

Clean Eating Guide

**Reveal and Reclaim
Wellness**

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Introduction

Congratulations!

Firstly, I want to congratulate you.

I want to congratulate you on taking the red pill – the symbol of truth – because Clean Eating is the answer to so many of our modern health issues caused by bad diets and inactive lifestyles.

We live in a world where – for the first time – parents may outlive their children because of the obesity epidemic affecting our young children.

So if you want to lose weight, be healthy and have a long-term sustainable eating program...

If you want to look better, perform better and feel better...

And if you want to opt-out of the obesity crisis and health crisis...

Then Clean Eating is the solution.

So, what exactly is *Clean Eating*?

And what makes it so special?

Clean eating – put simply – is eating food in its most natural form, as nature intended it to be eaten.

It's eating food that is not manufactured, it's not packaged in a factory, it hasn't been designed by food scientists and it doesn't rely on clever marketing tricks to sell it.

Clean eating is what our Grandparents and their parents just called *food*.

Our Grandparents grew their food, caught it and killed it (or bought it from someone who did it for them).

Clean Eating is consuming the stuff that grows in the ground, is picked from bushes, plucked from trees...

It's the stuff that flew through the air, swam in our waters or

grazed on our land...

And while that might sound overly-simple or boring.

This is what we evolved and were evolved and were designed to eat, digest and absorb. These are the foods that fill us, satisfy us, nourish us and repair our bodies.

They have no chemicals.

They weren't designed in a laboratory.

They are *just food*.

Clean eating is eating *real* food with the emphasis on *real*.

Clean Eating Versus Dieting

The word *diet* is a derivative of the older word *diaeta* which means "a way of life".

So, the word diet in the modern meaning couldn't be further from the truth. Today you *go* on a diet. Today a *diet* is a short-term fix to help you lose weight – usually drastically – because *things* have gone wrong (you've made poor diet decisions and now you're overweight – *things* have gone wrong).

The problem with diets is they are usually gimmicks and temporary fixes.

They are gimmicks created with one thing in mind...

Profit!

Diets are created with *the market* in mind. Maybe there's the donut diet because the creators know there is a market for people who want to lose weight but don't want to give up their donuts.

So, they create the donut diet. And the donut diet works.

If you stick to it and consume nothing but your five donuts per day, you'll eat approximately 2000 calories per day.

If you happen to burn 2000 calories per day then you break even.

If you burn 2500 calories then you'll lose weight. If you only burn 1500 calories then you'll start to gain weight.

The donut diet does – in theory – work.

But that doesn't make the donut diet a good thing.

You won't feel full. You won't feel satisfied and you definitely won't feel nourished. Donuts have a lot of calories and very little nutrients.

Plus, they are not really food (more on that a little later).

And that's the premise behind many diets.

They create a calorie deficit so you eat fewer calories than burn without any regard for what your body *really* needs to thrive and survive.

What our Grandparents just called *food*!

Eat Clean, Live Longer, Be Healthier, And Look Great!

Our bodies evolved thousands of years ago to eat, digest and absorb the goodness found in real food. And since our body is the only place we can live it's vital we fill it with the right food if we're to stay happy and healthy for longer.

It's no coincidence these are the same foods that make us feel full, provide the fuel our body needs to function optimally (what do you think World Class Athletes eat) and leaves us with lean, healthy physique with minimal body fat – even with minimal exercise.

Add in a little exercise and watch your body transform from lean to athletic physique, from a flat stomach to a full-fledged six pack.

I know there are going to be those of you that read that last paragraph and want to scream at me through the pages. You've ate well, exercised and still can't move your weight. We will speak about this a little farther down.

What You Will Learn Inside this Clean Eating Guide

Over the next few chapters I've broken Clean Eating into its basic components so you'll never fall into the faddy diet trap ever again.

Instead you'll understand food. You'll learn to listen to your body and you'll change the way you think and feel about food forever.

You'll going to learn how Clean Eating will fuel and fill your body, the nutrients you should include in your diet, the types of food you need to eat to obtain them and you will see changes to the way you look and feel forever.

Every chapter is jam-packed with very simple and easy to implement ideas so you can start to make small changes that have big results starting today.

Plus you'll learn how to overcome the hurdles that catch so many people out.

These are the hurdles that cause so many fad diets to fail.

You'll learn how to easily prevent overeating and start turning Clean Eating into a natural habit that starts to happen automatically – you'll make healthier food choices (and feel like crap when you eat low quality processed food products).

Get ready for the new you.

A leaner, healthier and happier you.

It's time to talk food...

How Our Grandparents Used to Eat

My Grandparents basically had a yard, I wouldn't even call it a plot of land because that conjures up me thinking about a farm. They lived in the city but they still had an area that provided the home for many vegetables plus a great big apple tree that provided abundant shade.

They grew all kinds of squash and lots of different vegetables. They got their milk from a local shop or local farm and visited the local butcher for their meat.

Food was food.

It wasn't packaged; it didn't have an ingredients label.

And everything was cooked from scratch from raw ingredients.

My parents on the other hand grew up in a generation that experienced a rapid rise in convenience. They grew up with television and were exposed to lots more advertising.

Times were changing, the standard of living was increasing and (in their defense) they didn't know what was happening.

So, what was happening?

Big business is what was happening. And big business knew how to make the most of increasing incomes, the faster pace to life and the natural desire for convenience.

Unlike our generation our parents didn't have the same access to information we enjoy today.

One of the best examples of this was when people were allowed to smoke in hospitals! It was seen as a good thing to do, a healthy thing to do! Can you even imagine someone thinking that was a good idea?

So, thanks to the boom in convenience, the influence of advertising and the terrible lack of food education any of us receive, for the first time ever, parents may start to outlive their overweight, diabetic children.

It's time we all started to Eat Clean, like our Grandparents did (again).

The Rules for Eating

There are lots of reasons our Grandparents ate so much better than us.

They had less money so they couldn't afford to over-indulge, eat out at restaurants or upgrade to a super-sized meal. There were many families that went without for periods of time or survived on much less. This can actually be a good thing for your health

They couldn't afford to buy products (think of any sugar laden cereal for breakfast) and so there wasn't a market for these products back then. Instead they ate hot cereals or eggs and bacon.

That's two big factors right there!

They ate real food and they ate less food.

Or more accurately – they ate the right food in the right quantities.

And they had rules for eating.

For example, a meal might be meat, potato and two portions of vegetables. As boring as that might sound it was a rule or a guideline for eating. A very simple rule that meant they ate the right amount of carbohydrates, protein, fats and vegetables for their main meal.

And nothing was wasted.

By that I don't mean *they ate everything on their plate* I mean they ate everything! They didn't just eat the prime cuts of beef from the cow. They ate everything. They ate the liver, the kidneys and all the rest.

Our grandparents had a diversified diet and they ate food that was in season

This is the essence of Clean Eating.

Clean Eating Compared with the Modern Diet

Our modern diet is best summed up with an example.

Take breakfast.

At some point in time - some very clever marketing guys realized that we have little time in the morning to prepare a wholesome, nutritious breakfast (that tastes good too).

So, they invented cereal. Just open the box, pour it out and cover it with milk. It's quick and it's easy.

Today hundreds of thousands of us have been brought up eating nothing but cereal and milk every day for breakfast, for several decades. **It's terrible.**

If you needed a bigger breakfast then you might have toast and glass of orange juice. It's the fine makings for a diabetic coma!

Which might sound ok until you take a step back and analyze it.

You'd have a dose of carbohydrates (cereal) with milk, with another dose of carbohydrates (the sugar in the juice) with more carbohydrates (the toast).

Or worse still you'd have pancakes covered in syrup, donuts you bought on the way to work or yesterday's left-over pizza - all really bad carbohydrates.

All of these foods above are food products. They are not real food cooked from scratch in your kitchen. For the most part they are processed, factory designed and heavily marketed.

This is not what food should look, sound or taste like.

There are no rules for eating either. Carbs with carbs, with more carbs. Where are the other nutrients? Where is the balance?

Sadly, this is the Standard American Diet or the SAD diet.

Time to Take a Step Backwards

It's time to take a step back. A 50 year or even 10,000 year step back and to start eating real food as God created and intended us to eat.

10,000 years ago, we didn't have to think about what was good or bad to eat. We just ate. It was all natural, unprocessed food. We didn't need a food education because that's all that existed. It was either edible or it wasn't.

Unfortunately, today we do need a food education and to know about the calories we are consuming because if we don't then some big company will just sell us on buying more food products (and then the diet pills when we get too fat).

We need to know about the food we eat because we are bombarded by marketing and advertising 24/7. We are surrounded by the diet gurus who cherry pick scientific literature (no matter how good or bad it is) so they can sell their new products.

And that's where we're going to begin – with a little bit of a food education that's simple and easy to put into practice.

Let's get started.

What You Need to Know About Food

A Basic Guide to Understanding Food

The reason we eat is primarily for nutrition and nourishment.

While many will nod their heads in agreement, it's a vague answer.

What exactly does that mean? Nutrition and nourishment?

It means we eat food – not for the pleasure, although it is pleasurable – because we need fuel and we need building blocks for the growth and repair of our body. And yes, you might be thinking that's obvious – and I agree, it is – but if it's so obvious, then why do so many of us fail to eat *real* food with any nutrients?

Instead millions of us would rather eat for pleasure.

It looks like we all got a little bit confused and starting to eat for fun, as a past-time, for something to do, as a hobby and forgot we need nutrients to feed the machine.

The nutrients we eat can be broadly divided into two categories – macro and micronutrients.

Macronutrients are the nutrients we need a lot of – they are proteins, fats and carbohydrates.

Micronutrients are the nutrients we need a little of – vitamins, minerals and phytonutrients.

And that's it.

These are the basic boxes we need to tick to eat healthily.

Micronutrients are often *added* to foods, for example you'll see breakfast cereals fortified with vitamins and minerals.

But ask yourself "*What's better?*"

To get vitamins and minerals that have been artificially added to a factory-made food or to obtain them in their natural state from the real food Clean Eating supplies.

It's a no brainer.

Plus, when we eat real food, we get an array of nutrients. Real food provides a wide variety of macro and micronutrients and (dare I say it) likely contains a lot of additional nutrients we might not be aware of, including the enzymes and co-factors necessary to digest, absorb and use other nutrients.

On a side note, many of today's allergies may actually be a result of having too narrow a bacterial flora in our gut. Bacteria that originally would have been obtained from the outdoors environment and – quite probably – on and in our food. But our near sterile lives (including sterile, packaged foods) remove these good bugs from our world to our detriment!

So let's start with the big stuff..

The Macronutrients!

Macronutrients: Proteins, Fats and Carbs

Proteins, fats and carbohydrates are macronutrients.

They're the foods we need the most of.

Protein provides the amino acids – the building blocks – our body needs to repair old tissue and to create new tissues (for example, when you exercise you break down muscle and then your body uses amino acids to repair itself).

We need protein, it's essential.

Fats are also building blocks. Fats provide the fatty acids we need to create hormones and are the building blocks that make up the cell membranes of the billions (or even trillions) of cells our body is made of.

In a nutshell, we need fat in our diet, it's essential.

Carbohydrates are a fuel source. They're not building blocks like proteins or fats so (in theory) we can live without carbohydrates just fine. Without carbohydrates in our diet our body will use protein and fats as fuel to get us through the day.

Most of us go wrong with our diet because we don't know what macronutrients are and we don't understand the role they play in our diet.

So, we typically eat too much fuel (too many carbs) and not enough of the essential building blocks (the proteins and fats).

This is made worse with processed food products. With these we are providing sub-standard macronutrients that have been tinkered and tampered with by the food companies to modify the taste, improve the shelf life or make them look like they're in their natural state.

Just to give you an example...

Say you were to consume 150 grams of carbohydrates per day, what is better...

The carbohydrates you consume from eating starchy vegetables, wild rice and sweet potatoes or the carbohydrates you get from mass produced white bread, breakfast bars or the microwave meal you bought?

What's better a calorie of protein from a fresh tuna steak or a calorie of protein from the chicken in a bun you bought at a fast food restaurant?

Clean Eating is about choosing foods in their most natural and nutritious state.

Your food journey begins by knowing your macronutrients (proteins, fats and carbohydrates), understanding that these are the nutrients we need in larger quantities and then learning to eat them in their most natural state and with the right portion sizes.

What is really amazing is food created in a laboratory doesn't make you feel full in the same way that real food does.

Have you ever eaten not one but an entire pack of cookies?

But could you devour five bananas?

I doubt it. Real food makes us feel full and satisfied. It doesn't leave you feeling sickly, bloated or tired.

And *real* food tells your body when you've had enough.

It's hardly a surprise when food manufacturers and fast-food outlets would rather you didn't stop eating because the more you eat the more, they make.

Let's delve deeper into the three macronutrients.

Protein

Protein is typically found in animal products with lean beef and fish being among some of the best sources of protein. The definition of a good protein source is based on the amino acids it supplies. Animal proteins provide us with a wider variety of these amino acids than (say) a plant might.

Vegetarians and vegans can get their protein from non-animal sources albeit the quality of the protein is typically not as good from plants so it's important they eat a wide variety of vegetables and legumes (lentils, for example) to supply them with all the amino acids they need. It's achievable but does require a little more work, trial and error.

Fats

There are three main types of fats you need as part of your diet. They are saturated fat, monounsaturated fat and polyunsaturated fat. Meat, in addition to protein, will include saturated fats and it's usually a good idea to focus on eating the leaner cuts of meat (or choosing leaner sources of meat) so you don't overdo the saturated fats.

Monounsaturated fats can be obtained from olives, macadamia nuts and avocados while polyunsaturated fats are readily found in oily fish (think mackerel, salmon and sardines).

Ideally you want to have an even mix of all three types of fats in your diet in equal proportions (roughly one third saturated, one third monounsaturated and one third polyunsaturated). What many people don't realize is how natural foods supply a range of macro and micronutrients all at the same time.

Eggs for example have a higher level of monounsaturated fat than they do saturated fat and the egg white is a great source of protein. In the same way that eating a portion of fish won't just provide a lot of your daily protein requirements, it will also help you with your daily fat requirements.

Carbohydrates

Carbohydrates are the starchy and sweeter foods in our diet. Brown rice, oats, quinoa and sweet potatoes are all examples of some of the better carbohydrates you can choose from. Unless of course you are dealing with some kind of Auto Immune issue or grain intolerance. In that case, there are some additional dietary changes that need to be addressed.

The best carbohydrates are the ones with the lowest glycemic index (GI). That means they release their energy slower, over a longer time frame than those with a higher glycemic index.

This is one of the reasons you'll see brown carbohydrates recommended over white.

So when it comes to choosing your carbohydrates choose those with lower glycemic indexes.

Fruit is high in sugar (fructose) and has a higher GI. While you want to restrict how many high GI foods it is good to include some fruit in your diet because they have lots of fiber, vitamins and minerals that are all very important for our health. Best to concentrate on anything in the berry family as you will get the biggest bang for your buck nutritionally speaking

You'll also consume smaller amounts of carbohydrates in vegetables. In fact, many people on very low carbohydrate diets (bodybuilders in the final weeks before competitions, for example) will obtain all of their carbohydrates from their fruit and vegetables and avoid the more obvious sources.

Let's talk micronutrients...

Micronutrients: Vitamins, Minerals and Phytonutrients

There's a Russian saying that goes...

"Meat for strength, vegetables for health!"

With meat providing your protein (and the basic building blocks your body needs) the vitamins, minerals and phytonutrients are essential to our health but needed in smaller volumes.

These are the little things that make a huge difference.

Just to give some examples:

Anemia results from a lack of iron (a mineral), iodine deficiencies can lead to thyroid problems, and scurvy is caused by a lack of Vitamin C and Rickets from a lack of Vitamin D and Calcium.

The list of illnesses from a lack of micro-nutrients is diverse.

Phytonutrients are the natural chemicals found in plants. These include the anti-oxidants and anti-inflammatory chemicals found in berries and the anti-bacterial properties found in garlic.

All essential and all obtained without having to think about with Clean Eating.

These foods occur naturally in our foods, are critical to our health and well-being as well as lacking from processed food products. The exceptions being foods that are fortified with vitamins and minerals (for example, cereal marketed towards children).

Again, what do you think is best?

To obtain these essential micronutrients in their raw and natural forms, or as additives to a food product?

When you eat clean this isn't a problem. With a varied diet you tick all the boxes and consume all the macro and micronutrients your body must have.

The majority of the Micronutrients we consume in our diet come from the fruits and (more so) the vegetables in our diet. For this reason, there have been efforts to get more of us eating our fruit and vegetables. There should be a push to eat five portions of fruit and vegetables per day although closer to ten portions is more likely necessary.

If you're worried you couldn't eat (or don't want to eat) ten portions of vegetables per day, don't worry. This is covered in the chapter on portion size and isn't as hard as you might think!

Now you understand the basics of macro and micro-nutrients let's start to put some actionable steps in place.

The Rules of Clean Eating

By now you understand that Clean Eating isn't a sexy new fad, it doesn't require expensive shakes and it isn't a short-term fix.

It is how you should be eating for optimal health, optimal performance and to make sure you tick all the boxes when it comes to getting the nutrients your body needs.

Bizarrely the best feature of Clean Eating isn't the astounding results (even though that's what drives so many people to start Clean Eating) it's the simplicity.

The rules about what you can and cannot eat are crystal clear and easy to understand.

Your first question is *"Is this a food or is it a product?"*

If it's a food then chances are, it is good to eat..

If you're not sure then ask yourself *"Does it need an ingredients label?"*

If the answer is no because there is only one ingredient - you have food in front of you.

Most diets are hard work because they are so restrictive and so hard to get right. With Clean Eating, food selection is as easy as it gets.

While Eating Clean and keeping it this simple (is it a food or is a product) you will get close to achieving your weight loss goals.

But if you want maximum results then you need a little more detail.

For example:

How often should you eat?

How much should you eat?

When should you eat?

And what should a meal look like?

Let's tackle these questions now.

How Often and How Much Should You Eat?

We're all accustomed to eating three square meals per day – breakfast, dinner and lunch.

While this is perfectly acceptable it's not necessarily the best way to fuel your body.

Let me explain.

If you need to eat 2000 calories to maintain your weight, then you divide this by three meals which mean each meal you eat will be roughly 667 calories. These 667 calories will be made up of proteins, fats and carbohydrate.

The problem people who eat three times per day is they gorge at the meal often times feeling stuffed and then they also get hungry in-between meals because their blood sugar isn't stable.

If you're awake for 16 hours per day you have over 5 hours between meals. This is time when you might get bored as well as hungry. And when most people get bored or hungry, they snack. Now this is OK if you Eat Clean and snack on wholesome food but most people don't.

A good way to tackle hunger and boredom is to split your calories across 4, 5 or 6 meals. More is better but you have to be practical. Your boss might not like you eating 6 times per day at your desk.

As well as fending off hunger and boredom, eating frequently has several other benefits too.

If you do get hungry you probably only have 30 minutes or so to wait before eating which means you're less likely to snack on the products in the vending machines or grab a handful of cookies to get you by.

Second, eating more frequently means you eat smaller meals. This has the advantage of reducing the load each meal has on your digestive system. Without going into the details, you will lower the changes in insulin levels that a bigger, heavier meal can trigger. This is good for keeping your weight in check and your blood sugar levels more stable.

If the thought of 6 meals per day puts you off remember that the meals don't all have to be the same size. You could still have three larger meals for breakfast, lunch and dinner with planned snacks in between.

So, you might have 500 calories for breakfast, lunch and dinner (a total of 1500 calories). This allows for a mid-morning snack and afternoon snack of 250 calories (the remaining 500 calories).

If you're not sure how much 250 calories per snack is its 50 grams of oatmeal or two medium bananas (7"long) (these are just examples) both of which are good sized snacks to get you by.

If you're curious how many calories you need to eat per day there are plenty of calculators available online. Just remember these calorie calculators are estimates based on your height, weight, age and activity levels. I tend to like Carb Manager which has both a free and paid platform.

We are all unique individuals with unique energy demands so these are ball park figures to get the ball rolling. Later you can make adjustments to these calories, either eating more or less depending on how your body responds.

You must remember this!

Calorie counting is not an exact science. And while it's a good thing to do occasionally to help you understand how much you might be eating when you *listen* to your body and *feel* when it is telling you to stop eating you don't need to count calories because when you Eat Clean is hard to overeat. Personally, I think calorie counting long-term is detrimental to your health!

When you are full, your body will let you know!

Eat Lean Protein and Vegetables Every Meal

From previous chapters you'll understand you have a protein requirement. This is the most important dietary requirement you have. More so than the carbohydrates most of the population over-indulge on.

And remember how we really need to eat as many as 10 portions of vegetables per day.

These will fill you up and provide your body with all the micro-nutrients it needs.

The benefits of eating lean protein are more than just filling a dietary need. Protein will help you feel fuller which means you're less likely to overeat.

If you eat three mains meals and two snacks per day then scrambled egg in the morning, salmon at lunchtime and chicken in the evening and you've done it. It's not that hard.

Some great snack options that will also supply you with protein would be nuts, nut butters, and hummus to mention a few.

As for the vegetables. If you are eating 5 meals per day that's only 2 portions per meal. Try having a spinach omelet for breakfast with a side helping of strawberries. A good mixture of protein and fats in the egg with plenty of micro-nutrients in the spinach and strawberries.

If it sounds a little weird eating a vegetable for breakfast then that's only because we've been sold on the idea of eating cereal and milk for decades. Your body doesn't think "*Oh it's morning I must have cereal and milk!*" As far as your body is concerned any good meal is OK for breakfast!

And if you think vegetables for breakfast sounds weird then chocolate flavored milk or frosted covered flakes is lot stranger and probably one of the worst and least nutritious ways to start your day.

It's no wonder we're getting fatter if we're starting the day on a sugar rush only to come crashing back down and in need to refueling an hour or two later.

Lots of calories and very little nutrients!

Stop Eating When Your Satisfied (Not When You Are Full)

It takes time for our body to realize we've eaten enough. It can take as long as 20 minutes which means if you eat fast (and without chewing) there's a very good chance you're going to finish your meal well before your body has registered that it is full.

This means second portions, desserts and causes us to overeat.

The solution is simple.

Slow down! Chew your food and switch off the distractions around you. Eat consciously, tasting and chewing every mouthful and making sure you start the digestive process in your mouth (the chewing and addition of saliva is the first step in digesting your food) before swallowing.

Put your knife and fork down in between mouthfuls if you have to or count how many times you chew your food if you have to. Just slow down!

Then when you feel satisfied (not full) it's time to stop eating.

Again (surprise, surprise) learning to recognize when you are satisfied happens a lot more naturally with Clean Eating. It's hard to eat a plateful of lightly steamed vegetables and a lean cut of steak fast compared with tearing through a burger and fries, while washing it down with milkshake.

This is partially because we tend to eat without thinking and without tasting. We're too busy watching television or playing with our phones to think and taste what goes into our mouths. The best example is watching a movie with a pack of candy or giant serving of popcorn. It usually goes from hand to mouth out of habit and without thought.

That and the fact that many food products aren't designed to make us feel full. Or they're loaded with salt to make us feel thirsty and so we buy a drink (usually a sugar laden one).

Moving on.

Eat Healthy Fats

Most naturally occurring fats are perfectly fine and healthy. We need them but unfortunately, we tend to over eat saturated fats and that's a problem caused by poor food choices and a lack of diversity in our diet.

Instead we need to mix it up more and make sure to include a small amount of fats at every meal. You might drizzle your salad in olive oil (monounsaturated fats), have a handful of nuts or have grilled salmon for dinner (polyunsaturated fats).

A nice healthy mix of fats is important for our health.

The most important fats to avoid are the trans-fats found in many processed products and an overindulgence in saturated fats from too much of the same kind of food.

The secret is to not be scared of fats and to make sure you include them in your diet.

Fats don't make you fat. Too much energy in and not enough energy out is what makes you fat and too many carbohydrates are often the main culprit.

Wind Down and De-Stress!

It's hard to believe that stress can make us fatter. Stress hormones (cortisol in particular) can seriously hinder our weight loss attempts.

Stress from work or stress at home can all contribute towards making us fatter.

But so too can stress from under eating where you are not providing your body with enough fuel to get through the day. This is really common amongst yo-yo diets that put-on weight when they over eat, then go to the other extreme and under eat only to stay the same weight or put on more!

The reason is simply because our body is a machine designed to survive and if you're not getting enough calories inside you then it doesn't *think* and understand you are trying to lose weight. It just thinks "*I'm experiencing a famine and I need to survive!*" before doing what it can to hold onto everything it can (including fat) by shutting down other non-essential processes.

The moral of this story is taking the time to relax and de-stress. Have fun.

Play with your kids, go out with your friends and talk to your partner.

Drink More Water

A staggering 45-70% of the human body is water and it's critical for virtually all the metabolic reactions that take place within our body.

Aside from the fact that the majority of our body is made up of water (we really do need it) drinking water also makes you feel fuller, for longer so it helps fight hunger and prevent overeating.

Now compare drinking water with drinking a can of soda...

Well there is no comparison. When you drink water, you are re-filling your body with the water it needs but with the soda, you're consuming a high number of calories with almost zero benefit to your body, your health and your performance. Not to mention what it does to your teeth!

As a general guideline consuming 2 - 3 liters per day is a good starting point making allowances for how active you are. The more you exercise and sweat, the more you need to drink.

If the weather is hotter or you are on a vacation then you need to drink more water too.

Again, it all comes back to listening to your body and drinking water to quench your thirst.

The best way to find out if you're drinking enough (or not enough) is by the color of your urine.

Disgusting I know but the darker it is the more you need to drink! If it is pale yellow then you are probably hydrated enough.

Summary

By now you should have a firm grasp on what Clean Eating is.

How to choose foods and while you will have questions – a lot can be answered by starting right away.

Portion size (for example) is often a major talking point but trust me – when you try to tuck into a nice Mexican Chili Beef you made yourself from scratch with raw ingredients with two or three portions of vegetables on the side you will feel when you're full.

Just make sure to eat the green stuff first. It is filled with fiber which is very important for digestive health and will make you feel fuller. This means you might end up leaving some of that Mexican Chili for tomorrow (instead of overeating meat and not eating enough of the green stuff).

Now you know the Rules and Principles we're going to delve deeper in the practical side to Clean Eating – the DOING!

How to Eat Clean

Getting Started is Easy

To get started, and to be successful you need to do three things.

First you have to commit.

Second you have to be consistent.

And third you have to be brutally honest with yourself.

Failure can't handle consistency. If you commit to Eating Clean and you do your best to keep at it and consistently work towards improving your eating habits then you will win. You don't have to be perfect but you do have to work consistently and daily to be better than you were yesterday.

Honesty might seem a strange trait to add but it's because honest folk admit when they eat the wrong food. They admit when they eat too much and they admit to eating secretly behind closed doors, when there is no one looking.

Dishonest people tell themselves (and the people around them) how they live on salads, never snack and only eat healthy, whole foods despite the fact they carry plenty of spare calories on their stomachs. Tucking into slices of peanut butter sandwiches while they watch television and raiding the fridge late into the night – secret eaters are dishonest with themselves and the people around them.

You have to be honest with yourself to make this work.

The easiest way to do this is with a food diary.

Starting a Food Diary

Food diaries are a lot easier and a lot less hassle than you might think especially with so many apps you can download for your phone. To make it work makes a note (on paper or on your app) immediately after you eat. If you don't do it immediately you run the risk of letting your memory let you down!

All you have to do is write down exactly what you have eaten, when you ate it and how much you ate. If you can, keep a record of how you felt afterward too. We'll delve into why should keep track of how you feel a little later.

Without a food diary people tend to guess and (conveniently) forget or underestimate what have eaten.

Mental notes of what you are eating don't work and research supports the fact that keeping a food diary stacks the odds of success in your favor. You are much more likely to be successful if you keep a food diary. Without a food diary people pluck numbers from thin air and make random changes to their eating that may or may not work.

For example, you might be eating good, wholesome food but not notice that it's too carbohydrate heavy or that you aren't eating enough protein to help your body replenish itself.

Without a food diary you can lose track of *little* treats here and there. Plus, that little treat might not sound or feel like a lot but with a food diary you can see clearly that an extra 300 hundred empty calories in a candy bar or a latte adds up to an additional 2700 extra calories per week.

That's the equivalent of an extra day's calories (maybe more)!

No wonder those pounds are slowly creeping upwards.

With a food diary you can see exactly what is going on without any guess-work or false assumptions. You can notice patterns, maybe you notice how you have a weakness for a snack late at night or that your breakfast is too small and your evening meal is too big.

You can see if you're eating too much saturated fat, too little fruit and vegetables or not drinking enough.

Improvements start with a food diary and without one you are just guessing.

It's the only way you can accurate assess what you're eating and make positive changes to it.

Clean Eating is a Simple Habit

The quickest, easiest and best way to assess your food diary is by comparing it with what Clean Eating is all about.

So, step one is looking at your food diary.

When you look at your food diary, answer the following questions:

1. Are you eating foods (not eating products)?
2. Are you cooking from scratch (with single ingredients)?
3. Are you eating lean protein with every meal?
4. Are you eating 5 to 10 portions of fruit and vegetables (mainly vegetables) per day?
5. Are you eating healthy fats at every meal?
6. Are you drinking $\frac{1}{2}$ of your body weight in ounces of water per day?
7. Are you eating 5 to 6 meals per day?
8. Do you stop eating when you are satisfied (80% full)?

If you answered yes to the questions above then you're doing pretty good and it looks like you're Eating Clean.

If you have to snack between meals, if you don't feel satisfied and are left feeling hungry then you may need to up your calories, start eating more and make a few minor adjustments to your daily meal plans (but rest assured you are on the right track).

Remember your food diary is just a starting point and by answering the questions above you can quickly identify the weakness in your daily eating and start to make incremental improvements.

The problem comes when people try to do too much too soon.

Instead of improving their diet slowly and gradually they take the "all or nothing" approach to eating and exercising. Instead of working on one habit at a time and stacking the odds of success in their favor (some authors believe you have an 80% chance of success if you focus on one habit at a time) they try to do everything.

They try to exercise daily (not two or three times per week, they exercise daily)!

Instead of making small changes to their diet (say swapping a sandwich for lunch with a grilled chicken salad) they change all the ingredients to all of their meals and try to be perfect.

And it works...

For a day or two...

Before they fall off the bandwagon. It is just too hard.

And of course, there are exceptions (people who change everything and make it work) BUT for the majority of us mere mortals it is just too much, too soon and this is the first step towards failure.

Instead it would be much better to focus on the biggest problems and to tackle them first.

Then tackle the second biggest problem, then the third and so on. This is where having a mentor to help you navigate this is beneficial to your success.

Remember this isn't a fad diet. This isn't something you do for a couple of weeks as part of a short-term fix so you can pile the weight back on (and more) afterward.

This is a *way of life* – where winning the longer race and losing weight permanently are at its heart.

It's about making permanent changes to your physique and to your health and effortlessly staying in the leanest and best shape of your life for the remainder of your days.

And it's about passing these habits onto your children who will learn (not from what you say but) from what you do.

The Single Problem that Causes the Most Harm

Pick a problem with your eating. Not any problem but the biggest problem you have. The single problem that is responsible for the vast majority of damage to your efforts.

This is step two.

It might be eating late at night.

It might be a love of soda or the need to eat all of the ice-cream (instead of a single serving).

Or it could be that you just love to overeat. That you've mistaken the feeling of being stuffed for being satisfied even though it leaves you feeling sluggish and bloated for hours later.

By picking a single habit and choosing to focus on it, you dramatically increase the likelihood that you will make it permanent.

As I mentioned earlier. Some authors believe you have an 80% chance of success if you try to change a single habit at a time. If you try to change two habits at a time then the odds of success drop to just 20%.

I know you want to change fast but be the tortoise, not the hare.

Look at your diet.

Look at the breakdown of macro-nutrients (the protein, the fat and the carbohydrates) and see if there is anything looks out of balance. Maybe you're eating lots of carbohydrates at every meal?

Are you eating a variety of fruit and vegetables to get your micronutrients?

Focus on one problem.

If you have a vice (a love of sugar perhaps) then remember this isn't about being perfect it's about being better. If you know that you have failed to curb your sweet tooth and end your love for sugar in the past then try to gradually phase it out. Replace and then reduce your dependence with time.

If you love soda you would ideally replace it with water but that might be too much too soon.

Replace it with diluted fruit juice, and eventually replace it with water.

If you like sugar in your coffee could cut it out or you could half it. Another option would be a natural substitute like Monk Fruit or Stevia. The idea will be to eventually get rid of the sugar completely.

If you eat cereal for breakfast then replace it with Steel Cut oats. Then later, have oats on one day and an eggs on the other. You've just gone from having cereal with empty calories (they have no real nutritional value) to good quality carbohydrates to a mix of protein, healthy fats and even consider adding vegetables to make an egg and veggie scramble.

As one habit starts to take hold (give it 7 to 21 days) add another and another.

There is more than one way to skin a cat (as the saying goes).

You could start by replacing food groups or you could start by *cleaning* up one meal at a time.

You could start by improving your breakfast.

When a healthy breakfast becomes a habit, start to work on your lunch or your evening meal.

One step at a time.

The Must-Have Super Food List

We've discussed how the best way to get started is by looking at your food diary and picking out the biggest problems first. Then tackling those problems, one habit at a time.

Chipping away at them, making gradual, permanent changes to how you eat and – more importantly – how you think about food.

Often, a single change to *the biggest problem* can have huge implications and for many of us that's change will be abandoning products and replacing them with *real* food.

This is the 80:20 rule or the Pareto Principle in action.

The basic premise of this rule is that 20% the things we do get 80% of the results.

In this instance a small, single change from products to real foods will do a lot of the heavy lifting and get you seriously close to your goals.

Sticking with the rule – while it's good and important to eat a varied diet – often you can make life a lot easier if you focus on superfoods. These are the 20% of the foods that will provide you with 80% of the nutrients your body needs.

It makes shopping easier. It makes food preparation easier. And it's a great way to start Clean Eating quickly.

Of course, these are all *real*, single ingredient foods.

Superfoods!

This is a great way to tackle overwhelm and information overload and paralysis by analysis.

Load up on these foods and make them the backbone of your eating.

If you really want to keep things simple you can start by eating the same things daily to start with. Adding variety to your diet as you grow in experience and understanding of what Clean Eating is all about.

Here's a short, practical list of Superfoods you should choose from.

Proteins

- Lean & Clean Beef
- Fish and Seafood
- Oily fish (salmon and mackerel)
- Organic Free Range Eggs
- Clean Chicken & Turkey

Healthy Fats

- Nuts and seeds
- Oily fish (also a source of protein)
- Avocados
- Olives and olive oil
- Whole eggs (did you know an egg yolk has more monounsaturated fat than it does saturated fat)

Fruit and Vegetables

- Spinach, Kale and any other Leafy Green Veggie
- Cruciferous vegetables (broccoli, cauliflower, bok choy, radish, turnips, watercress, Cabbage)
- Tomatoes and peppers (Unless sensitive to nightshade veggies)
- Berries

Carbohydrates

- Brown rice
- Sweet potatoes (when boiled they have a lower GI than white potatoes)
- Quinoa
- Legumes
- Steel Cut Oats

While this list isn't exhaustive it is an excellent starting point.

Most of the foods listed can be found in your local grocery store and, where possible, pick local, organic food.

This is a starting point. There are plenty of foods you can eat and choose from, you can mix up your green vegetables (try kale, asparagus, green beans, other beans and so on) but the risk of thinking too much and overwhelm can cause problems.

That's where Superfoods are great.

The list above are the foods where you can tick most of the macro and micro-nutrient boxes without having 50 different types of vegetable and 10 different types of protein in your fridge.

From a nutritional stand point, pound for pound these are the heavy-hitters of the food world.

Eat Locally. Eat Seasonally. Eat Organically.

Most food is available 24/7 and all-year-round in our giant superstores thanks to trade agreements between countries on opposite sides of the world. In the US there is a ready supply of green beans, Apples and Blueberries all from different countries.

The downside is these foods never get to us in their optimum, natural state.

Bananas get put to *sleep* in giant freezers and ripened just in time for transport to our shops.

It's a far cry from picking a ripe banana from a tree in Columbia and eating it there and then.

When you can, buy food locally.

First, you'll be getting the food as fresh as it could be (without picking it yourself). If you live by the coast you can buy fish that was caught this morning or if your local farm has a shop the beef will be from cattle raised there.

The real benefit in my mind (other than the environmental one) is you start to eat seasonal produce. More than anything, this keeps your food sources varied which means you'll eat different fruits and vegetables at different times of the year.

Which in turn means you'll be eating a wide range of nutrients.

Plus eating a variety of food is a nice break from spinach today, tomorrow, next week and next month.

So, eating seasonally.

Eating organic comes back to eating *real* food as we evolved to eat it. These are foods without chemical residues and that haven't been washed in chlorine to help them last longer. They haven't been tampered with genetically to make their shelf live longer and nutritionally you know what you're getting.

It might cost more to eat locally, eat seasonally and eat organically – and while I recommend you shop within your budget – remember every dollar we spend is a vote. By carefully choosing where we spend our money it's possible to have an impact on market forces (and you can probably create bigger changes this way than you ever would writing to any politician).

Moving on!

Planning and Preparation

If you want to succeed with Clean Eating then planning and preparation is everything.

Yes, there are exceptions - there always are - but for 99.9% of people out there you need to plan and prepare.

Especially in a world where we are only a stone's throw from a vending machine, a fast food outlet or a corner shop. Some towns and cities are blessed with restaurants that provide *real* food but that relies on being lucky enough to work near one and having the disposable income and discipline to do this daily.

Plus, a lack of preparation leads to hunger which leads to temptation and junk food.

Plan Your Shopping

Food shopping is where it all starts.

First you need to have an idea of what you are going to eat over the next week. Know what you're going to eat for breakfast, for lunch and for dinner. Know what snacks you are going to have and make sure to shop for them.

When you shop consider this is your food budget for the week (minus any meals out socializing of course). Planning for a whole week will diminish stress around making changes.

But it's not just about what you are going to buy.

It's also about what you are NOT going to buy.

If you don't have cookies in your house then you're not going to eat them. Your planning and preparation begin by only buying *real* food. It takes discipline to walk around the grocery store and leave food products on their shelves (especially when the donuts are on special offer).

If buying junk food and treats are a weakness then these three strategies will help.

First, never shop when you are hungry!

Second, always make a shopping list and then stick to it. Forget about the special offers designed to suck you in and trick you into spending more money (and eating more) than you intended.

Create a list and stick to it. You'll be pleasantly surprised by how much money this can save you too.

Thirdly, shop fast and shop with a purpose.

Know exactly what you want and where you can get it. For the most part you'll work through the fruit and veg aisles, move onto the meat and fish sections and be close to finished. While following this plan you should pretty much stick to the peripheral of the store, staying out of the aisles in the middle.

You might make a quick stop for green tea or coffee but other than that, there should be very little else you need.

If you have a weakness for cereal, then avoid that aisle. Don't even look down it.

If you love a fresh donut then walk as fast as you can past the bakery section (don't look, don't think and don't contemplate eating one).

And when you have everything on your list - get out of there *fast!*

Remember these superstores are designed by clever marketers who know how to tempt you and know how to position the most appealing and profitable products at eye-level.

Shop consciously and get in and out fast.

That is the best advice I can give you.

While shopping for *real* food can be more expensive than processed and packaged foods, your body is the most important vehicle you will ever own. You only have one and justify the cost to yourself (even if it means missing out on some luxury items) by remembering these healthy choices will change the way you look and feel, and have positive impacts on your mood and the environment.

Everything about Clean Eating is good.

You'll be voting with your dollars and having an impact on the

food industry your children may thank you for.

Buy locally, seasonal and organic produce to support the industry (where possible) and tell the world that you want to eat *real* foods so that together we start to bring about change.

Food Preparation

This is where the rubber meets the road.

With the *right* foods in your kitchen it's time to prepare your food.

The key to eating well for breakfast is getting up in time. If you give yourself adequate time in the mornings then a good start to the day is relatively easy.

Daytime eating is arguably the hardest and the one that catches most people out.

If you bring nothing to work, you will get hungry and which means a visit to the vending machine or stepping out to buy a sandwich is very easy. This isn't always a disaster unless you're the type who says "*Why not...*" and tops up their purchase with a can of soda, a pack of potato chips or a candy bar.

If you prepare your lunch in advance this can all be avoided (and a lot of money saved).

All it takes is spending 30 minutes either the night before or in the morning to prepare your lunch.

It also means being productive from the moment you get out of bed.

For example:

You get up, and start the coffee or tea. Cut up some veggies

Light the grill or preheat the oven. Take the chicken out of the fridge (you did remember to take it out of the freezer the night before, didn't you), Also take out the vegetable steamer or double boiler

Pour yourself a cup of coffee

Time for a quick shower.

By the time you finish your shower, the chicken will be ready for the grill or the oven. Then get your vegetables steaming.

While they are cooking you beat two eggs and chop some spinach before throwing them into a frying pan.

The chicken is almost done and the vegetables are finished.

Put them into their containers (lid open to cool down) and settle down to eat your omelette.

Right now, you are sitting down to a healthy breakfast of protein, fats and vegetables (a far cry from the milk-soaked carbohydrates eaten by millions every day).

And your lunch, a mix of protein, carbohydrates and vegetables from *real* food.

What about snacks?

Grab a handful of nuts into a small container for your mid-morning snack and grab two pieces of fruit for later in the day. Consider some cut up veggies for a healthy snack.

That's another helping of protein and a handful of healthy fats plus fruit that are packed with micronutrients.

So far you have one portion of vegetables for breakfast, two or three for lunch and two pieces of fruit (five or your ten daily portions) – not bad!

Like anything worth doing this is an effort but it's only hassle if you think it is hassle.

Just plan, prepare and benefit from it.

It's made so much easier when know in advance what you are going to cook the night before. It means there is no thinking involved. Just get up and start cooking on autopilot.

Plus, it's a lot better than waking up, rolling out of bed and going straight to work.

See that extra time in the morning as quiet time before getting stuck into the rat-race and daily grind.

Try to enjoy it.

With experience this will get easier and easier.

And why not learn to cook at the weekends? Spices, garlic, ginger, chili or salsa sauces (made from scratch) are great ways to make breakfast, lunch and dinner a lot more interesting.

Your Taste Buds Will Change and Thank You!

To the new converts to Clean Eating this might all sound a little boring.

A little dull.

But that's because you've likely grown up on a diet of processed and packaged food, with artificial flavors, sweeteners and ingredients.

Processed food covered with processed food-stuff.

With time your tastes will change.

For example, some people drink tea and coffee for the sugar and not for the tea or the coffee.

They're not drinking these drinks because they like and enjoy them; they're drinking them out of habit and because of their sugar addictions.

With time you start to realize how all the extra flavors used in processed foods mask the *real* taste of food and you'll start to realize how bad these food products make you feel.

You will become more in tune with your body and appreciate how good real food makes you feel, how much better you sleep and how much better you look. And then you will start to feel how bad food products really are.

Bulk Cooking

If the thought of cooking the night before or early in the morning destroys your spirit (or you don't think you'll have the energy to cook when the time comes) bulk cooking is easy, super convenient and very cost effective.

All you do is plan your meals in advance and cook them in bulk on the weekends.

Instead of spending 30 minutes every day you devote 2 hours or so on a Sunday and cook a massive batch of beef chili (cooked from scratch with real ingredients) and freeze it for the week ahead.

Then it's easy to throw together a few salad leaves, a couple of tomatoes and a pepper into a box before you leave for work.

It's very simple.

Even if you prefer to cook the night before or in the morning, it's not a bad idea to have an emergency supply of bulk cooked food in your freezer ready to go.

Maybe you have a heavy training session one night and sleep in, maybe you wake up with zero motivation or maybe you feel like throwing in the towel and going back to eating junk (a decision you will regret) an emergency supply of bulk cooked food is handy.

Bulk cooked food is both a practical strategy and a useful way to tackle emergencies where you need food fast and have no time to prepare.

I like this quote:

"Remember to do things today, your future self will thank you for!"

Sometimes bad things happen.

Hurdles will get in the way.

Bulk food is one way to tackle the hurdle of having no-time but there are many others.

That's what we're going to talk about next.

Clean Eating from the Trenches

Jumping Hurdles and Staying On Track

Sometimes, life gets in the way...

A busy week, a tough day or a *dark* moment where life is getting you down.

We all have them and - to be frank - life is a grind.

But that is a good thing.

If life was easy everyone would be rich, famous, ripped, skinny, lean and living the dream.

What makes you different and what sets you apart is that you're a go-getter. I know that because by investing time into reading this you're already one step ahead of the pack. You're arming yourself with the knowledge to do something about it.

Instead of drowning yourself in another hot chocolate and complaining about losing fat, you're investing your time.

While everyone else passes the buck and blames their excess luggage on being big boned you're arming yourself with real knowledge that will make a difference.

The first step is knowing what to eat and what not to eat.

The second step and the real difference between success and failure isn't knowing what to eat and what not to eat, it's knowing what to do when things go wrong and you're one step from falling off the wagon and picking up those old, bad habits again.

That's what this section of the book is all about.

The secret to success is having a plan, understanding where it might go wrong and being ready for it.

Because then you can plan for the bad days and get back on the wagon quick, sharp without a week or month (and several pounds) passing you by.

It's these little hurdles that destroy the dreams of so many.

Over the next few sections you're going to learn simple tips to keep you focused and on track, as well as learning what to do when things go wrong (including that party where you ate the entire buffet and drank the bar dry)!

Give Yourself Permission to Suck

You have permission to suck.

By that I mean you have permission to fail, fall flat on your face and make mistakes.

This is super-important because it takes the pressure off you. Remember, you're a human and humans make mistakes.

Plus changing old habits initially is tough and it takes discipline.

But the real reason this is so important is because we're often so scared of failing, we fail to start! Maybe you're too scared to try because you might let yourself down, then you feel bad and what will other people say?

This (from a black and white, logical perspective) is crazy.

Give yourself permission to suck!

Take the pressure off yourself and know that *doing something* is always better than doing nothing.

A word of pessimistic warning.

The food industry is against you and their marketing will try to convince you how their products really are the best fat loss solution. From shakes and pills to gadgets exercise programs.

Their marketing is smart and designed to push emotional buttons. They will make it hard for you.

Plus, you'll have friends who are against you. Actually, they're probably not against you but they might be scared that you will change, look better, feel happier and have more confidence. They're just scared they might lose the new you and (maybe unconsciously) try to hold you back.

And some people will just be jealous. These are the haters and "*Haters gunna hate!*" regardless of what you do.

They'll ask your secret is and when you tell them it's just Clean Eating, they won't believe you because they'll think you're keeping it to yourself. Shame on them!

I had a friend who started preparing lunches in the morning and bringing them to the construction sites he worked on.

Initially everyone laughed at him. He was eating chicken and vegetables and they were eating sandwiches for breakfast and dining on fast food for lunch. While his colleagues laughed and put on weight, he got leaner and looked better too.

He sucked up the verbal abuse and a few months later his co-workers started asking his advice and started preparing their own lunches too.

He had started a trend.

By refusing to listen and by laughing off their criticisms he did what they were secretly hoping to do and changed his body.

He took his health more seriously than he did their jokes and criticisms.

My point is this.

Don't be scared of failure and don't be scared what others might think if you fail.

Of course, you're going to do your best to Eat Clean and you're going to do this 80 - 90% of the time.

And when you have a bad day and fall off the wagon or go a bit crazy at a party and overdo it.

Forget about it. That's not failure it's just a bad day.

You pick yourself up, dust yourself down. You make a note for where it all went wrong and learn from it. You forgive yourself and try not to make the same mistake next time.

And when people around you who ask "*Have you quit that diet yet?*" or condescendingly say "*Oh, you're still doing that?*" ignore them. Don't let them control you and don't let a fear of failure (as they secretly hope you do fail so they can feel better about their lives and terrible diets) hold you back.

Ignore them and remember you're doing this for you, not for them.

If things go wrong. If you buckle at the knees and go crazy and binge eat.

Don't worry because you've given yourself permission to suck.

Just get back up as quick as you can

Just dust yourself off and get back on the Clean Eating wagon as quick as you can.

Bite Size Chunks...

This is a classic.

When you try to do too much too soon.

Now if you're one of those people who can take orders and follow them to the letter, then by all means go straight ahead and try to do everyone in one go.

But for the vast majority we are creatures of habit and while some folk can turn it on and go from bad to good overnight most of us can't.

And "Yes" I know you want results fast but this is not about a week or a month of Clean Eating.

This is about making Clean Eating your #1 choice of eating. It's about **re-writing old eating habits permanently** so you can effortlessly lose and **keep excess weight off**. In fact, when you Eat Clean, you'll discover you can eat more than you did when you weren't dieting because you'll be avoiding all the high calorie, low nutrient (the empty calorie foods).

The harsh reality is it is hard to focus on multiple habits and be successful at them all, forever.

What usually happens is people try too hard, burn out, get bored and go back to their old ways.

This is about learning to rewire the way you think about food and change your mind, body and taste buds, permanently.

The easiest way to do this and the best way to stack the odds of success in your favor is by focusing on one habit at a time.

And when you stumble or if you fall (you will have bad days) then refuse to give in.

Look in the mirror.

Look at your physique and your current state of health and remind yourself the real reason why you are trying to change.

It will help you overcome those moments of weakness when you're about to raid the fridge late at night and it will help you focus on the single habit until it's as natural as brushing your teeth morning and night.

How long it takes to create a new habit can be anything from 21 to 28 days so really you should only add a new habit every 21 days minimum but use your discretion. Some habits are harder than others to change. So, if it's an easy one for you do it for 7 days and see what happens. If it's a big one, then try it for longer.

To give you an example it took me close to 2 years of trying to completely curb my sugar addiction. It started with cutting my sugar in half. Then I replaced it with honey. And now, to make sure I'm never tempted, there is no sugar in my home.

Some habits might take even longer but you can chip away at them.

If you want to remove sugar from your diet it might start with swapping a sugar-coated cereal to Steal Cut oats with sugar. Then oats with honey or raisins and then gradually wean yourself off.

That's three habits and could take three months if you're a real sugar addict but that doesn't matter.

What matters is the end-goal. If you've another 40 years on the clock (hopefully) then what's three months to change a habit you will benefit from for years and hopefully decades.

While changing a habit of drinking 1 glass of water per day to 8 glasses might be super-simple to tackle.

The good news is this will increase your self-discipline and make future habits easier and easier to change.

In the beginning you might have a dozen or so you are trying to change but even if you change just doing one a month, by the end of the year you're tackled them all.

Improving One Meal at a Time

There is an overlap here with changing one habit at a time.

You might decide you're going to eliminate sugar from your diet. That's the habit but you could use that and simultaneously work on one meal at a time too.

For example, if you love sugary cereal for breakfast and want to make the change to oats for breakfast your sweet tooth might cause you to buckle pretty soon. So, you could add honey to sweeten your oats to help you make the transition.

Now you are eating higher quality carbohydrates and have made the swap from refined sugar to something a little more natural.

Then over time you reduce the honey or start to replace it with a few slices of banana before weaning yourself off sweet stuff altogether.

Now you are working on changing one habit (removing sugar throughout the entire day) with one meal (replacing cereal with oats).

You might decide to increase your water intake and perfect your breakfast at the same time without any changes to your lunch and evening meals other than the fact that you'll be drinking more water alongside them.

Or you might decide to just focus on your breakfast.

Get that right and then move onto lunch.

This is where you need to use your discretion and make a judgment call on how much you can handle at one time successfully. This is also where you have to *give yourself permission to suck* because it's common for us to overestimate our self-discipline initially and end up trying too much too soon.

Only you can decide how much is too much, but less is often more.

It's a marathon not a sprint and collectively this is a life changer.

If you decide to focus on changing one meal at time you might start by replacing your usual breakfast with scrambled egg and a portion of fruit. Now instead of wheat, sugar and milk you have protein, fats and carbohydrates with a healthy mix of micro-nutrients thrown in.

This is a more balanced start to the day with all three macro-nutrients and loaded with calories that provide lots of nutrients and nourishment.

If you can do this and it comes easy to you over the next 7 days, implement a new habit or start changing a different meal.

Success here starts with having the right foods stocked in advance and you have the foods you intend to eat in your kitchen ahead of time and give yourself time to p

Remember this all start with shopping for your food in advance, having it to hand in your kitchen and giving yourself the time to prepare it.

This effort IS worth it!

Do Something Your Future Self Will Thank You For

This is tremendously powerful.

Look in the mirror, look at your physique and ask yourself how happy am I? Think about what you want to change and visualize how they can improve.

This has nothing to do with vanity and everything to do with keeping on track.

Remember that image.

Lock it in your mind because when temptation strikes you need to remember how much you want this and how serious you are about making the change.

It's likely there are two reasons you want to start Clean Eating.

The first is the one you tell everyone and the second is the *real* reason - the reason you keep to yourself.

A single person might say they just want to lose weight and look better, fit into a smaller dress or whatever. But deep down - what they're not telling people - is that they're a little lonely and believe that if they look better, they'll be more likely to find someone. That's the *real* reason they want to lose weight and there is nothing wrong with that.

For others it might be because they are scared of dying from heart disease and leaving their children alone. Again, they keep this *real* reason to themselves because they don't want to be called paranoid or told that they are overreacting.

We're all unique and we have our own motivations.

It's important you are honest with yourself and discover the *real* reason why you want to do this and make it work because it will make the journey a whole lot easier.

When times are tough and you need that little extra discipline and determination you look in the mirror and remind yourself of that *real* reason.

Then you "*Do something your future self will thank you for!*"

Having a lean attractive body isn't something you achieved today. Living a longer, healthier life isn't something you stumble upon in your 70s, 80s or 90s.

It is thanks to the cumulative actions and habits you made in the past.

So, the next time you're at a BBQ and there is lots of meat, salads (which are normally left alone and go to waste) and there's lots of white bread..

Remember to "*Do something your future self will thank you for.*"

Skip the breads and high glycemic white carbohydrates then load up with salad and healthier leaner cuts of meat, poultry and fish. Even if you can't be perfect - just make healthier choices and your future self will thank you!

It might sound hard now but as you improve your eating habits, how you see and feel about food will change too. You will start making healthier choices not just because its discipline but because you feel better when you eat better, and eventually, it will just be normal.

And if you're still struggling at home in the kitchen.

There is evidence to suggest that having a mirror in your kitchen can help with weight loss!

Why? Well because when you see yourself in the mirror you are reminded of what you are working towards and have a moment of realization and self-questioning about what you are about to do.

It might even be the guilt that makes this work and stops you for a split second.

Then you ask yourself "*Do I really need to eat this?*" before you change your mind and make a better choice.

When it hits the fan...

Imagine this.

It's Friday, you don't have anything to do in the morning so you stay up late.

You're watching a movie, it's not great but you're too lazy to get up, brush your teeth and go to bed.

So, you vegetate on the sofa watching the same film that's been every night for the past two weeks.

During the commercials you get up, take a walk to the kitchen and raid the fridge, or ransack the cupboards for food.

It doesn't really matter what it is, **you have made up your mind** that you are going to eat (we can all self-destruct occasionally).

This is where a food diary is great. You keep a record of the food you ate, how much you ate, when you ate and how you felt.

So now you can look back and ask the questions:

What triggered this lapse?

What caused it to go wrong?

And remember the tip on keeping a mirror in your kitchen? You might even look in the mirror (felt proud of yourself because you're looking good) and still raided the kitchen for food.

Your food diary (and being brutally honest with yourself) is a great way to discover your Achilles Heel when it comes to eating.

For some it's coming home from a night of socializing and consuming alcohol with their friends.

For others it's been a bad week where food is comfort.

For some it's failing to prepare their meals to take to work. They wake up too tired to prepare their food and go to work promising themselves they'll not eat anything or they telling themselves they'll buy something healthy from the deli on the corner.

What happens is you either get too hungry (especially if you try to go without food) and visit the nearest vending machine. Or you do go to the deli where the cakes on the counter tempt and tease you - so you have one of them as well as your sandwich.

For some people it's just boredom that causes a lapse to take place.

Your success depends on conquering these old habits. That you control your habits instead of them controlling you.

While an iron-will and reminding yourself how you'll regret this tomorrow will sometimes fail.

So, it's better you learn to identify the causes and nip them in the bud before they take place.

If you can't eat one cookie and insist on eating the entire pack, then stop buying them. Don't even have one.

If you eat late at night then it's time to go to bed earlier! Or maybe brush your teeth so they're clean and fresh so you don't eat because you don't want to clean them again.

Use your food diary to identify when and why you're eating goes wrong. Then work at putting preventive measures in place.

It's like the smoker who only smokes when they drink. And they drink a lot!

How does one quit smoking? Do I really need to tell you?!

And yes, it does take discipline and determination.

Which brings additional benefits because it will make you feel good about yourself, it will improve your confidence and put you back in charge of you.

With a little discipline and strong willed determination you can pretty much accomplish anything (not just Clean Eating).

Putting It ALL Together

Clean Eating is super-simple.

You eat *real* food that was grown in the ground, picked from bush or a tree, swam in our waters, flew in our sky or grazed on our land.

When you eat clean you don't have to calorie count and you shouldn't have to worry about your weight.

Your body should be well nourished and well fueled with everything it needs to **thrive**.

And while Clean Eating is simple it is **no longer** easy because of the world we live in and the foods that are marketed to us.

But ironically, it's marketing that is the easiest indicator of what you should not be eating.

No one has to market and package broccoli. They don't have to sell us on the benefits of eating it. It is what it is – a green plant that grew in the ground packed with goodness. No one has to tell us about the vitamins and minerals in it or how it can help us. We already know that!

Cereals, low-fat readymade meals and other food products on, the other hand, marketed to us because there no obvious benefits and there is rarely a reason, we should choose them over *real* food.

The producers have to package the products and fortify them with vitamins and minerals or make this-that-and-the-other claims about how that particular product is good for us (with no mention of how it is bad for us). Or they sell them on *convenience*, taking advantage of our busy lives at the expense of our health.

And somewhere along the line (between growing the food and the chemicals that were added) the processing has literally stripped anything of any good from these lifeless foods products.

They don't nourish us and they don't fill us up.

They mask our hunger hormones and affect our metabolism.

They are just calories for the sake of calories.

And this is now the norm.

Big food companies coupled with the fact that your friends and family will look at you strange for eating nothing but *real* food is what makes Clean Eating tough.

It's makes food choice hard.

It surrounds us with temptation.

But you can do it!

A quick reminder of the main points:

Step #1 Make a Commitment to Clean Eating

Remember this isn't a diet it is a way of life. You might not crack it immediately but you will crack it if you persist.

And the results will happen as fast as you can implement these new habits and this "new" way of eating.

If you can make all the changes and make them stick, then do it.

Step #2 Keep a Food Diary

We can only improve the things we measure. Before you start Eating Clean, keep a food diary and then analyze it for major problems.

Look for the problems you make 20% of the time that bring about 80% of the problems.

If you can keep your food diary indefinitely then do it. But if not just do it when you make changes to your diet or introduce a new habit to monitor how you feel. Or if you start to slip – keep a food diary because it will make you more conscious of what you are eating.

It is the reference guide you need to keep yourself on track.

Step #3 Focus on Habits

Good habits are easy to live with. The reality is you stand a much greater chance of change if you make Clean Eating a habit and the best way to do that is by working on one habit at a time.

Pick one of the rules of Clean Eating and work to make each rule a permanent habit.

This is a healthy and sustainable eating plan and it is the only one you will ever need so the time and effort it takes is more than worth it.

You will reap the rewards and see changes in the mirror and in your health.

Step #4 Plan and Prepare

Planning and preparation are critical. Plan your food for the week ahead and then buy the foods you need for the week ahead.

Know what you are going to eat on every day and then cook your food the night before, get up and do it in the morning or bulk cook your meals at the weekends.

This is one of the most important aspects to successful Clean Eating.

Step #5 Give Yourself Permission to Fail

Bad habits are hard to live with and these bad habits (whatever they may be) can catch you out.

It might be forgetting to shop, failing to prepare or binge eating late one night. We all make mistakes and you don't have to be perfect but you do have to try and get this 80 - 90% right.

When it goes wrong and when you make a mistake.

That's life. Make a note of it in your food diary and take steps to avoid making the same mistake again.

Just make sure you never beat yourself up or let others get in the way of your goals.

Step #6 Find Your Reason *Why*

Remember there are two reasons for everything. The reason we tell other people and the *real* reason we keep to ourselves.

Whatever your reason for success, keep it at the forefront of your mind and remind yourself of how important it is to yourself frequently.

And when you feel like you might be starting to slip – think about that reason.

Remember this is worth it! Your future self will thank you for it!

Step #7 Invest in Yourself

By downloading and reading this book you've invested in yourself and your health.

Keep investing in your education about diet, nutrition and cooking. Remember Clean Eating doesn't mean boring eating. The world is awash with different food types, herbs and spices that can all be used to make your food taste better and, in many instances, have their own health properties (garlic for example).

Learn to cook and you'll discover how it tastes better than most of the junk people buy (and call food).

The most important part of investing in yourself is the value you place on your own health, quality of life, and happiness. Most people do not embrace the fact that what happens to our health is each of our own responsibility.

Health doesn't happen to us; we happen to it by the choices that we make along the way. Clean eating talks about the importance of the decisions we make.

Taking it one step further, we also need to understand that in order to turn our health around we have to be willing to do more than just eat clean. We have to understand that repair of one's health often requires more intervention than just eating food.

While cleaning up what you consume will directly impact your health and quality of life it may not be enough to undo damage or turn back the clock. There may be testing that needs to be done in order to unveil the root cause of a problem.

Summary

The real joy of Clean Eating is looking a really good meal (even a curry) and knowing it was cooked from scratch with real food and (ideally) grown organically by local people you can meet on Saturday at the market.

It's good for your body, it's a great education to pass onto our children, support farmers over industrial food companies and helps us look better, live longer and be happier too. Food definitely affects our hormones and our hormones control everything.

There really is no downside to Clean Eating and (if you're super-motivated) you might even start growing your own food, save more money, have fun outdoors and learn a really important skill all at the same time.

Its exciting stuff you should be proud to be a part of and (fingers crossed) continues to spread.

Hopefully the *real* food revolution is here! Here's to a happy, healthy and very long future.

Keep Eating Clean, Value your health, Work with someone in Functional Medicine to help determine the root cause of health problems and disease. This will allow you the ability to target the areas that need attention instead of throwing darts in the dark.

Dr. Michele Louiselle is a functional medicine practitioner specializing in Gut dysfunction (Auto Immune disease), Weight Loss, Adrenal Fatigue and Hormone imbalances.

Clean Eating Resources

<https://www.cimwellness.com/>