

The  
**ACTUALLY EASY**  
way to  
weight loss



An in-depth guide to find out what's holding you back  
from achieving your weight loss goals

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## Contents

1. Introduction: weight loss without the hassle .....	3
2. Why most people fail in their weight loss journey .....	3
3. The key: calorie deficit .....	3
4. One example of calculating a calorie deficit .....	3
5. Making your calorie deficit easy .....	3
6. How to feel more satiated .....	3
7. Oil: why it is important to keep an eye on it .....	3
8. Another source of calories people often overlook .....	3
9. About the practice of eliminating entire food groups .....	3
10. Portion control and your favorite foods .....	3
11. Is healthy food low-calorie? Is low-calorie food healthy? .....	3
12. Cardiovascular exercise and weightlifting are important for weight loss, but there is a catch .....	3
13. Something else, other than fat, is also lost during a calorie deficit .....	3
14. Managing a weight loss plateau .....	3
15. Signs your body needs a break .....	3
16. Miscellaneous .....	3
17. You have lost all the weight: now what? .....	3

## **Introduction: weight loss without the hassle**

When people decide for themselves to lose weight, they embark on a journey to achieve certain fitness goals. Little do they know, however, that they find themselves using confusing, incorrect, or incomplete advice concerning weight loss. They do not know what is and what is not conducive to weight loss. This leads to frustration whenever they do not lose the weight they expected to lose or when the advice is not as easy to implement as they expected.

The thing is, weight loss is more straightforward than you can imagine. In fact, losing weight can be very easy and pleasant to achieve on a consistent basis. This is why this E-book seeks to correctly and concisely provide information regarding successful weight loss. This E-book will help you discern the wheat from the chaff. That way, you are able to achieve your fitness goals without all the hassle, confusion, and inaccuracy of the advice you typically find on the internet. By the end of this book, you will be informed on why, for example, it is not necessary for you to eliminate carbohydrates from your diet. You will also know why misunderstanding cardio, short for cardiovascular exercise, can sometimes derail your weight loss progress. We will also teach you how to include your favorite foods while also losing weight. It is that simple.

## **Why most people fail in their weight loss journey**

There is a very vast array of reasons why people do not lose weight, even while undertaking advice on how to do so. While we will certainly overview some of these in detail later in the book, we can quickly mention some of them:

1. Using too much oil in cooking pans: as innocent as it may look, that tablespoon of oil you pour into each of your cooking pans to prevent sticking might be adding at least a whopping 390 calories a day.
2. Extreme calorie deficits: excessive reductions in daily caloric consumption can lead to intense episodes of binge eating. We will show you how to prevent these unnecessary and extreme changes to your diet.
3. Extreme restrictions: these are similar to the previous but carry the difference that these consist of restricting whole food groups, such as fats or carbohydrates. These are independent of caloric consumption. We will deal with the typical consequences of these restrictions.
4. Not measuring calories: even while carrying a conscious effort at keeping a low-calorie diet, people still do not lose weight if their daily calories are not measured. This is because they might be consuming more calories than they estimate.
5. Not managing cheat meals correctly: one weekly cheat meal is standard practice and considered of negligible effect on a diet oriented at weight loss.
6. Incorrectly measuring body weight: it is accepted practice that body weight should be measured first thing in the morning before any meal is eaten. Not doing so can yield inaccurate values.
7. Measuring body weight too frequently: weekly measurements of body weight are considered accurate to see the effects of a certain diet. Meanwhile, daily measurements are not considered accurate because body weight fluctuates slightly on a daily basis, regardless

of diet or lifestyle changes.

**The key: calorie deficit**

Every person has a daily number of calories needed to both maintain their current body weight and to carry out their normal, day-to-day activities. This daily amount of calories is referred to as maintenance calories because it does not lead to body weight gain nor loss, and when a person consumes this amount of calories, there is typically no cravings nor fatigue because the body obtains all the energy it needs.

While consuming maintenance calories, you feel quite energetic and ready to do it all. This is why food is considered fuel. Now, if a person's daily caloric consumption exceeds their maintenance calories, the body converts these additional calories into fat that is then stored throughout the body. Thus, this excess of calories leads to weight gain. Now, if this person eliminates this excess and consumes maintenance calories, weight gain will stop. Because there is no excess, there will be no new fat to be stored. However, does this mean that the person will lose weight? Not exactly. While it is true that under maintenance calories there is no increase in body fat, the body fat previously gained is not removed because consuming maintenance calories is not what triggers the body to begin burning body fat. What is it exactly that makes the body remove body fat? What is it that has to be done concerning calories that will lead to weight loss? A calorie deficit.

A calorie deficit, plainly stated, is consuming a daily amount of calories that is less than your maintenance calories. For example, if your maintenance calories are 3,500 and you consume this amount on a daily basis, you typically will not see significant changes in body weight, as we previously stated. Now, if you reduce this amount to 3,100, it is true to say that you are under a calorie deficit because the daily amount of calories you consume is less than your maintenance calories. It is also true that the size of your calorie deficit is 400. In

addition, your body will begin to use stored body fat as fuel to compensate for the lack of energy generated by the calorie deficit. This is the process by which weight loss can be achieved.

We previously stated that one of the reasons as to why people fail in their weight loss journey is extreme calorie deficits. In most cases, a calorie deficit of 1,000, for example, is quite literally extreme, and this is problematic because a calorie deficit that extreme can lead to uncontrollable cravings if the person is not used to this kind of restriction. It is also important to add that, even if these cravings are controlled, the toll on your body may include migraines and significant fatigue. These consequences cause people to abandon calorie deficits out of the incorrect idea that these are impossible to manage on a consistent basis.

It is standard practice and considered healthy that the size of a calorie deficit should be between 300 to 500 calories. How big this calorie deficit should be is up to you and how fast you want to lose weight.

Now, while it is true that under any calorie deficit your body will trigger cravings to replenish the missing calories, the cravings resulting from a sustainable and proper calorie deficit are typically manageable, and you should be able to adapt to these within a small amount of weeks after your calorie deficit begins.

With this in mind, you may ask how you should calculate your maintenance calories and your calorie deficit. To calculate the first, you can use the following quick procedure:

1. Calculate your Basal Metabolic Rate (BMR) using the Mifflin-St Jeor formula.

- Men →  $BMR = 10 \times \text{Weight (kg)} + 6.25 \times \text{Height (cm)} - (5 \times \text{Age (years)}) + 5$
- Women →  $BMR = 10 \times \text{Weight (kg)} + 6.25 \times \text{Height (cm)} - (5 \times \text{Age (years)}) - 161$

## 2. Select your Physical Activity Level (PAL)

- Sedentary (little or no exercise): PAL = 1.2
- Lightly Active (light exercise, 1-3 days/week): PAL = 1.375
- Moderately Active (moderate exercise, 3-5 days/week): PAL = 1.55
- Very Active (hard exercise, 6-7 days/week): PAL = 1.725
- Super Active (very hard exercise, twice a day): PAL = 1.9

## 3. Calculate your Total Maintenance Calories (TMC) Using BMR and PAL

$$\text{Total Maintenance Calories} = \text{BMR} \times \text{PAL}$$

## One example of calculating a calorie deficit

Robert is a 31-year-old male who works as a consultant. His job does not require a lot of physical movement, but he does light cardio 2 times a week, and every week, he takes a 1-hour walk with his family and his pet. Now, Robert is aware that if he were to lose some weight, he would prefer to reduce his maintenance calories by 375 calories. Now, here is some information about his body:

1. Body weight: 255 lbs (about 116 kg).
2. Body height: 5 feet, 7 inches (about 170 cm).

We have all we need to calculate his maintenance calories. We can begin by calculating his Basal Metabolic Rate (BMR); since we know he is male, we will use the BMR formula for men.

$$\begin{aligned} \text{BMR} &= 10 \times 116\text{kg} + 6.25 \times 170\text{cm} - (5 \times 31\text{years}) + 5 \\ \text{BMR} &= 1160 + 1,063 - 155 + 5 \\ \text{BMR} &= 2,073 \end{aligned}$$

Now that we have his Basal Metabolic Rate, we can determine his Physical Activity Level (PAL). By reading his personal information, we know that Robert does not hold a sedentary lifestyle because he does cardio and takes a weekly 1-hour-long walk around the park. We can also say that he does not engage in moderate physical activity because his twice-a-week light cardio and walk in the park are both not too vigorous for him to be considered a person of moderately active lifestyle. We can conclude, then, that he has a lightly active lifestyle. Thus, his PAL is 1.375. We can now calculate his Total Maintenance Calories (TMC).

$$\begin{aligned} \text{TMC} &= \text{BMR} \times \text{PAL} \\ \text{TMC} &= 2,073 \times 1.375 \\ \text{TMC} &= 2,850 \end{aligned}$$

Keep in mind that this result is the value for the maintenance calories. Now, since Robert prefers a calorie deficit of 375, he would consume 2,475 calories in order to lose weight.

With the information provided about what a calorie deficit is and the example on how to calculate it, you can now calculate the amount of calories you would have to consume every day in order to progressively lose weight.

Now, the Mifflin-St Jeor formula and the values for PAL are standard and widely accepted when it comes to determining a person's calorie needs, but they are still not perfect. If you feel like your weekly weight loss is too little even if your calorie deficit size is acceptable, you can always opt to reduce your daily calories even more, (so long as this reduction is not too extreme).

## **Making your calorie deficit easy**

When it was stated that you need to be in a calorie deficit, your mind may have jumped toward the fact that you may be required to have a calculator, a pencil, a piece of paper, and a balance to write down the calories and weight of each ingredient you use to prepare your meal. This appears to be tiresome, right? It does not have to be that way.

One effective way to bring significant ease to your implementation of a calorie deficit is to design and write down some recipes, the weight of their ingredients, and their total calories. That way, you can opt to make a certain recipe and just take a quick look at the amount of calories it has. It is also important, believe it or not, that you also make recipes for your coffee. This is because, as we stated previously, some ingredients added to coffee can add an unexpectedly high amount of calories that can throw off your calorie deficit. Two examples of these ingredients are creamer and syrup.

One example of a recipe for your breakfast you can write down is the following: microwaved oats with fruit, nuts, and on the side, eggs with cottage cheese.

### **Ingredients:**

- 80 grams of oats (300 calories).
- 240 ml of milk (about 120 calories).
- 150 grams of strawberries (about 50 calories).
- 20 grams of almonds (about 120 calories).
- 2 eggs (about 120 calories).
- 100 grams of cottage cheese (about 85 calories).

Total calories for this breakfast: 795 calories.

Having this recipe and plenty of other alternatives written down

with their ingredients' weight and calories is a step that brings ease. Doing it this way prevents you from going through the wearisome situation of having to do all the calculations and googling that come from weighting ingredients and finding their respective calories each and every time you cook a meal. However, you do have to measure the weight of each ingredient to make sure you are cooking with the amounts present in the recipe, but this is a relatively easy and quick process.

It is possible for you to design plenty of more recipes for you to have a tasty and diverse diet. This is, in fact, crucial because it prevents you from eating excessive calories from meals outside of your calorie deficit because your recipes have become bland and repetitive.

One last thing for this section: give yourself a 10-day grace period at the beginning of your calorie deficit. During these days, you will consciously carry the effort to eat in a calorie deficit but will not expect perfection.

### **How to feel more satiated**

There are steps you can take to make your meals bigger while not increasing its caloric value significantly. This is important because it can help you feel full for longer and can help prevent cravings.

Adding sources of fiber such as lettuce or spinach is one option. One cup of lettuce has a negligible 5 calories that can add plenty of volume to your meal. Spinach is similar: one cup only has 5 calories.

There is another thing that you can add to your meals to increase feelings of fullness: protein. There is no need for fancy forms of protein. The basics work just fine: chicken, beef, fish, etc.

### **Oil: why it is important to keep an eye on it**

One single tablespoon of avocado oil, typically used in a pan to prevent food from sticking, has a whopping 130 calories; and, if you use one single pan for three meals, you unknowingly add approximately 390 calories to your diet. Think about this. We previously stated that a healthy calorie deficit is about 300 to 500 calories less than your maintenance calories. Thus, 390 calories perfectly and completely cancel out the calorie deficit of most people, and because their deficit has been counterbalanced by the calories from oil, there is no weight loss.

This fact concerning oil may appear counterintuitive given the fact that oil, used as previously mentioned, is present in very low amounts that appear to have no impact on caloric consumption. You now know why this is not the case.

Now, what should be done concerning oil? It is standard practice that oil is poured in a relatively hot pan, and a piece of paper towel is used to absorb as much oil as possible while also attempting to leave a fine layer. This fine layer of oil can still perfectly prevent sticking and is present in a sufficiently low amount to cause only a negligible caloric impact on your diet. There is no need to worry about the calories present in this fine layer.

### **Another source of calories people often overlook**

Your body absorbs calories from liquids in the same manner as it absorbs them from solids. This is the reason as to why it was previously suggested to keep an eye on the calories added to coffee. This is because these liquid calories can still impact your calorie deficit.

Take into account, for example, orange juice. As healthy as it is, it has about 110 calories for just one cup. Apple juice is similar: just one cup of it has 114 calories. Thus, if your calorie deficit is about 325 calories, it can be offset by these two cups of juice, as harmless as they appear to be.

Now, we are not suggesting by any means that you refrain from enjoying these juices high in Vitamin C. We suggest quite the opposite, in fact. It is just important to state that you should keep account of calories from liquids just as much as those from solids.

### **About the practice of eliminating entire food groups**

There are 3 macronutrients: fat, protein, and carbohydrates. Some examples of healthy fats include cheese, avocados, and nuts. Whereas, some examples of protein are chicken, salmon, and beef. Finally, some examples of carbohydrates are sweet potatoes, oats, and fruit.

These differ in caloric value. One gram of protein and one gram of carbohydrates have 4 calories each. Meanwhile, just one gram of fat has 9 calories. Because one gram of fat has more than double calories than one gram of protein, the complete elimination of fat became a widespread trend. Its proponents argued that the elimination of fat enabled an easy reduction of calories; thus, weight loss would supposedly be achieved quickly.

The main issue with said practice is that fat plays an important role in the human body. For example, certain vitamins can only be absorbed by the body if there is sufficient fat. For example, vitamin D is fat-soluble, and if a fat-free diet is implemented, vitamin D deficiency could occur. Some symptoms of this deficiency may include muscle weakness, depression, and fatigue.

All you have to remember from this section is to keep carbohydrates, protein, and fats present in your diet. There is no need to measure each and every gram of these, nonetheless. There is also no need to eliminate some food groups to achieve a successful calorie deficit.

## **Portion control and your favorite foods**

So long as your daily calorie consumption adheres to your established calorie deficit, you can sneak into your diet some of your favorite food items: cake, baguette, cookies, etc. Perhaps it will not be feasible to include them in the amounts you would otherwise prefer, but you can still enjoy them while staying in a calorie deficit.

One thing you can do to sneak some of your favorite foods into your diet is to combine them with other foods low in calories. For example, you can eat half a cake with one green apple.

This is another thing that may be counterintuitive: can I really include some of the foods I really enjoy, even if they are calorie dense? The short and blunt answer is yes, but the nuance is that you are enjoying them in amounts that will not have an adverse impact on your diet. It is also important to state, however, that this section does not seek to allow this. This section, in fact, encourages it.

Eating your favorite food items in a manner that still keeps you in a calorie deficit prevents the situation of you enduring growing unsatisfied cravings that will make you eat an amount of these foods that throw off your progress.

Notice that twice we have given you information that we stated appeared counterintuitive. There is still purpose in the inclusion of this information because this guide will not give you what feels and looks right. This guide will give you what is right.

**Is healthy food low-calorie? Is low-calorie food healthy?**

One of the biggest misconceptions concerning what foods are high in calories and which are low in calories is that healthy food, no matter what, is always low in calories. At first, you might conclude that this always holds true because certain healthy foods are low in calories and most foods that have a negligible amount of calories are healthy. Examples include onions, peppers, lettuce, spinach, kale, arugula, etc. All of these are healthy and very low in calories.

Now, it is important to remember that, as astounding as it may first appear, not all healthy foods are low in calories. This is because food items are acknowledged as healthy for a variety of reasons other than calories. Sometimes, a food item is considered healthy only because it is naturally sourced and not ultra-processed. Other times, some food item is considered healthy only because it has a lot of vitamins and minerals. However, these two examples do not take into account calorie content.

Take honey as an example. It is widely considered a healthy food and a healthy replacement for sugar. It has some potassium and calcium. So, because you have heard that it is healthy, can you immediately and correctly conclude it is low in calories? 21 grams of honey have about 65 calories. Compare this amount of honey with 21 grams of sugar, which has about 85 calories. Yes, honey has less calories than sugar, but it turns out that honey is not as low-calorie as previously imagined.

If we take into account that some people sweeten their strawberry juice, for example, with about 30 grams of honey, they are unknowingly adding about 95 calories to their diet. This amount is about 30% of a 350 calorie deficit, which has been offset by something believed to be of no dietary effect.

Now, this section does not state that honey is unhealthy. This is just a reminder that **some healthy foods can have much more calories than previously imagined.**

## **Cardiovascular exercise and weightlifting are important for weight loss: but there is a catch**

There are many health benefits of both cardio, short for cardiovascular exercise, and weightlifting. For cardiovascular exercise, some of its benefits include improved heart function, mood, and sleep quality. For weightlifting, some benefits include increase in overall strength and mobility. So, there is no doubt that these two boost the quality of your life, whether you are trying to lose weight or not. However, there is a slight misunderstanding of how these two work on weight loss. (The end of next section of this book will cover the ideal frequency of cardiovascular exercise and weightlifting for a better calorie deficit).

People often think that, disregarding all other variables, weightlifting and cardio are both causes of weight loss. This is not entirely true as people, when lacking a planned calorie deficit, unconsciously replenish the burnt calories to a sufficient amount that the day's total calorie consumption is not in a deficit. So, these two activities are essential for weight loss, but a calorie deficit is the most important factor in a successful fitness journey.

Moreover, another reason why misunderstanding cardiovascular exercise and weightlifting may derail the outcome of your calorie deficit is that there are many variables that influence how many calories a person burns while doing this first type of exercise. Some of these include body weight, intensity, duration, and type of cardiovascular exercise done. When it comes to weightlifting, number of sets, repetitions per set, muscles trained, intensity, and duration can also affect the number of calories burned.

Did you notice that one of the previous variables is intensity? That does not appear very easy to measure precisely, and the last thing to be desired for a calorie deficit is lack of precision.

It is going to be significantly more accurate that you engage in cardiovascular exercise and weightlifting and disregard their respective burnt calories when measuring your day's total calories. If done, it is true to say that the actual size of your calorie deficit will be bigger than planned, but at least, there is no risk of your total day's calories being higher than planned because less calories than expected were burnt during exercise.

One example can explain this very well: you consume a diet consisting of 2,000 calories a day and the size of your calorie deficit is 350 calories. Thus, your maintenance calories are 2,350. One day, after having done some exercise, you correctly calculate that you have burnt 150 calories. You do not take into account these calories, so the day's total calories has been reduced to 1850 calories. The size of your calorie deficit is now 500, an amount higher than the one previously established, but you are still losing weight.

Whereas, let us say that, instead of 150 calories, just 60 were burnt. You still did not take into account these calories. Thus, the daily calories are now 1,940. The size of the calorie deficit is now 410 calories. Despite the inaccuracy of the calculation, you are still losing weight because the calories burnt through exercise were not taken into account.

Let us now analyze the opposite scenario. You exercised and calculated that 150 calories were burnt. So, you add 150 calories to your diet because these two values cancel each other out. Indeed, right after you exercised, the daily calories went from 2,000 to 1,850. You replenished them by adding 150 calories; so, the daily calories went from 1,850 to 2,000. In theory, there is no harm because, at a daily caloric consumption of 2,000, you are still in a calorie deficit of 350 calories.

It turns out that, in fact, 60 calories were burnt during exercise, not 150. After exercise, daily calories went from 2,000 to 1,940; However, since it was believed that exercising burnt 150 calories, daily calories then went from 1,940 to 2,090. At 2,090, the size of the calorie deficit has been reduced from 350 to 260. This will lead to slower weight loss.

Now, the error in the given example does not appear to be significant, but it is reasonable to state that this type of miscalculation may be worse.

With two given examples of taking into account and not taking into account calories burnt by exercise, we can reach the conclusion that by not taking into account these calories, you are guaranteed that you are not reducing your intended calorie deficit because of miscalculations of calories burnt by exercise.

### **Something else, other than fat, is also lost during a calorie deficit**

When people mention weight loss, they typically refer to fat loss. Indeed, weight loss and fat loss are used interchangeably to refer to loss of body fat, and that should be the goal: to lose body fat only.

You achieve body fat loss by plainly following the text in this E-book, but there is something else, other than fat, that is also lost during a calorie deficit: muscle mass.

The loss of muscle mass is a variable that has to be taken care of because it can derail the outcome of a weight loss. See, the loss of muscle mass slows down the rate at which your body burns calories, and thus, the rate at which your body burns fat. This problem may occur to such an extent that there may be no noticeable loss of body weight even under a calorie deficit. Overall, there is no need to be concerned about the possible loss of muscle mass since this is easy to both prevent and fix.

All you have to do is build muscle by going to the gym, short for gymnasium, lift weights, and eat plenty of protein. If you have never been to the gym, give your body about 2 to 3 weeks of light training for it to comfortably adapt. Then, train hard enough to build muscle. As a rule of thumb, your training should feel very challenging yet perfectly manageable, and it should take place 3 to 4 times a week with each session lasting 45 to 75 minutes. Right after you end your light training, you might feel overwhelmed by how hard you train. This is normal, and keep in mind that, over time, training hard becomes easy, manageable, and even enjoyable.

When it comes to protein consumption, it is ideal that you consume 1.4 to 2 grams of protein for every kilogram of body weight. This range is typical and necessary for people that will engage in consistent and vigorous physical activities.

Now, the ideal frequency of cardiovascular exercise is about 4 to 5 times a week with each session lasting 30 minutes, and there are plenty of available options for this exercise. Some of these are cycling, swimming, rowing, and jumping rope. As always, if you have never done these before, begin with gentle workouts for a smooth adaptation process.

## **Managing a weight loss plateau**

A weight loss plateau is defined as a sudden stagnation of weight loss progress that lasts for more than 2 weeks. This stagnation occurs even while under a calorie deficit. There are many available steps to fix it. Among these are the following:

1. Take breaks from your calorie deficit. This consists of slowly switching back to maintenance calories for 1 to 3 weeks for every 3 to 4 months of dieting under a calorie deficit. The next section provides more insight into this.
2. Increase muscle mass even more.
3. Maintain an active lifestyle by engaging in cardiovascular exercise, weightlifting, or both. You can go back to previous pages to check for the frequency and intensity for these exercises. However, if these are already part of your lifestyle, you can increase the frequency or intensity of these.
4. Reduce calories even further. If a weight loss plateau occurs, there is a fair chance that you may have attained some experience of being under a calorie deficit. Thus, you can reduce your calories even further, as needed, because your body is already adapted to it.

Now, the following are some, but not all, factors that may cause a weight loss plateau:

1. Loosened rules: you have allowed extra bites or slightly larger portions that did, in fact, increase your daily calories significantly.
2. Unknown source of calories: there are calories added to your diet that are not being taken into account.
3. Muscle mass loss.

## **Signs your body needs a break**

A calorie deficit is considered healthy because it is both temporary and conducive to fat loss. Nonetheless, after weeks of successful weight loss and dieting, some symptoms may arise that indicate that you should take a break. This is also important for people who engage in long-term deficits: give your body a break from time to time.

This break consists of adding calories to your diet until you reach your regular maintenance calories. It is ideal that you restore these levels progressively for, say, 6 to 10 days. Then, you will consume maintenance calories until the symptoms disappear.

Some signs you need a break are:

1. Increased fatigue.
2. Entering plateaus that last more than 2 weeks.
3. Mood changes or irritability.
4. Increased difficulty in resisting cravings.

Do not hesitate to contact a medical professional for any of these.

## **Miscellaneous**

Here are two tips to make a calorie deficit easier and more enjoyable:

1. Sugar-free drinks are your friend. They provide all the flavor but none of the calories.
2. Hydration: being dehydrated can induce or worsen fatigue. Meanwhile, ensuring you drink water as much as your body needs contributes to feeling energized and productive.

**You have lost all the weight: now what?**

Do you remember when it was suggested that, when designing your recipes, you should write the calorie content down? It was also suggested that you should create a large number of recipes because this would prevent you from eating outside of your diet out of the fact that your diet conducive to weight loss has become just too bland and repetitive. Well, there is, in fact, more than meets the eye when it comes to having a large amount of recipes made to fit a certain diet. You will know more about this in the next paragraphs, but first, it is proper to focus on what to do once there is no more need to stay in a calorie deficit.

Once you have lost all the weight you have wanted to lose, it is important that you replenish your daily calories to your maintenance calories. This is because the healthy and normal scenario is that your body receives all the food it needs, no more and no less. But, think of something for a second. There is a fair chance that, when ending the calorie deficit, you might gain all the weight you have diligently put the effort to lose. So, does this mean that you will have to count all the calories you eat every day for the rest of your life to prevent weight gain? No. This is where making plenty of recipes comes into play.

You will write plenty of recipes that are conducive to a diet consisting of maintenance calories. Now, the number of these recipes is entirely up to you but the more you have, the better. Implementing this large amount of recipes over time will enable you to develop a discernment of what foods and what amounts of food *are* conducive to weight maintenance and which *are not*.

This discernment is crucial because achieving caloric consistency despite not weighing nor measuring the caloric content of the food you eat is going to be a critical skill for you to develop in

order to prevent excessive weight gain after you finish your calorie deficit.