



# HEALTHY LIVING PLAYBOOK

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1

# FOOD

*“Eat food. Not too much. Mostly plants.”* Michael Pollan

*“Let food be thy medicine and medicine be thy food.”* Hippocrates

*“The doctor of the future will no longer treat the human frame with drugs, but rather will cure and prevent disease with nutrition.”* Thomas Edison



# Choosing the Right Foods

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Eating the right foods can make or break your health. There is not one ideal diet that works for everyone. Before I go any further, I want to clarify my use of the word diet here. I'm not talking about "going on a diet" but rather just the foods that make up what we eat. That's our diet.

Our bodies are so different that one person may thrive on a vegan diet, while another person may feel sluggish. I can't tell you "eat these specific foods and you'll be well", although I wish I could. If only it was that simple.

However, here's what I can tell you. No matter which dietary lifestyle you choose to follow, there are some elements of every healthy diet that are the same. Here are the guiding principles I use when choosing the foods for myself and my family:

\*The bulk of your diet should be made up of whole foods. (Vegetables, fruits, whole grains, beans, nuts, seeds, meat...foods that don't come in a box with an ingredient label)

\*You should limit your processed carbs, such as breads, crackers, and cakes made from white flour, white sugar.

\*Your overall sugar consumption (even natural sweeteners like maple syrup), should be limited.

\*You should limit or avoid foods made with hydrogenated fats (found in fried foods and a lot of processed foods).

Follow these guiding principles and you're likely to be eating a balanced, healthy diet.

# How to Stay Consistent

All of this is much easier said than done, right? Many of us intuitively *know* what we should be eating, but actually doing it is a whole different story.

First, you have to want it. You really, really have to *want* to eat a healthy diet to stay consistent with it. There are temptations to eat the wrong things every where. At the grocery store, in the break room at work, as we pass by fast food restaurants on our commute home, at social events, and sometimes even at our own home.

You can't avoid them all. It's impossible. Having a strong desire to eat healthily is the foundation to staying consistent.

If your desire is wavering, you need to dig dip into your soul and trench out the reasons why healthy eating is important. Imagine the energy and vibrancy it will give you. Imagine the way your body can look and feel through eating the right foods. Keep those thoughts at the forefront of your mind so the **desire** to eat healthy is **strong**.

Once your desire and determination are in check, you can work on this checklist to make the path easier.

Check off each item as you complete it and/or fill out the action item:

1. **Get rid of foods in your house that you don't want to eat.** Throw them away or give them away--just get them OUT of your house! \_\_\_\_
2. **Stock a healthy pantry.** Some foods to include: healthy canned foods like beans and diced tomatoes, nuts, seeds, lentils, nut butters, avocado oil, coconut oil, brown rice, dates, vinegars, barley, flaxseed meal, and rolled oats. \_\_\_\_
3. **Have a support team (or at least a support person) in place.** Don't try to do it alone. Have someone who is willing to help keep you on track, even when you want to stray. Who are your support people?

List your support people here: \_\_\_\_\_

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**4. Have a plan for difficult times.** First, you need to identify when it's going to be the most difficult to stay consistent. Then make a plan for how you can make it easier! (Here are some examples. Problem: You always eat the processed office snacks/treats because you're starving before lunch. Solution: Pack a healthy snack to eat between breakfast and lunch so you aren't tempted by the donuts. Problem: As a stay-at-home mom, you munch on snack foods all day because the food is there and you're bored. Solution: Write out an eating schedule and stick to it.)

Identify your problem area and write out your solution here:

Problem: \_\_\_\_\_

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Solution: \_\_\_\_\_

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**5. Don't buy tempting foods.** This seems like it should be the most obvious bit of advice one can give. But the more people I talk to about healthy eating tell me the biggest problem they have is they *keep buying unhealthy foods*. Stop. Just don't buy them. You can't eat that to which you don't have access. So stop putting the foods and drinks you don't want to eat in your pantry and fridge. Period.

## **All Healthy All the Time?**

So you're determined to eat a healthy diet and you've gone through the steps to make it a consistent reality. Now you may be wondering if you'll never be able to eat brownies again. Or what about holidays? Is pizza night gone forever?

A key factor in having a healthy relationship with food is to maintain a balanced mindset. It's more than okay if you aren't eating nutrient-dense food for every

meal of every day. Understanding and implementing a moderation mindset will help you with consistency and a healthy balance.

That means if you go out to eat and have something overly processed/sugary/rich/whatever, you don't beat yourself up, but you also are strong enough to not do that every other day.

I have seen people take the moderation mindset too far. They think they are practicing moderation by allowing themselves to eat foods that don't nourish them more than just once in a while.

On the other hand, I've seen people who are so rigid, they don't seem to enjoy food or life because they are so worried about what they are putting into their body. The key is to find the happy medium where you aren't giving yourself a pass everyday, yet you allow yourself to relax and enjoy less-than-ideal foods once in a while.



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# FITNESS

*“Take care of your body. It’s the only place you have to live.”*

*-Jim Rohn*

*“No matter how slow you go, you are still lapping every body on the couch.”*

*-Unknown*



# Get Moving!

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Our bodies are meant to move. A sedentary lifestyle can have the same devastating health effects as smoking, excessive alcohol use, or an unhealthy diet. It's TRUE!

Regular exercise reduces the risk of heart disease, cancer, high blood pressure, diabetes and other diseases. It's *not* just about vanity and looking good in our summer clothes! (Although, let's be honest, we are all okay with that bonus.)

You don't have to be a gym rat. You don't even have to *like* working out. There are way to incorporate physical activity into your day even if you're not doing a formal workout. The important thing is that you are NOT sitting all day and you ARE moving.

Let me give you some ideas for how to incorporate functional fitness into your day and avoid the sedentary lifestyle even when you aren't working out. Not every one of these ideas will apply to everyone, but find the ones that will work in your life. These little things add up to a lot!

\*Take the stairs. When at home, walk quickly/jog up the stairs.

\*Walk or bike to work or other places when possible.

\*Use your lunch break to take a walk.

\*Invest in a treadmill desk so you are walking while you work!

\* Play with your kids. Play hard! Get down on the floor, play soccer with them, climb the play set. Just be active instead of sitting and watching them play all the time.

\* Use a fitness tracker to keep track of your steps. Just having the count will motivate you to move instead of sit.

\*Start every day with some kind of movement. It doesn't have to be much. Take a few minutes and do 25 jumping jacks, a few push ups, or even a quick run down the hallway. Starting your day this way can make your body crave more movement throughout the day.



\*Clean your house with vigor. I like to call it power cleaning. Really emphasize the movements and turn it into more cardio than it normally is. Music helps with this!

\*Dance while you're cooking dinner, preparing lunches, or doing the dishes. The extra movement is good and it makes these sometimes mundane tasks more fun.

Okay, now that's I've got your juices flowing with ideas for how you can incorporate more fitness into your everyday life, I also want to encourage you to find a way to consistently fit formal exercise into your life.

Whether you run, go to group fitness classes, lift weights, follow fitness DVDs at home, or a mix of all of these, I know you'll feel better, have more energy, look younger, and quite possibly live longer if you incorporate an exercise routine into your life.

Let me help you plan for success in this area! Writing things down can help you gain clarity and it also helps us create a plan we're more likely to stick with. Don't skip this part, especially if you've struggled to stay consistent with exercise in the past.

1. What kind of fitness do I enjoy most? Remember, I said enjoy MOST. Even if you hate exercise, what is the most enjoyable or at least tolerable?

2. How often can I realistically fit in a formal workout of at least 20-30 minutes? (Your goal should be a bare minimum of 2 days per week. 4-5 is better.)

My goal is \_\_\_\_\_ days per week.

3. Let's plan! When will you fit these workouts in? Schedule your weekly workouts in the spaces below. (Most people won't do 7 workouts every week, but I'm including those spaces just in case!)

Day and Time for Workout #1: \_\_\_\_\_

Day and Time for Workout #2: \_\_\_\_\_

Day and Time for Workout #3: \_\_\_\_\_

Day and Time for Workout #4: \_\_\_\_\_

Day and Time for Workout #5: \_\_\_\_\_

Day and Time for Workout #6: \_\_\_\_\_

Day and Time for Workout #7: \_\_\_\_\_

4. Now that you've planned the day and times, let's plan what you'll do. Go to the gym? Do a DVD? Write it down!

Plan for Workout #1: \_\_\_\_\_

Plan for Workout #2: \_\_\_\_\_

Plan for Workout #3: \_\_\_\_\_

Plan for Workout #4: \_\_\_\_\_

Plan for Workout #5: \_\_\_\_\_

Plan for Workout #6: \_\_\_\_\_

Plan for Workout #7: \_\_\_\_\_

Okay! You've got a plan in place. Excellent. Now, how to make sure you follow through? I like to reward myself. It can be simple and small. Maybe two weeks without missing a planned workout and you get to have a Starbucks coffee treat or something that makes you happy. Or you'll allow yourself a 30 minute bath while reading a book. Find something motivating and it can help you stick with it!



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# THE HEALTHY MIND

*“If you correct your mind, the rest of your life will fall into place.”*

*-Lao Tzu*

## Becoming Healthy in Spirit

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What you eat is important to your health. Your activity level is important to your health. But does any of it matter if you're always stressed out, angry, riddled with anxiety, or feeling depressed? A healthy mental state is paramount to a healthy life. Don't discount this chapter; being healthy in body *and* mind will lead to a long, healthy life.

What does a healthy mental state look like? Does it mean every day is rainbow and butterflies? Ummmm....no.

Having a healthy mental state means that you can handle what life throws your way. It doesn't mean you're always happy or full of pep. It doesn't mean you always have everything together.

Overall, though, you've got a good attitude about life, healthy relationships, and you aren't feeling overwhelmed and or anxious all of the time. That's a healthy mental state.

How do you get there? For some people, it comes naturally. For most of us, it takes a conscious effort. There are things you can do to help achieve the best mental state possible. Here's a good starting point of action items you can do to work on having a healthy mind:

\*Meditate every day. If you've never meditated before, try an app like Head Space or perhaps some guided meditation on YouTube.

\*Certain essential oils promote a healthy mood and alleviate anxiety naturally. Some of my favorites are wild orange, ylang ylang, and lavender. I like to keep these near me as just the smell can calm me down and help my anxiety levels. I diffuse them into the air in my home daily.

\*Keep a gratitude journal. Focusing on what we're grateful for can help us not stress too much on the small missteps that inevitably happen in our days.



\*Cultivate meaningful connections and nurture the relationships you have. Strong relationships have a positive correlation with health. Work to make your relationships strong and meaningful. Don't let "busy" be an excuse to neglect relationships that are important to you.

\*Find like-minded people with whom you can connect. If everyone around you is negative or not supportive of your health goals, this is especially important. The Happy Healthy Mama Facebook group is full of health-minded individuals who are supportive and helpful. [Click here to request to join the group.](#)

\*Find a passion and purpose for your life. Your mental health will be strong if you know you are living for a certain purpose or living out your passion. Find something that makes you feel happy, full of passion and purpose, and pursue it.

\*Get professional help. Sometimes, we need a little extra guidance. A professional therapist might be just what you need to help work through issues that are clouding your mental state. There's no reason to feel strange about seeking help in this area.

\*Get enough sleep. Everything seems more difficult when we are sleep deprived. It's helpful to have a calm, tranquil sleep environment. The ideal sleeping temperature is around 65 degrees. Have a nightly routine that gets you ready for sleep. Try to go to bed around the same time every night. All of these things will help promote better sleep.



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# DETOX YOUR LIFE

*“We don’t ‘go natural’. We return. Natural is where it began.”*

*-Unknown*

*“Nature itself is the best physician.”*

*-Hippocrates*

## The Power of Natural Living

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Our environment, the air we breathe, the products we use, the chemicals we are exposed to, all of this plays a huge role in our overall health. Your environment may be silently causing you all kinds of health issues and you don't even realize it. It's not the obvious answer.

Make a commitment to clean up your personal environment, and you'll be doing your health a big favor. There's so much to cover in this area. Too much for this space.

I could write entire chapters on each of the following recommendations, but they will at least get you on the right path. You don't have to do everything at once, but make a decision to work on one thing each week or month.

### Detox Your Life

\*Clean up your personal care products. Look for products made with natural and/or organic ingredients. A short list of ingredients to avoid: parabens, fragrance, phthalates, triclosan, formaldehyde, and synthetic colors.

\*Minimize the use of plastic in your home, especially in the kitchen and around your food. Use glass or stainless steel water bottles and storage containers.

\*Makeover your medicine cabinet. Minimize the amount of over the counter medicines you take, relying more on natural remedies. Essential oils, spices, and herbs can be very powerful and healing. Commit to learn more.

\*Be aware of your indoor air quality. Help make it better by having plants in your space, which can help naturally clean your air, consider investing in an indoor air purity system, or, at the minimum, open your windows for at least 10 minutes each day to help circulate the air.

\*Clean with green products. The harsh chemicals in conventional cleaners can

be harmful to your health. Look for nontoxic, plant-based ingredients in the cleaners you use.

\*Drink and use clean water. Filter your drinking water. Our family uses a reverse osmosis system to remove contaminants from our water. There are also ways to filter the water you shower and bathe with, removing chlorine, which can be very harmful to our health with overexposure. The most inexpensive way to do this is with a simple shower filter, such as a Berkey Shower Filter.

I hope these recommendations get you started on the path of more natural living or inspire you to keep moving on your journey.

This is often the most difficult part of a health journey, because unless you have specific medical issues, like asthma, the results of your efforts are more long term and not always immediately visible. Please don't let that deter you or make you think it's not worth it. Getting harmful chemicals and toxins out of your life is worth it.

YOU are worth it.



# HAPPY HEALTHY Mama



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## ABOUT HAPPY HEALTHY MAMA

I'm Maryea (pronounced like Mariah) and I started Happy Healthy Mama in 2010 as a way to share my passion for healthy living with the world.

I love inspiring others to live their happiest, healthiest life through simple, real food recipes, natural living tips, and honest stories of the triumphs and struggles on my journey. My passion and purpose in life is to help others and I do that through my

blog. I hope you'll stay in touch! Here are some ways to connect with me and the Happy Healthy Mama community. I look forward to getting to know you through my blog, [Happy Healthy Mama](#) and the social media channels where I'm very active.

We'd love to have you in our private Facebook group, a place connect with like-minded people who are focused on healthy living. We are all at different stages of our journeys and you are welcome whether you're an expert or just getting started. [Click here to request access to the group.](#)

I'd also love to connect with you on social media. You can follow me on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), and [Twitter](#).