

The All You Can Eat Love Diet
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All You Can Eat Love Diet

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Introduction

Hello, thanks for downloading this book. If you are looking for more love in your life, or less excess weight, this book can help you. I've made it pretty short, because we're all very busy these days. Who has time to read several hundred pages? Better that you read a short book and actually learn and use something, rather than not even start reading a long book.

Congratulations on being still open to trying yet another method to lose weight, given the large amount of misinformation out there. After trying one diet after another it's really easy to give up and decide that it's just not possible for you to lose weight. It is possible. For you. Your persistence in reading this book is the very quality which will lead you to your goal.

Please read these pages slowly and see if anything resonates with you. If so, great, you've found something useful. If not, just let it go. Some ideas might seem strange at first, so feel free to discuss them with friends or family to see if you can find some sense in them. Don't blindly believe anything written here, or anywhere for that matter: make up your own mind.

So why is this book called *the All You Can Eat Love Diet*? Read on, and you'll find out!

Will Power Won't Work!

One thing you've probably already noticed is that will power doesn't usually help in the long term. Sure, you might be able to lose a few pounds initially, but sooner or later the discipline goes out of the window and you end up going off the rails. Then you feel guilty and/or start judging yourself for not being strong enough to stick with the plan.

Something isn't quite right here. That's because will power is usually about using force to suppress a part of you. An inner dictatorship that in the long term never works. Why would you want to suppress a part of you which has wants and desires? Any kind of inner struggle can never last very long, and usually you'll go back to what you've always done.

So what's the solution? I'm afraid there is no quick fix. It's a longer term project: you need to become somebody who easily and naturally lives in such a way that you maintain a fit and healthy body, and weight is no longer an issue to you. You need to actually change who you are, to heal whatever parts of you get something out of being overweight.

Again, if you're looking for a quick fix, you may as well stop reading now. However, there is an upside to this: as you gradually move in the right direction, you'll begin to lose weight without even trying. You'll just naturally eat less, eat less unhealthy food, and exercise more and more often, without trying. It'll be effortless. You'll no longer even need to think about it.

Isn't that something worth working towards? Solving the whole weight issue once and for all? Never having to think about diet ever again, or having to go against your own wishes? Yes, it is possible, and with patience and persistence, you can get there.

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Some Questions To Think About

Here is a list of questions to help you to identify what's behind your current situation around overeating. Please note that there are no right or wrong answers. There is no judgment about how you answer, the purpose of asking is to get a clear picture of the inner aspects of your situation. Knowledge is power and the more you know, the more your chances of succeeding.

Do write down your answers, as writing has the effect of focusing our attention. It's easy enough to answer them in our head, but by writing the answers down, we can get clearer about them. Once down on paper, we can reflect upon them, and clarify them, resulting in more detail. Everything you discover about yourself here can help you in the rest of the book.

Motivation

Why do you want to lose weight?
Is it because somebody told you to do so, or because you really want to?

Body Image

How do you feel about your body?
Do you like some parts?
Do you hate other parts?
If so, why? Does feeling that way help?
What is your idea of the perfect body shape?
Where did you get this idea from?
Is it realistic?

Overeating

Do you overeat? If so, why? Is it a way of numbing uncomfortable feelings?
How do you feel when you overeat? Does feeling that way help?
When do you overeat? Are there any consistent patterns you can see?

Early Lessons

Are your parents overweight? Your siblings? Your spouse and/or children?
What are their attitudes and habits around eating?
What are their attitudes and habits around exercise?
What do your family members think of your desire to lose weight?

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Hidden Benefits

What are the advantages of being overweight?
What are the disadvantages of overweight?
What are the advantages of losing weight?
What are the disadvantages of losing weight?

Peer Pressure

How do your close friends feel about your current weight? About you losing weight? About you becoming slim? Slimmer than they are?
How do you feel about your current relationships?
How do you feel about the opposite sex?

Limiting Beliefs

Is it possible for you to lose weight?
Is it safe for you to lose weight?
Do you have permission to lose weight?
Do you deserve to lose weight?
Are you worried that you'll only put it back on again later?

Dietary Beliefs

What you do think is a good diet?
A bad diet?
Why do you believe that?

What Next?

By exploring your answers to these questions, losing weight will become easier. However, it won't happen overnight, so please do be persistent and don't be hard on yourself if you don't always live up to your highest ideals. We're all doing the best that we can, and beating yourself up for not being perfect isn't useful. Be gentle with yourself - you're worth it.

As you read the rest of this short book, bear in mind your answers to these questions. As you begin to use and master these new ideas, you'll be able to choose more effective answers to the questions we've just explored, answers which support you better in your goal of moving towards a healthier and more sustainable body weight.

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The Secret Revealed

In this first section we take a look at love and how it relates to food. You don't think there is a connection? Read on, you might be surprised! A couple of simple experiments reveal an unexpected result, showing us how we might replace the excess food in our life with love.

Without further ado, let's start with an important question.

Why Do We Overeat?

Much of the information on losing weight focuses on what to eat, and how to exercise. These are good questions, but they miss a vital issue: why do we overeat? What causes us to eat so much? Unless we look at this, we probably won't make much progress. Given the increasing number of overweight people today, this question is very important.

How about you? Do you overeat when you're feeling happy? Do you cram down extra food when you're peaceful and relaxing? Do you eat too much when you're feeling content? Or do you perhaps find yourself eating too much when you're feeling anxious or uncomfortable? How about when you're worried about something or somebody? Hmmm ...

For each of us, the answers might be different to a degree, but there's a common thread that underlies most situations: we overeat when we aren't comfortable. We use food as a drug to numb our emotional pain, our sadness, our worry, any negative emotions we don't know how to deal with. What if there was a better way to deal with these uncomfortable emotions?

What Is The Upside?

What do you get out of overeating? What do you get out of being overweight? These are probably strange questions for you! Still, they are valuable to explore. There are usually reasons for why we do what we do, and why we are as we are. So please do take a little time to consider these questions. What you find out about yourself might make all the difference.

So again, what do you get out of overeating? What are the benefits of being overweight? Maybe you don't have to deal with the opposite sex by being overweight. Maybe you get sympathy. Maybe overeating comforts you when you're feeling down. Maybe overeating is a common bond with your peer group. Maybe being overweight gets you out of exercising.

Let's explore the opposite question: what would you lose if you weren't overweight? What would be the downside of not overeating? Maybe you'd have to face your fears? Maybe your partner would want to get closer to you? Maybe you believe your parents wouldn't love you any more? Maybe you wouldn't be able to use your weight as an excuse any more?

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Whatever you come up with, please don't judge yourself. This isn't useful and will only make you feel bad. Just notice whatever you can find, and see how there are logical reasons why you stay overweight. You might ask these questions to your friends and family, to see if they have any useful insights for you. Whatever you discover will be useful in this journey.

What Do We Really Want?

What do we want above all else? A good job? A nice place to live? A long and interesting life? These are all worthy desires, but above all, we want to have love in our life. Different styles or flavors of love perhaps, but above all, we all want to have love in our lives. The giving of love, the receiving of love, the sharing of love. How about you? Is that true for you?

Think about it: would you prefer love ... or a new car? Would you prefer love ... or a million dollars? Would you prefer love ... or a house on the beach? Even though these things would be nice to have, without love in our life, they're pretty meaningless. Why are so many books, songs and movies about love?

What's the point in having piles of money, or a red sports car or other nice toys, if we live alone and without love? We might be able to amuse ourselves for a while, but sooner or later we crave that basic human connection. Without it, we shrivel up and die long before our time.

Love.

Where Do We Look For It?

If what we really want is love, this question follows naturally. According to Hollywood and almost every song on the radio, the answer is simple: find somebody to love us. Then we've got it made. As there are so many people out there, this should be easy! Out we go to find somebody to love us, somebody who'll adore us, make us whole. Or so we believe.

Sure, there will be some ups and downs in any relationship, but overall we've got it made if we can find somebody who loves us. Warts and all, he or she will love us almost in spite of ourselves. Life will be bliss. Isn't that the message we get so often from the media?

So we focus our attention upon finding that ideal partner, that other half who will complete us at last. We wear just the right clothes, look in all the right places, and read up on what men or women really want. Hmm ... this isn't as easy as we thought! Surely it should just happen, shouldn't it? Surely we don't have to put all this effort into finding our soul mate?

All the time we're whipping ourselves up into a state of frenzy, convinced that we're not complete unless we can find this other. So we spend our time in a state of lack, a state of wanting, convinced that our lives can never really be ok until we find The One. This sense of lack is not attractive, and it doesn't feel good either.

How about when we find a partner to love us? How many of these apparently perfect unions actually last? We all know the divorce statistics, increasing every time we stop to measure them. These relationships don't always go as smoothly as we hope.

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And that isn't the only challenge. While we do enjoy much of the time we spend in relationship, especially at the beginning, we also worry that it might end. What if my partner leaves me? What if they find somebody else? What if they die? How would I cope? Worry, fear, and doubt, all of which eat away at the love that might have been there to start with.

We also know of a few couples who appear to beat the odds, but often only because they soldier on together in unhappy marriages, resigning themselves to lives of quiet desperation. Is this any better? What a choice: stay in a loveless union, or return to being alone and lonely again?

And so the show goes on. We enter into relationship, after a while it comes to an end, and we enter into a long or not so long period of introspection, trying to figure out what went wrong. Was it me? Was it the other? Was it both of us? How can I prevent that from happening again? What does it take to create a successful partnership?

Usually not much wiser, we soon decide to plunge back into the game, preferring to play rather than watch from the sidelines. Anything to avoid being alone. To paraphrase Oscar Wilde: "seeking another relationship is a triumph of hope over experience". And so we go on, serial monogamists most of us, for the rest of our lives.

Yet much of the time, whether in unsatisfactory relationships, or alone and lonely, we aren't happy. Our various partners aren't able to make us happy in the long term. And, to be fair, we probably never made them happy either. This grim prospect doesn't even consider the all too frequent event of infidelity within relationships.

So is that it? Is this all we can look forward to for the rest of our lives? Is there no hope? Is there another way?

Looking In The Wrong Places

Let's explore a little and try an experiment. Relax your body, and think of somebody or something you really love. It doesn't matter who or what you choose, only that you feel love when you bring up this memory. Get right into this memory and feel the love. Think of a specific time, see whatever you could see, hear the sounds and feel how you felt then.

Doesn't it feel good? Doesn't it feel wonderful? Isn't this the feeling we're all yearning for? Isn't it strange that you can feel this way just by remembering love from the past? What does that mean about all the time and money we spend looking for love?

Now think of a time when somebody loved you but you didn't return the affection. It doesn't feel very good, does it? How about when somebody loved you, but you never knew about it. Not knowing meant that you didn't feel their love, did you? This is strange? Isn't being loved the Holy Grail of life? How come it didn't feel good in these situations?

What can we learn from this? When you remember loving, you feel great. When you remember being loved, very often this doesn't feel the same. So maybe the joy, the energy, the aliveness lies in loving, and not being loved? Isn't that the opposite of what we've been taught?

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Ok, so when somebody loved you and you *wanted* them to love you, it did feel great. To love and be loved at the same time, what a joy! However, the difference again is that you loved them. If you did, it felt great. If you didn't, not so great. Again, it comes down to whether or not *you* love. Suddenly, it's not about somebody else anymore, it's about you.

Even better, you don't have to remember love from the past, you can look around you right here and now and find things that you love. They needn't be large or important things. How about a sunny day? Or a good film? Or a loving pet? A favorite book? The list is endless. Just by tapping into something you appreciate, you can feel the love that you want anytime.

Does this mean that you shouldn't be in relationship with a partner? Not at all! What it means is that you're probably going to enjoy a much more loving connection if you come from a place of loving. Offer love first and foremost, instead of firstly looking to get love from your partner. Seek to love first, then to be loved, and you'll probably do much better.

Now return to a loving memory from the past again. Choose a different one to the last time and see if you can relax right into that feeling. Recreate your surroundings from this memory, so that you feel as if you're right back there. Enjoy it, bask in it. How wonderful that we have the power to feel love whenever we wish. The trick is to remember!

Who Is It That You Love?

If you think about it, the love you feel is pretty much the same no matter whom or what you're loving. It might be mixed with other emotions, such as respect, lust, confusion or excitement, but the love is the same. This means that the more you practice loving, the better at loving you become. There's no shortage: the more you love, the easier it becomes.

You might love different aspects of people, places or things, or you might love something different in each of them, but the love is the same. Make it a priority to love as many different people, places, events and things as you can. Not primarily for their sake, but for yours! The great thing about loving is that you're not dependant upon another, you can love anytime.

Please note: loving somebody doesn't mean obligation towards them. You don't have to marry everyone you love, you don't have to do anything at all. Love is its own reward. Don't imagine that loving somebody has certain expectations, because it doesn't. Just loving is enough. What you choose to do from that place of love is up to you.

Love And Happiness

When you're loving, you feel happy with who or what you love. You feel accepting and at peace. Also, when you're happy, you're usually feeling loving. In many ways, love is the flip side of happiness. So if we want more love in our lives, we can work on being happier, and vice versa.

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Perhaps love is happiness turned outwards? Perhaps happiness is love focused inwards? Either way, they seem to be intimately connected, so when we feel one, we feel the other. If you find happiness easier than the love, simply changing your perspective reveals love. The Dalai Lama was once asked about the purpose of life. With a beaming smile, he replied:

"to be happy"

Maybe he knows something that we've forgotten?

The Only True Security

How much energy do we put into finding security? How much energy do we put into saving enough money to be secure? How much is enough? When we get that much, will we really feel secure, or just search for even more? Will the treadmill ever stop? Does anything ever stay the same? Can we ever find security in the outside world?

Maybe there really is no security in things like money. After all, the stock market could crash, you could lose your job, the fund manager could run off with your money. So much to worry about, not very secure! Not only can you feel insecure and anxious about how to accumulate money, you can also feel insecure and anxious about losing it once you've got it!

So maybe the only real security we can achieve is in learning to love. If we can love consistently, we find that outer challenges no longer affect us as much. We find ourselves more at peace with the world, even if we still wish to change some part of it. With love, other things don't matter quite so much. Maybe love is the only true security?

Why Don't We Feel Loving More Often?

Think of how a baby or young child acts in the world. Most of the time they are happy, trusting and loving. Sure, now and then they cry for food, or when they are wet, but overall they're pretty content. They're curious, they're interested, and they seem to love not only most people, but also most things and situations. Maybe it's natural to feel this way?

It's only when young children start being judged and criticized that they start feeling anything but happy as their natural state. Gradually their natural trust in themselves and the world gets rocked, as they're told to stop doing this, don't do that, and generally restrict the way they are in the world. They start changing how they are and how they act to prevent such criticism.

These comments are often offered with the best possible intention: to keep the child safe. Parents and others often try to protect children from harm by giving them a long list of things they shouldn't do, things to avoid, and behavior they mustn't do. Unfortunately, this begins to build layer upon layer of confusion over their previous natural state of loving.

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This process continues throughout most of our adult lives as we're continually told how we're not good enough, how we need to improve this or change that, otherwise we just don't measure up. It's no surprise that many (most?) of us spend much of the time wondering just how we need to be, think and behave in order to be good enough in the eyes of the world.

The Journey To Love

So what's the solution? A gradual process of seeing where we've learnt to judge ourselves and others, and letting go of such habits. While it's not an instant transformation, with a firm desire and a gentle heart, we can look for such habits within ourselves, and let them go. For each one we drop, we become a little happier, and return closer to our natural state of being.

It's not a process of gaining anything, or becoming something we're not already. It's more of a process of letting go of anything that has removed us from our earlier relaxed, loving, trusting nature. Underneath all the rules & judgements & roles we've learnt over the years, our original free nature is waiting for us. All we have to do is let go.

That's what this book is about: simple ways of returning to our natural state of being: loving, peaceful and trusting. The more we can let go of anything that keeps us uncomfortable, unhappy or untrusting, the less we'll need to use food or other drugs to deal with our discomfort. This will lead without effort to a normal weight, as well as a life full of love.

Note: sometimes we send our love to another, and then get disappointed when it isn't returned, or when our expectations aren't met. This can be very painful. The simplest solution is not to have any expectations of our love being returned. Just love for the sake of love, not with any demand that it come back to us, or how the object of our love should respond.

Is this easy? Maybe not initially, but with practice we can all develop this skill of loving without expectation. This is of course unconditional love. Any time we add any sort of condition or expectation to our love, we are setting ourselves up for disappointment. Love just for the sheer joy of love, then you cannot be disappointed by how it is received.

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Ten Steps To Love

Ok, you say, that's all very well, I can see that learning to love is a great idea, but how I can actually do it? Good question. It's no good knowing the rewards of love without some tools to get you there. This book introduces ten simple ways to increase the love in your life, all of which are based upon the principle of focusing on loving first, rather than being loved.

As you gradually begin to master these ideas, you'll find yourself becoming happier and more loving naturally. You won't need to try, it'll just happen automatically. This will lead to that other useful side benefit: you will find yourself overeating less, and any excess weight you have now will also begin to fade away, without having to use will power or force.

1 - Do What You Love To Do

Such a simple idea, but how often do we practice it? So often we get caught up in duty, or other people's expectations. Don't think that you have to keep doing things that you don't enjoy. This is a guaranteed way to feel frustrated and resentful. Resistance is no path to love or peace of mind. Resistance stops all that we want from coming into our lives.

It might not happen overnight, but with persistence we can all gradually move towards doing what we love doing. This is especially important at work. Spending 40 hours or more each week doing something you don't enjoy will ensure you are miserable, no matter how much money you earn. Not to mention the dreadful affect it has on your health and family life.

Yes, there may be doubts about your ability to find something you love doing for a living, but until you ask the question, you'll never know. Have the courage to ask the question, to take the risk, to do what you love. Often, if you just ask, answers will come to you. It might take trying a few different things before you find the ideal vocation, but you'll get there.

Each of us have special gifts, special skills, and the effort required to find a way to do what we love for a living is well worth it. After all, if you love your work, it's not work anymore. It's joy, and delight, and love. You'll never work another day in your life. Isn't that more appealing than enduring yet another dull endless working week praying for the weekend?

Exercise: sit down with a piece of paper and write down on the left hand side the various activities that you do during a typical week. Then mark on the right hand side whether you enjoy doing them or not. When you're done, take a look to see whether you enjoy all, most of, about half of, some of, or hardly any of those activities. Just notice without judgement.

If there are less enjoyable activities than you'd like, think about how you can improve the balance. How can you do more of what you love during the week? Or maybe less of what you don't love? Is there any way you could actually enjoy some of the tasks you currently dislike? Could you swap some tasks with somebody else who likes doing them? Hmmm ...

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2 - Carefully Choose The Company You Keep

How supportive are your friends and family? Do they encourage you? Love you? Accept you? Let you live your own life? Enjoy your successes? If not, why are you spending time with them? Surely not duty or obligation? Is it really worth it?

Who we spend our time with makes a huge difference in how we feel. If we are with a close friend who really supports us and enjoys our company, we feel great. If we spend time with negative people who constantly criticize us, then we'll feel pretty bad much of the time. Why would we want to continue to do that?

There is no unwritten law that we must spend time with people just because we've done so in the past. People change, we change, things change, we always have the chance to choose differently. So consider very carefully. Your health, happiness and wealth depend upon it. Difficult to believe? Try making some changes and see how much better you feel.

Do you spend time with people who really do enjoy who you are, people with whom you have a wonderful time, people whom you look forward to seeing again? If so, great! Prioritize spending time with them. If not, consider spending less time, or even no time with them. Life's too short to waste with people who consistently bring you down.

Exercise: sit down with another sheet of paper and write down on the left hand side a list of everybody that you spend time with during a typical week. Whether a minute or many hours, list them all. Then on the right hand side write down how much you enjoy the time that you spend with this person. Don't sugar coat it, this is for your eyes only. Be totally honest.

Now take a look to see where you're spending most of your time. Is it with loving, supportive, friendly people whose company you really enjoy? Do you feel uplifted after spending time with them? Or drained and depressed? Have a think about how you can spend more time in good company and less time with bad company. Your time is precious so think carefully.

If you spend time with draining people who are pretty much unavoidable in the short term, see if there's a way you can make that time better. It might be speaking out to them about what is and isn't acceptable behavior. e.g. no complaining or whining. It might be explaining to them how depressing such behavior is, probably to both of you. If this works, great. If it doesn't, see if you can find a way to gradually sever contact with such draining people.

3 - Let Go Of Obligation And Duty

So often we live our life by the things we think we should do, the things we believe we must do. Duty. Obligation. Unfortunately, this often produces tension, especially if we don't want to do the thing we think we should. We rebel and struggle internally, which is stressful. Our health and happiness both suffer.

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The way out of this is to realize that there is nothing that we have to do at all! No shoulds, no musts, no obligations at all in life. Certainly, there are consequences to our actions, and it's good to be aware of these. But forcing ourselves to do things we don't want to do is counterproductive. All we do is resist, procrastinate, feel guilty, and generally miserable.

What if you chose to only do the things you wanted to do? How would you feel? Happier, perhaps? Sometimes we might not want to do something right now, but if we look at the long term consequences, we can find a reason to do that thing. Think long term and not just short term, it helps you to find a reason to do things which might not make sense this minute.

But if you can't find a good short term or long term reason to do something, other than you think that you ought to do it, perhaps you can let go of it. This will release much tension within you, free up lots of blocked energy, usually some time, will allow you to relax more and be happier in your life, and therefore more naturally loving.

Exercise: Take a piece of paper and write down on the left hand side a list of all the things that you do in a typical week that you want to do. Now write on the right hand side a list of all the things you do during the week that you only do because you think that you have to do them. Anything that you do from a sense of obligation or duty, put down.

Now take a look at the paper and see where the balance is: are there more items on the left hand side or the right hand side? How do you feel about that? See if there's any way you can begin changing the balance by letting go of things you do out of obligation, and beginning to do more things that you really want to do. How does it feel to change that balance?

4- Forgive Everybody And Everything

Whenever we hold onto a past wrong that somebody has done to us, we are only hurting ourselves. Whenever we continue to blame ourselves for something we did in the past, we are only hurting ourselves. The past is over, and keeping count of and hanging onto old incidents that we judge can never help us in the present. The key to freedom is to forgive. Always.

This doesn't mean we have to agree with what happened, only that we let it go. We cannot change the past. All we can do is forgive. This will free up enormous amounts of energy that we had invested in keeping track of who wronged us, how badly, and how dreadful it was for them to do that to us. It's useful to learn from the past, but it doesn't serve us to live there.

Even more important is that we learn to forgive ourselves. Just like everybody else, we're doing the best that we can in each moment, and have no cause to judge ourselves if we fail to meet some standard. Judging ourselves only leads to low self esteem, to feeling badly about ourselves and a lack of self confidence. None of these outcomes are useful.

Even better than forgiving ourselves and others is not to judge in the first place. This might seem hard to do, but that's only because we've been taught to judge all of our lives. We can create a new pattern if we choose, by learning not to judge ourselves or others. This leaves us freer in each moment to enjoy life, here and now.

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Exercise: make a list of the people you still hold a grudge against. They may be still in your life, they may have moved on, they may be long dead. It doesn't matter. You're not hurting them by your grudge, you're only hurting yourself. Then add to the list all the things that you judge yourself about: past, present and future. All of them, even the small things.

Now, take the smallest thing on your list, and see if you can forgive the person you blame, either yourself or another. Start with the smallest thing so that it doesn't seem too difficult. What can you gain by hanging onto judgement? Would you rather be right (are you right?) or would you rather be happy? Once done, move up the list to bigger and bigger items.

5 - Stay In The Present Moment

One thing we are very good at is thinking about the future or the past much of the time. The trouble with this is that we often end up stressing ourselves about things we can't do much about. The past is already past, feeling guilty or ashamed about it doesn't help. It only stops you from feeling good. Learn from the past, yes, but once that's done, let it go.

Planning does have a role in life, but worrying about things you cannot change serves no purpose at all. Anxiety about future events doesn't help us to prepare for them, it makes us think less clearly about them, and leaves us less able to prepare for them. It also stops us from enjoying the present. Worrying about the future is paying interest on a debt not yet due.

By remaining in the present, we are able to notice things in our life that often pass us by. How often do we miss the joys of sharing a moment with our partner, or watching the trees blow in the wind, or the sun set? Only by remaining present can we actually experience what's happening now. Everything else is a dream of the future or a memory of the past.

Exercise: find ways to regularly check to see if you're being present. Put up small Post-it notes saying: are you present? Or set your watch to chime every hour, and when it does, ask yourself the same question. If you weren't being present, don't judge or blame yourself, just refocus yourself to the here and now. You'll find yourself becoming more and more present.

6 - Observe Your Patterns Of Thinking

Part of the challenge is that we've picked up many habits of thinking and behaving over the years which aren't helpful. e.g. getting upset whenever a particular person does something that annoys us. If we're not aware of this habit, it's not very easy to change our reaction. The first step to change is always becoming aware of something that's not working for us.

That's why observing ourselves is so useful. Not so that we can beat ourselves up whenever we find something negative, but so that we can notice our patterns and, if we wish, chose a new thought or action. Observing allows us to consciously choose a more useful response. Between action and reaction is always an opportunity to choose a different response.

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Exercise: one of the best ways to do this is to meditate. This doesn't have to be a strange religious experience from the East, it can be very simple. Just sit down for ten or twenty minutes each day and observe your thoughts, notice what flows through your mind, without judgement or condemnation. Don't get caught up in your thoughts, just notice them.

Simply by observing yourself regularly, you will notice thoughts and beliefs which aren't useful, which don't serve you. You will notice fears and concerns which have no basis in reality. You will start to see how your expectations create your reality. By just noticing such things, you can start to change them. This will lead to more peace and more love in your life.

7 - Accept Yourself And Others

Accepting who you are, how your life is, and how the world is, can really help you move towards love. So often we're taught to judge ourselves, to harshly criticize ourselves, but this is never helpful if we want to change our lives for the better. Only acceptance allows for this. Besides, it feels much better to accept ourselves than to judge ourselves.

Acceptance isn't an excuse not to grow or not to improve. It's just noticing that things are the way they are right now. There's no point struggling against how things are. That would be like being upset because the sun rises every day. As Byron Katie says: *when I judge reality, I lose, but only all of the time.*

Only from acceptance can we choose to make changes in our lives. If we refuse to admit that something is happening, then we have no power to change it. If we refuse to accept the world as it is, then we're getting ourselves upset for no good reason. It doesn't help. Certainly, change yourself and the world if you wish, but do so from a place of peace and acceptance.

The easiest way to accept yourself is to realize that you're doing the best that you can. If you could do better, then you would! This doesn't stop you from making changes if you want to, but it does allow you to stop judging yourself. Instantly you will feel better. This leads to more peace of mind, which leads to more love.

If you're overweight, accepting yourself is even more important. If you continue to judge yourself for being overweight, then you will feel pretty bad much of the time. This will often lead to overeating to mask this bad feeling. This will lead to more weight, and more judgement: a vicious circle. The only way out is to accept yourself as you are right now.

Also, when you're judging yourself for being overweight, then you are focusing on the extra weight. Whatever you focus upon tends to grow, which is another reason why judging yourself doesn't work. Instead, focus on something about your body that you can appreciate, however small. Find a way of feeling good about your body, and that feeling will grow.

Exercise: at the end of your day, take a few moments to see how accepting you were of yourself and others. Think back to see if there were any times that you judged, either yourself or others. Again, don't criticize yourself if there were, just notice them. Then see if you can let go of those judgements. Gradually you will find yourself judging less, and being happier.

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An even better thing to do is to look at yourself daily in a full length mirror. Notice any judgements and just let them go, without arguing one way or another about them. Just be with yourself. See if there's anything you can appreciate about your body. Tell yourself out loud. Tell yourself that you love and accept yourself. Repeat this regularly, and you will begin to.

It might be hard to do at first, but it's worth it. Much research has demonstrated that it can take about a month to change an old habit. By looking at yourself in a mirror each day and speaking new thoughts and appreciation, you're gradually changing how you think and feel about your body. Gradually, with persistence, the change will stick.

8 - The Attitude Of Gratitude

What we focus on determines to a large degree how we feel. If we spend all our time thinking about what we don't have in our life, then we'll feel a sense of lack, and often dwell on the unfairness of it all. In other words, we'll feel unhappy if we focus on what's not there. It's the glass being half empty instead of half full. Sure, we've heard this before, but do we live it?

On the other hand, if we are grateful, if we focus on what we do have in our life that we appreciate, then we'll feel pretty good. It doesn't have to be anything huge, like a new car, we can just as easily appreciate our health, or a letter a friend sent us, or even the meal we are about to eat. Gratitude about things large and small feels really good, and it costs nothing.

In financial terms, to appreciate means to increase in value. When we appreciate the good things in our life, their value also increases. Without doing anything at all, we feel better about our life, and that will lead us to feeling happier and more loving. Not a bad return on investment for taking a moment to feel grateful!

Gratitude doesn't mean that we can't continue to work on improving our lives. Indeed, when we feel grateful and happy, we are far more likely to work effectively to improve our lives than when we feel upset and unhappy that we're lacking something. The choice is ours always: which do you choose?

Exercise: 10x10: take ten minutes at the end of each day to write down ten things you're grateful for. Don't choose the same things each day, see if you can find different things to appreciate. Don't just write them down, really feel grateful for these things. Without feeling the appreciation, this exercise doesn't work. Choose small things as well as larger things.

10x10 take 2. If you live with others, here is an exercise which will transform your lives together. Take ten minutes at the start of the day, and sit down and share appreciation with each other for ten minutes. Take turns to tell each person what you appreciate about them. Be as specific as possible. e.g. I really loved it when you helped me with the cooking last night.

Watch their faces as they listen to this appreciation. It's magic. We all love to be thanked and acknowledged, and it's something we receive all too little of. All it takes is a commitment and a few minutes each day. You'll be surprised at how everybody blossoms from such a seemingly small gesture. What a great way to start your day before going out into the world.

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9 - Don't Compare Yourself To Others

This is one area where it's very easy to get into a downward spiral about our lives. We see somebody who is more successful than we are, and feel inferior or unworthy. We might even feel envy or jealousy. Either way, we feel pretty bad, and that doesn't help us in any way at all. We can easily get stuck in a downward spiral of jealousy and resentment.

By choosing not to compare ourselves with others, we can bypass this whole area of upset, leaving us more able to remain in a place of peace and love. After all, isn't that what we really want? Surely we'd prefer to feel good, rather than to compare ourselves unfavorably to others? The choice is always ours.

If you do notice people who have more than you, and you'd like to achieve similar success, a much better strategy is to work out how they managed to achieve their success, and then follow a similar path. Many (most?) successful people in the world became that way by studying other successful people and deciding to emulate them.

If you do find yourself comparing your situation to that of others, why not compare yourself to those who have it harder than you do? How well off are you if you have any kind of job, house and relationship, when there are countless others who don't have these things? How do you feel when you consider how lucky you are compared to most people in the world?

We can always find evidence to back up whatever thought we want to hang onto. Feeling that you should have more or be doing better? You can always find those who have more or are doing better than you. Feeling blessed and grateful for your life? You can always find reasons to feel that way as well. As always, it's up to us which attitude we wish to live.

Exercise: at the end of each day, review your day to see if you compared yourself unfavorably to others. If you did, don't blame yourself, just notice, and let go. You could also compare yourself to somebody less fortunate than you are instead. Either way, you'll be focusing more on what you have instead of what you lack. This leads to peace and happiness.

10 - Practice Patience And Persistence

This idea of focusing more on loving instead of being loved is probably a new idea for you. After a lifetime of looking for love outside yourself, it might not be so easy to change your way of thinking and behaving overnight. It might take a little while longer. Don't criticize yourself if it takes a while to master this new way of being.

Patience and persistence are crucial to creating a new way of being in the world. Your old habit of looking to be loved took a long time to be formed, and so your new focus of looking firstly to love will also take some time to become a habit. Be gentle with yourself, and persist. Your reward is a life full of love and peace of mind.

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Courtesy of Health Update
<http://visionupdate.net>

If you notice that you're again falling into the trap of looking for love outside of yourself, don't blame or judge yourself. Just notice, and choose to focus on being more loving. Focus on giving love instead of receiving it. Focus on being the source of love instead of feeling that somebody else must give it to you. You'll be more in control of the love in your life.

Exercise: Share these ideas with those who are close to you, and see if you can remind each other during the day, especially if you notice you're getting distracted. At such times, a gentle nudge from somebody dear can remind you to return your focus to loving. It might take a while, but it's worth it. When you learn to love, nobody can ever take that away from you.

There are more ideas later on about how to make sure you master these steps to love. There's no point in just reading about them if you're unable to use them in your life.

Please note: If you notice that many of these steps seem related, or the ideas seem to be repeated, you're right! By revisiting these steps in different forms, we're more able to understand them, master them, and integrate them into our lives. Practice makes perfect!

Bonus Step: Examine Your Beliefs

What do you believe about love? Do you believe that you deserve love? Do you believe that love is possible for you? Do you believe that it's hard to love? Do you believe there are limits to how and to whom love should be expressed? All the beliefs that we have about ourselves, our worthiness, and about love greatly affect how much love we have in our lives.

The strange thing about beliefs is that we all have different ones, but we all think that our beliefs are true! What's that all about? How can we all be right? Maybe it depends upon how we look at beliefs. e.g. whatever we believe we can usually find evidence to prove it. Even if we have a completely different belief to somebody else, we're both sure that we're right.

The world is a good place? We can find plenty of evidence to prove that. The world is a bad place? Again, there is plenty of evidence to back that belief up. So which one is true? Maybe neither! Maybe instead of exploring whether our beliefs are true or not, perhaps it would be more useful to ask whether they are useful or not.

What on earth does that mean? Let's say you believe that people are generally honest and trustworthy. You'll probably trust people in general and get on with most people. Your experience seems to prove your belief is true. If you believe the opposite, you'll probably trust few people, and be cautious and reserved. Again, your evidence will prove your belief.

So again, which belief is true? Neither! Some people are honest and trustworthy, some aren't. So which belief is more useful to you? Maybe the first one, as it seems to produce an easier life for you. Certainly be careful and notice how people behave, but starting from a position of mistrust and dislike is not going to be useful in the long term.

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Exercise: Let's look at some of your beliefs. Take a look at each of the following beliefs and see if you think it's true or not. How do you know it's true? Does it serve you to believe that? How do you feel when you believe this belief? Could the opposite belief perhaps be true? What if it was true? What if neither were true? This might sound very strange, but there are some very useful jewels to be found here.

Here are some beliefs about love you might have:

- I am lovable
- I deserve love
- I like most people
- People generally like me
- Love is easy to find
- Men/women are good company
- There are plenty of good men/women out there
- I enjoy my own company
- Learning is fun and easy
- My life is full of good things

Here are some others to consider:

- I must stay in a bad relationship
- Love hurts
- My relationships never work
- I'm too old for love
- I can't learn anything new
- Love never lasts
- I don't have time to focus on love
- People don't like me
- I'm better off by myself
- I can't love several people at once

Take a look at these beliefs. Which ones do you believe? Which ones don't you believe? How does each belief affect your life? Do they help you live a life of love? If so, great, keep them. If not, consider the opposite belief as a possibility at least. Be open that it might be true. Consider how different your life would be if you believed the opposite.

This can strike directly at who you believe you are, so be gentle with yourself while exploring this process. There are no right or wrong beliefs *, only beliefs which serve us and those that don't serve us. At any moment, if we identify a belief which we no longer wish to have, we can choose a different one. This will make a huge difference in our lives.

Now consider your beliefs around food and weight. Do they serve you? Are they true? How do you know? By exploring beliefs in any area you can make rapid improvement. The first step to change is to be aware of where we are right now, of what our current beliefs are.

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Here are some beliefs about food that you might have:

I eat too much
Being healthy is enjoyable
Food nourishes me
I will always weigh too much
Dieting is no fun
It's hard to know what to eat
It's easy for me to eat well
Eating fat makes you fat
Exercise is boring
Thin people have an easy life

See which of these you believe and which you don't believe. People used to believe smoking was healthy, and now they believe it's very unhealthy. Sometimes the beliefs that society teaches change. That's why it's very important to look at your own beliefs and see if they really are useful. Some are, some aren't. Don't just assume that what you believe is true!

* what about the law of gravity, surely gravity is true? Well ... probably, but be careful even with this one. e.g. hundreds of years ago people thought that gravity meant that human beings could never fly. Now thousands of people fly every day. Did the law of gravity change? Is it true? Maybe, maybe not, but don't consider any belief to be fixed in stone.

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Top Ten Benefits To Focusing On Love

Let's return to that memory of loving which felt so good. What other feelings come up for you? How about joy? Do you feel joyful now? Delight? Peace of mind? Maybe all these feelings are connected? Maybe they are all shortcuts to each other? Play with loving, and see what comes up for you. Practice makes perfect! Here are some more side effects of love:

1 - you will feel great: the best reason to love is to feel good! For most, there's nothing that can match the feeling of loving, and it's free, available whenever you choose to love.

2 - you will lose weight: by loving yourself and others more often and more consistently, you don't need food to mask your discomforts, so excess weight easily and naturally falls away. No depriving yourself, no internal battles of will, no struggle.

3 - you don't need anybody else or anything else to love: you don't need anything external to yourself. You don't need a special permit, nor can anybody stop you. True independence.

4 - your health will improve: science has repeatedly proven that feeling love literally fills your body with many healing chemicals which improve your health and longevity.

5 - your existing relationships will improve: More love can only improve relationships. People usually respond to like with like, so your outgoing love will help them love you more.

6 - you will attract other loving people: again, like attracts like, so you will attract more loving people into your life. Unloving people will either become more loving, or drift away.

7- you will have an easier life: you will be less upset if things go wrong and you will attract less difficult people into your life. Trouble will go elsewhere, and things will flow smoothly.

8 - you will be do better in business: happier workers means less stress, less staff turnover, increased productivity, better customer service, all leading directly to more profits. Besides, people prefer to do business with happy loving people.

9 - you will become wealthier: money worries are really you focusing on not having enough money. This attracts poverty. By loving and trusting, you will begin to attract abundance.

10 - you will help others: even though loving might seem selfish, it also helps those around you. So is it selfish or selfless? Maybe with love, it's both? Sharing love is a true win win situation, as everybody benefits. Not a bad side effect.

Obviously, much more that can be written about these things. If you want to know more, contact me at ed@solutionsontap.com or look out for other books and articles.

Best of all: **you will attract good things into your life:** when we are relaxed and loving and at peace, good things seem to happen to us. Whenever we are unhappy or resistant, we seem to encounter more trouble. Maybe we get what we expect to get? Hmmm ...

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The Graduate Program

Sometimes we find that our habits of thought, feeling and behaviour aren't quite so easy to change. That's why the field of counseling and therapy is large and growing. However, much of the time you can work on your own issues using simple but powerful processes.

Most of the steps in this book involve your conscious mind, which is only a small fraction of your total mind. The unconscious is where the real power lies, and by making changes there, results will be an order of magnitude faster. That's why persistence is so important: it often takes repetition to change unconscious patterns of thinking, feeling and behavior.

Warning: some emotional issues are very serious and require professional attention. If you have serious issues or are currently on medication or in the care of a mental health professional, please discuss the ideas in these books with him/her before applying them. The processes in this book and the sequel have an excellent track record and are perfectly safe, and it's always good to be cautious when trying something new.

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Courtesy of Health Update
<http://visionupdate.net>

Please Give This Book Away!

If you've found something useful in this book, please give it away to anybody you think might be interested. There are many people who would like to find a way to permanently lose weight, and most people would also be interested in finding out how to create more love in their life. By passing this book onto your friends and/or family, you're paying it forward.

If you run a web site or publish a newsletter (online or offline), feel free to upload this book and tell your readers about it. Alternately, you can just put up a link to my web site so that they can download it directly from there.

This Is All A Waste Of Time Unless ...

... you actually use what you've learnt here. Sometimes it's easy to get sidetracked in life, when the demands of work and family ask for our attention. Studies show that most people who buy books never read them, most of those that start reading them never finish them, and that most of those who finish them never apply the ideas. Don't let this happen to you!

The best way you can make sure that you benefit from what you've learnt here is to get regular support. There are many ways of doing this. Firstly, you can give this book to your friends and/or family, so that you are all familiar with these ideas. This allows you to support each other daily or weekly to make sure that you've continuing to apply these ideas.

Each step to love includes a simple exercise to help you master that step. While you might not be able to find the time to do all the exercises daily, you can usually find time to do one. Choose a different step each day and do the exercise, either alone or with others. Then choose a different step the next day, and cycle through them repeatedly until you master them.

Another way you can make regular progress is by creating a simple support group in your community. Offer a regular gathering where people can come along and support each other in making these ideas work in their lives. You can run them at home or another venue, charge or keep them free, even make them into pot luck gatherings. There are many possibilities.

Another way to get regular support is by joining the global online discussion group that lives at <http://groups.yahoo.com/lovedietlite>. Just go to this web site, read the introduction and signup. Once you're registered, please post a short introduction about yourself, stating where you live, what you've found most useful in the book, and any questions you have.

Please note: your email address will NOT be sold or passed onto other companies ever. Your privacy is secure and this discussion group is ONLY for readers of this book to network and support each other. The big advantage of an online discussion group is that you can read and post in your own time, whenever you like, and without needing to travel to a local meeting.

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If you'd like some one on one help, you might benefit from life coaching. I can help you apply these ideas, so that you are more successful at creating more love and less weight in your life. After all, knowing something intellectually isn't any good unless you're able to use and apply what you know. Please don't put this book aside without practicing these ideas.

Regular coaching (phone or email) allows you to get ongoing support and encouragement in your journey. It's like having a gentle, supporting friend who regularly checks in with you to see how you're doing. I only have space for a few new clients at the moment, so don't delay if you would like to work with me. For more information, email me at ed@solutionsontap.com.

The Beginning

Thanks for taking this journey with me. I hope you've found some useful ideas to create more love in your life. Please let me know of your successes along the way. You might just have an idea which I can use, and then pass onto others. Sharing ideas that work is one of life's joys, sometimes much of the satisfaction we can get from a new idea is to pass it onto others.

Remember that even though this book is coming to a close, your journey has not. As Winston Churchill once said: this isn't the end. It's not even the beginning of the end. It is, perhaps, the end of the beginning. Don't let these ideas fall by the wayside: take them and apply them to your life. Then teach others, and soon others in your life will be happier and more loving.

Everybody wins. This will of course make your life happier in return. I sincerely hope that you are able to create more love in your life. I'll leave you with my favorite quote from the song *Nature Boy*, which was heard most recently in the film *Moulin Rouge*:

"The greatest thing you'll ever learn
Is just to love and be loved in return"

Good luck, and may your life be filled with more love and less excess weight,

Ed Wilkinson Sydney, Australia

p.p.p.s. please check out the various resources listed in the appendices. These are all things which I use, and are the best of what I've found on the Internet in over 20 years exploring. Some may appeal to you and some may not, but please at least take a look.

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Appendix A: Health Resources

This EBook comes courtesy of HealthUpdate. Providing you with this valuable resource demonstrates our strong commitment to health, and well being. We hope you have learned a little, and this knowledge has translated into a better understanding, and appreciation of healthful living.

I encourage you to comment on this ebook, and other health issues, and make a contribution to our [Discussion Forum](#).

<http://healthfoodstoresusa.com/phpBB2/viewtopic.php?p=3#3>

Dr. Jay B Stockman

<http://visionupdate.net>

High Blood Pressure

<http://highbloodpressureweb.com/>

Explore the facts about high blood pressure and its causes, symptoms, treatments, diagnosis and hypertensive prevention.

Anti Aging

<http://wrinkletreatmentonline.com/>

Presenting information and product recommendations for facial wrinkle treatment products, anti-aging creams, surgical botox treatments, and laser wrinkle techniques

Substance Dependency

<http://newdrug-rehab-center.com/>

Drug rehab and drug rehabilitation addiction treatment center directory for chemical dependency, substance abuse, and drug rehab treatment facility.

Acne and Skin Care

<http://newacne-control.com/>

Acne information, including medications, scar treatments, natural acne treatments, and acne skin care products to treat adult acne, teenage acne, body acne, back acne, blemishes, pimples, blackheads.

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Clean Environment

<http://air-purifiersite.com/>

Publishing reviews on Air Purifiers, ionic air purifier, indoor air cleaner systems, iqair air purifiers, blueair, allerair air cleaner, and austin air purifiers.

Auditory

<http://hearing-aidsonline.com/>

Extensive information on hearing aids, including digital hearing aids, hearing loss, cochlear implants and tinnitus. View hearing related news, and articles.

Hair Transplant

<http://hair-transplantsite.com/>

Hair Transplant information, forums, and resources about leading hair transplant surgeons specializing in hair loss treatment and hair transplant surgery.

Hair Removal

<http://thelaser-hair-removal-new-york.com/>

Find useful information on laser hair removal procedures, advances, techniques and laser hair removal specialists.

Contact Lenses

<http://1contactlenses.com/>

A consumer guide to contact lenses, and the best places to buy, disposable, special effects, colors, bifocals, contacts for astigmatism, and all contact lens brands.

Health Foods

<http://healthfoodstoresusa.com/>

Your health is clearly your most valuable asset. So considering that fact how do you conserve your health? This website provides the foundation for a healthful life.