

# The Holistic Approach To Eating

Lose  
Extra Weight  
& Keep It Off  
For Life

JANE MOUNTROSE

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And Keep It Off For Life**

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# Table of Contents

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<b>CHAPTER ONE</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Background</b>	
Treating the Whole Person	3
My Experience	5
What Diets Are Missing	6
You Hold the Key to Your Success	7
<b>CHAPTER TWO</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>The Holistic Approach</b>	
Relaxing the Mind and Feeling Good	10
The Conscious and Unconscious Minds	11
Eating and the Unconscious Mind	13
The Plan	14
Five Goals of the Plan	15
<b>CHAPTER THREE</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>Getting Oriented</b>	
The Three Main Elements of the Plan	23
Element 1: Recognizing Your Hunger Level	23
Element 2: Deciding What to Eat	28
Element 3: Feeding Your Ideal Self	28
Preparation Phase: The New Beginning	32

<b>CHAPTER FOUR</b>	<b>35</b>
<b>The Four-Week Plan</b>	
Week 1: Observation	36
Week 2: Breaking Through Your Old Habits	38
Week 3: Changing Your Eating Patterns	40
Week 4: Changing Old Childhood Patterns	41
Beyond Week 4: Keeping It Off For Life	42
The Future	43
<b>CHAPTER FIVE</b>	<b>45</b>
<b>The Journey Begins</b>	
<b>APPENDIX A</b>	<b>49</b>
<b>The Exercises</b>	
Exercise 1: Your Ideal Self	50
Exercise 2: Nice Things You Can Do For Yourself	52
Exercise 3: What If You Really Eat What You Want?	54
Exercise 4: Food Log for Week 1	55
Exercise 5: Observing Your Eating Patterns	56
Exercise 6: Food Log for Week 2	58
Exercise 7: What You Can Do Instead of Eating	59
Exercise 8: Food Log for Week 3 and Beyond	61
Exercise 9: Support From People In Your Life	62
Exercise 10: Patterns From Childhood	64
Exercise 11: Remaining Fears and Reservations	65
Exercise 12: Heavy Foods and Light Foods	66
<b>APPENDIX B</b>	<b>69</b>
<b>The Guided Visualizations</b>	
Visualization 1: Centering and Contacting Your Ideal Self	71
Visualization 2: Centering and The Breakthrough Process	77

<b>APPENDIX C</b>	<b>83</b>
<b>Positive Thoughts</b>	
<b>ABOUT THE AUTHOR</b>	<b>85</b>
Private Consultations	85
<b>TAPES AND TOOLS</b>	<b>87</b>



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# Background

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*All that you need to know today  
is that love is shining in you now.*

*-LEE JAMPOLSKY*

If you have tried a number of diets and failed, you are not alone. Statistics confirm what most of us already know: diets don't work.

Overall, between 25% and 35% of the people in this country are overweight, generally from eating too much. And another 25% are struggling just to maintain. This means that over ½ of all Americans are struggling to one degree or another with eating. Most have tried a variety of torturous diets and have discovered the same thing.

The good news is that the approach I am presenting here is not a diet. It's a journey of self-awareness and growth that allows you to take off extra weight. I have developed the Holistic Approach to Eating based on my own struggle with weight and, ultimate triumph.

From the time I was about seven years old, I was one of those chubby girls. I can remember always being overweight and feeling badly about myself. Then, when I reached adolescence, I began with a variety of diets without finding any lasting success until I was over 40. Nonetheless, I studied the subject so thoroughly that I probably know how many calories there are in almost every food imaginable.

A couple times I actually succeeded in getting my weight down to something around "normal", but maintaining it was a constant struggle. Sooner or later, I always gained it back, plus some. The most consistent thing was that I felt badly about myself: guilty about my lack of control,



## 2 THE HOLISTIC APPROACH TO EATING

wondering why diets didn't work for me and assuming that they must work for someone. This went on until I began to learn more about the mind and could really understand what was happening. Once I figured it out, it became easy. I felt good about myself and maintaining my desired weight became natural and fun.

Now I'm a hypnotherapist. Along with my husband Phillip, I own and operate a hypnotherapy school in Sacramento, California. I also have a private practice and teach classes on the Holistic Approach to Eating. To give you an idea of the potential of this approach, I would like to read a statement from one of my students:

*"I am a veteran of see-saw weight problems of all kinds and have gone on a number of rash diets. This class wasn't like anything I'd done before. It was pure magic! Realistically, it is the most practical and inspiring way to take weight off and keep it off."*

Statistically, only around 1 to 2% of the people who try to manage their weight with diets are able to lose the weight and maintain it over an extended period of time. In his stimulating book "Diets Don't Work", Jack Schwartz estimates it to be less than 1%. The other 99% are left with feelings of low self worth and failure, and frequently end up heavier than when they started.

Most of us who have lived with weight problems dream of losing weight, becoming beautiful, feeling loved and living happily ever after. Unfortunately, this is not what usually happens. Even those with tremendous willpower who are able to beat the odds generally run into trouble down the road. I recently saw a lovely woman on a TV talk show who illustrated the problem. She said that she had managed to lose a lot of weight and keep it off. She looked beautiful, but she added that it was a struggle every day to keep the weight off.

I'm sure that many of you have had similar experiences. You lost weight, but it was a constant struggle to keep it off and more than likely you ultimately gave up. With this program, you can not only lose weight without starving yourself, but you can easily keep it off once you reach

your ideal weight. This is because we are going to look at the reasons you eat, many of which are unconscious. When the reasons you hold onto extra weight are gone, you can release the part you no longer need and become your ideal weight. You will also learn to give yourself the love you need to feel good about yourself regardless of your weight. You can start living happily ever after now.

### **TREATING THE WHOLE PERSON**

With this plan and using some simple visualization techniques (hypnotherapy), we are going to approach weight management holistically, treating you as a whole person, not just a set of symptoms. Unless there are medical restrictions that need to be addressed, you can even continue eating most of the same foods, if that is what you want.

Frankly, if I knew that I was looking at a 1% success rate on a diet, I would give up before I started. Even so, those who try and fail are criticized for their lack of control rather than considering the possibility there is something wrong with the approach. The failed dieters are told that they don't care enough about themselves, that they lack willpower, discipline, and on and on. This only adds to the problem.

Most diets are based on a simple concept: if you are too big, eat less and you will become smaller. This approach treats the symptoms, but completely ignores the source, i.e. the reasons you're eating to begin with. Diets are based on the assumption that you can't control yourself, so you need to be forced to get yourself back together. It feels like punishment, which is the last thing a person who already feels badly about him or her self needs.

As the famous ayurvedic physician Deepok Chopra so aptly put it: weight problems are not just a matter of weight. Your mind has a good reason for everything you do. And as we explore the mind, you will learn to find out what those reasons are and make lasting changes.

We all know what most diets are like:

#### 4 THE HOLISTIC APPROACH TO EATING

1. Your food intake is reduced, sometimes nearly to the point of starvation.
2. Usually, the types of food you can eat are restricted, creating cravings for the forbidden foods.
3. Sometimes exercise is added stimulate the metabolism.
4. Behavior modification may be added to help you to maintain your weight when you have reached your goal.

Amazingly enough, even exercise and behavior modification don't seem to change the statistics. When I think about the calories I use up exercising, my mind sees an opportunity to eat more and I usually end up more than making up for the calories I burned off with exercise. I recommend exercise and will discuss this more later, but I do not recommend connecting the ideas of eating and exercise, even though both are needed to maintain your health.

Diets completely ignore how we function as human beings. We are much more than a body with a brain mounted on top to count calories, which is what I used to feel like. When you look at yourself holistically, at the whole person, you have a conscious and unconscious mind which together determine how you relate to the world. And you are what some people call a four-brained being. You have a physical, emotional, mental and spiritual part. The basic problem is that in most of us, these four parts are operating unconsciously and independently, often in opposition to one another. You may not even know why you eat the way you do, but your unconscious mind has a reason for everything it does. Eating may be its way of dealing with stress, boredom, getting rewards, etc. It may be continuing family rituals and ways of expressing love. It may be protecting you with weight as a way to keep others away and feel safe, particularly with the opposite sex. Looking back, I think eating was my all-purpose solution to any problem I encountered in life. I would eat if I were sick, tired, bored, confused, etc. But it never really worked.

## MY EXPERIENCE

I'd like to share with you a common pattern I fell into during the decades when I was struggling with my weight. I knew I was overweight and that I was eating too much. My body was uncomfortable and I felt sluggish. I felt badly about myself and wanted to change. I would often spend my weekends researching diets and deciding on a reduction plan that I could start first thing Monday.

On Monday, I would be optimistic, fully intending to start on the diet, eat less and lose weight. Sounds reasonable enough. Then I would go off to work and things would start to snowball. Before I knew it, I would end up having two doughnuts and three cookies before lunchtime. After that I would be frustrated and ready to give up.

Now, let's look at what actually happened. To begin, I looked and felt heavy. My body was uncomfortable and wanted to make some changes. That was positive. To help out, my mind did some research and decided on a plan where I could count calories, reduce my food intake and presumably lose weight. Still sounds good. What I didn't count on, though, was those other parts of myself. I went to work and when got there, it was pretty hectic. The office was busy and I was immediately overwhelmed. I began to feel angry and frustrated; what a way to start the week. At that point, my emotions took over and decided I needed a treat to make myself feel better (the emotional part of me hadn't agreed to the diet, by the way). Without asking for permission from my body or my mind, the emotional part easily found a couple of treats and there went all of my good intentions. By the end of the morning, I would decide that I had failed and again felt badly. At that point I would figure that I might as well go out and have a nice big lunch to make myself feel better, again being led around by my emotions. Of course, lunch never made me feel any better. Again, I was back where I started.

I'm sure that many of you have had similar experiences. The way it often goes then is; I didn't do so well today, so I will start tomorrow instead. Or maybe next week: things will surely be different then. The

## **6 THE HOLISTIC APPROACH TO EATING**

fact is, things will probably be the same. You are the one who will need to be different.

### **WHAT DIETS ARE MISSING**

This example shows what most diets are missing: a way to deal with the unconscious components of weight problems. Diets rely on the conscious mind to control the responses coming from the unconscious. What we don't know is that it's just like trying to swim upstream on a river with a strong current. You might succeed for awhile, but even if you do, you have to keep working just to stay even and eventually simply get tired of the effort and allow yourself to float downstream, back into the old way. In comparison, using holistic hypnotherapy and a natural approach, you get the conscious mind and the unconscious mind working together. Then the way to success is like floating on a calm lake with clear water. You know exactly what is happening and how to deal with it.

The key to the Holistic Approach to Eating is to become more sensitive to the body and to shift the emphasis on food in the unconscious mind away from meeting the needs of the mind and emotions and towards feeding and nurturing the body.

Oddly enough, when we overeat to appease our emotional needs, the body suffers, having to digest enormous amounts and types of food that make us feel physically uncomfortable and mentally foggy. And after all of that, we don't feel any better emotionally. Most likely we feel worst, adding on the self-judgment associated with eating. With this plan, you can begin to actually want to eat less and eventually to desire the foods that energize and nourish the body instead of appeasing the mind and emotions.

Hypnotherapy is a wonderful tool for dealing with weight problems. Working with the unconscious mind, you can find out why you eat and develop other ways to deal with emotional, mental and even spiritual reasons for eating. Hypnotherapy can also help you to change the old

eating habits into effective eating strategies that will allow you to maintain your new weight easily, without the old struggle.

## YOU HOLD THE KEY TO YOUR SUCCESS

With this booklet and the guided visualizations that are available in Appendix B and on an audio cassette tape entitled *Visualizations for Change: Becoming Your Ideal*, I am going to provide an effective plan for change, but you hold the key to your success. Life is ultimately a journey of self-discovery and on this journey you need to bring commitment. There is no instant cure. The fact that there are so many diet aids on the market and nearly 1/3 of us is still overweight clearly demonstrates this. You are not going to find a pill or a magic potion that will solve all of your problems in an hour, a day or even a week. **You** have to participate.

The commitment:

- You must make the decision to change.
- You must commit to stay on the program for at least 4 weeks.
- You need to follow the suggestions in this booklet.



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# The Holistic Approach

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*Your task Is not to seek for love,  
but merely to seek and find  
all of the barriers within yourself  
that you have built against it.*

*-A COURSE IN MIRACLES*

Now I want to explain what it means to me to be a whole person. Above everything, the body, emotions and mind that take us through our daily lives, we are beautiful, unique spiritual beings with abilities and potentials that we are only vaguely aware of. We all deserve to love ourselves and to treat ourselves accordingly, yet few of us do.

Together, we are on a journey of self-discovery, of becoming aware of our true identities and abilities, of our Ideal Selves, and letting go of misconceptions and self-imposed limitations that prevent us from reaching this ideal in our daily lives. This is what the journey through life is all about: loving ourselves and others, and becoming more of who we really are. The rest is merely the stage and props we use along the way.

Eating food is an integral part of the journey. We have to have it to survive and it can bring a lot of joy to our lives. Eating should provide energy, vitality and pleasure. Just think of all of the different types of food, with its wonderful aromas and flavors, colors, shapes and textures. Preparing it can be a fun, creative process and eating it is a social as well as a physical experience where we can spend pleasurable time in the company of people we enjoy. So why should we have to constantly suffer



## 10 THE HOLISTIC APPROACH TO EATING

and worry about eating? My main point is that we don't. We can nourish our bodies, enjoy our friends, feel good about ourselves and connect with the Ideal Self we have been longing for.

### RELAXING THE MIND AND FEELING GOOD

If you are new to hypnotherapy and guided visualization, I want you to understand how easy it is. Hypnotherapy is just a way to relax the conscious mind, which is most active when we are in our normal waking state, and open to what is below the surface in the unconscious mind, much like focused daydreaming. It is easiest to achieve this kind of a relaxed state when you are in a quiet place. The short example I am about to give you may be used anywhere to achieve a mild state of relaxation to allow you to feel more focused and good about yourself anywhere. The only exception is that I do not recommend using relaxation techniques while you are driving.

*The most powerful transformational tool we have is to focus on our breathing, which is free and available at any time. In a moment I am going to ask you to stop reading, close your eyes and take a few deep, deep breaths. As you do this, you can imagine that you are taking in pure, fresh air, and fill your lungs completely so your stomach moves out freely. Then as you exhale, imagine that you are releasing all of the tension in your body and exhale completely. Take your time and fully enjoy each breath. Close your eyes for a moment and try this now ...*

*Amazingly enough, most people notice a marked difference in their state of mind just by taking a few deep breaths. A lot of the tension we experience can be related to shallow breathing, so you can easily change your frame of mind by focusing on your breathing and allowing yourself to relax a little. This also increases your body awareness, which most people need to do.*

*Next, I would like you to take another few deep breaths and, as you inhale, do it in a loving way, nourishing and nurturing yourself with each breath, feeling the loving energy flowing throughout your body. Close your eyes for a moment and try this now ...*

*You should feel noticeably different now. This is a wonderful way to take a break and feel good about your self. Whenever you feel tense, you can focus on your breathing and imagine sending that pure, fresh air throughout your body, where there is tightness in your neck, shoulders and back, to relax eye strain, anywhere you are tense, all the way down to the tips of your fingers and toes. If you have so many thoughts running through your head that you cannot focus, you can clear the thoughts with the breath. In a short time, you can think more clearly and focus on the task at hand. Just imagine that you are sending that pure energy into your mind, allowing it to become clearer and clearer with each breath.*

I recommend going through this process a few times, until you can do it on your own, without the script. It's so simple, you can do it almost anywhere. It doesn't take any time to take a loving breath.

As a note, if you found that there was a part that you did not love, or where your body seems to hold a lot of tension, you can continue to breathe energy into that area, and simply allow the hurt feelings that are trapped there to come out. You can ask that part of the body: if it could talk, what would it say? If you are honest and open, you can learn a lot about yourself this way.

### THE CONSCIOUS AND UNCONSCIOUS MINDS

Now that we have had an experience of it, I want to talk about how the conscious and unconscious minds work. We could compare the conscious mind to the tip of an iceberg, with just a small point poking above the surface of the water. Many consider our conscious mind to represent 10% or less of what is really occurring. The other 90% below the surface is like the unconscious mind, which is operating independently, with little or no awareness on our parts.

The unconscious mind is quite amazing. It takes care of a lot of practical functions that are needed for our survival, like breathing, keeping the heart beating and sending blood through the body. Fortunately, these functions occur effortlessly. The unconscious mind also remembers learned responses like how to drive a car. Driving takes a lot of attention at first, but becomes almost effortless after a period of time. The unconscious mind is also considered to be the source of our creativity.

The most important part for our purposes here is how the unconscious mind takes in and organizes information. It is like a huge computer that records all of our experiences and sorts them out so that we are not overloaded with trivial information. This is a valuable and much needed function. Then it creates programs based on the information it has received. These programs determine how we will respond under a given set of circumstances. Ideally, the information used to create the programs would come from the conscious mind, which would determine the most appropriate response, but this is generally not the way it works. More often, the unconscious mind creates its own programs and sometimes they are based on faulty assumptions.

A lot of our programs were created when we were young, mostly before the age of 7. This is when we decide what to value in ourselves, how to behave under the circumstances that come up in our lives and so on. A simple example is a young child whose first experience with a dog is being bitten and frightened. This experience goes into the

unconscious mind with a lot of emotional intensity and the unconscious sets up a program that says ... dog = fear. ... This child and future adult may always respond fearfully to dogs, even though his experience was not typical of most dogs who are loving and caring companions.

Another example from my own experience is a childhood friend. Her father had two nicknames for her: stupid and clumsy. Whenever he addressed her, he used one of these names. Each time her unconscious mind took that information in and what came out was a self-image of being stupid and clumsy. From my observation, she was quite intelligent, but she had a big job ahead of her to understand that herself. In her mind, she was stupid and clumsy, and that was a reasonable conclusion based on her experience.

Examples like this go on and on. I'm sure you can think of some in your own life. Any input a child receives from a parent, teacher or peer has the potential of being taken at face value as an absolute truth by the unconscious mind. This also extends into adulthood. And as a result, most of us are going around with self-imposed limitations that are based on situations that we have entirely forgotten. Unfortunately, the unconscious mind never forgets and will continue to respond in the best way it knows how until the programming is changed.

## **EATING AND THE UNCONSCIOUS MIND**

When we relate these concepts to food, we can understand that we all have reasons for eating the things we eat. It is not that we are out of control. Actually the unconscious mind has a reason for everything. As was mentioned before, we are embarking on a journey of awareness. You are going to find out why you eat and work with your programming. Some examples of programming related to food are obvious, like a child who picked up the name Chubby at an early age. The name becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy, carried out by programs in the unconscious mind.

For now, the important thing to realize is that the reasons we are the way we are, with relation to our weight or any other part of our life, is

## **14 THE HOLISTIC APPROACH TO EATING**

because of the way the four parts of our selves, the physical, emotional, mental and spiritual, interact. It is all based on the programming in the unconscious mind. With hypnotherapy all of this can be easily changed. As you have begun to see first hand, hypnosis is simply a way to access the unconscious mind through relaxation. Then you can make positive changes in the programming. With this approach, we will use techniques to help you understand your programming, make the changes you need to become your personal best and to stay that way for life. This is in reality a lifelong Journey. You will probably need to make adjustments as you go through the different stages of your life and that it can all be joyful.

### **THE PLAN**

With the Holistic Approach to Eating, you can only succeed. There is no failure. You are going to explore how you relate to food in your unconscious mind. With this understanding, you can make deep, lasting changes in the programming and in your life. You will probably find that as you learn more about yourself, you will notice benefits in all aspects of your life. Rather than dieting, you are coming into contact with your True Self.

The program is broken down into a basic Four-Week (or four-phase) Plan that you can follow and continue to use as a guide in the future. Once you understand how it works, all you need is the determination to stay with it and enjoy your success.

To fully understand the Plan requires some commitment. As we all know, any change takes effort. I can't take a magic wand, wave it over your head and - poof - you're done. In a way, that would take out all of the fun anyhow, because this is an opportunity for you to discover more about yourself. Some people are frightened by what might be hiding under the surface in the unconscious mind, thinking that they are about to open Pandora's box. From my experience, this is not the case. What I find in my work with people is that they have unconsciously created limitations about themselves and their possibilities. When they begin to

understand who they really are and their true potential, they become more and more excited about their lives.

The effort you make following the Plan will pay off. If you try to take a shortcut and eliminate the suggestions in this booklet, your chance of success will diminish considerably. The suggestions come from my first hand experience and will help you to keep your focus over time. The decision is yours. Just think of what your options are if you choose to stay with it and if you don't. If you follow the suggestions, your life will change for the better within the next month and you will be on the road to success. If you don't, nothing is going to be different than it is today.

I also recommend working with another person or a few other people, if you have interested friends. With a group, you can share your experiences and help each other out along the way.

## FIVE GOALS OF THE PLAN

Now I want to discuss the 5 main objectives we will explore.

**First, you will get in touch with your body and pay attention to what you are feeling.** You will begin to build a positive relationship with it and feel good about yourself. Remember, with this Plan, there is no failure, just increasing success.

As I mentioned before, weight just begins to come off naturally as a result of following this plan. You can eat whatever you want (considering any medical restrictions). You can also eat as much as you want. The only requirement is that you pay attention. When you get in touch with your body, it will tell you what foods you need to have and how much.

This is a key part of the plan. I have noticed that people who have weight problems often cut themselves off from feeling what is occurring in the body. It is usually a way to separate from the hurt feelings that have caused the problem to begin with. This allows them to eat foods that don't actually agree with them and quantities that make them feel too full without really noticing. I remember in my own case, I rarely experienced hunger when I was overweight. I was usually full. And the

## 16 THE HOLISTIC APPROACH TO EATING

heavy meals I ate made me feel tired. I thought this was normal, but it is not. Eating should leave you feeling wonderful and energized, not like you just swallowed a ton of bricks.

When you are in touch with your body, you will not want to overeat or to eat the wrong foods, because you will want to feel energized. You could compare it to receiving an electric shock when you eat too much or the wrong thing. The shock is a signal that a part of you has made an unwise decision. When you are in touch with your body, food becomes its own kind of shock. You do not want to eat the wrong foods or too much food because of how you know you will feel afterwards - stuffed. This is simply a matter of practice: getting in touch with the body and allowing it to determine what is best for it.

People with weight problems also generally have a bad body image as a part of their programming. When they close their eyes and visualize how they look, they generally see imperfection. This can be changed, because you can get in touch with your Ideal Self: the perfect, divine form of who you are. We will explore this in the first guided visualization process. Once you have developed a positive body image, you can remind yourself of it and allow it to replace the imperfection. In hypnotherapy, this process is known as reframing, which is simply looking at something in a different and more objective way. And when you know how to do this, you can use it in any aspect of your life.

When you contact your Ideal Self, which actually represents your True Self or Soul, you are beginning to observe who you really are. The perception of imperfection is actually an illusion. Most people with weight problems have trouble loving themselves because of all of the negative feedback they have received. In truth, you can love yourself just the way you are. This is a wonderful way to start, to truly understand your value and uniqueness and that it has nothing to do with the way society responds to different body shapes and sizes.

This will allow you to understand what your Ideal Self is, too, because for most of us, society's models of beauty do not correspond to our specific build. You are not aiming to look like a super model. Super models don't even look that good every day. You just want to be your

personal best, to allow your body to be the shape and size that is comfortable and healthy for you.

**Second, you will change the focus around eating.** You will explore the reasons why you eat and shift the focus from control of the mind and emotions to control of the body.

As we have seen, the models we use for diets don't work. We will look at how people who don't have weight problems behave compared with people who do. Interestingly enough, when you ask a thin person why he or she eats, they will generally look at you funny and may even ask if it is a trick question. The obvious answer is that they eat because they are hungry. They are simply allowing their body to do its job. And the things they eat are generally the things they feel like eating.

My husband Phillip is a good example. He has always been thin and seems to eat everything he wants. But when he is not hungry, he refuses to eat, even if it's mealtime. I used to think that was odd, because I was not in tune with my body. I can remember offering him breakfast and him saying he didn't want it because he wasn't hungry. I couldn't understand it; I would eat it whether I was hungry or not.

As you might imagine, when you ask the same question of a person who has trouble with weight, the response is entirely different. You will probably get a long list of reasons for eating, and often hunger is not even on the list. We will explore the emotional, mental and spiritual reasons why you eat and find other ways to fill these needs.

**Third, we will look for temptations that lurk in your environment and develop new responses to these temptations.** One common example is how a family relates food to love. This reminds me of a person I will call Dave who attended one of my classes. Dave was a young man in his twenties. He came from a very close family who got together frequently for meals and to share company. In itself, this is a wonderful, nurturing thing to do. But in Dave's case, his mother spent long hours on the family meals to express her love for them and insisted that they all eat a lot of food, which unconsciously represented accepting



## 18 THE HOLISTIC APPROACH TO EATING

her love. You can imagine what will happen in this family when Dave decides that he doesn't want to eat a big meal that he wants to just eat what his body needs. His mother is going to feel unloved, angry and resentful. Dave needs to develop a strategy to work with his mother and to decide on a way that they can express affection other than overeating.

Other examples may be the bakery wagon at work, the temptation of looking in the frig for a little something when you feel bored, the snacks you always get at the ball game, etc. Eating habits can be like rituals and an experience may seem incomplete without them. We will explore all of the areas where you need to find different ways to relate to the people and food in your life.

**Fourth, we will look at the past and uncover the programs the unconscious mind is running that are sabotaging your success.** Using the second guided visualization, you can open to the unconscious mind and allow the programs to come into your consciousness to be changed or discarded. With hypnotherapy this happens quite naturally. You can explore your childhood and how your family related to food. It may be that you were rewarded with food and continue to unconsciously look at food as a reward to use when you want to feel better. As another example, many of us were forced to clean our plates, which becomes a habit that removes the decision of what to eat from the needs of the body to a direction from the mind.

**Fifth, when we have the entire Plan in place, you will look into the future and focus on long term success.** Once you are on the right track, your weight will naturally gravitate to what is right for you. You will not want to overeat, eat foods that are not good for your body or eat when you are not hungry. You will feel good about yourself and be well on the way to success.

But like anything else, when life presents new challenges, you may occasionally need to review what is happening in relation to the new circumstances. No program can be complete without looking out into the future and having a plan for what to do when this happens. This

final step will assure continued success throughout your life, as you devise ways to meet new challenges and opportunities.

That is the entire plan. It may sound too good to be true - being able to eat whatever you want and as much as you want. But, you won't ever know unless you try it. There is a wonderful freedom that comes when your body really understands that you have removed all of the taboos. All of those cravings for forbidden foods simply go away.

We are now on the way to beginning a wonderful journey. If you choose to come along, it could change your life forever. Next, I am going to break the plan down into four weekly sections with exercises to follow and hypnotherapy techniques that you can use to help you to succeed.

One more note about exercise: as you become more aware of your body, I hope you will also notice that it really needs and wants to exercise. You can use the guided visualizations in this booklet to look at your relationship to exercise just as we are with food. When I really got in touch with my body, I began to notice that I just wanted to move, which was an entirely new experience for me. If you are not already exercising, I hope this will stimulate you to start on an appropriate exercise program. It will make you feel even better.

I also want to speak a bit about weighing yourself. I generally discourage it. People tend to allow their entire sense of self to revolve around the scale. If you weigh yourself and you are not as light as you wanted to be, you feel badly about yourself - if you weigh less than you expected, you have an excuse for eating a little more and interfering with the progress you made. If you want to weigh yourself, I suggest limiting it to once a week or less, starting when you feel like you are really following the plan. And don't weigh yourself right after a big meal; I used to do that just to beat myself up.



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# Getting Oriented

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*Left to its own devices, your body will find what it needs. If it needs more protein or more carbohydrates, it will crave foods that are high in protein or carbohydrates. ... You can begin to tune into your body's signals."*

*-DR. BOB SCHWARTZ, PhD*

To get started on the Plan, the first thing you need to do is to read this booklet and familiarize yourself with the materials. Then you need to decide that you are willing to commit to following the Four-Week Plan.

## **THE EXERCISES AND GUIDED VISUALIZATIONS**

During each week of the Plan you will be asked to complete a series of written exercises. Writing is a creative and fun process, but most people are reluctant to write things down. The reason is simple; they are afraid. You cannot ignore something if it is in writing. But that is also its power. Studies have shown that people who write down their goals are much more likely to achieve them than those who do not. Keep your eyes fixed on your goal. How important is it to you? And do not take yourself too seriously. The behavior you observe is not the real you; it is just a part of you with a misunderstanding. Look at it from the viewpoint of a neutral observer, like you are detective whose job is to release a wonderful person who is hidden inside you. This will allow you to discover what is hidden in your unconscious mind and how to make changes to succeed.

## 22 THE HOLISTIC APPROACH TO EATING

I remember a student who had been on a series of diet programs throughout her adult life. Over the years, she had lost the desired weight and gained it back several times, but she was determined to continue, saying that attaining her ideal weight was her most important goal. At the first class, I explained the value of writing and that I wanted the participants to write down everything they ate for the next week. Her immediate response was an unqualified “no”. I could see that she was ready to let this small detail prevent her from achieving her main goal in life. If you are reluctant, ask yourself how important this is to you. Writing down what you eat after a meal takes less than a minute of your time and can help you to develop a strong focus on your goal.

The plan also includes doing the guided visualization processes in Appendix B or the audio cassette tape *Visualizations For Change: Becoming Your Ideal* on a regular basis. This is your opportunity to change the unconscious patterns that are holding you back and to become more connected with your True Self. The visualizations are a treat for the body, emotions, mind and spirit, allowing you to soar with the recognition of your true potential.

The exercises and visualization processes serve two main purposes:

1. **Doing the written exercises increases your awareness of what you are doing.** Like writing down what you eat: many of us put food in our mouths throughout the day without even realizing it. A little here, a little there, it all adds up. And who notices if they are actually hungry or not!
2. You will work with guided visualizations to change unconscious patterns and create lasting changes.

Remember that changing any habit takes time. You could realistically plan on spending at least two weeks to break an unwanted habit and two more weeks to establish new strategies to replace it. This

is why it is critical to commit to staying with the Plan for at least four full weeks.

Each week you will be working with a specific theme or goal. But first there is a preparation period, which is where you are now, going through the materials and getting oriented. You can take as much time as you want for this stage, from a day or two to a week or more. Then you can choose to start Week 1 at any time.

### **THE THREE MAIN ELEMENTS OF THE PLAN**

During the preparation period, you can familiarize yourself with the three main elements of the Plan. These provide guidelines on how you can learn to eat in the same way a naturally thin person eats.

#### **ELEMENT 1: RECOGNIZING YOUR HUNGER LEVEL**

All you need to do here is learn to visualize a meter that tells you your hunger level. We can do a simple visualization right now, so you will always know how hungry or full you are. As a note, not all people visualize in the same way. You may find that you feel more or hear more. The key is to do it in your own way, without expectations of how it is supposed to be done.

Some people think they cannot visualize. I had this problem at first myself. I guess I expected that I would see pictures in my mind with the same clarity as I see with my eyes open. That is not the case, at least for me. As an example, imagine that you have a child's alphabet book in your lap. You open the first page and see the letter A and a picture of an object that begins with the letter A. What is the object?

It is probably quite easy to "see" what the object is, and, by the way, there is no correct or incorrect answer. The point is, you most likely visualized an object on the page along with the letter A without even trying. The question to ask yourself is this: how did you know what the object was? Maybe you saw it in your mind's eye, maybe you simply had a feeling about what it would be or maybe you heard a voice identify

## 24 THE HOLISTIC APPROACH TO EATING

what is was. Any of those ways are valid. Just allow yourself to be open when you visualize.

Before you do the process I am about to describe to visualize the meter in your mind, read the material in Table 3.1 and familiarize yourself with the levels of hunger.

Here is the process, which you can use now and repeat until it feels natural and easy to you.

*Begin as you did with the breathing exercise. In a quiet, comfortable place, start with a few deep, loving breaths, imagining that you are inhaling pure light and energy and as you exhale, you are releasing all of the tension from your body, so that with each breath, you become more relaxed and feel lighter and lighter. Allow this wonderful, light feeling to reach every cell of your body, as you become more and more relaxed. Close your eyes for a moment now and take these breaths ...*

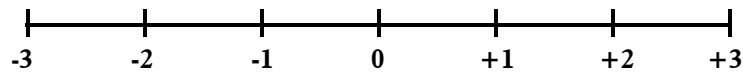
*Next, read this description and look at the meter in Table 3.1, then close your eyes again and visualize it in your imagination. You will imagine that you have a screen in front of you and that you can visualize anything you want to on that screen. It has a zero in the middle, then to the left of the zero are minus numbers from 1 to 3 representing your hunger level and to the right of the zero are positive numbers from 1 to 3 representing your fullness level. Looking at this meter, you can tell right away what your hunger level is, based on the*

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**Table 3.1**  
**Recognizing Your Level of Hunger**

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To recognize your level of hunger, you will imagine that when you close your eyes you can see a meter and it will tell you what your hunger or fullness level is. With practice, you will always be connected with your body and can easily determine the level of the meter.



- 3 = **You are on empty and feel ravenously hungry.** You think you might faint. Avoid going to this extreme; you will feel out of control and tend to overeat.
  - 2 = **You have a healthy hunger.** This is when you want to eat. You have gone through the slightly hungry stage awhile ago and now you know you would like a nice meal. You still feel good, but you know your body needs food.
  - 1 = **You are slightly hungry.** This is the first sign of hunger coming on. It is noticeable, but not really disruptive. You can probably wait awhile still.
  - 0 = **You are comfortable.** You do not feel hungry or full. You feel good. If you are just ending a meal, you feel invigorated by the food you have eaten.
  - +1 = **You feel slightly full.** You notice that your stomach is protruding a little more than usual. You probably had just a little bit too much.
  - +2 = **You definitely feel full.** Now you are sure you had too much to eat. You have to loosen your belt a notch and would rather take a nap than go on with your day.
  - +3 = **You are so full it hurts.** You want to avoid ever getting to this level of fullness. Your body feels like a slug and can't believe you have eaten this much.
-



## 26 THE HOLISTIC APPROACH TO EATING

*feelings you have in your body. The zero is neutral, when your body is comfortable. Then, moving to the left, at -1, you are slightly hungry, at -2, you have reached a good, healthy hunger, which is the right time to eat and at -3, you are overly hungry, and you know that you do not need to be that hungry. To the right of zero, at +1, you are slightly full and just starting to feel a bit heavy, at +2 you are definitely full, with that uncomfortable rock in your stomach feeling, and at +3, you are so full it hurts. You have eaten so much that you feel like you are going to explode. You can tell that you want to stop eating when you are between 0 and +1, so you are satisfied with your meal, but don't have that "full" feeling; you feel energized and invigorated by your meal. Close your eyes now and visualize the meter for a moment.*

*Next you are going to allow the meter to show you what your hunger level is now. And remember that, in the future, whenever you want to see this meter in your mind, it will pop right up on the screen, so you will know just how hungry or how full you are. Also, when you are in touch with your body, you know that you will want to eat when the meter is at around -2, at a healthy hunger, and you will want to stop before you reach +1, when you are satisfied and energized. Close your eyes again, return to the visualization of the meter and see what your hunger level is now.*

*If you are having any trouble seeing what your hunger level is, read the descriptions of the numbers on the meter again until you are familiar with them, then close your eyes again and take another look at the meter. With a little practice you should be able to easily determine your hunger level at any time.*

*When you are done, take a couple more deep breaths, breathing in energy to bring you back to your normal, alert waking state.*

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**Table 3.2**  
**Deciding What To Eat**

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1. Begin by focusing on being connected with your body. For a moment, notice how your body feels from head to toe. Feel how your breath moves in and out. Feel how your feet are connected to the earth. This will create a light state of relaxation.
  2. Now close your eyes for a moment and imagine the hunger meter. What is your level of hunger? Are you hungry enough to eat now?
  3. When you have determined that you are hungry enough to eat, you can focus on what you want to eat. If nothing has come to your mind already, connect with your Ideal Self. (To learn to do this, you first need to do the guided visualization *Centering and Contacting Your Ideal Self*.) Now decide on a possibility and imagine putting that food into your body. Ask the body how that would feel and if it is the right food?
  4. Maybe you will want more than one food, or if the first choice didn't feel good in you imagination, try another one until you come up with a satisfactory meal.
-

## ELEMENT 2: DECIDING WHAT TO EAT

If you are not certain what foods your body wants to have, you may need a bit of practice with body awareness. Following the technique described on Table 3.2 will help you to determine what your body really wants.

Awareness is a key in success with this plan. If you are going to eat anything you want, you need to be aware of the effect on your body. This simple process describes how you can imagine the effects of eating specific foods. It only takes a minute and, like learning to drive a car, with a little practice, you will easily know what your body needs. Before trying this technique, you need to connect with your Ideal Self by doing Guided Visualization 1, *Centering and Contacting Your Ideal Self*.

In the beginning, you may have a lot of foods you want to eat just because you have deprived yourself of them for a long time. It is a good idea to get this out of your system if you don't have any health reasons for restricting your diet. You want your body to know that it can have anything it wants, so you need to let go of the restrictions. After a short period of time, your body will begin to gravitate to more and more healthy foods, until, as you become more sensitive and accustomed to listening to your body, making the right food choices becomes natural for you.

Above all remember that whatever you do you cannot fail; this is a journey of self-discovery.

## ELEMENT 3: FEEDING YOUR IDEAL SELF

This strategy follows the model that people who are naturally thin use. That is:

- You eat only when your body is hungry and eat the foods your body wants.

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**Table 3.3**  
**Feeding Your Ideal Self**  
**Stage 1: Observation**

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1. Eat the foods your body wants. If you can't tell what your body wants, refer to Table 3.2: Deciding What to Eat.
  2. Make mealtime a pleasant, relaxing experience. If possible, sit at a table (avoid eating while driving). Focus on your food and eliminate distractions like the TV on while you eat. Relaxing music is a plus as are flowers, pretty dishes, etc. when possible. When you are at work or out in public, just make the conditions as positive as possible. As a note: if you are having a snack, you may not have time to give it much attention. Nonetheless, you want to focus on eating, not working, driving, watching TV, etc.
  3. Chew your food thoroughly and focus on enjoying every bite.
  4. Eat slowly so that you will notice as your body becomes satisfied. Again, as you begin to feel satiated, close your eyes and notice where the hunger meter is.
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## 30 THE HOLISTIC APPROACH TO EATING

- You make mealtime a pleasant, relaxing experience. Mealtime is much more satisfying when you enjoy your food.
- You focus on eating slowly and enjoying every bite, so you can tell when your body is satisfied.
- You stop eating when your gauge gets to 0 or +1, when you feel satisfied but not physically full.

This strategy is presented in two stages:

1. Observation
2. Making Changes

As you observe your behavior and begin to follow the Plan, your eating habits will begin to change. As with everything else, you cannot fail at this. When you start on Stage 2, you will begin to consciously change your eating habits by allowing yourself to eat whatever you want when your body is hungry with the goal of stopping when you are satisfied. You will probably notice that your cravings will quickly subside if you give yourself permission to eat anything you want and eat whenever you are hungry.

Again, the most important thing is to observe. If you find that you have eaten when you were not hungry or that you ate until you were too full, forgive yourself, focus again on your Ideal Self and remember that you are on the way to achieving that body by gathering more information. The key is to make a note of what happened. What part of you wanted to eat when you were not hungry or made you eat too much?

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**Table 3.4**  
**Feeding Your Ideal Self, Stage 2**  
**Making Changes**

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1. Eat only when your body is hungry. This is very important. Use your hunger meter to determine your level of hunger and only eat when the meter has reached -2.
  2. Eat the foods your body wants. If you can't tell what your body wants, refer to Table 3.2: Deciding What to Eat.
  3. Make mealtime a pleasant, relaxing experience. If possible, sit at a table (avoid eating while driving). Focus on your food and eliminate distractions like the TV on while you eat. Relaxing music is a plus as are flowers, pretty dishes, etc. when possible. When you are at work or out in public, just make the conditions as positive as possible. As a note: if you are having a snack, you may not have time to give it much attention. Nonetheless, you want to focus on eating, not working, driving, watching TV, etc.
  4. Chew your food thoroughly and focus on enjoying every bite.
  5. Eat slowly so that you will notice as your body becomes satisfied. Again, as you begin to feel satiated, close your eyes and notice where the hunger meter is.
  6. Stop eating when your hunger meter gets to 0 or +1.
-

## PREPARATION PHASE: THE NEW BEGINNING

Starting right now, you also have an opportunity to look at yourself in a whole new way and this doesn't require making any external changes at all.

### **Guided Visualizations:**

Before starting week 1, you can get in touch with your Ideal Self, using Guided Visualization 1. This visualization includes a simple relaxation process to release tension and bring you into contact with your True Self. Once you are relaxed, you contact the person who is already within yourself who is your perfect weight. When you have made this contact, you can communicate with this part of yourself on an ongoing basis to help you to meet your goals. He or she already has all of the answers you need.

### **Exercises:**

During the preparation phase, you need to become accustomed to being nice to yourself by completing Exercises 1, 2 and 3 in Appendix A.

**Exercise 1, Your Ideal Self:** You can do this as soon as you have done the first guided visualization, to fill in the details of your Ideal Self and other observations you have when you do the visualization. This is very important. After all, "What you see is what you get." If you see yourself as heavy and unhappy, that is what you will become. On the other hand, if you find the ideal you and see that image, that is what you will become.

**Exercise 2, Nice Things You Can Do For Yourself:** As you prepare to make changes, it is good to start by being nice to yourself. We have been looking at how eating can be a substitute for meeting other needs. These

don't have to be big things - it may just be taking a 5 minute break from your busy schedule to go outside and breathe some fresh air instead of having a few cookies, or taking a bubble bath on Saturday instead of having a big, heavy brunch. Fill out this page and start doing as many nice things as you can for yourself each day.

**Exercise 3, What If You Really Eat What You Want?:** Eating what you want is a key to success with this plan. Doing this exercise will help you to understand your feelings about using this strategy. Many people are afraid that things could become worse. With awareness, this is not the case.

Be sure you have familiarized yourself with the materials, done the first guided visualization and completed exercises 1, 2 and 3 before starting week 1.



**34 THE HOLISTIC APPROACH TO EATING**

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# The Four-Week Plan

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*My body knows the way to being whole and healthy.  
I listen with love to my body's messages.*

-AFFIRMATION BY LOUISE HAY

Now for the details of the journey. This chapter provides specific information for each week or stage in the Plan. You can take it at your own pace and pick up where you leave off any time, if you go off course. You may want to stay with one stage for more than a week and this is fine.

To summarize, there are three basic components of the Plan:

1. **Reading this Booklet:** This provides background information and a complete description of the Plan.
2. **Doing the Guided Visualization Processes:** You will be asked to do each of the two visualizations as you progress with the Four-Week Plan.
3. **Completing the written exercises:** These exercises will help you to focus on the Plan, to learn more about yourself and to develop strategies to make positive changes in your life.

As you follow the Plan, you will be amazed at the changes you'll see in your life and will be well along on the road to success in the next four

## 36 THE HOLISTIC APPROACH TO EATING

weeks. With these materials and easy to follow instructions, you have the power to make lasting changes in your life.

Remember, with this Plan, you cannot fail. If at any time you feel that you have fallen off the track, you can continue to love yourself for being the wonderful person you are and pick up wherever you left off. Each week of the Plan can be seen as a phase. If it takes two weeks to complete one week of the Plan, so be it. The key is to keep going and continue to learn about your self along the way. And remember, if you don't ever start, in four weeks things are going to be just as they are today.

Each week we will be working with a specific theme or goal. Along with the description of each week or, you will find a description of which visualization to do and which exercises to complete before moving to the next week.

### **WEEK 1: OBSERVATION**

Now you get to know more about your reasons for eating. If you are like most people who are concerned about their weight, hunger is just one item on your list of reasons for eating. And right now, you may not be fully aware of the emotional, mental and spiritual needs you are unconsciously trying to fill with food.

#### **Guided Visualizations:**

##### **Guided Visualization 1, *Centering and Contacting Your Ideal Self:***

Continue to use this visualization each day for the next week. It includes a simple relaxation process to release tension and bring you into contact with your Ideal Self. When you have made this contact, you can communicate with this part of yourself on an ongoing basis to help you to meet your goals. He or she already has all of the answers you need.

#### **Exercises:**

**Exercise 4, Food Log for Week 1:** This is where the detective work begins. On this page and using as many additional pages as you need, you are to write down everything you eat during the first week. As an alternative, you can use a little notebook or anything that is easy to carry around. This will expose all of those bits of food that “don’t count”, like tasting while you cook, eating while watching TV or in the car, having just one or two cookies, etc. Whenever you eat something, you will also write down your reason for eating, whether you are hungry, bored, someone else made you do it, whatever. This includes any and all nibbles, no matter how small.

The purpose of this exercise is observation, not self-deprecation. You are free to eat whatever you want. In fact, it is important that you eat what you want, not what you think you should eat. It is the rules that create the sense of deprivation that stays with you all of the time. Other than medical restrictions, you need to begin eating what you want so that you can get in touch with your body and allow it to communicate with you.

When you are in touch with your Ideal Self, you will understand that you are already in a state of perfection. Now it is just a matter of allowing your physical reality to catch up. Your behavior is simply the result of programming in your unconscious mind and observing it is the most direct way of preparing to make changes. Remember about being a detective: just look what you do in a neutral way, without judgment. Then it can actually be fun and sometimes even amusing.

A note on eating: avoid sneaking. If you feel good about yourself, you should be able to eat what you want in full view of anybody and everybody. If you feel like hiding, ask yourself why.

**Exercise 5, Observing Your Eating Patterns:** After spending a week observing your self and writing down what you eat, you should know a lot more about yourself. At the end of the week, fill out Exercise 5. On these pages you can write down what you have noticed.

By the end of the first week, you should already notice some changes. They may seem subtle at first, but just a small change in course increases with time.

## **WEEK 2: BREAKING THROUGH YOUR OLD HABITS**

You will probably notice during the first week that simply observing your eating patterns changes them. This is because you are changing unconscious behavior into conscious behavior, which is the first step in making lasting changes. As a note, this can also make you feel slightly uncomfortable, so it is important just to stay with it. Now you are ready to move further. Start to use your internal gauge to monitor your hunger level and implement more strategies for working with the reasons you eat other than hunger.

### **Guided Visualizations:**

**Guided Visualization 2, *Centering and The Breakthrough Process*:** You can start using this visualization at the beginning of the second week. It starts with a relaxation and centering process that you can continue to use in the future for relaxation. Then there is a process that allows you to release the old patterns and move into a new way of living. You can literally break through any limitations you want to leave behind. I recently heard Oprah Winfrey mention on her show that she discovered that the most important factor in making a change in her life is really deciding to do it, leaving all of her reservations behind. This is true for all of us. We have to approach change wholeheartedly. This is breaking through; you can decide to change at any moment. I suggest that you use this visualization at least every other day during the second week. As the week progresses, you may make some changes in your commitment.

Also continue with the first visualization every other day. Observe your Ideal Self. You may notice new things and the picture may become clearer as you progress. Take time to look more and more deeply at the

truth of who you are: at your inner beauty, your unique gifts, what you have to offer to the world. Talk with this Ideal You as you would to your closest friend, which is who he or she truly is.

### **Exercises:**

**Exercise 6, Food Log for Week 2:** This is a continuation of your log from week one, only this time, when you eat, you will add your hunger level to your observations. You are still free to eat whatever you want.

**Exercise 7, What You Can Do Instead of Eating:** This is a follow-up to Exercise 5, where you wrote down your eating patterns at the end of Week 1. Now, you can begin to develop strategies for filling the needs that are not actually related to hunger. For each pattern you observed in Exercise 5, write down ways you can fill your needs instead of eating. For example, if you are tired a lot, your body may be telling you to sleep more. Eating won't help at all. Or if you are bored at work, you may want to bring a cassette or CD player into the office and listen to music while you work. Or if you become nervous, you may simply need to take a few deep breaths before continuing with whatever you are doing. Again, eating doesn't really help with any of these things. You can be creative with this and begin to experiment. This is really another step in doing nice things for yourself as well and in balancing the four parts of yourself.

## **WEEK 3: CHANGING YOUR EATING PATTERNS**

This week we are going to start to consciously change your eating patterns. You will begin to work with the aim of eating only when your hunger level has reached a -2 on your gauge and stopping when you are around 0 to +1 on your gauge.

### **Guided Visualizations:**

## 40 THE HOLISTIC APPROACH TO EATING

I recommend as a minimum that you do the Centering Process at the beginning of Guided Visualization 2 each day. If you feel a need for more, use whatever seems appropriate to you. And do first guided visualization again at least once during the week, to notice any changes in your Ideal Self.

### **Exercises:**

**Exercise 8, Food Log for Week 3 and Beyond:** This is the final stage of the strategy for feeding your Ideal Self. You can eat whatever your body wants, with the aim to eat only when your body is hungry and stop when your body is satisfied. This may take some practice, but it becomes quite natural after awhile. And remember: you can't fail. If you eat too much, just wait until you are hungry to eat again. Use each experience to learn more about yourself.

**Exercise 9, Support From People in Your Life:** Before you start making any changes, fill out this form and prepare yourself to enlist assistance from the people who may work against your goal. Usually they have good intentions, but they force you to eat for the wrong reasons. Occasionally they are openly trying to sabotage your goals. As soon as possible, speak with each of these people and tell them how they can support you with this new lifestyle. I know that this can take courage. You have to look within yourself for what is right for you and not allow others to interfere with what you really want. You have to be able to say "no" when you mean "no".

## **WEEK 4: CHANGING OLD CHILDHOOD PATTERNS**

With Week 4, we are going through the last stage of observation: how food was used when you were a child. The ways your family related to food undoubtedly provided the foundation for the habits you have as an adult. You may have already had observations about this in the Breakthrough Process. The key is to observe how food was used then and

how you want to use it now. This involves finding new strategies to use as alternates to eating. One common pattern I can remember was to empty my plate. I used to be really good at this, just the way my parents taught me. Unfortunately, all it got me was fat, and didn't actually help any starving kids in China. A good question here is: is there actually more value in eating when you are full than discarding a bit of food that would only turn into fat anyway?

### **Guided Visualizations:**

I recommend as a minimum doing the Centering Process and adding more as you feel a need. Also do the first visualization at least once to observe changes and do the Breakthrough Process at least once to let go of those old childhood patterns.

### **Exercises:**

**Exercise 8, Food Log:** Like week 3, you will write down everything you eat and your hunger level before and after eating, with the aim to eat only when you are hungry and stop when you are satisfied. You can make copies of this form or use your own. The point is to write down what you eat for as long as you need it to help you to maintain your focus. You can also go back to it at any time in the future if you feel like you are going off the track. Writing down what you are eating is the best way to bring your awareness to what is happening and allow you to again find strategies to get back on track.

**Exercise 10, Patterns From Childhood:** This is where you can write down the patterns you developed when you were a child. Again, you can also decide on things to do instead of eating. The key is to implement the changes right away, as you have done before.

**Exercise 11, Remaining Fears and Reservations:** At the end of the week, as you prepare to go off on your own, write down any remaining



## 42 THE HOLISTIC APPROACH TO EATING

fears and reservations. Most of us go around with a few nagging reservations about what we are doing. This is your opportunity to become more aware of them and let them go, with the help of the Breakthrough Process.

### **BEYOND WEEK 4: KEEPING IT OFF FOR LIFE**

By the time you finish Week 4, you should know everything you need to continue until you achieve your Ideal Self, and to keep it for life. All you need is to continue to pay attention to what you are doing and stay in touch with that Ideal Self.

Around this time you may want to eliminate foods in your house that you no longer want to eat on a regular basis. I do this with most desserts. I don't tell myself I can't have them, I simply make it necessary to go and get them one at a time. This makes it easier to turn them down when I don't really want to have them. Is also do not keep most "snack foods" like potato chips and pretzels around the house.

**Exercise 12, Heavy Foods and Light Foods:** Once you really get the hang of this, you may want to focus on not having as many foods that make you feel heavy and having more foods that make you feel light. This is only for when your body feels satisfied that it can have anything that it wants and may want to refine its choices a little. I have noticed that people who eat a lot of empty calories, like soft drinks, other sweets and fats, feel less satisfied with their food than those who eat nutritious food. Also, eating refined carbohydrates like white bread and white rice is not as satisfying as eating whole grains. If you are already losing weight effectively, you not want to complete this exercise. If you want to improve your results, try this and focus when you eat on having the foods that make you feel lighter.

This plan and all of the exercises, visualizations and techniques are here to bring you in touch with your self in a whole new way, allowing you to develop a relationship with your True Self, so that it can express

itself fully in your life. Just as weight problems are not just about weight, taking off weight is not just about taking off weight. It is about being free to be all that you can be. This is what our entire world needs now and as you grow and express yourself in new ways, you will help others to grow, too.

## THE FUTURE

In time, when you achieve the results you want, you may not need to focus on the Plan to maintain your weight. But things change in our lives and new challenges may cause you to go off track. If this happens, you can go back to the guided visualizations and exercises to regain your focus. Since everything is connected on the journey through life, this will also help you to understand your challenges in a deeper way. Gaining weight may just be your True Self's way of telling you that there is something you need to understand.

The first thing to do is start to write down what you are eating again, using Exercise 7, for week 3 and beyond. This will remind you of what you are doing and allow you to observe why you are eating. You can also use the guided visualizations and review the exercises as needed. From my experience, just writing down what I ate was usually enough, along with a regular relaxation process. I had to return to the writing exercise a few times over a period of several years before it became so deeply engrained in all of the parts of my consciousness that I haven't had a challenge that threw me off track for a number of years now. If I start to feel a little heavy, I just focus a bit more on waiting until I am hungry to eat. But I know that more challenges await me in life and that I am ready to meet them when they come along.



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# The Journey Begins

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*Loving yourself  
means accepting yourself as you are right now.*

-SANAYA ROMAN

Now the path is fully laid out before you. You have an opportunity to explore the reasons why you eat and begin what could be a whole new life. In some cases, the reasons for eating may involve relationships to people or activities that need to be changed to be able to lose the weight. These situations are not always easy to deal with, but they are the challenges we are here to face. If you are not ready to make the changes, that is your choice; the time may not be right for you. I once worked with an overweight woman who had a difficult marriage. Her husband was abusive and encouraged her to be heavy to keep other men away from her. Her relationship was preventing her from doing the things that brought her joy, but she wasn't ready to change. She was afraid to go out on her own. She finally decided that it was not the right time for her and I honored her decision.

I have noticed that for many people, the time comes when they decide that they are going to take control of their lives regardless of the obstacles and miraculous things happen. They decide they deserve to be their ideal weight and do whatever it takes to achieve their goal. As you now know, this is an opportunity to get in touch with yourself in a whole new way: to develop a relationship with your True Self, the ideal you, and allow that Ideal You to express him or her self fully in your life. It is about being free to be all that you can be.

## 46 THE HOLISTIC APPROACH TO EATING

A few reminders before you begin:

- **This is a no-fail plan.** In each moment you have an opportunity to go further, to learn more about yourself and make progress towards becoming the Ideal You. If you get off track for awhile, you can start again at any time. Nothing has been lost.
- **You hold the key to your success.** Remember the commitment for 4 weeks. And, if possible, do it with a friend. It is easier with two or more to stay on track and you have someone else to share your experiences with.
- **Pay attention to what you are doing and look at yourself with out judgment.** This may take practice. Try the detective technique and pretend that you are looking at an interesting stranger as you observe your behavior.
- **Don't use your scale to "weigh" your success.** If you want to weigh yourself, It's best to limit it once a week or less, just to give you a general idea of how things are going. Your main focus should be on the internal changes that you are making. As you change the programming and your eating habits, the weight will begin to fall off.
- You should have the approval of your physician before starting any weight reduction plan.

If I were asked what the most important thing to remember is, it would be to love yourself regardless of what you do. Life is an experience of learning and growing and our bodies hold important lessons for us in our spiritual development. The ultimate lesson is unconditional love. I hope that the information and the guided relaxation processes presented in this booklet will help you to love and appreciate yourself more, to

understand what a unique and magnificent person you are regardless of what you weigh.



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# The Exercises

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*You can never get enough  
of what you don't really want.*

-ERIC HOFFER

The following exercises will help you to keep your eyes fixed on your goal. They are important keys to your success. I guarantee that if you work with these exercises along with the guided visualization processes, you will learn some new things about yourself.

The exercises will also bring fully into your awareness things you kind of knew, but didn't know how to deal with before. With the tools provided here, you can bring them out into the open and feel free to move beyond them. I compare the unconscious to a garbage collector, who collects all of the pieces of "stuff" we cannot process when it happens and saves them for us to deal with at a later time. Often that later time never comes and we end up with a lot of garbage filling our minds and our lives. In reality, this is what prevents most people from simply being and enjoying themselves. Now you can empty the garbage and find more fulfillment in your life.



**Exercise 1: Your Ideal Self**

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Before you write down the qualities of your Ideal Self, do Guided Visualization 1, which includes a visualization of this Ideal You. Understand that “What you see is what you get” and allow yourself to change any aspects of the image that are not what you want to have for yourself. Also, remember that your Ideal Self is what is ideal for YOU, not a reflection of what society dictates as the ideal. The goal for the Ideal Self is to have a body that feels vibrant and healthy to you. When you have developed this image, write down the qualities of the image, including as many of the five senses as you can.

How does this body look to you?

What kind of clothing is he or she wearing?

Is there anything else you notice, like the hair, shoes, jewelry, etc.?

How does the body feel physically?

How do you feel about the body emotionally?

What kinds of sounds do you associate with this Ideal Self?

Are there any scents associated with this image?

If you were to imagine a color or colors that relate to the image what would they be?

What does this Ideal Self value most in life?

What gifts does this Ideal Self have to offer?

## **Exercise 2: Nice Things You Can Do for Yourself**

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Most of us are too hard on ourselves or we may ignore one or more aspects of our being. Our lifestyles have become hurried and stressful in many ways. On this page, you can write down small ways that you can to show kindness and love for all of the different parts of yourself throughout the day (other than with food). They can be simple things like taking a 10-minute break to go out and get some fresh air in the middle of the morning, buying or picking a few flowers for your self or taking a bubble bath on Saturday.

If the categories don't exactly fit your lifestyle, make up your own. Use your imagination.

### **Some nice things that I could do for myself at home:**

For my body:

For my emotions:

For my mind:

For my spirit:

**Some nice things that I could do for myself at work:  
(If you don't work, at the place you spend your productive time)**

For my body:

For my emotions:

For my mind:

For my spirit:



**Exercise 4: Food Log for Week One**

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On this page and as many additional pages as you need, write down the dates, times (breakfast, lunch, dinner, afternoon snack, etc.) and everything you eat during Week 1. Also make a note of your reason for eating, whether you are hungry, bored, someone made you do it, whatever. This includes any and all nibbles, no matter how small.

During the first week, you are going to focus on observing your eating habits. There is no right or wrong about this. You are simply gathering data. Remember: the most important thing is to feel good about your self and to take positive steps toward change. This is the first step. You can eat anything you want.

<b>Date/Meal</b>	<b>Food Eaten</b>	<b>Reason for Eating</b>
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**Exercise 5: Observing Your Eating Patterns**

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One of the main keys to making lasting changes in your relationship with food is to make a conscious effort to observe your reasons for eating beyond feeding and nourishing the body. This form should be filled out at the end of the first week, when you have had some time to observe your patterns of behavior. If the categories don't exactly fit, add your own and use an extra page if needed.

**Food may be used as a cover for discomfort in the body**

**Physical Reasons      When  
other than hunger:**

- When I am tired \_\_\_\_\_
- When I feel sick \_\_\_\_\_
- To relax \_\_\_\_\_
- For something to do \_\_\_\_\_
- For a change of pace \_\_\_\_\_
- Others: \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

**Food is frequently used to soothe the emotions**

**Emotional Reasons:      When  
To make up for:**

- An unpleasant time \_\_\_\_\_
- Nervousness \_\_\_\_\_
- When I am frustrated \_\_\_\_\_
- Out of boredom \_\_\_\_\_
- When I am anxious \_\_\_\_\_

Others: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Your mind may have rules for when you can eat**

**Mental Reasons:      When**

Others offer food      \_\_\_\_\_  
To clean my plate      \_\_\_\_\_  
At sporting events      \_\_\_\_\_  
At coffee breaks      \_\_\_\_\_  
While watching TV      \_\_\_\_\_  
Others: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Food is often a way to provide love or fill the void when that indefinable something is missing.**

**Spiritual Reasons      When**

As a reward      \_\_\_\_\_  
For love      \_\_\_\_\_  
To feel important      \_\_\_\_\_  
For companionship      \_\_\_\_\_  
To fill an inner void      \_\_\_\_\_  
Others: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



**Exercise 6: Food Log for Week Two**

---

This week, every time you eat, write down what you ate, your hunger level before and after eating and your reason for eating. Again, the purpose is to observe. You are free to eat anything you want.

<b>Date/Meal</b>	<b>Food Eaten</b>	<b>Reason for Eating</b>	<b>Hunger Level Before/After</b>
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**Exercise 7: What You Can Do Instead of Eating**

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Once you have observed an eating pattern that you want to change, the first step is to develop a strategy. What you have been doing is filling needs with food and now you need to find new ways to satisfy those needs so that you can use food exclusively for its intended purpose: to feed and nurture the body. Complete this exercise as a follow-up to the Observing Your Eating Patterns form to help you to begin to make the desired changes. Use the categories from the other exercise, adding your own as required. You can continue adding to the list as you notice other patterns.

**Food may be used as a cover for discomfort in the body**

<b>Physical Reasons (other than hunger):</b>	<b>What I will do instead of eating:</b>
When I am tired	_____
When I feel sick	_____
To relax	_____
For something to do	_____
For a change of pace	_____
Others: _____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

**Food is frequently used to soothe the emotions**

<b>Emotional Reasons: To make up for</b>	<b>What I will do instead of eating:</b>
An unpleasant time	_____
Nervousness	_____
When I am frustrated	_____

**60 THE HOLISTIC APPROACH TO EATING**

Out of boredom \_\_\_\_\_  
When I am anxious \_\_\_\_\_  
Others: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Your mind may have rules for when you can eat**

<b>Mental Reasons:</b>	<b>What I will do instead of eating:</b>
Others offer food	_____
To clean my plate	_____
At sporting events	_____
At coffee breaks	_____
While watching TV	_____
Others: _____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

**Food may provide love or fill the void when that indefinable something is missing.**

<b>Spiritual Reasons</b>	<b>What I will do instead of eating:</b>
As a reward	_____
For love	_____
To feel important	_____
For companionship	_____
To fill an inner void	_____
Others: _____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

### **Exercise 8: Food Log for Week 3 & Beyond**

---

This week, every time you eat, write down what you eat, your hunger level before and after eating and, if you still need to observe it, your reason for eating.

You are still free to eat anything you want. This week you should have the goal of eating when you have a healthy hunger, at around  $-2$ , and stop when you feel satisfied, at around  $0$  to  $+1$ . Regardless of what happens, however, the most important thing is to feel good about your self and to stay with it. Continue to notice your reactions as a neutral observer.

<b>Date/Meal</b>	<b>Food Eaten</b>	<b>Reason for Eating (optional)</b>	<b>Hunger Level Before/After</b>
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### **Exercise 11: Remaining Fears & Reservations**

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After using the plan for a few weeks, you should have learned quite a bit about yourself and changed many of the patterns that were causing you to overeat. Most people still have a couple of reservations left nonetheless. If you do, you can use this page to write down any lingering fears and reservations about our potential for being successful for life using these methods. Then you can use Guided Visualization 2, The Breakthrough Process, to release those fears and reservations.



### **Exercise 12: Heavy Foods and Light Foods**

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Once you are accustomed to using the techniques for feeding and nurturing your Ideal Self, you may find that weight simply begins to drop off easily and effortlessly. If this is not the case and you are sincerely following the plan, you can make a few adjustments that will improve your success.

We are starting with the assumption that you want to be lighter, so it naturally follows that you will want to eat the foods that make your body feel lighter. From my observation of people with weight problems, the foods that cause them the most difficulties are fats, including fatty meats, butter, cheeses, etc., and heavy carbohydrates like starches, sugars, etc. The relationship between eating fat and being fat is simple enough to understand. Even when foods are fat free, like all the new lines of potato chips, crackers, fat free ice creams, etc., which are on the market, they still can put on weight when eaten in large quantities.

The purpose of this exercise is to write down your observations of foods you eat that make you feel heavy and those that make you feel light. Once you have completed both columns, you can begin to incorporate more of the foods that make you feel light and less of the foods that make you feel heavy, at least while you are reducing your weight.

<u>Foods That Make Me Feel Heavy</u>	<u>Foods That Make Me Feel Light</u>
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

<u>Foods That Make Me Feel Heavy</u>	<u>Foods That Make Me Feel Light</u>
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# The Guided Visualizations

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*Your higher self will guide you  
in the right direction so that you can make the changes  
you are asking for, or have what you want.*

-SANAYA ROMAN

If you are new to guided visualizations, I can give you a few tips. After all, working with the unconscious mind is different from our normal waking state.

- Create a positive setting where you can relax and open to your deeper self. Allow the time to be just for you, with no distractions and allow ample time to complete the entire visualization, which is at least 15-20 minutes for the visualizations presented here. To enhance the experience, you can play soft music and/or light a candle in the room. You may want to cover yourself with a cozy comforter or blanket if you tend to get cold.
- As you begin, allow your brain to relax, set aside your rational mind and logical thinking. This is hard for some people to do, but it is important, because you want to go into a place where your imagination can become active. I tell my mind that I want it to wait and evaluate the experience later, when I'm done and that allows me to just experience what is happening in the moment.

## 70 THE HOLISTIC APPROACH TO EATING

- Open to your inner senses; your inner sight, feeling and hearing. Some people even experience smells and tastes as a part of their visualization. Each person is unique in this area; some feel more, some see more. Rather than expecting anything specific to happen, just allow the experience to unfold, to be what it is. Your inner senses can open you to a whole new way of experiencing life.
- As you open to your inner world, the unconscious mind expresses itself with imagery and symbolism, so you will receive the best results if you just accept whatever you experience without questioning it, even if you do not understand it at first. We will be exploring imagery connected with some situations that have been difficult for you. Working with a client, I can recall her seeing an image of a barren landscape with dead grass and a gray sky when she focused on a problem she was having. Along with this there was a wind that sounded like it was moaning and she understandably felt depressed. This was not a place she had been; instead her unconscious was expressing how dismal the experience was. As we continued and were able to bring more awareness to the situation, the barren landscape transformed itself into a beautiful green forest with tall trees, a blue sky, puffy clouds and a bright golden sun overhead. Birds were chirping and she felt wonderful. Without knowing much about imagery, you can pretty easily understand the differences. Opening to the unconscious can be a creative and enlightening experience. Every cloud has a silver lining. When you are shown dismal images, your Soul, who expresses him or her self through the unconscious, has a solution to the problem and is ready and willing to reveal it to you. The visualization processes we will explore are designed to allow this to occur. All you need to do is be open-minded and willing to explore your inner world.

The following guided visualization processes are designed for you to read. As you read, you can allow yourself to relax, focusing on each word, then closing your eyes to visualize. In a quiet, comfortable place, you should be able to easily maintain your relaxed state and focus as you

alternate between reading and closing your eyes to visualize. I also recommend having a pad of paper or a journal to write down the information you receive during the visualization. This will help you to keep your focus and recall the details of your experience later.

### **VISUALIZATION 1: CENTERING AND CONTACTING YOUR IDEAL SELF**

We're going to begin with a visualization of your body and a centering process, so you can connect with your True Self or Soul. Then you'll contact your Ideal Self, the magnificent part of you that is waiting to come into your life.

As a note, this same process may be used for issues about exercising or any other problem in your life. Just substitute the problem in your mind for references to weight and food.

Now you're ready to begin.

*Begin as you did with the breathing exercise. Take few deep, loving breaths, imagining that you are inhaling pure light and energy and as you exhale, you are releasing all of the tension from your body, so that with each breath, you become more relaxed and feel lighter and lighter. Allow this wonderful, light feeling to reach every cell of your body, as you become more and more relaxed. Close your eyes for a moment now and take these breaths ...*

*Feel yourself relaxing more and more, so that with each breath, you feel more and more relaxed and your body becomes lighter and lighter, allowing the tension to drift down through your arms, legs and feet and into the earth. Notice that even as you continue reading, you can go into a pleasant state of relaxation, guided by your breath.*

*Now you can visualize your body. This will tell you how you see yourself, and as you continue to use this process, the image will change. First, recall a time when you were eating for a reason other than hunger, like when you were bored or frustrated or at a social gathering. You will find the right time. If you have done this process before, you can go back to another time, or repeat the same one and make note of*

*the changes. Pause for a moment now, close your eyes and visualize that time in your mind.*

*Now continue to focus on that scene and allow yourself to feel now how your body felt then. As you respond to each of the following questions, close your eyes for a moment and notice how you feel, what you see, etc. First, how does it feel physically? How much energy does it have? How does it feel emotionally? How do you feel about yourself? Now, as you continue to focus on your body, make note of what you see in your imagination: the size of your body, the shape, the clothing, how your hair looks and so on. Give yourself enough time to focus on each item with your eyes closed. Make note of any details you notice about this body and if you don't think you see anything, just allow yourself to imagine how it would look if you could see it and make note of that. And make note of the scene you see around you, where you are, if there are other people there, and so on. Now, imagine that if there were any sounds associated with this image, how would they sound? Again, allow time to close your eyes and focus on each item. What is the volume of the sounds? How harmonious are they? What type of rhythm do they have, if any? And if you were to associate a color with this image, what would it be? See and feel this color around yourself and allow the entire image to become completely clear, experiencing it with all of your sense, the feelings in your body, the emotions, how it looks and sounds, even any scents in the air and tastes in your mouth. Close your eyes again for a moment and experience the entire image.*

*Now, when the image is complete, allow yourself to rise above it in your imagination, so it is like a photograph or picture on a screen that you can see below you, separate from yourself. Allow yourself to gently drift to a peaceful place, maybe in some soft billowy clouds or on a magic carpet, whatever is right for you, so you can simply allow yourself to relax. Close your eyes now and allow yourself to drift this peaceful place, noticing the image becoming smaller below you as you go.*

*Now focus on taking some pure, loving breaths, bringing clear energy into your mind with each inhale, so that all of the cells of your brain can relax and any thoughts from the day can simply drift off into*

*the air. Notice how your mind becomes more and more clear with each breath. And, as you continue to read, allow the clear energy to move down so that your entire head is relaxed, your forehead, your jaw and mouth. Feel the relaxation traveling down your neck and shoulders now, again allowing any tension in these areas to simply melt away, so that your neck and shoulders can feel completely relaxed.*

*Now allow a wave of clear energy and relaxation to move gently down your arms, past the elbows and wrists, all the way down to the tips of your fingers. Feel another wave of relaxation moving down from your shoulders so that your entire torso can relax and all of the organs in your body can relax, moving down the chest, relaxing the lungs and heart, the stomach and down past the waist allowing all of the organs in your abdomen to relax. Now feel the relaxation moving all the way down your spine, so that your entire back can relax, melting further into your seat. And allow the relaxation to move down the thighs, to the knees, the ankles and feet, all the way to the tips of your toes, so your entire body is relaxed and filled with clear, pure energy.*

*As you continue to read, begin to focus your breath on the area around your heart, which is where your True Self or Soul is most firmly connected with your body. Imagine that you are sending pure energy into this area, so with each breath there is more and more energy there. And as you continue breathing, you can feel the energy building so it may seem there is a ball of light there around your heart, and this ball of light becomes brighter and brighter, radiating its energy out in all directions. Pause for a moment now and continue breathing energy into this area.*

*Now feel yourself completely surrounded by the energy. Feel this energy permeate every cell of your body with its beautiful light. As you do this, if any pain comes up in your heart, simply allow the pain to come out into your awareness, because releasing this pain will help you to completely embrace the love you hold in your heart. If necessary, you can close your eyes and continue to breathe pure energy into your heart to allow any pain you are experiencing to release. It can also help to*



*write down what you are experiencing, to bring more complete understanding into your awareness.*

*Now you can shift your focus to the area just above your head and imagine that there is another light there. Close your eyes for a moment now if you need help visualizing the light.*

*As you imagine it there, allow this light to begin to pour down through the top of your head and fill your entire body, so you can see and feel yourself filled with the light all the way down to the tips of your fingers and the tips of your toes. As it becomes brighter and brighter, it overflows so that you are completely surrounded with this light and you can feel yourself in perfect harmony and balance with everything that is around you. Close your eyes for a moment and see and feel this light.*

*From this place of peace, you can easily contact your Ideal Self, the Ideal of who you truly are, which includes your ideal body. Imagine that you are in that state of perfection, that you are that Ideal Self now. Like before, as you respond to each of the following questions, close your eyes for a moment and notice how you feel, what you see, etc. First, notice how this Ideal Self and Ideal Body feels physically. How much energy does it have? How does it feel emotionally? How do you feel about yourself? Now, as you continue to imagine this Ideal Self in your mind, make note of what you see. What is the size of this body, the shape, clothing, hair, etc. Take time to make note of all the details of this body. And again, if you don't think you see anything in your mind's eye, just allow yourself to imagine how you would like it to look and make note of that.*

*Now, imagine that if there were any sounds associated with this image, what would they be? What volume? How harmonious? What type of rhythm, if any? And if you were to associate a color with this image, what would it be? Surround yourself with the color and experience the entire image with all of your senses, the feelings in your body, the emotions, the sights and the sounds. Close your eyes for a moment and get a clear image of your Ideal Self in your mind.*

*With the next series of questions, I recommend writing the responses down, allowing the thoughts from that Ideal You to come out*

*on paper. First, ask yourself how this Ideal Self feels about eating? What types of foods does he or she want to have? How does she want this food to feel in your body? Now ask if there is anything else this Ideal You would like to say. Spend a little time getting to know this Ideal Self.*

*Now, staying in contact with your Ideal Self, in a moment I will ask you to look down at the first image you created, which you left below you, and from this peaceful place, send the color you are now surrounded with down to the old image, completely surrounding it. Just follow the color, so that you are in the original scene again, but with all of the feelings, the sights and sounds that you associated with the Ideal Self. Close your eyes now and move down into the first scene.*

*Once you are there, close your eyes again and respond to each of the following questions. Look around and see how the old scene looks to you now. Has it changed? How do you feel about yourself? How much energy and vitality do you have in your body? How does your body look? And how do you feel about eating the food you were so tempted by before?*

*If this image and your reactions to it have changed from the way they were before, if they are closer to your Ideal Self, this means that you are on the way to making this Ideal Self a reality in your life now. Because of this, your future will be different.*

*And as you strengthen your relationship with this Ideal You, communicate. Allow him or her to share with you all the special and unique qualities you have to contribute to the world.*

*As a note, if you were not able to fully experience your Ideal Self, just continue to work with this process and you will notice a shift as you move closer and closer to the ideal. Make particular note of the emotions you are experiencing and what they remind you of in your life. Experiencing these emotions, breathing pure energy into them and allowing them to release will bring you closer to experiencing your Ideal Self. Above all, continue to breathe those loving breaths.*

*Now, I want you to shift your awareness back to the present time and feel yourself where you are, sitting or lying down, making note of your body's position. And, as you breathe, allow your breath to bring*

*you back to your normal waking state, feeling alert and alive, bringing your Ideal Self with you into your daily life. You may feel like moving around a little, wiggling your toes and fingers, and stretching a bit.*

*Counting from 1 to 5, you will feel more and more alert: 1, 2, 3, feeling more awake now, 4 and 5. Now you should feel completely awake and wonderful.*

Now, as you go back into your waking life, remember your Ideal Self as frequently as possible. When you look at yourself in the mirror, see your Ideal Self, feel the feelings, hear the sounds. Let it become you. And when you eat, let the Ideal Self help you to decide if you are really hungry, what your body needs and when you are satisfied.

## **VISUALIZATION 2: CENTERING AND THE BREAKTHROUGH PROCESS**

With this visualization, we are going to start with the Centering Process, which we have done before. You can use this version as a short daily guided meditation to relax and to connect with your True Self, which makes all of your experiences in life more meaningful.

After the Centering Process, we will do the Breakthrough Process. The purpose is to make changes in your life, to literally break through limited beliefs and hurt emotions that can keep you stuck in unproductive patterns. When you do this, I recommend having a pad of paper or a journal handy to make note of the details of your experience, to help you to focus and for future reference.

The Breakthrough Process is quite profound: at any moment you can decide that things are going to be different from now on and leave your reservations behind. You can also use this process to break through any kinds of limitations in your life; just substitute the subject of what you want to change for my references to eating, food and so on. Let yourself be creative, have fun and open your imagination.

We will start as before in a quiet, comfortable place where you will not be disturbed and where you can relax.

*“When you have made yourself comfortable, you can start by taking a few deep breaths and just allow any tension you feel in your body to begin to melt away. By now you should be able to begin to relax as you continue to slowly read each word and you can close your eyes any time you want to deepen the experience. Just continue to fill your lungs with pure, clear air and allow more tension to release with each exhale, so that with each breath, you feel more relaxed and your body is becoming lighter and lighter, allowing the tension to melt down through your body, legs and feet and into the earth. And allow the breath to be loving and nurturing, embracing yourself with relaxation.*

*Now focus on breathing this clear, loving energy into your mind with each inhale, so that all of the cells of your brain can relax and any thoughts from the day can simply drift off into the air. Notice how your mind becomes more and more clear with each breath.*

*Now allow the clear energy to move down so that your entire head is relaxed: your forehead, your jaw and mouth, sending relaxation down your neck and shoulders now, again allowing any tension in these areas to simply melt away so that your neck and shoulders can feel completely relaxed.*

*Now allow a wave of clear energy and relaxation to move gently down your arms, past the elbows and wrists, all the way down to the tips of your fingers. And feel another wave of relaxation moving down from your shoulders so that your entire torso can relax and all of the organs in your body can relax, moving down the chest, relaxing the lungs and heart, the stomach and down past the waist allowing all of the organs in your abdomen to relax. And now feel the relaxation moving all the way down your spine, so that your entire back can relax, melting further into your seat. And allow the relaxation to move down the thighs, to the knees, the ankles and feet, all the way to the tips of your toes, so your entire body is relaxed now and filled with clear, pure energy.*

*As you continue, begin to focus your breath on the area around your heart. Imagine that you are sending pure, loving energy into this area, so that with each breath, there is more and more energy there,*

*and as you continue breathing, you can feel the energy building so it may seem there is a ball of light there around your heart. You may notice that this ball of light becomes brighter and brighter, radiating its energy out in all directions, so that you feel yourself completely surrounded by the energy, the energy of your True Self and you can feel this energy permeate every cell of your body with its beautiful light. If any pain comes up in your heart, simply allow the pain to come out into your awareness, because releasing this pain will help you to completely embrace the love you hold in your heart. If necessary, you can stop for a moment and continue to breathe pure, loving energy into your heart to allow any pain you are experiencing to release.*

*Now you can shift your focus to the area just above your head and imagine that there is another light there. As you imagine it there, allow this light to begin to pour down through the top of your head and again fill your entire body so that you can see and feel yourself filled with the light all the way down to the tips of your fingers and the tips of your toes. And as it becomes brighter and brighter, it overflows so that you are completely surrounded by this light and you can feel yourself in perfect peace and harmony.*

As a note, we just finished the Centering Process, which you can use any time for relaxation and stress reduction. Now we will continue with the Breakthrough Process.

*Now, I would like you to imagine that you are beginning to drift. You can imagine that you are moving slowly through a beautiful mist, still feeling the harmony within yourself and surrounding you, feeling very light and drifting gently. Close your eyes for a moment if you want to feel yourself drifting.*

*And as you continue drifting, you gradually find yourself arriving at a peaceful place on the top of a hill where the mist begins to clear. You find yourself standing on a path, with the your past extending out behind you and the path to your future extending out before you. And directly in front of you is a gate. You can look at this gate and make note of its appearance, its color, materials, and any noteworthy details.*

*Beyond the gate, in the future, your Ideal Self awaits you and you can notice the color, sounds and feelings of this Ideal You permeating your future. Close your eyes now to visualize the scene with the hill, the path, the gate and your future self.*

*And now, I want you to imagine yourself turning around and see the details of the past, especially anything that you need to see to understand more about your relationship to eating. This is an opportunity to observe these details, knowing that you can simply choose to leave them behind when you are ready to move through the gate into your future. Today can be that special day when you decide that things will be different from now on, that you will be different. You may want to look back at your childhood or at times later in life. If you have done this process before, look for something new this time, something you may have missed before, but are ready to see today.*

*In a moment I will ask you to close your eyes, so you can take a few minutes to really look at your past as a neutral observer. Take a kind and honest look at how you have related to food. Examine the specific times when it has been most tempting to eat for reasons that have nothing to do with hunger and nourishing the body. Allow yourself to feel the emotions you have felt. This may be a good time to allow your thoughts and feelings to come out on paper. And make note of any ways that your relationship with food in the past has prevented you from becoming that Ideal You. Close your eyes now and allow yourself to travel back into your past.*

*When you are through examining your past, it is time to consider moving through the gate and into the future, leaving any of the limitations that you are ready to leave behind and to literally break through into a new life, where anything is possible, where becoming your Ideal Self is a reality, where you can become more consciously aware of who you really are.*

*If you do not feel like you are ready to make any changes, you can wait and go through the gate at another time. I just suggest that if this is the case, continue to use this and make note of what you notice about yourself and how it prevents you from becoming your ideal.*

*Now it is almost time to move through the gate. First, imagine yourself turning back towards the past and take a final look at the limitations that you are ready to leave behind. If you haven't written them down, stop for a moment and write them down. And recognize how significant this moment can be. This is the moment when everything can change. Close your eyes for a moment and take a final look at the limitations you are ready to leave behind.*

*As you turn back to face the gate, you see that off to the side, there is a purple flame, a transformational flame where you can throw all of the old patterns of behavior, old beliefs, old emotions, anything you are ready to discard. You can even throw a few of those extra pounds into the flame. Before you go through the gate, I want you to take a moment to throw each one into the flame, watching it light up as the fire transforms each limitation into an unlimited possibility for the future. Close your eyes now and imagine yourself throwing your limitations into the flame.*

*As a note, you can also throw any reservations you have about succeeding with your goal into the flame. Take another moment to consider if there are any other things that are holding you back that you are ready to let go of and toss them in.*

*Now, you are ready to find the handle or latch on the gate, open it and look out into the future, seeing the color of your Ideal Self permeating the scene. And when you are ready, walk through the gate. Close your eyes now and go through the gate.*

*Once you are on the other side, make note of how you feel. Close your eyes and notice the differences. Fill yourself with the color of your Ideal Self, feel the sensation and emotions, hear the sounds, notice how your Ideal Self looks, the clothing and all the details. Close your eyes again, look around you and see how your future looks. How do you relate now to the things you explored in your past? Congratulate yourself for the changes you have made. Look out into your future now and see the color of your Ideal Self extending out as far as you can see. And feel yourself starting to move down the path, as I begin to bring you back to your normal waking state.*

*Now, become aware of your breath again and breathe in active energy to make you feel alert and vitally alive as you imagine drifting back through the mist to your seat here in this place, now feeling your body resting gently, allowing your toes to wiggle a bit and, as I count from 1 to 5, become totally awake and ready to move on: 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5, fully awake now and feeling wonderful.*





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## Positive Thoughts

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AT the beginning of each chapter of this booklet, you have found quotations and positive thoughts. These thoughts and others you may find yourself, can also provide a powerful way to communicate with the unconscious mind and help you to remember your goal as you go through your daily life. I recommend copying a few and putting them in places like on your refrigerator, on the bathroom mirror, and other places you are around regularly.

Another suggestion is to include pictures that remind you of your goal and your Ideal Self with your positive thoughts. This could include images of how your Ideal Self might look, images that remind you of how your Ideal Self feels, pictures that remind you of ways to be kind to yourself, and so on. This is a way to bring this Ideal You into your daily life right now.