

100 Pounds Ago...

**I Started Learning
How to Love Myself
More Than The
Pleasure of Food**



By Charles A Postma

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Acknowledgements

I am a very utilitarian person. This book is short and to the point. I could but have chosen not to clutter it with superfluous words and phrases meant to convince you that I am some sort of towering intellect. I hate acronyms that make you ask yourself, “now what did that mean again?”, and keep making you look back to find its meaning to make sense of what I am trying to tell you. Whenever possible I avoid using words that the average person might have to look up in a dictionary. Many thanks to Mary Decker and my sister Renae Postma for lending me their editing talents. Their contributions are deeply appreciated.

The most important books I’ve read when it comes to improvements to my personal return to health was *Fasting and Sunbathing* by Dr. Herbert Shelton. Fasting helped me get rid of plaque psoriasis, seasonal pollen allergies, improve my circulatory system, gain body strength, improve stamina, and shed 100 pounds of visceral and subcutaneous fat. *The Salt Fix* by Dr. James DiNicolantonio helped me finally achieve normal blood pressure when I began adding more high-quality salt to my diet. To Lynn Farrow who wrote *The Iodine Crisis*. Since starting to supplement iodine I am no longer constantly cold. To Dr. Ken Berry, author of *Lies My Doctor Told Me*, for helping me recognize and utilize the healing, anti-aging, and restorative power of a wholesome diet. To my wife of over five decades, Sue, who has been there with me every step of the journey. And finally, to the Bible for healing my soul, reshaping my priorities, telling us the diet we have been designed for, and revealing to us where autophagy came from. Thank you, Lord.

I am not a doctor. You will find no medical recommendations in this document. There are many references to randomized, controlled studies that the reader is strongly encouraged to investigate. The traditional sources of medical information have failed us catastrophically. Bad and fraudulent “science” have put far too many of us into an early grave. Our most precious mortal possession is our health and entrusting it to the same people who make their livelihoods from our sickness has not worked out very well in retrospect.

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Preface

Twice in the last few decades I lost sixty pounds and promptly gained it all back. There were a few other efforts at weight control of lesser accomplishment that also were not sustainable. Honestly, I'd given up. I was going to be happy with myself at 260 pounds and learn to live with it. I had autoimmune diseases that were not too taxing on my quality of life, but the thought of not being able to enjoy my gluttonous lifestyle was simply unthinkable. I so enjoyed plowing my tongue into the center of a chocolate truffle or a white cream filled donut. Sugar is addictive. I knew it and did not care. Getting my sugar fix several times throughout the day was cheap and totally legal. Standing in the grocery store checkout line grabbing a chocolate bar next to the register was so natural. And I would always amuse myself that it wasn't going to make it home, except in my stomach.

In 2013 I read *The 5:2 Diet* by Michael Mosley. However, the diet regimen proved too complicated for me. No, the diet wasn't too complicated, it just wasn't simple enough for me. I am not a calorie/carbohydrate counting, food weighing, rules following kind of guy. That's probably why none of the several 111 diets rolled out on the world since the 1970's that I tried did not work for me. I think the reason why manmade diets have a success rate for reaching and staying at goal weight of **only 1.7%** is because they are manmade. Fasting does not have this fatal flaw.

It does not matter if you believe in the Theory of Evolution or Intelligent Design we evolved or were created to go for extended periods of time without food. Prehistorically, if the spear or arrow missed its mark or the bear beat you to the berries, you fasted. Settlements of humans were always located next to a source of water, so we never needed to go for long periods of time without it.

Fasting, as a dietary intervention, does not need to explain or justify itself. It has been with us for thousands and thousands of years. Our ability to go without food, living off fat reserves, is something the body does instinctively and expertly even if it has never known a period of hunger for more than a few moments or hours at any point in a lifetime.

Autophagy, the healing power within fasting, is the star of a fasting event. The orderly process by which autophagy renews the body was documented by Yoshinori Ohsumi who won the 2016 Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine for his 20 years of work to do so. Before our obesity epidemic, fasting was rarely used for weight loss. It was used to reverse disease. Once you understand the supernatural healing power of autophagy during fasting you might think that using it for something as trivial as weight loss is almost disrespectful. However, I will take it as a side effect!

Table of Contents

Acknowledgements

Preface

Chapter One: In the Beginning

Chapter Two: My Fasting Abuse Phase

Chapter Three: The Long Haul

Chapter Four: The Struggle with Food's Grip On My Mind

Chapter Five: Goal Reached

Chapter Six: What Fasting Has Done for Me

Chapter Seven: Random, but Important Considerations

Chapter Eight: Fasting and Religion

Chapter Nine: Autophagy, the Healing Power Within Fasting

Chapter Ten: The "Proper" Human Diet

Chapter Eleven: In Conclusion

Chapter One

In the Beginning

Fear plays a part in making us afraid of fasting that most of us won't admit to. I read several books on fasting that should have brought relief to my fears, but until I started fasting, they were of little help. Even learning about the epic, supervised, zero-calorie fast of Angus Barbieri in 1965 for 382 days left me apprehensive. In 2013 I read *The 5:2 Diet* by Michael Mosley. It was a good book, very informative, but it advised weighing food and counting calories and carbs, eating at certain times and not others, and I just do not do all that. If I was going to do anything it had to be simple. I was going to adhere to a few rules, if you will, but that was it. It had to be on my terms, or I was going to just be fat the rest of my life and that was that.

From my past dieting experiences, I knew that a low-carb, high fat diet was to my liking. Eating low-carb since I read *The New Diet Revolution* by Dr. Robert Atkins in 1996 was certainly keeping me alive because saturated fat actually protects the cardiovascular system from the damage done to it by high carb foods, even though my indulgences into everything sweet were pretty much unabated. I knew I would have to do something about that at some point. I gave up on the 5:2 diet thing very quickly. I had stopped eating breakfast for a time for an eating window of about 18:6 (18 hours fasting, with two meals in 6 hours and no snacking between them). I really missed my breakfast which was fried eggs atop a slice of homemade sourdough bread with a slice of American cheese between them. I have eaten this breakfast since I was a kid. I have never been a cereal person which is partly responsible for me obtaining my three score and 13 years on the planet's surface so far. And I have always cooked my own breakfast. Frying my eggs each day was the first thing I learned how to cook.

After giving up on the 5:2 as too complex, I meandered through life carrying an extra person under my skin until January of 2017. That is when I'd had enough and started the eviction process of getting rid of my 100-pound burden. I weighed 260 pounds and set my goal to get to a BMI (Body Mass Index) of 25 or 160 pounds. However, if and when I reached the goal, I was going to allow myself to go back up to 170 pounds. I found a website that used actual bone dimensions to determine what a person's weight should really be. After I input my information, it said that my weight range for my frame size should be 152-170. With that I was off and running.

The first thing I did was begin skipping breakfast to give autophagy the longest time possible to heal my body from my self-loathing gluttonous past. This I learned later was restricted window eating. I made 11:30 AM my lunch time and my last mouthful for the day would be before 6 PM. This would be 17.5:6.5 in restricted time eating lingo.

I needed to do some research. I wanted to do this right, and I wanted to do it for the rest of my life. I knew that all diets could bring permanent weight loss if they were sustained. I had tried several of the 111 diets rolled out on the global population since 1970 and the more cluttered with rules and tasks they were the less likely they will be sustainable. Especially for me! Fasting, more than any other reason, appealed to me because I realized that at its core, fasting is to **do nothing**. There is nothing easier to do than **NOTHING!** Fasting is an overlay for any diet you choose. For me there are no special foods, no counting calories or carbs, no weighing my food, no weird instructions to a restaurant server, I can eat anything on the menu, it is nothing like manmade diets. You can add all the clutter you want, but it was not for me. Using manmade diets, of the people who reach goal weight, only 1.7% manage to maintain it. That means 98.3% fail to keep lost weight lost.

So, I started skipping breakfast every day and started reading about therapeutic fasting. I read books that were published in the 1800's, 1900's and as recently as 2016. They all start by addressing fear. They help a person considering a fasting lifestyle to get comfortable with the idea of intentionally refusing to eat. They all talked about how all other mammalian lifeforms on earth fast when sick or injured except man. "You need to eat to keep up your strength" does not come from a place of wisdom. They all talked about the history of fasting including its prehistoric beginnings and how we were either designed or evolved to go prolonged periods of time without food. Another thing I observed was that fasting has been a healing dietary intervention for thousands of years and there is nothing new. Nothing. They just have modern physiological tools now to prove what fasting practitioners have been saying about fasting going back to the earliest medical writings in ancient times.

I started reading the free stuff first. The first book was *The No Breakfast Plan – Fasting Cure* by Dr. Edward Dewey published in 1904. I found Upton Sinclair's *The Fasting Cure*, published in 1911, to be very well written. The best of everything I have ever read on therapeutic fasting was by Dr. Herbert Shelton titled *Fasting and Sunbathing*, published in 1934. I read that one several times. Then I broke down and purchased a few books and the best of those was *The Complete Guide to Fasting* by Dr. Jason Fung.

A few weeks after I started skipping breakfast every day, I found out that the phrase "breakfast is the most important meal of the day" first appears in American literature in the publication Good Health magazine in 1917. The article was written by the magazines founder, but the more important fact about it was the editor. Dr. John Kellogg whose brother Wilber founded the Kellogg's Cereal Co. They were competitors in the cereal business. So, I would have to say that "breakfast is the most important meal of the day" is the most successful advertising slogan in the history of advertising. Then, once I learned about autophagy and how it works, I realized that breakfast was the most foolish meal I could possibly eat and haven't had it since. I love American breakfast foods like eggs and sausage, so I just have it for lunch.

A few weeks after starting to skip breakfast I began to skip lunch as well two non-consecutive days a week, Saturday, and Tuesday. That is when the weight really started to fall off. At that time, I was still eating sugar added foods every night for dessert. The first 50 pounds seemed to fall off in chunks, but the last 50 took flexibility in making better food selections and reducing portion sizes.

A couple of months in I did my first overnight fast. I ate my last bite of food at 6 PM, did not eat all day the next day, and then waited until lunch the next day to eat again. I was relieved when I woke up on the third day realizing I'd survived. Sometime after that I did 2 days waiting until noon on the third day to eat lunch. Then I did three days and again did not die. I was 8 months into the lifestyle, I had read 8 books on fasting before I did my first 5 day zero-calorie fast. My sustenance was water, sparkling water, and coffee. No calories and nothing with artificial sweeteners. The fourth day of this fast was something very special. I'd read about it, it was in nearly every book I'd read, that on the fourth day of a zero-calorie fast many people experience a euphoric feeling that makes you feel like you could go on forever. Hunger pain leaves you on the fourth day with a feeling in your stomach that you are not hungry, but not full either. My mind was clearer than at any time I can ever remember. It also became obvious to me why fasting and religion have walked hand-in-hand since the beginning. No extended fast that I have ever done has brought an experience close to that feeling again. Maybe it is because they no longer have that first time excitement factor.

In the afternoon of that 5 day at 2 PM I was turning a screwdriver for some home repair and experienced severe cramping in both hands, even the one not turning in the screws. I immediately went to the refrigerator and broke the fast with some grapes. A month or two later I was in another fast, it was the afternoon of the fifth day again and had the same side effect. Cramping in my hands. So, I started researching this phenomenon and it led me to electrolytes. After I started including salt, magnesium, and potassium in my drinking water I never had the issue again.

If you decide to embrace this lifestyle change you are going to read about all manner of rules that people apply to fasting. When confused it is not a bad idea to think back to prehistoric times where fasting was common and necessary for survival. There were no rules. If you could not kill anything or find anything you fasted until you did. Fasting really is that simple, but you can add whatever claptrap to it that makes you happy.

Chapter 2

My Fasting Abuse Phase

It did not take long for me to realize that I could use fasting to literally have my cake and eat it too and not regain all the weight back. This is a hard chapter to write because just like anybody else I do not like to admit being stupid. I learned the hard way that sugar can destroy the body faster than fasting can heal it. By the end of my first year I had lost about 40 pounds and as we closed in on the holiday season, I started a new hobby. I started making chocolate truffles. I already knew from my early low-carb days in the 1990's that sugar caused heart disease and strokes and not saturated fat, but that did not stop me from eating copious amounts of sugar. I learned that I could eat whatever I wanted for a week and then fast off the gained weight the next. Eating sugar without worrying about weight gain was emancipating. My butterscotch chocolate truffles were the best my daughter had ever tasted. And this is a woman who has traveled the world including Europe, the truffle capitol of the world.

I did not lose any more weight during this time, but I was in sugar eating heaven without gaining back anything I'd lost since January the year before. This went on until May 6, 2018. I woke up that Sunday morning with a numb face, slurred speech, and left hand and leg that I could feel slipping away from my control. **I was having a stroke!** The inflammation caused by my sugar consumption finally clogged my blood vessels to the breaking point, literally. It was an ischemic stroke in the right thalamus region of my brain. My wife took me to the hospital and by early afternoon I was feeling much better. They had not given me anything to that point, but they had taken a lot of blood for testing. They discharged me and we all thought I'd dodged a bullet, but the next day the stroke "evolved" and not in a good way. Suddenly my eyesight was blurred, I could not walk, and had more difficulty with speech. Back to the hospital I went. This time I was there for 3 weeks with therapy to hopefully get my life back. When the therapists would come into my hospital room, I would tell them "to show me no mercy". I was willing to work hard to get my life back! Even on the weekends when the techs weren't there, I would find someone to walk with me to do laps around the hospital halls. Getting up from a fall was a priority for me so I wanted to practice doing so. The techs would not allow me to lie on the floor without a pad to protect me. Well, the pad made it impossible to get up. I finally convinced them that if I fell there would certainly not be a pad to break my fall. From that time on I had no problem getting up from a prone position.

In rehabilitation they would not let me shower alone. I had to have a shower "supervisor". I was still a bit overweight at 220 pounds and the supervisor had to be a beautiful young lady as if I wasn't self-

conscious enough already. I warned her not to dwell on the memory of my anatomy as it could put her in need of therapy.

I continued with therapy after I left the hospital. It was important to me that I pass the tests for driving safely again so I focused on those skills as much as I could. Three to four months after the stroke I was done with all therapy and was officially approved to drive again. In that time, I went from having a left hand that I could not even pick my nose with, to fishing with my grandson including the task of securing a hook to the line. At my last visit with the neurologist, he told me that I did have some cognitive decline which I immediately challenged because he had no pre-stroke baseline to support that opinion. He sheepishly agreed with me, but to be less confrontational with him I said that we do have my wife's subjective opinion that I was an idiot before the stroke, and she has confirmed several times since that I still am.

With the stroke behind me I studied neuronal autophagy to use fasting to repair what I could and to get my stamina back. The post-stroke life for most survivors is physically very taxing. It was amazing how fast I would tire just from being awake. We had to hire someone to mow my lawn. By the end of the therapy, I had about 90% of my life back and unless I told someone, they could not detect that I was a stroke survivor. Today I would say I am 100%, however, complications of the stroke in the next chapter plague me to this day. And my wife still thinks I am an idiot.

Chapter 3

The Long Haul

Due to my stroke, fasting for me became what it actually is, **a health plan with the side effect of weight loss**. My neuronal autophagy studies informed me that longer fasts are required to heal the brain of trauma which is what a stroke is. I was set and ready for this next phase. I was still skipping breakfast every day and lunch as well on Tuesday's and Saturday's eating only supper on those days. Simple and easy. Now all I had to do was learn how to lose weight on it.

Within a month or so I was down to about 210 for a total of fifty pounds lost. That is when things really started to slow down. Being an engineer in my working life I knew what the issue was. Fifty pounds lost meant that it takes less energy to move about and live life. Food equals energy. I had to make better food choices and adjust my portion sizes if I wanted to keep losing weight. I had to add some "clutter" to my simple strategy. I needed to weigh myself every morning so that I could make food choices and adjust portion sizes based on what the scale told me.

I already had a very accurate scale and had kept it calibrated so I was good there. After my stroke I began recording my blood pressure and resting heart rate. When I started to weigh myself every day, I added my weight to the record. I had read in several books that the myth of strength lost because of fasting had been debunked way back in the 1860's, again in the 1880's, several times in the early 1900's and as recently as 2016, but I wanted to keep track of it myself, so I bought a hand strength dynamometer. Keeping these records proved invaluable to confirm my phenomenal improvements that will be discussed later.

To weigh myself accurately I picked first thing every morning after I had drained my bladder, but before I drank any liquids. If I did not like what the scale told me, I blamed myself and made better food selections and reduced portion sizes to ensure that tomorrow there would be no disappointment. Using this procedure, I never had a "plateau" that lasted more than a few days. The weight just kept coming

off. I have never counted carbs or calories and just guessed at portion sizes and obviously, over time, got rather good at it. And the weight just kept coming off. I did many extended fasts and gradually improved my health to the point where I did not know if a brief balance issue was due to the stroke or because I am an old man. Today I really do not experience fatigue that I can say is the result of the stroke or my age. I have just recovered completely and thank God often for it.

I used extended fasts of up to 7 days for healing. During these fasts I would consistently lose 10 pounds of weight but would regain 3-5 pounds at the end of the fast when I refilled my gut and maybe had some water weight gain. This is where my regular weekly protocol was used to get those 3-5 pounds back off because I refused to begin another extended fast until I got back down to my final weight of the previous extended fast. I learned that for me extended fasts for weight loss were just not sustainable. I am now 4 years into maintenance of my 100-pound weight loss and as it turns out the simple skip breakfast every day and lunch as well twice a week worked wonderfully.

Breaking my sugar addiction and food's grip on my mind in general took a couple of 7-day fasts, but also transitioning from sweet snacks and foods to low-carb, high fat fare. It came after my stroke when it got harder to keep losing weight. We all know what bad snacks are, and it will take some creativity to replace them with items that if you do decide to shovel in some food during a weak moment, no harm done. Today my snack foods are pork rinds and homemade dip. I can't stand pork rinds by themselves, but with dips, I love the combo! I also make meat sticks and jerky. I like hard boiled eggs with dips or fancy mustard. Several daily handfuls of mixed tree nuts are a staple for me. I keep 2-3 kinds of cheese handy. You get the idea. You can buy keto snack foods, but at this writing they are quite pricey. I love to cook so making my own salad dressings and dips is a joy and not a burden. I do not like the "chaffles" that are popular with the keto crowd because I do not like overcooked egg. Tortilla shells have as many carbs as any other bread shape.

All that said about snacks and now the bad news. To lose the weight I stopped snacking between meals and at some point, if you want to get rid of insulin resistance you will have to add these treats to the beginning or end of a meal as well because snacking between meals is the worst possible habit for your health.

Between the stroke and reaching goal weight I had two surgeries for hernias. In July following the stroke in May I was carrying a 4 x 4 x 12' long, treated board which is heavier than untreated wood, but much lighter than I had carried before the stroke. I felt a breach in my left inguinal area and knew immediately I had given myself a hernia. I had to wait for 12 months after the stroke before they would do surgery because of the risk of a second stroke. So, in the spring of 2019 I had surgery to fix that breach as well as an umbilical hernia I'd had for about 40 years and to do some reinforcement of a left side inguinal area hernia I had fixed when I was 14 years old.

Then I was carefully moving some late snowfall after my post-surgery lifting weight restrictions had expired and I felt the left side breach again. All was supposed to be okay for the activity. After the re-repair, the surgeon told me that she had used a piece of mesh that 'should probably have been a little bigger". I quipped that they sell that stuff in 4-foot x 8-foot sheets do they not? She did not laugh. I do not think she appreciated my humor before the second surgery either when I asked if I could buy the extended warranty this time. She fixed me up really well. So well, in fact, that I had to go back to the hospital the evening of the surgery because I could not pee. The surgery gave me acute urinary retention. Either too many synaptic connections were severed or too much swelling around my urethral tube not allowing muscles to relax that allow urine to flow. So, for the next week I walked around

hurting from surgery with a catheter shoved up my joystick. That then led to a urinary tract infection. Earlier I referred to a lingering complication of the stroke, well that is it. I am much better today, and fasting did make it more tolerable, but I still have to pee too often and need to get up once or twice a night to do so.

Chapter 4

The Struggle with Food's Grip on My Mind

Self-love, self-loathing, and addiction.

At some point I had to admit to myself that my weight issue was not about food and being mad at myself for my indulgences was not of any help. There was obviously a part of me that really wanted to end me. Committing suicide is the ultimate self-loathing act a person can do to himself. There are fast ways to do it and there are slow ways to do it. Abusing your body with food is a delicious and benign way to kill yourself, slowly. It is still self-loathing based on how I feel about it, since breaking that addiction. I remember what it felt like to plow my tongue into a white cream filled donut or let a chocolate truffle melt in my mouth. I would close my eyes and let the ecstasy of that moment satisfy my addiction demands. No matter what negativity was flourishing in my life that feeling was always there and available. It was reassuring to have a pantry filled with sweetness. I got the same feeling when I used to make wine and could look in my wine cellar and see 200-300 fifths of wine waiting for me. The challenge, as I came to realize, was either overcoming that need for comfort or switching it to something else less destructive. In retrospect, I did both and got two blessings for the price of one abstention. The first blessing was to switch from sweet to savory. The second was to start learning how to love myself more than food.

I still look back on those culinary moments with fondness in much the same way as I do for unrepeatable events in my life like watching my two children come from my wife's womb and into a much larger world. Or my son catching a very large salmon during a fishing trip.

I am an adult. I can do what I want. I was an expert fudge maker, and nothing brought me more culinary pleasure than those squares of condensed sugar. Fudge to the sugar addict is like crack to the cocaine addict, is like spirits to the alcoholic. Oh, but I struggled! Gradually with each 5-7 day fast my addiction to sugar was pushed further and further to the back of the line of importance in my life. Do you have to do long fasts to break sugar's addiction? I do not think so. That said, how many recovering alcoholics do you think there would be if they all had to drink just a little alcohol three times a day? Obviously, not many! It is interesting that the ethanol in alcoholic drinks is made from fermented sugar and grains, the two foods that, if abused, can kill us in any form.

Transitioning from a sweet palate to desiring salty, high fat fare helped immensely. I would still stuff my face occasionally, but it would not move the scale in the wrong direction. Nor did it leave me hungry for more like sugar did. It was satisfying in a way that sugar never was. However, regardless of sweet or savory, every bite brings insulin out of the pancreas and into the blood stream and eventually insulin resistance. Hyperinsulinemia and insulin resistance are the precursors for a host of autoimmune diseases including diabetes.

In a Facebook group someone posted that fasting was an act of self-love because of the peace and health that it brings. I thought about that for a while and had to agree. So, if fasting is an act of self-love, then gluttony has to be a self-loathing act slowing committing suicide with the consumption of more food than we need to sustain ourselves or sweets which are just...fatal. I do not know if I got into this

fasting lifestyle because I loved myself more or not, I just wanted to stop killing myself. If you recall, I nearly did with a stroke.

I have read in both secular and religious writings that our love for others is dependent on how much we love ourselves. If you do not love yourself, you can't love others. I have known several people who live with self-destructive behaviors, but clearly love others at least as much as they love themselves. In fact, I know of people who are alcoholics and as members of the military and law enforcement love others enough to risk their lives protecting people they do not even know. So how does this fit with self-loathing of a food addicted person trying to kill themselves. I think addiction is the link. All else is normal except that addiction is like a sperm cell looking for a weak spot attempting to penetrate an embryo. We have all seen microscopic images of squiggly sperm cells surrounding an embryo all looking for that weak spot.

A food addiction is both physical and mental. A gambling addiction is mental. People enjoy the exciting sensation while waiting for the slot machine tumblers to stop moving, the last card in Blackjack, or when the dice stop rolling. The physical and mental addiction of the alcoholic when the ethanol begins to alter consciousness to bring on a euphoric feeling and the energy for activity that it can bring. My wife is one of those people who enjoys everything in moderation. She eats what she wants, when she wants, has a BMI under 25 and at 73 enjoys the same perfect health that I now enjoy, but I really must work at it. For her it is effortless.

I can see fear in the eyes of some people when they consider for the first time never eating sugar, grains, or vegetable oils again. We use sugar added foods as a reward for our children and for celebrations of every description. The use of foods for celebration and to bring comfort are deeply imbedded in every culture. Transitioning from sweet celebrations to savory celebrations was gradual for me. Instead of cake and ice cream, make mine meat dipped in herb butter. For a couple years after I reached my goal weight, I would still eat the cake at the birthday celebrations of my immediate family, but now in the fourth year have given up even that. I just do not crave it nor miss it in any way. I do not have favorite restaurants anymore. They all have wholesome menu selections. I just eat the meat and vegetables and leave the rest on the plate. I bring my own olive oil if I need it because you can't trust a restaurant to actually serve you the real thing.

I see sugar differently now. We use it for rewards and celebrations, but it destroys our bodies with inflammation and causes insulin resistance. "Everything in moderation" does not work for people like me and for others who struggle with sugar addiction and obesity. Recognizing that it is addictive I now see that it has a dark side that I fear. The dark side of sugar, to my way of thinking, is insidious. Fruit juice is one of the most lethal forms of sugar we can ingest due to its sugar concentration yet is touted to be so good for us.

It seems most of us need a wake-up call to make better choices with food and portion sizes or with any addiction. I know people who have had cancer and still do not care about what they consume. People are surprised to learn that sugar is cancer's favorite food. They are even more surprised that this discovery, by Otto Warburg, won the Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine in 1931. **1931!** To continue to eat sugar, enriched grains, and vegetable oils we are putting out a welcome mat to cancer. I had a brother who was a heavy smoker until he got lung cancer and then stopped smoking immediately. It was too late for him. If you need a wake-up call to live a better life, I hope you survive your crisis as well as I have survived mine.

Confidence will come with time. I too was afraid of losing and then regaining the weight back in a fasting lifestyle, but as the weeks and months passed I gained confidence one little success at a time. The crowning glory of that confidence came when I changed my goal weight to 10 pounds under my high school weight. My military draft card said I was 5'-9" tall and weighed 170 pounds on my 18th birthday in 1967. I decided that I would blast through that to 160 and lose an even 100 pounds. Doing so gave me the confidence to **believably** tell myself **that I will never be obese again!**

In retrospect, NSV's, an acronym for Non-Scale Victory, gave me some optimism when the scale was not moving fast enough for me. Some people take their body measurements and keep track of inches lost. I recall going back to my list of medical issues to see if there was anything on it that was now gone. The day I just had to go out and buy some new clothes to wear to a semi-formal event because my fat clothes were just way too big to wear anymore was an NSV. The day I took my old military uniform to the dry cleaners as I was approaching goal weight was another. I never took measurements of myself, but the day I tried on my high school class ring, and it fit was a definite NSV. Speaking of rings, the day I lost my wedding ring that my wife gave me 30 years ago because the original no longer fit was an NSV. I later found it inside a glove I had worn. I simply started wearing the original 1969 wedding band again. The day the scale said I was less than 200 pounds was both a scale and non-scale victory in that I was now in "Onderland" as they say in Facebook fasting groups. My biggest NSV came a few days after reaching my goal weight. I knew I would never be obese again, so I put all my old clothes and jackets in a bag and donated them on my way to buy a whole new wardrobe. That is an NSV I wish for everyone!

Chapter 5

Goal Reached

In July 2019, at 170 pounds, ten pounds above my goal, I began an extended fast to go at least 7 days as usual. All my fasts are open-ended just adding a day with each successful day passed until I reached 7 days. I never set goals for a number of days for an extended fast. Powering through what could be a serious issue requiring immediate medical intervention is not a place I ever wanted to find myself. Fasting length should never be a goal-oriented activity. On day seven I thought about taking it a few more days if possible. On the morning of the ninth day, I woke up with palpitations, scary ones, and an elevated heart rate and high blood pressure. I decided to end my fast after weighing myself. I weighed in that morning at 159.5 pounds. I could not believe I'd made it. Finally, on July 17th, 2019, I reached my goal weight. Then I went to the refrigerator and ate a few grapes. I felt my body go back to normal within a few moments, seconds really. I briefly considered continuing after everything was okay but thought better of it and grazed with a nibble here and a nibble there for the rest of the day. Within a week or so I was back up to 170 pounds where I hoped to stay at or under for the rest of my life. I've danced around my maintenance goal weight of 170 ever since. Thanks to my simple fasting protocol, that dance has been more of a waltz than a twerk.

The day of reaching my goal weight I put on my military uniform fitted to me in 1969 and took some pictures for Facebook and made a big deal of it for a couple of days. Then I settled into maintenance. It was no different than when I was trying to lose weight. I weighed myself every day just as I had before. I made food selections and adjusted portion sizes just as I had done before. It was all quite anti-climactic just like how the whole thing started in January two years earlier.

The holidays proved to be a bit more challenging. There have been three holiday seasons since reaching goal weight and I went above my desired maximum maintenance weight for each one of them. I did not panic or sink into a pity party. Blowing past my goal weight by ten pounds left me with a permanent confidence that I will never be obese again. This past holiday season 2021-22 will be the last season that I will allow myself to indulge in a few sugar-added treats. I just do not enjoy them anymore anyway. Each season I get up to the low 180's, but with warm weather coming I just start doing one meal a day and I will be back to 170 by July 19th for my reaching goal weight anniversary.

I used to get excited planning extended fasts and noting the rapid healing results, but five years into this lifestyle and the honeymoon is over. I am glad I picked a simple easy to follow weekly fasting protocol to maintain what I have gained in benefits. Without diseases to heal nor weight to lose it is hard to work up the interest in an extended fast. I did find a reason for longer fasts and I will share that later in the book.

Chapter 6

What Fasting Has Done for Me

Fasting has always been a health plan with a side effect of weight loss. Today, weight loss is what draws many people into a fasting lifestyle and that blurs the higher purpose of the superhuman healing power that we now call autophagy. Okay, so I lost one hundred pounds. What else did it do for me?

In January of 2017 I listed all my health issues so that I could check them off as they disappeared. I found myself adding to the list as time went on because I did not think fasting had that kind of power like reversing heart disease, completely healing old wounds, and chronic pain relief. I had some strange improvements as well, like in the 1970's I was prescribed a medication for ear infections that destroyed the hair and wax glands in my auditory canals. At 2 ½ years in I suddenly had wax in my ears reducing the need for a cream I use to prevent ear infections. Our natural wax prevents infections. The hair glands have not come back yet, but that is okay, I'd rather they did not.

The pain relief has been wonderful. In 2008 while restoring an old home I fell from a ladder onto a concrete pad that was 6.5 feet below the step I was standing on. I was leaning against the building when the ladder shot out from under me letting me fall on my side on the pad. I think I tangled my foot into the ladder framework. I did not break anything, but I did have a bad sprain of my left ankle. For 30 years I have been laying out for an hour every sunny day in the sun all summer long hoping to keep strong bones as I age. Well, it worked. However, finding this out in such a painful way is something I would like to have avoided. That injury gave me chronic ankle pain that plagued me until my first 5 day extended fast and only returns at about 8 months since my last extended fast. It eliminated all pain from a hammer toe as well. I still no longer eat breakfast which is an 18 hour fast until lunch from supper the previous day.

Another surprise was relief from seasonal pollen allergies. I had suffered from oak pollen for over 40 years. Sneezing, watery eyes, runny nose, difficulty sleeping, breathing, living. I had done two 5 day fasts by spring of 2018 and suddenly realized oak was in bloom, but I had not had even a sniffle. Nothing! It has been that way every spring since. Sugar, enriched grains, and vegetable/seed oils confuse our immune system.

In May of 2018 just after my stroke I recorded my 30-day average resting heart rate at 76.2 beats per minute which is "high" for my age at that time. In March of 2021 I recorded a new record low resting

heart rate of 57 beats per minute. I averaged my readings for the previous 30 days and found a 14% improvement at 65.3. This was considered “great” for a man half my age at that time. I think of all those people who succumbed to an early grave, if they had only known that fasting reverses heart disease. Again, though, one cannot discount the fact that I no longer eat sugar, added sugar foods, nor sugar concentrated beverages like fruit juice. This improvement came without exercise except I walk behind a mower for 40 minutes a week in the summer and do some push-ups occasionally.

One of the excuses to refuse a fasting lifestyle is “I do not want to lose muscle mass”. I read that this myth was busted in the 1860’s by French researcher Charles Choosat. It was again busted by Professor Sergious Morgulis of Ohio State University in the 1880’s. Several times in the early 1900’s and again as recently as 2016 using modern physiological measurement technology. Consistently they found that the fat to muscle loss was 97% to 3%. As a formerly fat man, that’s a trade I will make all day long! However, reading about this was one thing, but I wanted to prove it to myself, so I purchased a hand strength dynamometer. The only strength exercise I ever do is pushups so I do not do anything that would strengthen my hands specifically. Below you will see a chart that came with the device that conclusively proves that I gained strength from my fasting lifestyle. When I started, I was normal for a man in his late 60’s, but today at 73 I am now “strong” for a man in his 50’s.

● APPENDIX: PHYSICAL STATUS ACCORDING TO THE TEST RESULT GIVEN BY THE DYNAMOMETER

AGE	MALE			FEMALE		
	Weak	Normal	Strong	Weak	Normal	Strong
10—11	<12.6	12.6—22.4	>22.4	<11.8	11.8—21.6	>21.6
12—13	<19.4	19.4—31.2	>31.2	<14.6	14.6—24.4	>24.4
14—15	<28.5	28.5—44.3	>44.3	<15.5	15.5—27.3	>27.3
16—17	<32.6	32.6—52.4	>52.4	<17.2	17.2—29.0	>29.0
18—19	<35.7	35.7—55.5	>55.5	<19.2	19.2—31.0	>31.0
20—24	<36.8	36.8—56.6	>56.6	<21.5	21.5—35.3	>35.3
25—29	<37.7	37.7—57.5	>57.5	<25.6	25.6—41.4	>41.4
30—34	<36.0	36.0—55.8	>55.8	<21.5	21.5—35.3	>35.3
35—39	<35.8	35.8—55.6	>55.6	<20.3	20.3—34.1	>34.1
40—44	<35.5	35.5—55.3	>55.3	<18.9	18.9—32.7	>32.7
45—49	<34.7	34.7—54.5	>54.5	<18.6	18.6—32.4	>32.4
50—54	<32.9	32.9—50.7	>50.7	<18.1	18.1—31.9	>31.9
55—59	<30.7	30.7—48.5	>48.5	<17.7	17.7—31.5	>31.5
60—64	<30.2	30.2—48.0	>48.0	<17.2	17.2—31.0	>31.0
65—69	<28.2	28.2—44.0	>44.0	<15.4	15.4—27.2	>27.2
70—99	<21.3	21.3—35.1	>35.1	<14.7	14.7—24.5	>24.5

In January 2017 I had plaque psoriasis. After my first 5 day extended fast in September of that year it was gone and has not returned. In Facebook fasting groups I gather that women really care about how their skin looks and they are always raving about the improvements they experience. I am not big on having soft supple skin, but I am really glad I no longer have those big purple blotches.

Below is a list of diseases that can be improved by fasting. The items in red type were my issues. The chart has a very good reminder and that is that fasting does not “cure” anything. It gives the body the rest it needs to cure itself. That is why fasting addresses such a wide range of issues. We are too used to the one pill approach that requires a patented prescription drug for every health issue. Obviously, the one pill per disease approach is certainly more profitable.

Autoimmune Diseases that are regularly improved with Autophagy During Fasting

acne
adult onset diabetes
allergies
anxiety
arthritis
asthma
atherosclerosis
autoimmune illnesses
tumors
chronic back and joint pain
chronic fatigue
colitis
deterioration of the
 musculoskeletal system
digestive disorders
eczema
hay fever

headaches
heart disease
high blood pressure
high cholesterol
hyperactivity
hypoglycemia
inflammatory bowel disease
 (ulcerative colitis
 and Crohn's disease)
insomnia
irritable bowel syndrome
lupus
migraines
obesity
osteoporosis
PMS
psoriasis

recurrent infections
rheumatoid arthritis
sinusitis
skin irritations and disorders
substance abuse/addiction (sugar)
tension
uterine fibroids
neurological issues
weight loss

Fasting does not cure anything. It gives the body the rest it needs to up-regulate autophagy to heal itself.

www.allaboutfasting.com/benefit-of-fasting.html

Keep in mind that in our one-pill-for-this-and-one-pill-for-that-world that our bodies are capable of multi-tasking to keep us healthy. You cannot expect autophagy to fix what you want or expect it to fix. I see people begin a fasting lifestyle to reverse a specific disease or blemish on their body and are disappointed when it does not happen as fast as they wish. I think autophagy works on the greatest threat to your well-being first and that may not be anything to satisfy your vanity or that you are aware of.

Chapter 7

Random, but Important Considerations

Is It Really Worth It?

Fasting has a variety of side effects. Most common among them is backaches, headaches, insomnia, being cold all the time, being hot, diarrhea, constipation, dizziness, fatigue, anger or being “hangry”, awkward social experiences, evaporation of family support, giving up foods you crave and are clearly addicted to, and, of course, regular periods of hunger pain. Is it really worth all that added to your daily grind? It took me 2.5 years to reach goal weight losing 100 pounds. In the process I reversed 4 diseases. I could have and wish I had done it a lot faster. I’ve been at goal weight for over 4 years now.

My answer to this question comes every time I look at myself in the mirror, or watch people I care about as they visit their doctors over and over and over again expecting different results. Then there are the more sudden rushes to the ER for conflicting reactions to the drugs they take and almost brag about when lined up like ducks in a row and placed into a daily dispenser. Complaining about their health and poor quality of life worms its way into the conversation at every social gathering. Our natural fear of death is conflicted with wishing for an early grave to end the misery. Yes, my answer is yes! At 73 years-old I thank God every day for giving us fasting and diet advice in Genesis that has brought me to my pain-free life in perfect health. It was indeed worth it to finally learn how to love myself more than the pleasure of food!

How Do I Begin A Fasting Lifestyle?

Some points below are repeated in the book, but this item is meant to be a condensed version of the manuscript.

How do you begin a fasting lifestyle? The short answer is just by skipping a meal. The long answer is first by educating yourself. I did both. I started skipping breakfast every day and a few weeks later started to skip lunch two non-consecutive days a week. I still do this today to maintain my weight loss and keep myself free of the autoimmune diseases I had and the pain of inflammation. Fasting can be used just for weight loss or for healing, or for both.

As I read twelve books on therapeutic fasting, I experimented with longer and longer fasts until 8 months into my journey I did my first 5-day zero calorie fast. All my fasting is zero calorie. There are fat fasts if you are only interested in weight loss or reversing diabetes. That is right, fat fasts. It is nearly impossible to eat enough fat to gain weight and it reduces hunger pain. I fast for healing, and I do not allow hunger pain to annoy me so fat fasts are not my thing. You cannot gain weight eating too much fat, but it can prevent weight loss. The established order of the body is to use dietary fat first and if that is depleted it starts delving into your fat stores. Hunger is the only indication you will have that confirms your body is eating its own fat. I saw hunger pain as good news!

Fasting is simple. There is nothing to buy, nothing to do, nothing. Boredom during a fast is a nemesis for some so for them it is important to stay busy. There are over one hundred diets that you can choose from or simply eat whatever you like. Fasting is an overlay of whatever diet you choose. You are an adult and know what you should and should not eat. The most detrimental food to the human body is sugar. The Great Saturated Fat Hoax has had its day and we can all forgive the now dead people who took the money and created the deception that put millions of people into an early grave thinking it was saturated fat that put them there. Millions more use palliative drugs that merely address symptoms but bring no mercy from the disease that causes them. Sugar and in general a high carbohydrate diet is the

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