

EXECUTIVE WELLNESS



THE 4 WEEK GET-BACK-
ON-TRACK PROGRAM

SAM HESTER

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**The 4 Week
Get-Back-On-Track Program**

By

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ISBN: 978-0-9888463-0-2

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Please check with your physician before undertaking any type of diet, weight loss, or exercise program, or before utilizing any specific information or technique in this book if you have any concerns. The information here is of a general nature based upon the author's experience, and should not be substituted for medical advice.

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*“Winning is a habit.
Watch your thoughts,
they become your beliefs.
Watch your beliefs,
they become your words.
Watch your words,
they become your actions.
Watch your actions,
they become your habits.
Watch your habits,
they become your character.”*

Vince Lombardi

Introduction

This book is designed for busy executives who, by the very nature of their profession, work incredibly long hours, remain sedentary for long stints, are under constant stress, and often have to travel for business. If that describes you, then you may have gotten off track in taking care of your most precious natural asset—**you!**



One of the natural consequences of working this much—and having too little free time to pursue your own wellness—is that you reach for food that may be convenient, but is not necessarily healthy for you. Most of it is probably filled with sugar, and so sets a

pattern in which about every 2-4 hours, your blood sugar will drop and your body will signal to you that it needs energy. When this vicious cycle emerges, it is often very difficult to break. Another consequence to this cycle is that you don't have the energy to exercise, so you continue to sit and eat and can't get out of the rut!

If that describes your life right now, then I can help. This book is designed to assist you in getting out of the ditch and guide you along the first part of your journey back to better health and wellbeing. I have designed a 4-week program called Get-Back-On-Track (GBOT) that will eliminate your sugar cravings and help you to regain your focus and energy, maximize your productivity, remain resilient, and begin exercising.

My intention in writing this book was based upon my experience at looking how our bodies are made—how our physiology works—and how far away from that we have gotten in our current lifestyles. In my earlier book, *Soar to Success—Minus the Stress* (ISBN: 978-0-615-23238-6), I described how stress is affecting all of us and even killing a number of us, because we don't understand how our bodies function and how our lives today are way out of sync with how we are made.

There are certain laws of life—cause and effect—that should not be violated, and there is a price to be paid when we do. It's not our modern world that's the problem; it's the fact that our bodies have functioned

in a certain way for thousands of years, and the more our modern behavior is *misaligned* with that natural functioning, the more problems we end up having.

When you are young, it's possible to be fit but not necessarily *healthy*. However, with rare exceptions, when you're over 40, you have to be *healthy* to be fit. This is a crucial distinction. So, if you focus on getting healthy *first*, then you can become fit and lose weight *much more easily*.

Genetics plays, at most, about 30% in determining your future, and that the other 70% is a product of our lifestyle choices. This reminds me of the line from *Invictus*, by the British poet Henley: "I am the master of my fate, I am the captain of my soul." The good news is that we know a lot more about how to take care of ourselves than ever before in history—even more than we did 10 years ago!

On February 24, 2000, several of the nation's best-known diet gurus, including Dr. Robert Atkins and Dr. Dean Ornish, participated in the USDA's "Great Nutrition Debate," where they discussed their diametrically-opposed ideas about eating, nutrition, and health. Drs. Atkins and Ornish did agree on two things that summed up the essence of the problem: *we eat too much simple sugar, and we don't exercise enough*.

Shazam! That information has stuck with me since then, and building on my interest in the physiological aspects of stress and my coaching hundreds of clients,

I have some insights to share with those of you who are struggling with weight loss, have sugar cravings, and find it difficult to begin exercising again. I do not claim to have “the answer,” but I do believe that my gift is taking all of this great body of information and distilling it down into some essentials that people can understand and incorporate in their busy lives. It’s like those fundamentals in football: blocking and tackling. If you don’t do those things right first, you won’t end up winning many games.

Change

Many of us have thought that change was an event, such as *I am quitting smoking today*, or *I am beginning a diet*, which often gets mixed results—the proverbial one step forward, two steps back. Through research, we now know that the *trans-theoretical model* necessary to institute change in our lives is a process, not an event, and that we generally don't



begin to make changes until we experience significant discomfort in our continued lifestyle behaviors.

Much like the famed five-staged grief process that Dr. Elizabeth Kübler-Ross introduced in the 1960s, psychologists have identified five different stages that people either consciously or unconsciously pass through on their way to making changes in their lives.

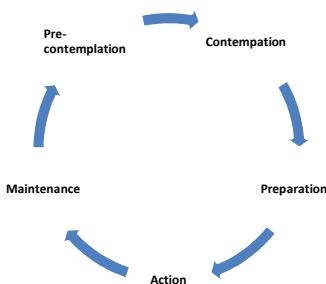
The pattern (see diagram on page 10) is circular (global vs. linear thinking) and that one phase doesn't necessarily involve a conscious thought process.

For example, you keep seeing TV commercials exhorting you to join a gym for \$0 down and \$29 per month. At first you might think, *Gee that's nice, but I'm not ready to do anything now* (pre-contemplation stage). Several months later, you see the same commercial, and you think, *That seems like a good*

idea, and I think I'll check that out sometime soon (contemplation stage).

A couple of weeks go by and then you see the same commercial, and this time you jot down the 800 number and web address and leave it handy on the counter so that it will serve as a reminder (preparation stage). A few more weeks go by, and as you are dressing in the morning, the new suit you bought and haven't worn yet doesn't fit, and in your mind you say, *All right, I am going to call the gym today and get a free two-week membership*. And later in the day, you call and arrange the free trial membership. At this point, you have taken a step and actually done something (action stage). Voila! This is the psychological juncture where all positive change takes place.

You actually show up at the gym, take advantage of the free two-week membership, and begin doing some



exercise—and feel good about it. Somewhere in the next several weeks, you will come to a decision point: to continue taking positive steps, such as signing up for some personal training, or to stop going to the gym and slide back into your old

ways. It is only through repetition that good habits are developed. Then, continued positive habits lead to success. The objective is to continue taking positive

actions until this becomes second nature, and you start feeling results (maintenance stage).

Having seen hundreds of people go through this process, my job is to meet them where they're at (they usually don't call until they are at the action stage) and to help motivate them until they can see and feel some real success from their own perspective. It is very rewarding to see people "get it."

Even a little change is good

Let's use an analogy about the time value of money. How does an initial investment of \$1,000 become \$10,000? The answer is compound interest. Every time interest is applied, it's not just to the initial \$1,000, but also to the current balance, and so forth. Interest over time! How does this idea work in regard to our health and wellness?

Let's say that you eat one fewer cookie a day, and make no other changes in your life. Eating 100 fewer calories per day yields a calorie deficit of 36,500 per year, and since there are 3,500 calories per pound, you will lose a little more than 10 pounds over the course of a year. If you can begin looking at change in this way, it can be highly motivating and exciting.

Wellness vs. diet & fitness

One of the differences in the new paradigm of looking at nutrition, fitness, and weight loss together instead of separately is the new holistic concept of *wellness*: if you start taking action in one part, it will inevitably

and positively influence the rest. Let's take a concrete example. You go into your garage and get out the old mountain bike that you haven't ridden since last fall, you put a little oil on one part of the chain, and you begin turning the pedal. The oil begins to lubricate not only that part of the chain, but also other parts of the chain and the gears, as well. So, a little investment in putting some oil on a small part of the chain yields a greater benefit than just the initial action.

In just the same way, if you become more aware of what you eat, and make better choices more of the time, you will overcome your sugar cravings, which will give you more energy to begin exercising, as well. Let's get started!