



RESILIENCE EMBODIED

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Recently I sat down to write, and I was sharing with my daughter that I had a lofty goal in attempting to be able to map out the links between mind, body, behavior, actions, emotions, the nervous system, our body chemistry, and overall conscious awareness.

You know, just a tall feat to start off my relaxing Sunday morning as I delved into the possibilities of what it means to create a dynamic, healthy, robust, and fulfilling life.

I was explaining to my daughter a bit about what it means to access a certain "state," a place of awareness and willingness when we need to perform or desire to perform at our best. I was explaining how there's a neurochemical phenomenon linked to this peak state, and she said the most brilliant and entertaining thing; she stated, "Well dad, someone can't take commitment pills."

I loved her statement as she was implying that success and commitment are inside jobs and not something we can necessarily just "ingest"; however, she did understand that while she was eating her organic yogurt and berries that her choice would create a different and desired result, as opposed to the cascade of chemical results that would occur if she ate a bowl of artificially colored and flavored pina colada jelly beans for breakfast.

That simple exchange with my very inquisitive and bright daughter motivated me to sit down and share a bit about my passion for what it means and what it takes to possibly live an incredibly dynamic, fulfilling, and vitality filled life.

I want to clarify that abundance arrives in many packages, and a dynamic, committed, fulfilled kindergarten teacher is no less or more important than a leadership driven CEO of a fortune five hundred company. I mean this when I say, we all have precious roles to fill and the real question is what level of engagement are you playing in your role. Perhaps, through this dialogue you may contemplate changing your role or shifting how you partake in your role. Whatever the choice may be, I'm here to say that even when it feels as though you don't have a say in the matter, through this dialogue, I'm here to share with hard earned experience that in fact you may have some input into the

quality of your future. Are there exceptions to this rule? Yes, of course there are, as there are so many thousands of people who are disenfranchised and existing in horrible states of experiences and circumstances; however, I'm humbly here to state that this conversation is geared towards those who at least have some say in how their life and health plays out. I have sincere awareness and appreciation for those who cannot at this time improve their state of being and existence, and it's my deepest intention that some of the revenue I generate from these efforts can and will support those who cannot support themselves to the degree that they would prefer.

Ok, so perhaps I should share a bit about me as I personally always click the "about us" tab of any website or blog as I have to know the person, the soul, the driving force behind who and what I am exposing myself to.

Recently I had a client share the most brilliant statement in regards to a media presentation/popular movie she watched and she shared, "I cannot unsee what I have seen."

I share this because I think it's important to evaluate who we all connect with and why he or she chooses to convey the messages they impart.

So a bit about me:

My name is Dr. Jason Kolber and my nickname is Dr. J. There are many hilarious stories I can share about how I look quite different from the six foot seven well known Dr. J - Julius Erving from the NBA and I will share them a bit later.

I was born right outside of Chicago, and I'm so grateful that I was born into a very supportive family. My Father is a performance oriented chiropractor for 53 years and a natural body-builder. He has exposed me to a way of thinking that was proactive in nature. I was exposed to states of awareness that asked questions like, "why do we focus on what's wrong, when in fact we can amplify what's right?"

Although there is so much to be learned from looking at what doesn't work, my father operated from a model that chose to focus on function, rather than a lack thereof.

I was raised within a model that states that animate objects have a coordinating intelligence within them, and that the nature and order of things can lead to harmony, success, vitality, growth, and health.

Said another way, I was raised to believe we are intelligent creative beings and the same wisdom that allows a beautiful rose to bloom, exists within us when we cut our finger. We don't have to stay up at night, in general, worrying as to whether or not our innate capacity knows how to heal the cut, seal the wound, and generate epithelial cells. Our inner capacity most of the time has the exact blueprint to re-create proper form and structure.

I was also raised to believe that with hard work and concentrated will, we can often achieve great things. My parents both came from humble beginnings and my father worked late nights driving a taxi to help pay for graduate school. My mom worked countless hours in her family's diner in Chicago, often missing school dances and the prom to serve the family's needs.

Later in life my mom became a successful and patient real estate agent often serving populations that took great care and attention, and she succeeded because she served her clients like a precious family.

My sister is a brilliant specialist in public relations, and she has a knack for helping meaningful projects and companies receive news and media coverage. I love her creative spirit and her hard working nature.

Growing up around the bodybuilding industry shaped me in many ways as I observed the discipline it took to eat well and quite strictly. Sometimes the lifestyle seemed rather punitive for my tastes, but to this day I have to say I'm grateful my dad placed the seeds of awareness inside my mind that food and nutrients are fuel; and, if we nourish ourselves properly, the energy yield it generates is massive and powerful.

This nutritional focus would plant the seeds for my passion for natural supplementation. I knew at a young age that it's essential to fortify our diets with additional resources as our soil, water, and food reserves often lack a complete package of dietary necessities. I will share more about this and how this shaped my future as well.

At a young age I think I thought of myself as potentially becoming a geriatric physician. I just loved senior citizens as I cherish life wisdom and the stories that people weave as they cultivate life lessons.

By the age of 17, I decided that if I possibly was not going to make the major leagues as a pitcher (as my fastball was topping out at about 72 mph), I should probably start looking for internships in my potential future field of interest.

Due to my involvement in the National Honor Society (thanks, mom), I secured an internship in a suburb of Chicago at a senior citizen care center. The National Honor Society encouraged volunteering to gain real life insights, and I followed their guidance. I'm so grateful I did.

After my first week of volunteering at the first senior care center (notice I said first as that is a foreshadowing of what's to unfold), I started leaving sticky notes criticizing the potential harmful effects of some of the medication that was being administered to the patients by the attending physicians. Considering that they didn't take kindly to the criticism from a 17 year old "expert," I was quickly escorted out of the building and I left in a huff without contemplating that perhaps I could've approached the concerns with some informed questions or comments rather than passive-aggressive defiant sticky notes.

But, be that as it may be, I was to not be deterred that easily.

I then found my second and last senior care center to volunteer at, and I just so happened to creatively omit my recent excusal at the prior senior care center.

The second center that I was fired from or “excused” from was very nice and filled with care and warmth. It just so happens that I thought I could amplify this care and warmth by contacting the Humane Society so that I could bring dogs and cats into the care center to help the ailing seniors feel unconditional love. I definitely didn't take into account that many of the patients might have severe allergies, or perhaps I should've asked if I actually had permission to contact the Humane Society without the program director's permission; and let's just say when the Humane Society outreach coordinator called to confirm that the dogs and cats were welcome to visit the following week, I quickly received my walking papers.

I think there is some old adage about asking for forgiveness later rather than starting with permission, but I think I got it backwards in this instance.

After some deep contemplation and some long therapeutic runs, I decided that I wanted to embrace the holistic roots of my family, and I decided that I would combine my love for sports with my love for serving and amplifying life and health. I chose to initiate the path of being a life enhancement and sports performance focused chiropractor.

I chose to be part of a profession that focuses on how structure affects function, and with proper alignment, synergy, healing, and radiant energy, positive results are more likely.

Just the way many now know that a 5G capacity phone is faster than a 4G phone which is quicker than a 3G phone, I wanted to focus on how I could help people create greater synergy and capacity in their bodies, thus resulting in greater harmony and resiliency in their minds and in their overall quality of life.

In NASCAR, they change the wheels on a fine tuned race car even if there's only 1/18 of tread loss as that slight hindrance in the tires impacts torque, spin rate, grip, and acceleration. In a race, one car may win by one hundredth of a second and that win could lead to winnings, earnings, endorsements, and valuable future opportunities.

I wanted to approach the alignment of the body and health in this same manner. What could cumulative positive health advantages lead to over a lifetime?

I now can share that I'm a living example of the mission that I set out to study, and I'm so grateful for all the mentors and collaborative partners who've illuminated the way.

The Turning Point:

Approximately 9 years ago we had a profound experience with a patient whom we'll respectfully call Krista. Krista had been through many traumatic challenges in her personal and professional life and she entered our office after having been on disability insurance for over 18 months.

After taking Krista's case history, we started to realize that all of the symptoms that she had been describing were the common factors for the diagnosis which we now have come to understand and call fibromyalgia.

In addition, what was so interesting about Krista's case was the intense emotional stress she had endured throughout her life, and furthermore her inability to adapt to and cope with the changes of everyday life. To put it simply, Krista had lost hope, was depressed, and her personal life was in shambles due to the intense pain, and the lack of energy and motivation that she experienced.

What evolved through serving Krista changed our professional lives forever. In a very short amount of time after implementing some of the strategies that we set forth for her, Krista's life began to change. Suddenly, her facial expressions seemed lighter, her eyes looked brighter, and the time she spent interacting with the outside world grew.

In fact, within two weeks of our care and coaching, Krista enrolled in dance lessons with her husband, something they'd not done in years and something she never thought she'd have the energy for again.

Then suddenly when all seemed to be going so well, something very interesting started to happen. Krista started missing her appointments. Slowly but surely, Krista's health challenges were actually returning again.

We called Krista and encouraged her to strictly follow our care plan, and in fact we almost desperately asked her to do so. She then shared with us one of the most honest things we've ever heard in our practice. Krista said, "But Dr. Jason, what will I do if I get really well? I will lose my disability insurance."

After hanging up the phone, we simply sat there and stared at each other, and then shortly after we realized that this was not all Krista's fault.

For you see, the model of healthcare that she'd always participated in never once prepared her for the concept that she might actually be free from fibromyalgia one day. In fact, the model that she'd originally participated in told her that she'd have this dreadful condition forever. Furthermore, they set up a system of dependency for Krista in that she never once had even approached the thought of creating a fulfilling and healthy life after health concerns.

In other words, Krista had fully become her disease and even more so, became dependent upon the healthcare delivery system that identified her as such.

So often people are defined by the challenges they experience, and instead of seeing those challenges as temporary setbacks they begin to see those challenges as life-long sentences.

We've never seen Krista again, but after that day we vowed to never let that happen again in our office. We know that Krista's choices weren't our responsibility, but what if we could've possibly started her care with the same concepts that are now in this book.

Concepts and strategies that are empowering, encouraging, and created with the goal in mind of not only restoring health, but also helping people create and maintain fulfilling lives.

While writing this book, we spent hundreds of hours pouring over the research and case studies in addition to our own clinical experience regarding health concerns that are prevalent today.

We can honestly say that what you put into this process is what you'll get out of it. After thorough and sometimes painstaking research and observation, what we found is that the patients who implemented the most amount of these strategies recovered more quickly than the hesitant patients who dabbled in what we were offering them.

This principle applies to you as well and we encourage you to just dive into the water of this material. Trust us, your big toe won't give you all the information you need.

Chapter 1: You're Experiencing The Real Deal

The essential concept that we want to impart to you in this chapter is that any and all of the intense associated life and health challenges that go along with whatever state you currently present in, are not all in your head!

No matter how many lab tests you've received that have come back as "normal," we assure you as doctors that your experience is anything but routine.

Any concern that we're approached with, we take as a very intense and serious concern, and please take refuge in the knowledge that we know that you are not making all of this up. You're not faking it, and no, you don't simply want to get others attention by feeling out of sorts.

On the contrary, 99% of the patients that we work with deeply and desperately want to feel good again.

It's important to them that they're not viewed as "helpless" and a burden to others, and it's their heartfelt desire to enjoy and participate in their own lives again. Our sense is that this applies to you as well or else you wouldn't have taken the time to read this book.

You are not alone and we are glad we met you now!

Chapter 2: Your First Stop- Discovering How You Got Here

Throughout this process, we're going to ask you to think back over the last several years and review many of the events and stressors that you've experienced.

You're a sum total of every thought, action, word, and deed that you've taken part in. This may sound like a looming concept, but actually it can be very reassuring. After all, if one's affected by all past choices and experiences, then by the same token, they also have the same power to determine their future experience by current choices and activities.

You see, health is changeable even if you've been told it's not.

It's very clear to many that their bank account balance is an accumulation of deposits and withdrawals. Similarly, your account of health so to speak, works very much the same way.

We don't mean to sound too basic, but to be honest some of the simplest concepts are the most profound if implemented correctly. We know that during times of challenge, the last thing you want is complexity. So, we've boiled down these concepts and refined them to help you heal more quickly.

Throughout your lifetime you've had numerous experiences of all types of stressors whether they're physical, chemical, emotional, or mental.

Like many people with any current health concerns, you may have experienced any number of these following stresses in the recent past or even as far back as your childhood.

The accumulation of past mental, emotional, chemical, and physical traumas could indeed play a critical role in regards to your overall quality of life status today. Likewise, current stressors such as the loss of a job, financial stress, the loss of a loved one, an unexpected move, career changes, having a child, divorce, intense physical falls, bumps, car accidents, surgeries, sports injuries, demanding physical labor, over-exertion, medications, exposure to poisonous chemicals or toxic environments, as well as electromagnetic radiation may very

well be the stimulus that pushed you over the edge.

Whatever the stress you're experiencing or have experienced, it's your nervous system that records every event and sends a cascade of chemical and electrical impulses to every tissue, cell, and organ of your body giving it the message to either respond in a proactive way, or to perceive that signal as an overload and generate a fight or flight response.

Your nervous system literally acts like an antenna both receiving and transmitting signals within and without your body as you interact with your internal and external worlds.

One of the most powerful tools that'll help you thrive is understanding the functioning of the nervous system and how it helps you adapt, cope, and thrive in the world.

Over and over again what we've seen clinically is that any loss of function can be best understood, approached, and treated as a condition associated with and affecting the central nervous system; and we'd like to share a story with you to bridge the gap between the nervous system and how it relates to everyday life.

Let us share Jane's story.

Jane's story may be very similar to your story or someone you love.

Jane (not her true name) is currently a patient of ours.

Jane is 43 years old, is in a loving marriage, the mother of three, and an emergency room nurse at a local hospital.

Jane entered our office presenting with symptoms of fatigue and widespread pain, achiness, and general malaise.

Jane was frustrated and confused as to why over the last six to eight months she'd been feeling as though she had less and less energy, and was feeling irritable when faced with the need to care for her children, not to mention her

desire to stay in bed when faced with having to be on call for emergencies at the hospital. Worst of all, even on her days off from the hospital, Jane felt as though she couldn't find a comfortable position to sleep and would lay awake at night in pain.

This whole experience was becoming emotionally draining for Jane for she truly did love her job, and she felt immense guilt for the fact that she no longer was the same attentive wife and mother that she once was.

To top it off, Jane had gone through extensive testing at her place of work, and all of her lab findings came back as normal, or only slightly elevated to the point that was seen as inconsequential.

Jane called us after a friend explained to her that she may indeed need an alternative solution, and when she arrived at our office she was ready and open to suggestions.

If we'd just looked at Jane's current lifestyle, it would appear as though nothing remarkable was present. Her husband was well compensated at work, they had just moved into a beautiful new home, and had hired a nanny to help care for the kids. Jane was back to working only two full time shifts at the hospital, something she'd looked forward to because she knew it would give her the opportunity to still spend plenty of time with her children.

However, when we use our unique process to evaluate the state of one's health, we don't only look at someone's current lifestyle. For us, it's very important to review the steps as to how someone had arrived at their state of health or lack thereof.

After speaking with Jane we found that some of her favorite times in life were during her collegiate years. Jane was very active both socially and academically, and participated in numerous sports activities both in the intramural setting and through collegiate women's lacrosse.

Jane met her husband at a collegiate sporting event, and they were a match from the very beginning. After speaking with her further, we found that getting to college in the first place was an overwhelming challenge for Jane.

When Jane was 17 and in her senior year of high school, she took a trip with the ski team and experienced a massive accident and fall impacting her head and neck, leaving her bedridden for almost two months.

Being the over-achiever that she was, and college bound, Jane immediately rejoined her class without fully recovering physically, and made up lost time by studying extensively into the night.

Jane was able to make up her schoolwork in a short amount of time, even though this put her under a tremendous amount of pressure both emotionally and mentally.

Being young and driven, Jane never fully gave herself the adequate time needed to recover, and moved onto college where she began her extensive involvement in activities, sports, and social events.

In order to fit all her newly found activities and friendships together, as well as keep her high grade point average, Jane relied on stimulants such as “NO-DOSE” and caffeine to maintain her energy. Jane’s student lifestyle and diet of pasta, pizza, and Haagen Dazs definitely added further fuel to the fire.

Jane and her husband were engaged in her senior year of college, and both had exciting plans for the future. Jane went to nursing school, and he went to business school.

A few months after graduation Jane experienced the traumatic loss of her younger sister to a car accident, and over the following year the horrendous amount of stress led to her parent’s separation and divorce.

Jane, being the glue of the family, shouldered the responsibility of caring for her parent’s emotionally and couldn’t honestly remember when speaking to us if she'd taken the time herself to grieve about her sister.

Eventually, Jane and her husband Adam married and had a son. Although the baby was beautifully healthy, the birth process was traumatic, as Jane needed a last minute cesarean section. Her friends reassured her that a cesarean was

typical, and Jane never really gave this event much thought in regards to her body needing additional time for healing.

Three years later Jane and Adam chose to have another child, and to their surprise and joy, Jane gave birth to identical twins!

At this time, although Adam had seemed to have been in a secure job, his company downsized leaving Jane responsible for the finances of the family while he searched for new employment.

At the time, Jane went back to work full time in a stressful environment with hospital administrative changes, after years of her body never fully being able to rest or let down.

Luckily, Jane's husband did find employment with a new recruitment firm 9 months later that offered him nearly two times as much as he'd previously earned provided that he was willing to travel.

Although this allowed Adam and Jane to realize their dream of purchasing a larger home and hiring a nanny, it took Adam away from the home due to his busy travel demands.

Jane went back to working part-time to have access to a stimulating environment as well as caring for three children.

At this point, Jane had felt things had finally begun to look up, and although quite busy, Adam and Jane were enjoying their life.

Although they were enjoying their life, it was at this point that Jane felt the creeping fear arise that her health was no longer the same. Slowly but surely, Jane felt her energy depleting, her immune system failing, and emotionally felt quite fragile.

This brings us to the present moment where Jane entered our office needing help and feeling bewildered by the presence of her symptoms.

Life gets stored in our body

Jane's story is the epitome of how our life gets stored in our body. It's paramount that we now explain the physiological ramifications of Jane's life experience and our sense is that it may apply to you or someone you know. Looking back at Jane's life experiences, it becomes evident that she has experienced physical, chemical, mental, and emotional stress. What is also notable is the timing of the events in Jane's life.

What we've found with many patients is that there tends to be a running theme of repeated exposure to stressful events and noxious stimuli.

Jane's story is not unique. The events may be different, but the effects are the same.

Our bodies will always try to adapt to the amount of stress and overwhelm that we're exposed to. Sadly enough, without the proper adaptive strategies in place, recovery is not always automatic, and fatigue, lack of organ function and disease can set in.

This degenerative process can best be described as the General Adaptation Syndrome (GAS), and plays a key role in why people like Jane, and quite possibly you or someone you know, suffer from a limited expression of health.

Chapter 3: The Physiology of Fight-or-Flight & The General Adaption Syndrome

In the 1930's two American doctors, Walter Cannon and Hans Selye, became famous for publishing precise details of how our bodies respond to stress.

These two brilliant scientists are the ones who coined the term "fight-or-flight."

The fight-or-flight response is a genetically programmed survival trait dating back to the early history of mankind. The ability to react immediately to a situation by either fighting or fleeing from a stressor was a definite advantage. The accompanying physiological responses are aimed at increasing strength, speed, and stamina, and in our caveman days were all necessary for survival.

Although this is still the way people respond to stress, the problem is that in today's environment these responses are generally no longer appropriate except in extreme situations. It's a bit like shifting a powerful car into neutral and flooring the accelerator. This produces plenty of potential power with the car going nowhere, while at the same time burning out the engine.

A certain amount of stress can be a good thing because the increased levels of hormones flooding through the body can increase performance; however, there's a point where stress levels increase beyond the body's ability to adapt to it, and performance drops off very quickly causing people to "burnout."

In Jane's case (and quite possibly your own), long-term exposure to repeated stressors has played a key role as to why she now experiences significant health challenges. Here's why:

The Fight-or-Flight Response

Stress and its effects on the body are major causes of degeneration in our health today. The first reaction to a stressful event is the fight-or-flight response. This response is triggered by reactions in the brain that stimulate the pituitary gland to release adrenocorticotrophic hormones which stimulate the adrenals to secrete adrenaline and other stress-related hormones. Now we all may know about the healthy use of adrenaline when we're truly faced with the need to instinctively react to a dangerous or alarming event. For example, if

a child were to run out into a busy intersection our response would immediately be to run after her and quickly bring her to safety. In that situation, our adrenal glands appropriately revved up our engines.

To facilitate the immediate physical reaction to protect the child in danger, our heart rate and force of contraction increases to provide blood to areas necessary for response to the stressful situation. Except for the heart and lungs, blood is shunted away from other internal organs and the skin. The blood carries more oxygen to the brain, heart, and exercising muscles.

Sweat increases to eliminate toxins from the body and to lower the body temperature. Production of digestive secretion is reduced and digestion is significantly slowed (long term, this stress could affect digestion, i.e. irritable bowel syndrome and other digestive disorders). Blood sugar levels rise dramatically as the liver dumps stored glucose into the bloodstream for immediate use of fuel. Cholesterol levels and blood pressure are also increased.

The stress response is a response to get the body moving and out of trouble. It's designed to be a quick physical response that's quickly dissipated with a surge of physical activity, and then the body returns to its resting state.

The Problem With Stress Today

The problem today is that this stress response is out of place. Most of our stress encounters revolve around situations where we can take little or no physical action. For example, a nasty interaction with a co-worker, a challenging relationship, loss of a loved one, sudden job change or move, financial stress and more. It's counter-productive to move blood to muscles that will not be used, and to distort important metabolic functions like increasing heartbeat and blood pressure, if they cannot be diffused by appropriate physical exertion.

Many of us internalize stress instead of communicating our needs or finding ways to healthily deal with life's frustrating and sometimes overwhelming changes. Our stress responses are held in the body and continue to produce wear and tear on our metabolic processes, our organs, and our cellular functions. No wonder so many of us feel depleted.

When our external stresses are continual or unable to be completed, they end up resulting in internal stresses. Such internal stress depletes our nutritional and other body resources. When this depletion becomes severe the body is weakened in its ability to recover from stress, energy levels diminish, degeneration takes the lead over regeneration, and disease conditions can develop.

In Hans Selye's book *The Stress of Life* he breaks down the General Adaptation Syndrome into 3 stages. Let's look at them in relation to Jane's life and possibly your own.

Stage One of the GAS: The Alarm Stage

The first stage of stress - the fight-or-flight response - is the alarm stage where the body sets into motion its first line of defense - the sympathetic nervous system response. Due to the activation of the adrenal medulla (the inner portion of the adrenal gland), adrenaline is released into the bloodstream. To increase the energy output, the metabolic rate in the body increases by increasing the activity of the thyroid and adrenal glands. This is the resulting physiological response to occurrences such as Jane's ski accident, her resulting school stress, and continual intake of stimulants to get ahead in her studies.

In this stage of stress, the body may manifest acute symptoms such as pain, inflammation, and fever. In the alarm stage of the stress response, the thyroid and adrenal hormone secretions increase to above normal levels to maintain high energy.

Blood pressure and blood sugar levels are increased, the pulse is rapid, reflexes are quick, and calcium and magnesium levels are lowered as a result of the stress. To maintain the needed high energy levels, there is excessive tissue breakdown (this breakdown of your cell tissue makes it even more challenging to recover). The body dips into its own energy resources to provide fuel for its survival. An inflammatory process may be present if there is physical injury. When the stress is resolved, the symptoms resolve and the body returns to homeostasis. However, Jane's stress was never fully resolved leaving her body in that state of fight-or-flight.

The effects of continual stress (lack of rest, work stress, repeated emotional demands, poor nutrition, lack of exercise, and lack of fresh air to name a few), at this level may induce such problems as high blood pressure, high blood sugar levels, anxiety, nervousness, insomnia, acute aches and pains, hyperactivity, irritability, emotional sensitivity, a racing mind, and learning difficulties with an inability to concentrate.

Stage Two of the GAS: Resistance

If the body cannot resolve the initial stress, it then enters into a resistance stage of stress where the alarm reactions in the body change. The central nervous system begins to get used to the continual experience of being under stress and fatigue, and it directs the body to remain in a heightened state of response.

In Jane's case her body began to accept the continual states of overwhelm that occurred in her life such as college activities, poor diet, lack of rest, emotional upset due to the loss of her sister, and the resulting divorce of her parents. Not to mention her involvement in nursing school, change of life due to marriage, becoming a mother after a challenging labor, and continual upset in finances and work hours.

To follow along physiologically, in most cases like Jane's, the adrenal cortex is activated and secretes cortisol (a stress hormone) and other corticosteroid hormones responsible for the body's resistance reactions.

Cortisol secretion indicates that the body is attempting to function at a heightened level. These hormones stimulate conversion of protein to energy so that the body has a large supply of energy after glucose stores have been depleted (i.e. the needle of the gas tank has passed E and is soon to be running on fumes!). It also promotes retention of sodium to keep blood pressure elevated. Endocrine activity is also heightened – that is the glands in your body are taxed.

If this stress stage continues to prevail, the body mechanisms involved in supporting this stage of resistance will weaken. High circulating levels of cortisol (stress hormone) produce damaging effects on the circulatory, digestive, immune, and other systems of the body.

Continual stress, in this state, is related to such conditions as diabetes, high blood pressure, TMJ, chronic fatigue, and digestive disorders.

At this point there's a general reduction of energy levels or often dramatic fluctuations of energy. Either the thyroid or adrenal glands can become overactive. As the body continues to attempt to adapt to stress, adrenal cortical steroid hormones, which are anti-inflammatory, continue to be produced. This process of adaptation takes energy and the body must dip further into its own energy reserves which begin to weaken the body. Nutrients are not assimilated properly, and glycogen (fuel) reserves in the liver cannot be drawn on properly (think of this as though you have put high octane fuel in your car engine yet your car cannot utilize it efficiently, and thus doesn't move out of first gear).

If this resistance state of the body is not resolved, that is if the demands on the body to constantly adapt and live with overwhelming stressors and continual fatigue do not cease, eventually one's body will pass into a steadily declining state of exhaustion.

Stage Three of the GAS: The Road To Exhaustion

This depletion and exhaustion of body resources and functions may manifest as a total collapse and shutdown of body functions or specific organs.

One cause of exhaustion is the weakening of the organs. Prolonged stress places a tremendous load on many organ systems, especially the heart, blood vessels, adrenals, digestive, and immune system.

These biological reactions which accompany this stress response - caused by the general adaptation syndrome - results in short and long-term adverse physical changes including widespread body pain, dramatic fatigue, as well as hormonal imbalances, and nervous system overload.

In the exhaustion stage of stress, the activity levels of the adrenal and thyroid glands diminish thus dramatically affecting energy level and weight gain. Cholesterol rises, toxic metals accumulate in the body, and chronic diseases such as diabetes, cancer, and cardiovascular disease may eventually manifest.

Again, metabolism is slowed, glandular depletion occurs, and profound exhaustion ultimately develops. Constipation, allergies, fatigue and hypoglycemia are often present. The body no longer has the energy to deal with the stress and begins to break down. Endocrine glands have become overworked and eventually may fail in their attempt to keep up one's energy levels.

When one reaches this state the body has to retreat from this stress. In Jane's case, she became irritated at the thought of having to be available to her family and at work. She had a hard time getting up in the morning and preferred to stay in bed. In this burnout state the body has to rely on some kind of outside input to maintain any level of energy. Commonly, people in this situation become reliant on caffeine, sugar, painkillers, and sleeping pills to get by.

Total exhaustion and burnout are adaptations to chronic stress - by shutting down, the body refuses to function under continuing conditions of stress - exhaustion, or collapse may then occur.

This state leads to a slow metamorphosis that severely imbalances the body chemistry and slowly wears out the body processes resulting in many common conditions such as angina (chest and heart pain), asthma, auto-immune disease, cancer, cardiovascular disease, common colds, diabetes (adult onset - type II), depression, headaches, hypertension, immune suppression, irritable bowel syndrome, lupus, menstrual irregularities, premenstrual syndrome, rheumatoid arthritis, ulcerative colitis, and ulcers.

This exhaustion is not only physical, but can also show up emotionally, mentally, and psychologically. Symptoms such as apathy, submission, hostility, resentment, anger, frustration, and lack of satisfaction may become a constant state. To keep the body going, moving between states of depression and elation becomes a common adaptation in an effort to block the awareness of such a low energetic state. ***The body feels like it's fighting for its survival.***

This is the state of health Jane was in when we met her; it may very well be the state you find yourself in now. What we've found is that in order to fully heal and recover from the General Adaptation Syndrome, and ultimately any health concerns, the body and mind must be cared for in an integrated program.

Your Role in This Process

As we've reviewed, the GAS and the experiences that go along with the stages of alarm, adaptation, and exhaustion, it's essential to note that there was not one specific thing that caused Jane's health challenges, and it is safe to say that there is not a sole cause for your distress as well.

We share this, for all too often health recovery programs fail to give the essentials to create a healthier foundation.

We promise you that we'll never do that with you, and now we ask you to make a promise to yourself and to us.

Of all the people we've worked with, we've never seen someone fail if they truly were dedicated to getting well.

For your dedication we acknowledge you, for you've read this far, and we assure you that you can make this plan work for you. Success is within your reach.

Chapter 4: Your New Life Skills

So often doctors are trained to focus on alleviating symptoms, however, we feel it's more important to listen carefully to the patient and look beneath the surface of the symptoms to the source of the problem.

What we've repeatedly found is that some of the challenges that show up in the bodies of patients, have to do with the events and circumstances of their lives. Said another way, our biology speaks volumes about the events we experience daily.

With that in mind, we're going to share with you some priceless life skills and life coaching concepts that have the potential to help turn your life and health around.

When working with patients in the past we immediately attempted to change their sources of fuel (nutrition) and quickly implement an exercise program. These are essential components, and we look forward to sharing more in depth information in the chapters to come regarding exercise and nutrition; however, what we found was that if we could help our clients first identify what was truly draining their energy, and help them to refocus on what their true priorities were in life, we were able to help them feel more empowered about changing their own life right away.

We recommend that you don't compromise in any way on the strategies that we provide for you. Your health depends on it.

Here are the six strategies we'll cover in this section:

- 1. Becoming Self-full (putting yourself first)*
 - 2. Choosing a Priority Driven Life*
 - 3. Eliminating Draining Factors Forever*
 - 4. Taking Time for Solitude and Renewal*
 - 5. Connecting to Peace, Tranquility, and Inspiration: Discovering Meditation and Contemplation*
 - 6. Self Talk: Harmonizing Your Inner Voice*
-

Strategy #1: Becoming Self-full (Putting Yourself First)

You're undoubtedly a special person. We say this for through our clinical experience, we've found health oriented patients to be some of the most sensitive people we've ever met. We truly believe that this sensitivity is a gift, and if accessed correctly this sensitivity could help you to live a life directed by your own inner strength and guidance.

However, an instrumental concept to share is that you deserve more than what you're experiencing. In order for you to truly embody the idea that you deserve more than what you're experiencing, it's essential that you accept one key and undeniable principle.

In order to fully heal, you have to become selfish. Now, selfishness in today's society has really taken on a negative connotation, so we've converted the word selfish into self-full.

What we mean by self-full is that you place you, as number 1 on your list. What we've found clinically is that people who feel less than optimal have often been very well intended people who at times choose to put others' needs above their own. They often make other people the priority instead of themselves. Whether it's a spouse, a co-worker, a career, a relative, or friend, many people often say "yes" to a request when in their heart of hearts they really crave to say "no."

Becoming self-full means that proper boundaries are set in place (a concept we'll talk more about), and that you place your own desires as of utmost importance, even if that means confronting others or simply letting them down.

A warning- as you evolve into this state of mind, there are bound to be a few people who aren't that happy with the "new" you. We made up pink slips that we playfully give to our clients hinting that some of those people, who aren't in support of the more powerful and forward speaking you, be put on waivers, be placed on the bench, yes, fired.

Becoming self-full means taking time for yourself, and examining what your needs are. This can be as simple as no longer volunteering at an organization, or asking for some alone time so that you can soak in a warm bath.

Becoming self-full is a way of life, and when you truly start taking care of yourself first, you become way more attractive to yourself, others, and ultimately, your interactions change for good. Remember that on airplanes, they always tell you to place your oxygen mask on yourself first, and then assist others.

At times, you may slip and say yes when you mean no, but you'll feel it in your body. Your muscles will literally tell you that you betrayed your needs.

So, Strategy #1 is - Becoming Self-full (putting yourself first)

Self-Full Questions:

You might want to keep these 3 key questions in mind throughout your day as you become an expert in strategy #1 - "self-fullness"

Question #1- Is the behavior or activity I'm doing or the choice that I'm about to make, helpful or harmful to my health and emotional well-being?

This question is essential for becoming self-full. It means that you start to evaluate how your daily choices affect your health. When you choose activities that harm you consistently, you're undermining the odds of you ever fully getting healthy. Patients who learn how to connect their behavior with their symptoms, start to realize that their tender points or sore muscles become feedback mechanisms, instead of signs that your body is betraying you.

One way to start connecting your behavior with your symptoms is to keep a log of your daily activities, choices, behaviors, and the results that they bring forth. You might want to even monitor your energy level in relation to what your daily activities consist of. By paying attention to your natural rhythms and needs, you slowly can learn how to heal yourself.

Question #2 - By taking part in this activity, am I pushing myself to do something to please someone else?

This question is powerful because self-full people learn how to think of consequences of their human interactions, before they ever happen. In other words, pleasing others at the cost of your own health and comfort becomes a noticeably displeasing experience for you.

If we continually push ourselves, we're actively choosing to deny our own needs. Pushing implies being outside of "the flow" of life, and requires effort, struggle, and force. Clients who break this pattern by listening to what they truly need and feel, start to live more authentic and balanced lives.

Question #3 - If I say yes to this request, will I feel resentful and frustrated about the commitment I just made? How might this affect my health?

Resentment has been studied to actually generate cortisol within the bloodstream. Cortisol is a stress hormone and acts in the body like an irritant or stimulant.

If we're literally irritating ourselves in our own body chemistry, our chances to heal are slim. Question #3 means that you're learning to start to give yourself permission to say "no" in life. Often times, we coach our clients to say no to 7 out of 10 opportunities, simply for the experience of standing up for themselves.

Strategy #2: A Priority Driven Life!

It might sound way too idealistic for us to talk to you about the characteristics of what your ideal life might look like; however, we're sharing this concept with you for a number of reasons.

Firstly, if you have some idea of what you'd really like in your life, you may be able to start to define what behaviors and activities detract from your happiness and contentment.

Secondly, setting your priorities straight ensures that you'll have ample time for yourself, your recovery, and your relationships.

Lastly, having even a vague picture of what's important to you helps to motivate you during low times, and keeps you focused on getting an enjoyable life back. So again, strategy #2 means getting your priorities straight.

Here are some key questions that can help you refine your priorities during your healing process:

Question #1- What really matters most to me right now?

This may fluctuate throughout your day and week. For instance, asking yourself this question when you wake up, may give you the answer that rest is more of a priority than driving your child to school; in which case you may need strategies in place to support you (carpool, spouse or neighbor drives etc...).

In the afternoon, you may ask yourself if it's more important to complete a project at work, or take a break, get some fresh air, and feed your body. Sometimes the completion of a project is relieving, sometimes taxing.

This same question on a deeper level may encourage you to not only ask what you need on a day-to-day level but also encourage you to start thinking about what priorities in your life have taken a back seat. For example, many patients we've worked with admit to us that life has become one day of toleration after another. Many patients share that they miss feeling creative, optimistic, and purposeful as though they're having an impact on others and the world around them.

Without sounding too lofty sometimes this healing process affords you the time necessary for introspection and review. Getting your priorities straight may mean consistent small life changes that ultimately bring you to living a fulfilling life that you crave.

For example, one of our clients significantly scaled down her lifestyle and simplified, which enabled her to spend more time with her grandchildren and gave her time away from the office.

If one of your larger priorities is having more free time, then you may have to evaluate where you're currently spending your time and if it's meaningful for you or if that time can be better spent elsewhere. Are your obligations running your life? Are there regular commitments, groups, or committees that you could let go of simply by becoming more honest to yourself and others?

Do you have draining family obligations, meal prep, dish washing, house cleaning, care giving for children or elders that your family can assist you with, or that you can hire out? These are important questions to ask yourself in order to create that free time that you crave and need during your healing process.

If living a stress-free life is a priority then examining your career path may be helpful. Are you working way too hard for the rewards and benefits it brings?

Does your experience at work drain you to the point that it takes you all weekend to recover? Would scaling down your lifestyle enable you to work less and feel less pressure while still maintaining a good quality of life? Is your career costing you your health?

If family is a major priority, can you structure your life so that you have evenings and weekends together? Can you telecommute and do work from home instead of spending valuable time on the road? Can you move closer to loved ones and friends? Can errands be run by a high school student freeing you up to spend quality time with your children? Can you create a date night for you and your spouse/partner?

Bottom line, if your life is led by your priorities, you'll find that you have more energy available for life and loved ones and better health.

Question #2 - Where have I borrowed someone else's priorities?

Oftentimes we find that people who have challenged health don't feel that they have choices in life. When you have borrowed someone else's priority, you've made an unconscious (sometime conscious) choice to give your power away. You may find you're doing things that feel draining because they're things that were/are important to someone else, perhaps a parent, child, or spouse.

Borrowed priorities can be a valuable experience, but may not be right for you at this time.

Question #3 - Are the priorities you've chosen valuable and important, but the emphasis you've placed upon them inappropriate or out of balance?

For instance, you may be currently a parent and have chosen to remain an active participant in your children's upbringing; however, home schooling may be a commitment that proves to be overwhelming. Perhaps, just being a stay-at-home parent is enough.

If being of service in a community, group or organization is fulfilling for you, it may be a top priority; however, you can choose to just volunteer time instead of being on the board of directors or having a regular commitment.

Giving yourself permission to live a life directed by your own personal priorities, and living them with balance is an essential strategy for your recovery.

Strategy #3: Eliminate Draining Things From Your Life

When working with patients we've found that they can literally make a list of a 100 things that they're putting up with and tolerating in their life. A toleration is something that we continually put up with that zaps our energy and motivation. It's anything that drains you, takes away from you being at your best, and ultimately costs you your peace and sanity.

A toleration can be the way a co-worker speaks to you, the clutter in your home or office, your weight, a challenging relationship, the lack of comfort of your bedroom, a shower curtain that keeps falling down, your job, driving in traffic, or anything that depletes you and takes your attention away from important and more fulfilling things.

In order to become toleration free, meaning that you don't put up with anything that you don't choose to, you must become clear of what gives you energy and what drains you as well.

Let's look at clutter, an obvious toleration and how to become clutter-free.

It's the collection of clutter that keeps us in old patterns, and attached to old thoughts and memories. Unfinished projects that linger in our environments keep a hold on us and force us to remain ever so slightly hooked to the past.

With clutter we have no clean space to create, to breathe, to generate, and most importantly to heal.

Since a major cause of loss of energy is the other “stuff” that accumulates around us when we're focusing on one particular project, schedule time to keep the piles (physical or mental) from accumulating. Do the filing, or hire out if necessary.

If you don't clear clutter, your “tolerations” will zap your energy and overwhelm you. You may think that you don't have time to tidy up loose ends, but feeling complete and free is a sure-fire way to stay anchored to your energy, hope, and goal of getting your life back. There are many more benefits to becoming toleration-free like feeling relaxed, more creative, and more relieved.

We suggest you start with small projects like a pile of papers, and graduate to cleaning out your closet, your car, your house, and your office. Enlist help if it's taxing.

Getting clutter free also stands true within our bodies. If our body is filled with old, stressful, and toxic events, choices, experiences, and thought patterns, there can be no room for a creative life, abundant health, and self-advancement.

Ultimately, our biology becomes our biography; where every tissue cell and organ of our body speaks volumes about the victories and challenges of our daily life.

You'll learn how to renew your body in the chapters to come. Starting with simple things in your external environment will help you feel successful along the way.

Strategy #4: Take Time to Be Alone and Quiet

We shared previously that many patients tend to be sensitive people. We feel taking time to be alone is an essential strategy because so many in our community commonly feel overwhelmed. In our daily life there are many sources of external stimuli that we're all exposed to. Discerning patients need to be especially careful what they're exposed to. Whether it's being around too many people, and having to be "on" for others, many patients fatigue easily and need to concentrate on building their reserves of energy.

Is there a time of day that you can create for yourself when you don't have to answer to anybody? Do you have a peaceful place to do this? One of our patients used to take the last 20 minutes before her youngest son would go to bed to sit outside with him and watch the stars in silence. Perhaps you find this time for yourself at work, by actually taking an hour break, eating for 30 minutes and walking for 30 minutes. Most importantly, during this time, turn off all communication devices so you're not disturbed or accountable to others. Communicate this in advance so people know this is your time. Remember this is 60 minutes for you.

We also recommend that you don't read or listen to the radio during your alone time; make this a quiet contemplative hour or two.

Taking this alone time, even taking a silent drive alone, gives your body a break from having to react to demanding stimuli and helps to reset the nervous system thus decreasing the amount of fight-or-flight patterns that are created throughout the day.

Strategy #5: Connect to Peace, Tranquility and Inspiration: Discovering Meditation and Contemplation

Throughout time men and women have sought out ways to connect to peace, tranquility and inspiration. When we teach fibro patients to meditate or contemplate, they successfully break the continual chain of anxiousness, feelings of overwhelm, and fear. Silencing their mind, even for a few minutes a day, is priceless for patients for it gently assists in the healing of the body, mind, and spirit.

It's been said that your body eavesdrops on every word you say and every thought you think, and contemplation helps to create a positive relationship between your mind and your body.

During our workshops we teach our clients to find a comfortable position, whether sitting on the floor, in a chair, or reclining on the bed. Sometimes it's helpful to focus on a positive or loving word or image during contemplation while your eyes are closed. A possible image could be a loving pet, a family member or friend, a beautiful flower, or the color blue. It can also be helpful to chant or say a word out loud repeatedly like love or peace. We often suggest the use of the word HU (sounds like "hue") to use in contemplation as it has a nice sound and vibration and helps to uplift peoples spirits. "HU" is an ancient word similar to "OM" and when sung repeatedly can help people feel peaceful, protected, and calm. Some of our clients have worked their way up to singing HU for 20 minutes a day, but we suggest you start any contemplation practice for 3-5 minutes a day and work your way up.

We suggest you experiment and use the images or words that feel the best for you.

Meditation/contemplation has been proven to lower blood pressure, increase immune function, steady respiration, and improve quality of sleep. Meditation/contemplation is currently used in many well-known programs created by the renowned physicians and wellness experts Dr. Dean Ornish, Dr. Deepak Chopra, Dr. Andrew Weil, and Dr. Christine Northrup.

Even children are being taught meditation/contemplation to combat anxiety and nightmares. The British Journal of Educational Psychology reports that various meditation techniques enhance postgraduate students academic performance.

On the whole, we've had great success working with our clients and meditation, and we find it to be a valuable strategy not to be overlooked.

Strategy #6: Self-talk

We understand that at times you must feel like your body is violating you and

betraying you. Negative self-talk keeps you in the cycle of creating unhealthy body chemistry. We suggest you start to use affirming statements of belief to help your body and mind heal. We understand that some of the things we're going to ask you to say to yourself do not feel true, however, we've found that our clients who consistently take positive action grow into these statements.

Here are a few examples of new, positive self-talk that you may wish to use:

I allow my relationship with _____ to be joyful, loving, and constructive.

I allow my situation with _____ to be resolved with fairness and mutual respect.

I allow myself to love_____.

I allow myself to achieve and celebrate my ideal body weight.

I allow myself to enjoy eating foods that nourish me, keep me fit, slender, and attractive.

I allow myself to sleep well and awake refreshed.

I allow myself to express my creativity this week.

I allow myself to perform effectively and successfully at work.

I decide to speak positively and constructively with myself.

Positive self-talk is a strategy that anyone can use, and if you implement this strategy immediately, you're sure to feel uplifted and more motivated.

There may be times when you slip with what you say to yourself, and others; but if you can anchor yourself to a positive thought or feeling, you'll get right back on course in a hurry.

If it's helpful, you might even experiment with writing a positive quality or

feeling 15 times a day. For example – “I'm healthy, relaxed, and rested,” or “I'm recovering quickly and easily,” or “I allow myself to rest peacefully tonight.”

We've shared these essential life strategies with you, for we've truly found that if you acknowledge who you are as much as how you feel, you're likely to recover more rapidly with ease and even enjoyment.

We're not implying that doing this internal work is a walk in the park, but it's essential to the entire healing process, for healing is always an inside job.

With greater strength and resilience emotionally, we guarantee that you'll feel more motivated to rebuild your physiology; and with this strong foundation your odds of successfully implementing a new diet, exercise program, and body-balancing program are much higher.

Chapter 5: Getting The Nourishment You Need

Food is fuel; it can be one of your most powerful healing tools or your worst enemy. Yet few of us have ever had the opportunity to really learn the true building blocks of healthy nutrition and supplementation.

Many of us have never learned how to eat the appropriate foods in the right proportions. Even when we do, it can be very difficult to follow through and eat in a consistently healthy manner.

Our goal with you now is to help make food preparation and meals an uncomplicated, enjoyable, and nutritious experience.

As we see it, having a diet that suits your lifestyle is imperative. If a food plan isn't easy, you don't want to follow it or fit it into your schedule, thus sabotaging your health instead of enhancing it.

In this section we'll give you strategies to generate renewed energy from food. You'll learn how (and why) to consistently eat a balanced diet. We'll help you determine what foods to eat, as well as what not to eat. You'll also find easy snack and meal ideas, tips for eating on the run, and a handy shopping list of groceries and items to keep on hand, helping this part of your healing process remain as simple as possible.

Strategy #7: Understanding the Importance of Macronutrients and Micronutrients

Macronutrient as well as micronutrient balancing is essential for generating radiant health, balanced body chemistry, and nourishment for the brain.

Macronutrient balancing is simply a fancy word for finding the proper balance of carbohydrates, proteins, and fats in order to move from chronic health problems to optimal health. (Examples of healthy macronutrients that people eat are - Proteins: fish, lean red meat, poultry, tofu, dairy, and eggs; Carbohydrates: fruit, vegetables, grains, and cereals; Fats: olive oil, nuts, avocado, seeds – we will differentiate between healthy choices and unhealthy choices later.)

Put simply think of proteins, carbohydrates, and fats as the sources of fuel that your engine runs on. Essentially, we'll do best when we find the right combination or percentages of these foods for our unique bodies. If we eat significantly disproportionate meals our body chemistry is negatively affected. This has profound ramifications for your healing and recovery process.

A conscious and proper balancing of macronutrients (proteins, carbohydrates, and fats) can provide the fine-tuned maintenance of blood glucose (sugar or “fuel”) that's required for your optimal health, energy, and concentration levels. This is critical for f patients because if you fail to properly balance your meals, and thus your blood sugar levels, the odds of you experiencing pain, aches, depression, and fatigue are significantly higher. Learning more about how to implement this important nutritional strategy will greatly benefit you.

Micronutrients are vitamins and minerals and are substances that are needed by the body in very specific amounts to maintain its normal functions. They're derived from external sources like our diets or supplementation because the body cannot produce them on its own.

Without the proper balance of micronutrients, health problems are difficult to resolve.

They are so important that if these micronutrients are missing during phases of rapid growth like fetal development, the development of basic biological functions like intellect and immune system formation can be threatened.

This is why young children and pregnant women are often among the risk groups for micronutrient deficiencies.

Understanding Macronutrient Balancing – What Really Happens to Our Body Chemistry When Our Blood Sugar is Imbalanced.

So often we only think about the importance of blood sugar balancing in relation to diabetes; however, through the brilliant work of Dr. Barry Sears, PHD and his research on food and its effects on the body's hormone levels, we now know that disease can be diminished through proper balancing of proteins, carbohydrates, and fats.

Whenever we work with patients we really focus on helping them create proper blood sugar levels during their meals and for four to five hours between meals. This is accomplished by eating a combination of quality proteins, carbohydrates, and fats at each meal. **We will show you step by step how to do this shortly.** This is so essential, because there's a link between what food you choose to eat, how much you choose to eat, when you choose to eat it, and how your body is able to break down and utilize that food which ultimately creates either healthy body chemistry or toxic stress chemistry.

Think of your meals as a marathon instead of a sprint.

When you eat a balanced meal it's the carbohydrate that supplies your initial energy, and the protein and fat that supply your sustainable energy.

For example, food acts like energy to the body in the same way that batteries supply energy or fuel to a toy, television, remote control, or a car.

Carbohydrates are like a very skinny AAA battery. Obviously this type of battery is not very powerful and does not store a tremendous reserve of electricity. Carbohydrates are often like that AAA battery in that they supply very quick energy to the body, but that energy is soon depleted.

On the other hand, eating protein and fat are like plugging into a massive generator. This type of energy source provides fuel, energy, and electricity for prolonged periods of time, and allows the motor to run at length.

The energy from proteins and fat (think big power plant generator) are not used up as quickly as the supply from the carbohydrate (think skinny AAA battery) and lasts much longer. Therefore, carbohydrates supply immediate energy following a meal, and protein and fat provide more sustaining energy.

How the body handles dietary carbohydrates also depends on the body's immediate requirements for glucose or fuel, (for instance the needs of a competitive athlete vs. the needs of a computer engineer are different) and how well the individual's blood glucose balancing system is functioning.

We have evolved into a society that's more at rest as compared to a very active society, and thus we do not utilize sugar from the blood that rapidly.

Thus, without physical exertion, a high-carbohydrate or high-sugar drink or snack (e.g., glass of juice, soda, or candy bar) will cause a rapid rise in the blood glucose (sugar) level.

Elevated blood glucose levels for extended periods of time cause damage to tissues. Therefore, once the blood glucose level rises beyond a certain point, ***the body must do whatever it can to reduce the blood glucose level.*** This requires the pancreatic hormone insulin.

Insulin is released into the blood and stimulates the cells of the muscles and liver to take glucose out of the blood, that is, it moves the sugar into storage cells for potential future use. This reduces the blood glucose level and, in turn, reduces the chance of damage to tissues.

That is of course unless there's an overload of carbohydrate intake (i.e. sugar, bread, rice, cookies, pasta, cake, cereal, fruit, candy...), in which case the body, according to John Yudkin, MD, may produce an increase in both insulin and cortisol levels which propels the body into a fight-or-flight pattern.

This whole process is more easily understood with a story.

Greg is 39 years old and a successful stockbroker. He came into our office when he noticed that he had a harder and harder time pushing himself to get up to trade in the morning, as well as feeling fatigued throughout the day, and achy even when he didn't work out. His digestion had been severely compromised for months but he wrote it off as poor diet and stress, two things common in his field and nothing to take note of.

There are many facets to our conversation and coaching with Greg, and his recovery from his health concerns, however the nutritional insight Greg gained from our care is noteworthy to share.

Let's talk about diet.

When we first started working with Greg we asked him to write down the foods he ate throughout the day. We weren't surprised to learn that Greg commonly drank 3 to 5 cups of coffee a day with cream and sugar. In addition,

in the morning Greg would often grab a quick onion bagel, a jelly filled donut, or skip breakfast altogether.

He tried to make up for this lack of nutrition at lunch time with a “healthy” salad consisting of lettuce and lots of vegetables topped with a few croutons and a low to no-fat salad dressing. He often drank a glass of orange juice and had a granola bar for dessert. Oftentimes managing large portfolios meant cocktail parties, heavy dinners out, and eating late at night.

If we take a closer look at Greg and return to our analogy of AAA batteries and power plant generators, we can see that by consuming stimulants like caffeine and sugar, as well as eating meals that only consist of carbohydrates (onion bagel, jelly filled donut, salad, orange juice, granola bar, etc), Greg was running on unsustainable and quick burning fuel. All these AAA battery type foods caused his blood glucose (sugar) levels to skyrocket resulting in higher insulin levels and thus higher cortisol levels as well (not to mention the already increased levels of cortisol streaming through Greg’s bloodstream due to his stressful career and lifestyle).

Remember that cortisol attacks muscle and organ tissue keeping the body in an alarmed state. What’s interesting is that we would never think of an onion bagel or jelly donut as terribly damaging, but any action that generates excess stress chemistry, like cortisol, creates long term damaging effects on the recuperative powers of the body.

In addition, Greg regularly skipped meals which radically lowered his blood sugar and taxed his hormone levels causing his body to remain in a state of survival.

Once blood sugar falls below a critical level, our brain which needs fuel - “sugar/glucose” - to work properly, begins to call out for more glucose. If our brains don’t get the necessary fuel it’ll start to shut down. For Greg this often showed up as an inability to focus on his clients’ orders and the constantly changing numbers in the market.

We're often intrigued that many patients experience regular bouts of mental fatigue, lack of clarity, and foginess, and we feel that there's a link to proper blood sugar and the mental alertness of patients.

If we multiply the fact that Greg has been treating his body this way for over 10 years, it makes sense that slowly over time Greg has felt a gradual decline in his overall health, focus, and energy level. ***This is essential because many patients have not been coached on how to properly analyze and identify the cumulative effects on their body from their long-term health and life choices.*** All too often patients have been told that their health decline has been a sudden phenomenon.

Greg's case is a perfect example of a health challenge that did not occur overnight; however, with a few powerful strategies Greg was able to begin a successful recovery.

Let's continue with the nutritional strategies that we recommend to patients like Greg. They're the same nutritional strategies that'll help you too.

Strategy #8: Buy High Quality Foods - You're Worth It!

One of the first things you'll want to do as you begin to nourish yourself, is to locate markets that'll provide you with a selection of high quality, organic, and natural foods. Markets like Whole Foods and Natural Grocers are dedicated to providing customers with high quality products. You may also be able to find organic and natural foods in the "health food" section of your local market.

Eating non-processed foods has become more popular, and higher quality products are now available in traditional markets such as Fry's, Bashas, Ralphs, and Trader Joe's to name a few. If enjoying whole, non-processed food is a new concept for you, we encourage you to take the leap and start studying the distinctions between organically grown food and conventional food that has been genetically modified and/or chemically enhanced or treated.

Strategy #9: Commit To Eating Organic As Much As Possible

A growing body of evidence shows that compared to conventionally grown fruits, vegetables, and grains, organically grown food offers substantially more nutrients and has significantly less nitrates and pesticide residues.

Exposure to synthetic pesticides and fertilizers are known to cause health

problems for people and animals as well as harm the environment. We feel that when one's immune system and resistance is in a compromised state, it's important to avoid contact with harmful chemicals as much as possible.

Look for produce, meats, eggs, and dairy as well as packaged goods labeled organic. Free-range and hormone free do not necessarily mean organic, however they're a good second choice.

Strategy #10: Include A Source Of Protein, Carbohydrates And Fat Whenever You Eat.

As we mentioned before macronutrient balancing is the proper balancing of proteins, carbohydrates, and fats in one's diet. To keep your blood sugar stable, you need to eat a balance of a high quality protein with some carbohydrates that digest slowly and a bit of a high quality fat at each meal. This same strategy should also be applied to snacks.

The most effective food at regulating blood sugar and thus helping to decrease cortisol is protein, and it's imperative to your recovery that you add a source of protein to every meal and snack.

Strategy #11: Get Clear That Properly Combining Your Proteins, Carbohydrates And Fats Will Be Beneficial For You And Your Recovery Process.

Not all foods are created equally and specifically for patients who need immune system support. Certain food will facilitate your healing process more than others. Your commitment to staying focused on eating healthfully will pay off for you in a hurry!

Strategy #12: Make Healthy Protein Choices

For healing, protein is a key building block for keeping your blood sugar balanced and your body chemistry cortisol and adrenaline free. Combining the proper proteins with proper carbohydrates and fats will help you feel nourished and energetic.

Here are some excellent protein sources:

- Fish – salmon, snapper, grouper, halibut, bass, tuna, swordfish.
- Fresh or canned white tuna packed in water or pure olive oil are good choices too.
- Seafood – shellfish like shrimp, crab and lobster, are high in protein and low in fat.
- Poultry - turkey or chicken breast are good choices if baked with the skin removed. You may want to avoid dark meats and packaged meats due to more harmful chemical makeup (as well as possible preservatives or additives if non- organic).
- Tofu – tofu is a bean curd made from soybeans that has gained increased popularity. It can be helpful in small doses.
- Eggs – look for organic or free range.
- Low fat cottage cheese – a good source of protein and fat, and a good alternative to eating meat or poultry.
- Mixed foods (both a protein and a carbohydrate)
- Yogurt – excellent for digestion due to the content of healthy bacteria (probiotics) as well as an easy source of proteins and carbohydrates.
- Beans – beans are high in fiber and B complex vitamins and may even boost the immune system due to their high zinc content. They are both a protein and carbohydrate and because they contain fiber, are a longer lasting fuel source.

Strategy #13: Make Healthy Carbohydrate Choices

The key here is to be conscious about your choice of carbohydrates. With our clients, we typically put a strong emphasis on “avoiding” refined carbohydrates such as chips, cookies, cake, candy, most packaged crackers, and more...

It's better for patients to choose more nutritious complex and quality carbohydrates like whole grains, vegetables, and some fruits. This is important because these types of carbohydrates are longer-lasting fuel sources in that they burn like a log of wood on your fire, instead of throwing in a flimsy piece of newspaper. This will help you keep your blood sugar levels balanced. Have you ever noticed that if you eat a bag of chips, you're hungry again shortly thereafter vs. a nice bowl of oatmeal?

Here are some ideal fruits:

Fruits are rich in nutrients and what's especially beneficial is that the sugar in fruits, fructose, is easily assimilated by the body.

Here are **11 super fruits** that we highly recommend for their nutrient rich properties. Most of them contain high levels of vitamin C, which aids in muscle recovery and detoxification.

- *Bananas* – rich in potassium, which is key for aiding recovery of the nervous system and musculoskeletal system. They're also very high in the B vitamins which are known to have a positive effect on stress reduction.
- *Prunes* – excellent source of fiber, and filled with antioxidants A and E.
- *Strawberries* – known to have high levels of vitamin C.
- *Pears* – provide high fiber, vitamin C, and potassium.
- *Kiwi* – high source of vitamin C, and known to have cleansing properties due to high fiber content.
- *Cantaloupe* – high in Vitamin C, potassium, beta-carotene, fiber, and folic acid.
- *Mangos* – high in vitamin C, B6, and antioxidants, and are believed to lower blood pressure.
- *Apricots* – high in vitamin C, beta-carotene and antioxidants. Packed with fiber and clinically found to lessen the risk of colon polyps.
- *Oranges* - Oranges are not only rich in vitamin C, but contain flavonoids, carotenoids, and terpenes, which are natural cancer inhibitors.
- *Apples* - The pectin in the apples is known to lower cholesterol. Apples also contain some anti-inflammatory, antibacterial, and antiviral properties

Great grains for your health:

Whole grains which are rich in vitamin B6, fiber, and manganese, are enhancing nutritional carbohydrate options. Here are some fantastic sources of “slow burning” whole grains which will provide you with more energy for a longer period of time as compared with more refined carbohydrates like chips, cookies, candy bars, etc...

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- *Brown rice* – Brown rice is a strengthening food and is said to calm the nervous system, assist in relieving mental depression, strengthen the internal organs, and offer additional B vitamins. Brown rice is also rich in complex carbohydrates and fiber. To prepare, add 1 cup rice to 2 cups water or stock. Bring to a boil and simmer for 40 to 45 minutes.
 - *Barley* - contains protein, potassium and calcium. To prepare pearly barley, add one-cup grain with 3 cups water. Bring to a boil and then lower heat and simmer for 35 to 45 minutes. Cook as a breakfast cereal with some added cinnamon, or add to brown rice, put in stews, or pilafs.
 - *Oatmeal* (steel cut oats) – These oats contain cholesterol-lowering bran. It's delicious as a breakfast cereal. It can be kept in the refrigerator for several days, so we recommend making a large batch to have on hand as an immediate high quality carbohydrate. To prepare, bring 3 cups water to boil. Add one cup oats, cover and simmer over low heat. They're extra good when you let them cook in a crock-pot overnight (use the same measurements and cook on low).
 - *Millet* - Very easy to digest and gluten free. It's also rich in lysine, an amino acid which is a building block for proteins. It's also high in B vitamins. It can be substituted for rice and goes with vegetables. Add a little sesame oil for a richer flavor. To prepare, add 1 cup grain to 3 cups water. Boil, cover, and reduce heat and cook for 15 minutes. Then remove from heat and let stand for 20 minutes.
 - *Amaranth* – This is an ancient Aztec grain rich in amino acids and calcium. Has a nutty and slightly spicy taste and can be used like rice. To prepare simmer 1- cup grain with 3 cups water for 25 minutes.
 - *Quinoa* – An ancient Incan grain also high in amino acids, iron, phosphorous, and vitamins A, B, and E. To prepare, rinse grains and add 1 cup quinoa to 2 cups boiling water, cover, and reduce heat and simmer for 20 minutes.

Strategy #14: Include Healthy Fats In Your Diet.

A huge error that many people make when they think of healthy eating is to eliminate all fats in their diet. This couldn't be further from the truth. It's essential to include healthy fats in your diet.

The truth of the matter is that there's such a thing as a "good fat." Here's your list of healthy fats which are instrumental in the proper functioning of your nervous system. Furthermore, healthy fats aid in recovery of skin, hair, nails,

and the lowering of cholesterol. The following fats provide you with key essential fatty acids necessary for your recovery.

- *Organic unrefined extra virgin olive oil* (this type of olive oil is best for salads and cold dishes due to the heat sensitive nature of the oil)
- *Olive oil* - may be used to cook in moderate heat. High in Vitamin E and excellent for heart health.
- *Fish oil* - these oils have been found to lower blood sugar and significantly impact the function of the nervous system. For this reason we recommend eating fish like salmon and tuna a couple times a week.
- *Avocado* - ripe avocados are soft to the touch and very dark green or black. They can be a tasty addition on rice cakes, crackers, and sandwiches. They are high in "good fat."
- *Raw Nuts and seeds* - whenever possible try to stick to raw organic almonds, pecans, walnuts, chestnuts, cashews, pumpkin seeds, flax seeds, sunflower seeds, and sesame seeds. It's worth paying a little more for higher quality nuts and seeds and receiving the benefits of the health enhancing fresh oils rather than possibly receiving the adverse effects of rancid oils.
- *Coconut oil* - An excellent mild tasting addition for sautéing, baking and dressing. A healthy way to add flavor to your food.
- *Sesame oil* - An excellent tasting addition for sautéing, baking, and dressing. A healthy way to add flavor to your food.
- *Flax seed oil* - rich in essential fatty acids and can be added to smoothies, hot or cold cereal, sauces, and salads.

Eating food from these lists for 30 days will radically enhance your health. Our clients commonly tell us that they lose their cravings for empty "junk" foods and sugary snacks and feel like they're finally nourishing themselves.

Strategy #15: Calculating The Proper Amount Of Protein, Carbohydrates And Fats.

An easy way to determine proper amounts of protein carbohydrate and fats, is to eat an amount of protein equivalent to the size of your fist.

Eat twice the amount of healthy carbohydrate compared to your protein. For example, if you were to eat a "fist" sized portion of salmon or chicken, eat at least two fist-sized portions of mixed vegetables.

If you're choosing a not-so-healthy carbohydrate with your meal, such as a hamburger bun, eat only one slice of the bun or bread.

Be sure to add a small amount of healthy fat, such as a slice of avocado, a tablespoon of olive oil for dressing, or a handful of nuts.

In technical terms, you want a ratio of 7 grams of protein to 9 grams of carbohydrate to 3 grams of fat. A meal for an average sized woman would be about 21 grams of protein, 29 grams of carbohydrate, and at least 9 grams of fat. Men in the 175 lb. range would need about 28 grams of protein, 40 carbohydrates, and about 15 grams of fat. You'll need to fine-tune this to your body and activity level. It doesn't have to be a perfect balance, just close enough to satisfy you.

Strategy #16: Use Package Labels To Your Advantage

When shopping for groceries or preparing a meal it's helpful to be able to calculate the nutritional content on food packages; this makes it easier to stay committed to eating a macronutrient balanced diet. If you look at the label on a can of soup (or any packaged good) there's a breakdown of the total ratios of proteins, carbohydrates, and fats.

Strategy #17: Know The Signs Of A Successful Meal

- You'll know if a meal worked for you if mentally you feel clear and awake for 3-4 hours after your meal without fatigue, or cravings for sugar or carbohydrates.
 - If you feel lethargic or ready for a nap quickly after a meal you overdid it on the carbohydrates, or chose the wrong type of carbohydrate (i.e. white breads, pancakes, potato chips, candy bars). Also, if you still crave carbohydrates or sugar after a meal you may have had too many carbohydrates during that meal as well.
 - Too much protein or a lack of adequate fat may cause early hunger. If you feel hungry after a meal, but are clear and alert, you may need to increase the amount of carbohydrates or fat by a small amount at a time at your next meal until you're able to go 3 to 4 hours without feeling hungry.
 - If you didn't properly balance your protein, carbohydrates, or fats during a meal, never fear, you're only 3-4 hours away from getting back into balance.
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Strategy #18: Go Crazy! Eat Often Instead Of Much

Eat 4 to 5 small well-balanced meals a day - we like to call this "grazing." An example of this might be eating at 8am, 11am, 2pm, 5pm, and 8pm. This will help to keep your blood sugar levels balanced by making sure that your blood stream is not overloaded with sugar, which always occurs with a large meal. Think about Thanksgiving!

Strategy #19: Adopt Clean Cooking Styles

Try to broil, steam, grill, or sauté at all times.

Strategy #20: Take These Foods Off Your List And Out Of Your Diet

- Fast food
- Junk foods
- Caffeine -creates excess cortisol
- Diuretic
- Processed food
- Refined food
- Boxed Food
- Canned Food
- Artificial Sweetener
- Chocolate
- Sleeping Pills
- Nitrates (a good rule of thumb is to notice the shelf life).
- Refined sugar
- Tap water
- Chlorine preservatives
- Sulfates
- Artificial Colors & dyes
- TV dinners
- Additives
- Soda
- Alcohol
- Heavy metals
- MSg

Strategy #21: Substitute Natural Sweeteners For Refined Sugars

Refined sugar has been proven to be a neurotoxin, immunosuppressant, and stimulator of cortisol production. It commonly leads to higher anxiety levels, insomnia, and depression. We suggest you avoid it by not only removing it as a sweetener but also by identifying it on the packaged foods you buy. It's better to substitute the following sweeteners, many of which can be found in your neighborhood market. If not, they're available at local health food stores.

- *Barley Malt Syrup* - Considered one of the best natural sweeteners because of the slow digesting sugars. It's made from sprouted barley and has a thick, sticky, malty consistency. It's good for cookies, muffins, and cakes with strong flavors. Also good to top your toast in the morning.
 - *Brown Rice Syrup* - This balanced unrefined natural sweetener is high in maltose and complex carbohydrates, so it's easy on your blood sugar levels. It has a mild flavor and can be used in baked goods, salad dressings, marinades, and sauces.
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- *Honey* - A natural, all purpose sweetener that contains small amounts of a wide array of vitamins, minerals, amino acids and antioxidants. In addition, it's been found that raw honey has many additional health benefits like being an instant energy building food.
 - *Maple Syrup* - Maple syrup adds denseness and moisture to baked goods. It's less sweet than honey or white sugar and makes a wonderful substitute for sugar in cookies.
 - *Fruit Juice concentrate* - Fruit juice concentrates are made by cooking down peach pineapple, grape, and pear juices to produce a sweeter, more concentrated product.
 - *Stevia powder or liquid* - Stevia is derived from a South American plant. A good quality leaf is estimated to be 300 times sweeter than cane sugar. Stevia also appears to have medicinal properties. Research suggests that it may lower blood pressure, aid in digestion, and possess anti-viral properties.
 - *Unsulphured Molasses* - A sweet, robust, medium colored sugar cane molasses. It's well suited for all baking applications in dark and whole grain breads, brownies, and spiced cakes.

Strategy #22: Always Pack A Snack

We encourage you to have healthy snacks available at home, at work, and in your car. This is a safety net in a world where we always seem to be on the go. Here are some ideas to make snacking easy and effortless.

- Have hard-boiled eggs ready made to eat for a quick on-the-go breakfast protein or to take to work. We personally boil 8 to 12 at a time and keep them in the hydrator for several days.
 - Grab a $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of nuts and a piece of fruit.
 - Try $\frac{1}{2}$ a pear with an ounce of goat or feta cheese and a few sliced almonds (toast a cup of almonds ahead of time and have them on hand in the refrigerator to add flavor to a snack or salad).
 - Tuna on crackers.
 - Almond cheese and an apple.
 - 1 rice cake, tablespoon of avocado, one sliced hard boiled egg and some salt
 - Asparagus wrapped with turkey slices
 - Already cooked flavored tofu blocks (available at health food stores) with a piece of fruit.
 - $\frac{1}{2}$ cup plain yogurt
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Strategy #23: Make Your Own Boilable Pouches For Meals

The Magic Meal Food Saver System or the Seal-a-Meal from Sears are good ways to create boilable pouches to freeze or store in the refrigerator and take to work to heat in a pan of water.

Strategy #24: Avoid The Microwave

This one is simple. The second we start using the microwave we start thinking of foods that are frozen, processed, synthetic, and less than ideal. Also, the satisfaction from taking twenty minutes to prepare your own meal reinforces the concept that you're dedicated to self-care. Most importantly, the last thing you need is to be exposed to harmful radiation during a process of healing.

Strategy #25: Eating On The Run

Sometimes it's just not possible to sit down to a high quality meal. Here are some tools to help you avoid skipping a meal. Although, we much prefer our patients to choose fresh, organic whole foods, it's better to have a lower quality meal that is balanced than to skip eating altogether. Be careful not to overdo the low quality meals though, it can be easy to do because they're fast, and as we noted before one challenge with fibro is the pattern of doing way too much and not taking down time to care for yourself. When you stop eating fresh vegetables and fruits or find yourself frequenting faster food restaurants more than once or maybe twice a week, this is a signal that life is moving too fast to be sustainable and you may be heading for a break down.

- Go to a supermarket and pick up a mixed green salad with some carrot and garbanzo beans. In the deli section, buy 4 to 6 ounces of sliced turkey or chicken. Add some dressing and you are ready to go.
 - Many supermarkets have a section that carries sushi. Choose a roll that's made with tuna, salmon, or shrimp as well as vegetables and rice. If possible choose brown rice.
 - For a quick fuel source, open a can of bean soup like lentil, black bean, navy bean, etc. (Try to choose brands that are organic like Amy's, Shari Ann's, or Health Valley.) Add 2 ounces of cooked protein (cooked chicken, turkey, firm tofu). This is a somewhat tasty way to hold you over until you can actually sit down for a "real meal." Prepare this and take it with you in a thermos as an easy option for "fuel" instead of running your gas tank to empty and having to go to a fast food restaurant.
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- Open a can of tuna or boneless salmon, add some chopped olives and a little mayonnaise and put it on a rice cake, WASA (whole grain) cracker or a piece of bread.

The important concept with eating on the run is not to worry too much about the fat content, (especially if it's olive oil, avocado or butter) just the balancing of the protein and the carbohydrates. Remember, keep these meals as the exception not the rule.

Strategy #26: Foods to have on hand at all times

- Brown rice
 - Millet
 - Quinoa
 - Amaranth
 - Oatmeal
 - Wild rice noodles – rice noodles
 - High quality oils – unrefined sesame (toasted sesame is flavorful too, and corn oil)
 - Extra virgin olive oil
 - Sea salt – Celtic sea salt is best because it provides a good supply of minerals
 - Miso herbs and spices
 - Arrowroot powder
 - Natural sweeteners – maple syrup,
 - Lemons
 - Apples
 - Bananas
 - Broccoli
 - Cabbage
 - Onions
 - Garlic
 - Potatoes
 - Carrots
 - Eggs
 - Tofu
 - Tamari soy sauce
 - Celery juices
 - Leafy green vegetables – can be sautéed with garlic, onion, etc.
 - Frozen fruit - Cascadian Farms brand
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- Sweeteners - Eden organic barley malt, Stevia, agave nectar, Cascadian Farms, fruit spreads
 - Nut butters - Raw almond butter - found at Trader Joes as well as Whole Foods
 - Oils Spectrum or Hain brands – toasted sesame, peanut, corn, canola, olive, coconut
 - Pasta - De Boles rice, Quinoa Vita spelt - Spelt Papadini - lentil, Thai kitchen rice noodles
 - Baked goods - Aluminum free baking soda, carob chips – fruit sweetened egg replacers
 - Treats - Pamela's cookies – chocolate chip is good, Jennies – coconut macaroons (honey sweetened)
 - Seasonings Tamari sauce, Braggs Liquid Aminos - taste a bit like soy, brown rice vinegar – good in dressings, Ume plum vinegar – nice over steamed greens – use just a little to flavor
 - Mayonnaise Spectrum brand – canola mayonnaise Veganaise
 - Fruit sweetened ketchup
 - Canned fish - Check for tuna or salmon that has only the fish and sea salt and water, or olive oil - available at Trader Joe's and Whole Foods
 - Salad dressings - Annie's
 - Snacks Genisoy – soy chips, deep sea salted Organic food bars/Greens Plus food bar – in bar section
 - Juices - RW Knudson has natural juices, now Dole pineapple.
 - Pasta sauce -Amy's, Enrico's
 - Meat - Shelton's frozen turkey sausage, turkey burgers - frozen, turkey chili, chicken chili – canned
 - Soups - Amy's organic lentil
 - Crackers -Kavli, Wasa, Ryvita
 - Dairy products- Horizon milk, goat milk, Alta Dena, Horizon and Nancy's cottage cheese and sour cream
 - Earth balance – instead of margarine (butter is better overall)
 - Yogurt -Brown cow, Horizon, Nancy's, Stonyfield

Strategy #29: Get Your Supplements

Walking into the vitamin and supplement aisle in your local grocery store or health food store can be overwhelming to say the least.

In this section we've boiled down the whole subject of vitamins and supplements to the essential components that you can implement immediately.

We've also kept this section short and simple so that we could keep the cost down for you; for our goal is that this plan is sustainable for you over the long haul.

There are, of course, more advanced vitamin plans and claims for cures, but we tend to stay away from those types of offers. Rather these components can help you build a healthy foundation; they're the basic building blocks that you can create through the usage of supplementation.

- *Blue green algae* - Although considered more of a “super food” rather than just a vitamin, supplementing your diet with blue green algae, spirulina, kelp, or other green products can give you added energy and valuable nutrition needed during your recovery process. We like a product called E3 Live by Vision which can be taken in liquid or capsule form.
- *Probiotics* - This helps to replenish the healthy bacteria found in our intestinal tract. It's essential for proper digestion and can be easily found in a health food store.
- *Enzymes* - Enzymes help to break down food in your stomach and digestive system, and can be very helpful if you have difficulty digesting your meals. Also found in health food stores.
- *Vitamin A* - Vitamin A helps to maintain and repair muscle tissue, fight infection, treat skin irritation, and aids in the growth of healthy bone, skin, teeth, and gums.

It's best to take Vitamin A in the beta-carotene form which is non-toxic.

Deficiency findings: Some findings of Vitamin A deficiency that we've found in our patients are: itching and irritated eyes, sinus challenges, dry hair, and overall malaise. Food sources: carrots, apricots, sweet potatoes, yellow and green vegetables, eggs, milk, and fish oils.

- *Vitamin C* - Is essential for healing and generation of neurotransmitters of the brain. Vitamin C also assists with your adrenal glands and immune systems function.
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It's a powerful antioxidant and can be considered an anti-stress vitamin.

Deficiency findings: infections, fever, and injuries.

Food sources: citrus fruits, broccoli, red and green peppers, cantaloupe, olive oil.

- *Vitamin E* - A major benefit that vitamin E offers is its ability to assist in calming down, relaxing, and protecting glands during stress. Also a powerful antioxidant and is needed for nerve maintenance and body cleansing.

Food sources: egg yolks, spinach, whole grains, wheat germ, and vegetable oils. Kelp is also a very good source of vitamin E.

- *B-Complex Vitamins* - Vitamin B is paramount in the care of the nervous system and its calming effects are valuable. It's for this reason that many patients need more Vitamin B since they're often experiencing or have experienced a tremendous amount of stress. A good B Complex should contain all of the B vitamins (to follow).

Deficiency findings: When Vitamin B is deficient it can contribute to a lack of ability to handle stress and other demands.

B1 (Thiamine) Food sources: Rice bran, oatmeal, sunflower seeds, brewer's yeast, wheat germ, kelp.

B2 (Riboflavin) food sources: Wild rice, fish, white beans, sesame seed, red peppers.

B3 (Niacinamide) food sources: White meat, avocados, prunes, fish, whole wheat.

B6 (Pyridoxine) food sources: Very useful to patients due to its ability to help with irritability, nervousness, depression and muscle weakness, pain, and headaches.

B12 (Cobalamin) food sources: Salmon, trout, tuna, yogurt, milk

Biotin and Pantothenic acid food sources: Eggs, fish, milk and milk products, whole-grain cereals, legumes, broccoli and other vegetables in the cabbage family, white and sweet potatoes, lean beef.

- *Vitamin P (Bioflavonoids)* - Work together with vitamin C to strengthen connective tissue and capillaries. They are also essential in assisting the body to utilize other nutrients.

Food sources: cherries, spinach, citrus fruits, apricots, blackberries, grapes.

- *Herbs* - Some herbs can also be useful in the recovery of health concerns. Herbs are a natural and healthy way to provide the body with vitamins, minerals, and other nutrients needed to boost the immune system and aid the body in healing itself. They can be conveniently made into a tea and are excellent alternatives to soft drinks or bottled juices that are both normally added with sugar. You can drink the tea hot or cold and may even try freezing them into Popsicle molds.

Try herbal teas such as chamomile, spearmint, peppermint, cinnamon, orange peel, and valerian.

A calming and soothing combination tea to help in getting to sleep and relaxing is passionflower, valerian, hops, and chamomile. Many companies now make wonderful blends for energy, relaxation, moodiness, and immune system health. Check out your local market or health food store for brands like Celestial Seasonings and other organically grown pure teas. Of course, we encourage you to visit www.huelements.com

- *Valerian* - Widely used for anxiety and nervous tension. May be used as a sedative to improve sleep quality. It's rich in calcium and helps to support and strengthen the spine, nerves, and brain.
 - *Chamomile* - Has relaxing properties to help you fall asleep. Chamomile also aids in digestive problems.
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- *Red clover* - A natural blood purifier and builder. It also gives the body energy and protects and strengthens the immune system.
 - *Passionflower* - This herb's properties are helpful for the nerves and circulation. Helps to combat nervous tension, anxiety, stress, restlessness, and nervous headaches.
 - *Pau d'arco* - Also a natural blood cleanser as well as possessing antibiotic properties which aid in destroying viral infections in the body.
 - *Ginseng* - Helps to stimulate the endocrine glands, improve brain function and memory, increase physical stamina, and strengthen the central nervous system and immune system.
 - *Goldenseal* - Helps to boost a sluggish glandular system and promote hormone production. Also aids in metabolism and energy production, which is helpful for many patients.
 - *Guto Kola* - Said to be a valuable aid to depression because it helps with mental fatigue and memory loss. Helps to rejuvenate the nervous system, increase circulation, neutralize blood toxins, help balance hormones, and relax the nerves.
 - *Echinacea* - Assists the body in its ability to resist infection and promotes production of white blood cells. Considered a natural antibiotic and very useful in helping to strengthen the immune system.
 - *Slippery Elm* - Buffers against inflammations and irritations of the mucous membranes. It also assists the activity of the adrenal glands and is a nutritious herb for both internal and external healing.
 - *Rosemary* - Can often replace aspirin for the treatment of headaches. This herb combats stress, is high in calcium, and is considered of benefit to the entire nervous system.

Strategy # 30: Drink More Water

Drinking an adequate amount of water is crucial for a healthy life. Many of us know that we can survive many days or even weeks without food, but we can

only survive a few days without water.

Unfortunately, the body's need for water and its importance for health is often overlooked. This is so true out in the desert where we live, however we find that this applies everywhere throughout the country and the world.

Did you know that sixty to seventy-five percent of our total body weight is water? Most people know that blood, lymph, urine, sweat, and tears are mostly water; however, many don't realize that the majority of the makeup of our lungs, brain, and even bones are mostly water!

Water delivers nutrients to tissues and carries away unwanted wastes. It's the medium in which all chemical reactions take place within cells, and therefore greatly influences cellular function. Water also serves as a cushion and lubricant for our spine and other joints. For these reasons alone, it's important for all patients to consume a significant amount of water.

Throughout the day most individuals lose between 10 and 16 cups of water. This loss occurs in our sweat, urine, feces, in the air we exhale, and via direct evaporation from our skin. Especially during exercise, it's important to drink more water since as much as 8 cups of water can be lost in one hour.

As we mentioned in strategy #14, it's imperative that you cut out the ingestion of caffeinated and alcoholic beverages since when consuming them the loss of body water through urination is greatly increased. These drinks have a diuretic effect and thus deplete our water reserves, a stress that your body can definitely do without.

Caffeine and alcohol tax the body in that they stimulate the kidneys to excrete more urine. With caffeine and alcohol, not only do we lose water, we also lose water-soluble vitamins, such as vitamin C, vitamin B1 (thiamine) and other B complex vitamins. With caffeine intake there's also an increased excretion of calcium, magnesium, potassium, sodium, chloride, and zinc.

On the other hand, providing your body with a diet containing lots of fruits and vegetables will supply about 4 cups of water per day. Even with a diet high in fruits and vegetables, we still recommend an additional 6 to 8 cups of water per day to supply enough water to meet your body's daily needs. If you can't give up your morning coffee, a good point to remember is for every caffeinated or

alcoholic beverage you drink, you need to add an additional glass of pure water.

Because insufficient water intake results in reduced cell function, the body's ability to heal damaged tissues from injury and maintain optimal health greatly diminishes when we don't consistently give our body the hydration it needs. Batmanghelidj, M.D., author of *Your Body's Many Cries For Water*, has successfully treated many diagnosed diseases-peptic ulcers, colitis, hypertension, rheumatoid arthritis, chronic back and neck pain, anxiety, depression, chronic fatigue, high cholesterol, asthma, allergies, and diabetes with simply increased and regular intake of water. We're in full agreement with Dr. Batmanghelidj and cannot stress to our patients enough the importance of adequate hydration.

According to Dr. Batmanghelidj, dry mouth is the last sign of inadequate cellular water. When the thirst signals produced by the body are ignored or are responded to with intake of beverages other than water (i.e., soda, coffee, tea or concentrated fruit juice), eventually the body stops providing the sensation of thirst. Adequate water intake often requires drinking water regularly throughout the day for as long as six to eight months for the normal thirst signals to return, and for people to reacquire a taste for water. It can take up to a year or longer to rehydrate your tissues. The sensation of thirst also diminishes as we age. Therefore, it's very important to acquire a "habit" of drinking adequate water to avoid cellular dehydration and subsequent health problems commonly associated with and that exacerbate health concerns.

So remember, keep that water bottle on hand at all times even if you think the weather is cool and you won't be thirsty!

Chapter 6: The Healing Power Of Exercise And Movement

We care about you and we know that exercise may feel like the last thing in the world that you are craving to do right now.

However, before you possibly jump ahead and skip this section, we highly suggest that you take a peak at this material. We have had tremendous results working with our patients and one of the ways that we've achieved such fantastic results is by making some very gentle, yet effective recommendations for them regarding physical movement and exercise.

When we were finishing our clinical studies, we had the fortunate opportunity to study under a top exercise research expert, Dr. John Zhang, MD, PhD, P.T.

What Dr. Zhang has researched and proven regarding exercise is that the rapid breathing component of exercise expels volatile and toxic waste materials that become harmful if they build up. Exercise also facilitates increased blood flow, and Dr. Zhang specifically was interested in the fact that increased blood flow from exercise helps keep plaque from building up in the arteries while stimulating the organ that clears many toxins from the body, especially the liver.

Many researchers have found that exercise improves cellular function, which improves the accompanying acceleration of carbon dioxide, oxygen, and nutrient exchange.

We've clinically found, in our office, that exercise normalizes levels of cortisol, insulin, blood glucose, growth hormone, and thyroid hormones. Exercise also facilitates the delivery of more oxygen to the brain.

Our personal research in professional school illustrated that exercise actually affects alertness and even hand eye coordination!

One of the greatest benefits of exercise for patients is literally how much better it makes them feel daily. Exercise is so essential, for new tissue growth and development is stimulated when you exercise, and this is instrumental for all patients.

Another very important note, we've found that exercise has a significant effect on decreasing depression too. The endorphins which are released in your bloodstream, not only help to block out the pain and discomfort signals that travel through the body, but they also help elevate hormone levels that specifically affect your disposition and emotional well being.

Mild depression is a very common concern associated with any chronic health concern, and with exercise you'll be able to break this cycle. Exercise is rejuvenating and has proven to alter mood more effectively than pharmaceutical agents according to the American Journal of Epidemiology. We know that you might be hesitant to start an exercise program in fear that you will be excessively sore. We wholeheartedly understand your concern, and in this section, we'll break down which exercise might be best for you.

The pain in some forms of health concerns often creates a vicious cycle in which patients start reducing their activity levels, and avoid exercise. We understand this, and our deep concern for you is that if you avoid exercise, your inactivity will only lead to deconditioning, increased pain, stiffness, discomfort, sleeplessness, and fatigue.

If you don't exercise, you may also be putting yourself at risk for sleep impairment, a compromised ability to manage stress, and emotional overwhelm.

With the lack of movement for many patients, sleep disturbance often continues which creates greater levels of anxiety and depression. For many patients, this cycle can only worsen uncomfortable symptoms.

Exercise is sure to break this vicious cycle for you, and our clients commonly report that:

- Choosing to exercise helps them feel like part of the solution, as they feel more in control of their daily health experience.
 - Our clients tell us that after exercising they sleep better that night, and the following night as well.
 - Our clients always tell us that they're more greatly able to handle work and family stress after exercise.
 - Our clients report that after exercise they feel increased energy levels and overall pain reduction.
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We're extremely confident that exercise works almost like a magic formula in which you can sleep better, feel more peaceful and calm, feel less depressed, and even feel more energetic!

We'll be very honest:

The biggest piece of the exercise program for you will be getting over the first hurdle of the first 5 days or so. We know that many people's New Year's resolutions only last approximately 5–7 days, let alone the goal of someone who has health challenges; however, we feel that you have even more to gain from the benefits of this new opportunity and commitment to exercise regularly.

As we coach you through this exercise program, make sure to remember that the goal is for you to start gradually and incrementally utilizing low impact and aerobic enhancing activities like fast walking, biking, swimming, and water aerobics.

We've had especially high results with water activities, for the buoyancy of the water tends to support your musculoskeletal frame quite well while avoiding any of the typical impact that comes from aerobic activities on harder surfaces.

In addition, water activities provide the added benefit of strengthening the muscles due to the resistance in the water. If you live near a community center or health club that does offer swimming/water-aerobic classes and activities, we highly recommend that you start there first!

An important point to highlight is that an essential part of your exercise routine will be your warm-up and cool down phases. We share this because some of our clients have overly enthusiastically jumped into exercise without reading this section.

The purpose of the warm-up phase is to reduce the risk and odds of injury to your muscles, ligaments, and tendons.

Your exercise routine should always begin with a 3-5 minute series of very light movements such as calisthenics, walking, or cycling. It's essential that patients don't start with stretching first, as this creates too much strain on your

sensitive muscle tissue! Always stretch after you've done the 3-5 minute initial light warm-up. We repeat, always stretch after you've done the 3-5 minute initial light warm-up.

For example, if your workout today consists of walking for 30 minutes, you should warm-up by walking at half the pace that you'd walk for your actual exercise. You can choose to walk slowly, make circle arm movements with your arms, or even gently pretend that you're raising your legs as if you were in a college marching band.

If you ever crave to do more demanding stretching you should monitor your soreness, and only engage in this stretching after the warm-up period.

The cool down period can actually mimic the warm-up period and is typically the aspect of exercise that many fibromyalgia patients skip. They may skip this part because they feel refreshed after exercise, and don't think they need to unwind. This part of your routine is critical as it gives your muscle and ligaments time to regroup.

There are two types of exercise that we're going to recommend for you: #1 - aerobic or endurance exercise, #2 - resistance or strength training exercise.

What we've found is that the proper combination of these two types of exercise most greatly accelerates the healing process. All too often, many patients who come to us have only implemented the aerobic portion of exercise such as walking, cycling etc., and have missed out on the benefits of strength training as well.

It's important to understand the distinctions and benefits of both types of exercise.

Aerobic activity does not only mean "aerobics," that is, participating in an aerobics routine, but rather it means engaging the large muscles of the body in a manner that creates endurance and increases the pulse rate and breathing capacity for a prolonged period of time.

The National Institute of Health typically recommends participation in moderate exercise, and the main type of exercise that the NIH focuses on is of the aerobic variety.

This is the case, for so many have become sedentary and have lost their natural inclination to move and breathe.

The NIH has proven that just 30 minutes of walking a day can substantially reduce the risk of disease and benefit many patients by dramatically relieving their symptoms. By now you may be thinking that 30 minutes sounds like a lot of time, but this is something that you can gradually build up to. It's just essential that at first you simply begin! Remember there is power in repetition and accountability and we're here to provide you with both!

AEROBIC OR ENDURANCE EXERCISE

Rather than going into intense explanation of perfect heart rates, we're going to ask you to monitor what is called "perceived exertion." In other words, after gradually growing into your exercise routine and increasing your effort over the course of 14-21 days, most people report that they can tell that they're exerting themselves "somewhat hard" or "hard."

This ultimately means that you're most likely aware that you're breathing more rapidly when you're working out, and that you may even be developing a slight sweat; however, at the same time you're not huffing and wheezing and unable to talk to a person next to you on the treadmill.

Exercising "very rigorously" may feel uncomfortable, and is not advisable for extremely health challenged patients. We always tell our clients that they're shooting for the feelings of being refreshed, not exhausted.

We always teach in our seminars and workshops that exercise should be fun, rewarding, and enjoyable for you. If we laid out an overwhelming and laborious regime for you, the odds of you implementing it are low. Even lower are the odds that you would be able to sustain such an intense routine.

Remember that exercise for beginning patients should not be grueling or debilitating. What's key for you is that you start on a program that helps to increase your lung capacity, muscle tone, flexibility, and overall fluidity.

Some ideas to ponder while reading this section, and some activities for you to visualize yourself participating in are:

- Yoga with accompanied breathing exercises is always excellent as long as it's a beginner's class.
- Tai Chi is very peaceful and rewarding.
- Gentle aerobics and/or shadowboxing are fun as long as there's no contact or intense impact.
- Swimming is absolutely ideal for patients as it creates three tiers of benefits with strength, endurance, and flexibility.
- Fast walking is good for patients provided that at first you start slow and build up to a brisk pace.
- Dancing can be fun, and actually one of our clients had a tremendous change in her pain level by signing up for square dancing! On top of that, she made 10 new friends that were already members of the group. She had such a ball that we discussed helping her develop a square dance program specifically for senior patients as both the movement and the camaraderie are healing.

RESISTANCE AND STRENGTH TRAINING EXERCISE:

Without some form of resistance training, we've found that many patients experience some loss of muscle mass, power, and endurance. Many people don't know about the healing benefits of creating muscle.

The National Institute of Health teaches us that every pound of muscle added to the body burns an extra 50 calories per day or 350 calories per week. Adding muscle with strength training can increase your overall metabolism and body efficiency. This is key for many people who have too high of a fat count for their body composition, which only further taxes the cardiovascular system and digestive system; two systems essential in helping you eliminate toxins and create new healthy cell tissue.

The American College of Sports Medicine reports that strength training can help contribute to better balance, coordination, and agility which helps healing, tissue regeneration, and repair.

Strength training is rewarding and doesn't have to be overly extensive to benefit any and all patients. Here are a few points that illustrate some of the

benefits of strength training:

Aerobic exercise and flexibility training have long been recommended, and now a small study suggests strength training can also help. Daniel S. Rooks, Sc.D., of the Harvard Institute of Medicine, had 15 women do progressively harder aerobic, flexibility, and strength training for one hour, three times a week.

After 20 weeks they had less pain, fatigue, and depression and also slept better. Rook's advice: "Start very slowly, lifting a weight you can handle easily 10 times. But, only do five reps."

New Benefits - Researchers have discovered that strength training provides these benefits:

- *Low-back Pain Decreases:* Several years of research on strength training and back pain conducted at the University of Florida have shown that strong low-back muscles are less prone to injury. A recent study by Risch (1993) found that low-back patients had significantly less back pain after 10 weeks of specific (full-range) strength exercise for the lumbar spine muscles.
 - *Arthritic Pain Decreases:* According to the Tufts University Diet and Nutrition Letter (September 1994), sensible strength training may ease the pain of osteoarthritis and rheumatoid arthritis. This is good news because most men and women who suffer from arthritis, need strength exercise to develop stronger muscles, bones, and connective tissue. (If you have arthritis, strength training could be a big help. Be sure to check with your doctor before beginning a program.)
 - *Resting Blood Pressure Decreases:* Harris and Holly (1987) showed that regular strength training alone significantly reduces resting blood pressure. Westcott (1995) revealed that a combination of strength training and aerobic exercise improves blood pressure readings even more. After two months of combined exercise, program participants dropped their systolic blood pressure by five millimeters of mercury (mm Hg) and their diastolic blood pressure by 3 mm Hg.
 - *Bone Mineral Density Increases:* Menkes (1993) reported significant increases in the bone mineral density of the upper femur after four months of strength exercise.
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- *Glucose Metabolism Improves:* Hurley (1994) reported a 23 percent increase in glucose uptake after four months of strength training. Because poor glucose metabolism is associated with an increased risk of adult onset diabetes, improved glucose metabolism is an important benefit.
 - *Gastrointestinal Transit Time Decreases:* A study by Koffler (1992) showed a 56 percent decrease in gastrointestinal transit time after three months of strength training. This finding is significant because delayed gastrointestinal transit time is related to a higher risk of colon cancer.
 - *Blood Lipid Levels Improve:* Although strength training's effect on blood lipid levels needs further research, at least two studies (Stone et al. 1982; Hurley et al. 1988) have revealed improved blood lipid profiles after several weeks of strength exercise.

To break it down even further and make it even easier, here are some strategies for movement and exercise for you to participate in!

Strategy #30: Choose An Activity That's Right For You

Pick an activity that is really going to be enjoyable for you. Remember, you're not trying out for the Hawaii Ironman or trying to set a new Olympic record. You're simply working on learning how to feel ease and enjoyment in your body again.

Exercises such as walking, swimming, stretching, yoga, Pilate's, Tai Chi, and others are good initial activities that'll be easy for you to incorporate into your daily life over the next 30 days.

Strategy #31: Include Some Sort Of Stretching Movement

Into Your Daily Routine: Here's a possible stretch plan to get you started. We recommend beginning your day in the morning with this, as well as incorporating it into the middle of your work day or your home life; and even trying it once again before you go to bed.

Here are some easy stretches to try:

- *Long Stretch:* In a seated position, clasp your hands together and reach palms up towards the ceiling. Hold for at least 10 seconds and repeat 5-10 times.
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- *Shoulder Stretches with forward reach*: Link your fingers as you reach forward with your arms at shoulder level pushing your palms away from you. This helps to stretch your shoulders and backs of your arms, forearms, and wrists. Hold for at least 10 seconds and repeat 5-10 times.
 - *Shoulder Shrugs*: Bring your shoulders up to your ears, hold for at least 10 seconds and then slowly relax. Repeat 5-10 times. This exercise helps to relieve early tension in the neck and shoulder areas.
 - *Backward Reach*: Clasp your hands behind your back and lift your arms upwards as you turn your elbows in towards you. Hold for at least 10 seconds and repeat 5-10 times. Don't bend forward. This exercise helps to stretch the muscles on the front of your chest, the front of your shoulders, arms, and forearms.
 - *Behind-the-Back*: Reach both hands behind your back, then gently slide up the back as far as you can with your thumbs leading. Hold for at least 10 seconds and repeat 5-10 times.
 - *Cross-Body Stretch*: Drape one hand across the opposite shoulder while maintaining the arm at shoulder level. Assist this cross-the-body stretch by pushing the elbow and applying a slow sustained stretch. Hold for at least 10 seconds and repeat 5-10 times. Alternate the arms. This is an effective stretch for the shoulders and upper arms.
 - *Alternate Behind-the-Head*: Clasp one elbow with the opposite hand behind your head. Apply a gentle stretch to bring the elbow behind the head. Hold for at least 10 seconds and repeat 5-10 times. This is an effective stretch for the muscles on your side and through the armpit area.
 - *Stretches for your Neck Side-Bends*: Starting with your head in a neutral position, looking straight ahead, bring your ear to your shoulder and hold for at least 10 seconds. Repeat 5-10 times, alternating sides. The stretch must be slow and sustained, not jerky. This exercise will help stretch the muscles on the side of the neck.
 - *Chin Tuck*: Bring your chin to your chest and hold for at least 10 seconds. Repeat 5-10 times only going to the point of tension. This exercise will help stretch out the muscles in the back of your neck.
 - *Wrist Stretches: Palm Up - Palm Down*: Start with your elbows bent 90 degrees and resting by your side. Without moving your upper arm, turn your palms up and hold for at least 10 seconds, then turn them down and hold for another 10 seconds. Repeat 5-10 times.
 - *Wrist Circles*: Using just your wrists, circle your wrists forward for at least 10 seconds then backwards for the same count.
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- *Tighten and relax*: Clench both fists and hold for at least 10 seconds then relax. Then spread both hands and hold for at least 10 seconds. Repeat 5-10 times.
 - *Back Stretches Seated Low-Back Stretch*: Sit in a chair with knees spread apart. Bend forward to the floor. A comfortable stretch should be felt in the lower back.
 - *Side Stretch*: Drop left shoulder, reaching left hand towards the floor. Hold for at least 10 seconds. Return to starting position. Repeat on the right side.
 - *Eye Yoga*: Turn away from your computer or paperwork. Sit up straight. Without moving your head, look up and down 5 times. Then look side to side 5 times. Look around in circles three times in each direction. Then come back to center. Close your eyes. Place your palms together, rub them briskly to make your hands warm and then gently place the palms over your eyes. Take a long, deep breath in, filling your lungs as completely as possible and then exhale slowly. Repeat this breath and, on an exhalation, remove the hands slowly as you open your eyes softly. Blink a few times and return to work.
 - *Deep breathing Yoga*: Inhale deeply, filling your belly, lower lungs, mid-lungs, upper lungs, and chest. Slowly push the breath out of your upper lungs, mid-lungs, lower lungs, and belly.
 - *Breathing with head bowed*: Keeping your eyes closed, bring your chin to your chest. Take three long breaths and then slowly bring your neck to its upright position by uncurling it one vertebra at a time. This exercise is beneficial for the seven vertebrae that make up the neck.
 - *Breath retention*: Inhale slowly for five counts, hold in for five counts and exhale out for five counts. Do three or more full sets.

Strategy #32: Add Some Aerobic Activity Into Your Day As Well

Remember that it's crucial for all patients to increase their heart rate! Consider walking, cycling or swimming, as a healthy addition to your life! (The exact amount of minutes to participate in your aerobic activity will be covered shortly!)

Strategy #33: Supplement Your Exercise Routine With Regular

Strength Training: Resistance exercise such as water aerobics, and very light weight training is essential for muscle elongation, endurance, detoxification,

and more! If you don't belong to a health club or fitness center, we recommend you purchase ankle weights and wrist weights to use while walking or even to wear around the house for time increments of 20 minutes a day to begin. Soon, you'll be able to move up to using 5 or 10 lb. dumbbells for your strength training.

Strategy #34: Try Something New

Instead of just walking, be creative and try a new way to get moving. Here are a few good examples:

- *Yoga*: Yoga helps to establish a natural harmony of body and mind. It was developed in India more than 5,000 years ago and is now more popular than ever. In yoga, typically, you perform a series of poses and postures while focusing on your breathing and relaxing your mind. Some classes involve the use of relaxing positive affirmation statements, soothing candles, and music. Yoga promotes deep relaxation, body awareness, strength, and flexibility. Plus, it's a great stress-buster.
- *Pilates*: Pilates is named after Joseph H Pilates, a carpenter who developed this unique exercise system in the 1920s for injured dancers. Today, there are reportedly hundreds of Pilates studios across the country as well as a number of instruction videos and how-to books. Pilates is sometimes taught under other names such as "the method" or "Re-Ab."

Pilates is available through private lessons on specially designed equipment or it can be taken in a group setting in a "mat" class. Pilates doesn't require many repetitions of each exercise. It just requires your focus and attention on each movement. The benefits of Pilates are many; it can help lengthen and stretch your muscles in a gentle way as well as help to build your core strength.

Many people enjoy Pilates for the fact that it creates strength without bulk while creating healthy postural awareness. You can check out Pilates at your neighborhood gyms.

- *Tai Chi*: You may have had the opportunity to watch people in your local park or on the beach perform the graceful, fluid movements of Tai Chi Chuan.
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This ancient Chinese therapeutic exercise is a combination of martial arts and traditional Eastern medical therapy and can be thought of as a moving meditation.

According to Tai Chi Magazine, Tai chi is a type of chi gong exercise (chi means energy, gong means work) that's been around for thousands of years. According to Chinese philosophy, your chi can become blocked when your life is out of balance, such as when you're not adhering to a healthy diet or exercise habits, or are under a great deal of stress which can lead to poor health.

Tai Chi can greatly improve your coordination, flexibility, and sense of balance. In fact, the American Medical Association has endorsed this discipline for elderly people because their sense of balance tends to weaken with age.

We've found that Tai Chi is also excellent for improving muscular strength in your small, stabilizing muscles, such as your adductors and your abductors (they support your knees), which are often overworked and prone to injury. Studies show that Tai chi can even help reduce blood pressure.

Although the movements are very slow, the purpose of Tai Chi is to focus on your body and to release tension as you move. Tai Chi ultimately teaches you to participate in movement with ease, which is instrumental for the healing of health concerns.

- *Rebounder*: This Mini-Trampoline Exercise Is Good for The Lymphatic System. The lymph system bathes every cell, carrying nutrients to the cell and waste products away; yet, the lymph is totally dependent on physical exercise to move. Without adequate movement, the cells aren't able to detoxify thus resulting in a situation which contributes to arthritis, cancer, and other degenerative diseases, as well as aging. Vigorous exercise such as rebounding is reported to increase lymph flow by 15 to 30 times.

The rebound mini-trampoline is about 3' in diameter and 9" high. It's safe, easy to use, and effective, and is more gentle than jogging on hard surfaces which can put stress on certain joints, such as the ankles and knees eventually damaging them.

Strategy #35: Create A Regular Routine

We highly recommend you create a regular routine for yourself. For example, at the beginning of your 30-day healing process, you might begin your day with 5 minutes of stretching and a 10 minute walk, and follow that up with another round of stretching a lunchtime.

Perhaps, twice a week you include a yoga or Pilates class, or invite a friend to do an instructional yoga video with you!

Be sure to include, in all of your daily routines, several healthy meals spaced throughout the day!

Over time you'll start to create and crave a regular routine. The rewards of the commitment to yourself and maintaining positive self-discipline will outweigh any challenges.

Strategy #36: Trust Your Body

One thing to remember is that you're unique, and no personal trainer, doctor, or exercise magazine should tell you what pace you should be exercising at. If you get extremely tired, rest and take a break from exercise for that day, or possibly re-visit the walk or swim later in the day if you feel more up to it.

The purpose of your exercising is not for you to become a bodybuilder, but rather for you to start creating greater muscle tone, flexibility, and aerobic capacity.

After a week or so of implementing your exercise routine, you should begin to feel more flexibility and ease. If you feel tremendously sore, you possibly over-trained or you're exercising too vigorously (or you didn't fuel yourself properly with good nutrition).

If for some reason you're not experiencing these benefits after 2 weeks, we suggest that you try another type of exercise.

Over the course of these next several weeks, you'll feel your stamina increase significantly. You can gradually increase your exercise intensity and duration as your body continues to recover.

The most important ingredient is that exercise can become something that's sustainable for you to follow through with, and be both enjoyable and fun!

There will be some days, perhaps many, which you don't feel like exercising at all. We're going to ask you to really listen to your innermost needs and honor your body; however, at the same time we ask you to try to work through some of the initial discomfort and just keep moving, even if that means starting and continuing at a very slow pace which literally may look like 5 minutes of walking a day.

Strategy #37: Exercising Regularly

Exercising regularly is an emotional as well as physical victory, for you're telling yourself the message that you're worth investing in, and that slowly but surely, you know that your body can regenerate and heal.

Strategy #38: Stay With It

Don't let exercise become just another part of a to-do list and a continued stressor for you. When a part of your body resists getting in motion, acknowledge that part of your body instead of ignoring it, but don't let that part of your body dominate the rest of your being and chip away at the possibility for you to heal.

Strategy #39: Make Sure To Chart Your Progress

Make sure to chart your progress - this is essential so that you keep track of what activities you're supposed to do on what day, and you'll be absolutely thrilled to review your notes which is always motivating! Also, charting your progress helps you to make very incremental changes in your routine, especially if you're participating in any strength training using any form of resistance machinery.

Strategy #40: Go Slowly, But Go!

If you're just starting on your program to recovery, you should start out by walking, cycling, or swimming for 5-10 minutes. You may even do 2-3 shifts a day in which you exercise for 5 minutes at a time. This will create momentum and enthusiasm, for you and your body will build up a healthy resistance to the

activity. Your ultimate goal as you build up minutes will be for you to exercise for 30 to 45 minutes, never to exceed an hour. Remember, it took some time for you to reach this point in your health and you may need a little time to progress and recover. Stay involved and stay encouraged. Five minutes is always better than three, and three is better than nothing!

Strategy #41: Go Gradual And Consistently

Increase the length of your exercise regimen by increments. For example, for five days walk for a total of 10 minutes per day. Then the following week, walk for a total of 14 minutes per day, and the following week after that walk for a total of 18 minutes a day - adding 4 minutes onto your time per week. This gives you something to work towards and doesn't overwhelm the muscle tissue.

Strategy #42: Give A Good Effort But Don't Over Do It

Remember, aerobic enhancement is the primary goal as you raise your heart rate and increase your intake of oxygen; however, you should be able to communicate with a walking partner instead of huffing and puffing away.

Strategy #43: Increase Aerobic Capacity First!

Make sure to always develop your aerobic capacity before attempting to take on a strength-training regimen. If your aerobic capacity is built up properly, you'll be better prepared to build and re-build muscle tissue, strength, and endurance. A good rule of thumb is to first be able to walk approximately 30 minutes at a pretty brisk pace (elevated heart rate, starting to sweat moderately) before starting any exercise using weights.

Strategy #44: Consider Experiencing the Healing Power of Water

If you prefer to never use strength-training equipment, we've seen patients do extremely well with swimming and water related activities such as water aerobics. New research suggests that athletes can boost muscle strength and power with less risk of injury by exercising in water (issues 4 and 5 of Strength Injury Bulletin, November-December 2000), and this is true for the

general public as well.

Strategy #45: Here's An Ideal Sample Routine To Follow

WEEK ONE

- Monday: Simply begin with a 5-10 minute walk. That's it; these few minutes start you off on a successful path!
- Tuesday: Warm-up for 5 minutes with light aerobic activity such as walking. Follow this warm-up with 5 minutes of light full body stretching.
- Wednesday: Warm-up for 5 minutes with light aerobic activity. Follow this warm-up with 5 minutes of light full body stretching and finish with 5 more minutes of light aerobics activity like walking.
- Thursday: Warm-up for 5 minutes with light aerobic activity. Follow this warm-up with 5 minutes of light full body stretching. Then just gently try walking at a little bit of a higher pace for 7-10 minutes. Maybe consider walking as fast as you would if you were walking a dog.
- Friday: Warm-up for 5 minutes with light aerobic activity. Follow this warm-up with 5 minutes of light full body stretching. Switch things up by riding a bicycle gently for 5 minutes.
- Saturday: Take this day totally off except possibly park your car further away if you go to the mall, grocery store, or the movies!
- Sunday - Optional Day: Take the day off if you need it, or simply try a light 5 minute warm-up followed by 15 minutes of full body stretching. Maybe even set a timer to know when you can take a break (if needed). Stretch for 7 minutes, rest, and then stretch for 7 more.

WEEK TWO

Week 2 is critical, for this is when you really need to listen to your body to see if you can kick things up a notch or rest more. If you do need to rest, rather than taking the whole day off, try walking for 5 minutes 2 times a day.

- Monday: Warm-up for 5 minutes with light aerobic activity. Follow this warm-up with 5 minutes of light full body stretching. Switch things up by riding a bicycle gently for 10 minutes.
 - Tuesday: Warm-up for 5 minutes with light aerobic activity. Follow this warm up with 5 minutes of light full body stretching. Then walk again for 15 minutes at a very slow and steady pace. Try to waive your arms gently
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as you walk and remember to breathe gently, but deeply.

- Wednesday - Day Off!
- Thursday: Warm-up for 5 minutes with light aerobic activity. Follow this warm-up with 5 minutes of light full body stretching. Switch things up by riding a bicycle gently for 15 minutes.
- Friday: See if you can warm-up for 5 minutes with light aerobic activity. Follow this warm-up with 5 minutes of light full body and then try your first yoga video for 10 minutes! Go slow and pick a beginner's tape- Stay positive and if you can do 1 out 5 yoga poses, you're doing great!
- Take Saturday and Sunday Off!

WEEK THREE

- **Monday:** Try to do at least 20 minutes of exercise and break this up by choosing at least 5 minutes of light aerobic warm-up (walk, bike) followed by 15 minutes of your choice (walk more, swim, bike, rebound on trampoline, jumping jacks) if not too harsh, or stretch thoroughly using slow gentle movements.
 - Tuesday: Play Day! Take a nice walk in the park, walk in the mall, or even walk your dog. Simply remember to move today, and take 20 deep breaths at least twice. Breathe in for a count of 3, and out for a count of 3. Be sure to breathe easily, almost as if you would not blow out birthday candles.
 - Wednesday: Yoga Day, Tai Chi Day, or Stretch Day! Warm-up for 5 minutes with a light aerobic walk and follow this warm-up with 15 minutes of Tai Chi, or very beginner yoga moves preferably illustrated by a beginner video.
 - Thursday: Warm-up for 5 minutes with light walk or Rebounder, stretch for 5 minutes, cardio/aerobic exercise for 10 minutes - Ex: Walking at a good pace (breaking a sweat and elevating heart rate) or stationary bicycle.
 - Friday - Day Off!
 - Saturday: Warm-up for 5 minutes with light walk or Rebounder, stretch for 5 minutes, cardio/aerobic exercise for 15 minutes - Ex: Walking at a good pace (breaking a sweat and elevating heart rate) or stationary bicycle, then 8-10 minutes of strength training such as resistance weight training on machinery using a circuit of weight machines such as upper and lower body (emphasizing chest, back, shoulders, arms, large muscles of legs, hamstrings, and calves) or 10 minutes of rigorous water aerobics. Make sure to have a small glass of juice after exercise!
 - Sunday Day off!
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WEEK FOUR

- Monday: Break up your exercise on this day into morning and evening routines. Maybe do 5 minutes of light warm-up in the morning, followed by 5 minutes of a thorough stretch. Follow this with 20 minutes of medium exertion cardio such as walking, bicycling, or even bouncing on the trampoline.
 - Monday evening: Take a trip to the gym and do 5 minutes of warm-up on the treadmill, followed by 20 minutes of higher paced, lightweights resistance machinery. Do 1 set of chest, 1 set of back, 1 set of arms, and 1 set of legs. End your workout with 10 toe touches and 10 reaches up to the sky and then tell the gym goodbye!
 - Tuesday morning: Warm-up for 5 minutes with light walk or Rebounder, stretch for 5 minutes, cardio/aerobic exercise for 20 minutes - Ex: Walking at a good pace (breaking a sweat and elevating heart rate) or stationary bicycle, then 20 minutes of strength training such as resistance weight training on machinery using a circuit of weight machines such as upper and lower body (emphasizing, chest, back, shoulders, arms, large muscles of legs, hamstrings, and calves) or 20 minutes of rigorous water aerobics, possibly even choosing to wear light 2 lb. wrist or ankle weights if comfortable! Make sure to have a small glass of juice after exercise!
 - Wednesday: Fun day! Take a leisurely bike ride for 30 – 40 minutes, preceded and followed by a 5 min warm-up and cool down.
 - Thursday morning: Warm-up for 5 minutes with light walk or Rebounder, stretch for 5 minutes, cardio/aerobic exercise for 30 minutes - Ex: Walking at a good pace (breaking a sweat and elevating heart rate) or stationary bicycle, then 20 minutes of strength training such as resistance weight training on machinery using a circuit of weight machines such as upper and lower body (emphasizing, chest, back, shoulders, arms, large muscles of legs, hamstrings, and calves) or 20 minutes of rigorous water aerobics, possibly even choosing to wear light 2 lb. wrist or ankle weights if comfortable! Make sure to have a small glass of juice after exercise!
 - Friday: Make this a stretch/elongation of muscle day such as 40 minutes of focused Tai Chi, or 5 minutes of warm-up followed by a 35-minute beginner's yoga and breathing video. When we say beginner we mean beginner!
 - Saturday morning: Warm-up for 5 minutes with light walk or Rebounder, stretch for 5 minutes, cardio/aerobic exercise for 30 minutes - Ex: Walking at a good pace (breaking a sweat and elevating heart rate) or stationary
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bicycle, then 20 minutes of strength training such as resistance weight training on machinery using a circuit of weight machines such as upper and lower body (emphasizing, chest, back, shoulders, arms, large muscles of legs, hamstrings, and calves) or 20 minutes of rigorous water aerobics, possibly even choosing to wear light 2 lb. wrist or ankle weights if comfortable! Make sure to have a small glass of juice after exercise!

- Sunday Day Off! You deserve it, and well done!

We assure you that if you apply the information from this section you'll experience powerful results. If at all possible try to find a buddy whom you can exercise with and who might help you stay on track. Make sure if you do work with a buddy that they have the same or even greater amount of motivation than you.

If needed, feel free to repeat the routine for week #3 for up to three weeks, and then move into the more rigorous workout schedule that week #4 provides. Consistency is the key, and if you keep going you're being successful!

There may be days that you feel like you're not making any progress, but we assure you that if you continue your commitment to getting your life and health back, you'll be successful. If you can get moving, even a little, the benefits are sure to come.

My commitment:

I personally have committed my life to helping every single person I encounter to have a more fully functioning, properly expressed, integrity filled nervous system.

Through many mentors, I've been blessed to evolve into creating my own system of delicately balancing the spine and the nervous system through healing touch. Whether it's through my role as a performance specialist for The Arizona Diamondbacks, The Arizona Coyotes, Arizona State University Athletics, Peak athletes throughout the USA including Olympic Athletes, Navy Seals, Corporate Wellness and High performance programs, or through my private practice, www.livinginline.com, I have the unique honor of witnessing the power of the enhancement of the electrical potential of the human frame.

It's one of the greatest blessings I know to be able to facilitate people having a greater quality of life.

I cherish watching people thrive as I collaborate and become a witness to the miraculous healing capacity and inner resiliency of each and every soul I meet and serve.

I have had the privilege to collaborate with some of the finest minds, and as you can probably tell, I'm obsessed with learning and sharing about what it means to live a fully expressed and radiant, extraordinary life.

Through my outreach in many arenas, I have had the good fortune to learn, grow, serve, and evolve, and it's through that magnificent opportunity that I get to meet people like you and that I'm imbued with strength and optimism for the opportunities that are to unfold.

I want to thank you from my heart for reading this long e-book.

I hope I've shed some light on the possibility of what extraordinary health looks like.

I will study tirelessly so that I can best serve you through my exciting collaborative efforts at www.huelements.com, www.drjasonkolber.com, and www.livinginline.com.

Here's to you knowing that all doors are opening for you as you manifest all green lights on the path towards fulfilling dynamically healthy and extraordinary lives.

My very best in gratitude,

Dr. J

Ps- We invite you to connect with us and other like-minded awesome souls through our collaborative community, and see all that we have in store through:

