

**The One-Month
No Sugar &
No Flour
Challenge**

John Graham

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Special thanks to Cody Grady for his editing support.

ISBN-10: 1540461874

ISBN-13: 978-1540461872

DEDICATION

This book is dedicated to you, the person who has decided it's time to change their health for better and picked up this book. I hope that you travel this sugar-free road for a quite a distance and see multiple amazing results along the journey.

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I couldn't have made it through these many months of no-sugar and no-flour without the support and participation of my wife Stephanie.

1

ADMISSIONS

Before we get started, it's time for some admissions about me. I feel there's no better way to start off a relationship than with a little dose of honesty, right?

First off, I'm unsure how to talk you into trying this challenge. You likely have come up with quite a few reasons why you shouldn't even attempt it. I'm guessing your thoughts are filled with sugary drinks or delicious breads you know for certain that you can't live without.

Last year, I was in the exact same place as you are right now. The thought of giving up pizza, sweet drinks, and ice cream seemed an impossible task. For some reason, I decided the moment in my life was right for the one-month challenge. I looked at it as more of an experiment instead of a drastic lifestyle change that would leave me living in sugar free sadness for the rest of my days. I began the challenge March 2016 and was adamant about not cheating at all. I ended up finishing the month and decided to keep going. I've found that since that point it changed my life in more ways than one.

Secondly, I'm just a guy who tried something that really opened my eyes for the first time in my life. The key thing is that I'm just an average guy; not a dietician, not a physician, not a personal trainer,

not a motivational speaker, nor anything else that would give me the cool credentials needed to sell a million copies of a book that promotes healthy lifestyle change. The opinions expressed in this book are my own and I'm sure if you look hard enough, you can find someone to disagree with almost everything I have to say. This is a sad fact of any eating program created in recent years, you'll find people that swear by it and others who swear at it. In the end, read my story and decide for yourself if you're ready to take the plunge.

Third. Are you a fan of facts, figures, test studies, and medical research? Well, you won't find much listed in these pages. There's tons of it out there to support what I talk about in this book, but I'm not a scientist and the only lab rat I've used is myself, so my statistics are lacking. What I can promise you is an achievable challenge with materials for planning and organizing with the goal of setting you up for success. I created these tools to realize what I was capable of accomplishing through personal motivation. Believe it or not, you have the same capacity for motivation and will-power that I do, so there's nothing holding you back.

Still with me? If you haven't put the book back yet or clicked the "X" on the window, then it's time for my biggest admission. I'm overweight. Yes, you read that right, I started out this challenge just under a year ago when I was overweight. According to many health agencies and statistics, I am still going to be overweight when you read this. I said we were going to be honest with each other, remember?

I'm making progress every day and will eventually achieve my goal, but this experiment isn't about seeing how much weight you can lose in a month, it is more about being in the right state of mind to make an impartial decision on how you are affected by food.

So there you have it, some great reasons to keep reading this book, or some that talk you out of trying something that would be too difficult. Regardless, you've started thinking critically about your

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health, and that is great for you. My hope is that you keep going and take the challenge. I can promise it will be a turning point in your life.

2

A MOMENT OF HONESTY

I'm sorry to break this to you, but you're addicted to sugar. You might disagree with me and that's fine. In the end, I'm right. Don't get me wrong, I don't blame you or think you're a bad person, especially since everyone I've ever known (including myself) was just like you, but then I conducted an experiment that really opened my eyes to the problem.

You see, our culture has glorified sugar and programmed you from a young age to equate its sweetness with everything that is good in life. Even the thought of going without sugar for any extended period of time makes you feel a little sad, like saying goodbye to a family member that's a big part of your life. In fact, I think you can quickly name two or three things containing sugar that would be impossible for you to live without.

The truth is, that you can go without sugar and feel better without it. This book was created as an experiment in eliminating your ties to sugar because let's be honest, you simply can't make an impartial decision about the effect sugar has on you right now. The sugar in your system is clouding your judgment, so the only way to make a good decision about your future health is to get it all out and then talk through its effects.

Before I get into the nuts and bolts of the experiment, let me ask you a question. What's your favorite food or drink containing sugar that you feel you can not live without? Picture it in your mind and pretend it is right there in the room with you.

Please try not to get any drool on the pages of the book.

Now, what would it take for you to give that food up for one month? You might think that there is nothing I could offer you at first, but I'm sure there's something. What if I offered you a thousand dollars? How about ten thousand dollars? Let's get crazy and say one million dollars for you to give up your daily soda or treat for a month. Now do you think you can live without it? I'm guessing you could come up with a number that makes the sacrifice worth it to you.

Let's take this idea one step further now and pretend you were stranded on a deserted island with just coconuts, fish, and fruit for a month. Do you really think it would kill you to consume just these three things? Would going without your favorite cookies or beverage be the end of your existence? I'm guessing you would make due, and even come out a better person for having overcome the challenge.

This experiment won't involve just eating coconuts and fish for a month, (though if you enjoy them, I'm sure you can work them into the menu somewhere). The biggest key here is acknowledging you can make a change in your life if you are open to temporarily sacrificing some of things you feel you can't live without.

3

THE BASICS

The experiment itself is incredibly easy.

1. Give up sugar and flour for one month.
2. Increase your water intake.
3. Never feel hungry
4. Use the Glycemic Index to identify the best options.
5. Get a little exercise.

Now I know your first reaction when you read that was “No way is that possible for me”, because funny enough, that’s exactly the same thing I thought at first.

1. Giving up Sugar and Flour

You may think there are no food options without those two ingredients, so try thinking of it this way – with this experiment you’ll still be able to enjoy almost any food in its single ingredient form, like fruit, vegetables, meats, cheeses, and more. (Un)fortunately this rule eliminates most everything with an ingredient listing filled with strange names on the side of the box.

Why sugar AND flour you might ask? The answer revolves around sweetness and acknowledging that we are addicted to sugar **and the** sweet taste. I’m not going to rehash all the studies out there

about sweet tastes affecting your brain in negative ways, but let's just say that the goal is to completely purge your system of the "evils of sweets".

Yes, I know I didn't answer your flour question in the last paragraph. While I'm speaking for just me personally right now, I knew that if I just gave up "sugar" for a period of time, then I would turn to the hundreds of "sugar-free" items out there to fill the void. I would still snack on cookies, candy, and other sweet items, which would never actually eliminate the sweetness addiction. I would have never experienced an actual change through this experiment and overcome a challenge that would help me realize my food addictions.

Finally, I don't want to sound like a conspiracy theorist here, but I'm willing to bet that much of the food industry is hiding all sorts of stuff that I shouldn't be eating in their products. Before you call me crazy, let's keep in mind that this is the same industry that has created numerous ways just to say that the ingredient "sugar" is in an item. I've never seen so many names for sugar as I have on the sides of their boxes. To me, eliminating flour and all the foods with multiple ingredients in them was an easy way to not worry about the potentially sneaky stuff in food.

Sticking to single ingredients let me know exactly what's being eaten. Keep in mind that you want to find a balance and not rely too heavily on one type of food. Variety is the basis for success in the program.

Use this page to create a list of all foods you enjoy that are in their single ingredient form. Examples would include: Rice, Apples, Steak, Corn, etc.

2. Increase your water intake

Don't panic, I'm not going to tell you how much water you should be drinking each day. I'm not even going to give you some complex mathematical equation based on your weight, body mass, or eye color that shows how poorly hydrated you are.

Let me just tell you that I wasn't a big water drinker before my experiment, so I made a conscious effort to drink more when I started. Doing this kept me feeling full and I also believe that it helped my system with lessening the impact of the detox period. While I didn't do any scientific testing on that area, I can say that I was going to bathroom quite a bit more.

3. Hunger is the Enemy

One of the most important rules I recommend is to avoid feeling hungry at all costs, so plan your day to make sure that you're prepared when hunger hits. Feeling hungry is a sign that your blood sugar level is dropping and that can make you a tiny bit irrational with food. It will be tougher to drive by that fast food restaurant while out doing errands, or even resist that bag of chips in your cupboard. Avoiding hunger centers on maintaining a consistent blood sugar level through the day. This is important so your body works with you to become healthier.

Take a moment and think of your body like a fire in a brick pizza oven. (I am a sucker for pizza, hence the example.) When the fire is at the perfect level for cooking pizza, it's similar to your body operating perfectly to burn calories as you go about your day. Your job as the pizza chef is to keep that oven fire burning at the same level the entire time, so if you don't put the wood on regularly, you'll see the temperature drop and the oven becomes inefficient. You might panic a bit and then grab extra wood to throw in there, which then causes the fire to burn hotter and start burning the pizzas. Your body has a similar reaction to irregular eating. When you don't eat,

your body sends out signals that you need something quick to solve the problem. You might grab some soda and candy to tide you over, but you push your system the other way and now your body is scrambling to process what you're eating, so it starts over producing insulin and storing fat. Too low and too high just don't work well for the oven or your body.

Use this section to list foods that you enjoy eating and can be taken out and about as a quick snack. Examples would include: Oranges, Cheese Sticks, Applesauce cups, Ham Chunks, Bananas, etc.

4. Use the Glycemic Index to identify good food choices

Another phase of this experiment consists of practicing low glycemic eating, something that diabetics have embraced for many years. While I'm not a professional dietician or scientist, I'll do my best to break down this method for you in layman's terms. Don't worry though; if you like the science behind things, there will be a listing of websites in the appendix of this book for you to scour through.

The Glycemic Index was created in the early 1980's by Dr. David J. Jenkins and a team of researchers at the University of Toronto. Their goal was to help diabetic patients manage their blood sugar levels and give them an understanding of how certain foods affect their bodies. The Glycemic Index (GI) is basically a ranking of foods created by researchers who tested volunteers after they ate something and then watched what their blood sugar level did in the hours after the food was consumed.

The higher a food's index number, the faster it makes your blood sugar level rise. The lower the number, the slower the food works though your body during digestion, resulting in a more gradual release of glucose into your blood. The slower the increase in blood sugar, the less likely your body is to trigger the need to store fat.

I don't want to scare you too much, but eating a diet of high-glycemic foods can give you a greater chance of developing serious health problems, like diabetes, obesity, cancer, and more. While a diet of low-glycemic foods has shown to be helpful in lowering cholesterol, controlling weight, keeping your energy levels up, and just making you feel healthier overall.

Understanding the Glycemic Index (GI) of your favorite foods, even the ones without sugar and flour, will give you an edge when it comes to feeling good throughout your day.

Glycemic Food Groups

Keep in mind that just because something doesn't contain sugar and flour, doesn't mean it's the healthiest food in the world. When you think of French fries, bacon, and cheddar cheese, you might say that all three items fit into the world of no sugar and flour. You might even bake up a big helping of loaded fries to enjoy because it's delicious, but please don't fool yourself into thinking you are having a "healthy meal". The amount of calories and starches you are consuming can be just as bad for you as those slices of pizza and candy bars you used to enjoy.

This is where common sense and discretion needs to play a part of the experiment. Don't rely too much on the high glycemic foods just because you enjoy them and they fit into the parameters of the experiment. Sure you can have them on rare occasions because they still fit in with your new lifestyle, but don't make them a regular part of your weekly menu.

Even in the "healthy" world of fruits and vegetables, there are some choices you can make that will be better for you than others.

There are a lot of factors, such as fructose levels, speed of being processed by your body, and nutritional value. I started calling this the "potato principle" because as much as I love white potatoes, I had to admit in the end that sweet potatoes were a better choice. This wasn't the most difficult choice to make because I think sweet potatoes are pretty tasty too, but the world has programmed me to want mashed white potatoes with meals.

Here's a quick list of the categories of fruits and vegetables, but you'll also find references on my website at www.FIGIDPress.com. The three categories are *good*, *better*, and *best* because I feel that even the worst choice of a fruit or vegetable is better than the best choice of candy or cookie. The key to any new eating program is finding balance and not relying too much on one type of food.

Good choices for fruits and vegetables – eat these sparingly

Baked potatoes, parsnips, carrots, french fries, beets, corn, watermelon, pineapple, raisins, ripe bananas, white rice, cantaloupe, dates.

Better choices for fruits and vegetables – these are good day to day choices

Sweet potatoes, yams, green peas, black-eyed peas, mango, kiwi, grapes, not overly ripe banana, pears, peaches, plums, oranges.

Best choices for fruits and vegetables – go crazy with these

Dried beans, lentils, pinto beans, green beans, chick peas, lima beans, most beans, green vegetables, apricots, grapefruit, cherries, tomatoes, strawberries, blueberries, brussels sprouts, cabbage apples, quinoa, avocado, collard greens.

This is just a small sample of the many different fruit and vegetable options available. Please use the websites listed in the References section at the end of the book to research anything not listed here.

5. Exercise, Exercise, Exercise!

This area is a personal decision for you concerning the types and duration of exercise. I'm not a physical therapist or work out coach, but I can assure you that any movement is better than none.

When I started the experiment, I chose to not begin any exercise program, simply because I wanted to see what my body would do just by giving up flour and sugar. By the tenth day, I was feeling so great, that I decided to start exercising to see how this lifestyle change would impact me. I purposely chose a low impact cardio program with some weight routines added in. My goal wasn't to try any extensive, muscle building super workouts, because I didn't want to chance straining myself and then sitting on the couch in pain thinking about how cookies might make everything better. I started slow and then worked my way to a regular routine over the following months.

Side note: Exercising while going without sugar and flour is a results multiplier. With a regular routine and eating properly, the side effects were a rapid weight loss.

4

DIGESTING THE BASICS

Let's take a deep breath here for a minute and "digest" that last section. There's a chance that you're shaking your head and thinking there's no way you can do this, but let me tell you that I know you can.

Not that I'm trying to get an award for being the pickiest person in the world, but I went into this experiment without being a fan of many fruits and vegetables. When I think of you contemplating this experiment, I actually get a little jealous because you I'm sure you enjoy a much wider selection of fruits and vegetables than I do.

Sadly, In the beginning I was really just a fan of apples and bananas, so my options were pretty limited. As time passed, and my taste buds became less saturated with sugar, I tried some new fruits and was able to work them into my eating, but it took a while.

My point is this, if you are a person that can walk into a produce department and see tons of eating possibilities, then you have a huge edge over me. The variety you enjoy will help keep things fresh and not make you feel like a tortured soul going without good food.

This same principle applies to vegetables. If you like more than just corn and broccoli, you're light years ahead of where I was when I

started this experiment. Don't sell yourself short on the food options you have if you give up sugar and flour because you'll quickly realize that there's a whole world of deliciousness for you to explore.

The positive effect of no sugar and no flour!

I'll tell you that it is highly unlikely that you will come out of this one-month experiment saying that sugar and flour will never again pass your lips. What will happen is that you will gain a better understanding of the control these foods had over you and will be able to impartially judge for yourself when you want to eat some. You won't be controlled by your emotions any longer, so in each situation going forward you can step back and say "Is eating that right now really worth it?"

The other positive effect of this experiment is that in those weak future moments you'll find that flour takes care of your need to "just get crazy with food". It's hard to explain, but after a month of going without, I decided to have some pizza on a special occasion. Now the old me who was "just trying to be a healthy eater" would have the pizza and then my mind would have been triggered for dessert. I would end up throwing everything away because one forbidden food would roll into the next and a sugar coma would be my late evening plans. Instead, I discovered that just a piece or two of pizza was enough to satisfy me completely. After this experiment, I've found that having something with flour on rare occasion would be enough to hit the spot and I wouldn't have an emotional need to keep going. This makes avoiding the candy, cakes, and cookies so much easier. I've had ample opportunity to eat any sweet that I wanted over the past months and now they no longer call out to me.

The ability to emotionally sever yourself from food really only comes from a complete detoxification of sugar and flour. Once you complete the month, your mindset changes and you'll find that many of the sweet foods you were once addicted to, no longer have a hold over you.

Are you an emotional eater? Use this section to list and track the foods you “have to have” when a particular emotion hits you. Understanding the link will better help you prepare to overcome the cravings as you progress with your experiment.

STRESS –

SADNESS –

HAPPINESS –

ANGER -

-Use a journal to track your moods and food this month.

5

DECIDING IT'S TIME

The hardest question to ask yourself is whether or not you are truly ready to make this change in your life. I really want to think that by picking up this book and reading through it you'll be magically motivated and ready to take on the world, but that isn't always the case. In my life, I have cycled through moments of incredible motivation and will-power, only to have moments where I've felt I could accomplish nothing and wallowed in self-pity.

You might get some artificial motivation through the influence of others in your life, possibly a spouse or loved one asking for your support when they are motivated to make a healthy change. Maybe a doctor gives you an ultimatum about your health and you leave the office with a strong desire to "turn over a new leaf" when it comes to eating. These moments may be harder to sustain than the ones where you're "ready", but they are important moments nevertheless.

Any moment that encourages you to change your life for the healthier deserves the best results for your effort. That is the foundation of this experiment. Through its implementation, you will get the momentum you need to go forward with continuing a life changing experience. Yes, it requires some pre-planning, willpower, and self-control, but it also gives you the ability to impartially look at your life and determine what is best for your future.

Make a list of the reasons you need to make a positive change in your health.

What actions can you take to help keep your motivation up when you feel challenged? Make a list of resources you can turn to for continued support throughout your experiment.

6

WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE?

I think if the old me was reading this book right now, he'd be asking himself what he would get out of all this sacrifice. He'd probably try to rationalize that he could just "cut back" on sweets or hit the gym a little more, so what's the point in giving up everything he loves to eat. I'm sure you're nothing like I used to be, but just in case, I have an exercise for you.

Think back to a point in your life when you actively decided to become healthier. Maybe you counted calories, stopped drinking soda, joined a gym, or did any of the many possible things in your currently unhealthy life. You made the commitment and had the resolve to say that this time it's for good.

After a couple of months you started to feel really good and you reached a point where you looked in the mirror and noticed some physical changes. Possibly you were walking a little taller at that point because you'd lost ten to fifteen pounds and even your heart felt a little lighter. After a strenuous workout, you head home and could almost feel your body getting healthier, which is a feeling you embraced.

The healthy feeling sustained you for the most part, but after a few months, reality sets in and tries to throw you off track. Maybe

you got sick for a week and you lost your routine. Possibly you took a vacation where you threw caution and healthy eating to the wind, rationalizing that you deserved to “enjoy yourself” on the road, but you’d “get back on the horse” once you arrived back at home. Unfortunately, once you returned, you realized how tough it was to get into the healthy routines again. These first falling dominos end up toppling everything and soon you find yourself back in the same unhealthy situation you were in a few months before.

Now, stop thinking about the moments you failed at being healthy and go back in your mind to that healthy point in your life that you experienced after working at it for a couple of months. If you compare that traditional dieting experience with the no sugar/flour experiment, the difference is time. That “healthy feeling” moment happened to me just 18 days after starting my experiment, instead of the two months in previous experiences.

No one can say for sure what will happen in the future, but I can say this. Doing this experiment put me in the same place mentally at three weeks as my 2 – 3 months of “healthy living” in the past. The beauty of this mindset change was that with so little time invested for the results achieved, it allows your willpower to continue on strong after your original goal date. You actually start looking forward to the next hurdle to overcome with your new healthy outlook. At that moment, your body will be at a point where you are more motivated to set another goal, instead of running back to your old routines.

To me, this is a really big selling point of the experiment, but I’m fairly sure you’re reading this right now thinking:

“It’s not enough.”

Getting a healthy feeling and challenging yourself just might not be enough of reward for you to embark upon what you likely feel as a month of torture and torment. I completely understand, so let me sweeten the deal for you just a little more.

I want to share some of the other “side effects” I experienced as I went through my month-long experiment and then in the months directly following it. As you know, I decided to keep going with my experiment because it was so impactful on my mind and body, and this is why. SIDE EFFECTS MAY INCLUDE:

- Aches and pains in my joints going away.
- Back pain going away.
- More energy (and yes I just drank water all the time.)
- A consistent energy level through the day.
- Better sleep.
- Snoring level decrease.
- Acid reflux completely going away.
- Leg and feet swelling going away.
- An increase in my self-confidence.
- Better posture.
- Willingness to take on new challenges.
- Eczema clearing up.
- Experiencing better mental clarity.
- A desire to exercise.
- My emotional connection to foods minimized.
- A positive self-image.
- Naturally occurring portion controls.
- Weight loss
- Improvement of cholesterol, triglycerides, etc.

Can I guarantee you’ll experience all of these things during the first month? Probably not because we’re all different, but I can say that if you commit to the experiment 100%, you will feel different and experience a new mindset. A whole new you is out there if you can just overcome your arch nemesis, the Sugar Slug.

7

THE SUGAR SLUG

I want you to imagine a little voice in your brain powered by sugar. This voice often tricks you into thinking it has your best interest at heart, but its true purpose is to keep you firmly addicted to sugar and sweet tastes. Now picture this voice coming out of a slimy, white colored, sugary slug, resting comfortably on your brain. This slug is like any parasite; it needs sugar to maintain its life and it will do anything it can to stay alive.

If you're like me, that voice would strongly encourage you to swing by the grocery store after a tough night at work and buy something sweet to ease your troubles. The sugar slug would also encourage you to eat a second or third bowl of sugary cereal because you might need some more energy to get through the day.

Even when bored, the slug would send me through my cabinets on a sweet scavenger hunt, looking for some morsel that my wife had forgotten to mention she purchased. I was under the slug's control as much as any other addiction and it would be challenging to kick the habit.

When I started the experiment, the sugar slug seemed to sense it was in trouble, which made it dig into my brain even more. The first week it was nearly impossible to drown out its voice. There were

moments when I wanted to tackle someone eating sweets in my vicinity and wrestle the treats away from them. As the initial days moved forward, the slug kept on me by throwing tantrums and giving me a pretty constant headache that couldn't be treated. My only defense was increasing my water intake in an effort to drown the slug, but it was entrenched at the start.

Around the tenth day, something wonderful happened. The sugar slug started shrinking and its voice began to lose power. Every day after the tenth, the slug diminished more and more, causing me to see things from a clearer perspective. I can only describe it as an "out of body experience" around sugary foods, where I could see them, but no longer felt their pull on my senses. It wasn't as difficult to visit the grocery store and walk down the cookie aisle without temptation, and my friends no longer had to fear for their lives if they snacked in front of me.

After week three, the sugar slug's voice barely registered any longer. The psychological pull of my once favorite foods wasn't as strong and I began to forget how important those foods were to me just a month before. As the months passed, I found that food no longer has the power over me that it once did. The slug is gone and so is that voice that would whisper about all the delicious foods I should want every day.

I want you to give some thought to the "Sugar Slug" curled up on your brain right now and determine how much it controls you. I can promise you that eliminating that slug will make you realize that giving up sugar only becomes easier as time moves on.

One of the most effective weapons to defeat the Sugar Slug is creating an effective plan for your month long experiment. The next chapter will hopefully give you ammo needed to wage war on your Sugar Slug and the other temptations in life during the month.

SUGAR SLUG SAYINGS

What does your Sugar Slug say to you? Think back over the past week and write down some of things it talked you into.

8

CREATING YOUR PLAN

Planning process – Around one month before you begin

With any change in lifestyle, planning is a key element for success. When you visualize a home whose occupants don't eat processed sugar or flour, what do you see in their cabinets? Now think of your cabinets and you'll realize that you have a bit to go.

Below are five steps to developing your plan for success before you begin the experiment. The shorter amount of time you give yourself to prepare, the more challenging this experiment will be. As much as I would love for you to embrace everything I speak about in this book, the last thing I want is for you to read it today and plan on starting your experiment tomorrow. Give yourself some time to get your house in order, so you can bypass any issues with temptation.

1. Decrease purchases of non-experiment items so you run out before you begin.

In the past when I decided to be healthy I would set a date, typically a week in the future, and then look through my cupboards trying to figure out all the unhealthy items. Then would come the decision to eat everything unhealthy before my start date, just to get it "out of the house". My body would be oversaturated with sweets, which then made my first day of being healthy more like jumping off

a cliff than strolling down a hill.

In this experiment, as soon as you create your meal and snack lists, you will have a good idea of what you want in your cabinets and fridge when you start the program. Your goal in the month before your start date is to minimize your purchases of items not on your list and also begin scaling back on those foods that don't fit with the experiment, so your change won't feel so drastic. If you're used to eating ice cream every night before bed, then make it every other night on week one, two times a week in week two, one time a week in week three, and then none before your start time. This is especially needed for heavy soda drinkers, who tend to experience headaches and other issues when they go without.

2. Make lists of dinner, lunch, and breakfast meals

Let's face it, processed and unhealthy foods are the most convenient to find, affordable to buy, and easy to make. If you put yourself in a situation where you don't know what your next meal or snack is, then the temptation to stop and "grab something quick" becomes much more likely.

Take some time before your start date and make a list of non sugar/non flour foods you would enjoy for each meal. If you are incredibly picky, like I am, then you might need to identify the few things you enjoy starting out and then rotate them through different meals so it doesn't feel like you're eating the same thing over and over.

3. Create a snack list

There are countless fruits and vegetables that can be considered a snack, so make a list of the ones you enjoy. Take into account prep time needed for slicing and prepping so you can have them at a moment's notice. Don't become too dependent on just one fruit or vegetable, keep a variety of them to choose from so things stay fresh.

Use the following pages to list some of your options.

Breakfast options:

Lunch options:

Dinner Options:

Snack options:

4. Identify foods for kids and compromises

Having kids in your household might put a twist on your prep, but won't make things impossible. While decreasing your child's sugar and flour intake might be the best thing you can do for them and their health, odds are they won't understand how taking away something so tasty is a good thing for them. Use the same food planning principles with them to identify fruits, vegetables, and meats they enjoy and put it on the list so they have options accessible to them.

I started this experiment in a house with an 8, 16, and 18 year old who all stated they couldn't live without the things I was giving up. Over a family meeting, (our *Sugar Summit*), we reached some great compromises for all parties. We split a piece of paper in three parts with these headings:

- **Foods that fit in the program:** This was fruits they enjoy, vegetables they could snack on, and treats like Natural Applesauce.
- **Foods that didn't fit in the program, but I didn't like:** My youngest son loves Gogurt singles from the freezer because they are like frozen yogurt. I'm not a fan of them and will never be tempted to eat them. The kids also like Lunchable snack packs, which I will admit are tasty, but it is unlikely that I would go through the effort to tear open a pack just to steal the cookie. Some cracker choices aren't my favorite, but the kids love, so they were on the list. The key here is to identify things that would never tempt you in a moment of weakness.
- **Foods that didn't fit with the program and I liked:** Unfortunately, the foods on this list had to be phased out during the initial portion of the program implementation due to their tempting nature. While the kids were a little disappointed that I wouldn't be bringing home ice cream,

The one-month No Sugar/No Flour challenge

chips, pretzels, soda, and cookies any longer, they understood that they would have access to the items on the other two lists, so it didn't seem like the end of the world. They also understood that just because their parents were following the no sugar/no flour program, it didn't mean we would be following them to school and judging them for eating a roll or cookie.

Find the worksheet on the following pages and also as a downloadable document on the website, www.FIGIDPress.com in the “published works” section.

SUGAR SUMMIT

List all single ingredient foods that the whole family enjoys for breakfast, lunch, dinner, and snacks.

Foods that are enjoyed by others in the house, but are not tempting to the participant of the One-Month challenge.

SUGAR SUMMIT (Continued)

Foods that are enjoyed by others in the house, but are tempting to the participant of the One-Month challenge. These items will need to disappear for a few weeks during the challenge.

Bonus family section

List some ways we can help each other to become healthier and stay motivated during the one-month challenge.

5. The Dairy Dilemma

Personally, I view milk sugars in the same way that I view natural fruit sugars. Yes, they are types of sugar, but to me they come from nature so I accepted them my no sugar / no flour experiment. It goes to the point that I'd rather eat a few cheese cubes or an extra apple than a cookie or two, so if I have a craving that can be satisfied with a little cheese or fruit, then so be it.

BUT, like everything else in the world, too much can actually hinder your results instead of help you, especially with fatty foods. When I started the experiment, I knew that I likely would be eating shredded cheese more often, so I committed to not drinking milk during this time to help avoid “doubling down on dairy”. This strategy worked for me and I never felt like I was overdosing on cheese.

I also decided to keep blocks of cheese to a minimum as I moved through the weeks. During the first couple of weeks I survived because I snacked on cheese cubes occasionally, but as time moved forward, I made the effort to use cheese cubes, blocks, and wedges less and less. This allowed me to feel at ease about cheese on my salads and eggs.

How you approach these scenarios is your personal choice. Heck, you might be one of those people who doesn't even enjoy cheese, so this might be a non-issue. Whatever your decision, please keep in mind that a healthy balance of the right foods is needed for the experiment to be a success.

9

EXECUTING YOUR PLAN

The time has come to navigate the ocean of your planning, preparation, and mental readiness for your experiment to begin. My goal is to try and give you some honest information about what to expect, along with some suggestions to make things as easy as they can be for this process.

1. Detoxing – not the time of your life

I'm not going to lie and say giving up sugar and flour will be the easiest thing you've ever done. In fact, your body will make you suffer for the first week. Plan on headaches that last for multiple days, a feeling of hunger even when you know you're full, and a longing for the foods you love. No matter how bad you feel during that first week, I promise that your life will vastly improve shortly after day seven and you will feel great.

My advice here is to stay full on the right foods because nothing is worse than going through withdrawals and being hungry at the same time. Plan on snacking regularly throughout each day, so your will isn't weakened. I would also encourage you to increase your water intake during this time to help flush your system out.

2. Pick your favorite meal combinations to start out

I'm sure you can think of some meals you enjoy that don't involve sugar and flour, so let me suggest you put your favorites on the list for the first week of the program. Having your favorite foods will make the transition easier for you and the leftovers can be savored during the following days to offset the feeling of just eating salads for lunch.

3. Keeping it fresh, integrate new foods

As you move forward after purging the sugar from your system, let me recommend having a "New food night". This would involve introducing a no sugar/no flour item that you and your family have never had before or typically haven't eaten much in the past. Make it a side dish for one meal in the week and encourage everyone to give it a try.

4. Spoil yourself

Hopefully you come up with a little extra money when doing your grocery shopping because you won't be buying as much "junk food". Let me suggest taking some of that money saved from not buying chips, breads, and sweets, and invest it into a special meal for the end of the first week to celebrate. If you like a great steak dinner or some lobster, then make the plan and spoil yourself.

5. Have an accountability method

Whether it's a close friend, a blog, or some anonymous stranger you talk to on the bus, it's good to share your day-to-day experiences while moving through the program. For me, I decided to blog about each day and tell the world what I was going through and what I ate for the day. It really helped keep me on track and also identify what foods worked best for me. See my blog reprinted at the end of this book for your reference.

6. Create a survival pack plan for “on the go” moments

We live in a world where it’s typical that we’ll be running from place to place or visiting a location that we know won’t have any healthy food options available. Take a moment and make a list of foods that transport easily and are quick to grab so you can munch on good things while on the go. We’ve visited events and movies while packing in apple slices, bananas, carrots, bottled water, cheese cubes, meat cubes, and more that didn’t have to be completely refrigerated. My wife travels by car constantly for her job and always has some of those tiny oranges stashed in the console just in case she needs something to snack on throughout the day.

The key here is the same as the rest of the experiment, you should think about where you will be and what you will eat. I can compare it to having a baby in the family and planning a bunch of errands for the day. You would plan for every situation before you leave the house and pack it all in a diaper bag. I’m not advocating you pack yourself an extra outfit in your case, but it doesn’t hurt to have some fruit or veggies within reach when traveling.

7. Keep a food journal daily and collect recipes

I’m not saying you have to write down in detail everything you eat during the experiment, but as you try different meals, try to write down what you liked or didn’t. There are a lot of recipes out there for people who are eliminating sugar and flour from their diets, but you need to identify the ones that best suit your tastes.

As you find meals that you enjoy, keep the recipes handy and start planning out the next week or two with them. This will help you with grocery shopping and meal prep times, so you can better organize your days in advance. You can organize your recipes by time involved to prep them or even cost involved so your time and money stay balanced from week to week.

8. Exercise

Physical activity is something personal to everyone and my goal isn't to give you a workout regimen that may or may not work with schedule, interests, or capabilities. I'm sure you realize that to effectively make your lifestyle more healthy, you need to do some sort of exercise. Pick what you like and start.

If you think the eating portion of the program will be too much to handle along with starting an exercise program, just focus on the eating to start. You will still feel results from cutting out all the bad foods from your life. Like I mentioned earlier, it was around day ten that I realized I was ready to begin working out, so I set a goal of working some cardio and ab work into my routine every other day.

The amazing part of the experiment is that changing the eating habits made my exercise time feel like it counted for double. My body changes seemed to accelerate once I started working out and it felt great. Each day of eating right and exercising felt like a jump to my goal instead of a stagger.

Bonus: Portion Control

Let me start by saying that I believe that you should have some concept of portion control when looking at a healthier lifestyle. Just because something doesn't contain sugar or flour doesn't mean you should just go crazy, eating huge quantities until you feel bloated and lethargic.

But, I found that in the first two weeks of the challenge, it's a better choice to focus more on eating the right food and not panicking if you consume a little too much. You're already giving your system quite a shock, so don't feel like you need to make your life harder by measuring out portions and counting calories. Just eat until you're full and then stop eating.

I can see the headlines now. “John is anti-portion control and is trying to doom us all.”, but I promise you that isn’t the case. When you first give up sugar and flour, your brain is confused and sends you mixed signals about when to stop eating. You’ll find over the first two weeks that this clears up and you will naturally adjust your eating to manage your own portions. Your brain starts getting the “full” signals a little quicker and you end up leaving a bit on your plate each meal.

From that point forward, you start to rediscover what it takes to make your body feel full and won’t find yourself overloading your plate or grabbing more than what you need. This is the time to start really focusing on calorie intake and your portion sizes while maintaining the never get hungry rule. In my personal experience with the experiment, I noticed my portion sizes decreasing and I found I wasn’t as hungry as the days progressed.

10

RECAPPING THE BIG THREE

I've boiled my initial success down to three main areas that anyone can incorporate into their lives with just a little work.

1. **Don't make it about the eating!** People seem to always get hung up on their diet and what they are going without. In the past, I would focus so much on what I could and couldn't eat; that it ended up consuming me. I actually made the "diet" an evil creature that was to blame for making me go without the foods I loved. This would cause me to say things like: "I'd love a piece of pizza, but my diet won't allow it." Or "That's not something I can eat because of my diet." People started to pity me because of this evil "diet" that was ruining my life and making me sad. In fact, once I started to cheat, my brain didn't see it as a bad thing, but instead that I was escaping the clutches of the diet overlords and tasting freedom after a long imprisonment.

My approach this time was to conduct an experiment instead of starting a "diet". You might think it's still the same thing, just with a different word, but the word "experiment" has a lot of power in it. First off, an experiment doesn't run forever, so I had an ending date. Second the word experiment tends to evoke curiosity in others instead of pity. As they asked

about the experiment, I could easily explain that this was more about a test of my personal will power than it was about losing weight. It certainly helped that my experiment allowed me to eat until full and never feel hungry as long as the food fit into the parameters of the test. Things quickly went from a situation where I was sacrificing something I loved, to determining how strong I was.

- 2. Set a timeframe goal!** You've already heard speeches and read books about goal setting, so I'm not going regurgitate a bunch of stuff here that you've gotten somewhere else. Short version is that you need to set some sort of timeframe for your "experiment" and stick to it. I wrote this book with a goal of a month because it lets you get everything out of your system and begin feeling the benefits. One month gives you the mental clarity to realize the haze you've lived in all your life so that you'll want to keep going.

When I started my experiment for a month, I wasn't sure I would even survive, let alone continue it. I realized that something was happening to both my body and my mind around two weeks in and everything started to change. They say it typically takes 21 days to create a change in habit, but it seemed to be earlier for me after detoxing all the processed garbage in my system. When I talked to people about what I was doing, they'd quickly let me know that there's no way they could change their eating like I was doing. I think most folks immediately get hung up on if they can eliminate sugar and flour from their diet forever, which keeps them from trying it for a month. Sure they can imagine taking a vacation for a month in some exotic location, totally changing their daily routines, but changing their food is out of the question. I honestly believe that anyone could do anything for a month, just think about the 780 months you get in 65 years of life? Do you think you can try something new for just one of them?

3. **Tell people what you're doing!** Now I'm not saying you need to go grab strangers and tell them you've reached a point so low in your life that you're trying something crazy to see what happens. And I definitely don't recommend posting on social media that you're starting a new "crazy diet" and people should express their condolences. Quite often in those situations, you'll only get silence from others, mostly because people look at those "diet" posts on social media and see it as a loaded statement. It's still important to share your goals, but I feel that phrasing is important. Make it more about the experiment and testing of your personal willpower than the eating. You'll find that people will start encouraging you more and become involved in your success each day for the month of your experiment.

In my case, I started a blog about my month long experiment, where I shared everything I was experiencing and eating. This way, I had a record of what I did for some self-reflection down the road. Sure I had some folks call me crazy, or chime in that they could never imagine doing anything like I was, but overall people focused on encouraging me in my month long endeavor. In fact, quite a few people checked in regularly with my progress, which was a motivator for me. A few folks used my experiment as a catalyst for their own personal change and decided the time had come for them. Talk about motivation! When you have people telling you that your journey is positively impacting their life and mindset, it gives you the extra resolve to continue forward. Just think about the people who look up to you and how you might positively impact their lives by doing a one month "experiment". Why wouldn't you give it a shot?

Finally, I have to put another plug in for planning. I didn't include it in the "big three", because I felt it goes without saying, but I'm still saying it. Let's be realistic and agree that you can't completely change your eating habits, unless you do some planning and prep on the front end, and some regular planning throughout.

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MY MEALS FOR A MONTH

Here's a quick summary of what I ate during my month without sugar and flour. Please keep in mind that I am extremely picky, which has helped me develop the ability to eat the same things over and over and not get bored. You likely will have many more options that fit into the guidelines of the experiment.

Breakfast:

I was really quite boring with my breakfast meal for the month. Since I'm quite picky, the only thing I really like for breakfast that fit in the criteria was scrambled eggs mixed with diced Kielbasa or turkey sausage. I would cook a large portion twice a week and then eat the leftovers each morning. I typically enjoyed my eggs and kielbasa with some shredded cheddar sprinkled over the top, though I tried to use cheese sparingly most days.

Lunch:

My main "go to" dishes were either a salad with ham chunks, cheese, and black olives or a taco salad with taco meat, cheese, and black olives. Other days consisted of leftovers from dinner the day or two before. I found that I didn't really need salad dressing to eat lettuce, putting different meat toppings on my salad kept things varied

enough that I didn't get bored. You might want to try chicken, sliced pork chops, or other meats with spices to help you avoid dressings. Here are a few of my other meals.

- Small taco salad.
- Dinner leftovers - chicken, carrots, mushroom mixture over Quinoa.
- Cauliflower crust pizza, but it ended up closer to a "pizza cauliflower lasagna".
- Left over pork loin, along with the broccoli. I laid it all out on some Quinoa.
- Leftover sausage, along with a side salad.
- For a final lunch I had probably the unhealthiest meal during the entire month, but it didn't have flour or sugar in it. I purposefully avoided white potatoes and leaned more toward sweet potatoes due to the higher fiber content. I found a bag of crinkle cut fries in the freezer and decided to bake a portion of them up. I put a portion on a plate, covered it with cheddar cheese, ground beef, and some leftover spicy chicken chunks and I was all set. Kind of a French fry nacho smorgasbord. It was quite tasty, but a rare treat.

Dinners:

- Delicious pulled chicken crock pot concoction that was served over rice. Mixed vegetables rounded it out as a side. Rather tasty.
- Crusted chicken in Almond Flour and parmesan cheese. The chicken was cut into smaller portions that were slightly bigger than boneless chicken wings. The sides were mashed sweet potatoes and corn.
- Meatloaf, corn, and applesauce. I didn't realize that applesauce would be such a hit with the family during this time. It's like my 8 year old had never eaten it before and is

constantly asking for it. One tip here though, make sure you buy the “natural” applesauce and not the regular. Check the ingredients and make sure it just says apples and water.

- Sausages, half a sweet potato, broccoli and cauliflower mix, and a few turkey spinach meatballs with light alfredo sauce drizzled over the top of them.
- Bangers and Mash, but healthier style. Sausages with a light gravy next to some partially mashed sweet potatoes and fresh green beans.
- Pork chops simmering in a Verde salsa over a helping of Quinoa with a side of corn.
- Seasoned porkchops and sweet potatoes with some natural applesauce and steamed corn.
- Steak with fresh green beans and peppers.
- Seasoned boneless chicken stuffed with broccoli in a cheese sauce, with sweet potato rounds sprinkled with a little cinnamon and nutmeg.
- Brautwurst, natural applesauce, and broccoli.
- Stuffed chicken with Quinoa
- Chicken breasts stuffed with a mixture of cheese, bacon, and cream cheese. Had it with mixed vegetables on the side.
- Bratwurst, sweet potato chunks, and onions all put on a large cookie sheet and baked in the oven for what seemed like a long time. Dessert was some natural applesauce.
- Chunks of chicken mixed with mushrooms, carrots, and cauliflower over a bed of Quinoa.
- Grilled chicken with a side of wild rice and a side of corn.
- Teriyaki chicken chunks over a bed of rice with a mix of sweet peppers. I also had a portion of cottage cheese with the meal, just to jazz it up a bit.
- Bratwurst with a large side of diced sweet potatoes, mushrooms, and onions.

- Chicken sausage bonanza. Almost like a stir fry, it had cauliflower, zucchini, chicken sausage chunks, and various other things that I couldn't identify. I had a sweet potato on the side, something I've come to enjoy just eating plain with no butter or seasoning.
- Turkey meatloaf burger that was a little spicy for my tastes, but my family disagreed. Some fried Jicama on the side with a small bowl of applesauce. Some cheese cubes later in the evening.
- Ham and cheese Stromboli that was wrapped in a cauliflower crust. Apple sauce was eaten for dessert.
- Seasoned chicken chunks with cauliflower, along with a small bowl of applesauce, no sugar added, of course.
- Chicken, Quinoa, and a sweet potato.
- Shredded chicken on top of a bowl of Quinoa.
- Pork Tenderloin with a sweet potato and broccoli on the side. Some cheese chunks as a late night snack.
- Broccoli, sweet potatoes, and Italian sausages.
- Meatballs with an orange type sauce. A side of Quinoa that you can put the meatballs on. A helping of broccoli.
- Two apples sliced up. Some eggs and kielbasa. Applesauce.
- Pork Roast, mashed sweet potatoes, and broccoli



USE THE
FOLLOWING PAGES
TO PLAN OUT YOUR
MEALS FOR THE
FIRST WEEK.

Breakfast options:

Day One –

Day Two –

Day Three –

Day Four –

Day Five –

Day Six –

Day Seven –

Lunch options:

Day One –

Day Two –

Day Three –

Day Four –

Day Five –

Day Six –

Day Seven –

Dinner Options:

Day One –

Day Two –

Day Three –

Day Four –

Day Five –

Day Six –

Day Seven –

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DAILY BLOG FROM MY EXPERIMENT

I started my no flour / no sugar experiment on March 1st, 2016 with the intent of going for the entire month. I committed myself to blogging about each day, so others can get an idea of what I was going through during the huge change in my life. Below are the daily blog posts from the month and at the end is a summary of everything I ate during the time.

3-1-2016

Well, I'm a couple of hours into March and my great experiment is underway. So begins my month long journey without processed sugar or flour to eat. So far I'm doing pretty good, but it's only been an hour. Tomorrow, (or is it later today?), I'll be enjoying some eggs and turkey kielbasa for breakfast, a nice salad for lunch, and then a dinner of Brauts, veggies, and sweet potatoes. Sprinkle in an apple here and there, and I have my strategy for the first day. I'm sure future days will be very similar though.

People have asked me why I would want to do this and I'm not sure I have an exact answer. Yes, I've watched some shows and read some books on our culture's dependency on sugar, which made me

want to see how much impact it has on my life. Maybe I want to do something like this while it's on my terms and not when I have a health professional telling me it's unavoidable. In the end, I think it's just another challenge to see how much I can endure and then how I can use this challenge to encourage my creative side.

Day one comes to a close and I have survived. Actually it didn't feel like I had given up anything at all, so I'm thinking I just fooled my stomach and taste buds into thinking this is just a temporary thing. I noticed that I got a little sluggish around 9PM, but I wasn't hungry.

The time after I get home from work will still be the biggest challenge for me I'm sure. I typically found myself able to snack on anything around 2AM, away from the prying eyes of my family, but I've decided that I will try to avoid eating so late in the evening during this experiment also. My best tactic for not eating after 1AM is flossing and brushing my teeth as soon as I get home. No one wants to eat after they go through the effort of brushing AND flossing. So far so good.

Challenges for the upcoming weeks definitely include the possibility of becoming bored with the same foods over and over because I'm quite picky. I guess I'll need to get over my pickiness pretty soon.

3-2-2016

An interesting day with me waking up to a headache that I just couldn't shake. I didn't want to believe it was detoxing from sugar, especially since the memory of the three cookies I ate just 48 hours ago were still fresh on my mind. In the end, I think it did have something to do with my body craving sugar because nothing I took would make it go away. It did shift from a sharp pain to a dull throbbing ache after a quick nap midmorning, so that was a win.

I realized today that I gave up a lot more than just sugar and flour for my March experiment. I've also given up caffeine because I've never been a coffee drinker and all my usual beverages are out. Luckily for me, I haven't been a huge soda drinker and we rarely had it in the house before this month, so I'm not trying to kick a soda addiction too.

Eating after midnight, which has become the norm for me after getting off work at 1am is out also. My goal is to try and get my body back to a normal daytime schedule, which means no late night snacking and instead, getting to bed early so I don't sleep the morning away.

Finally, I'm attempting to increase my water intake to reach a more recommended level. Granted, I'm nowhere near what "experts" (and my wife) think I should be drinking each day, but I've tripled my intake, so I'm good with that for now.

3-3-2016

My headache was gone and I had more energy today, which kept my spirits up. I had some folks tell me that they could never give up sugar and flour for a month and I had to answer that I wasn't sure if I could either. I asked them to check in on me in a couple of weeks and see what happens.

I won't lie to you and say it's easy, or that you should think about doing it next month. In all honesty, I have a bit of an edge on most folks right now with my schedule and preplanning. Will power has a bit to do with it too, but without a plan, I don't think anyone would get very far. Here's a few of the things I have going for me.

1. **Work schedule.** Even though I don't like the schedule I work, it does work in my favor for tackling this experiment. I typically wake up around 9:30AM and have the ability to spend time making breakfast without being in a hurry. I leave for work around 2:30PM, so I can also make myself a nice lunch. My job is within five minutes of my house, so I come home for dinner, which is typically prepared by my wonderful wife or kids. I don't really get additional breaks at work, so it isn't like I have to sit and look at a candy machine, calling my namely softly.
2. **Grocery Shopping.** I've done the shopping for the family for the past year and it's given me a chance to slowly adjust some of the food choices in the house. During this experiment, I don't have anyone to blame but myself for any "tempting" foods brought into the house. Of course, this ties in with the kids and things they like to eat, which is the next point.
3. **Family Support.** We started talking about this experiment months ago, describing what it might look like. Of course there was concern from all the kids about what they would be eating, but I made it clear that I wouldn't be forcing my experiment on others. I did let them know that their eating habits may be impacted for the short term though, especially when it comes to foods that I typically snack on. We phased out the cereals that I love as much as them, and replaced them with ones they love and I don't. Our youngest still gets his lunchables, gogurts, and peanut butter sandwiches because I have no interest in them, but he had to say goodbye to Goldfish Crackers and pretzels because I can't control

- myself around those. Each child got to pick foods they enjoy that I don't care for and I committed to stocking up on them.
4. Planning. Having a meal plan is one of the most important parts of this experiment and while I don't have every day for the month figured out, we still talk over things as family. One of the most important parts is having some quick back up meals for dinner just in case my wife has to work late or gets held up. This allows the older kids to whip something up without having to stress about making a new meal that requires a lot of knowledge.
 5. Mental strength. I'm not saying I have the willpower of a super hero, in fact I'm craving some chips with cheese right now. But I think that by calling it an "experiment" makes me feel like it's less restrictive than a diet or permanent lifestyle change. I don't know what my mind or body will be like at the end of March, but I could very well keep going with my experiment if it has a huge positive impact on my life. I just know that trying this for a week or two wouldn't have the same effect on me due to the short timeframe. Besides, you can do anything for a month if you put your mind to it.
 6. Peer pressure. No, I don't have a gang of vegans hanging around me and telling me I need to eat more salad. To me, peer pressure is caused by you, the reader of these words. Once I committed to writing about this month, I knew folks would follow along and I don't want to disappoint you with not giving it all my effort.
 7. Money. I like to save it, and this gives me a chance to see that happen. I know there are some of you thinking that buying fresh food is so much more expensive than frozen pizzas and soda, but I've found that actually isn't true. After the first trip to the grocery store over a year ago to take on the shopping responsibilities, I quickly realized that cookies, chips, and other "junk" foods were expensive and had to be cut back on. This was ironic because when my wife did the

shopping and would ask what I needed, I would quickly say Oreos, Ice Cream, Deli Pizzas, etc. Look at how much money you spend on those things and you'll be surprised. Add to that the money you spend eating out or ordering in and it's quite a chunk of change. This month we won't be doing much eating out because it's easier to control the ingredients at our house.

With all that said, I know your life is likely very different than mine and some of these points might be more of a challenge for you. For me, everything came together and it just seemed like this was the moment for the experiment in my life. Your moment to do something similar will present itself soon enough and I hope you take advantage of it.

3-4-2016

Side Effects

I'm not going to tell you that things have dramatically changed for the better after four days of my no sugar / no flour experiment, but I have noticed a couple of side effects. First, I haven't needed an antacid since I began eating this way, not that I consumed them too regularly before. I used to need them after a pizza dinner or too many cookies and couldn't imagine sleeping without some antacids on my nightstand. The second thing is hard to describe, but I noticed when I ate very unhealthy throughout a day, I would feel a pressure throughout my body much like I was being lightly squeezed everywhere at once. It was never enough to make me overly concerned because it almost felt like my body was in overdrive trying to process all the junk I consumed in large quantities. Since the beginning of this month, that hasn't happened once.

When I wake up, it will be the weekend and I'm not positive

how much more challenging it will be than the past few days. It will be my first around the family for a prolonged period and we often like to enjoy our time together eating things on the “not so healthy” scale. I’m sure my blog tomorrow night will have a different tone than the past few.

3-5-2016

Today wasn’t more challenging because of my family, but it was difficult due to running around. My errands took me out of the food safety of my house and into the real world. I tried to time it between meals, but things always take a little longer than expected. No, this isn’t where I confess falling out of my experiment, so be comfortable that my resolve is better than that, but I did break a cardinal rule I set out, which is skipping lunch. Sure I kept snacking on bananas and cheese sticks, but that didn’t make the drifting smell of Buffalo Wild Wings any easier to bear as I walked through the shopping center.

While I was out, I did find a copy of the book “Sugar Busters” at Goodwill for a dollar, which was a win. This was a book that I checked out of the library as I was looking into trying this experiment and I found it filled with lots of good information. I recommend you check your thrift stores for it.

My only trouble began around 10PM when I started getting really tired and decided to head to bed. This may sound like a good idea to you, but it typically ends badly for me because of shift work during the week. Think of it like you getting sleepy at 5PM and deciding to hit the sheets early for the heck of it, your body tends to consider it a nap, then wake you up around 10 and make your next day jacked up. I went to bed at 10, and now am up at 3AM typing up this blog and hoping I can go back to sleep close to my normal 3:30. More than likely I will be up until 5AM and will be a wreck on Sunday.

3-6-2016

Day Six – Surviving Sunday

After a night of erratic sleep, (not due to my eating experiment), I ended up watching the Attack on Titan series for a while until breakfast and then ate the last of the eggs and kielbasa. I'm realizing that the weekends aren't much more challenging than weekdays, except that being around my kids makes me want to eat ice cream or some other junk food item. It made me wonder if my children are to blame for weight issues over the past 18 years. Of course I would then have to blame someone for me being heavy as an adolescent, because I'm sure it had nothing to do with my love of Milk Duds and grape soda.

Spousal Support

I realized today that my wife is much stronger than I am with this eating experiment. She is eating the same way as I am, but doesn't have a daily blog and readers to help her stay accountable. Add to that the fact that her job has her driving around past fast food places throughout the day and erratic work hours, which are challenges in themselves. I bow to her ability and strength and appreciate her keeping pace during this experiment. Try to find someone as crazy as you are if you want to make this eating leap.

3-7-2016

Tonight is my one-week anniversary of my no sugar, no flour experiment. I realized that the first week also included no caffeine and no milk, though that wasn't my original intention. This week I made a solid effort to increase my water intake to 100 ounces a day, which was triple my normal intake before. I feel like I hit the goal every day, though Saturday and Sunday may have been a little on the short side. I just don't drink a lot of water when I'm driving around

because I'm afraid I'll need to stop every twenty minutes to pee.

So, here's my summary of the week, but I'm going to warn you that it won't be startling and exciting like so many commercials on TV. I didn't set out to do this so I can impress you with losing tons of weight in just a week or two. In fact, I didn't even weigh myself before the experiment began, because that wasn't the important thing for me. This month is about my personal will power and how my body feels in general, so if you're patiently waiting to see a topless selfie of my pudgy body in my bathroom mirror, then I'm going to have to break your heart. No camera phones were harmed in my preparation for this endeavor.

Here's what I do know after one week.

- I haven't needed an antacid or felt like I had an upset stomach.
- My joints weren't achy or sore. (Not that I was falling apart before, but I did have my aches and pains that nagged me.)
- My feet haven't become swollen or ached. (Over recent months my feet would swell a bit when I ate high salt or badly. Again, not terribly, but enough to be annoying.)
- I feel like I'm sleeping better now than a week ago. (This could tie back to not having to get an antacid at 3AM and then trying to fall back asleep.) I'm not sure if I'm snoring less, but I'm sure my wife would appreciate that side effect if it could happen soon.
- I feel like I have more energy today than I did on average a week ago. Sure there were a couple of tough days in the beginning of the week, but each day after those had me more energetic than the last.
- Finally, I feel like my head is clearer than it was last month. I'm not talking about "limitless" clarity where I've developed super human insight just that things just seem better in my head.

3-8-2016

Hello everyone and welcome to the finish of day eight in my wonderful experiment of not eating any sugar or flour for the month of March. I'm still chugging away and haven't slipped yet, so thanks for your support and for not having pizzas delivered to my house. For this blog, I wanted to share some "behind-the-scenes" stuff that helped me get to this point. I call this.....

How Facebook helped shape my experiment.

After my most recent annual physical, the doctor explained that my aches and pains weren't due to some horrible illness that he could remedy with a pill or a laser. Instead he nicely explained that I'm getting older and I'm not eating the way I should be. This wasn't the explanation I was expecting because over the previous months I had gotten accustomed to an ache here and a twinge there as part of daily life. After pondering things for a while, I realized I would have to discover for myself the impact a poor diet had on my body.

Around that same time, it seemed that many friends on Facebook were sharing the same Memes about staying in a log cabin for a year without internet for a million dollars, or spending a night in a haunted house for a million bucks. I'm sure you've seen them, or something similar, asking what you would do for some reward.

This started me thinking, what would I do to not have aches and pains for prolonged periods of time? What would I give up or start doing in exchange for that reward? I watched a documentary called Fed Up, which talks frankly about the sugar industry and the control it has over our lives, and at the end was a challenge to go a week without sugar to feel the change. That started my brain working on a plan to begin an experiment. While I'm not a glutton for punishment, I did know that a week was too short a timeframe to try anything new. You barely feel the effects after a week and you haven't really put any change into effect. It takes 21 days to change a

habit and the information I read about sugar stated it would be around two weeks for your body to adjust to functioning without it.

I'm not going to lie to you, my original plan was to use February as my experiment month, but the timing just wasn't right and I hadn't mentally prepped myself or the family for what was to come. I wanted to use a full month, start to finish, so March became the deadline.

My goal isn't to preach the gospel of "no sugar" to folks or look down on soda drinkers out there. I think at the end of this month, which I hopefully survive, my plan is to have you ask yourself, "What would I do in exchange for feeling better, minimizing a medication you're taking, not having to use insulin, not feel aches and pains". If you look at it as an "experiment" like I am, then you aren't thinking about living the rest of your life without things. Suddenly it doesn't become about eating your last slice of pizza ever or enjoying a final brownie before entering the dark world of no sugar. It simply becomes a test of your will, with an exact ending date.

The catch here is that when I get to the end of the month, I don't know for sure how I'll feel or where my mind will be. Maybe the "me" at the end of March will determine that my experiment is worth extending because of feeling better or seeing positive results. You just never know, but you can guarantee you'll never find out if you don't start. This is just my start.

3-9-2016

Today was an interesting day that surprised me just a bit. My day at work was going just fine until the final two hours and then everything seemed to go wrong. It caused me a bit of stress and I wasn't exactly pleased. While this isn't an entirely new situation for me, my reaction was completely different than before. You see, if

this had happened two weeks ago, I would have started my short drive home and taken a left instead of a right, taking me to a Kroger that's just two miles from the house. I then would have walked the aisles at Kroger trying to decide which brand of cookies, ice cream, candy, or other sweet thing I craved enough to spend my money on. Then I would have walked in my house at 1:10AM and set myself down on the couch to watch TV while eating almost all of what I bought. This was how I dealt with "tough" days or any days that I felt like something sweet. Tonight was the same scenario that I encountered many times before, but my brain didn't switch over to "need sugar comfort mode".

When I think back to it, I can't say it was my will power alone that helped me avoid the sweet fate of Kroger after hours. It wasn't even a desire that I felt I had to override, it just felt like business as usual and I wasn't even tempted to take the left. I may not have explained it perfectly in the paragraphs above, but I can only say that something's different now after nine days of the experiment, whether it's in my body or my brain I'm not sure.

Another fun thing today was the delivery of eighty pounds of boneless, skinless chicken breasts to our house. My wife started ordering meat from Zaycon Fresh last year and we haven't stopped since. Basically you order the meat by the case like a month or so in advance, then you drive somewhere local and they load it in your car. Trust me, when we started getting our meat this way, I was completely against it, but I've come to realize it's quite a good deal. Even though I fear I won't hear the end of it, I will go on record that my wife was completely right about this one. Check out their website if you'd like to learn more, it's ZAYCON FRESH.

3-10-2016

Day ten is finishing up now and I can comfortably say that I'm in the double digits for my experiment. It's been a pretty great day too because I realized that I had no aches or pains through the day as I did a variety of tasks. It's great when you can actually begin to feel the difference after changing your lifestyle in some way.

I mentioned previously that my my wife was also going without sugar or flour for the duration of the month to keep me company. Now, I didn't ask her to do the experiment with me because I didn't want her to suffer like I had planned to, but she decided to take on the challenge also and I will admit that she is much more impressive than I am.

You see, when I started planning out my experiment of no sugar and no flour, I put steps in place that help me stay on track. I can honestly tell you that I live in a guarded compound against the armies of sugar and flour. If you opened our cupboards right now, you won't see any chips, cookies, or other tempting things hanging around. Sure we have food, but I made sure a majority of the food is the right food for my experiment. I also don't go out much into the real world where it's dangerously filled with sweet treats bent on tempting me. Basically, I have strict control over what comes into my world.

My wife though, spends her days in the battlefield, facing the sugary sweet enemy multiple times and overcoming amazing obstacles that would likely cripple me. From a workplace with donuts or cookies in the breakroom just waiting for a moment of weakness, to catered work lunches that don't provide many choices for someone undertaking this experiment. Add to that the multitude of tempting places to stop by as she drives around for her job and it's a recipe for disaster.

Even with all that thrown at her, she's kept solid footing. I may

get a bit of fame because I like to write and include the world in my crazy ideas like this one, but I'm not sure what the results would be if I was out there every day like she is. It's like I'm the General who isn't seeing combat, but comes up with a great plan and she's the infantry fighting on the front lines. I actually believe she could write a more motivational blog than I could at this point and you would likely be calling her up in a year and thanking her for changing your life for the better.

So if you'd like help creating a plan for tackling something similar to my experiment, then hit me up and I'll share what I can. If you'd like strategy to surviving the day to day battles in the real world, you might want to talk to my wife. I'm very fortunate to have her traveling this road with me.

3-11-2016

When I decided on March for my no sugar / no flour experiment, I really just worried about one day in the month being an issue. While you might be thinking Easter, with its delicious chocolate bunnies and piles of jelly beans, you would be incorrect. The day was March 12th, the day we are celebrating my youngest son's 8th birthday.

I remember sitting at the dinner table in the middle of February and informing the family of my plan, which didn't really faze them. The only question came from my youngest, who asked if he could still have pizza on his birthday, along with cake and ice cream. I quickly answered that he would definitely still get those things on his special day, so he shouldn't worry. The worrying it would seem would be mostly on my part as the experiment started.

During the first few days in March, my mind was always focused on the 12th and how I would handle it. That first week in March my

body and mind craved pizza terribly, and knowing that I would have it in my house on the 12th was overwhelming me. I will admit as I type this, that it sounds incredibly silly, but I obsessed about the food we would buy on my son's special day. Each day I would argue with myself about whether I would be strong and not have a slice, or if I would call it a special cheat occasion and partake in some deliciousness. I began to justify a quick cheat in my mind, saying that nobody would think any less of me for having some cake and ice cream on my son's birthday. Besides, I figured no one would be paying attention to my blogs anyway, so why not. My mind was pretty much made up by the 5th of March, I would have a couple of pizza slices, some cake, and some ice cream with my son and didn't care what people thought.

Then I hit the 7th of March. No, I didn't have any emotional epiphanies or psychic breakthroughs to change my mind; I just found myself thinking about and wanting pizza less than the day before. As the days moved by, my resolve got a little stronger and my cravings got a little weaker until I had second thoughts about "cheating" during my experiment. By the 9th, my brain had switched from justifying the cheat, to how I can make it easier to survive the birthday and still have my son love me when it was finished. I thought about my likes and dislikes to create a plan for a party with 4 eight year old boys.

1. Ditch the ice cream and get popsicles instead. I'm not much of a Popsicle guy, so my temptation would not be as great. Besides, I can't remember the last time I bought just one container of ice cream for an event; those things are always on sale when you buy two.
2. Cupcakes instead of cake. This may sound strange, but I'm not a huge fan of store bought cupcakes. I feel like they are a lot of work to eat, just to get your hands dirty. They always have too much frosting on them too.

3. Sell the idea to my son, which wasn't too hard. Once he heard he could go to the store and pick out any popsicles he wanted for him and his friends, then walk to the bakery and pick out a six-pack of cupcakes of his choice, he was sold. I told him price was not an issue, which is like a special gift from me in itself.
4. Minimize the pizza impact. 4 eight year olds will be fine with one pizza and some crazy bread. This is an area that I will play by ear though, because my goal will be to not have any leftovers.

I know my plan isn't foolproof, but as of this moment I feel like there will be no need to cheat on my experiment. It may take a little time, but the message here is that there is always a way to minimize the threat to your goals, you just need to figure it out. Make sure you read tomorrow's blog to find out what happens.

3-12-2016

I'm not going to lie to you, it was a challenging day. Lunchtime arrived and I was responsible for picking up the pizza for the boys at the birthday party. My strategy was set since it was just four 8 year-olds and I planned just to get the meal deal from Little Caesars, more than enough, but with hopefully no leftovers.

The pizza place was short staffed in a deliberate attempt to make me linger in the smells of my once close friend. The overhead screens called out to me with full color pictures of deep dish, hand tossed, and side orders that would drive any sane man to salivate. As I waited quietly to the side for the pizza, an older couple came in for a special order of ten pizzas and my eyes began to slightly water as my emotions welled up. I tried to talk them into taking advantage of the card you get for free that will give you a free pizza after buying ten, (which they were doing), and they had the nerve to say they

weren't interested. I was slightly saddened by their response and their lack of desire to receive a free pizza in the future.

I grabbed my cheese pizza, crazy bread, sauce, and Root Beer and headed to the car. Things didn't get much easier after that. The smell quickly filled up the small space and acted like an old friend that I was forced to ignore at a dinner party, even though I wanted nothing more than to strike up a conversation. I tried to think of other things as I rolled down the window, hoping the smell would dissipate in the slightly warm day. It didn't work and it just caused the smell to whip around me like a sweet smelling tornado of a world I used to inhabit but could never see again.

Arriving home, I placed everything on the counter for my wife to dish up to the boys. My resolve had been shaken and it was too much for me to think about touching those triangles dough, sauce, cheese, and love to put them on the plates. I found myself slowly staggering to the other room with just a quick glance back over my shoulder at the closed box beckoning me. Our house is small, so I couldn't get too far away from the feast as the four boys rip through the food and drink like nobleman at a medieval feast. I'd steal an occasional glance at the food being devoured, remembering the good old days when I could easily annihilate a pizza just by myself.

The worst part of the pizza was that I had no desire to eat a salad while it was in the house. It was lunch time though, and I needed to eat something because my hunger was getting worse by the moment. My brain tried to justify eating a salad, but it just wasn't an acceptable option. It was like deciding to drive a Pinto when someone was trying to hand you the keys to a Porshe. I needed something of substance to tie me over and I had nothing ready, which was a mistake on my part. In the end, I retreated back to my eggs and Kielbasa to fill the salad void. I ate in silence, pretending each bite was filled with tomato sauce and cheesy deliciousness.

3-13-2016

Happy Sunday everyone! Sadly I don't have much to report about today. Nothing super exciting happened to tempt me, tease me, or torment me.

My mother asked me today what my plans were after this month was over and I didn't have an exact answer for her. I can honestly say that I'm not sure where my mind will be at on April 1st, so I'll have to wait a little longer to figure that out. After thirteen days of going without sugar, flour, and caffeine, it feels like a fog has been lifted from my brain and I realize that there is a life without those things. Now, I think we all know that our society is built on a foundation of sugar, so it would be nearly impossible to say I want to continue this indefinitely, but the benefits of the experiment are compounding each day.

The biggest challenge to overcome will truly be that of convenience. It's simply just easier to grab something to go or out on the road that contains all the things I've given up. Like I've said previously, I have worked hard to plan things out and isolate myself from the sugary world of temptation. I am already thinking about April 1st, 2nd, and 3rd when I'll be at a convention here in town and away from my refrigerator for a prolonged period of time. If I want to continue this effort, I know some additional planning will have to be involved.

It's funny because when I started the month, all I could think about was how I would go out for a nice deep dish pizza once the experiment ended. As the days passed, I realized that this "reward" mentality is part of the trap I was caught in over the years. Now I'm not so sure I need a food based reward for finishing an objective, reaching a holiday, or having a birthday. As my wife and I talk about Easter and the activities surrounding it, I feel a mental clarity that I never had before. Does the holiday have to be tied to candy like it has been in the years past? Does our youngest need to attend a

“candy hunt” where they don’t even use the plastic eggs anymore, and just throw fun sized candy bars around a park and let the kids go crazy? Yes, he’ll still attend, but I can now see how silly it all is. I’ve started seeing how many holidays have been hijacked by the candy companies.

No, I haven’t had some magical transformation into a sugar and holiday hating guy who is punishing his children because of how society acts. I’m still myself, but without the stranglehold of sugar on my senses. It’s helped me ask the questions, even though I may never get to the answers. To some degree, I feel like Homer Simpson in the episode where they remove a crayon lodged in his brain that kept him stupid all these years. He suddenly becomes smarter about things and more aware of the world around him, only to decide it was easier just to be oblivious to the world so he puts the crayon back in. My fear is that I too will quickly go back to the sugary braincloud in April, losing everything I have gained. Either way, I’ll be taking you along with me, so stay tuned.

3-14-2016

Happy Pie day everyone, I hope you enjoyed a fresh pie of your choosing to celebrate the day. I, of course, did not partake in pie or any other delicious thing that involves flour and sugar.

I’m past the two week mark of my experiment and I still feel great. I find it hard to believe that the hardest part of this experience has been trying to drink 100 ounces of water every day. Giving up sugar and flour seems to be no problem compared to sucking down all that water every day.

Today my family informed me that my snoring has softened since beginning the experiment. I no longer sound like a freight train barreling down the tracks, instead I’m more like an average

locomotive. I'm counting this as a win in the health department. Along with the health check in, I feel thinner, though I can't give you exact numbers since I didn't weigh in before starting this. I will likely take my measurements again in the next couple of days and let you know if there are positive results.

To celebrate my completion of the first half of my experiment, I'm devising a 2.0 version for the last half of the month. My goal will be to hit the gym fairly regularly in the coming weeks to combine the power of exercise with the eating program. I'd like to say I purposefully avoided exercise during the first two weeks so I could evaluate the eating change by itself, but in all honesty I just didn't feel like going to the gym. Sorry if you thought I was going super healthy from the start, but I like to pace myself. I will likely do a quick weigh in and remeasure to get some numbers before hitting the gym so I can give you some results when the month is done. You're still out of luck if you are hoping for the topless picture, I just don't think our relationship is to that point yet. In future blogs I will include an exercise section.

3-15-2016

The question was raised about what I've been drinking during this time and it made me realize that I've only drank water for the past two weeks. I purposefully avoided milk because I knew that I would be eating a tad bit more cheese during the day and I didn't want to overcompensate my sugar loss with tons of dairy. I read that article saying cheese is more addictive than some drugs out there and I completely agree. I absolutely could not live without cheese in my diet. Of course, three weeks ago I thought I couldn't live without sugar and flour in my diet and I'm doing better than I expected.

Before this experiment started, I was a big fan of Crystal Light drinks and that's what we had with almost every dinner. I favored

the Peach Tea myself, but was open to anything so the kids had variety. If we had pizza, then typically I was drawn toward Root Beer because it just made the pizza taste better. I feel fortunate that we have never been huge soda drinkers in my house, so I didn't have to kick that addiction also. Trying to go without soda when you're used to having 1 or 2 a day is tough and I feel for you guys that try to kick it. Of course, when I was younger, I drank a lot of soda like most people, but for some reason moved away from it. I guess I can thank Iced Tea in the summer for helping with that.

So in the end, I've just been drinking water and quite a bit of it. It may sound super boring to you, but it isn't too bad after the sugar has been kicked out of your system. I'm not saying that water tastes as good as punch to me now, but it doesn't taste like the bland nothingness it used to either. I guess my point with this is that there are likely things you think you could never live without right now, but if you just give yourself some freedom from them for a while, it becomes easier to change.

I have really surprised myself over these past couple of weeks and while I haven't become the perfect picture of health, I know my body feels different. I don't look in the mirror and have a biggest loser shock moment each day, but I have noticed my clothes fitting better and my shape becoming less "Santa Claus" and more "Santa Claus in his 30's" (likely when he wasn't drinking Coca Cola all the time). These results are even better to me because I haven't really done much exercise and my focus has been eating full meals and never being hungry. At no point have I measured my food or counted a calorie during this time. If I get hungry, I make sure to eat, especially so my family can tolerate me. We do go to the store more to stock up on perishables like Bananas, but our shopping budget hasn't increased.

Right now there's a lot more in the "wins" column of this experiment than there are in the "negative" column. I especially like

that I'm not paying money for any special food or programs, but remember I have my wonderful wife supporting me, so that's equal to a high-end program in itself.

3-16-2016

Yes folks, the sixteenth has finished and I'm on the backside of the month. It's all downhill from here and I'd like to imagine things get easier, or at least stay the same as they are now. I did make the goal of going to the gym a total of at least eight times before the end of the month, so we'll see how that goes. I can promise you that my time in the gym won't be excessive and I won't be wearing a muscle t-shirt, throwing the weights around. It will likely be rather boring routines that are more sustainable in the future. Today I just hit the elliptical for around thirty minutes and then worked my arms for a bit.

I had a chance to get my measurements taken again after two weeks doing the experiment, just to see what progress was made. While minor gains were made in most areas, the biggest surprise was the loss of 2-3 inches from my hips. I guess it's true that you tend to lose weight in the last places you need to because my hips and butt are the last places I was hoping to drop inches. Hopefully the rest of me catches up with them soon.

If you've been reading this and wondering if you could ever do something like my experiment, I recommend you give it a try. While it's not the easiest thing to do, especially if you aren't a preplanner, it is still something that can be done if you put your mind to it. Once I hit day twelve, it was like a cloud lifted from my brain and I could actually feel my body being healthier. This feeling in itself is almost as addictive as the cookies and candy I used to enjoy.

3-17-2016

Not much to blog about today. I do find it funny though, that now when the grocery ads come, I find myself looking more at the fruits and vegetables on sale than other items. I've come to realize that eating healthier foods does mean you have to trim back in some other areas due to the cost involved. Not that it's breaking the bank, but it does contribute to my getting excited when certain fruits we buy consistently are on sale.

This experiment has caused me to share some of the grocery shopping responsibilities now though. I realized I'm only good to buy the basics for the home and then some of the easier fruits, like apples, bananas, strawberries, blueberries, and sweet potatoes. Much of the abnormal fruits and vegetables I leave to my wife who has a better eye for them than I do. I just spend too much time handling avocados with no luck in figuring out which one is best and often get strange looks when I ask people's opinions on their fruit selections.

I've also realized that I get too overwhelmed looking at yogurt options. Yogurt is not a food I enjoy and my least favorite thing is trying to figure out which ones to buy if my family asks me to get some. Do they really need that many yogurt options in the world? This has led me to just leave some money aside for Stephanie to find the best deals on fruit and go crazy.

3-18-2016

I've had healthy spans in my life. My goal isn't to ever give the impression that I lived the last forty years in a pit of sugary squalor, which I just escaped just over two weeks ago. Much like most people in the world, there were periods of time where I dedicated myself to "eating right", giving up sweets and sodas, and participating regularly in healthy activities. These moments were challenging at times, but

have added to my growth and ability to see the potential I have in overcoming challenges. Heck, ten years ago I actually completed a sprint Triathlon, which still amazes me today.

Now this paragraph you might expect me to rant about the evils of our society embracing sugar, or the ease of obtaining non healthy foods, causing us to sway. You might even expect a paragraph about how eventually my life got busy and it just became easier to not exercise or eat right for a day, then a week, then a month, then a year. Even I am amazed that I'm not churning out an eloquent series of words about how the world is always against us, but this time I will overcome.

I raised the question in my first blog about what would you do or give up for a month for a big reward at the end, but let me adjust that. If you are at a point in your life where you want to be healthy, would you give up sugar and flour for one month if it meant you didn't have to sacrifice your time and energy to reach the same place in three? How much is your cereal, pizza, soda, etc worth to you at that point?

In the end, I appreciate you spending your time reading my thoughts and following along with my experiment. I enjoy it when I'm told that I motivated you or someone to start down a healthy path. My biggest fear is that I'll become "that guy" to folks. "That guy who did something you think you could never do." "That guy that has so much more motivation than you do." "That guy who is just crazy to try something like this." "That guy who has tons of willpower and inner strength, which is why he could do something that I could never do."

Honestly, I'm just "that guy" who decided to try an experiment because he needed to do SOMETHING. I'm "that guy" that ate 3-4 packages of Keebler cookies in the final days before starting this experiment because I needed to "work it out" of my system before giving everything up. I'm "that guy" that is no different from you

and is now afraid of losing this amazing feeling in my body and mind after just eighteen days of giving up flour and sugar. Be who you are, but understand that you are capable of amazing things. What would you give up for thirty days and for what reward.

3-19-2016

Saturdays have proven difficult for me. Not in the pizza wanting kind of way, just in a hectic, disorganized fashion. Seems I get up too late and I'm pretty much running around shortly after. Meals get skipped and water doesn't get drunk to the level it needs to be. But I still survived and stuck to it, even with the driving from place to place.

Some days I realize you have to plan a little more to prepare for the unexpected.

3-20-2016

I had my third visit to the gym today, so I feel like I'm on track to hit my goal before the end of the month. I have five more visits to tackle before the 31st. The interesting thing about incorporating a light workout into the experiment is that it feels like the results I'm seeing are accelerating. It's like how compound interest can positively affect your retirement plan, a little exercise is compounding things away. Don't feel like you need a gym membership either if that might hold you back. I'm doing the equivalent of a brisk walk and some light weight work, something you could easily do at and around your house.

I wanted to talk in this blog about grocery shopping, because I feel like most healthy battles are won or lost at the grocery store, especially in moments of temptation. I write these following

paragraphs knowing full well that what we do may not work for you, but at least it exposes you to a different technique. I also know that my wife takes a different approach to grocery shopping than I do, so some of you might think I'm crazy. My goal isn't to make this a "man brain" versus "woman brain" thing, but let's just be honest and admit that men and women approach shopping from two different directions.

When I took over grocery shopping for the family, my goal was to make the process as organized and simple as possible. Below are the steps I took to get things going.

I made a list of all of our "staple items" that need to be bought every so often. Toilet paper, ketchup, salad dressing, deodorant, etc. These items aren't a weekly purchase, but need to be kept in mind.

Sat the family down and asked for 3 items they couldn't live without and always wanted to see in the fridge or pantry. This could be Gogurts, lunchables, lunch meat, cheese, mini tomatoes, hot dogs, etc. I didn't judge their choices too much, but did lean them in a healthier direction. (The psychological reason behind this discussion was that if we always had those items, then they would rarely feel like there was "no food" in the house.

- Created a list of family staple items that would be purchased weekly. This included bread, milk, eggs, cheese, cereal, lettuce, water, etc.
- Then I created two Excel spreadsheets, one that had staple items that wouldn't be purchased weekly, and then another that had the weekly and family staple items.
- Then I went to the grocery store we most frequent, (Kroger in my case), and walked the aisles for a couple of hours, recording the prices of everything I had listed. I went home and put that information into the spreadsheets to create a foundation of prices.

- Each week we would plan a rough menu based on what we had on hand and what we needed to buy, like hamburger, brats, stuffing, vegetables, etc. The goal was to not go too meat heavy in one week or it drives your prices up. Our menu was typically created around what was in the store ad.
- I would then create a master shopping list, pulling any “non-weekly” staples into the list of weekly needs. Then add any dinner options based on the ad, with the sale prices. If anything on our staple list was on sale or had a coupon, then the price was adjusted on the sheet to reflect that also. When the sale was good, I will bump up the quantity of an item, so I can skip it the following week at regular price.

After a list confirmation with my wife, then the columns were totaled and the sheet was printed. At that point, I rarely deviated from the list. If my total said 80.00, then I would bring 90.00 in cash and no more.

When shopping, the goal was to get the listed items and then get out. If there was a tempting clearance special on something we eat, then I had a little wiggle room, but that wasn't the end objective.

As time moved on, the family slowly readjusted their staple items or I slowly phased out some of them. In the beginning we were buying Cheez it crackers and Goldfish crackers for my youngest, but he eventually settled on one and I stopped buying the other. He was still happy and I was saving money. It didn't take me too long to realize that we didn't have the money for all the junk food that I used to request when my wife did the grocery shopping, so much of that was phased out. We have a strict budget of around 120.00 a week, so that didn't leave much for Oreos and ice cream.

After a year of sticking to this process, it was fairly easy to ask the kids to temporarily identify staple items that didn't contain sugar or flour. Since they were used to a smaller variety of items, switching things out gave them something new to eat.

3-21-2016

The Blame Game

I'm sure you're nothing like this, but I used to find myself blaming others when I "cheated" during times I was trying to be ultra healthy. Maybe someone in the family brought tempting food into our house that I felt forced to eat or my wife drags me to an event filled with cookies and cakes that I had to eat so I could be polite. Either way, it was rarely my fault that I filled up on sweets, only to regret things later. These moments would domino until I was completely off my healthy lifestyle and back on the couch with a package of Oreos and a tall glass of milk.

On Saturday, my wife took our youngest son to an Easter egg hunt, you know the kind without eggs where they just toss candy everywhere and let the kids go crazy. He went into the fray with a jumbo basket and fought his way back with a good portion of candy bars and treats. When they arrived home, the basket went on the table where I had the pleasure of walking by it over and over. I could have easily grabbed a quick snack and no one would have noticed, but strangely enough, the temptation wasn't there. It's like my body has become desensitized to the "needing" of sweets when they are in my proximity. Mentally though, I still register when they are near and my brain tries to remind me of the good times we used to have with them, but that need fades as the impulses move down from my neck.

It's almost like an out of body experience now where I can see everything going on, but don't feel a need to participate. I could tell myself that my son wasn't a bad person for wanting to go get free candy, and that he wasn't trying to sabotage me by wanting to bring it home. I had nothing to blame him for, because the need to eat the sweets wasn't there. I don't want to say this mindset change happened because I gave up sugar and flour for my experiment, but I can honestly tell you that a month ago I would have been turning our kitchen upside down right now to find every last speck of candy in

the place. I definitely had an issue with cravings after midnight.

So now my goal is to not feel “put out” by people or places that have sweets hanging about. This experiment has given me the power of choice and being able to choose what I eat and when. I won’t judge others if they want to eat sugary, delicious food. Unless of course they try to throw me off by offering just a small portion that “won’t hurt me”. Then I might get cranky.

3-22-2016

People have begun to take notice that I’ve lost weight, something nice to hear after just three weeks. While I still consider myself “larger than life”, it’s good to feel that visible progress is being made. It continues to charge me up when folks are interested in how I have survived this long without society’s basic food groups. I try to make every effort not to be preachy, but I’m sure my excitement in discussing the positive effects of my experiment comes across a bit over the top at times.

I’ve started prepping my kids that I will likely extend this experiment another month. While they weren’t exactly thrilled, they are understanding of what I’m trying to do. I still plan to visit my doctor at the start of April and get my recent numbers from this year’s physical, which will allow me to do some comparisons for the month. Once I finalize the decision about April, I will let you know. I do plan to continue my blog along with my experiment so you can track my daily progress.

3-23-2016

Yes, no sugar, but why no flour, caffeine, and milk?

I've mentioned in previous blogs about this experiment that I enjoy pre-planning and setting myself up for success when I set out to do something crazy like this. Originally when I thought about my goals and personality, I had intended just to give up sugar and nothing else. As I continued my research on the subject, I realized things had to be more drastic and my start with sugar quickly included flour also.

But why, you might ask. First of all, everything I had discovered on giving up sugar strongly suggested you go cold turkey from any sweeteners, artificial or natural. Continuing to eat those things, even if they don't contain actual "sugar" will keep your body in a state of need for the sweet stuff. My goal wasn't to simply substitute the variety of "sugar free" options out there for my regular food and then think I was really sacrificing anything. I've eaten a bag of sugar free candy before and I'm sure it ended up being just as bad for me.

Another good reason to get rid of the flour was that I didn't have to bother looking at labels anymore. There was no need to analyze the ingredient's list to see what hidden sugars or other chemicals might be lurking in the package. Once the sugar and flour combo were out, I realized that I would be sticking to food that was very close to its original form. This helped me quickly and clearly identify what could and couldn't be eaten, making things easier from a planning perspective.

Caffeine ended up going away due to the sweetener issue also. I'm a huge fan of Crystal Light teas and punch, but even though it was considered "healthier" than soda, it was still sweet and would impact me. I realized I was pretty much safe with just water, so I decided to challenge myself to up my water intake so I could help flush my system faster.

Giving up milk was simply a personal choice for my experiment. I enjoy milk and cheese and wonder if I could ever live without them. I also knew when I started the experiment that I would be leaning more heavily on cheese than typical. It's difficult for me to eat a salad without cheese or have my eggs without sprinkling some cheese on top. I was worried that I would hurt my results if I ended up eating more cheese and was also drinking milk, so I had to pick one. Sorry milk, I just don't love you as much as cheese.

I think you'll agree that this was quite a bit to give up all at once and I'll admit it was challenging. I do think that going for the entire combination helped me get through the craving time faster. You try it and let me know what you think.

3-24-2016

Day twenty-four has wrapped up and I wanted to share an observation with those of you following along at home. It will be difficult to describe, but after twenty-four days without sugar and flour, food has lost some of its meaning to me. Sure, I'm still hungry and I want to enjoy good food, but it's almost like the tasty treats I used to obsess about are just a fading memory.

As I walk through the grocery store now, I don't feel the same psychological pull toward specific cereal brands, ice cream, cookies, or other sugar laden treats. While it's likely still possible for me to snuggle up with a package of oreos and a glass of milk, my brain doesn't see the point any longer. I'm not going off the deep end here and vowing never to eat sugar again, but it's like I can see the sugar "matrix" and I realize that foods that were important to me at one time, now don't have the same impact.

A good example of this would be the holidays, any holiday in fact. If you're like me, each holiday has become associated with a

particular food or dessert; so much so in fact, the food soon overtakes the holiday itself. I couldn't imagine a Thanksgiving without thinking about homemade rolls and stuffing. Halloween time was when I craved a few bags of mallowcreme pumpkins and candy corn. Fourth of July was about brownies and cookies. Easter was about a solid milk chocolate bunny and some Cadbury mini eggs. Birthdays were about ice cream and cake. Maybe this thought process from over the years makes me a shallow person, but I can't imagine I'm alone with these food connections. The pull of holidays and food is so strong in fact, that I have actually put off being healthy in my life because of the timing of a holiday. Sure I might have wanted to be healthier starting December 1st, but I would quickly talk myself out of it because it would be "too hard" with all the sweets around that I wanted to devour.

Now it's different, like the mental link between the holiday and the food has been broken. My wife asked me what we should do for Easter today and I realized I hadn't put any money aside for a special shopping trip to get a brown sugar glazed ham with pineapple rings, stuffing, roll mix, pie mix and countless other things that normally would be sitting in my fridge at this point. I even mentioned that I don't have any desire to see my normal chocolate bunny and candy assortment in the basket this year. This isn't because I have more willpower than the average human, (which I can promise I don't), but because those foods just don't matter any longer.

I almost feel bad for my kids because even though I don't have an issue with them getting some sweets from the Easter bunny, he definitely won't be bringing the typical haul. Of course, I ask myself if I should even feel bad about not feeding my kids a ton of candy? Does every holiday need to be etched into their brains with its candy counterpart. Do we "deserve" sweets just because of a day on a calendar and the mass marketing of candy companies? The "me" of two months ago suggested that my family should shift back Easter one week, so it wouldn't fall in March when I was trying my

experiment and then I could still have a solid chocolate bunny. Now I realize how crazy that sounds, shifting a holiday so I can celebrate it with chocolate. This is the power that sweets had over my life. Holidays were ruled by yummy treats and any good deal on them was a sign from God that I should stock up and eat up.

Again, it's hard to describe my current mental state after so many days in my experiment, but it's different. I'm at a point now where I'm addicted to the results I'm experiencing, as much as I was addicted to pizza and cookies. It's like I've been deprogrammed from some candy cult and realize how crazy my previous beliefs were. My body feels better, my self-image has improved, and at times I think I actually feel weight loss, like it's burning off and I'm watching it go. True, I started this experiment as a test of my mental state and addiction levels to sugar, but it's become something after just three weeks that encompasses my entire body. My thirty-one day challenge may very well stretch out for a longer period of time.

3-25-2016

Today was our prep for Easter and all the good food that typically occurs on that day. Please don't think of me as someone that loses the meanings of the holidays and just focuses on the food, so take a look at yesterday's blog to get an understanding of where I'm coming from. We sat down with the kids today and had an "expectations" talk about what Sunday would look like. The two main points were what the Easter Bunny would bring and also what we would eat for dinner.

1. Here's what I knew going into the conversation.

We wouldn't be having the typical Easter morning with baskets filled with a variety of treats and each person receiving their "featured" treat. (Mine was always the solid chocolate bunny.)

We wouldn't be having ham for Easter Dinner because it was a slippery slope. Once you get that sweet ham on the table, you have to position the mashed potatoes, homemade rolls, stuffing, and more around it. They all just seem to go together.

2. There would be no Easter pies or ice cream for dessert.

As we attacked the first area of concern, (the candy), I realized how lucky I was to have kids that love foods I don't particularly care for. We gave them each the option to pick something just for them. One chose Reeses Peanut Butter Eggs, one chose Jelly Beans, and the other chose Sour Patch kids. Since it was their only item, they got the freedom to name the brand of their choice, which really only applied to the Jelly Beans. The specific brand was identified and would be secured for him. Again, I was lucky that none of those treats are my "favorite" which would cause me issue to be around.

With the dinner situation, we took an entirely new approach in an effort to create a special meal. Stephanie suggested a sirloin or some other steak like meat which I can't recall at the moment. For you normal folks out there, steak might be a weekly occurrence in your house, but it is quite rare that we eat it at the Graham House. I can really only think of a couple of times during our 8-yr-olds life that we've had steak. It's not that I dislike it, but my reasoning would likely be a blog in itself so I'll spare you for now.

Once you settle on steak, then your side dishes can easily be adjusted. Mashed sweet potatoes and cauliflower will make an appearance, along with green beans possibly mixed with some bacon. You can also justify a salad on the side. As for dessert, let's just say we've reached a point where the kids no longer ask "what's for dessert tonight?". Our youngest considers unsweetened applesauce a dessert item now so we'll likely roll with that. (On a side note, I don't understand why they sell "sweetened applesauce" with sugar and corn syrup. Is the unsweetened not sweet enough for people? I've always thought the natural applesauce was sweet enough, but

give me your thoughts.)

My family came to an agreement about Easter in around 10 minute's time. No one had hurt feelings or said they felt unloved because they were just getting one type of candy. The kids, ranging from ages 8 to 18, are more understanding about what the experiment is trying to accomplish than I originally gave them credit for. Keep that in mind if you ponder doing something similar to this experiment, but think it will be too difficult because you have kids of various ages. Don't let your perception of your kids reaction be the thing that keeps you from making a positive change in your life for you and them.

As for me on Easter, I should be just fine without my solid chocolate bunny this year and maybe next. Not being distracted by chewing the head off of a chocolate animal might allow me to focus on more important things that day.

3-26-2016

Saturdays are tough, plain and simple. I'll be honest with you, it is a challenge to have no sugar or flour when you are running from place to place and eating through your "approved" snacks to tide you over. Today we ran to the store, the movies, and then out to a restaurant with friends. Each situation presented unique challenges that were overcome.

Short trips are no issue, solved by grabbing a banana and hitting the road. The movies situation was a bit more interesting though because the film was during the time I typically had lunch. We brought in around two apples cut up and a bottle of water, which worked pretty well. Dinner was a challenge as we met friends at an Irish Pub with a menu heavily relying on fried or flour heavy items. I did the best I could think of and ate before heading out, but this was

the first time during my experiment that I had been in this situation.

I thought it would be easy since I already filled up, but watching folks order their amazing appetizers and entrées was tough. Especially when you're out with friends and everyone is happy to share a portion with you if you look the least bit hungry. Stephanie ordered a burger without the bun and a side of broccoli, which I had a bite of, but even that wasn't the same. Let me just say that you will need to psych yourself up a bit if you try this experiment as someone who is always going out with friends to eat. Or at least make sure you pick places that cater to your restrictions with lots of options. In the end I survived and was happy I didn't make an excuse not to go. You can only be a shut in for so long before you snap.

3-27-2016

Happy Easter everyone! I didn't get a basket filled with treats today, and you know what? I'm fine with that. Don't worry though, we didn't neglect the kids and they still received a sweet or two in a modest basket for each of them. It's not surprising that most of their candy is gone, so thankfully it wasn't that much to start with.

We had a nice day today with the weather being wonderful for a few hours in the afternoon, so we went to the park and did some walking, Frisbee throwing, and just watching our youngest play on the playground. Spring is getting closer every day and it easily entices us outside for fresh air and some exercise. I think that's why I think folks should start their "New Year's Resolutions" in February and March. January is such a bleak month and Spring seems too far away. Starting my experiment in March allows me to catch another wave of energy once the weather starts warming up shortly after. This allows me to integrate new activities into my healthier lifestyle.

It's hard to believe that I'm starting the final week of my

experiment and I'm approaching thirty-one days of no sugar and no flour. I realized when talking with friends about it tonight that I took this on as one of the pickiest people you might know. I've never been a big fruits and vegetables eater and it's been a struggle to not fall into a rut. It made me realize that you, the person reading these words right now, would have an easier time doing this experiment than I ever would. You likely enjoy a variety of fruits that could be eaten for breakfast as a smoothie or just raw, so it wouldn't be eggs and kielbasa every day like me. You probably enjoy a wider variety of meats and vegetables, so the entire menu is open to your tastes, while I'm much more selective. This made me think why more people don't give this experiment a try?

That's the big question isn't it? What is keeping you from trying something like the no sugar/no flour experiment? If you're like the "me" from four months ago, I bet you can come up with quite a few good reasons it couldn't be done. I came up with more than a few, like I wouldn't have time to prepare meals, it would be too expensive, my kids wouldn't be able to handle it, I wouldn't have the willpower, I "needed" sweets to help me through stress, etc., etc., etc. I look back on those excuses I made months ago and realize that they were just that, excuses. In the end, I found my motivation and my wife found hers, not through some divine event, but because I set a date, made a plan, and decided I had enough of the aches, pains, and feeling crappy. This experiment has joined a recent string of challenges that I've set my mind to and overcome, which gives me the confidence and power to seek out the next one and do it again. My hope is that whatever challenges you face will be overcome also.

3-28-2016

You might not realize it with all the stuff I've given up for my experiment, but I actually hit a different milestone this month also. This is the first time I maintained a daily blog revolving around a specific topic for a month. Sure I've always enjoyed writing, but this has helped me realize that daily blogging is a tough gig. How do I keep it interesting for you, the reader, and how do I keep thinking of fresh topics. The last thing I wanted was for my blog to be like my breakfast, just the same thing over and over every day. Hopefully you've enjoyed reading some of them.

Today I realized something good and bad at the same time. The good thing is that our entire family has shifted toward eating more fruit in their daily diet, "yay for change". The bad thing is that we go through a lot of fruit in our house now and that stuff can be a little pricey. In fact, this is the first time in close to a year that we've run out of apples in the fridge. It's a strange feeling that I can't open the fridge and grab an apple. The bright side is that fruit season is almost upon us and the sales will begin to save us some money.

3-29-2016

I don't have much to say. The month long experiment of no sugar and no flour is wrapping up and I survived. I plan to write some detailed blogs in the near future that will help you out if you think you're crazy enough to try the same experiment in your life. I can promise that you already have an edge over me when I started. More to come.

3-30-2016

The final day looms before me like the last 25 meters of a marathon. The finish ribbon is waving in the wind, just a hop, skip, and a salad from me completing an experiment that I thought might not be possible a month ago. This month has flown by for me and I've gotten through each day with the support of someone in my life telling me I motivated them, or that I was just plain crazy.

I decided to call my doctor today and asked to pick up my check up numbers from my annual physical in January. I think it will be interesting to see where I was with my weight and where I am now. True, I didn't start this experiment as a weight loss program, but it's a nice side effect. My final official blog tomorrow night should have some interesting results to share.

Unofficially though, I plan to continue to blog through the month of April so please plan on checking in on me during the month. I've decided that I will continue forward with the experiment and add on April to see what happens. I've reached a point where I don't think I can just grab some sugary food on Friday and tell myself it was a nice experiment, but it isn't who I am. The results I feel in my joints, legs, and attitude put me in a situation where I want to keep moving forward. I almost wonder how many people do something similar to what I have and end up just continuing forward and not going back to their old ways.

I might just end up raising the stakes a bit also. This weekend is my first convention of the year and I'll be hanging around lots of geeky people and comfort food for long hours. My goal is to plan out my strategy and execute it so I'm not swayed by all the deliciousness available. I figure this will definitely test my resolve and give me an idea of a "real-world" situation. Either way, you'll hear about it.

3-31-2016

The thirty-first day has come to a close and my experiment is officially over. It's hard to believe that it's been a month since I stopped eating processed sugar and flour, along with caffeine and milk. It's also funny that I decided to up my water intake and that part became the most difficult. My hope was to sit at the computer and provide you with some profound reflection on the month, hopefully motivating you to try something similar.

This whole thing started with those “What would you give up for 30 days” memes you see on the internet and I've realized now that mine would say:

“What foods would you give up for a month in exchange for losing around 20 pounds, not needing antacids, getting better sleep, and having all your aches and pains disappear?”

I would have probably just scrolled right by this meme because there surely would be some kind of catch to make it impossible, right? When I started this, I expected to feel better, but had no idea it would be this impactful. In fact, I purposefully created an experiment that anyone could do, so no one could say I had an advantage over others. I'm just a guy who's much more picky than you, but still made it work.

Going without sugar and flour for a few weeks slowly begins to adjust your mindset about food and emotions. I think I described this in a previous blog as almost being an “out of body” experience. The old me would have a stressful day at work and then feel a need to stop at the store because I truly craved something sweet. I still have stressful days at work, but my drive home consists of thoughts about how tough it was, but not that I “need” anything to help me cope.

Previous attempts at being healthy have been healthy breakfasts

and lunches, while dinners were still filled with starches and flour. After a few weeks of eating salads for lunch, my brain was still addicted to sugar so each bite was like torment. I would choke down the healthy meal while every fiber of my being wanted to eat “real” food. This would cause me to begin eating less healthy after two or three weeks, and then throwing the whole idea out after a month tops. Now that the sugar is out of my system, food has become more like fuel and my body doesn’t care if it tastes amazing or just so-so. That might sound a little weird because I still enjoy a tasty meal, but now the little voice that was always comparing every meal I ate to a delicious pizza, has been quieted down. If I’m eating vegetables, it’s not screaming that I better get some ice cream soon after to balance things out.

In fact, that voice in my head that is always encouraging me to stop for a hamburger, some cookies, a pizza, and anything else, has gotten quieter with each passing day since giving up sugar. I’ve realized it’s the same voice that tells me I should buy something sweet when grocery shopping because it’s on sale. I used to hear that voice talk me into buying sweets for my kids because I needed to show them that I loved them. I honestly believe that the “voice” in my head gained its power from sugar and the more I ate, the louder and more powerful it became until I couldn’t hear anything else. Taking away its energy to control me has been the most interesting part of this experiment. Take a moment and think about the “voice” that you might have. It could be telling you that there are foods you would die without, or soda you need every day just to function. Taking two weeks or more from sugar and sweet food and drink allows you to pull back the curtain and see the voice for what it is. A hurtful thing that doesn’t have your best interest in heart. Finally, once you quiet that voice down, you begin to see everything differently and you’ll be thankful when you reach that point.

I can’t say for sure how strict I will be for the months to come, but at least I’ve been given the ability to look at each meal objectively

The one-month No Sugar/No Flour challenge

and determine why I want to eat it. I no longer feel the “pull” of certain foods filled with sweet goodness that want to derail my healthier lifestyle. It’s something I wish everyone could experience.

My hope is that you’ve gained something from following my month-long adventures through these blogs. I highly recommend that any challenge you undertake that might need some accountability, you think about daily blogging. It helped keep me honest. More blogs will continue into the future as this experiment progresses.

All the best and thank you for the support!

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THE WRAP UP

Well, now you've had a chance to read through everything and are questioning if this program can even be done by someone like you. I completely understand where you're coming from, because if someone had given me this book two months before I started, I likely wouldn't have believed I could do it. I'm glad that I made the decision and put myself out there to tackle this eating experiment.

The biggest thing to remember is that I'm not saying you need to live the rest of your life without sugar or flour. I'm just asking you to try an experiment that will test your will power, planning, and ability to overcome obstacles. In exchange for your participation, you will feel healthier, better about yourself, and have less aches and pains than before.

Give this 100% effort for one month and I bet you'll realize that it's doable. Finish the month like I did and you'll realize that you're more addicted to how great you feel and the results than you ever were to soda, candy, rolls, and pizza. You'll quickly find that your memory of the food and drinks you "couldn't live without" will fade more and more with each passing day and the future you have will get brighter.

You might think that you can never do this, but I know you can.

The one-month No Sugar/No Flour challenge

Give it some effort and your eyes will be opened to what you can accomplish. You have total control over what you eat and drink, take the power back from the foods and give it to yourself. I'd love to have you keep me updated about your journey on the program, so drop me a line at: FIGIDPress@Gmail.com

All the best!
John Graham

FOR YOUR REFERENCE

Documentaries I watched:

Fed Up – *Atlas Films* – www.fedupmovie.com

Sugar Coated – *The Cutting Factory* –
www.sugarcoateddoc.com

The Secrets of Sugar – CBC News – available on Youtube

Search out and view many more, there's plenty.

Books I read:

Sugar Busters – *Ballantine Publishing* – H. Leighton Steward,
Sam S. Andrews, Morrison C. Bethea, and Luis A. Balart

Easy to Use Glycemic Index Food Guide – *Square One
Publishers* – Dr. Shari Lieberman

Search out recipe books and other resources.

Websites I referenced:

www.GlycemicIndex.com – *The University of Sydney* –
Searchable Database

www.Diabetes.org – American Diabetes Association – Search
Low GI eating.

*Google “Glycemic Index” and “Low GI” for a wealth of
resources and information.*

*Visit www.FIGIDPress.com for other material you can
download to help your experiment be a success.*

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

John Graham is a writer, presenter, and publisher living in Brownsburg, Indiana. In January 2016 he went for his yearly physical to complain about some constant aches and pains he was suffering from. His doctor promptly let him know that it wasn't any horrible illness or issue, just that John was not eating right, was overweight, and getting older. In an effort to prove his doctor wrong, John decided to conduct an experiment of giving up sugar and flour for one month.

Over the course of that month, John simply proved his doctor was right as all of his symptoms improved almost immediately. After one month, John decided to keep going and continued on for six months, losing sixty pounds and experiencing drastic improvements in his overall health. John decided to write this book about his experiment in the hopes that others will also take a chance to experience amazing results.