The 31 Day Food Revolution

Heal Your Body, Banish Excess Weight, and Change Our Toxic Food World

By Ocean Robbins

The 31 Day Food Revolution is an eater’s guide to liberation from a toxic food world. It offers readers an action plan to eating food that is healthy, humane, sustainable, and delicious. Robbins reveals dark secrets the food industry doesn’t want you to know that are making you and the people you love sick. And he shows you how, in just 31 days, you can use the healing power of foods to heal your gut, lose excess weight, dramatically lower your risk for diseases including cancer, heart disease, dementia and diabetes - and contribute to a healthier planet.

Ocean Robbins, CEO, The Food Revolution Network
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We live in a toxic food world. Judging by its actions, you’d think that the food industry didn’t care much about your health. And judging by its actions, you’d think that the health industry didn’t care much about your food.

But as any first-grader knows, you are what you eat. Which means that in most of the world, the modern diet is bad news for your arteries, your brain, and your future.

In 2013, the Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation (IHME) at the University of Washington completed the largest study of the causes of death in world history, and they concluded that poor food choices contribute to 30.8 million deaths per year worldwide. With more than a billion people now overweight or obese, and with heart disease, diabetes, Alzheimer’s, and other diet-linked disease skyrocketing, it’s become clear that profound change is needed.

But in spite of—or perhaps even because of—the depth of suffering and disease that we now see as normal, a revolution is building. All over the planet people are fed up with toxic food, have lost trust in the major food corporations, and are hungry for change.

In 2015, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation announced that it had liquidated its investments in McDonald's and Coca-Cola, selling nearly $2 billion worth of shares in the two companies. Companies like McDonald’s and Coca-Cola, which have long been seen as proud symbols of American capitalism, are losing their privileged status and coming to be seen as threats to public health. In fact, in 2015 McDonald’s closed 700 restaurants.
And more and more people are directing their money to good stuff. In the United States, since 1987, while consumption of feedlot beef has dropped by more than 19%, organic food sales have increased by over 2600%. Since 2006, the number of farmers’ markets in the United States has increased by 180%, and sales of natural foods have grown to be a $100 billion industry. And since 2010, US sales of certified non-GMO foods have gone from nothing to over $19 billion in sales.

Change isn’t just happening in the U.S.. Organic food sales have more than doubled in Europe in the last ten years. And in 2016, Indian analysts were projecting that organic food sales in India would triple by 2020.

Junk food still dominates the landscape, but healthy eating is beginning to move from trendy to mainstream. And The 31 Day Food Revolution is designed to help millions of people take the next step in their healthy eating journey.

Written by Food Revolution Network CEO Ocean Robbins (son of 2-million copy bestselling author and healthy food advocate John Robbins, and grandson of Baskin-Robbins founder Irvine Robbins), The 31 Day Food Revolution grows out of generations of history from one of the food movement’s most beloved families. It will deliver a penetrating diagnosis of what’s actually fuelling the current predicament, and more importantly, offer a galvanizing and scientifically grounded prescription for transformation. This prescription can give us vastly lower rates of chronic illness, save trillions of dollars in medical care costs, and protect millions of lives.
The goal of *The 31 Day Food Revolution* will be to support sustainable behavior change that fuels greater health and a more fulfilling life. The framework is one of action, with a focus on solutions, stories of hope, and practical tools the reader can implement easily and immediately. As readers taste the flavors of health, and reap the benefits, their lives will change for the better – making them the book's foremost advocates.

Within a framework of 31 simple, proven, easy to implement action steps, *The 31 Day Food Revolution* will:

- Offer insights and recipes for incorporating the real (and affordable) super foods that can optimize health;
- Demystify GMOs and the real impact of agricultural policies;
- Explain the neuroscience of changing habits and the proven healing power of gratitude;
- Empower the reader to use food to bring family together and to create a more loving and thriving home;
- Deliver a simple road map to choices that build not only a healthier life, but also a healthier planet.

*The 31 Day Food Revolution* will be at once profound and practical, radical and common sense. Framed by 31 positive action steps that anyone can take, it will incorporate anecdotes from real lives that have been transformed; delicious, healthy and quick recipes (provided by some of the world's foremost food and health authorities); and easy-to-implement strategies for success that have already been tested and proven by thousands of people. This book offers a map out of our current food madness and a compelling path towards a truly healthy, sustainable, just, humane, and vibrant food future.
Introduction

Food’s kind of an obsession in my family, and it has been for a few generations.

In 1953, my grandfather, Irvine Robbins, joined with his brother-in-law, Burt Baskin, to found the 31 flavors ice cream company, Baskin-Robbins. Up until then, most people seemed content with three flavors of ice cream: vanilla, chocolate, and strawberry. But my grandfather was a consummate entrepreneur, and he set his heart on offering consumers many more options—31 to be exact—one for each day of the month.

My dad, John, grew up with an ice cream cone shaped swimming pool, and throughout his childhood he enjoyed an abundance of the family product. Sometimes, he even ate ice cream for breakfast. He was groomed from early childhood to one day run the family company. My dad’s childhood innovations included the invention of Jamoca Almond Fudge (one of the company’s most iconic flavors to this day), and the rollout to all the stores of the famous “pink spoons” that enabled customers to enjoy free samples of ice cream flavors prior to purchase.

But in 1967, my Grandpa's brother-in-law and business partner, Burt Baskin, became very ill. His doctors informed him that he was, in fact, dying of heart disease.

Grandpa Irv was faced with a choice: he could sell the company for a large sum of money, or he could keep the company in the family and take on my dad, then about to turn 20, as his future business partner.

My grandpa decided to offer my dad the chance to join in and help run the company.
My dad said no.

There wasn’t much known, then, about the connection between food and health. And very few people thought then that ice cream could harm you. But ice cream is mostly made of two things: sugar, and high fat dairy. And medical research has since made it clear that the more sugar and the more high fat dairy products a person eats, the more likely they are to suffer from heart disease, diabetes, obesity, and other food-related ailments. And all my dad had to do was to look at his uncle Burt, on his deathbed at the age of 54, to see that the family product was no health food.

I never knew my dad’s uncle Burt, because he passed on a short time later - six years before I was born. But I do know that he was one of the greatest entrepreneurs in American history. He had great wealth, a business he enjoyed, and a family he loved. But in the end, he had nothing - because he lost his health, and his life.

My dad decided that he wanted to spend his life doing something that would make people healthier. So he walked away from the company, and with it from any access to or dependence on the family wealth. He left a path that was practically paved with gold, and ice cream, to follow his own “rocky road.”

My dad had suffered from polio as a child, and grew up frequently fatigued and ill. But he fell in love with my mom in Berkeley in the ’60s, and the two of them set out on a healthy living path. They stopped eating processed foods. They gave up ice cream. And they based their diet around vegetables and whole, natural foods. My dad’s health, and energy, steadily returned. Before long, he and my mom moved to a remote little island off the coast of British Columbia,
Canada, where they built a one room log cabin, grew most of their own food, practiced yoga and meditation for several hours a day, and named their kid “Ocean.”

They say that they almost named me “Kale.” I’m not sure whether they’re joking about that, but I’m so glad they took the more conservative route on this one.

But we did eat a lot of kale – along with cabbage, carrots, onions, broccoli, chard and other vegetables that my parents grew, plus rice, sprouts, buckwheat and beans. For a treat, once in a blue moon, we’d have a few drops of organic blackstrap molasses. I think we went through about a bottle a year.

Though my childhood food was simple and Spartan, and my family was monetarily poor (when my dad walked away from Baskin-Robbins, he made a choice to decline any access to or reliance on his father’s wealth), I grew up feeling rich. Because I had time with my mom and dad, a healthy environment – and a healthy life.

In fact, I became an accomplished distance runner, completing my first marathon at the age of ten.

My dad went on to study the health impact of food choices and to share what he was learning with the world. His landmark bestsellers, including *Diet for a New America*, inspired millions of people and helped to galvanize the modern “health food” movement. The media was tickled by the notion of a would-be ice cream heir becoming a healthy eating spokesperson, and called my dad the “rebel without a cone.”
Tens of thousands of people wrote my dad letters, many of them hand-written, sharing how his work had changed—sometimes even saved—their lives. One of the lives his work impacted, as fate would have it, was that of my own Grandpa Irv.

In 1989, Grandpa Irv, then in his early 70s, was suffering from some serious health conditions, including diabetes, heart disease, and weight problems. He’d always eaten the modern diet, plus a double scoop of ice cream on top, and now he was facing the modern diseases. Grandpa Irv’s cardiologist told him that he didn’t have long to live – unless he changed his diet. And then, the good doctor handed him a copy of my dad’s book, *Diet for a New America*, and encouraged him to follow its advice.

Remarkably enough, my grandpa did. He started eating a lot less processed foods and less meat. He gave up sugar and, amazingly, he even gave up ice cream. He started eating a lot more fruits, vegetables, and whole foods.

And he got results.

Before long, Grandpa Irv had lost 30 pounds, had gotten off all of his diabetes and blood pressure medications, possessed more energy than he’d had in decades, and his golf game had improved by seven strokes. He started taking morning walks with his dog, and before long was traversing several miles each day. Despite receiving a grim prognosis in his early 70s, he ended up living another 19 more healthy years.
One morning, as we were visiting my grandparents at their home in Rancho Mirage, California, my grandpa went out for his morning walk. My dad and I were training for a marathon, and we took the same time to head out for a morning run. My grandpa cheered for us as we cruised by.

I’ll always remember that morning because to me, it’s a vivid reminder of the power of food choices to fuel a healthy life, in every generation.

In my family, we’ve seen intimately how food can harm, as in the case of my dad’s Uncle Burt, or heal, as my Grandpa and so many others have discovered.

At the age of 16, inspired by my family’s experiences and by the legacy of leadership modeled by the two generations before me, I tested out of high school and founded a non-profit organization called YES!. Our goal was to mobilize young people to say “yes” to life and food choices that would support their health and the health of our planet.

Over the next 20 years, I raised money, built an organization, and led workshops and trainings for hundreds of thousands of young leaders from more than 65 nations.

As I traveled the globe, I had the opportunity to see how people live, and eat, in many different parts of the world. I dined on hummus with Bedouins in the Middle Eastern desert, on quinoa with indigenous leaders in Peru, on black rice with farmers in Thailand, on potatoes and sweet corn with corn growers in Indiana, and on collards and black-eyed peas with African-Americans in rural Alabama.
Everywhere I went, I was connecting and collaborating with leaders and changemakers. And everywhere, food was the glue that brought us together. I met people all over the planet who were up to something good, often in difficult circumstances.

Their stories have shaped me and galvanized my profound commitment to healthy food for all.

I’ve learned so much from people to whom hunger and malnutrition aren’t statistics on a UNICEF chart– they’re a daily reality. Some of them have lived through wars, have lost family and loved ones in senseless violence, and are to this day grateful if they have anything at all to put in their bellies. And I’ve been inspired by those same people as they’ve built local, resilient economies that help to alleviate poverty from the ground up.

I’ve worked with indigenous leaders in the Amazon rainforest, who shared with me the devastating impact that global meat consumption was having on their home, as cattle ranchers burnt the forest down so we could buy cheap burgers at fast food restaurants. And through YES!, the non-profit organization that I founded, I’ve helped to raise money so that these leaders could buy airplanes with which to monitor their forest home and help to keep out illegal mining and cattle ranching – in the process, helping to save the rainforests which function as lungs for our planet.

I’ve worked with community organizers in Detroit, Michigan, where the median home sale price is $33,000 and where there are thousands of vacant lots and people who are financially destitute. Detroit is a city where the unemployment rate was recently as high as 24%. A Yale University study found that more than half of Detroit residents live in areas that have severely limited access to healthy food, and that this makes them “more likely to suffer or die
prematurely from a diet-related disease.” And yet in the midst of this intense poverty, a sign of hope is emerging. Detroit has become a world leader in the community garden movement, with more than 1,400 urban farms and community gardens. Instead of fighting in gang wars, some of the city’s young people are growing tomatoes and feeding their neighborhoods. Community gardens are giving meaningful work to the unemployed, they’re bringing healthful nourishment to food deserts, and they’re helping to restore the fabric of community.

But for all the work I was doing – I kept feeling that it wasn’t enough. The global food system was steadily churning out tasty but deadly products laced with chemicals, pesticides, hormones, antibiotics, and other toxins. All over the world, rates of obesity and diabetes just kept on rising. In many countries, including the United States, life expectancy was actually going down.

In 2012, I decided that I could make the greatest impact on the Internet, with a direct focus on food. So I joined with my dad (and now colleague) to launch an online education and advocacy community called the Food Revolution Network.

Since that time, I’ve had the tremendous privilege of working with and learning from some of the top food experts on the planet.

And perhaps most importantly of all, I’ve had the opportunity to work with, learn from, and support a community of more than 850,000 people from more than 180 nations who have participated in our online “Food Revolution Summits.”
Time and time again, I hear from people who are fed up with toxic food, who are sick of feeling sick, and who are disillusioned with the status quo. What frustrates so many of these people is that they don't really know what the solutions are.

Perhaps you can relate.

Chances are, you know there's a lot of unhealthy food in the world. And you try to stay away from it. But in a toxic food world, it sometimes feels like gravity is pulling you in the wrong direction. Family, habit, social pressures, price, confusion, and stress can all conspire to make healthy eating difficult to say the least.

I wrote this book to make healthy eating easy, simple, and fun.

This book is for you if you want to leverage the power of food to fight cancer, diabetes, heart disease, dementia, and other chronic ailments. It's for you if you want to step into more health, vitality, mental clarity, and joy than you might have ever known in your life. And it's for you if you want healthy food to be accessible and affordable to everyone.

Your body wasn't just meant to survive. It was meant to thrive.

This book is your road map to the health that you deserve.

Perhaps you're motivated by suffering or disease. Perhaps you're motivated by visions of the health that you want. Either way, the simple steps you’ll discover in this book could change the course of your life.
One of the most widespread misconceptions of our times is that diseases like heart disease and cancer are causes of death. But they're not.

They're actually symptoms.

For hundreds of thousands of people every year, the actual cause of death is diet and lifestyle – which creates conditions out of which symptoms like cancer, heart disease, diabetes, obesity, asthma, and even dementia are prone to emerge.

In 2013, a global collaborative of scientists led by the Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation (IHME) at the University of Washington completed the largest study of risk factors for death and disabilities ever conducted in human history. Their study analyzed death and disability from 291 diseases, conditions, and injuries as well as 67 risk factors, over the course of 20 years.

Their resulting report, titled The Global Burden of Disease, concluded that poor diet is the biggest contributor to more than 30 million deaths per year worldwide. And in the United States, they concluded that dietary factors are causing 672,282 deaths annually. This means that more Americans are dying from diet-caused disease each year, than died in World War 1, World War 2, the Korean War, the Vietnam War, the Afghan War, and both Iraq wars, combined. But this time the enemy isn’t another country. It’s our own choices.

Pat Spensley, MD is a family practice doctor in Newburgh, Oregon. Like most doctors, he learned very little in medical school about nutrition. In 2013, faced with severe asthma and
obesity, Dr. Spensley participated in a Food Revolution Summit that my dad and I hosted. In the following year, after changing to a whole foods, plant-strong diet, Dr. Spensley lost 50 pounds, and his health and energy levels improved dramatically. This inspired him to transform his medical practice. Now, he talks to his patients with enthusiasm about how to prevent osteoporosis and cancer, and about how to avoid hypertension, obesity, and heart disease. He also helps them to stay off of drugs, and to stay away from doctor’s offices. Dr. Spensley has lived a transformation, and it brings him tremendous satisfaction to not only treat the symptoms of disease, but to actually help his patients to be well.

Dr. Spensley is not alone. And neither are you. If you care about your health, and if you know that food matters, you’re part of a global groundswell of people who are standing up, getting informed, and changing the course of food history.

Two generations ago, my family brought the world 31 flavors of ice cream. That ice cream has inspired fun and pleasure for millions of people.

But there's a deeper pleasure that comes from health, from knowing that you're doing the right thing for your body, from having the energy and the mental clarity to do what you love, and for being part of a food revolution that's building a healthier world for everybody.

In the long run, 31 flavors of health can bring you far more satisfaction, and even more pleasure, than any number of ice cream flavors. When you bring your food choices into alignment with what you most want for your health, and for your life, something remarkable happens.
Your blood flow improves, and you have more vitality. You start to sleep better. Mysterious ailments disappear. Your mind becomes clearer. Excess pounds melt away. And your life takes on a greater sense of meaning and inspiration.

With this book, you’ll discover what’s possible for your life, and for your world. You’ll see how you can save money and enjoy more food pleasure – while you fight cancer, heart disease, diabetes, and aging. You’ll unlock little-known secrets to help you live with greater vitality and joy. And you’ll find out how you can be part of a something powerful, and something wonderful, that is changing how food is grown, prepared, and consumed, from farm to table, and from grocery store to kitchen.

I’m so glad you’re here. Shall we get started?

**How To Use This Book**

There are two basic ways you can use this book for optimal results. 1) You can read it all the way through, and then go back and take a day with each action; or 2) You can start out with chapter one, and read and implement a chapter per day for 31 days.

Depending on your current food and lifestyle, it’s possible that you already implement some of the actions in this book. If that’s the case, then those days will be especially easy for you. I hope you take every action in this book. And I hope you stay on the journey for 31 days consecutively - because that’s how you’ll reap the greatest rewards. But if you need to push “pause” while the relatives visit, or while you go on a family vacation to Timbuktu - that’s fine. Just come back later and pick up right where you left off.
Even five of the actions in this book can make a very real difference, and ten will be life-changing. Do it all – and you just might change your world. Welcome to the food revolution.
Part One: Detoxify

Let’s face it, we have a toxic food world. If you tried to design a diet to promote heart disease, cancer, and diabetes, you’d be hard pressed to do better than what many of us are eating already.

In the developed world, we now have the dubious distinction of having the most addictive and most nutritionally inferior food in the history of humanity. The sheer number of chemical food additives in use today is staggering, and the galling reality is that many of them have been declared safe only by the companies making them, without any testing or oversight from governmental agencies.

The food industry often tells us that there are “good for you foods” and “fun for you foods”, and the key is a healthy balance. But it’s amazing how often these “fun for you” foods turn out to fuel suffering and disease, and even to be addictive. How much “fun” is cancer, or heart disease, or diabetes, or not being able to remember the names of your kids because you’ve developed Alzheimer's?

In this context, eating real, wholesome food can sometimes seem like some kind of a radical or even revolutionary action. But it is in fact one of the most basic, practical and effective acts you can take.

For many people, the first step is to clear away the toxins. And you may be surprised to discover how many of the foods that are ubiquitous in the modern world turn out to be toxic. Many of them are even sold in health-food stores.
In the chapters that follow, I will guide the reader with simple steps to free their kitchen of the most unhealthy foods that are there.

No one needs to take a pledge of purity, or to enroll in regular inspections from the food police. Rather, Part One provides a spacious and welcoming invitation to get informed about some of the often hidden toxins that may be causing harm – and to clear the space for greater health and wellness.

One of the most dangerous myths of our times is that healthy eating needs to be confusing. And while it’s true that many so-called experts are often pointing in diametrically opposing directions, the reality is that much of the confusion faced by the public is not shared by serious researchers. It has been, to a significant extent, manufactured.

From 2005 to 2007, David Katz, MD, served as Good Morning America’s medical contributor. He told me that during that time, he was told never to offer the same nutritional advice two weeks in a row. The interest of the mainstream media, he discovered, is not primarily education or clarity. The primary interest is attracting an audience. From this vantage point, if you say the same thing about nutrition a few times in a row, the perception of the producer on the show is that it’s boring. And boring means a loss of ratings and advertisement revenues.

The truth is, most food and health researchers are neither clueless nor confused about the basic care and feeding of homo sapiens. Modern medical science is quite clear about the dietary patterns that can, in the vast majority of cases, help to prevent or even reverse many
of the chronic ailments of our times. And in the chapters that follow, the reader will be
guided to put that clarity into action.

**Take The Quiz: How Toxic Is Your Kitchen**

To start part one, as for all four parts of this book, readers will be given a short quiz which
will enable them to self-assess. The quiz that begins part one reveals how toxic their
kitchen is, on a score of 1-10. They’ll also be invited to take the quiz online if they want to
see how their score compares to other quiz-takers and to share in the *The 31 Day Food
Revolution* journey with co-horts.

**Day 1: Clear away the three worst food offenders**

I’ll offer an overview of some of the most widely consumed foods that medical research
finds to be associated with negative health outcomes. Some of the foods in this “top ten”
may sound familiar. Others may surprise you.

1. Added sugars
2. White flour
3. Fried foods
4. Processed meats
5. Sugary sodas
6. Diet sodas
7. Corn & soybean oil
8. Grain-fed beef
9. Carageenan
10. Commercial dairy products
We’ll look at some of the “sneaky” places that some of these hazardous foods show up, and at the profound and documented health benefits of avoiding them.

Readers will be guided to look at their current dietary pattern, and to identify the three most unhealthy items that populate their food lives. For some this could be potato chips, Coca Cola, and ice cream, and for others it could be sweetened yogurt, gluten-free bread, and whole grain cookies. Wherever we are in our food journeys, there are always steps we can take to get rid of foods that don’t serve our health goals – and to make space for the good stuff.

**Action:** Take pictures of yourself disposing of your worst offenders, and share them with friends or on social media. Hashtag #foodrevolution.

**Day 2: End problem drinking**

The average American drinks 385 calories per day – and the vast majority of those calories are sugars consumed through soft drinks. Meanwhile, many European adults who drink alcohol get an average of 10% of their calories from alcoholic beverages. There are some studies showing that moderate consumption of alcohol can be good for you. But 10% of calories is a lot of alcohol! And while soft drinks and alcoholic beverages are widely known as being damaging to health, many people don’t realize that orange juice, apple juice, “natural” sodas, and even most iced tea beverages, contain enormous quantities of sugars and little to no valuable nutrients.
This chapter will look at the real impact of drinking empty calories on metabolism, waistline, and long-term health, and at alternative drinks that can add tremendous value to a healthy diet. It will conclude with two delicious—and nutritious—low-sugar beverage recipes.

**Action:** Make and enjoy one of the beverage recipes.

**Day 3: Say bye-bye to bad snacks**

While the average American eats roughly the same amount of food during meals as in the 1970s, the number of calories Americans consume as snacks has increased to 580 calories per day - the equivalent of a fourth meal.

But not all snacks are bad. In fact, a steady flow of energy can keep the brain and metabolism functioning optimally – when the snacks provide real nourishment.

This chapter will explore some of the most common snacks consumed today, and highlight five to avoid (granola bars, chips, candy, cookies, and most crackers), and five to enjoy (vegetables with hummus, fresh berries, mixed nuts, frozen grapes, and dark chocolate).

**Action:** Choose a healthy and delicious snack that you can enjoy regularly.

**Day 4: Go organic and avoid the dirty dozen**

Pesticides have been linked to a wide range of human health hazards, ranging from short-term impacts such as headaches and nausea to chronic impacts like cancer, reproductive harm, and endocrine disruption.
And that’s just the tip of the iceberg.

In response to concerns about the safety of eating foods that have been sprayed with neurotoxic poisons, more and more consumers are buying organically grown foods. But organic food sometimes costs 50% more than the same item grown conventionally. Some families on a budget have to choose between organic food and paying the rent.

Fortunately, not all conventionally grown foods carry large amounts of pesticides. In this chapter, we’ll look at the “dirty dozen” most pesticide-contaminated foods, and the “clean 15” least pesticide contaminated foods, so that consumers who are on a budget can know which foods are safest to buy in their non-organic form.

I’ll also expose the little-known but very real danger of arsenic contamination in rice (yes, even organically grown rice), and why most consumers should consider limiting their rice consumption. And I’ll explain why I believe most people are vastly better off eating fresh fruits and vegetables, even if they were sprayed with insecticides, than not eating them. And I’ll remind readers that we shouldn’t make the perfect into the enemy of the good.

**Action:** Find at least one item in the “dirty dozen” that you consume regularly, and commit to buying it organically grown.

**Day 5: Reduce toxic impulses – & save 23% on your grocery bill**

The simple act of making and sticking with a shopping list can save you huge amounts of time and money. Why?
For two reasons. First of all, Americans alone throw away 35 million tons of food – worth more than $165 billion – each year. That’s $2,200 per year for the average family of four. With proper planning, that’s real money that can be saved.

And the second reason is that when you shop from a list, you’re vastly less susceptible to impulse purchases. Researchers from the University of Pennsylvania have found that people who avoid impulse spending can save up to 23% on their grocery bills.

In this chapter, I’ll illustrate how much money and time can be saved by shopping once a week instead of several times per week. And I’ll get practical - explaining the pros and cons of two different shopping list systems that we’ve helped thousands of people implement through our online courses. I’ll provide links to easy-to-use downloadable, customizable shopping lists and shopping systems.

**Action:** Download a shopping list template and start using the one you like best - or go to bigoven.com and take advantage of their online recipe and shopping list app.

**Day 6: Practice water safety**

My name’s Ocean. I love water. Especially when it’s good and clean.

But there’s a dark side to water today: Much of it is contaminated.

*In 2015, Flint, Michigan* suddenly dominated the news with headlines describing the high lead levels in the drinking water that was being served to the population, including children.
But it’s not just Flint. Not even close.

In this chapter, we’ll look at the alarming data on water safety around the world, and take an in-depth look at the pros and cons of bottled water and of various filtration options.

**Action:** Commit to implementing a safe water solution that works for your location and budget. And drink a glass of water today!

**Day 7: Get rid of dangerous cookware**

Many “non-stick” coatings contain polytetrafluoroethylene (PTFE), a polymer that deteriorates when overheated. The resulting fumes can kill pet birds. Have you ever heard of the “canary in the coal mine”? Birds can be more sensitive to dangerous gases than humans – but if something is lethal to birds, then it doesn’t take a coal-miner to know that it isn’t good for humans, either.

And that’s not all. Most modern kitchens are stocked with plastic water bottles and plastic food storage containers that leach bisphenol A (BPA) and a class of chemicals called phthalates. These chemicals are known hormone disrupters, and have been linked to obesity, diabetes, and cardiovascular disease.

In this chapter, I'll explain the dangers of non-stick coatings and plastics in the kitchen, how to use them (more) safely, and I’ll also review the best (and worst) options for pots, pans, and food storage containers – as well as for juicers and blenders.
**Action:** Get rid of any non-stick "Teflon" type pans, and order any supplies you can afford, that will make your kitchen safer for healthful food preparation and storage.

**Day 8: Recover from food addiction**

More than 59% of Europeans, and more than two-thirds of all Americans, are overweight. And right now, more than 108 million Americans are on a diet. The average dieter makes four or five attempts each year. And less than one percent of these attempts actually result in long-term weight loss.

Is there any other domain in which so many people are trying so hard and so often, with so little success?

In this chapter, I’ll explain the neuroscience of food addiction, and stunning new research on the role of flour and sugar in fueling weight gain. I’ll explain how I’ve co-produced programs that have helped participants to release over 70,000 pounds, and I’ll teach the core principles to rewire your brain for food freedom.

Finally, I’ll explain the role of “bright lines” and supportive community in sustained weight loss, and tell readers how they or loved ones can engage with and benefit from what early research indicates is the most effective “food freedom” program in the world today.

**Action:** Today, avoid consuming any sugar or flour products. Can you do it?
Part Two: Nourish

A report released by the USDA in 2015 found that potatoes and tomatoes account for more than half of America’s total vegetable consumption. And as you might guess, these potatoes are often eaten in the form of French fries and potato chips, while the tomatoes are often eaten as ketchup and red sauce on pasta and pizza.

No offense to potatoes or tomatoes, but if they represent half your vegetable consumption, you’re missing out on a whole lot of fun.

What we’re discovering today is that a great many vegetables, as well as berries, legumes, herbs are the real “super foods.” They provide antioxidants, flavonoids, and micronutrients that are stunningly powerful in fighting cancer, dementia, heart disease, and even wrinkles. They can boost your immune system, improve your digestion, and even give you better energy and a more satisfying sex life.

For example - did you know that in one major study, when women consumed the equivalent of three mushrooms per day, they reduced their breast cancer risk by 64%? Or that when those same women also drank green tea regularly, their risk of breast cancer dropped by an almost unbelievable 89%

Did you know that Harvard researchers recently concluded that women who consumed at least one serving of blueberries or two servings of strawberries per week showed substantially slower rates of cognitive decline, and that another 20-year Harvard study of
100,000 men and women found those who ate the most berries were significantly less likely to suffer from cardiovascular disease or from diabetes?

In the next phase of our journey, we’ll look at how you can supercharge your body with the top anti-aging and cancer-fighting super foods.

By “super foods” I don’t mean pricey Himalayan goji berries or $300/pound ginseng. I mean foods that are “super” precisely because they’re affordable and widely available. And some of them may surprise you!

Here’s a list of things you might want to have on hand. Start this phase off with a shopping and you’ll have what you need to succeed.

• Nuts (peanuts, almonds, pistachios, cashews, walnuts, Brazil nuts, or another nut of your choice)
• Legumes (beans, split peas, or lentils - dried and soakable is best, but canned will do)
• Green tea (fresh or tea bags - whichever your like best)
• Organic fair trade coffee (caffeinated or, if you prefer decaf, get some decaffeinated using the Swiss Water process)
• Organic fair trade dark chocolate (optional – should be at least 70% cacao content)
• At least one fermented food (such as sauerkraut, kimchi, miso, kombucha, kefir, unsweetened soy/coconut/other yogurt, etc)
• A bottle of organic red wine (optional)
• Turmeric (root or powder)
• Black pepper
• Mushrooms (button, portabella, crimini, shiitake, maitake, oyster – any mushrooms will do)
• Greens (spinach, broccoli, Bok Choy, Brussels sprouts, Swiss chard, cabbage, collards, mustard greens, kale, or beet greens)

Take The Quiz: How nutrient-rich is your diet?

Readers will be given a short quiz which will enable them to assess how nutrient-rich their diet is, on a score of 1-10. They’ll also be invited to take the quiz online if they want to see how their score compares to other quiz-takers, and to connect with a community of co-horts.
Day 9: Enjoy healthy pleasures

Here are four health superstars that might surprise you.

It turns out that coffee, red wine, tea, and chocolate all carry tremendous health benefits.

In this chapter, I'll discuss the results of medical research, and how you can put these healthy pleasures to work for you.

Take coffee, for example. The Cardiovascular Risk Factors, Aging and Dementia (CAIDE) study tracked more than 1,400 individuals over the course of 21 years to look at a broad range of diet and lifestyle choices and health outcomes. In the study, people who drank 3-5 cups of coffee per day at midlife were found to have a 65% decreased risk of dementia in later life.

And not to be left out of the fun, red wine drinkers have been found to have a 50% drop in risk of prostate cancer in one study, and in another, a 34% lower mortality rate (within the years of the study) compared with drinkers of beer or vodka.

Tea, too, turns out to bring some tremendous health benefits. In fact it’s been found to protect against cardiovascular disease, and linked to reduced rates of Alzheimer's Disease, obesity, arthritis, diabetes, infections, malaria, and even AIDS.
Finally, we’ll look at chocolate, which has been linked to lower rates of heart attack, stroke, diabetes and cancer. In fact, a Harvard study of 8,000 men discovered that those who ate chocolate as many as three times a month lived a year longer than those who didn’t.

And in the case of coffee, red wine, tea and chocolate, we’ll also look at the cautions, dangers, and caveats to consuming them – including how to watch out for excess sugar, which varieties are best, how to know when you’re getting too much caffeine or alcohol, and how to enjoy ethical sourcing and steer clear of unintentionally funding slavery and exploitation. If readers are sensitive to caffeine, they’ll be encouraged to give rooibos herbal tea a try instead of coffee and tea.

**Action:** Enjoy coffee, red wine, green tea, or chocolate today.

**Day 10: Enjoy the real super foods**

The foods that can make the biggest difference to the greatest number of people offer critical minerals, vitamins, antioxidants, flavonoids, polyphenols, and a host of other important phytonutrients that are good for your brain, your immune system, and your vitality – and that can help you lose weight and gain strength.

In this chapter, we’ll look at mushrooms and greens, which between them could possibly save millions of lives each year.

We’ll begin with mushrooms, which have been linked with reducing risk of hormone-related cancers. We’ll also look at how the lectins in mushrooms exert anti-angiogenic, anti-
proliferative, and other anti-cancer effects, which have been studied in relation to stomach, colorectal, and prostate cancers.

And I'll explain that while shitake, maitake, and other pricey mushrooms have some fabulous health benefits, the commonly enjoyed white button, cremini, and portabella mushrooms also have strong cancer-fighting and health-boosting properties.

Next we'll look at greens, which may be the most potent single food group on the planet when it comes to boosting your health. These nutrient dynamos include not only spinach, but also broccoli, Bok Choy, Brussels sprouts, Swiss chard, cabbage, collards, mustard greens, kale, beet greens, arugula, and even many varieties of leaf lettuce (such as romaine).

Greens have been linked to fighting dementia (in one study, regular consumption of greens was linked to an added 11 years of healthy mental function!), cancer, heart disease, diabetes... and even to better bowel movements.

I'll offer some tips for how to incorporate – and enjoy – more greens in your diet. And the chapter will complete with two delicious mushroom and green-centric recipes.

**Action:** Make a recipe that features greens or mushrooms.

**Day 11: Go nuts for nuts**

Epidemiologic studies have linked nut consumption with reduced rates of heart disease and gallstones, as well as beneficial effects on hypertension, cancer, and inflammation. Recent studies have also indicated that nut consumption can help to prevent type 2 diabetes.
One study involving over 9,000 North Americans found that those who ate nuts at least 5 times per week gained, on average, an extra 2 years of life expectancy. The nut eaters also experienced a 50% reduction in heart disease risk.

Another large-scale, 30-year Harvard-affiliated study found that people who regularly ate one ounce of nuts at least seven times per week were 20% less likely to die of health related illness, compared to those who avoided nuts in their diet.

**Action:** Choose your favorite nut and enjoy it today.

**Day 12: Love your legumes**

The legume family includes beans, peas, lentils, and peanuts. There are thousands of colorful legumes, and together they are a critical source of protein and fiber for billions of people worldwide.

Legumes contain folate, iron, magnesium and potassium, which can help with general body function and also with neuron firing. They figure prominently in most Alzheimer's prevention diets. They also contain choline, a B vitamin that boosts acetylcholine (a neurotransmitter critical for brain function). And as if that wasn't enough, legumes turn out to be potent cancer-fighters.

In an 8-year study in Uruguay involving more than 3,539 cancer cases and a control group of 2,032 people, scientists found that the highest rates of bean and lentil consumption were associated with a 25% reduction in overall cancer rates.
I’ll shed light on why legumes are such potent cancer-fighters, and then we’ll turn our attention to how you can, by soaking them for 48 hours (rinsing 2 or 3 times a day) enjoy them without getting gas.

**Action:** Start some legumes soaking.

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**Day 13: Give your microbiome a boost**

This chapter will look at the stunning new frontier of gut health and its impact on inflammation, neurological function, and overall well-being.

I’ll provide an overview of why your microbiome is the cornerstone of your health, and explain how leaky gut, autoimmune disease, and inflammation are wreaking havoc on millions of lives.

I’ll expose how toxins, pesticides, and an adulterated food supply are fueling disease – starting in the gut. And then we’ll look at what the medical research tells us about the role of fiber, fermented foods, probiotics, prebiotics, enzymes, and micronutrients to help you restore your microbiome and enjoy optimal digestive and neurological function.

**Action:** Enjoy a fermented food.

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**Day 14: Make a great green smoothie for breakfast**
A healthy breakfast is often one of the first casualties of an over-packed day. But when you feed your body right from beginning, it will thank you all day long.

This short chapter will look at how can saturate your body with delicious and nutritious micronutrients – getting an abundant supply of antioxidants, flavonoids, vitamins, minerals, and protein – all prepared in five minutes or less – with a delicious green smoothie.

Several recipes will be provided.

**Action:** Start your day right with one of these delicious recipes.

**Day 15: Spice it up**

For millennia, spices have been a central part of ethnic cuisines around the world. And today, we’re discovering how remarkably health-promoting they are.

Turmeric, for example, has been popular in India for more than 5,000 years, and this is widely thought to be one of the reasons why both India’s rural and urban populations have among the **lowest** rates of Alzheimer’s disease in the world. In fact, India has **less than** 2% as many Alzheimer’s related-deaths, per 100,000 people, compared with the United States.

Hundreds of studies have demonstrated turmeric’s ability to help **reduce** unhealthy levels of inflammation, **protect** against heavy metal toxicity, **lower** heart disease risk, and its potential to **destroy** multi-drug resistant cancer and cancer stem cells.
We’ll look at how much turmeric you need to reap its extraordinary benefits, and then we’ll turn our attention to other beneficial spices – with a special focus on garlic.

For example – in one study, researchers studied 41,387 Iowa women, tracking their consumption of 127 foods over a five-year period. In the study, women with the highest amounts of garlic in their diets had a 50% lower risk of certain colon cancers than women who ate the least.

We’ll also look at the health benefits of ginger, cinnamon, cayenne, and other spices, and then share a delicious gut-health-boosting, inflammation-fighting recipe for turmeric milk.

**Action:** Organize and spiff up your spice rack. Make sure it includes turmeric, ginger, cinnamon, cayenne, and black pepper.

**Day 16: Implement kitchen shortcuts**

Most people think that healthy eating takes too much time. And in today’s hyper-stressed world, time is one of the biggest barriers many healthy eaters face.

In this chapter, I’ll share three of the top time-saving tips that I’ve taught thousands of people in courses and workshops.

1. Prepare breakfast and lunch the night before (I'll offer some of my favorite recipes!).

2. Make a big pot of soup or a casserole when you have time, and freeze the extra in meal-sized portions.
3. Buy frozen berries or vegetables – or freeze your own during harvest season – and have them on hand, ready to use, any time you want. (Most people don’t realize how nutritious frozen berries and vegetables can be!)

**Action:** Select at least one idea described in this chapter – and implement it in your life.
Part Three: Gather

Food can be deeply social. Throughout history, “breaking bread”, and sharing a meal, has been an act of communion and connection between people.

But food can also be a source of division. Many families and relationships suffer when kitchens turn into zones of conflict. As a result, many people compromise in their food choices for fear of alienating a spouse or a loved one.

You might even fear that if you truly live your food values, you could end up feeling isolated or lonely. You may worry about not being able to share a meal with a loved one at a restaurant, missing out on a weekend barbeque, having to decline a friend’s invitation for dinner, or being unable to eat in the cafeteria at work.

But in the next few days, you’re going to find out how you can pull friends and family along with you on your healthy eating path – and how you can build a new community of healthy eating allies.

When you have a strong community behind you, it becomes easier and easier to do the right thing. Like gravity, you’ll be pulled towards habits and foods that serve your well-being. And you’ll be able to be a positive influence on the people you love.

You’ll find that most real friends want the best for you and want you to be healthy. When you know how to communicate artfully, you may be surprised by how many friends are inspired to join you. And you’ll also find that your food revolution can be a doorway to new
friendships, deeper bonding, and stronger social ties. As you begin to benefit from shifting in healthy directions, you can pass your discoveries on to others. There are few things more rewarding than being a positive influence on people you love, and helping them to lose weight, to heal from illness, or to achieve their health or life goals.

In the chapters that follow, I’ll share the practical ways that you can go to a restaurant with a friend and know what to order on (or off) the menu; how to be get back on track if you slip up over the holidays; how to artfully navigate complex social dynamics so you can stay in your integrity without coming off like a kill-joy; how to be a positive influence on friends and loved ones; and I’ll help you to develop the social bonds and the webs of relationship that will support and empower your healthy eating journey.

There doesn’t need to be anything drab, dreary, or lonely about healthy food. So get ready to share some delicious and nutritious food with new and old friends.

**Take The Quiz:** How strong is your food community? Readers will be given a short quiz which will enable them to assess how strong their food community is, on a score of 1-10. They’ll also be invited to take the quiz online if they want to see how their score compares to other quiz-takers, and to connect with a larger community of co-horts.

**Day 17: Find a healthy eating ally**

Any time you want to make a change, it can help to have one person to consistently root for you. Someone who will stand by you, and stand up for you. Someone you can confide in when things get tough, and who can celebrate your victories.
In this chapter, the reader will be given insight into the importance of finding an ally to back them in the healthy eating journey, and support in selecting, requesting, and utilizing a healthy food friend.

Action: Ask someone if they’d be willing to be your healthy eating ally.

Day 18: Make a great meal for someone you love

There’s truth in the saying that the fastest way to a person’s heart is through their stomach.

In this chapter, we’ll focus on how you can choose a fitting meal based on a loved ones’ interests. It could be a healthier version of a staple favorite of theirs, or it could be a chance to expose them to something new.

I’ll suggest specific recipes, provided later in the book, for sharing with kids, work colleagues at lunch, a “meat and potatoes-loving” spouse, and parents.

I’ll also give tips for building bonds of connection around a shared meal.

Action: Make a delicious and nutritious meal and share it with someone you care about.

Day 19: Start a meal club

In this chapter I’ll discuss the very practical ways you can build community while setting up healthy food sharing systems with friends, colleagues and family.
Many of the same kinds of benefits are available when you create a healthy meal-sharing program. Preparing food in quantity can save time and money – while also building community and supporting healthy habits.

Parents can take turns making meals for each other’s kids in school. Neighbors can take on dinner preparation for each other once per week. Co-workers can bring each other lunches. And if you live alone – then you have an even greater incentive to take advantage of the economics of scale while cultivating a healthy food community.

Plus, you’ll get a chance to share your favorite foods with others, and you’ll be exposed to some new culinary ideas – some of which you might grow to love.

**Action:** Start a meal club or a regular meal-sharing program with other people in your life.

**Day 20: Rewire your brain to love healthy food**

After a hard day, many of us will say to ourselves, “I’m going to give myself a treat and have some comfort food” – which could mean downing a package of cookies or potato chips.

But the notion that eating unhealthful foods is someone comforting, or an act of self-care, is fundamentally false. Yes, it may confer short-term pleasure. But there’s not a whole lot of pleasure in getting cancer, or in losing a limb to diabetes.

Now a growing body of scientific research is illustrating that food addiction is in many ways
similar to drug addiction. For certain people, binging on sugar can stimulate the brain’s production of and utilization of dopamine – and facilitate a powerful addiction response.

In this chapter, we’ll look at how you can re-wire your brain to reward healthy behaviors instead of toxic ones. And I’ll reveal some little-known tips for winning the “mental game” and setting yourself up for success on your healthful eating path.

**Action:** Choose a healthy comfort food to enjoy next time you feel low.

**Day 21: Savor your food**

“You are what you eat” is only a half-truth. It would be more accurate to say, “You are what you digest.”

And digestion starts long before swallowing even takes place.

When you take the time to savor your food, to smell it, to chew it, and to let saliva build up, you are shifting the course of your digestive process and setting yourself up to more efficiently absorb what you’re eating.

It’s well documented that when your nervous system is in a state of ease and relaxation, your digestion improves and your metabolism becomes more stable, and that gratitude can have profound benefits to quality and even quantity of life.

For all these reasons, this non-denominational chapter will focus on the vast benefits of “saying grace” and taking a moment of gratitude before a meal.
Readers of all faith perspectives will be given some possible “grace” poems to read aloud, and well as tips for developing their own and for creating bonds of connection with family members or loved ones around the table.

**Action:** Take a moment to “say grace”, or give thanks, before a meal.

**Kitchen Prayer**

May this kitchen be so filled with peace
that all who eat food prepared here receive peace.

May this kitchen be so filled with happiness
that all who eat food prepared here receive happiness.

May this kitchen be so filled with goodwill
that working here is a joy.

Bless this kitchen.

Bless all who work here.

Bless the food that is prepared here.

May this kitchen and the work done here be a blessing to all who live.

— John Robbins

**Day 22: Eat well when you eat out**

Unless you’ve been hiding out in a cave for the last 40 years, or you work in the McDonald’s PR department, you probably already know that fast food is no health food. It’s typically loaded with sugar, salt, chemicals, factory-farmed meat, and processed carbs.
But did you know that even many upscale and gourmet restaurants also use ingredients that you or I would never knowingly want to bring into our kitchens?

Even some of the nicest restaurants are driven by the demand to cut costs, and to increase sales. And since they don’t generally have to reveal all their ingredients, they often face market pressures that pull them to sneak in cheap fillers and taste-boosters, regardless of their impact on your health.

As a result, many restaurants at all price levels use highly processed oils; foods laced with artificial flavorings and preservatives; and add sugar added to almost everything. Unless they explicitly tell you otherwise, restaurant salad dressings could contain chemicals like Disodium Guanylate, Disodium Inosinate, and Monosodium Glutamate (MSG). And restaurant meats are typically sourced from factory farms.

Even when salmon is sold as “wild”, that may not be a guarantee of anything. Using DNA analysis, in 2015 the nonprofit ocean conservation group Oceana studied samples of salmon from upscale and takeout restaurants in New York, Washington, Chicago and Virginia. They found that two-thirds of the “wild” salmon appearing on restaurant menus was incorrectly labeled.

But it’s not all bad news! When you know what to look for, and what to order, you can eat well when you eat out. Step one is selecting the best available restaurant (online tools like Yelp and Google can help when you know what to search for); step two is reviewing the menu for the best available options; and step three is knowing how to ask for what you want even if it isn’t on the menu to begin with. I’ll explain how to handle all three of these
steps with dignity and social grace – so you can enjoy the convenience, cuisine, and social pleasure of eating out, without compromising your integrity or your health.

I’ll also include a section on healthy eating “on the go” – sharing how to scout ahead for stores and restaurants; what kinds of foods to pack for a road trip, a plane flight, or an extended journey; camping foods that are delicious and nutritious (including my family’s personal camping meal plan); and how to find other healthy eaters in a new city or community.

Action: Find a healthy option at a local restaurant.

**Day 23: Bring friends and family along**

In this chapter I’ll discuss the tremendous health and psychological benefits of social ties, and the unique power food has to bring people together – as well as to drive us apart.

I’ll share personal anecdotes from my own life, including my embarrassing fundamentalist childhood attempts to convert my friends to vegetarianism.

I’ll also share key lessons learned about how to be a beneficial influence on the dietary choices of the people that you love – including:

- Make your loved ones healthy and delicious food;
- Look for openings;
- Ask questions;
- Lead by example; and
• Always love them.

**Action:** Choose one of the action steps in this chapter and implement it with someone you love.
Part Four: Transform

Our food chain is in crisis. Big agribusiness has made profits more important than your health—more important than the environment—and more important than your right to know how your food is produced.

But beneath the surface, a revolution is growing.

From rural farms to urban dinner plates, from grocery store shelves to state ballot boxes, people are rising up and taking action. We’re reclaiming our food systems and our menus. And we’re taking responsibility for our health.

Food is very personal, but it’s also very political. Every bite you take literally becomes you - and it connects you to people, policies and practices all over the planet.

Today there’s a huge and growing demand for food that is organic, sustainable, fair trade, non-GMO, humane, healthful, and of course nourishing and delicious. In cities around the world, we’re seeing more and more farmers’ markets, and more young people getting back into farming. Grocery stores (even big national chains) are displaying local, natural, and organic foods with pride. The movements for healthy food are growing fast, and starting to become a political force.

In the chapters to come, you’re going to realize how powerful you are.

You’re going to see how your food choices can change your life – and change your world – at the same time.
You’ll see how it’s no accident that so many people are sick and suffering from preventable diseases. But you’ll also see that there is much we can do about it. You’ll find out how we can make personal choices that will, collectively, transform the health of millions.

There are so many areas in our world where we can feel powerless to truly make a difference. After all, the systemic problems of our times are an awful lot bigger than any one of us.

But when it comes to food – and health – you and I have immense power. We have the power to choose what we take into our bodies. We have the power to vote, with our dollars, for the kind of food system we want. And we have the power to contribute - in a tangible and meaningful way – to the building of a more healthy, sane, and sustainable future for ourselves, for our loved ones, and for our planet.

**Take The Quiz:** Are you a food revolutionary? Readers will be given a short quiz which will enable them to assess how engaged they are in building a healthy food future, on a score of 1-10. They’ll also be invited to take the quiz online if they want to see how their score compares to other quiz-takers, and to connect with a community of co-horts.

**Day 24: Cook organic – not the planet**

In this chapter, we’ll look at the perilous reality of climate change, and at the powerful impact that industrialized agriculture is having on it.
We’ll look at the role that meat, in particular, is having on the world’s climate. And at how a chemical-intensive industrial model of agriculture, combined with global distribution systems, is wreaking havoc on the planet’s sustainability.

But we’ll focus mainly on solutions. Large-scale solutions - like carbon sequestration which can pull carbon out of the air and put it in the soil; and organic agriculture, which can help to reduce humanity’s carbon footprint and to feed the world in times of changing climate. And personal solutions, like eating less meat, choosing to go organic, growing gardens, and buying local.

**Action:** Find a local CSA (Community Supported Agriculture) program, or farmer’s market.

**Day 25: Enjoy a Meat-free Monday (or any day)**

Large-scale animal agriculture is causing disastrous health, humanitarian, and environmental impacts. Eating a whole-foods plant-strong diet greatly enhances the health of your cardiovascular system, strengthens your immune system, and reduces your risk of cancer and many other illnesses. It also lowers your environmental footprint and saves a tremendous amount of greenhouse gas emissions.

The goal of the meat-free Monday movement is to help more people to take advantage of the health benefits of a plant-strong diet, and to contribute to an overall reduction in diet-fueled climate change. And it’s catching on! In fact, by some estimates up to 18% of the US population is participating in the Meatless Monday campaign. And some entire school districts, including the entire Los Angeles Unified School District, are now enrolled.
In this chapter we’ll look at the impact of the Meatless Monday campaign on public health and on the planet - and at how readers can engage with and help to implement it in schools and other institutions.

**Action:** Go meat-free for a day (or more!).

**Day 26: Make your food cruelty-free**

More than 90% of the American public believes that animals raised for food should be protected from abuse.

You don’t have to be a vegetarian or an animal rights activist to be appalled by the conditions in today’s “factory farms.” These farms raise animals in crowded, stressful and miserable conditions. Many of them never see the sun, or a blade of grass, in their entire lives.

In this chapter, we’ll look at the human-animal bond, we’ll look at how animals raised for food are being treated, and we’ll look at how readers can be true to their conscience if they choose to eat animal products.

I’ll also expose what the various “humane” labels and certifications mean – both good and bad. For example, many “cage-free” chickens are simply raised in huge indoor warehouses with one or two square feet per bird, in conditions so deplorable that the birds go crazy and have to have their beaks cut off so they don’t peck each other to death. Pasture-raised birds, on the other hand, are generally given at least 108 square feet per bird. If you want cruelty-free eggs, “pasture-raised” is a much more meaningful label than “cage-free.”
We’ll also look at the environmental impacts of industrialized animal agriculture, and at the effect that cruel conditions has on the physical and emotional health of consumers.

**Action:** Inspect the labels on the animal products in your fridge or local foods store – and say no to meat, eggs, and dairy that don’t meet your ethical standards.

**Day 27: Just say “no” to drugs in your food**

Antibiotics have saved tens of millions of lives. But rampant overuse is breeding antibiotic resistant bacteria (“superbugs”) that are no longer treatable by any known antibiotic.

As a result, our medical system is on the brink of being driven back into an era when common infections once again kill.

The biggest driving force that threatens the viability of antibiotics is their routine use in today’s factory farms. In the United States today, approximately 80% of antibiotics are being fed to animals in industrialized “factory” farms (which the industry calls Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations). In Europe, it’s more than 66%. These operations have become breeding grounds for antibiotic resistant bacteria.

If we do nothing, we are headed towards major disaster. The latest evidence suggests that 10 million people a year could die globally by 2050 as a result of antibiotics becoming powerless against common infections - more than currently die from cancer.
This chapter will lay out the problem. But then it will focus on a clear call to action – highlighting the courageous companies that are demanding an antibiotic-free supply chain for the animal products they sell to the consumer - and the powerful role that consumer demand is playing in catalyzing rapid change.

**Action:** Call a local restaurant. Ask to speak with an owner or manager. Ask if their meats are antibiotic-free. If they say yes, thank them. If they say no, tell them what you’ve learned and that you will be happy to patronize their restaurant when they go antibiotic free.

**Day 28: Go non-GMO**

The vast majority of corn, soybeans, canola, cotton, and sugar beets grown in the U.S. are genetically modified (GMOs). Monsanto and its allies claim that GMO crops reduce pesticide use, increase yields, reduce water consumption, and offer foods that are tastier and more nutritious. But in the 25 years since GM crops first came on the market, studies have found that they have led to higher pesticide use, and no meaningful improvement in flavor, nutrition, yield or water consumption. Instead, what they’ve created are plants that are engineered to withstand massive dosing of toxic herbicides, and plants that function as living pesticide factories. Monsanto’s Bt. corn, for example, is actually registered with the EPA as a pesticide.

This chapter will illustrate some of the health and environmental concerns with GMO foods and why consumers may want to avoid them. It will lay out where GMOs are found in the food supply. And it will explain how an informed consumer can choose to reject consumption of GMO foods if they want to do so.
Action: Enjoy a non-GMO day.

Day 29: Stand up for healthy food for all

Children living in poverty are seven times more likely to suffer from poor health, compared to children living in high-income households.

In this chapter I’ll explain how food has become one of the most critical social justice issues of our times, and why bringing healthy food to low-income communities is essential to the well-being of a civilized society. I’ll look at strategic points of intervention that are successfully bringing down obesity rates and expanding health in cities, states and nations, and at what readers can do to successfully participate in solutions.

I’ll share stories of hope including community gardens; food banks that are educating their users and offering healthy foods; and organizations and programs that are making a world of difference.

Action: Contact your local food bank to find out how you can contribute something healthy.

Day 30: Tell political leaders: Stop funding the bad guys with my tax money!

Since 1995 the USDA has handed out more than $277 billion in subsidies – primarily to growers of “commodities” crops like corn, soy, rice, and wheat. These crops are usually turned into cattle feed or refined and converted into sweeteners (like high fructose corn syrup) and processed foods.
But between 1995 and 2012, less than .03% (that’s less than $3 out of ever $10,000) of US farm subsidies went to growers of apples or vegetables. And it’s not just in the U.S. In fact, around the world, governments are subsidizing junk food at the expense of the foods we all know we should eat more of – creating a market distortion that pushes everybody, rich as well as poor, in the wrong direction.

Whether you’re a free market economist or a government intervention-loving socialist, this system is just plain crazy.

In this chapter, I’ll encourage and provide guidance for letters, meetings, and calls to elected officials - and provide suggested scripts as well as top lobbying tips.

**Action:** Write a letter, make a call, or set up a meeting with a local elected official.

**Day 31: Share the Food Revolution**

Readers will be invited to re-take teach of this book’s four quizzes and to compare their score with what it was when they started. Then they’ll be invited to reflect on how things have changed, and to post online about their top “win” – the most successful action they’ve taken that’s made the biggest difference to their life – in the last month.

They’ll be encouraged to share this book with someone they love, and to join in the online 31 Day Food Revolution community, if they haven’t already done so.
Action: Spread the word! Post online about a health victory from the last month. Hashtag #foodrevolution.

Closing Chapter: Your Personal Food Revolution

The closing chapter will summarize what we've been learning, share stories of transformation, illumine what's at stake, and galvanize the reader to put it all into action.

Appendix: Recipes for Health

The average American in the 1960s spent about an hour a day in the kitchen. Today that number is down to less than 27 minutes a day - less than any other population of people on the planet. And this trend is spreading throughout the world. As our lives speed up, many of us find that time spent cooking feels like a luxury we can no longer afford.

But studies also show that people who spend time preparing food eat more healthfully, and tend to enjoy their food lives more.

And the act of food preparation can be a source of deep satisfaction and fulfillment.
One of the keys to healthful kitchen efficiency is to find recipes you love – and to make them over and over again, until you have the process memorized and don’t need to look up the instructions. That’s when food preparation becomes truly efficient – and easy.

This section will provide some inspiration, and tips, to help bring more joy and ease into the preparation of food. And it will lead into the recipes appendix.

**Note:** I will include a collection of 20 delicious, whole foods, plant-based recipes. Recipes will be invited from, or have been offered by: Alicia Silverstone; Brenda Davis, RD; Caldwell Esselstyn, MD; Caryn Hartglass; Chris Wark; David Katz, MD; David Perlmutter, MD; Dean Ornish, MD; Frances Moore Lappé; Gene Baur; Joel Fuhrman, MD; Joseph Mercola, DO; Kris Carr; Mark Bittman; Mark Hyman, MD; Michael Greger, MD; Michael Pollan; Neal Barnard, MD; Rip Esselstyn; Ritamarie Loscalzo, DC; Robyn O’Brien; T. Colin Campbell, Ph.D; and Vani Hari, among others.

**Breakfast**

**Lunch**

**Dinner**

**Snacks**

**Deserts**
Resources

I’ll list organizations, books, and tools for further education and engagement.

About Ocean Robbins (Narrative)

“Ocean Robbins is a refreshing and inspiring voice of wisdom for our times. The more people who experience his work, the more hope we can have for our future.”

— Marianne Williamson, Author, A Return to Love

Ocean Robbins has been profoundly shaped by his family's food legacy.

His grandfather founded the world's most successful ice cream company, Baskin-Robbins (31 flavors).

His dad, John, grew up with an ice cream cone shaped swimming pool, and was groomed from early childhood to one day join in running the family company. But in his early 20s, John was offered that chance, and he said no. He walked away from a path that was practically paved with gold (and ice cream) to follow his own “rocky road” and become a million-copy bestselling author and internationally recognized leader on topics of food and health. John’s 1987 classic, *Diet for a New America*, has sold more than a million copies and been translated into, coincidentally, 31 languages.
Ocean grew up hearing family stories about his dad’s uncle, Burt Baskin, who died of heart disease at the age of 54. Burt was one of the most successful entrepreneurs in American history. He had wealth, and he had a family he loved. He also ate a lot of ice cream. And in time, he didn’t have his health, or his life. And thus, he left his children fatherless and his wife a widow.

Ocean also grew up watching his own grandfather, Irvine Robbins, undergo an epic transformation. When *Diet for a New America* came out, in 1987, Ocean’s grandfather, who had eaten the standard American diet plus a double scoop of ice cream on top for his whole life, was seriously overweight and suffering from high blood pressure and diabetes. In 1989, the elder Robbins’ doctors wound up recommending he read *Diet for a New America*, and follow its advice, if he wanted to live. In a remarkable twist of fate, Irvine Robbins read the book written by his renegade son, and changed his diet radically. He ate more vegetables and whole grains, and he even gave up ice cream. He lost 30 pounds, he got off all his diabetes and high blood pressure medications, and his golf game improved seven strokes.

He went on to live another 19 healthy years. He got a second chance, and he took it. His brother-in-law, Burt Baskin, never did get that second chance.

The Robbins family has seen, first-hand, what can happen when we follow the standard American diet,
and also what can happen when we make a change.

Ocean was born in a log cabin, to parents who were growing most of their own food. He was raised eating a natural, plant-strong, whole foods diet – in a family that talked about food a lot. In fact, his parents were so passionate about the topic that they almost named him “Kale.” Ocean’s passion for healthy eating turned into a natural foods bakery, “Ocean’s Bakery,” which he ran from the family kitchen starting at the age of 10. Ocean sold baked goods to 100+ customers around the neighborhood, and wound up on the front page of the Santa Cruz Sentinel newspaper, with the headline: “Boy Isn’t Very Rich, But He’s Got Dough.”

At age 16, eager to make his mark on the world and to inspire his generation in a healthy eating direction, Ocean tested out of high school and started a non-profit organization (YES!) with a teen-age friend. They organized a national tour, speaking to school assemblies about sustainability and the power of healthy food choices – and wound up reaching more than 650,000 students in live school assembly presentations.

Eventually Ocean started organizing week-long leadership training camps for diverse leaders in movements for social justice, health and sustainability. Over the course of twenty years, he and his organization, YES! (which he left in 2010 but which still continues to this day) led more than 100 week-long gatherings for changemakers from 65+ nations.
As Ocean travelled the world, he was struck again and again by the fundamental reality that everybody eats. In Israel and Palestine, in Brazil and in Iran, in Sweden and in Senegal – food is a point of connection, and a point of decision. What we eat sends out ripples that impact our environment, our healthcare systems, our economies, and our health. After directing YES! for 20 years, Ocean decided he could make the biggest impact if he placed the food revolution at the very center of his life’s work.

Starting in 2012, Ocean and his father founded the Food Revolution Network (FRN), for which he serves as CEO. Since that time, Ocean has worked directly with some of the most prominent food and celebrity leaders of our times – including Dr. Joel Furhman, Dr. Mark Hyman, Jane Goodall, Paul McCartney, Senator Cory Booker, Tony Robbins, Kris Carr, Dr. Dean Ornish, Dr. Christiane Northrup, Michael Pollan, Dr. Deepak Chopra, Dr. Sanjay Gupta, and many more.

FRN has reached more than 850,000 people who have collectively spent more than 2 million hours participating in the online summits, trainings and courses that Ocean has hosted. One FRN project helped 4,000 overweight participants to collectively lose more than 70,000 pounds. Other programs have helped countless people to say goodbye to heart disease, diabetes, and obesity, and to say yes to more energy, better sleep, and to longer and healthier lives.
For the past five years, Ocean has sent two or three newsletters weekly to a list that now includes 500,000+ active members. He’s led campaigns for GMO labeling that have engaged hundreds of thousands of people. And he has facilitated a series of meetings that have brought leaders from Coca-Cola, Nestle, Mars, Unilever and other food giants together with leaders from the Center for Food Safety, Consumers Union, and his own Food Revolution Network – to find common ground and help move the needle on food policy.

In the Food Revolution Network, Ocean has, along with his father, built an organization that is changing the course of food history, and helping everyday people to bring their food choices into integrity with what they most want for their lives.

He is also father of 16-year-old identical twin boys, has been married to FRN’s CFO, Phoenix Robbins, for 22 years, and serves as an adjunct professor in the Peace Studies Department for Chapman University.
Shorter Professional Bio

**Ocean Robbins** is co-founder and CEO of the Food Revolution Network, which is a global community of 500,000+ members standing up for healthy, sustainable, humane and delicious food for all. Working with his dad and colleague, 2-million copy bestselling author John Robbins, Ocean has hosted and organized online summits and classes which have reached more than 600,000 participants from 190+ nations. Ocean also serves as an adjunct professor in Chapman University's Peace Studies Department, and as founder of Youth for Environmental Sanity (YES!), a global non-profit organization which he launched at age 16, and directed for 20 years. Ocean has led live in-person events and public presentations for more than 200,000 people from 65+ nations. He is a recipient of many awards, including the Freedom's Flame Award, the Harmon Wilkinson Award for distinguished contribution to the humanities and social sciences, and the national Jefferson Award for Outstanding Public Service.