

# HUMAN NUTRITION

## WELLNESS CHALLENGE

A 90  
Day  
Companion  
Guide



KERI WATKINS WEBB

# *Human Nutrition Wellness Challenge*

**A 90-Day Companion Guide**

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## *Introduction*

It is not a coincidence that the diet industry is a \$60 billion-a year-business. The industry promises to make weight loss easier. It promises to deliver the body of your dreams without the hard work, sacrifice, and self-discipline required to shed pounds and improve your overall health and appearance. Unfortunately, their promises are too good to be true and you are left feeling discouraged and looking for the next fad diet!

The truth is, there is no magic pill and the only way to achieve long-term success is to adopt a healthy lifestyle of proper nutrition and exercise.

The Human Nutrition Wellness 90-day Challenge is not a “diet.” It’s a lifestyle that you continue to practice long after the 90-days have ended.

*“Challenges are not sent to destroy you. They're sent to promote, increase and strengthen you.”*

*-Malika E. Nura*

# *The 4 Phases of the Challenge*

*“If you are busy focusing on the falling bricks, you will never realize that they are truly stepping stones you need to cross over to the next phase of your life.”*

*- Kemi Sogunle*

## *What is it?*

The Human Nutrition 90-Day Wellness Challenge was created by health enthusiast and life style coach, Keri Watkins Webb, to be used in conjunction with her book, *Blood, Sweat and Prayers*. For ninety days, participants commit to adopting a healthier lifestyle by participating in weekly challenges designed to increase energy, reduce weight and jumpstart creativity.

## *Is it just about weight loss?*

Although the Human Nutrition 90-Day Wellness Challenge includes a weight loss component, it is hoped that participants will transform their mind, body and spirit through valuable nutrition education and phenomenal lifestyle tips that they can implement right away. It is the goal of the Challenge, for participants to become healthy, in every aspect of their lives, as they lose weight.

## *How much does it cost?*

The Challenge is FREE to anyone who wants to participate!

## *How do I join?*

For more information contact Keri Watkins-Webb via email at [keriwatkinswebb@gmail.com](mailto:keriwatkinswebb@gmail.com) or visit [empoweredlivingnyc.com](http://empoweredlivingnyc.com).

## *Phase One: Educate – 30 days*

*“As I see it, every day you do one of two things; build health or produce disease in yourself.”*

*–Adelle Davis*

Weight-loss campaigns boast expressions like, “Lose 10 pounds in 10 days.” Or, “Wear a magic girdle that will enable you to lose weight while you are sleeping.” Although these diet fads are myths, they embody concepts we want to hear. And, because we want to hear them, we regard them as truth. In doing so, however, we set ourselves up for the only outcome we can expect if we base our actions on lies: failure.

Consuming a diet with proper nutrition is a difficult balancing act for most people. There are many factors that can make maintaining a healthy diet challenging, among them the tendency to eat "junk" food or other unhealthy items, or eating too much or too little. One thing that many people do not often anticipate that can make maintaining a proper diet extremely difficult or even impossible, however, is a lack of knowledge or understanding about food nutrition.

It's time that we educate ourselves about our bodies – what works and what does *not* work. Our inaccurate perceptions of health and what foods are best have compelled us to look to the wrong sources for answers. And when we look in the wrong places for solutions, all we gain is excess weight that we can't get rid of, health problems that we shouldn't have, and a great deal of stress that could have been avoided.

### ***How We Learn***

Everyone learns best in a different way. Some people are readers, and can virtually see certain parts of text being highlighted as they read. Others are listeners, and remember minute details from stories they heard years ago.

Think about some things that you remember very well and then about how you originally learned them.

Did you draw a diagram or picture? Did you instantly teach what you learned to someone else? Or did you just sit quietly and absorb what you just heard?

Essentially, there are 3 ways we learn:

1. Written text (books, blog posts, magazines, research papers)
2. Audio (podcasts, interviews, radio shows, audio books)
3. Video (Youtube, online courses, documentaries)

For the purposes of this Challenge, we are going to explore several documentaries in order to increase our knowledge of health and wellness. For the first 30 days of the Challenge we will be watching 4 documentaries/films.

### ***Phase One Challenge Description:***

The education component of the Challenge is specifically designed so that participants will be better equipped to choose a diet that is right for their health. During the first 30 days of the Challenge, participants will gain a basic understanding of the effects of food on the body by reading various articles and texts and viewing documentaries.

- Week 1: Watch the documentary, *Hungry for Change* (2012)
- Week 2: Watch the documentary, *Fat, Sick and Nearly Dead* (2014)
- Week 3: Watch the documentary, *Food Matters* (2008)
- Week 4: Watch the documentary, *Simply Raw: Reversing Diabetes in 30 Days* (2009)

Please use the *Video Viewing Guide*, located at the back of the guide, to jot down any important ideas and/or concepts you have learned.

During Phase One of the Challenge, you will also be preparing to eliminate certain foods and beverages from your diet. You can use the food journal template, found in the back of this guide, to track your daily eating habits. Pay attention to any reactions you may have to certain foods and indicate them in the column labeled, “symptoms.” For example, if you feel bloated after you eat a bagel, write that down. This may be an indication that you have an intolerance to gluten or wheat. If you see that it is a consistent pattern, you may choose to eliminate bagels during Phase Two of the Challenge.

The next few pages provide basic guidelines to begin your journaling journey.

### ***If you bite it, then write it!***

**Why food journals are an important tool to lifestyle change...** Did you know that writing down what you eat can help you analyze your food habits and make healthier lifestyle changes? It might not sound like the most exciting way to lose weight or spark an exercise routine, but it really *does* work. A [recent study](#) of weight loss in overweight or obese women published in the journal of the *Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics* found that women who kept food journals consistently lost more weight than those who did not.

Today, tracking what you consume is even easier with a host of online food journals and smartphone apps to suit every need. But, whether you use an app or a piece of paper, when you jot down your eating habits, you become more mindful about what you are doing—and that’s why it works. But, as with most things in life, perseverance is the key to success. So, do your best to keep up the journaling practice for at least 21 days straight



in order for it to become a habit.

***Here are some tips to begin the journaling process:***

**1. Record everything you eat and drink immediately!**

Be sure to record what you're doing while you're eating—listening to music, watching TV, etc.

**2. Describe how you felt while you ate: angry, sad, happy, nervous, starving, bored?**

Be honest. It's a journal, not a newsletter, and no one has to see it but you.

**3. At the end of each day, examine how your emotions affected your eating.**

Often, after analyzing your food habits, you may realize that you do not always eat because you are hungry.

***Education Phase Tip:***

Your health is in your hands. To get healthy and to stay healthy, you must be informed and proactive. When you learn something new that you want to incorporate in your life, write it down. Then, find a place that you frequently look at and post it there (like your bathroom mirror or your refrigerator door) so that you can be constantly reminded of the change you want to see in yourself.

## *Phase Two: Eliminate – 15 days*

*“Whether you’re trying to lose weight, lower your stress level, or looking for new ways to eat healthy, each day is a new day to tackle your goals.”*

*- Anonymous*

We become unhealthy when toxins clog our cells, and our bodies become inflamed. These toxins come from the food we eat. For example, diabetes, heart disease, obesity, high blood pressure, and heart disease can all be linked to the harmful effects of sugar on the body.

My friend, Michael, is a 42-year-old man, who is 5’7” tall, and weighs 326 pounds. He has an 8-year history of Type 2 diabetes and frequently complains of fatigue, difficulty losing weight, and depression. He has noticed a marked decrease in his energy level, particularly after lunch. He realizes that he has gained a tremendous amount of weight since being placed on insulin 7 years ago. His weight has continued to rise over the past 6 years, and he is presently at the highest weight he has ever been. He says that every time he tries to cut down on his eating he feels shaky and unstable. He does not follow any specific diet and has been so fearful of hypoglycemia that he often eats extra snacks.

His doctor has repeatedly advised him to lose weight and exercise to improve his health status. He complains that the pain in his knees and ankles makes it difficult to do any exercise. In addition to being a diabetic, Michael also suffers from sleep apnea, high blood pressure, and elevated cholesterol. Upon his last visit to the doctor, Michael received a huge wake up call. Instead of reporting the results of his last physical, the doctor simply looked him in the eye and said, “Change or die.”

Although Michael wants to change, he does not know how. He knows that the food he is eating is having a negative impact on his health and should be eliminated, but he is stuck in a cyclical and destructive pattern that he does not know how to get out of.

Many of us are like Michael. We repeatedly eat foods that we know are not good for us. This type of eating results in negative consequences like joint pain, chronic fatigue, food allergies, lethargy, obesity, diabetes, heart disease, acid reflux, etc. This type of eating also manifests in mental, emotional, and social disorders that disrupt our lives. But, despite these challenges, we still continue to engage in negative eating patterns because we would rather suffer with certain health conditions than give up the foods that we have grown to love.

That’s the bad news. Here’s the good news: You can reverse, remediate, eliminate, or improve most, if not all, adverse health conditions. You can adopt a healthy lifestyle that will afford you the simple pleasures you desire - like playing with your children/grandchildren in the park, like wearing an outfit without squeezing into it, like walking

up a flight of stairs without getting winded, like eating without relying on medication to stabilize your blood sugar levels, or like attending a party or your high school/college reunion and being proud of your appearance. Yes, you have the power to create the life that you want. All you have to do is make the decision to change. And when you change what you know, you will change what you do.

It has been said that there are two pains in life: The pain of regret and the pain of discipline. While initially it may be painful to get up earlier to make your lunch or go to the gym three times a week, these practices will give you what you desire. And I can attest to the fact, if you are not disciplined you will certainly regret it!

Write down three practices you are currently doing that are unhealthy.

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Write down three things that you should be doing to improve your health.

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### ***Phase Two Challenge Description:***

During the Elimination Phase of the Challenge, participants will use the food journal they developed during Phase One to identify the things that are causing inflammation in their body. After analyzing their journal, they will begin to eliminate these foods from their diet. This is an opportunity for participants to learn to choose healthier options and substitutions for the foods they love.

### ***Elimination Phase Tip:***

Remember, if you fail to plan, you are planning to fail. Some steps you should take for your preparation:

1. Clean out your refrigerator and cabinets of all undesirable food. This will help to eliminate temptation and make it easier for you to make good choices.
2. Set aside one day per week to go food shopping and prepare your meals for the upcoming week. Many of us have very busy schedules and a lack of preparation can lead to making poor food choices.
3. While in the supermarket, do the majority of your shopping in the outside aisles (think about shopping in the shape of a “U”). The items in the outside aisles will include all of your vegetables, fruits, meats and dairy. These are all natural perishable items and are the healthiest for you.



## *Phase Three: Invigorate –30 days*

*“You don’t have to see the whole staircase—just take the first step.”*

*- Ruka Sanusi*

Food is a powerful drug. In fact, it may be the most powerful drug you will ever take. However, like any drug, food can help you or harm you depending on how you use it. Used correctly, food can make you more energized and healthier with the guarantee of a longer more active life. Used *incorrectly*, food can become your worst enemy –robbing you of a healthy body, healthy weight and a healthy mind. Most importantly, if food is used improperly, it can also shorten your life.

During Phase Three of the Challenge, participants will select and use the finest fruits, vegetables, grains, flours, legumes, nuts, seeds and proteins. Participants are also encouraged to consume quality drinking water.

A large component of this phase is also devoted to physical activity. Participants will be encouraged to incorporate exercise into their daily lives – even if it’s 30 minutes a day. Although, everyone knows that exercise is beneficial, a lot of us don't do it for various reasons. Whatever the condition, excuse, or issue, I'm here to tell you that you CAN exercise in one way or another. All exercise can be modified to fit your unique situation. Start, even if you just tap your toes. Do what you can and increase gradually. I promise you things will improve right away.

For those of you who do not currently exercise, please heed the following advice before beginning an exercise regimen:

**First**, tell your health care professional what you plan to do. Talk about any restrictions or modifications that may be advisable.

**Next**, get a comfortable pair of sneakers to protect your feet. Find comfortable clothes, not too tight and not too loose. Cotton works best.

**Finally**, I encourage you to take a class. Classes are easy to find and are generally offered at local gyms and recreation centers, YMCA's, YWCA's, or wellness centers. Look for classes labeled: beginner, easy, gentle, basic, low impact, etc. Once you find a class you think you might like--try it. You may be able to participate for free. If not, you may be able to pay for just one class.

Speak to the instructor before class, and tell him/her whatever physical challenges you may have. He/she will guide you and help prevent you from sustaining any injuries. During the class, you will probably meet like-minded people who can help support you on this new journey.

If you do not want to take a class, then turn what you love into exercise. Dance, swim, play tennis, walk, jog, or garden. It doesn't matter what you do, just do something!

**Three cautions:**

Never do anything that hurts! If you experience discomfort shortly after exercise or even the next day, ice it, and the tension should lessen. If the discomfort lasts two days, then you worked too hard. Don't exert as much energy during your next session.

Starting to exercise now is a big step. I know. I've done it. Others have done it. You can do it too. Exercise is now considered to be the most important lifestyle component for managing your health. Quality food and adequate amounts of water are important—but exercise is critical for the quality of your life, for the rest of your life. Most importantly you will feel happier and invigorated.

To drive my point home, I make this analogy: What do the Super Bowl and exercise have in common? During the Super Bowl there are 22,000,000 people who **need** exercise watching 22 who don't! The time has come for you to stop sitting on the sidelines – take action now!

Write three things that you can do TODAY to jump start or increase your activity levels:

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Write three healthy things you can do to invigorate your life:

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**Phase Three Challenge Description:**

During this phase, participants will begin an exercise program to strengthen their bodies and boost their metabolism.

After participants have eliminated the foods that are harmful to their bodies, they will add foods that will give them the proper nutrition they need. Participants will design their own food pyramid, using the template found later in this section.

**History of the Food Pyramid**

The first food pyramid appeared in Sweden in 1974. Ever since then, triangular shaped nutrition guides have been used by 25 other countries and organizations. Today, Americans have adopted the MyPlate design (which is very similar to the food pyramid in terms of nutrient percentages), while other countries around the world still use a food pyramid to dictate nutritional practice.

**The Problem with the USDA Food Pyramid:** A consistent pattern that can be seen in these food pyramids is the appearance of grains, cereals, pasta, breads and other starchy carbs at the base of the diet, and fats and oils, near the top of the pyramid, in the “use sparingly” category. Although these classifications are approved by the USDA, I believe that following them will lead to major health problems. In fact, research has shown that over-consumption of carbohydrates can cause serious issues with everything from weight gain to fuzzy thinking to heart disease. But, the issues don’t stop with the predominantly “high carb” recommendations found in most food pyramids. Frequent consumption of highly featured and recommended foods such as commercialized whole milk and cheeseburgers has been linked to heart disease. I also take issue with the fact that dairy is extremely overemphasized and that there is no distinction between “good proteins” and “bad proteins,” “good carbs and “bad carbs,” and “good fats and “bad fats.” If that isn’t bad enough, the minimum serving of fruits is 2-4 per day, which is enough to send your blood sugar levels on a roller coaster ride all day long if you’re not careful.

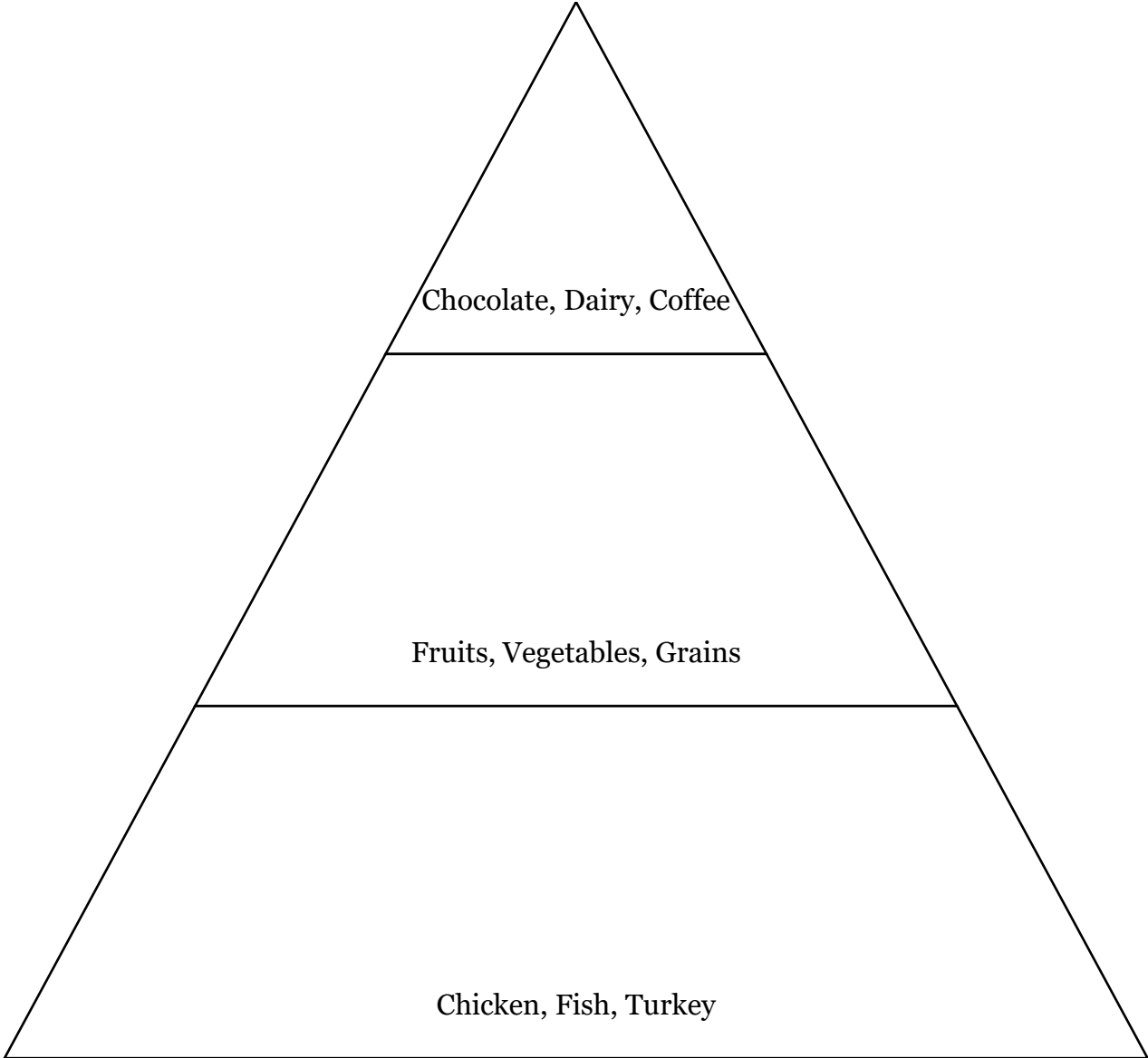
Putting dietary recommendations aside, I would be remiss not to mention the role that politics plays on the food pyramid. Over the past several decades, agricultural institutions have exerted lobbying and political power on the USDA to feature and prioritize subsidized industries such as corn, dairy, and wheat. In doing so, they have encouraged the public to consume excessively large and unhealthy portions of their byproducts. As a result, the average American has grown as fat as the pockets of those who are supposed to serve and protect us.

So, you may be asking yourself, “If we can’t trust the guidelines of the food pyramid, what should we eat?”

The easiest way to answer that question is to share what I believe: I believe that one size does not fit all when it comes to meal planning; I believe that all calories are not created equal; and, I believe that one man’s meat is another man’s poison. In other words, everyone must take ownership over their bodies and what they put into it. Some foods should be eaten in abundance, some in moderation and other foods should be avoided completely.

During Phase Three of the challenge, participants will work with Keri Watkins Webb to identify the specific foods that are beneficial for their individual dietary needs. Once these beneficial foods are determined, participants will create a personalized food pyramid that will help them to increase their wellness.

**Here is a sample of my husband's food pyramid:**

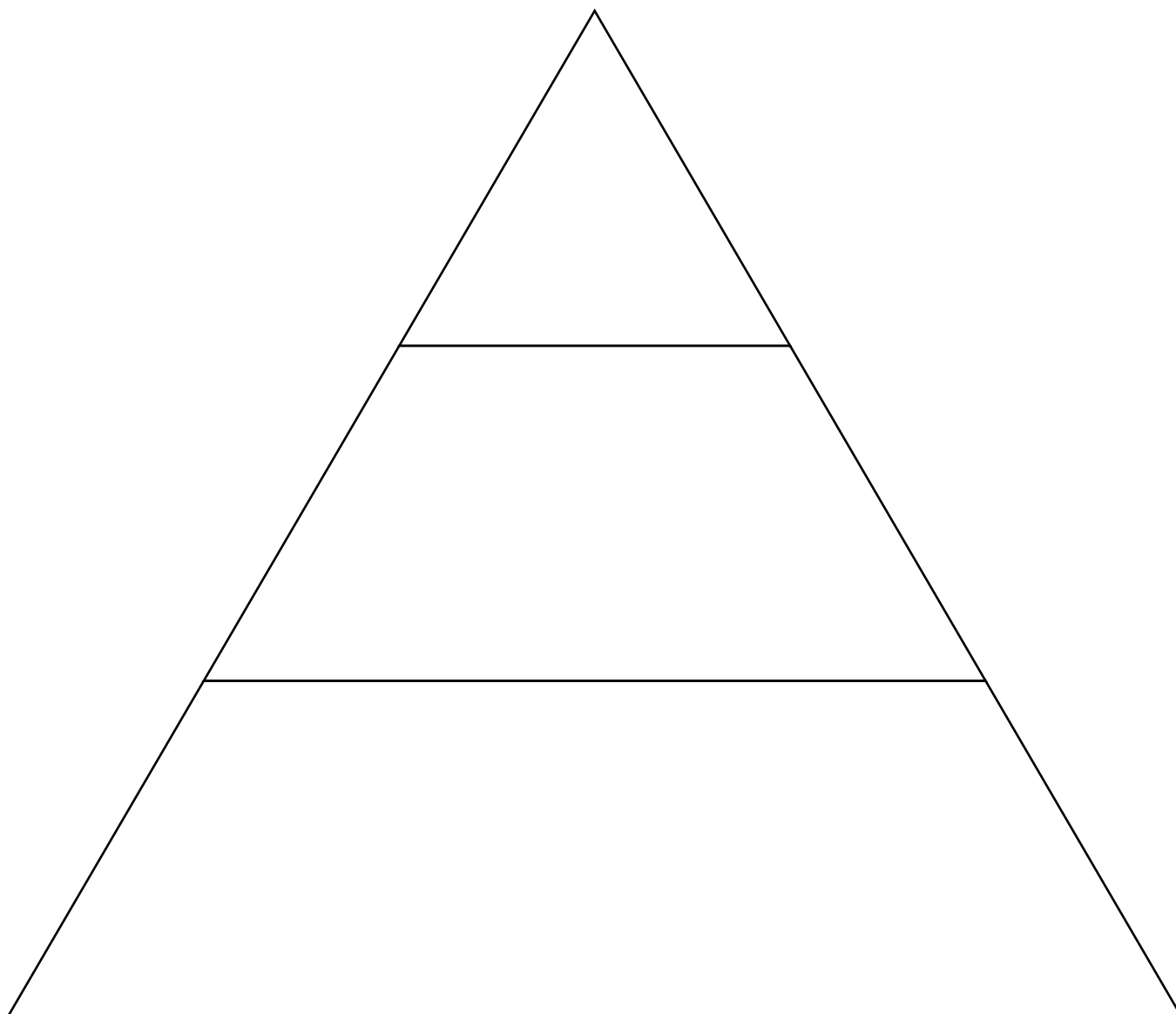




## My Food Pyramid

***Directions:***

After eliminating the toxic foods discovered in Phase One, list the most beneficial foods for your body, and then fill them into the template below according to how much you consume on a daily basis. The bulk of your daily foods should comprise the bottom portion of the pyramid. Feel free to add vertical or horizontal lines.



### ***Invigorate Phase Tip:***

Once you have cleaned out your body, start to replenish it with the essential things it needs: whole foods, quality water and daily exercise! Use the alarm on your cell phone to remind you when to eat, when to drink and when to work out!

### ***Food for Thought: 90-Day Challenge Eating Guidelines for invigorating the body.***

1. Don't starve yourself or skip meals in order to lose weight. If you do, you will slow down your metabolism and your body will store fat as a defense mechanism. This is commonly referred to as "starvation mode." Instead, aim to eat 4-5 smaller, balanced meals throughout the day. Use the following formula to determine how many calories you should consume per day to achieve your ideal weight: Take your ideal body weight, add a zero, and divide it by the amount of meals (including snacks) you will eat for the day. For example: If your ideal weight is 150, when you add a zero =  $1500/5$  meals = 300 calories per meal. Remember, eating well and eating regularly provides your body with the energy it needs, and prevents hunger—the primary cause of overeating.
2. Always remember, eat slowly and stop eating when you're satisfied--rather than eating until you're full.
3. Don't skip breakfast! It is the most important meal of the day! When you eat breakfast, you are breaking the fast from the night before. Skipping meals, especially breakfast can actually make weight control more difficult.
4. Always read labels. Just because something claims to be fat-free doesn't mean it's safe to eat. Non-fat usually equals high sugar and calorie content.

## *Phase Four – Rejuvenate – 15 days*

*“Allow yourself time to be. Listen to the wind blow. It carries a message of yesterday and tomorrow, and now. Now counts.”*

*- Unknown*

Recently, I saw a commercial for a popular restaurant chain that made an amazing claim: “Help Yourself to Happiness.” Wouldn’t it be something if a serving of pasta, chicken or sweet potato pie would be all that was needed to provide happiness? Even though no eatery can fulfill this promise, often- times our pursuit of happiness *does* involve food. How many times have you reached for the chocolate chip cookies to pacify yourself after enduring an emotional hurt? How many times have you turned to the Doritos when you were feeling blue? But, the reality is when food is used to garner brief moments of pleasure, satisfaction, or distraction, the cry of our hearts remains unheard.

I believe we all need to view our existence from a broader perspective. It has been said that where the mind goes the body will follow. It really is true. I believe that losing weight and achieving optimal health is more of a mental thing than a physical one. In other words, I believe that the food we consume is secondary to the thoughts and subsequent habits that our minds are forced to digest. Often our minds are not really “with” us. They are regretting, analyzing, planning, remembering, wishing to return to the past or dreaming about the future. In essence, our minds are missing the present moment. Mindfulness is the moment-to-moment attention we pay to the details of an experience. Over the last decade or so, a great deal of research has focused on the influence of mindfulness on one’s emotional wellbeing. Cultivating a more mindful way of being is associated with less emotional distress, a more positive state of mind, and a better quality of life.

So, while food can *fill* us, it can never *fulfill* us. The final phase of the Challenge invites you to explore the nourishment of the mind and spirit. It focuses on creativity, relationships, purpose and joy – and challenges you to make every moment count.

### ***Phase Four Challenge Description:***

During the last 15 days of the Challenge, participants will focus on what is not on their plate. They will consider the effect that relationships, career, and finances have on their health. They will learn about how the brain is an amazing control center that releases chemicals that can actually cause depression or inflammation and what they can do to counter this phenomenon. Participants will also understand how their body works on every level, so that they can be healthier on a physical, emotional, and spiritual level.

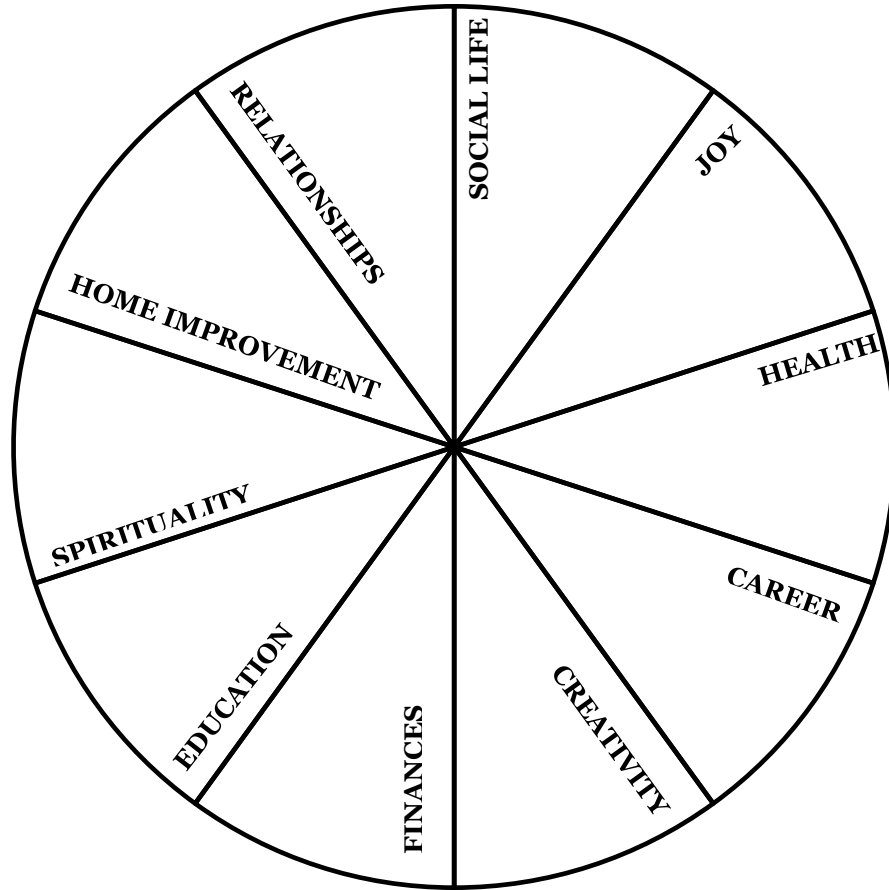
The first step to rejuvenating your life is to assess your overall state of being. In order to be completely healthy, we need to be balanced. The “Wellness Wheel” on the next page, provides an opportunity for you to reflect on every aspect of your life and determine which areas need more energy and attention.

**Directions:**

1. Using the Wheel of Life, indicate your level of balance in each area of your life by placing a dot on each spoke of the wheel. Imagine that the circumference of the wheel signifies the minimal amount of balance and the center of the wheel represents the ultimate amount of balance. (Be honest and remember that we are all works in progress).
2. Connect the dots.
3. Reflect on the areas that fall closest to the outer edge of the circle. These are some areas that may require some time and focus.
4. During the Fourth Phase of the Challenge, you will work with Keri Watkins Webb to set actions goals to improve these areas of your life.

*Wheel of Life*

**Being healthy means being well-balanced**



***Rejuvenate Phase Tip:***

Many people go through life in search of their purpose and never find it. If you are trying to discover God's purpose and plan for your life, try the following:

1. Think about something that bothers you.
2. Think of a project or platform you can create to fix that problem.
3. Complete that project no matter what.

## *Conclusion*

***“I may not be there yet, but I’m closer than I was yesterday.”  
– Unknown***

Often times, looking at the long journey ahead can squash our motivation to change; the achievement of our goals may seem so far away that they diminish the few steps we took today. Don’t let the long road ahead discourage you. Realize that as long as you’re a bit closer to your goal than you were yesterday, you’re headed in the right direction.

Every journey is an accumulation of small steps, and some steps are bigger than others. The important thing to remember is to consistently take those steps, however small they may seem. You’ll be amazed how far you’ve gone when you look back at where you began.

So, keep the faith! You’ve got this. I believe in you.

*Human Nutrition 90-Day  
Wellness Challenge  
Video Viewing Guide*

**Name of Documentary:**

**3 things that amazed me:**

1.

2.

3.

**2 things that I want to know more about:**

1.

2

**1 thing that I will change as a result of watching this documentary:**

**In order to make this change a reality, I will set the following goal and action steps:**

*Human Nutrition 90-Day  
Wellness Challenge  
Video Viewing Guide*

**Name of Documentary:**

**3 things that amazed me:**

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Wellness Challenge  
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**Name of Documentary:**

**3 things that amazed me:**

1.

2.

3.

**2 things that I want to know more about:**

1.

2

**1 thing that I will change as a result of watching this documentary:**

**In order to make this change a reality, I will set the following goal and action steps:**

# *Food Diary*

**Example:**

	SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SYMPTOMS
<p>BREAKFAST</p> <p>Time: <u>7 a.m.</u></p>	<p>Tea with sugar, 2 eggs, bacon, toast w/ butter</p>							<p>Time: _____</p>
<p>SNACK</p> <p>Time: <u>10 a.m.</u></p>	<p>Candy bar, water</p>	.	.	.	.	.	.	<p>Time: <u>11 a.m.</u> stomach cramps, itching on back</p>

# ***Notes***

# ***Health Tips***

## *About the Author*

Keri Watkins Webb is a nutritionist, educator, lecturer, author and lifestyle coach committed to transforming the fatally flawed, American health care system by providing safe and practical solutions to people's health problems. Keri is a certified Holistic Health Coach with training in Eastern and Western nutritional theory from the Institute of Integrative Nutrition in NYC. She also holds a Master's Degree in Holistic Health Studies from Georgian Court University and a Certificate in Christian Ministry from New York Theological Seminary. In 2010, she founded Empowered Living, LLC, a holistic healthcare practice dedicated educating, invigorating, and rejuvenating the mind, body, and spirit. Currently, she teaches Nutrition at Empire State College and counsels a sizable number of clients from her offices in Brooklyn and Queens, New York.