THE ART OF

BODY TRANSFORMATION - AN ABSTRACT
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A Big thanks to my wife Nidhi and my brother Amit for making this possible.
I am not here to tell you that I’m the smartest, best, or most qualified Fitness Trainer or Sports Nutritionist that you will ever come across. However, I want to tell you this - I can give you the right information and tools that you need to achieve your desired Fitness Goals and Transformation! This book is all about gaining knowledge regarding basic Training Principles and Nutritional Information that will help you design and customise your own diet programs and workout regime. So, you won’t need a Trainer or Nutritionist to run after, for basic queries like ‘what to eat’ and ‘how much to eat’?

Nevertheless, before that I would like to share my journey as a fitness expert, with you. I was a novice when I started working out in the year 2007. Like many of you, I was perpetually on the lookout for a perfect workout schedule, diet program, supplements and a trainer. Unlike today, there were hardly any certified trainers available then, leave alone authentic online training. I was misguided by a lot of local gym trainers but I thank my lucky stars that there was one thing I never fell prey to and that was steroids. Though it was recommended by all and sundry but putting a syringe in my butt just to enhance my looks was never a path I was willing to tread. Neither did I long for those massive 21 inches of biceps in a jiffy! I always had the interest and inclination to learn new things so I rigorously began searching the net about these injectables and learnt soon enough that they were quite harmful. I continued with my transformation on my own as I was happy with whatever results I was able to achieve, however sloppy or sporadic. My goal was to put on some quality muscle and look good in whatever I chose to wear as I was always on the slim side of the scale.

I continued to work out all by myself and reached a point where I got addicted to going to this place called ‘THE GYM’. It was only post completing my Chartered Accountant’s education that Nirvana dawned and my passion and purpose beckoned! And like they say – “Purpose is the reason you journey. Passion is the fire that lights the way”. Intermittent though but for almost 8 years this fire was something that I could not keep myself away from! I used to learn exercises from youtube and research about supplements and diets for achieving my targets in order to get closer to my goals. Though I was getting results but they were not satisfying enough. This was the point when I decided to take the plunge and go for a Certification in Personal Fitness Training. It was a complete eye opener and only post the certification did I understand and figure out the amount and kind of mistakes I was making, with regards to my training. Like everyone else, I used to follow various articles on the internet and implement them blindly on myself without even recognising that they might not be for me or my body type. For e.g., On seeing a pro bodybuilder doing a particular kind of exercise with heavy weights and multiple reps, my mind would instantly scream, saying – “That’s the reason he looks like this so I should be doing the same!” . But thankfully, this certification changed the way I trained myself and others, busting many common myths along the way. And all for the better!

Then came the Nutrition. Trust me guys, till the time I did not become a sports nutritionist myself, I thought that six-pack abs cannot be made naturally and all those people flaunting their gorgeously chiselled six-packs were on steroids. Well, it’s human tendency to say that something is not possible till the time we jump into the mud, dirty our hands and burn our fingers and do it ourselves! I implemented whatever I had learnt during my own training and nutrition program and achieved a physique that I was dreaming of and struggling to get to, for a decade. Chasing one trainer to
another, from one website to the next, I ultimately and relentlessly pursued scientifically proven studies and got the results I aimed for.

So that’s my reason for writing this book. I don’t want you guys to be fooled by the plethora of easily accessible information out there and waste your time like I did without much relevant knowledge. I am going to share all the information that I’ve gathered over the years through thorough research and my own real-time experiences; everything you need to know in order to transform your body and look the way you’ve always wanted to. Everyone in the fitness world is trying to sell you something but through this book I intend to help you earn something. I’ve been on this fitness journey up and down, back and forth for 10 years now. Taking in the good and discarding the bad, picking brains, reading books, researching, taking classes and using all my knowledge to find the most feasible and effective ways to succeed. I want to share with you the wisdom that has come through many and varied experiences. I’ve learned the hard way and through this humble and earnest effort, I only hope to make it a little easy for you.

And one last, most important thing before we get the ball rolling. I want you to understand that whether you need to lose 1kg or a 100kgs of body fat, you can do it! You will eventually and most definitely, get there. So don’t disregard this plan or get demoralized prematurely even if you initially feel like it’s too far out of reach or a long shot. Let me tell you that there is no such thing as ‘too far out of reach’ when it comes to getting your own body in shape. Just like our attitudes which we always have an option to choose, our own bodies and how we choose to live in them, are the closest within our reach. One can find fitness success stories everywhere and the thing they all have in common is determination and discipline. Always bear in mind that the struggle is the purpose and if you can’t embrace the work and the initial suffering, you will never get to where you want to be and look the way you want to look. You don’t have to take my word for it. Go ask any person who has achieved their goals and they will tell you that you will have a greater sense of accomplishment and an amazing story to tell when you do!

Arnold Schwarzenegger always said, “Where the mind goes the body will follow.” He wasn’t just referring to the bodybuilding world of growing muscle with the proper mindset; he sure was alluding to everything in life. Every goal, success, championship or world record is always first conceived in the mind of some individual. They envision an idea, dream of it, pursue it, live it each moment and make it their reality. Each one of you has an incredible power that exists within your mind. All you have to do is to awaken and unleash this beast, to become a beast yourself; you just need utter faith and confidence in its existence.

Have you ever wanted something so bad that it was all you could think of? Be it a relationship, a job, or some competitive event? So much so that you ate, slept, dreamt and breathed the goal, that vision, every moment. Like the famous poet Rumi, said – “What you seek is seeking you”. When you live for it, you eventually end up getting it! It’s the power of your mind that will give you the power to succeed. You will find yourself doing those very things every day that will inch you closer to your goal till you finally get it!

Let me put forth an example for you here. While I was going through my own transformation for my youtube channel, I once had to travel to Punjab where I was staying in a small town called ‘Malaut’. I am certain that most of you might not even have heard of it. It was a Sunday and there were hardly any gyms in that town, so finding a gym and that too one open on a Sunday was next to impossible. I searched and found on the net that there was a Gold’s Gym in Bhatinda, which was about 40kms one way from Malaut and that too was open only till 2pm. The tired clock already showed past 12 noon. First thought which popped in the head was that till the time I’d manage to reach the gym, it
might be shut. Another loud whisper in the ear was that it was a matter of just one workout. The mind was trying all sorts of tricks, like it always does but I knew that the goal I had set for myself demanded that I do not skip my workout even for a day. The vision of what I had to look like after the 12 weeks, propelled me and gave me the motivation to not give up and I didn’t. I drove all the way to Bhatinda and was able to spend an hour at the gym. It would have been quite easy to drop the whole idea of travelling 80kms for a mere workout, but I did not want to give myself any reason for not succeeding at the end of those 12 weeks.

Let’s just come out and say it: “Many people in the world are weak-minded. Or rather, they convince themselves that they are weak-minded. They fail and accept it, assuming the successful ones are ‘lucky’ or their good fortune was ‘meant to be’, rather than having blossomed from a determined will and a focused mindset.”
SETTING A FITNESS GOAL

What do you want to achieve?

So the first thing you ought to ensure is that you have a well defined target. Then you need to set a goal and define the target for it against a specific time deadline. Goals without a time limit are no goals, just like ships without a shore. Till the time you give yourself a specific timeline to attain your target and translate your dream into reality, you will not execute it with a hundred percent commitment. The time frame needs to be a realistic one after having practically assessed a few crucial factors. Since this book is about transforming yourself, your goal will ultimately be to have a healthy and better looking body. Some of you might be looking for weight loss and some for lean muscle gain. Whatever be the need or desire pertaining to your transformation, I will tell you how you can fix a realistic time goal. Aspirations like building your core strength, endurance or power have also been covered in this book.
Before you commence your Fitness Journey, it is critical that you are clear about your goal and related timelines. Whether it is to lose weight, gain strength or just to make your body more flexible, prior to hitting the gym or starting to work out, you should have utter clarity in your mind and your training along with your diet should complement your goal. Whenever you train yourself, be completely cognisant of your target without any room for ambiguity. And I’ll tell you why this is extremely important. What usually and very naturally happens is that when you see other people training along with you in the gym, you sometimes try to adopt their workout styles; this could be with respect to how they train or how much they train. For e.g., when you’re training for Endurance and doing higher number of repetitions in every exercise, you may come across a person who is lifting heavier and not doing the same number of sets as you. Now that person might be training for Power or he/she may just be another fitness enthusiast who doesn’t have the slightest idea about the scientific ways of training and thinks that lifting heavy is the only thing the gym is meant for! So exercising caution and applying commonsense becomes mandatory here.

It is also important to remember your goal while training because it is not just the hard work that will make a difference but the smart work too. I have observed a lot of people training in the gym contrary to their fitness goals. I particularly remember this one guy who used to lift very light weights and do very high repetitions of each exercise. Upon asking him for the reason, he said that someone had told him that this approach will make his muscles grow better. Now, if there is an abundance of fast twitch fibre in a muscle (covered later in the book), it makes sense to train it this way. But training the whole body like this for muscle hypertrophy (gain in muscle size) doesn’t make any sense. You only end up wasting your energy, time and effort. Therefore, it is imperative to fix a goal and work accordingly and consistently towards it in such a way that there is a fine balance of hard and smart work.

And of course, there’s never a dearth of those ‘self-proclaimed trainers’ with their endless ‘pearls of wisdom’, on how to train. If any such person tries to impose their training methods on you, kindly ask them to justify what they are saying with some logical reasoning. You may find your answers here in this book or search the net if they aren’t here, but never trust someone blindly. In our country, every guy who has a little biceps and is in shape imagines himself to be a trainer and an expert in dispensing fitness related advice. But there’s a huge difference between lifting weights and knowing what the body is doing to build your muscles while you’re lifting those weights! My advice is to stay away from such people who are unable to provide substantial reason and logic while asking you to train in their style.

Once you are lucid about your goal, the next step is to identify where you stand in terms of the level of training. Your training program will depend on your existing level. So let’s understand what the different Levels of Training are.

**Beginner** – If you have just started working out and are new to resistance training then you should classify yourself in this category. People who are learning the correct form and posture of exercises will also be slotted as beginners.

**Intermediate** – People, who have been training themselves for a minimum of 6 months regularly and have a fair idea about the correct form and posture of almost every exercise, can be categorised as Intermediate. If you are training and getting results, it means that you’re at an intermediate level. This is the stage where people generally train themselves from a year to 3 years, perfecting their techniques and continuously moving forward in their transformation journey.
Advance – If you’re at an advanced level of training, then this book is not for you. People, who have already transformed themselves and are training for a specific sports competition or bodybuilding completions, fall in this category.

We have classified the above three categories of weight training right at the outset because the training program for each category is different. For instance, people at the Beginner Level need more time to recover from a workout, have less mind and muscle connection and less muscle maturity therefore their training program focuses more on the recovery period. At this level, one should never workout for more than 4-5 days a week; working out even thrice a week is fine. Only once you realise that your muscles have started recovering early and you feel less sore after a workout, should you increase the frequency of your workout. Remember, once you train any of your muscles that muscle needs at least 48 hours to recover so you should always design your workout in such a way that you’re never training the same group of muscles before they have fully recovered. For sample workout programs for Beginners and Intermediate Levels, do check the website www.sixpacktummy.com.
BODY TYPES - Let’s check it out!

The next important thing to identify and understand is your body type. The human body is complex and each one of us has a unique physiology so there will never be one standard ‘workout’ or ‘diet’ that will give everyone the same results. Different people will train and diet completely differently with the same end state goal and this is due to a funny thing called genetics. Genetics are molecular blueprints that instruct your body; the physique you inherit from your ancestors’ DNA. But the good news is that this is not something you’re completely stuck with! You just have to learn how to properly eat and train for the goal you want to achieve, given the genetics you possess. Any body type can be transformed but you have to work within the perimeters of your body type.

There are 3 major body types that define your genetic physical construct: Ectomorph, Endomorph and Mesomorph.

**Ectomorph**
An Ectomorph is someone who is skinny, has long lanky limbs and a long torso. Ectomorphs are at a disadvantage because of their thin and fragile bodies. And unfortunately they struggle to add bulk to that frame. Although it’s another obstacle in the way, an ectomorph can achieve their dream physique with some hard work and dedication. Ectomorphs have very high metabolism that burns calories almost too efficiently. This can prevent them from putting on weight easily which acts as an impediment for anyone aspiring to be a bodybuilder and even a struggle for some, looking to maintain a healthy body mass index. These are known as “Hard Gainers”.
As with any body type, diet, training and rest are going to be equally significant for an ectomorph, however, diet may be slightly more important for them.

**Endomorph**

On the extreme opposite end of the spectrum, you have an Endomorph - someone who has a thick bone structure with large body mass. These people have slow metabolism and a tendency to gain fat and muscle quite easily. Typically, they have great natural strength and power but not much muscle definition.

**Mesomorph**

Mesomorphs are right in the middle of the spectrum and can generally put on quality mass or reduce body fat relatively easily. They are not bulky or skinny, just somewhere in between. Once the desired body composition and appearance is achieved, a mesomorph can usually just maintain by making sure to continue exercising regularly and living a healthy lifestyle.

Now let me tell you why knowing your body structure is important before you start your training. Suppose you’re a skinny ectomorph and you want to add muscle but are doing tons of cardio every week and can’t figure out why you’re not gaining, well there you go! You’re just burning away all the hard earned muscle your body can barely hold on to, naturally. Also, if you are an ectomorph, like I am, you will have a gala time being lean and even flaunt a decent six packs like I do almost all around the year, however, if you are an endomorph, Getting to that single digit fat percentage will always be a task for you. I’ll get into more depth on specific nutrition and exercise suitable for each body type later in the book, but for now just figure out and keep in mind your body type.
TRAINING: Pain or Gain?

Let’s talk about training. How will you train yourself to get that sculpted physique which you always wanted? The moment we mention the word training, the first image that flashes before us is that of lifting dumbbells in a gym, right? We are going to discuss weight training but first I want to talk about cardio to help clear a few doubts and misconceptions from your mind.

CARDIO: Is it Necessary?

Cardio exercise is the process of bringing your heart rate up to an elevated level and keeping it there for a sustained amount of time. Personally, I am really not in favour of using cardio vascular exercises as the sole medium of losing weight as some people often choose to. People (guys and girls) who want to lose weight are often seen running on a treadmill like almost every other time. You must have seen a lot of them posting pictures on social media of their Treadmill Run which shows that they have burnt ‘x’ number of calories. Yes, it’s true that you’ve burnt those calories but the second you stopped the cardio session, your body ceased to burn them without you having spiked your metabolism for the day. Yes, you will lose weight from cardio as the body will follow the rule of calories in<calories burnt. But a quick reality check - are we merely focusing on weight loss here or a healthy and toned looking body? I assume you’re interested in being toned along with sustaining it which only weight/resistant training can do for you.

From weight training you also get the additional benefit of an increased metabolism for the 24-hour period, post workout. How does this happen? We’ll come to it when we dissect weight training in detail in this book.

There are predominantly two ways in which cardio is performed:

Steady State Cardio is moderately slow and steadily paced with your heart rate at your target heart rate zone. Now to know your target heart rate zone, here is an easy formula for you: This zone is to be set at 60%-70% of your maximum heart rate (MHR). To find your MHR, simply subtract your age from 220. This method does not take into account your fitness level or inherited genes which can
make your actual maximum heart rate 10 to 20 beats per minute higher or lower than the age-predicted number (example of a 40 year old: 220-40=180MHR, 180x.70=126 is your target heart rate zone). Keeping your heart rate at this aerobic zone will keep you ideally burning body fat as energy. It normally takes about 20 minutes into a steady state cardio session before your body starts tapping into body fat because it will first burn the stored sugars and glucose. Therefore, you must perform this type of cardio for no less than 30 minutes to get considerable results: 45 minutes to an hour is ideal.

In my opinion, spending 20 hours a week in the "fat burning zone" leads to very little fat loss and a lot of muscle loss. The result? Looking like a flabby runner. Steady state cardio should be reserved for endurance athletes and not for those seeking fat loss and awesome body composition. It is great for developing your aerobic fitness levels and enhancing your cardiovascular stamina. If you participate in weekend adventure activities like cycling or marathons, cardiovascular endurance is essential.

**High Intensity Interval Training (H.I.I.T.)**

As far as cardio training goes, high-intensity interval training, aka HIIT, has been a ‘big hit’ among serious fitness enthusiasts. In fact, studies comparing HIIT to continuous steady-state exercises have shown that HIIT is far superior and way more effective for fat loss, in spite of requiring less time to complete. One of the first studies to establish that HIIT is more effective for fat loss was done in 1994 by researchers at the Laval University, Canada. A 2001 study from East Tennessee State University, USA, demonstrated similar findings with obese subjects who followed an 8-week HIIT program (subjects dropped 2 percent of body fat) as compared to those who followed a continuous steady-state program (subjects had no percentage drop in body fat) on a treadmill.

HIIT only needs about half the time invested but with 10 times the effort. How does it work? Well, this type of cardio spikes your heart rate to about 85%-100% of maximum heart rate (MHR) for a short amount of time (Target Heart Rate Zone) before bringing it back to normal. Then again it is shot up to 85%-100% of MHR, performed rigorously and repeatedly with intervals until you want to either throw up or fall down or both!

You only need about 20 minutes of HIIT and it’s enough to burn a lot of calories. During your 85%-100% MHR interval, keep it no shorter than 20 sec and no longer than 1 min. Let your rest time be double of your MHR period. Example: Sprint for 30 sec and walk for 1 min or sprint for 1 min and walk for 2.

Running, biking, jumping, roping and rowing all work great for HIIT but you don’t need any equipment to get these done. High knees, fast feet or anything plyometric like jumping lunges work just as well to get your heart rate rise fast.

According to a 2011 study presented at the American College of Sports Medicine, mere 2 weeks of high-intensity intervals improve your aerobic capacity as much as 6 to 8 weeks of endurance training. Let me explain this to you with an example.

**Workout 1 - Steady Cardio**

Moderate intensity, steady state cardio workout like running at 5 km/h for about 30 minutes.  
Total calories burned during workout = 200
% calories from fat = 60%
Total calories burned 24 hours post workout = 0
Workout 2 - High Intensity Intervals (HIIT)
Varying intensity workout; running at 5 km/h for 40 sec and 9 km/h for 20 sec for a total of about 30 minutes.
Total calories burned during workout = 240
% calories from fat = 30 %
Total calories burned 24 hours post workout = 250
Total calories burned altogether = 490

So what’s the reason for the additional calorie burn after you’ve finished the HIIT workout? It’s something called EPOC which stands for Excess Post-Exercise Oxygen Consumption. In simple terms, it’s the additional energy your body uses to return to equilibrium or homeostasis. This process includes replacing muscle glycogen (stored energy within the muscles), repairing muscle fibres, returning the body temperature to normal and restoring oxygen levels in the blood and other body systems. Thus, the higher the intensity of a workout, the greater the EPOC effect. According to The National Strength and Conditioning Association (NSCA), the EPOC (Exercise post-oxygen consumption) Effect is greater in people who perform a High Intensity Workout. HIIT programs provide your body with multiple opportunities to work anaerobically, increasing the body’s need to replace energy stores and escalating the EPOC necessary to bring the body back to its normal resting state. So what’s the bottom line? HIIT is great for burning lots of calories in a short span of time as well as improving cardiovascular and muscular endurance and strength. It’s vital to start each workout with a proper warm up in order to prepare your body to work at a high intensity. To get optimal results, HIIT workouts should be performed no more than 3-4 days per week so as to allow for the much needed recovery time in between.

When to do cardio? Another important question is, if you want to do cardio, when is the best time to do it, before or after your resistance training? You can either do it after weight training or in split sessions. A split session is one in which at least a 6 hour gap is maintained between your weight training. This will give your body two anabolic and metabolism spikes a day.

Another good time to do cardio is right after your weight training. This is when your glycogen is depleted and you will be burning fat right away instead of taking 20 minutes or so to tap into it. But please be aware that you may also be losing some muscle during this time. The worst time to do cardio is prior to the weight training. You will exhaust all your glycogen leading to a physically drained and catabolic weight training session. Hence for this reason, DO NOT DO CARDIO BEFORE LIFTING WEIGHTS.

Alternatives to Conventional Cardio
Over the past few years other training equipments such as kettle bells, sandbags, sleds and ropes have also been incorporated into our metabolic training. The advantage of using tools like a kettle bell or sandbag in metabolic training is that they give you a functional movement. Moreover, there has also been some research in the last five years proving that kettle bell training is a fantastic tool for fat loss.
WEIGHT/RESISTANCE TRAINING - Don’t wait or resist!

Weight training is the centrepiece of getting a shredded and sculpted physical appearance. Diet is crucial to be healthy and fit but resistance and weight training is the true key element through which you can mould and shape your physique. You craft it as if you are the artist with the canvas and you have the power to visualise and create any picture you want.

Let’s understand what happens to our body when we lift weights. We all have heard that lifting weights makes one build muscles but no one tells you how exactly that happens. I’ll try to explain it in the simplest way possible without going deep into concepts like IGF or sarcoplasmic reticulum.

When you lift a weight, it damages your muscles. Although there are different types of muscles in the body such as cardiac muscle (in your heart) for instance but for now we will talk exclusively about skeletal muscles. Skeletal muscles are composed of thread-like myofibrils and sarcomeres that form a muscle fibre and are the basic units of contraction i.e., they are used in the contraction of the muscles. So when you lift weights in the gym, it creates microscopic tears in your muscle fibres. After you work out, your body repairs or replaces damaged muscle fibres through a cellular process where it fuses these fibres together to form new muscle protein strands or myofibrils and thus you
experience the muscle growth you desire. A majority of the actual muscle growth in your body takes place during the rapid and sustained growth periods after the workout. The rapid augmentation period begins around the one-hour mark post workout, lasting up to five hours. The sustained development period is anywhere from 5 to 24 hours after you’ve lifted those weights. Regularly consuming small meals and snacks of carbohydrates and proteins every two to three hours throughout the growth phase will help you keep your glycogen, amino acid and nitrogen levels elevated. All these nutrients contribute to a positive protein synthesis.

Women and Weight Training

Weight training gets a bad rap from some women who want to get toned and lose body fat. I can’t even begin to tell you the number of times, while training clients, I’ve heard women say that they don’t want to lift weights because they don’t intend to get big and bulky. Ladies, you need to understand that guys are fighting a full time battle of eating and training properly in order to gain muscle. And an immensely slow battle at that, I should say! Women can’t nearly gain the muscle men have even if they tried because of their lower testosterone levels. Men have over 10 times more testosterone (the muscle-building hormone) in their bodies than women. So please be assured that you wouldn’t look anywhere close to a bodybuilder even if you wished to till the time you are not on steroids. What women fail to understand is that once they start weight training, they will be building muscles and making their bodies toned and the more muscles your body has the more toned you’ll look! Did you know that all these movie and media celebrities do weight training! Well they do and that’s precisely how they manage to look so toned.
The Six Pack Stigma!

In today’s ultra-vain and narcissistic society, people will assess your fitness levels by how defined your abdominal muscles look. If you have a ‘six pack’, you’re fit. Remember the ectomorph body type that we talked about; the ones with a super high metabolism? There are plenty of ectomorphs in the world who have a six-pack and they have neither worked out nor do they eat very healthy. And there are ample of cardio kings who may be able to destroy one of those ectomorphs in a long distance run but still have a bit of padding around their midriffs. So a six pack is really not a parameter to measure fitness.

Now the question is, how do they (ectomorphs) have it? Their metabolism is so high that it burns everything they throw into their body including body fat and muscle. So yes, they may have a six-pack but I guarantee you that their arms and legs are equivalent to twigs and their overall health is most likely not ideal and may even be awful if they’re not exercising and eating properly. The key to being healthy inside and out is maintaining a healthy diet and a consistent workout regime. Once this exists, the six-pack will automatically follow!

Let’s go over what abdominals do for the body besides getting girls at the beach. Abs are your core stabilizers. They originate along the ribcage and go all the way down to the pelvis. You are constantly engaging in core movements all day long whether you realize it or not. Without your core muscles your upper body would basically just fall apart. Besides stability, their other primary purpose is to protect and hold your internal organs.

Just as every individual has a unique fingerprint, everyone’s abs are also shaped slightly differently. Some people have uneven abs, some have wide, short, deep, shallow and some have a 10 pack while others can only get a 4. This is due to genetics so accept what you were given and work on perfecting it and making it a blessing. Always remember, regardless of what shape your abs are in, you can attain a well-defined core with proper diet, time and hard work in the gym.

I’ve also noticed people in the gym who never train their abs and the reason given by them is that ‘they are on gaining’. On the contrary, I suggest everybody to train their abdominals like any other muscle group so that you have an overall strong body irrespective of gaining or losing. Not training your core muscles puts more pressure on your lower back for stabilising the body which may lead to muscle imbalance and later to poor posture and injuries.

Another reason given by people for not training their abs or training them too much is that ‘abs are not visible’. Guys, your abs are not visible because of the layer of fat on your belly but when you train them they get stronger like any other muscle group. When your body fat percentage reduces to somewhere around 12 percent, they most definitely will get visible!
Diet: Cry, try but I will succeed!

Diet, a word that most of us are afraid of and where majority of us make mistakes. If you take it as a task it will actually feel like a burden but if you make it a lifestyle, it merges smoothly into your life and becomes a part of it just like your daily job, for instance. Picking the right food every day is not tough; it just takes some effort and a little preparation both of the body and mind. Trust me, like they say – “it’s only the first step that is the most difficult”. Many people will declare that they don’t have the time to prepare. Well if you ask me, this is sheer laziness and utter B.S.! Do not let the weak cells in your mind conjure excuses; instead, make it happen by surpassing these very tricks and temptations. To determine how much, how often and what type of food you should eat; let’s take a close look at the 3 major Macronutrients - Fats, Carbs and Proteins.

Carbs, short for Carbohydrates - Get a lot of raps from different people and have a complicated reputation. A decade ago, carbs were never looked at as the enemy but it was fat. They were the major nutrient in almost every meal and considered to be a necessity. So let me first break down for you what carbohydrates are and how they work in the body. Carbohydrates are the most abundant macronutrients out there and also the most complex. They are the body’s main source of energy as well as a catalyst for efficient brain function. While exercising, your body first uses carbs for energy before anything else. When you consume them, they enter the blood stream after exiting the small intestine and get converted to glucose. Glucose only exists in the blood stream and the body instantly uses as much of it, for energy. Any excess glucose not utilised is then shuttled from the blood stream to the liver and muscles and is stored as glycogen. The movement of glucose is carried out by a hormone called insulin. Insulin is released by the Pancreas and regulates your blood-glucose or ‘blood sugar’ and is known as the ‘storage hormone’. Diabetes is a condition in the body where ingested glucose is not utilized properly. This could be due to a lack of insulin or the insulin in the body not working effectively.

There are two types of Diabetes: Type 1 and Type 2. Both can be acquired during childhood or adulthood but many a times Type 2 diabetes is brought upon through bad eating habits and lack of exercise, mostly related to obesity. The onset of Type 1 usually occurs in early childhood and stems from one’s genetics. Consequently, it’s essential to understand that glucose is stored energy and is paired with body fat to fuel high intensity workouts. Now just like everything in life, too much of something good, is bad. Too many grams of unused carbs result in excess glycogen. Your muscles and liver can only store so much, hence the surplus glycogen is then stored as body fat. For this reason, if you consume too many carbs, more than what your body requires to use as energy, it will increase body fat. Also, if you take in a sufficient amount but do not use it as energy, then that too will be stored as fat.

Now that you know the process and essence of carbs, let me also explain their different types and how they affect your body, starting with the hormone insulin. I want you to get a better understating of its purpose and how it affects the body. Like we just stated, insulin is released by the Pancreas and increases your blood sugar levels when carbohydrates are consumed and enter the blood. Proper insulin and regulation is fundamentally essential and the key is to keep insulin levels at a steady state without spiking or crashing frequently.

When you eat a complex carbohydrate you give yourself a slow release of insulin. This gives your muscles and liver the slow release of glycogen throughout the day which they need to do their jobs, as the liver keeps your blood clean and your muscles fuelled as they move you around and hold your body together.

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All carbohydrates are ranked on a chart called the Glycemic Index chart (GI chart). It scales from 1-100 with simple carbs ranking higher and the complex ones ranking lower. The slower the insulin spike a carb gives you, the more of a complex carb it becomes thus resulting in a lower rank.

**Examples of COMPLEX CARBOHYDRATES:**

- Multi-grain bread products
- Whole wheat
- Rye
- Oatmeal
- Oats
- Brown Rice
- Sweet Potato
- Potatoes
- High fibre cereal
- Peas
- Beans
- Lentils

The reverse of a complex carbohydrate is a simple carb. It does the exact opposite of a complex carb: it spikes your insulin levels and crashes fast. The glycogen is then forced into the muscles and what cannot be absorbed or utilised is then stored as fat.

**Examples of SIMPLE CARBOHYDRATES:**

- Any added sugar
- Bread, rice and pasta
- Fruits
- Candy
- All baked food items made with white refined flour
- Soda
- Milk
- Starchy cereals
- Honey
- Corn Syrup
- Yogurt

So, we certainly want carbohydrates in our diet but we want them to be complex instead of simple!

When your muscles are at their maximum capacity of glycogen, they have no option but to spill over and store it as fat cells. So how many carbs should you eat? Well, it hangs on several factors. Your weight, metabolism, body type and end state goal. The higher your metabolism, the faster your body uses up the glycogen as fuel and demands for more. The bigger you are, the more you will need as well to load the bigger tank.

**Fats -** After carbohydrates are used for energy, fats are the body’s second choice. This usually occurs about 20 minutes into an exercise. Most people have this question - “Hey, if I eat fat will I get fat?” No! Your body needs fats to burn fat, regulate hormones, lower cholesterol and support healthy skin and hair. When you eat fats, it doesn’t go directly to fat storage. Remember, any type of macronutrient can end up in fat storage if you consume too much of it or by eating the wrong type at the wrong time. Just as there are different types of carbs— good and bad—this is also and particularly true of Fats.

High consumption of the bad fats can lead to obesity, high LDL (bad) cholesterol and a greater risk of heart disease. Fats also have the maximum amount of calories of the three macronutrients when
measured by density. Carbs and proteins have 4 grams of calorie per gram serving but fats have 9 grams. They are also the best tasting nutrient making it more tempting and easier to over eat them.

There are three major types of Fats:
• Saturated Fats
• Unsaturated Fats
• Trans Fatty Acids

Saturated fats are mostly animal fat (apart from coconut oil). They come from dairy and meats. These fats should be kept at a bare minimum consumption level.

Trans fatty acids are the worst. These are manmade fats contained in many fried foods, processed foods and baked goods. Do not eat anything with the word “hydrogenated” in it!!

This leaves us with one fat i.e. unsaturated fat. These are the beneficial fats that you would want to consume. They are derived from nuts, olive and canola oil, peanut oil, sunflower oil, sesame oil, fish and avocado and numerous other natural sources.

Proteins

We’ve saved the best for the last! Proteins are the most essential and vital macronutrients whether you’re looking to build muscle, lose body fat or just maintain proper cell function. Every single cell in the body is made up of protein. They’re used to repair and make the body’s tissues. It is physically impossible to build muscle without the right amount of protein in your diet. The only drawback is that it is the body’s last choice for energy so when you have an extremely low carb/fat diet with abundance of proteins, you will find yourself physically drained. Now unlike carbs and fats, consuming too much is not bad. It will not make you fat, although excess in calories will. If you’re going to have an overload of one of the major macronutrients, it must be protein! Reason being, proteins will not give you an excess insulin spike which carbs will. Fats are much higher in calories per gram than proteins so eating more fat can easily put you in a surplus of calories for the day. And unless your kidneys are shot, your body can comfortably deal with additional protein in the diet. As always with nutrition, the question is how much and when should you consume it?

The timing of your protein intake will depend on the kind of diet you’re following which we will discuss later in the book. Let’s first determine how much protein is recommended for a healthy lifestyle. The suggested minimum daily intake is 0.8g/kg/day of your body weight. The exact amount also depends on the kind of diet and the targets you wish to attain. The maximum intake shall not exceed 2.0g/kg/day, as having protein more than this limit will not offer any further value.
The Fundamentals of Weight Loss – Calorie in < Calorie Out

For any weight loss transformation, the underlying principle is always the same. You need to create a ‘calorie deficit’ i.e. either you have to burn extra calories than what you are taking in or you have to take in lesser calories than what you are burning. Now to create a calorie deficit, you first need to know how many calories you’re burning currently. Isn’t it? Let’s find out how to calculate that.

**BMR**

Basal Metabolic Rate or BMR is the amount of energy you need while resting in a temperate environment. It is the energy that will be utilised only to maintain your vital organs which include the heart, lungs, kidneys, the nervous system, intestines, liver, lungs, sex organs, muscles and skin. The BMR decreases with age and increases with muscle mass. Basal metabolism is usually the largest component of a person’s total caloric needs. The daily calorie need is the BMR value multiplied by a factor with a value between 1.2 and 1.9, depending on the activity level.

In most situations, BMR is estimated with equations summarized from statistical data. The most commonly used one is the Mifflin St. Jeor equation:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>BMR = (10 × weight in kg) + (6.25 × height in cm) - (5 × age in years) + 5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Men</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Women</strong></td>
<td>BMR = (10 × weight in kg) + (6.25 × height in cm) - (5 × age in years) - 161</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The following table enables calculation of an individual’s recommended daily calorie intake:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Exercise Level</th>
<th>Daily kilocalories needed = BMR x 1.2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Little to no exercise</td>
<td>Daily kilocalories needed = BMR x 1.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Light exercise (1–3 days per week)</td>
<td>Daily kilocalories needed = BMR x 1.375</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate exercise (3–5 days per week)</td>
<td>Daily kilocalories needed = BMR x 1.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heavy exercise (6–7 days per week)</td>
<td>Daily kilocalories needed = BMR x 1.725</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very heavy exercise (twice per day, extra heavy workouts)</td>
<td>Daily kilocalories needed = BMR x 1.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The above calculation will tell you approximately how many calories you need to take in order to maintain your current weight. And since we are talking about weight loss, you need to generate a
deficit. I recommend a deficit of 500 calories; however you can also begin by creating just a 200 calorie shortage initially and then hike it up to 500 calories.

So by now you’re aware of how much your daily calorie intake ought to be! Now let’s discuss what should be the macro ratio to have these calories. There are various diets that you can follow for your transformation and you could choose any one of them as per your convenience and what suits you better.

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**The so-called ‘Low Carb Diet’**

I am sure you’ve heard this term before; a ‘low-carbohydrate diet’. Though a pretty vague description in and of itself! People often say that they’re following a low carb diet but ‘low’ after all is a relative term. How low is low? What is the exact percentage or how many grams of carbs should you consume in a low carb diet? Nobody answers this for you; they just say, follow a low carb diet. Let me help you comprehend this better.

In most research studies, a low-carbohydrate diet is defined as eating less than 30 percent of calories from carbohydrates, which often equates to 50-125 grams per day. Therefore, if your target is weight/fat loss and you want to follow this diet, your macro ratio should be 25-30% carbs, 40-45% protein and 25-30% fat. In the most effective versions of this approach, priority should be to be more selective about your carbs and where they come from.

Paleo Diet is also one of the Low Carb Diets that is followed worldwide for weight loss and has been quite successful. The only difference between a low carb diet like Paleo and Keto Diet which we are going to discuss next is that protein ratio is higher in low carb diet whereas in keto, protein intake is kept in moderation.

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**The Ketogenic Diet**

While a diet can become low(ish)-carb merely by cutting down on a single macronutrient, a ketogenic diet demands specific changes to all the three macros. For this reason, it’s hard to recommend a keto diet to someone unless they know how to track their macros or are serious about learning.

A ketogenic diet is a high-fat, very low-carbohydrate, moderate-protein approach that, when followed correctly, shifts your body’s preferential fuel source from carbs (or glucose) to fat in the form of ketone bodies and fatty acids. The Difference Lies In The Ketones. One by product of carb restriction is increased production of ketone bodies which are small molecules derived from the fat produced in the liver. When your body’s stored glucose levels are low, ketone production increases. This can be measured via blood or urine ketone testing.

A traditional high-carb diet results in blood ketones between 0.1 and 0.2 millimoles (mmols) and a moderate-to-low-carb diet has no significant effect on this. However, once you truly embrace a ketogenic diet, blood ketones rise to 0.5 -5.0 millimoles, putting you in a state of ‘nutritional ketosis’,
signifying that you're keto adopted. This is the primary indicator that you're following a ketogenic diet.

This diet is defined as eating 5-10 percent of the total calories from carbohydrates which often translates to 25-30 grams, with a suggested maximum of 50 grams per day. Keeping your carbs consistently below this 50 gram threshold appears to be the trigger that induces nutritional ketosis and enables your body to begin relying primarily on fat as the chief fuel.

You know that too many carbs will kick you out of ketosis. Now let me tell you that too much protein will, too. This is because when carbs are low, proteins can also be broken down into glucose via a process known as gluconeogenesis. Eating too much protein—more than 20-25 percent of daily calories—increases gluconeogenesis and therefore glucose production, ultimately blunting the formation of ketone bodies.

On a ketogenic diet, however, everything hinges on fat. A whopping 70-75 percent of your daily calories are supposed to come from fat because it is now your primary fuel source. When eaten in the absence of carbs, fat is used as a readily available energy supply. This can be hard for many people to commit to but research increasingly supports the idea that dietary fat isn't what makes you fat. A high-fat, high-carb diet, conversely, is the true culprit for many obesity related issues.

Intermittent Fasting

I wouldn’t say that it’s a diet, rather it is an eating pattern. People are using it to lose weight, improve health and simplify their lifestyles. Many studies demonstrate that it can have powerful effects on your body and brain and may even help you live longer. Intermittent fasting (IF) is a term for an eating pattern that cycles between periods of fasting and eating.

It does not say anything about which food you should eat but rather when you should eat it. In this respect, it is not a ‘diet’ in the conventional sense of the word and is more accurately described as an ‘eating pattern’. Intermittent fasting can help reduce the total number of calories you consume in a day. If you’re doing it but there’s no calorie deficit while you break your fast, you will not lose weight. The calorie deficit rule is to be borne in mind at all times.

Common intermittent fasting methods involve daily 16 hour fasts or fasting for 24 hours, twice per week. Most people already ‘fast’ every day while they sleep. IF can be as simple as extending that fast a little longer. You can do this by skipping breakfast, eating your first meal at noon and the last one at 8 pm. Then you’re technically fasting for 16 hours every day and restricting your eating to an 8 hour eating window. This is the most popular form of intermittent fasting known as the 16/8 method.

Despite what you may think, IF is actually fairly easy to do. Many people report feeling better and having more energy during a fast. Hunger is usually not that big an issue although it can be a problem in the beginning while your body is getting used to not eating for extended periods of time. No food is allowed during the fasting period but you can drink water, coffee, tea and other non-caloric beverages. Some forms of intermittent fasting allow small amounts of low-calorie food as well, during the fasting period. Taking supplements is generally permitted while fasting as long as there are no calories in them.
One can however, experience some side effects of IF like bloating, diarrhoea, caffeine-dependency, reduced energy, hunger pangs, heartburn, brain fog and headaches. It also reduces athletic performance and may have a negative impact on a woman’s hormones. Avoid during pregnancy.

**Types of Intermittent Fasting**

**The 16/8 Method:** Fast for 16 hours each day by only eating between noon and 8pm.

**Eat-Stop-Eat:** Once or twice a week, don’t eat anything from dinner one day till dinner the next day (a 24 hour fast).

**The 5:2 Diet:** For 2 days a week, consume only about 500 to 600 calories.

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**The Zone Diet**

This diet is very big on helping you control your insulin and the rate at which carbohydrates are used by the body. For this reason, it is quite similar to a keto type diet but yet very different as you’re allowed a much higher intake of carbs. You can make sure your insulin stays ‘in the zone’, neither too high nor low, by eating food at every meal in the right proportion: 40 percent carbs, 30 percent protein and 30 percent fat. The body needs the right balance of these nutrients in order to stay healthy and slim and operate at its peak performance. This diet works well for someone who does not want to give up any of their favourite food. Nothing is put ‘off limits’ in this diet, however, it still needs to stay within the guidelines of the program: you don’t have to set alarms though. The point is to develop the habit of eating at regular intervals so your hormones are balanced throughout the day. Eat within an hour of waking up in the morning, don’t go more than 4 hours without eating something and pop a snack before you go to sleep so you have some fuel left, to dream on.

It recommends eating only those carbs with a low glycemic load. The glycemic load (GL) of a food is an estimate of how much it will raise your blood glucose levels once you’ve had it. It takes into account how many carbs are in the food and how much that amount will spike your blood glucose levels. This would include food items such as spinach, beans, berries, cucumber, green pepper, oatmeal and barley. Food like bread, sugar, bagels, rice, pasta, cereals, other white-flour products, dried fruits, peas, mangoes, corn, raisins, bananas, potatoes and carrots are discouraged but you can still eat them if you really want to and if they fit within your plan.

When it comes to protein, the diet recommends eating food such as fish, low-fat lean meats like chicken, turkey, beef and pork, egg whites, low-fat cheese, soy products and protein powder.

Finally, on the fat side of things, which is the key to the success of this plan, you’ll need to scoop your fat from sources like almonds, cashews, avocados, peanut butter, olives and olive oil, salmon and Omega-3 fatty acid supplements.

The good thing about this diet is that it is well suited for those with blood sugar issues, diabetes or people who have a propensity to gain weight easily on a high carb diet. Some people simply cannot tolerate carbohydrates well and end up feeling sluggish and exhausted after consuming them so this plan would be perfect for them as well. Another great thing about this diet is that due to its make-
up, it is unlikely that you'll experience too much hunger while on it, since all meals will have a combination of both fat and protein (both of which are high satiety macronutrients).

The only drawback is that because carb intake is lower compared to some other plans, endurance or high intensity athletes may struggle to meet their energy demands and find themselves faltering during workouts. In such a case, the diet could still be followed but it may be helpful to add a special 'carb-up' period once a week to top up your reserves.

This diet is very good so long as you’re willing to put in the necessary effort. However, if you’re looking for a simple plan where you can eat out easily and don’t always need to be watching the clock, this isn’t a favourable choice. With regards to muscle building on the other hand, it can definitely be used and again is probably preferable over Keto for muscle building as there are more carbs allowed. One important thing to keep in mind in the Zone diet is that you should never go without eating for more than 5 hours at any point of time.

Which Diet Is for You?

This is a personal question. Some people get into ketosis and never feel right. Others discover it’s exactly the feeling—and the results—they’ve been chasing all along. Some feel low is better as it gives them a better options of recipes to choose from.

All above diets are useful weight/fat loss strategies and have research to support their ability to promote it (given that you’re in a caloric deficit, of course). What works for you may largely be a question of taste and lifestyle. For what it’s worth, a low-carb with a moderate-to-high protein intake probably requires fewer drastic changes to your current diet and shopping list than going on keto.

Diet Program for Gainers

Though the chunk of people who are looking to gain weight is very less, but I would like to give some tips to them as well. Like in the topics above we discussed that you need to create a calorie deficit to lose weight, in the same way, to gain weight, you need to create a calorie surplus. You can start with adding 500 calories to your present diet and you can follow a balanced diet which consists of 45-50% carbs, 20-25% Fat and 20-25% Protein. You can also follow zone diet macros if you are lean initially, as it will maintain your Fat percentage and you will add lean muscles.
“There is no rest for the weary”. Well, not really!!

You must’ve heard people say that your dreams shouldn’t let you sleep if they are big enough. Well, this certainly doesn’t work with your body transformation! If you don’t get proper rest and sleep, all your hard work in the gym and the kitchen will go down the drain. Everyone should get anywhere between 6-9 hours of sleep per night. When you sleep, your body repairs muscles, bones and strengthens your immune system. You also release large amounts of growth hormone and testosterone while sleeping. These two hormones play the most vital role in muscle building, fat burning and regulating your metabolism. Many people don’t get enough sleep and are often tired the entire day, relying on caffeine to help them get through the day. Then on some days they’re able to sleep when they’re ‘catching up’ on it. Although you’ll feel better after that day of catch up, it does not really work that way and it should not!

Sleep deprivation (anything less than 6 hours of it) has a massive negative impact on your body’s ability to repair itself. It can’t be overstated how significant a role sleep plays in getting transformed. If this isn’t enough, you’re also inclined to have a much higher appetite and naturally tend to guzzle more, when sleep deprived. With such positive effects of adequate sleep and the negative consequences of a lack of it, you must put in greater effort to get good sleep because it is just as crucial as your training and diet.
MOTIVATION: Fuel for the spirit.

Sure you’ve tried to diet before! You’ve gotten rid of those cookies in the cupboard and virtuously refused that cake at an office party. And then a few weeks into it, your motivation began to wither and wilt. Maybe you hit a plateau in your weight loss or you got bored with steamed vegetables for dinner night after night or were plain tempted by a special dessert so you concluded that just this once, won’t hurt. A few slip-ups and you’re totally derailed, physically and emotionally. If this wasn’t the first time that losing weight was one of your New Year resolutions, then maybe you just haven’t had the right diet motivation. It turns out that the key to losing and keeping weight off isn’t simply a matter of what you eat or how much you exercise - it’s your overall attitude. Lasting and sustainable weight loss is a slow process and it’s all too easy to give up before you attain your goal. Nonetheless, with the right psychological tools, your chances of diet success can be greatly increased. Here is a list of my favourite diet motivation tips that will keep you and your diet on the winning track to losing.

**Tip 1: Set Realistic Goals for Diet Success**

One of the reasons why people fail to stick to any fitness/transformation regime is because they set an unrealistic target. The first step to maintaining your mojo should be treaded even before you cut a single calorie. In fact, one of the strongest predictors of long-term diet success is setting the right goal, right at the start. If you set unachievable goals such as losing 15Kgs in just a few months, believe me that you’re preparing yourself for a mighty fall and fail! Instead, you’re more likely to stick to a diet if you focus on your health and create sensible eating strategies. Fixing smaller, attainable benchmarks like losing 2Kgs or a single dress size, will give you more confidence and a greater kick, to continue.

**Tip 2: Slow and Steady Wins the Race**

Rome wasn’t built in a day. Just like you didn’t gain those extra pounds in a day, you won’t lose them in a day, either. Diet success entails making real lifestyle changes and that doesn’t happen overnight. You have a better chance at keeping the weight off if you lose it slowly and consistently. People who are starving tend to get more irritable and have a higher failure rate. If you constantly keep telling yourself that an optimal weight loss is 1 to 2 pounds a week, it’ll only add to your frustration. Once you start by cutting down just a meagre 200 calories a day, the weight will come off steadily and comfortably without you even realising it.

**Tip 3: Expect Setbacks and Don’t be a Perfectionist**

Everyone is bound to give in to temptations from time to time. The danger isn’t in a single splurge but letting it become an excuse for an all out binge. So what do you do if you’ve scarfed down a tub of ice cream before noon? Perfectionist thinking gets in the way of success more than anything I know. A 100-calorie indulgence is just that. But if it’s perceived as a failure and a reason to give up, it can turn into thousand-calorie gluttony. Bottom line when you slip up - forget about it! Tomorrow is a brand new, healthier and better day.
**Tip 4: Use the Buddy System**

It's tough to make major lifestyle changes when you're swimming upstream all by yourself. Finding other people with similar goals can amplify your odds of diet success. When your willpower wavers, having people to reach out to can provide the apt nudge you need, in order to continue. You can choose to join an online support group, for instance. Having a support group to turn to whether it's your family or people in a weight-loss chat room, can make all the difference for your diet to succeed.

**Tip 5: Patience and Perseverance is the Key**

One of the biggest diet motivation busters is the much dreaded weight loss plateau. You've been doing everything right, exercising and eating well and the numbers on the scale have been steadily dropping. Then all of a sudden, the scale stays stuck for several days at a stretch. We all face this situation in any kind of Transformation and it's perfectly normal. Turn it around and congratulate yourself on the diet success you've achieved so far. This is a natural part of the weight loss process. When you hit a plateau, you may want to try something slightly different to jump-start your diet. Commit yourself to expending an extra 100 calories a day through walking, for example. And check honestly to see if you're backsliding in tiny ways with your eating habits. A few minor adjustments and you'll soon be back on track.

**Tip 6: Reward Yourself**

Dieting is hard work and calls for commitment and it's not always a whole lot of fun. Small incentives can provide the right push to keep you going. But make sure your rewards are not food-related (Translation: Rewarding yourself for losing 2 kilos with a box of chocolates is definitely not what we’re talking about!). Set mini goals along the way and keep congratulating yourself when you reach them. Your remuneration could be a massage, a round of golf, a new pair of jeans or a hot bubble bath. Celebrating your diet success will fortify your resolve to continue and that too with a greater verve.

**Tip 7: List your Reasons for Transformation**

Looking (and feeling) better on the beach is a perfectly valid reason for wanting to slim down but it might not be enough to keep you inspired for the long haul. Come up with a running list of all the things that are better about your life when you’re at a lighter weight. Your list might include but not be limited to things like being healthier, having more stamina, improving your confidence, shopping for fun fashions, keeping up with or setting a good example for your kids etc. Once you've laid out your detailed list, keep it handy and read it often, especially when you're feeling particularly drained. Let this be a constant reminder of why it's worth staying on track. This is how I stay motivated all the time.

**Tip 8: Have a Maintenance Plan**

For many people, losing weight is far easier than keeping it off. It's important to remember that healthy eating is a lifelong choice and goal and not simply a one-time project. If this has been a problem for you in the past, devise a maintenance strategy ahead of time. You may want to consult an expert to help create a diet or exercise plan that works well for you.
SUPPLEMENTATION: Great cry, little wool.

Ten percent! That’s right; 10% is about how much of an impact your supplements will have on your results, yet we have made this industry into a multi-billion dollar one, that’s growing at a rapid pace. It’s disgusting how many millions are spent each year on diet pills and gimmick solutions!

Everyone wants a quick and easy fix: few people appear willing to put in the hard work. Please understand that it’s the only true way to your fitness goals. I’ve had so many people come up to me with a direct query about the type of supplement to take to for fat loss or the kind to consume for muscle gain. In fact, a client once even gave a lame excuse for not going to the gym as he did not have the supplement stack. The supplement industry thrives on people’s lack of knowledge and desire for fast, too good-to-be-true results. A large share of the money that these companies mint is pumped back into marketing the shitty products that they sell. Do you really think that the ripped and shredded guy in the poster holding a bottle of Fat Burner used that product to get the body he has? Come on people, get real!

These models do this for a living and are paid to do shoots for such products. Now I’m not saying that all supplement companies are amoral snakes looking to hustle the unaware and vulnerable populace out of their hard earned money. Well, supplementation does play a significant role in your nutritional plan to get closer to your goals but its impact pales in comparison to the role of the kitchen and the gym.

The key is in knowing what products and ingredients to look for. Don’t just pull out your credit card when a bottle says, ‘burns fat, increases muscle’, especially when you’re unaware of the components of the product. I know this because I used to be that very kid buying every such thing and wasting my money on worthless overpriced crap. I learnt it the hard way; you don’t have to!

You can learn from my mistakes and experience as a Sports Nutritionist. The major problem with these products is that since the FDA doesn’t regulate the supplement industry like it does the food industry, they can say that the product does something it actually doesn’t do!

I’m not going to name the company but I read a label the other day on a product which said - “converts fat into muscle”. First of all, fat cannot be turned into muscle or vice versa. Fat cells can be accumulated and built up or burnt away. Muscle can be built as well just as it can be burnt. These are two different parts of your body and it’s physically impossible to simply convert one directly to the other. Fat can be burned when you workout and muscles can be built.

Secondly, how lazy are people these days?! That’s like taking a fat burner and eating a cheeseburger thinking it will cancel each other out. No! It doesn’t work that way. Everyone wants an easy way out but actually there isn’t one. The secret is hard work, discipline and consistency. Yes it will be difficult but it will be totally worth it!

- Multi-Vitamin: This is one supplement that I consider to be a must have. Our body needs various vitamins and minerals daily but unfortunately none of us have a complete diet that contains all the required vitamins and minerals for the body to function properly. Especially when we talk about any kind of transformation, you will have to make some changes in your diet keeping in mind your target calories and macros. So you will not have the absolute liberty to include all the essential vitamins and minerals naturally. Therefore, I highly recommend you take one and always do so with a meal as the food will help your body absorb the vitamins.
• **Omega:** Omega 3-6-9 is something you can blindly put your money on as it contains all the vital and non-essential fatty acids you need from fish, flax and borage oil. This product is unbelievably beneficial for your skin, hair, heart, joint and cell production. Take it 1-3 times a day.

• **Whey Protein:** It’s quite hard to get all your protein requirements for the day from food alone though food is your best bet. Whey protein is a great way to supplement in a nutrient shake that will help you meet your goal. It is also very easy to digest.

• **BCAA:** Branch chain amino acids are the building block of proteins. They’re needed to build and recover muscle tissue. When the body is low on BCAA, it taps into muscle for energy. Take these before and after exercise to prevent catabolism especially on a low-calorie diet. You can skip it if you’re in a muscle gaining period.

• **Caffeine:** A stimulant that has been proven to speed up metabolism, particularly when consumed before and after exercise.

• **Green Tea:** Proved to pace up metabolism as well as a powerful antioxidant and natural diuretic.

• **Creatine:** Basically a fuel source for ATP which is an energy system used for short bursts of power. Creatine enhances the body’s capacity to perform high intensity work (and assists greater muscle size and performance gains, as a consequence).

• **Digestive Enzymes:** Helpful if you find yourself bloated due to intake of too much protein. Take with each meal.

• **Probiotics:** Helpful in keeping your gut healthy.
The Final Word: Take Control of your World!

It’s funny because when I first started my transformation into a clean eating and dedicated gym pattern, everyone looked at me like I was crazy or overtly obsessed. When I used to say that I will transform myself naturally into a ripped six-pack muscular guy, these so called Gym Trainers laughed at me. I never got that support initially and I guess that’s how the world is. But after sometime, once my body started to transform and the visual results and overall health accomplishments began to build up, they were no longer asking “Why?” but “How?”.

One day, if you decide to stick to the road map and work hard, I promise this will be you! Natural transformations take a lot of time and commitment but in the end you will reach your destination. I have seen the system work time and time again and it will positively work for you too. At first, people around you will tempt you with food and a good time but you must have the determination to see your body transformation through.

It is now time for you to take control of your life and take over the world! I’m not going to tell you it will be easy because it won’t be. In fact, it will be hard but it will be worth it. Taking charge of your life by making a conscious lifestyle change for the better will give you so much in return that it will be incredible and long lasting. You will never go back to your old habits and even if you do succumb to temptation, you will know the way back to your peak physical form. We are creatures of habit and breaking the bad ones is the toughest part but once you create the good habits, it’s a cake walk. You will be shining with your proper diet, exercise, sleep and a balanced life. You will be a whole new person.

The external achievement of ‘looking better’ is, honestly, the least of it. Yes, you will look better, get compliments from friends, even strangers and have a higher self-esteem. It’s the confidence gained from struggling, working hard and achieving a goal that’s the biggest reward and will spill over to all aspects of your life. Hell, depending on when you are starting, getting shredded might actually save your life!

The bigger picture though is your internal health. Have you ever seen an elderly obese person? That’s because obesity is a major cause of death. You will decrease your chances of disease and illness. Once you achieve the goal of transforming yourself, no one can take away your will power to succeed. I have given you enough information to transform yourself, but it all starts with conquering the internal demon who tells you, “start tomorrow”. The only thing stopping you from building your dream body is you! It’s not your busy life, it’s not the cupcake on your counter, it’s not the hours spent at your job. If you really want it to happen, make it happen.

You can apply these principles to any goal in life. Education, proper time management, preparation, hard work, dedication, persistence and progress are all key elements of success and anyone who has worked towards a goal knows and can swear by this formula!

And one last word my friends, Either don’t Start the Process of Transformation, but if you do, Give it all that you Got.