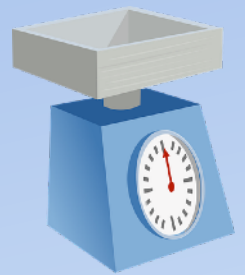
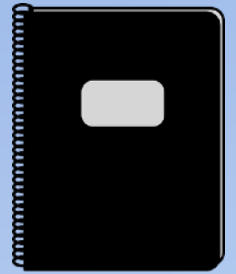


INTRO TO NUTRITION

WEEK 1

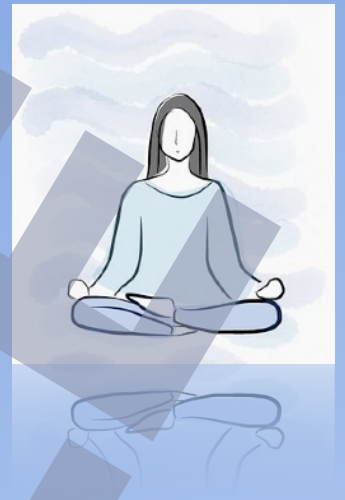
WHAT YOU WILL NEED

- A notebook or journal: This can be whatever works for you (including the notes app on your phone), but a blank notebook that you can write and record in is recommended
- Kitchen scales, appropriate for weighing out and measuring food
- Bathroom scales to record your weight. Note: if you have an aversion to bathroom scales these are not strictly essential, they are just one tool for monitoring change
- A tailor's tape-measure if body fat % is also something you want to track
- My Fitness Pal downloaded on your phone. Don't worry about buying the premium version it's not needed for our purposes



MINDFULNESS

Mindfulness is a heightened state of being; of being in the present moment rather than being in the past or the future. It increases focus, inner resilience and self-awareness.



When it comes to improved nutrition, mindfulness is another highly useful tool to employ. Bringing a mindful approach to food is another way to control our cravings and develop a healthy balance.

Mindful eating

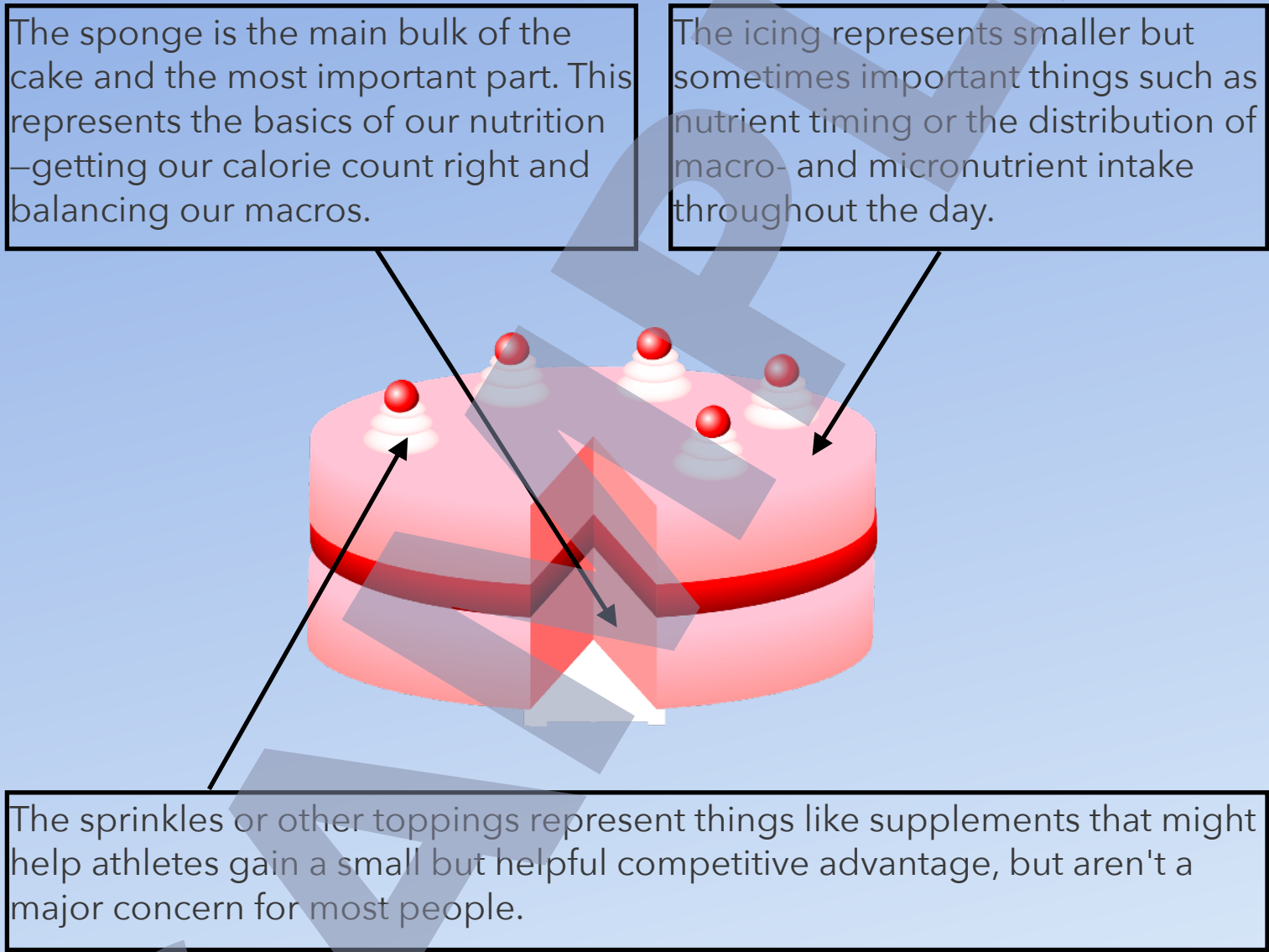
Mindful eating is bringing exactly the same principles of mindfulness, only instead of applying them to a classic meditation we bring them into what we eat and how we are eating it.

Many of us get into the habit of eating rapidly, eating on the go, or surviving on easy go-to options like snacks, caffeine or energy drinks.

Mindful eating is slowing down and being aware of what we are consuming. Not only is this going to improve satiety and digestion, it is going to help you experience the textures and flavours of food and make the whole experience of eating more enjoyable.

GOOD NUTRITION AS A CAKE

Before we dive into further nutritional knowledge, it's important to take a step back and consider the bigger picture. In this instance, we can think of the bigger picture as a cake. Because, who doesn't love cake?



Ever notice how the diet and fitness industries place far, far more emphasis on the sprinkles and extras than they do on getting the basic mix right? That's because it's a lot easier to try and sell someone a quick fix than it is to help them re-learn the basics. But that's exactly what we're taking time to do here.

EATING FAT DOES NOT MAKE YOU FAT

This is a common misconception which needs thorough debunking. It is only eating in excess of our TDEE continually over time that causes weight gain, not eating certain types of foods. Fat that we eat is not converted directly to body fat – this only happens when we over-eat, whether it's carbs, proteins or fats.

That being said, it is easier to over-consume on fatty foods, as they are 9 calories per gram, whereas carbs/proteins are 4 calories per gram.



The Mediterranean Diet

A good example is to think of the Mediterranean Diet. This is a diet typically high in fats – think about all the oils, nuts, seeds, yoghurt, animal meat and fish found in the dishes of Italy, Greece and Spain. It is also one of the healthiest diets in the entire world, as it is focused around whole foods, high protein and unsaturated fats.

BUILDING HABITS

As you've probably started to realise, the key to improving overall nutrition and health isn't about knowing loads of science, but learning how to integrate the basics into our everyday routines, which for most of us are already busy! The easiest way to do this is to integrate what we've discovered and need to do, with what we do already.

Habits

We are the product of our habits and what we do each day. If we routinely over-eat, then over time we will gain weight. If we routinely under-eat then we will lose weight. If we regularly exercise, our body and muscles will have to adapt.



The most important takeaway is really that we don't need to do it all perfectly, just consistently.

Habit stacking

Instigating new habits is hard, so it can help to piggy-back desired habits onto current ones.

List out where these might be for you. For example, you can remember to take your multivitamin as you brush your teeth, or add some leafy greens onto the side of a favourite weekly meal or mix up some protein with a mid-morning snack.



[Learn more about habit stacking with this video.](#)

POPULAR DIETS

There are hundreds of diets out there, some with backing in science and some just touting total nonsense. Here are a few of the most popular:

Low Calorie/Low Energy Diet

Most crash diets would fall under this category, where caloric intake is radically reduced. While this does achieve rapid weight loss, it also comes with the risk of losing lean muscle tissue rather than fat, decreases the ability to recover from exercise and probably means we're not getting sufficient micronutrients. Plus you're likely to be hungry a lot!



Ketogenic/Keto Diet

The Keto diet involves radically reducing the amount of carbs being consumed (to less than 5%) and replacing them with fats instead. This puts the body into a state of 'ketosis', where fat needs to be burned for energy as there isn't enough glucose coming in from carbs. It has been proven to be effective for weight loss and advocates also claim it helps reduce the risk of diabetes and heart disease. Yet when protein count is kept moderate-high and calories are kept under control, no significant evidence has been found which marks out the keto diet as being any more effective. The massively reduced carbs may also hinder the growth of new muscle.



Paleo Diet

The Paleo Diet aims to mimic the foods that would have been most commonly consumed by our palaeolithic ancestors – meat, fish, nuts, seeds, fresh fruit and veg. While this is great in theory, paleo in its strictest form also calls for the avoidance of grains, legumes and dairy products – foods which have many proven health benefits. Paleo has shown benefits as a weight loss diet, but this is mostly just due to the reduced calorie intake which comes from eating more whole foods. Because it is so restrictive, it is also not very sustainable in the long term.

