

THE FAT LOSS MANIFESTO FOR BUSY BUSINESS OWNERS

How to drop 12 lbs in 12-weeks,
without starving or guesswork.

You're Not Lazy, You're Busy

The weight arrived while you were building your business.

It came a pound at a time, quietly enough that you never once caught it happening, and when you finally copped it, guess what, you'd gotten fat.

The scale is the least of your problems.

What wears on you is the fog that settles in by the afternoon, because the edge that used to come free now costs you something. You still get through the day, but you are pushing where you used to glide.

The good news is there is nothing broken in that, and it corrects faster than you think.

That quick, sharp operator who built the whole thing is still in there, running on less than they are used to, and lately you have been taking their return on faith.

A few things before we start, because they are why I bothered writing this down.

This is a scheduling problem before anything else. Not training, not even nutrition. It predominantly lives in the scheduling, tracking, and admin.

You took every ounce of discipline you own and spent it on the thing that pays you, which is fair enough. But your body ran on whatever attention was left over, which some weeks came to nothing. It is the one account you never managed, and it drifted the way any unwatched thing drifts.

The way back is simple. It will still ask something of you, but nothing about it is complicated, and it all fits into the eight principles below.

Twelve pounds in twelve weeks is a real pace, albeit a boring one. It still works in week nine, and the pound that comes off in summer is still gone by winter, which the dramatic version can almost never say for itself. Let me tell you where I learned all this.

How I Reverse Engineered My Body Back From 93 kg

I started a small food brand in Ireland, and for a while it was flying. I sold door to door into more than a hundred and twenty stores in ninety days flat, and made content around my efforts. The videos achieved ten million views organically, which for me was not a bad wee start.

While selling and making content, I also built an email list of ten thousand people in the same window. I took home three Irish Quality Food awards, and I signed a deal with the biggest health food distributor in the country. All of it looked great from the outside, but what nobody saw was the state of the person running it. I sold all day, edited videos by night, and spent whatever energy was left building my customer database. I ate the way anyone busy eats when nothing is measured, which is to say badly.

I skipped meals and then wolfed whatever was fastest and heaviest at ten at night, takeaways at the desk, a drink to bring me down, and no structure holding any of it together. It never felt like much in the moment.

But it added up to ninety three kilograms by Christmas that year, which on my frame is a considerable amount. The weight was the least of my problems. My head had gone soft, my patience was next to nothing, and my focus was completely gone. Then the thing I had bled for came apart in my hands, and I fell off the horse.

When you build something out of nothing and then fall off the horse, partly by letting your own health go, you do not only lose your grip on the business. You lose your grip on the person running it.

I was heavier and fatter than I had ever been in my entire life. I had nowhere to point the little energy I had left, and I did not much like the person still standing when the noise stopped. So I did the only thing I could think of. I treated my body like a business in trouble and focused on turning the ship around.

I began my rebuild with my foundation, which was my body and energy. And I did it, would you believe, primarily through a spreadsheet. Six months later eleven kilograms of fat were gone off my belly, and my energy and my confidence had started to come back.

Below are the eight first principles that worked for me.

THE FAT LOSS MANIFESTO

Dao's Eight First Principles of Fat Loss

(From Heaviest to Lightest)

The Eight Principles for Fat Loss (Part 1)

PRINCIPLE 1

FAT LOSS IS THE PRIMARY GOAL THAT EVERYTHING ELSE SERVES

Most plans die because they chase six prizes at once.

They promise you strength and sleep and clean eating and lower stress and more energy and balance, and a plan aimed at six targets lands none of them cleanly, because you can never tell which effort moved which number, or whether a single thing moved at all.

So we hold one goal, and the goal is to strip the fat off you. The training serves it. The food serves it. Anything on the plan that stops serving it comes off the plan.

Because every task in your week traces back to the same place, you can look at your numbers on any given morning and know exactly where you stand.

You already run the business this way.

One figure matters more than the rest, and everything else arranges itself around that figure.

I am asking you to extend your body the same courtesy you already extend your accounts.

PRINCIPLE 2

NUTRITION IS THE ENERGETIC AND VISUAL BOTTLENECK

The industry likes to dance around a small piece of arithmetic, so I will put it on the table. A hard, honest hour in the gym burns a few hundred calories.

One relaxed dinner out puts every one of them back before the waiter has cleared the starters, and asks nothing of you in return. That maths is the whole reason you know someone who trains four mornings a week and looks identical year after year. The effort is real, don't get me wrong.

They have simply aimed it at the wrong place. What shows up in the mirror, and what you have left in the tank by four in the afternoon, is settled at the table far more than under a barbell.

The gym earns its place, and I give it a section of its own near the end, but it plays the supporting hand.

The Eight Principles for Fat Loss (Part 2)

PRINCIPLE 3

FOOD TRACKING IS NON NEGOTIABLE

You would never run the company on a hunch.

You track what comes in and what goes out, and if a manager swore to you the figures were probably fine, you would want them in front of you before lunch.

The body that carries you through every working day has most likely never been measured once.

The first week asks a few small things of you, and I would rather you heard them from me now than felt ambushed by them later.

You log what you eat, every day.

That daily record is the objective ground that everything stands on.

I will tell you how it feels, which a lot of people will not, because here's the truth, it feels like admin.

Boring administrative work.

It bores you in week one and it will still bore you a little in week nine, but its worth has nothing to do with whether it entertains you.

Then, after a few weeks, something turns over.

You stop eating on autopilot.

You start carrying a quiet running tally of where the day stands, the same way you always know roughly where the month stands at work, and that awareness will do more for your waist on its own than any clever protocol you have read at midnight.

The Eight Principles for Fat Loss (Part 3)

PRINCIPLE 4

MICRO OSCILLATION, MACRO PROGRESSION

Life will happen across twelve weeks, and the plan is built to expect it.

A client dinner lands in week three, a birthday in week five, and some week goes sideways for reasons neither of us can see from here.

Your daily numbers will jump around because of all that, and the jumping costs us nothing, so long as the overall trend across the weeks keeps moving in the direction of the way we want it.

The days may oscillate. But the weeks and the months must progress.

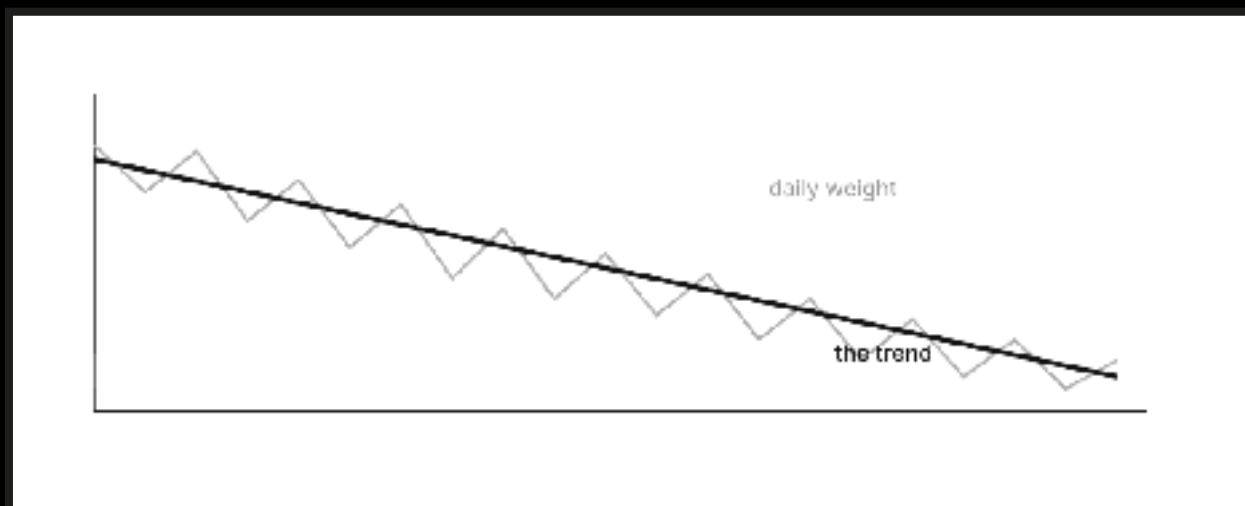
Both are true at once, and holding both in your head is most of the discipline.

The thing that ends most attempts is small.

Someone has one poor Tuesday, reads it as proof the whole project has failed, and quits over a single day that never once threatened the outcome.

A flawless week has never survived contact with a real diary, so we build on honest consistency through a messy life instead.

An accurate log of a shambolic day is worth more to me than a perfect day you never wrote down, because the log keeps you in touch with what actually happened, and what happened is the only thing either of us can adjust.



The Eight Principles for Fat Loss (Part 4)

PRINCIPLE 5

BUILD A CALORIC DEFICIT LIKE A CALLUS

Losing fat means consuming less energy than you burn.

There is no getting around that.

How you enter the deficit decides whether the result holds into next year or springs back on you by August.

Watch how a sensible person starts lifting.

They leave the heavy plates on the rack for the first few months, because their joints are not ready for them yet.

Discipline runs on the same rule.

It grows under a load that climbs by steps, and the person who halves their food overnight and collapses three weeks later usually decides they lack willpower, when in fact they skipped the part that builds it.

So we open the deficit small enough that you barely feel it, and hold it there until barely becomes not at all.

Then we drop it a step, and later another, so that by the time we reach the numbers that actually move the scale you have grown the capacity to carry them without your whole evening bending around your dinner.

None of it asks you to go hungry for long, and I want that on the record, because hunger is what wrecked every crash diet you have already tried.

This is why the pace is twelve pounds across twelve weeks.

A pound a week is close to the speed at which a body will part with fat and stay calm about it. Push much harder and it digs in, and whatever you tear off in a panic tends to find its way home before summer, usually with a little extra for its trouble.

The Eight Principles for Fat Loss (Part 5)

PRINCIPLE 6

FEVERY MEAL HAS FOUR CORE JOBS

Diet food earned its miserable reputation fairly, since most of it is dreamed up by people who treat eating as a sentence to be served.

Every meal on this plan does four jobs at once.

It has to taste good enough that you would happily eat it again on a wet Wednesday.

It has to fill you up, because permanent low grade hunger is a design fault, and willpower will cover for one for about three weeks before it folds.

It has to fit inside the day's calories.

And it has to carry its share of fats, carbs and protein.

A meal that nails three of those and drops the fourth is a meal you will quietly abandon by week six, whatever you swore to yourself on day one.

This is design work. You do it once, with a little thought, and then you repeat it, because the last thing your evening needs is a kitchen demanding fresh inspiration at nine o'clock.

A short rotation of meals you actually like, built to hit the numbers and keep you full, will still be doing its job in week eleven, long after raw willpower has handed in its notice.

TASTE

Good enough that you
would eat it again on a
wet Wednesday.

SATIETY

Full, because steady hunger
is a design fault willpower
covers for three weeks.

CALORIES

Fits inside the day's
sustainable number
without a fight.

PROTEIN

Carries its share, so the
weight leaving you is fat,
not muscle.

The Eight Principles for Fat Loss (Part 6)

PRINCIPLE 7

WE SPEAK TWICE PER WEEK

Most coaching checks in once a week, and once a week is where most coaching loses people.

Seven days gives one rough Tuesday all the room it needs to grow into a rough fortnight.

It also gives you plenty of privacy to decide the whole thing has stopped working and start drifting toward the door.

So we speak twice, and the two check ins do different work.

Early in the week we go through your numbers and make whatever small correction they ask for, while the correction is still small.

Later in the week we handle the human side, the stress and whatever is about to knock you off course, because a bad stretch at work reaches your plate before it reaches anywhere else.

The numbers only ever tell half the story of a week, and you tell me the other half.

Plans are cheap, and most of the ones you have already tried were fine on paper.

What failed was the holding of them once the week got loud, and the holding is what you are actually buying here.

A second pair of eyes on your progress, and a standing appointment with someone paying close attention, so that slipping quietly away stops being available to you.

You are not short of information. What you have lacked is a structure that stays upright when the diary fills, and one person who notices the first week you begin to slide.

The Eight Principles for Fat Loss (Part 7)

PRINCIPLE 8

TRAINING IS FOR STRUCTURAL LONGEVITY

Training matters, and after seven sections spent putting it in its place, I owe it a fair word.

While the food takes the fat off, the training defends the muscle underneath it, so that the twelve pounds leaving you are fat and the strength stays where it is.

Anyone who diets hard and never lifts ends up a smaller edition of the same soft shape, and twelve weeks of graft deserves better than that.

We are also building a frame meant to serve you for decades rather than for one summer.

We build from the ground up, so the legs and the trunk come before anything you would show a stranger, because they carry everything else. And we hold to one order in the gym without exception.

You earn the movement first.

Once the form is clean you slow the tempo, and once the tempo is clean you put weight on the bar. That order looks fussy from the outside, and its whole purpose is to keep you training, because an injury in week four helps itself to six of your twelve weeks.

Most driven people walk in ready to punish themselves under the bar and to haggle at the table.

The plan asks them to swap the two around.

What This Is Really For: The One Who Comes Back

The scale was never the point, and neither was the tape measure or the photo you take each week. Those are just the receipts and the control mechanisms.

The point is getting yourself back.

I mean waking with a clear head and making the day's decisions before lunch, at the speed you used to make them. I mean coming home with something still in the tank for the people who live there, and walking into a room the way you did before the business began running you into the ground on the quiet.

I have stood on both sides of this. There was a version of me running the whole show on fumes, and there was the version that rebuilt, and the distance between those two is hard to set down in words.

The nearest I can manage is that one of those versions of me spent a great deal of energy looking like everything was handled, and the other one simply had it handled.

Twelve weeks of steady, unglamorous work gives you back the person who was already in there, running properly again.

Eight Clients. No More, No Less.

I take eight at a time, in person here in Dublin and online.

The number stays at eight because the whole thing rests on my paying close attention to each client, and there is no honest way to pay close attention to forty in person clients.

When a place opens, it goes to whoever books the call first.

Either way, I hope it was of some use to you.

Charkley Dao · Dao's Diamond Club