

Six Things Absent from Unsuccessful Diet Programs

By Sam Benavides

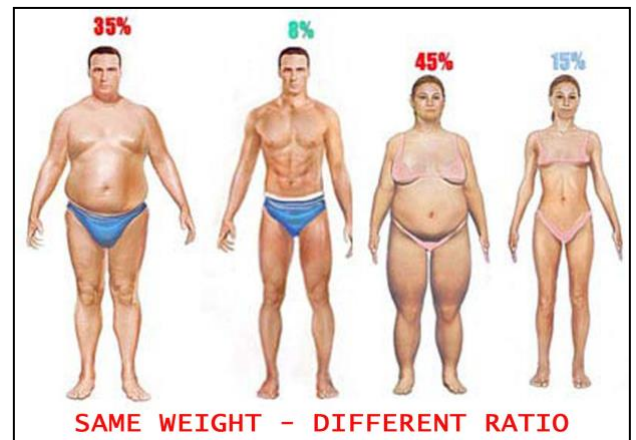


Diet or weight loss programs abound. All promise fast, easy weight loss that for the most part function on a principle of deprivation of some sort, either by calorie restriction, low carbs, high protein or a meal replacement. Whereas some people do lose weight in the short term, most of these diet programs fail to offer any kind of sustainable, long-term or permanent weight loss. In fact, according to ABC News, in 2012 there were over [100 million dieters](#), each making four to five attempts per year at losing weight. This is failure plain and simple.

So what's missing from these diet programs to make them so unsuccessful? What would make them credible, reliable and trustworthy? Here are six things I believe are absent from unsuccessful weight loss programs:

1. **Admitting the truth that losing weight is hard.** Most weight loss programs pride themselves in promoting losing weight as EASY. It's not easy, IT'S HARD. Most people who've struggled with weight for years have most likely impacted their metabolic functioning to the point of damage from ill-nutrition and toxicity. Therefore, the first step is to acknowledge that a long-term, successful and sustainable weight loss strategy is to identify the source of the problem; in many cases, the core problem is psychological and/or emotional in conjunction with little to no food education. Admitting this can be hard and often times takes years to achieve. Since diet programs are just quick-fix solutions, they don't address this issue.

2. **Using a body fat scan instead of the scale.** Using the scale to measure health makes about as much sense as squeezing an orange peel to get the juice, because it's not weight that is the problem, but excess fat. Our bodies put on fat for several reasons, energy storage is just one of them. Most diets use the scale to measure total weight without measuring the ratio of fat to lean muscle. Scanning the body for fat as a ratio to lean tissue tells a better story of how healthy a person is, because you can be thin,



but metabolically obese. If the truth be told about why a person gains weight to begin with and which fat is unhealthy, the diet would cease to be a diet and become an education in health and fitness.

3. A detoxification protocol.

For most people, the body puts on fat as a result of too many toxins at a rate faster than it can safely eliminate them. This is not something that happens overnight. Years of continual exposure to chemicals in our water, air, food, household products, etc., and yes, even stress, play havoc with our metabolism. Combine this with a significant lack of nutrient-dense food to help

us “detox” this onslaught of chemicals, and the body has no choice but to compensate by creating fat cells to sequester the toxins for a day when it has the needed phytonutrients, and in the right proportion, to rid them out of the body. The problem is that day never comes, and most diets fail to address the toxicity issue.



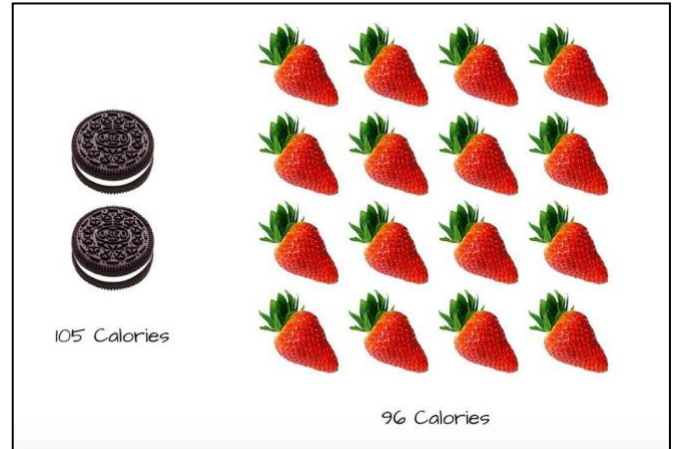
4. A qualifying application to determine risk factors for failure.

If you knew you were destined to fail at your weight loss goal, would you still spend the money on the program? Of course not. Yet the statistics are that people keep trying; over and over again, year after year. The problem is most diets are quick-fix solutions to a life-long problem of [food addiction](#). If diet programs would just be honest with you on the food addiction issue, they would cease to be a diet program and become a [Food Addicts Anonymous](#) support group. This would lead you to face the issues that affect your chances of success. This could be: poor eating habits growing up; too easy access to the wrong foods; food is comfort from emotional trauma; or a combination of these or other factors. A successful program would prequalify you by asking questions that would help you see your areas of weakness and offer ways on how to overcome them. Diet programs that promise you can eat your “favorite foods” and still lose weight are like an



alcoholics anonymous group meeting at a cocktail bar to help you get “sober.” To minimize your risk of failure, and maximize your chances for success, you need help being honest with your problem issues before you spend the money.

5. Proper food education. The main reason diets fail at offering sustainable, long-term weight (fat) loss, is the lack of education about our food. To put things into proper context, consider that at the turn of the last century (1900), 50 percent of the population were farmers, by the year 2000, that number dropped to less than 2 percent. This reveals what we already know: most of us know little to nothing about where real food comes from; we know nothing about the seed, the soil, the seasons, or the nutritional value. Our relationship to food is mostly with packaged foods because they're convenient. Our decisions are based on marketing propaganda or the USDA's food pyramid, the latter, some would say, is heavily influenced by the meat and dairy industry. As a consequence, most diet programs tend to include meat, then focus on a manipulation of macronutrients (carbs, protein or fat) to achieve the desired weight loss. In the absence of any significant discussion of the role micronutrients in whole, plant foods have in a healthy metabolism (and corresponding disease prevention), the selection of foods proposed by these diet programs is almost entirely related to an artificial reality.



Case in point, breakfast cereals that are mostly sugar play NO “part of a nutritious breakfast.” Instead, successful weight loss programs would: help you distinguish the difference between a craving and true hunger; teach the functionality of phytonutrients to health; teach that whole plant foods that require you actually chew your food cooperates with the body's signaling of satiety; encourage nutrient dense foods and discourage calorie dense foods, and show you how to prepare them; teach about intermittent fasting and nourishing with whole plant foods as promoting insulin sensitivity, healthy hormone regulation, detoxifying, and the role this has on getting better sleep. In short, you are what you eat—so know your food!

6. A vision for lifestyle change. The bottom line is that most diets fail because they don't confront dieters with a true lifestyle change. Most diets acquiesce to dieters' desire for a quick-fix solution and avoid offering them what their bodies really need for healthy, sustainable and



permanent weight (fat) loss. A vision for true change would include recommendations for adopting a whole-food, plant-based diet; detoxifying plant foods; appropriate and regular physical activity in the fresh outdoors; adequate hydration; adequate sleep (rest); stress management; and the importance of trusting in our creator God for our life purpose. These are necessary for a balanced lifestyle that will promote healthy “weight” the rest of your life. The truth is that permanent weight (excess fat) loss requires a permanent change in lifestyle. Like defecting from your mother land to the new

world, you must be willing to leave the indulgent lifestyle of the “American way” and make the necessary changes for true wellness, never to look back. In other words, change your life, and your body will follow.