

Be
Stronger
Than
Your
Excuses

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My Long Path to Self- Discovery

A guide for those
looking for something
more



TO LIVE IN YOUR TRUTH

To live in your truth simply means to live as your most authentic self, doing things daily that bring you happiness and joy, living as true to yourself as possible. To me, this is what it also means to live your best life. Let me ask you, are you and your family living your best life? Are you all living a balanced life of wellness? In this book, I am going to share with you my personal journey to finding balance in order to live my best life. Holding no bars....you will hear about my failures (which I consider learning experiences and are numerous) and my absolute triumphs.

Let's start.

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I always knew that there was something that made me “different” from the rest of my family. I just saw things differently. I reacted differently to things. It was like the only way I could express myself was through yelling or tears. Because of this feeling of being different, there was this emptiness inside me that nothing could fill. I was looking for something and I just had no idea what it was. Trust me, I tried filling this void with food, unsatisfying and toxic relationships, and pushing myself in the direction that others wanted me to go in. I was unhealthy, unhappy and unsatisfied with everything. Nothing made me happy. I fell into a depression and had reached a point where my doctor was discussing putting me in a short stay psychiatric ward for a few days to help me figure things out. I didn’t want that. I took the prescription he gave me, which was Paxil. I started feeling better, but knew I didn’t want to be on medication for the rest of my life. Now I am not saying that you should not be on medication. It is definitely needed in certain cases. I just knew it wasn’t for me. This is where my journey began.

I was reading every self-help book there was. I found that it sounded great on paper, but I had a hard time translating it to my actual day to day life. I was trying to apply what I had learned but also found I was starting to show side effects of the Paxil; weight gain, I gained 90 lbs to be exact, and I was getting these really weird “electric shocks” down my arms and legs if I turned my head too quickly. Something wasn’t right. I was tired of being told to control myself with food intake and given no plan of action to help. No one was listening to me that I felt the Paxil was the driving force behind my weight gain. It was immediately put back onto me as my fault for a lack of willpower and lack of control.

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It was implied if I could just do that, everything would start to balance out. And on top of that, the doctors starting telling me that the “phantom electric shocks” I was experiencing were all in my head. I knew they were not. I began to slowly decrease my dosage of Paxil, with the help of my primary care physician.

Once off the Paxil, my body felt like an unhealthy blob. I was so discouraged. I wasn't depressed, but I did feel like I could not go any lower or get any worse. My gynecologist gave me the name of a doctor who might be helpful. This doctor ran all sorts of tests and discovered that I had metabolic syndrome. Metabolic syndrome is a cluster of conditions that often occur together and increase the risk of developing heart disease, stroke, and type 2 diabetes. The conditions include high blood pressure, high blood sugar levels, excess body fat around the waist, abnormal cholesterol levels, and insulin resistance. Metabolic syndrome is often associated with unhealthy lifestyle habits such as poor diet, lack of physical activity, and obesity. This described me to a “T”. It is important to manage metabolic syndrome through lifestyle changes and, in some cases, medical interventions to reduce the risk of associated health complications. The medical profession's answer is to medicate. To force my body to do a particular action to normalize levels. I thought about this and asked myself, “how is this "normal"?” I couldn't live the rest of my life on a ton of medications and dealing with the side effects. There had to be another way.

I needed help with my weight immediately, because I truly thought that if I could get my weight down, all these horrible precursors to disease would slowly go away. I found a wonderful bariatric clinic in Boston and began the long road to have bariatric surgery. I finally came to the realization I was slowly dying by living and eating the way I was. I weighed 320 lbs and had so many other chronic illnesses. I was trying to control my chemical imbalance depression.

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I say that because I truly started to believe that my chemical imbalance was caused by my physical unhealthiness also. That physical unhealthiness being the lack of movement, food I was eating and my mind being focused on this “emptiness”. I found it very difficult trying to open a conversation with my doctors about how I was feeling. I went into therapy and learned that the “why” to me eating the way I was had so much to do with feeling that I had to constantly look for acceptance in everyone else, so I had to make sure they were happy. They would accept me then. I was putting myself on the back burner and I was punishing myself. Actually, I really didn’t like myself very much. Since I couldn’t love myself I was looking for acceptance in those around me. Well, once my doctor got this tidbit of info, the doctor's solution was to medicate. Then I could deal with my emotional issues. I refused the medication and started to listen to and like myself.

I found I was becoming very upset with the answer always being to medicate. I wanted to see what other options were out there. Here is where my interest in nutrient dense foods to balance out my insides came in.

Hippocrates said, “Let food be thy medicine and medicine be thy food.” That started to resonate with me. There was a logic to that I had never truly understood. Why is it that we are so “advanced” and we do not follow what a very intelligent man said thousands of years ago. It makes perfect sense. What it basically means is that we understand the importance of a healthy, nutrient balanced lifestyle and how those said nutrients have the ability to potentially heal us. It seriously blows my mind. Our government officials are more interested in promoting foods, food substances and food by-products that they are literally paid to promote. It has nothing to do with our health, but everything to do with the all mighty dollar.

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As I started to realize that our food industry and our “healthcare” industry (which should be renamed “sick care” industry because it works from an illness care model instead of a preventative model) are closely linked. We are force fed advertising for foods that are colorless (unless full of allergy producing dyes), tasteless (unless unhealthy amounts of sugar and fat are added to them) and full of preservatives. And now we are also having to deal with GMO foods. We are one of the richest countries in the world yet we are also one of the sickest. That doesn't make sense!!

Our children are getting adult-onset diseases and even dying from them!! Adult onset Type 2 diabetes, High Blood Pressure, Osteoporosis and osteoarthritis, heart disease, stroke, just to name a few. We are killing our kids!!! We have become too busy, too tired, too unimaginative to come up with and create meals that are fresh, whole, nutrient-rich, full of color and taste. We opt for the easy way of just ripping open a package, popping it into the microwave or oven and serving that to our families. Half the time we do not know how to pronounce the “ingredients” that make up that “food”. How can we be satisfied with that? I'm hoping that, by reading this book, you will begin to make small changes that will start to heal you and your family and prevent future chronic illnesses, leading you to a life of holistic wellness.

Holistic wellness refers to an approach that addresses the well-being of the whole person—mind, body, and spirit—rather than focusing solely on one aspect. It emphasizes the interconnectedness of various dimensions of health, such as physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual well-being.

Holistic wellness involves adopting a balanced lifestyle, practicing self-care, engaging in regular physical activity, maintaining healthy relationships, managing stress, and nurturing one's spiritual or inner self. It recognizes that all these elements are interconnected and influence each other, contributing to overall well-being. To achieve holistic wellness, we need to start making changes in our whole manner of living. We are not living as full a life as we should be, and that makes me very sad. I decided to do something about that. I became a wellness coach. Now, you may look at me and ask, “she still has weight to lose, still has to get healthy”, and you are correct. I am on a journey of self-discovery. I am not saying that I am an expert, but I know that I am finding my way. I want to help you find your way. We are very different, and so what has worked for me may not resonate with you. I am hoping to give you the information and the guidance to find your own personal path to wellness.

Making changes is difficult. I know this first hand. Change comes when you step outside your comfort zone, and too many of us are too comfortable to explore this. We want change, but we do not want to do the work, so we make excuses as to why we cannot do the work. We want someone to give us the answers to our problems, our feelings, our needs and wants. We go to people who promise that they can fix your “issue” with a cookie cutter method that worked for them on their personal journey. They are not looking at YOU. You as an individual. Looking at what has worked for you in the past and what hasn't. They want you to conform to their idea of success, ignoring you and your needs. We begin their program and immediately we may connect with it, but in the long term, it is not who we are. So this itself becomes an excuse as to why we cannot change

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Take what works for you and leave out what may not resonate within you. This is about you stepping outside your comfort zone and achieving success. Yes, you will make mistakes. You are human, it is inherent. Learn from your mistakes.

In order to activate the self-healing switch within you to regain balance, it takes more than diet, more than excuses. I have always hated that word, DIET. It means restriction and to me, how can you achieve wellness if you are restricting yourself from the things that bring you joy and happiness, that comfort you. I prefer to say “lifestyle”. Think about it. If you want to make changes for long term success, whatever you do has to be sustainable. You have to be able to do it for the rest of your life. You should not “diet” and restrict yourself, because when you slip up, it sets you up for a shitload of self-judgment, self-loathing and self-criticism. I have lived this and it is not a good place to be. How has any of those things ever helped someone improve themselves? When you refer to it as a lifestyle, it means a journey. An opportunity to make mistakes and learn from them. To build self-confidence and to nurture self-worth, to give yourself an opportunity to grow. You have everything you need to succeed, to become the person you want to be. You can do it on your own, but you may need a nudge here and there, someone to keep you honest and on the right track. This is where the help of a health or wellness coach can come in.

A wellness coach is a professional who helps individuals improve their overall well-being and achieve their health and wellness goals. They provide guidance, support, and accountability in areas such as nutrition, exercise, stress management, and lifestyle changes. A wellness coach focuses on creating sustainable habits and empowering individuals to make positive choices for their health.

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Having a wellness coach can be beneficial for several reasons. They can provide personalized guidance tailored to your specific needs and goals. They can help you develop a customized plan to improve your health and well-being, offering strategies and techniques to overcome challenges along the way. Additionally, a wellness coach can provide accountability, motivation, and ongoing support to help you stay on track and make lasting changes to enhance your overall quality of life. For example, ever finally decide to make that big change in your life? It's time and you are all in. You want to, say, lose 20lbs, that is usually what everyone wants. You begin, but within 2 weeks you are slowly veering off the path. You are losing your enthusiasm. You begin reverting back to your old "bad" habits. Ever try and figure out why that happens? That is where a health or wellness coach can help.

When we decide to make big changes, we are enthusiastic and want to jump in immediately and get going. We are human and in this day and age, we want it yesterday. We grew up in a time of instant gratification. So when we set out to accomplish a new goal, we don't think about the work involved and the "why" behind it all. We look for others to do the work for us. For example, pre-made, processed foods that are full of chemicals and preservatives. When we eat these types of foods, our bodies crave fresh, whole, clean foods. BUT, when we veer off the food plan we are given, we do not eat the foods our bodies are craving, we go back to the old way of eating with foods loaded with sugar and fat, preservatives and chemicals. We eat these foods that our minds are craving, the foods we used to eat, the foods our emotions are craving. So we condition our minds and bodies that we should be eating highly processed foods, so that is what we go for. Junk food and sweets. Our bodies no longer crave the fresh fruits and vegetables, the whole grains.

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We have conditioned our bodies and our tongues to crave processed, chemical-laden foods. This is what our minds think we are supposed to be eating because that is what you have been giving your body. The bad bacteria, the pathogens within our bodies are the ones craving these foods. We are no longer feeding our bodies, we are feeding our emotions. This is where your "why" comes in. This is where the work begins, where you dive deep into your feelings and emotions and figure out "why" you want to make this change. Trying to solidify the reasons or our "why" for wanting to make the changes can be very difficult. You probably have never really thought about it. We don't understand how important our "why" for doing anything is. It goes deeper and way beyond wanting to lose twenty pounds. Our "why" gives us the specific picture of what we want. Our "why" digs deep and makes us examine our truth, it is our truth. Our "why" helps to create the sub-goals to help us achieve the bigger picture. Our "why" gives us our level of commitment and makes us see things clearer. Taking time and thinking about the reasons behind why you want to make the changes you are looking to make helps you formulate a concrete plan and easily breaks things down into steps.

Making changes is not a one and done deal. It is a lifetime commitment. It becomes your PERSONALIZED journey. It means that what you are doing for yourself, is for you. You need to find what works for you and only you. As you create small attainable goals to help you reach your ultimate goal, you begin to lose the old, "bad" habits and begin replacing them with healthier habits that you keep for the rest of your life. Read that again, *you begin to lose the old, "bad" habits and begin replacing them with healthier habits that you keep for the rest of your life.* That is very important to understand. These are not temporary, short-term habits or short-term fixes. These are habits that you will carry with you for the rest of your life. They will help you to meet your wellness goals on your journey.

You need to also remember that you are only human and will undoubtedly have not so good days. When these days hit, accept what made it not so good and then fix what you need to. Then, without judging yourself, let it go. We have the next moment to start fresh. Formulate a new plan implementing the lesson you just learned from your mistake. Accept responsibility for it and begin again. Do not make excuses for your mistakes. If something has truly kept you from your goal, don't use it as an excuse, use it to create your new healthy habit! Use it as momentum to push you forward. BE STRONGER THAN YOUR EXCUSES. Don't let your excuses hold you back from achieving your goals or making progress. I cannot emphasize enough the importance of pushing through barriers, taking responsibility, and maintaining determination in the face of challenges or obstacles. Prioritize your ambitions over limitations you have set for yourself or justifications for inaction. When you decide to make a change, sit down, dive deep and really think about the "why" behind it. Write it down and pin it all over your house, office, car, planner, wherever you need to so that you can have daily reminders about it. Just do it!! You are so worth it!! 

Thank you for taking the time to read my story. I am the person I am today because of what you have read. It wasn't easy and it still isn't...everyday is one more step forward, one more lesson, or one more discovery that pushes me forward. I am working on a book that explains how I have incorporated everything that I have learned into my coaching practice.

Find your path and walk strong!