

JULY 2009

9S: Sustenance & Spirit Review

Last week was another of our 9S courses – Sustenance and Spirit. ([more about the 9S Model](#)) It was a large certification, with 63 advanced-level trainers learning about the physiology of hunger and food absorption, the impact of lifestyle and diet on chronic disease, and number of supplementation options. We also spent considerable time working on a variety of motivational and coaching skills to help our clients make the changes they want for themselves.

Managing bodyfat levels ALWAYS comes down to balancing energy intake with energy expenditures – to lose weight you need to take in fewer calories than you expend, and to gain weight, you need to consume more than you burn. And, as you probably already instinctively know, both Nature and Nurture play a role in our eating habits and body composition. What you may not have been as acutely aware of is the role of both Nature and Nurture on chronic disease.

Let's take a quick look at both Nature and Nurture to learn a bit about how this practically plays out.

NATURE

This is the genetics and related predispositions we were born with. A simple analogy is to think of your body as a car, some people are born Geo Metros and others are born as Ferraris. So, while you can manipulate gas consumption and performance through driving habits, running the air conditioning, air levels in the tires, etc, the responsiveness of the car is still the responsiveness of the car. Our bodies are much the same. We are born with what we are born with, BUT we can affect how it performs. Premium quality fuel, regular tune-ups, and treat it well -- and it will run forever.

Just because you may have the family history/genetic marker for a chronic condition does NOT automatically mean you will develop the disease. Out of the top 10 causes of death in the US, 7 of those 10 are widely accepted to be as a result of lifestyle choices. Lifestyle choices, good and bad, significantly influence the likelihood of you developing a chronic condition.

NURTURE

So, that's good news — even though you may have a predisposition to diabetes, coronary artery disease, or other chronic conditions, you have a huge amount of

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EVENTS CALENDAR

Be sure to check [our website](#) regularly for updates.

Conferences & Workshops

Minneapolis, MN

July 15-17 - Essential Secrets of Elite Performance (sponsored by DragonDoor Publications)
[Register Online](#)

R-Phase

Denver, CO

May 29-31 & July 24-26

Atlanta, GA

Aug 7-9 & Sept 25-27

Minneapolis, MN

Aug 14-16 & Sept 18-20

Denmark

November 2-7

I-Phase

Denver, CO

October 8-11

San Diego, CA

November 12-15

Minneapolis, MN

November 19-22

S-Phase

Phoenix, AZ

December 3-6

T-Phase

Phoenix, AZ

October 22-25

control over the likelihood of it expressing itself through disease. Dr. Susan Roberts of Tufts University has given us the 5 High Payoffs when it comes to behavioral and lifestyle choices around food.

Hunger

Hunger is tricky. Our bodies trigger different types of cravings at different times of the day (generally sugar in the morning and fatty foods at night), they release hunger triggers when we are sleep-deprived, and over time many of us can no longer tell the difference between actually being hungry and simply wanting to eat.

There are several things we can do to satiate our hunger while managing caloric intake:

- We are wired to like the feeling of being full, and our stomachs, when empty, are about the size of our fist (but CAN stretch to the size of a football). Something the size of your fist isn't a lot of space to take up, so eat lots of low-calorie vegetables or drink water before your meal to take up some of the space.
- Eat slowly. Let the chemicals in our brains kick in to tell us that we are full. Eating with people (in a calorie-controlled environment), taking time to chew your food, and setting down the silverware between bites are all great tricks.
- Before you eat, pause briefly and figure out WHY you are eating. Are you hungry? Or, are you bored, upset, or procrastinating? If it's any of the latter, can you NOT eat, or can you at least substitute what you were going to eat for a better alternative?

Availability

In the US (and most other westernized societies), we produce FAR MORE food than we need. According to recent statistics, there is enough food produced EVERY DAY to provide 3,500-4,000 calories for every man, woman, and child in the US. This is about double what most people need.

In a fascinating study of how availability really impacts consumption, researchers took a group of people and fed them soup. As a control, they fed them one bowl, and measured how much they ate. Then, they took these same people, and later gave them the same soup, but had rigged the bowls so that they were bottomless soup bowl and auto-filled from the bottom. At the end of the study, they asked participants how much more they consumed the second time — most participants estimated 10%. They ACTUALLY consumed 70% more!

To avoid the bottomless soup bowl syndrome, you can:

- Avoid grazing. And with that, keep your trigger foods either out of the house or out of easy reach.
- Plate up your food ahead of time, and eat it away from the serving dishes.
- Skip seconds.

Caloric Density

We are wired to want calorically dense foods. Like all of our wiring around food, it's a leftover from our hunter/gatherer days when we didn't know how long it was going to be before we got to eat again – so we needed to eat while the eating was good.

Since it's pretty impossible to get your daily caloric or nutrient requirements from all low-calorie foods, eating calorically dense foods is necessary. But, by making calorically dense foods the bulk of your calories, you are more likely to be hungry as you won't get that physical feeling of fullness. So, the keys to managing it are:

- Pay attention to serving sizes. A pint of Ben & Jerry's is typically 4 (yes, 4) servings – not 1. Many of the bottled beverages, like the bottles of iced tea that look like they are one serving, are at least two servings. Be sure to look at the label — if you don't have a lot of experience at this, I guarantee you'll be surprised!
- Pre-determine the portions of your calorically dense foods. Now that you know how many servings are in the bag, bottle, or carton, determine how much you are going to eat, and portion it out into a separate bowl or plate before eating.
- Stick to zero-calorie drinks. Recent studies indicate that for most Americans a significant amount of daily calories come from beverages. Americans now consume 156lb of sugar per year (compared to 10lb/year 100 years ago), and 33% of those calories are in liquid form. Odds are, those are calories provide no nutritional value, and liquids are proven not to satiate hunger the same way solid food does.

Familiarity

Common sense says we like foods that are familiar to us. When we are in a hurry or during times of stress, we are going to eat what we already know. Familiarity is good. The key here is to be familiar with a wide enough variety of foods to make meals interesting and get all of the nutrients that the body needs.

- Radically changing your diet overnight is a recipe for disaster, so add and change foods slowly.
- Use herbs, spices, and preparation methods for similar foods that you are already familiar with to introduce yourself to new foods.
- Take a familiar food and prepare it in a new way. If you steam it, grill it. If you sautee it in butter, try steaming it with some familiar spices. Try new or different spices in a familiar vegetable. Different preparation methods impact nutritional value, so branch out.

Variety

Familiarity and variety go hand-in-hand and also seem to be at odds with one another. We talk above about adding variety to your diet, but too much of a good thing is problematic as well. Some popular diets succeed because they limit your food choices to the point where you simply lose interest in the foods that are on the

"allowed" list. How often, when you go out and are presented with a wide variety of foods, do you need to try a little of everything? 100 calories here, 100 calories there, and suddenly you've far exceeded your caloric limit for the day.

As mentioned above, variety is critical for both the enjoyment of food as well as achieving proper nutrition. So, there are a few things you can do to optimize your options.

- Eat at home. Not only do you know EXACTLY what is in your food, but eating at home usually means you are opting for familiarity and won't be faced with as many choices and temptations.
- If you know you are going to be facing a meal with virtually unlimited options, define limits ahead of time. For example, decide you will have one meat, one bread or starchy carbohydrate (e.g., potatoes, corn), and two low-density carbs (broccoli, carrots, spinach, etc). If dessert is on your plan, stick to one kind. Creating these guidelines in advance gives you a success strategy.
- When grocery shopping, don't go when hungry, shop from a list, and pay cash. You'll curb your impulse purchases, develop the appropriate level of familiarity vs variety, and limit availability.

We've given you a long list of things you can choose from to positively change your eating behaviors for better health and performance. Our challenge to you is to pick just one from this list and implement it over the course of the next week.

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Book Review: Changing for Good

In the 9S article above, the last thing we do is challenge you to pick just one thing and implement it. If you either picked an item from the list or made a mental note to go back and do it later, then then you are likely in the Preparation or Action stage from the Stages of Change with regards to your sustenance. If picking and implementing something from that list holds no interest for you, then odds are you are in the Pre-Contemplation Stage regarding sustenance.

You already know that the best results come when you are internally motivated to do something, as opposed to "being told to" by your doctor, spouse, or employer. [Changing for Good](#) provides a model for learning where someone is on the change continuum and what questions and information will be beneficial — because the wrong type of question at the wrong stage in the change cycle can send someone back to the beginning.

The book comes out of years of studying various tobacco cessation, alcohol cessation, and weight loss programs that worked, and finding the common factors. They wrapped this up in a six-stage change model, complete with case studies, questions, examples, and tools you can use to identify where someone is at and move them to the next stage of change.

Rated 4 1/2 stars on [Amazon](#), this is a classic text for

helping individuals through the change cycle.

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Newsletter Archive

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