

# HEALTH INTERRUPTED

## *Nutrition*

Let's be honest, there are so many opportunities to interfere with healthy habits. We have the best intentions, we follow through, we create space to treat our bodies well. But, inevitably, something changes, a life disruption, a celebration, a deadline, and our health once again takes a back-seat.

Setting up a sustainable plan means that you know these gaps will occur, but, you are prepared to handle them and have a plan to get back on track. This takes time. On the road to effective, sustainable change we first need to understand the situations that are most challenging, create a strategy to stay in control and recalibrate when we go off-course.

### **Stress**

*Situation:* Stress is an everyday event. Whether work, financial, relationship or home related, life is complicated.

*Solution:* Develop a list of 5 stress-busters and keep it on your mirror, refrigerator, computer screen, phone. Make a habit of pulling out this list as soon as you find yourself in a stressful situation. This will serve as a reminder to engage in an activity and keep the stress-eating under control. My favorite stress-busters are sitting on a balance ball, going for a quick walk or flipping through a favorite magazine with a cup of tea.

### **Celebrations and Holidays**

*Situation:* There is always an occasion to celebrate. We often think of the holidays as the space between Thanksgiving and New Years, but really there are many more: birthdays, vacations and anniversaries, Valentine's Day, Halloween to name a few. Multiply this by everyone in your household, your friends and your work colleagues and you suddenly realize that every week has another holiday, another reason to celebrate and perhaps another store-bought cake.

*Solution:* Make space for non-food celebrations. Treat yourself to a gift rather than food. Bring healthy food to the celebrations or choose a location that will offer healthy options. Decide, in advance which splurges are worth-it and commit to that decision.

### **I Need this Food**

*Situation:* Some foods are hard to give up. I get it. Your morning coffee with cream and sugar, diet soda, an evening cocktail, an afternoon unhealthy treat. If it is something you eat or drink regularly, especially daily, it may be a hard transition to make.

*Solution:* Value your health above your habits. Recognize the foods that are simply not worth it and cut them out as a gift to yourself. Make other indulgences a treat as opposed to a habit.

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### **I have been so good, I earned it**

*Situation:* You have been so committed to diet and exercise all week. Its been hard but you have conquered it. Now, you want to reward yourself and those cookies your office-pal baked are calling your name.

*Solution:* Exit food rewards. You can still have cake, wine, cookies, chocolate, whatever indulges you enjoy. But, have these as indulgence not a reward. Create incentives for yourself that you appreciate: a few dollars towards a new pair of shoes, a spa appointment, a new book. Create your own list. Don't let food be a reward.

### **I will start over next week**

*Situation:* You are off-routine but having fun. You want to keep having fun. Or perhaps its not fun but it takes so much work to get back on track, you just don't have the energy.

*Solution:* Start over now. Take a break, go for a walk, drink a glass of water and create an immediate solution that puts you back on the track to better health.

Create health habits that are personal, specific and that you are able to maintain.

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