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When you thought we were done with talking about food, here comes more. And this part will be the deal-maker of making a sustained life-long healthy eating plan. The critical part comes when you have to deal with your family, friends and social occasion, your environment and off-the-routine circumstances.

How to manage family and your new healthy eating?

It is much easier to follow a healthy eating plan when you are alone. When you live with others and your family, you will have to have some discussion on harmonizing the foods, which will be suitable for you as well. You will have to stand on your feet and able to manage tolerating others eating fast food and high sugary high fat foods.

Talk to your family and esp. you Mother about your special needs as an athlete. Explain to her that giving love by overstuffing you is not going to do much good for your athletic carrier. When I need to manage others I just tell them *“Please give me a hug, to show much you love, but don’t feed me!”*

Be prepared to answer questions why you are eating this way. Don’t get offended, just simply say *“I made a decision to eat healthy—is that ok with you? And would you like to try what I eat”*.

When you feel great from eating well, you want your loved one feel the same. However, don't push your family to eat healthy. Let them come to you with questions. And they will come to you upon seeing how much better you look and how much better your mood and energy level is. Everyone has to be ready to endorse change, just like you had to back then. When people are ready to listen they will come forth and join you in the journey of health.

How to celebrate with food?

Food has been a center of celebration for many centuries. We give food, esp. sweet to our loved ones to express our love and caring. Celebration foods are unfavorable for your performance, so you need to apply much care. Taking a few bites of them on your day off will not do so much harm. The key to success is moderation and awareness. When you lose control of your eating, that's when the problem begins.

Eating on Special occasions and holidays

Special occasion are the difficult times when we need to carefully chose what we will eat.

The secret is to look around and think what you would like to eat from the feast. Try all foods you like but keep the portion under control. If you like to taste many different foods, eat a few bites of all. The best is to fill up your plate with all the foods you like to eat and then sit down and eat it. This way you can see in front of you how much food you actually eating. Dim sums are dangerous and hard to keep track on how much you ate. I encourage you to take all food on one plate or at least keep it on your mind how much you ate.

Focus on eating low fat desserts (jellies fruits are great) use low fat milk instead of coconut milk if it is possible. Eat less of high fat dessert esp. those, which have a lot

coconut milk in it. Remember that fat makes sugar to turn in fat and store in our fat storage. This is why if it is better to control how much sugar you put in the desert. Eating desserts, which are too sweet is a habit, which can be unlearned as well.

Holiday means you are off from training and your energy needs are less. If you continue to eat a lot during this time you can be sure you are going to put on weight. This is true especially when you gain weight easily. Most important thing is to be aware of this and control your food intake to some extent. You can think of that it is so easy to put on weight and it is so hard work to get it off.

“One minute enjoyment on your tongue will stay on your hips for ever”

What about those athletes who can eat anything?

There are those athletes who can eat and drink anything and still performance well. Well, on the long run it will catch up on them. And as professionals, we ask the question: Imagine if these poorly fed athletes were eating well, just how much better their performance would be.

What about drinks?

In non-Muslim countries alcohol is major tool for celebration. People even will ask you *“Drink for my health!”*. This is a little paradox thing by my opinion. Think for a moment: how can you drink a toxic liquid, which is poison for your body and believe that you did a good deed for somebody else’s health? Doesn't make sense, does it?

Drink non-alcoholic drink and say to your friend *“ I drink this for my and your health”*.¹

How to manage your friends who eat for self-love

How many times you see people eating out of emotional reasons, depression, anxiety and boredom. These people use food to make themselves feel loved, and to release anger or anxiety.

Have you seen people eating in a buffet? They eat out of control to make sure to get a good deal for their money. You need to recognize people whose life is all about food and they will want you to eat with them. Eating and food choices have a deep psychology behind for many people.

What are the reasons you don't eat healthy foods?

Before you will be able to get in control of your eating you need to understand what is going on in your mind: why do you choose certain foods, and why do you eat or avoid certain food. Why do you like one food and don't like the other. It is the taste, or the consistency? Do you avoid foods as they made you sick earlier, or your parents were pushing it on you as a child? What is the reason you don't try healthy foods? What if they still taste great?

Lastly you need to answer what do have to lose by trying healthy foods and experience what they can do for your body.

¹ The Article on hydration later will cover more on the effect of alcohol on performance

How does food habit form?

Habit dictates for most people what they eat. Look into what are your food habits, and where did you get them from.

Food is fuel for our body and we need to refuel constantly to have the engine running well for top performance. Unhealthy habits are formed and became automatic because we practice them too long and they are part of who we are. The good news is that all habits can be unlearned and replaced by new healthy habits. It is all in the practice. Practice a new habit for 21 days and you will comfortable with it. Practice a new habit for 9 months and you have 90% chance that it will become automatic in you. Practice a habit for 2 years and it will become a part of you.

Eating healthy and thinking about food as fuel is also a habit. Start practicing right now.