

FOOD FREEDOM

Why Diets Don't Work &
Mind Body Awareness Does

assist
personal training



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FOOD FREEDOM

"Change the way you feel about yourself and you'll change the way you look at the world" Annette Shepherd

INTRODUCTION

In the years before Annette entered the health and fitness industry she was addicted to training. She was training before work and after work. As far as she knew at the time, she was eating healthy but her weight just wouldn't budge any further. With the amount of training she was doing, she could have been ripped but she was far from it. Instead she always looked a little puffy and her stubborn pot belly was going nowhere.

In 2012 Annette saw a Naturopath who arranged an IgG test for her. Her results came back indicating she had a severe sensitivity to dairy, wheat, nuts and a mild sensitivity to soy. She walked out of that appointment rather overwhelmed and the transition to even cleaner eating proved to be a long and inconsistent one. That was until she began learning more about how the body functions and behavioural cycles. She was able to arm herself with knowledge that brought her freedom from the foods affecting her life in more ways than she was initially aware of.

These days we have many alternatives to those foods but the more Annette learnt, the more she began to value how much food is our medicine and also how many ingredients and chemicals can cause inflammation in the body.



Over the years Annette attended a number of nutrition and biochemistry courses and seminars which has resulted in her being able to heal her gut and reintroduce some of those foods she originally tested sensitive too, if/when she chooses to consume them.

What Annette is most passionate about now is helping her clients understand how stress and inflammation lead to poor health and using food and exercise to turn it all around.

In 2014 Annette became a qualified Applied Muscle Testing Practitioner. She began using AMT to test clients to ensure foods causing inflammation were replaced with more nutritious sources, for faster results. Today we use AMT for many things, one of those, to create personalised nutrition guidelines based upon our clients needs too.

WHY DIETS & MEAL PLANS DON'T WORK

Big statement because yes, short term diet and meal plans can be great to follow to see sudden changes in your body composition but if the behaviours and reasons why you weren't already eating the way the diet or meal plan suggests, then chances are, you have found yourself trying diet after diet.

Also, when it comes to diets and meal plans, what works best for one person may do absolutely nothing for someone else, and a diet your body responded to well in the past won't necessarily be what works best for you again in the future because our bodies are always changing.

As for meal plans, if your goal is to create a lifestyle change and long term sustainable results, you can guarantee there isn't a meal plan in the world that you will happily follow 100% for the rest of your life.

Overuse of the same food, eaten the same way, for too long becomes boring and unsatisfying. Not eating enough variety can leave the body deficient in important vitamins and nutrients.

Jumping from one diet to the next when you hit a plateau is stopping you from addressing what's really in the way of you seeing further changes in body composition and following diets and meal plans that contain foods your body

finds disruptive, even if these foods are “healthy” foods, means no matter how much you train and how strictly you follow the plan, you just will not shift those last few stubborn kilos.

This is why diets and meal plans don’t work.

When it comes to lifestyle changes, a whole lot more is required than just “doing” the diet and “doing” the exercise.

To hold onto a transformation, we need to address behaviours that got us in this situation in the first place. We need to be mindful of our thoughts, behaviours and actions so that we can maintain results. A diet or meal plan does not teach this.

It’s important that you enjoy the process of getting to your goal, while loving and respecting your body, so that you understand how to maintain the results you’ve worked hard to achieve without any rebounding or causing danger to your health down the track.

Diets and meal plans will give you a short term fix but only until you get to a point where you can’t stomach that soup, shake or omelette anymore.

The word “diet” is often associated to negative connotations too. Making the dieter feel like they’re depriving themselves of “all the good foods”. The result of this is that many fail soon after they start or binge their way back as soon as they finish.

The key to success is understanding your body and the nutritional benefits of foods instead of just focusing on calories in vs calories out. Instead of following a diet that just removes calories, our diet needs to focus on consuming more nutritional foods. Eating lots of nutritious food will help keep you satisfied instead of feeling deprived, it will also help your body function better doing things you want it to do, like fat burning instead of being in a stressed state looking for nutrients!

Our bodies are incredibly complex. Some of us lose weight easily by consuming a diet high in plant foods, while others need a diet high in fats. Some of us need fattier cuts of protein while others do better off leaner cuts of protein. Depriving yourself of essential nutrients can lead to more serious problems down the track. On the other hand, cutting calories too much can also starve your body from seeing results!

When it comes to changing the way you eat, it's important you understand the more intricate workings of your body and nutrition and track your progress to make adjustments as necessary.

Eating nutritious food is empowering because it gives you choice to choose foods you know nourish and help build, fuel or heal your body. A healthy body can't help but get results so why put yourself on a "diet" when you can at times have your cake and eat it too, literally!

After helping thousands of people change their lives through healthier eating and exercise, we continue to educate, test and measure our clients to ensure that we have them eating foods that their bodies digest well.

What's optimal for each person differs but a great start is ensuring your meals consist of plenty of plant foods, quality protein sources, good fats and the right type of carbs at the right time based on your bodies needs and goals.

Reducing or learning how to cope better with stress is also extremely important. The foods you consume can also cause stress within your body, as can a training plan that does not take into consideration your lifestyle and past health history.

Avoiding inflammatory foods will also place less stress on the digestive and/or immune systems, assisting the body to function optimally so that food can be turned into fuel to be used as energy, not stored as fat.

It all comes down to a healthy balance of work, rest and play. Allowing our body to come out of its high stress fight or flight response, known as the sympathetic nervous system, and spend some time to allow our parasympathetic nervous system help the body rest and digest too.

Apart from looking and feeling great, freedom from food guilt can also be enjoyed when you eat for health as your norm. Eating out, even special occasions like birthdays and Christmas, are never anything to be feared but rather times where you can enjoy good food with the good company you're in.

The right diet for you is the one you see results from that makes you look good and feel great, physically and emotionally, most importantly, it's the one you can stick too.

WHAT IS MIND BODY AWARENESS?

Mind body awareness starts with paying attention to the way our body is communicating to us by means of our thoughts, behaviours, actions and symptoms.

Due to the busy lives we are all living, many of us fail to stop and listen to what our body is trying to tell us. We're caught up being here and there, focused on what we need to be doing next and more often than not, we fail to often take action to improve our health and wellness until symptoms begin causing disruption in the body that we no longer want to tolerate.



This process may start out treating symptoms like indigestion with an antacid, digestive pain with ibuprofen, headaches with Panadol, allergies with anti-histamines. Symptoms are the bodies way of communicating with us to pay attention to what we are doing or surrounding ourselves with, in an effort to address these things to try bring us back into homeostasis. Masking or not addressing the issue behind the symptom can lead to further disruptions. Some common disruptions we see in our industry come in the form of gained weight, inflammation, declining health or disease.

The foods we eat sends us signals to pay attention too. Feedback to help us understand our behaviour, action or choice.

Our symptoms are feedback mechanisms to guide us toward more positive behaviours that serve us well.

HEALTHY LIVING TIPS

Here are some things you can do now to help you break free from dieting and become more aware of what your body wants and needs for better health and wellness so you can enjoy your life long into the future!

TIP 1: DATA IS VALUABLE!

Keep a food diary to track how you feel within the hour of finishing a meal, along with what you ate and what time you ate. You may also wish to track water intake and how regular your bowel movements are too. Do this for one week without making any changes to your diet, just monitoring your current eating habits, honouring your cravings and seeing how they are affecting you now. You will find a copy of our Wellness Diary Template and our Cravings Worksheet at the end of this booklet. Fill in this template for a week to help you become aware of the foods you are eating. This is the first step to understanding what and how foods are affecting you through mind body awareness.

TIP 2: LEARN FROM SLIP UPS

Own your choices and understand the fair exchange to get where you want to be. There are benefits and drawbacks to everything. Understanding what these are can help you create change. While there's more benefits than drawbacks, creating change will be difficult. If you find yourself making excuses for your choices and playing down your slip up, work out what action you can take to avoid it reoccurring again.

TIP 3: MAKE THE BEST CHOICE YOU CAN

Always make the best choice you can in the situation you're in and if you keep getting caught out, start looking at actions you can take to be better prepared next time. Our online program Habit Overhaul teaches you exactly how to do this should you need further help with this step. You can find more at www.assistpt.com/workshops

TIP 4: REPLACE SNACKS WITH PROPER MEALS

Focus on consuming delicious healthy meals every time you eat. Snacks can elevate your blood sugar levels leading to another crash later in the day or the need to reach out for high caloric snacks that interfere with fat loss.

A healthy and satisfying “meal” contains a quality source of protein, plant food and a source of good quality fat. Work on hitting the meal criteria first, then work on portion sizes. Eat enough nutritious calories to avoid binging.

TIP 5: ENJOY QUALITY FOODS

Eat good quality fresh foods – wild caught, grass fed, organic, home grown. Buy “in season” and local where you can – local produce suppliers, farms, farmers markets etc. If you enjoy your food, you’re more likely to eat it.

TIP 6: EAT COLOURFUL MEALS

Eat more greens and lower carb vegetables daily. Never force feed, increase gradually, eat all the colours of the rainbow. To change body composition, every meal should contain plant food and enough protein.

TIP 7: EAT REGULARLY

Do not wait too long between meals that you get so hungry and make bad food choices – eat!

Do not eat less throughout the day because you want to indulge in “cheat foods” or junk foods at night either. Keep up your protein, fats and plant food intake throughout the day. This way you are less likely to overeat.

TIP 8: EAT SNACKS AND SWEETS IN GOOD COMPANY

Eat high calorie foods in good company. You will be less likely to overeat in good company! If you’re out for a meal and you want dessert, have a proper meal first with a complete protein source and enough fibrous plant food to fill you up then implement the ‘one sitting rule’. This means once your bum leaves the seat, the meal is over, no going back for more.

TIP 9: DO NOT EAT FOODS THAT CAUSE INFLAMMATION

Do not eat foods that your body is sensitive too. An AMT session can identify these foods for you. See section in this resource titled “What you need to know now”

TIP 10: START REDUCING TAKEAWAY FOODS

Swap takeaway for eating out at a nice restaurant and order something you wouldn’t normally eat at home – lamb shanks, oysters, mussels, sushi, seaweeds etc.

TIP 11: START YOUR SHOP FROM THE PERIMETER OF THE SUPERMARKET

To help avoid filling the trolley with junk foods, always start your shop by shopping from the perimeter of the supermarket before heading down the aisles.

TIP 12: EVERY MEAL CAN TAKE YOU CLOSER TO YOUR GOAL

Act as if you are the healthiest version of yourself who has already achieved your goals. Would you make the same choices? *A healthy body creates the right environment for successful weight loss and remember every meal is an opportunity to take you one step closer to your goal.*

TIP 13: WATER IS VITAL FOR WELLBEING AND SEEING RESULTS

Aim for 1 litre per 25kg of body weight and more on training days. Build up gradually. All the facts on why water is essential to your body transformation and how you can increase your intake easily can be found in our special edition blog titled [Water....Why it's so Important & What You Need to Know](#).

TIP 14: GET CREATIVE WITH YOUR COOKING

If you think your food is boring, remember you made it that way.

- Eat rainbows! Fill your meals with lots of deeply coloured vegetables.
- Add ½ to 1 bunch of parsley, coriander, mint, dill or basil into salads or wilt into winter vegetables.
- Add cinnamon, turmeric, rosemary, oregano, garlic, cloves, oregano into smoothies, broths, soups.
- Cook rice or vegetables in broth.
- Add fruits, berries, nuts and seeds to your salads or stir fries.
- Use different cooking methods to excite the taste buds. Try steaming, roasting, BBQ, stir frying.
- Variety is the key. Rotate through your choices. One week meals prepped from white fish, red meat, one week white meat, wild caught salmon or seafood. Frozen vegetables and fresh vegetables etc.
- Coat meats and vegetables in nuts or seeds and your choice of seasonings.
- Add a little gluten free nitrate free bacon to vegetable dishes.
- Occasional additions of coconut cream and gluten free condiments may be ok too.

TIP 15: NUTRITION IS A DO WITH PROCESS

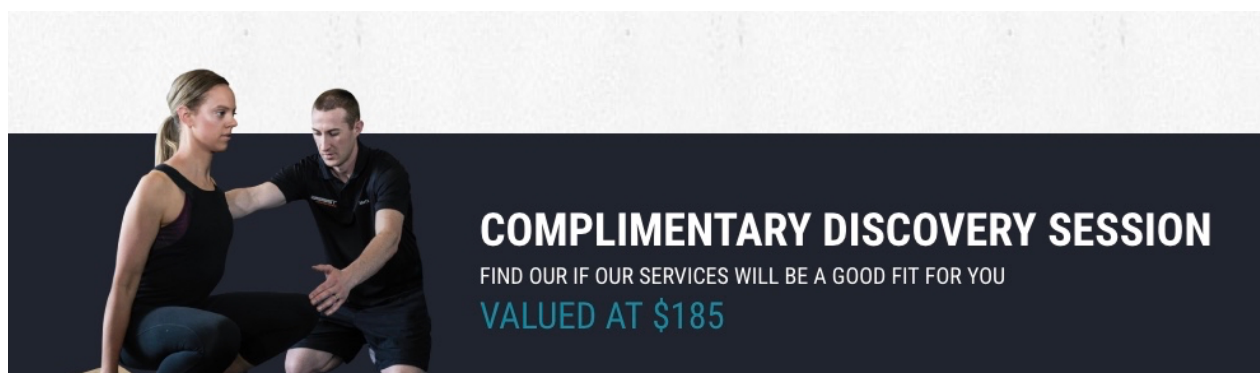
Nutrition is a do with process, meaning that what is best for you now depends on your body, your goals, your lifestyle, your habits, what support you need and your relationship with food. Once you begin implementing changes, what is best for you may need to be altered to help you get where you want to be.

TIP 16: GET TRAINING!

And not just any old training, train the way your body needs you to be training right now. This means training in a way that doesn't add extra stress on your autonomic systems. Every muscle is linked to our sympathetic or parasympathetic nervous system. Too much emphasis on one more than the other leads to chronic tension. Smash sessions are easy to dish out but understanding a clients physiology and matching their training to that is the difference between a good trainer and a professional trainer. Wellness occurs when the sympathetic and parasympathetic nervous systems are balanced. Maximum wellness occurs with a balance of challenge and support, of which the frequency and amount of each differs depending on your environment and the way you handle stress. If you want to know more about training with a coach who understands how to get the best results for their clients while improving their health and wellness, head back to our website and redeem your complimentary Discovery Session have a chat about your goals and let us help find the best training solution for you.

TIP 17: ALWAYS REACH OUT FOR HELP!

Your car needs to be serviced by a mechanic, even the best coaches in the world have mentors. You are not alone. Don't aim for perfection, aim for progress. If you would personalised help to bring about a long term lifestyle change, reach out to us for help!



FREEDOM FROM SUGAR CRAVINGS

When we think of sugar, we often think of biscuits, cakes, lollies and soft drink but sugar is also added to many cereals, fruit juices, canned fruit, tomato sauce and protein bars.

Then we have the foods that they body converts into sugar, becoming glucose in the blood stream. These are foods which contain grains such as wheat, quinoa and rice, processed foods like bread, pasta, chips and crackers, as well as other starchy plant based carbohydrates like potato, corn and bananas.

Sugar has the effect of altering hormone response and brain function so that when we eat it, we crave more of it. Dopamine, which makes us feel good, increases when we eat sugar but at the same time, the hormone leptin, which suppresses hunger and signals fullness, is suppressed.

The American Heart Association recommends to limit added sugar intake to 100 calories a day, which is equal to about 24 grams or 6 teaspoons.



When it comes to consuming sugar, be aware it's going to come at a price, the price of additional cravings in the days that follow.

Overcoming a sugar addiction does take time however you can make simple switches to healthier forms of sugar by following the following tips.

The first 24 hours after consuming refined sugar are the hardest but in your meals, include roasted vegetables like sweet potato, pumpkin, carrots and onions seasoned with a good quality salt (I recommend Murray

River Salt) and make sure you eat satisfying meals; vegetables paired with your protein and good fats. Even more importantly, make sure your water intake stays up too. Ensuring you're drinking enough water will stop your brain confusing messages of hunger with dehydration. Check out our article on [Water, Why it's so important and What you need to know](#) to find out more.

To overcome sugar cravings, we recommend roasting vegetables in coconut oil and cook them so they start to caramalise. Replace all processed sweets with raw cacao (drinking cacao with hot water also acts as an appetite suppressant), blueberries or strawberries and avoid sugar in all processed forms.

Once you have overcome your refined sugar cravings and you feel like something sweet, continue eating your berries and other fruits and get yourself a good quality Dark Chocolate (min 80% cacao) which is healthy for most people in moderation.



OVERCOMING EMOTIONAL EATING

Food freedom comes when we are no longer controlled by the foods we eat. If the thought of having to give up foods makes you nervous, this is also a very good task to do.

To help you create mind body awareness, I have put together some questions for you to consider as you go about your meals over the next 24 hours.

There is always some type of emotional state before we eat something. Follow these steps to identify if your foods are controlling your life or giving you freedom.

1. What is the emotional state you experience at the moment you begin thinking about eating?
2. What's the feeling you have the minute before you're about to eat it?
 - a. Try to identify the true meaning of how you believe this food you're about to eat will make you feel. If you feel it will make you feel "better", what does better mean? Is it happy, connected, love, excitement, distraction or something else.
3. How do you feel
 - a. Is your first bite as good as you thought it was going to be?
 - b. What about your second bite?
 - c. Is your third bite still as good as you thought it would be?
 - d. What about your fourth bite?
 - e. How do you feel as soon as your finished?
 - f. How do you feel 30 minutes later?
 - g. How do you feel 60 minutes later?
 - h. How do you feel 2 hours later?

Record your answers on our Cravings Worksheet at the end of this booklet.

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW NOW

Forget diets, diets often lead to food guilt. Instead, focus on health and loving your body!

Love what your body does for you, appreciate the warning signals it's sending you in the form of symptoms. Those symptoms are a feedback system, an opportunity to learn a lesson and create changes that will benefit you.

Weight loss is simply a by-product of being healthy. If you focus on health, giving your body what it needs to function better mentally and physically, you will drop weight if you have weight to lose.

Connecting in with our body and how we feel after consuming foods gives us clues as to what foods are best for us.

Foods I commonly refer to as inflammatory foods are foods your body has become sensitive too, either from over consumption or perhaps due to poor gut health, you don't digest them well. These foods can also affect our immune system and if ignored, manifest into a range of diseases that fall under the term commonly referred to as Metabolic Syndrome or a Metabolic Disorder.

The most common food sensitivities are wheat, gluten, dairy, soy, eggs, nuts, nightshades and corn.

This does not mean you should cut out all these foods because some of these foods may be a super food for you. Each of us have a unique biochemical make up which influences what our bodies respond best too.

However, when it comes to fat burning, if you have a sensitivity to something like gluten or dairy, even foods derived from wheat or dairy, or just consuming a tiny bit of gluten can be enough to disrupt fat burning in the body if these are foods you have trouble digesting.

If you have weight to lose and you're struggling to see results, you can bet you have a food sensitivity that needs to be addressed. You can find out what foods you are sensitive too in your first nutrition session with us. After that, we can give you a personalised nutrition guideline to follow to get you started on the path toward better health so you can see faster results from your training too.

If you're unsure what foods are inflammatory for you, book in to see us for an Applied Muscle Testing nutrition consultation or if you are also after some personal training, our 12 week packages have options to get your Applied Muscle Testing done at a discount when you join us for training too.

WANT TO KNOW MORE?

Annette also works as a mind body coach offering workshops and mentoring using a mix of healthy lifestyle coaching, nutrition guidance and personal development. She is available to work with online or face to face.

Assist PT have been offering a personalised approach to the communities health and fitness goals since 2008. We know what stops people making progress and how to work around it so that those we work with see long term results.

If you would like help making a healthy lifestyle change, one of our workshops might be just what you need. Visit www.assistpt.com/workshops or book in for a free consultation to discuss your health and fitness goals. Email info@assistpt.com or contact Annette on 0433 445 505.

WELLNESS DIARY TEMPLATE

DAY: _____ DATE: _____

Sleep - Total Hours		Time you got up	
If woke up during the night - what time			
Type of training completed today			
Time training started and finished			
Water consumption			
MEAL 1 _____ AM/PM		(symptoms, feelings, reintroduction or notes)	
MEAL 2 _____ AM/PM		(symptoms, feelings, reintroduction or notes)	
MEAL 3 _____ AM/PM		(symptoms, feelings, reintroduction or notes)	
MEAL 4 _____ AM/PM		(symptoms, feelings, reintroduction or notes)	
MEAL 5 _____ AM/PM		(symptoms, feelings, reintroduction or notes)	
MEAL 6 _____ AM/PM		(symptoms, feelings, reintroduction or notes)	

Please ensure you book in a time to review this with your Assist PT Trainer so we can help you further

CRAVINGS WORKSHEET

FOOD ITEM:	
What is your emotional state at the moment you thought about this food?	
What feeling do you believe this food will bring you?	
Did your first bite bring you the feeling you were seeking? Was it as good as you thought it would be?	
How did your second bite taste?	
What about your third bite?	
How are you feeling now, four bites in? Describe how you feel now.	
How do you feel as soon as your finished?	
How do you feel 30 minutes later?	
How do you feel 1 hour later?	
How do you feel 2 hours later?	

If you need more help, book in a coaching session with Annette so she can help you further info@assistpt.com

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