eating (if you're not familiar with it you can [click here](#) to read it). If you start eating over those allocated calories you can start seeing why the weight is creeping up on you (even if you are exercising). Let me give you an example; let's assume that your 3 main meals are exactly right for your calorie allowance. It's the extra little snacks that hurt. For example: at morning tea you have a chocolate bar ("*after all you've been really good with your eating and you deserve it*") [bang 300+ calories]. At lunch you decide to have a can of coke because you're having a healthy salad [there is another 160 calories] and at dinnertime you're exhausted, it was so tasty so you go back for another helping ("*after all you've been really good...*") *This is where the chocolate and coke amnesia kicks in...* ☺ [400+ calories].

That works out to be an additional 860 calories that you didn't really think about and they were very easy to eat! Here comes the scary part – for you to MAINTAIN your weight you now have to have burnt 860 calories (and that takes you back to zero, if you're trying to lose weight you now need to burn additional calories to create a deficit). On the flip side, if you didn't do the exercise, that then means that you have a surplus of calories which if you don't burn off over the week your body will store and it WILL turn to fat.



The other reason that I would like to challenge you and get you to start thinking about what you are eating is because what you put in your mouth can have an effect on your energy levels and moods. I've mentioned Christmas enough in the last two newsletters (I want to get you planning ahead) so let's use it now. Think about Christmas Lunch or Dinner. Do you eat yourself silly and then once you've finished all you want to do is go and have a nana nap (*so you've got energy to get up and eat again hehe*)? Or if not at Christmas, think of the last time you ate a big carbohydrate dinner like pasta. Did you feel very lethargic and tired afterwards? What about when you had a high protein meal (like tuna, fish or steak etc) with vegies do you feel more energised and focused?



Different foods have different effects on the body. That's why it's really important you are aware of what you're eating so you can help control your energy levels and moods (if you're really tired and hit the afternoon slump you'll no doubt be craving sugar – instead of chocolate or cake, have a glass of water and grab a yoghurt and piece of fruit. Try it for a couple of days and take note of your energy levels. I bet they'll improve!)

So how do you make it happen? Keep a food journal. As I said right at the beginning, yes it's time consuming, yes it's boring, yes it's a nuisance... However how much do you really want to reach those goals? I bet when its summer and you still have those extra kilos you'll be frustrated and upset that you didn't spend 5 minutes a day doing your food diary (seriously EVERYONE has 5 minutes to put towards their health!) I bet when the heat effects you and saps all your energy this summer, you'll wish you had of done something about it when you had the chance. By keeping a food diary you start getting a better understanding of your body, what you're actually putting into fuelling it and best of all it keeps you accountable! (You start thinking about it and asking yourself if you really need to eat that).





Where to from here? if you're serious about changing your lifestyle and you really want more energy then I recommend keeping a food diary. Here are a couple of resources for you. I have one on my website which you can print out and use: <http://www.ar1.com.au/PDF%20Files/DailyLog.pdf>



The other option is a fabulous resource and I recommend to clients: www.calorieking.com.au. It's a FREE resource and it's an online food diary. You simply create an account and each day you can update your food diary (and it works out the calories for you).

So in a nutshell, healthy eating doesn't have to be about eating rabbit food all the time. It's about everything you eat on a daily basis and making sure that it's all done in moderation and accounted for. As a society we have become so time conscious that we eat mindlessly and are quite often not aware of what we are eating (one of the reasons we are becoming an obese nation). I challenge you to take back control & see what's really going on in your diet and find out how healthy you really are.

So here is my challenge to you – fill in your diary for 1 week and see how you go. Set a reminder in your calendar or diary each day to fill it out, or stick it on the fridge. Get the family on board – it doesn't take that long, but I promise it will make a big difference! I welcome you to share with me your discoveries & thoughts!

Happy Fitness.

Amanda

Luv Amanda xx

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