

REBOOT YOUR BODY FOR 2015 BY DOING WHAT YOU LOVE*by Dianne Bischoff James,**author of The Real Brass Ring: Change Your Life Course Now*

Months after delivering my third child, I stood barefoot on the cold scale in my doctor's office, the metal weights swung up and down, settling in at 192 pounds. I had been struggling with obesity since childhood, but gaining forty-five new pregnancy pounds was a living nightmare. I knew I had to do something different. Not a fan of calorie counting, self-control, or overt food deprivation, I developed a structured, yet intuitive approach, changing my thoughts and behavior regarding food. I tuned into my body's natural communication system and practiced a feast and famine model, losing 55 pounds without cutting out any food groups. These simple rules will help you put a lid on overeating, restore your inner guidance system, and put a smile on your face when you look in the mirror.

Rule 1 – Reboot Your Relationship With Food

To me, food was a sumptuous, tantalizing reward, a friend, and a lover and then moments later, a cruel, villainous perpetrator. My rapport with this monster was certifiably bipolar. I ate to feel better about life, but the more I ate, the more I fell into a self-loathing pit. In order to get healthy and begin a journey of weight loss, I had to first change my core beliefs about food. A pint of Ben and Jerry's Chocolate Therapy is not a pacifier, a friendly hug, or compassionate ear. Food is not love; food is fuel.

Rule 2 – Your Body is Talking... Are You Listening?

With excessive food consumption as part of the American culture, many of us have lost touch with two basic body impulses- the stomach growl and the gentle feeling of satiation. In order to lose weight, you must be able to feel and respond to your innate Hungry/Full meter. The best way to do that, is to ask yourself a simple question, "Are you physically hungry right now?" Be honest. If the answer is "No," grab a glass of water, a cup of tea, or piece of gum. Wait until your stomach talks before you feed it and stop the minute you feel full.

Rule 3 – Eat Like a Toddler

Despite what our society promotes, three full meals a day is too much of a good thing. When we're young, our food consumption is directly related to activity levels and natural cravings. After a morning playdate, a toddler will grab large bites of hotdogs, peas and apple chunks and then eats lightly for dinner, naturally balancing calories. As we age, our metabolism decreases and we require less food to function. To get lean, focus on eating two significant meals a day and make the third meal a medley of light, healthy snacks- enough is a good as a feast.

Rule 4- Lock the Fridge After Dark

Since we are more active during the daylight hours, we typically metabolize a

hearty egg breakfast and hamburger for lunch as functional calories. The protein, fats and carbs contained within, are burned to keep you moving and thinking. Conversely, heavy dinner calories at night are stored as body fat in the hips, thighs and stomach. To lose weight quickly and easily, "lock" the refrigerator figuratively after 6 p.m. If you get hungry later in the evening, eat fresh fruits and steamed vegetables to curb your appetite. The pounds will simply fall off.

Rule 5 – Thumbs Up To Protein, Fats, Vegetables And Fruits

Since the dawn of Atkins, we all know that lean proteins, healthy fats, vegetables and fruits significantly contribute to weight loss. Personally, however, I find it very hard to live carb-free, eating sandwiches without bread and skipping Double Stuff Oreos when the mood strikes. A much better approach is to cut bread and rice portions in half and if you crave sweets, consume them in moderation early in the day.

Rule 6- When You Love What You Do, Everything Becomes Easy

When I was at the top my weight class, I was fortuitously cast in a local musical theatre production of Oliver. This was an exciting time for me and I joyfully danced and sang every night for months, preparing for the opening of the show. Miraculously, 30 pounds of fat melted away and never came back. It never fails, when you are emotionally happy, eating less, and physically active, losing weight happens all by itself.

Rule 7 – Gross Motor Movement Is Key

When it comes to keeping weight off, it's critical to take part in activities that utilize the large body muscles such as hiking, swimming, Zumba, or fast-walking. These full-body, aerobic activities speed up your metabolism and provide extra calorie-burning benefits for days afterward. So, be sure to engage in gross motor exercise for at least 17 minutes every other day. If you get on a treadmill and jog while watching your favorite reality show, the time will pass quickly and both your heart and waistline will thank you.

Rule 8 – Make The Scale Your Friend

According to traditional height/weight charts, everyone has an ideal weight range that remains the same throughout life. Armed with your perfect "champion number," start looking at the scale as an honest friend who had no personal opinion regarding your weight. Hop on the scale every morning before eating or drinking and monitor your weight without emotional attachment. As the number decreases, this will positively reinforce your future efforts.

Rule 9- Name And Claim Your Food Addictions

Some foods seem to have highly addictive properties. No matter how many times

I've promised to only eat a meagre handful of the seemingly good-for-you, Skinny Pop, I invariably inhale an entire bag in a matter of minutes. Since willpower can't overcome the massive endorphin brain-rush provided by great salty snacks, it's essential to name, claim, and avoid highly addictive treats.

Rule 10 –Take a Free Pass Once In A While

With this more structured yet intuitive eating approach, if you feel extremely deprived and/or restricted, it can work against your long-term success. It's helpful to open up the flood gates and allow yourself a full dinner at least once a week. Enjoy the open dining experience, but remember keep portions to a minimum. As soon as you fill up, stop eating and pack up the leftovers for tomorrow's lunch.

Rule 11 – Don't Give In To The Setbacks

When I started down the weight loss road, I first set a goal of reaching a resting point of 155 pounds. After reducing late night meals and light jogging for several weeks, I hit this number with relative ease. I then became totally hysterical when 1 - 3 pounds seemed to creep up on my body every day. I comforted myself by remembering that the yo-yo effect is normal because fat cells like to return to their original state. I stuck with the plan and refused to give up because I was in charge over food, not the other way around. Eventually, my body settled into a plateau of 157 pounds until I was ready for the next big reduction.

Rule 12 – Let Go of Your Story

The bottom line is, if you've struggled with weight in the past, you probably have a deep history of diet failures. These disappointments can make you feel like throwing in the towel even before even you start. We all know that if you want to lose weight and get healthy, something has to change. Simply let go of your past and tune into your body's own intelligent system for finding your ideal weight. If you eat only when you're physically hungry, the past will no longer define your future.

Dianne Bischoff James M.S., is an acclaimed, motivational speaker who specializes in life enhancing transformation and encourages audiences to create a reality that is prosperous, deliberate and meaningful. She is the author of the award-winning book, *The Real Brass Ring- Secrets of a Midlife reboot*, a Screen Actors Guild actor, marketing consultant and founder of Live Your Everything, a sanctuary for midlife transformation at liveyoureverything.com.

