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"If you have
knowledge, let
others light their
candles in it."

— Margaret
Fuller

DEB CARUANA'S...

Vital SignsFitness!

"Insider Tips For Healthy, Wealthy & Fun Living..."

True Confessions of a Personal Fitness Trainer

As your personal fitness trainer my passion is to teach, coach, understand, push, prod, cajole, investigate, research and apply, over and over... As a 'Fitness Role Model'...well...I feel vulnerable with weakness, so, in hopes we can all learn, from my own weakness, here goes...My Confession.

Last year I had a number of clients who started stubbornly on the Atkins diet despite my warnings. Immediately I saw almost profound results in their weight loss. I reminded them it was the loss of water weight, and warned of the strain on the kidneys and the high cholesterol risk.

During this time I was mastering my yoga practice as a complete vegan but found that my immune system had been profoundly compromised and I was currently on my third cold for the fall season

Atkins was in the media again because of new study results indicating lowered cholesterol. I went to the Atkins book yet again with a more open mind, and decided to try the diet. I liked the contrarian view point to the current AMA position of the low fat diet, which seemed to be producing a society of increasing obesity. Atkins view of sugar as the culprit making you fat, not fat, made sense and the extra work from all the protein for the kidneys... it's benign. I wanted to use his diet as a tool to get myself entirely off of any sugar. I started out on the high protein, low carb aspect of the diet. As I reintroduced the animal proteins into my diet I could feel myself get stronger and the colds, finally stopped. I also saw my muscle bellies start to open and swell again. The cold of winter was not as painful as it had been while on my vegan diet.

I then summoned up the courage to start bringing fats into my diet, including bacon, egg yolks, cream cheese, heavy cream, whipped cream, even bacon rinds. On a daily basis I would marvel at having eaten these "forbidden foods" only to awaken the next day thin, svelte. I couldn't believe this, result! I was loving eating all these foods so familiar yet banished since ...childhood

I was in full swing eating the high fat, high protein, low carb diet at the time when the pictures on my website were taken. www.vitalsignsfitness.com I felt strong, but I had no energy!!! My walks on the beach were lethargic, I had to force myself to go that extra mile. I was thin but I felt like a beached whale. My love affair with Atkins continued a few more months. I followed his prescriptions religiously.

Eventually I had to add more carbs, I needed more energy. By carbs I mean vegetables, salads and whole grains. At this point I gained back the total of two pounds I had lost on Atkins. Body fat went from 16% to 18%, my energy was better. After 7 months I decided it was time to get the blood checked out and to my horror discovered that my cholesterol which had always been around 150 had rocketed up to 300!! Luckily my HDL to LDL ratio was still at a healthy level. Thanks to my forcing myself to exercise, I kept my HDLs high.

I immediately started drinking hot lemon juice with cayenne pepper every morning to clean my blood. I have now thrown away all the high fat foods and have once again, come back full circle to moderation and balance. A balanced diet. It takes a little more discipline but my energy is back and I can now eat the same meals as my husband so dinner preparation is simpler. My weight has not changed since I gradually introduced the carbs. I avoid at all costs the "white foods" flour, sugar, milk. I drink unsweetened soy milk I avoid foods in packages, boxes and bags. I feel a fine layer of fat but that's okay its winter, I need it, and in the summer, heat always melts it off. I am completely off sugar and alcohol to keep blood sugar low.

Log into www.vitalsignsfitness.com in the Chat page where a discussion has already begun re: Atkins and other diet plans, add your comments or just read and muse. Or go to the Nutrition Program page and find out how many calories (protein, carbs, fats) you should eat to sustain your current or ideal weight.

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www.vitalsignsfitness.com**

Reuters –

[Gene Therapy Did Cause Cancer in Boys, Study Shows](#)

Gene therapy saved the lives of two French "bubble boys" but later gave them leukemia by activating a cancer-causing gene, researchers said.

UPI –

[Coffee Increases Sperm Speed](#)

A new study indicates coffee makes sperm travel faster, suggesting caffeine might form the basis for infertility treatments for some men.

[Obesity predicted for 40% of America](#)

USA Today –

About 40% of Americans, or 68 million people, will be obese by 2010 if people keep gaining at the current rate, government researchers predict.

BBC News

Drugs will soon offer HIV patients a normal lifespan Independent - Nearly all HIV patients receiving modern drug treatments can expect to live at least 10 years from the date of infection and may ultimately enjoy a normal lifespan, researchers said yesterday.

HIV drugs give 10 years of life BBC News

The Diet

A blonde is terribly overweight, so her doctor puts her on a diet. "I want you to eat regularly for two days, then skip a day, and repeat this procedure for two weeks. The next time I see you, you'll have lost at least five pounds."

When the blonde returns, she's lost nearly 20 pounds. "Why, that's amazing!" the doctor says. "Did you follow my instructions?"

The blonde nods. "I'll tell you, though, I thought I was going to drop dead that third day."

"From hunger, you mean?" asked the doctor.

"No, from skipping."

**Thank You! Thank You! Thank You!
Thank You! Thank You!**

Thanks to *YOU* the word is spreading. Thanks to all of my clients and friends who graciously referred me to your family, friends and neighbors last month! See, rather than pester people with unwanted calls and pushy sales techniques (that's definitely not me), I build my business based on the positive comments and referrals from people just like you. I just couldn't do it without you!

This month I am thanking all of my wonderfully hardworking, dedicated and loyal clients who are all continuously trying to spread the good word (my services) while progressively building stronger healthier bodies, minds and spirits. Happy and Safe Holidays to all!

A PHENOMENAL WOMAN

By Maya Angelou

(excerpted)

I've learned that no matter what happens, or how bad it seems today, life does go on, and it will be better tomorrow.

I've learned that you can tell a lot about a person by the way he/she handles these three things: a rainy day, lost luggage, and tangled Christmas tree lights.

I've learned that regardless of your relationship with your parents, you'll miss them when they're gone from your life.

I've learned that making a "living" is not the same thing as making a "life."

I've learned that life sometimes gives you a second chance.

I've learned that you shouldn't go through life with a catcher's mitt on both hands. You need to be able to throw something back.

I've learned that whenever I decide something with an open heart, I usually make the right decision.

I've learned that even when I have pains, I don't have to be one.

I've learned that every day you should reach out and touch someone.

People love a warm hug, or just a friendly pat on the back.

I've learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel.

Please send this to five phenomenal women today. If you do, something good will happen ...

You will boost another woman's self esteem.

If you don't ... the elastic will break and your panty hose will fall down around your ankles. :)

What is a serving size?

Sometimes you may not have your food scale available but don't fuss, use these handy visual reminders to help you with your weight loss success:

- Three ounces of cooked meat, poultry or fish, the recommended amount at a meal, is about the size of a deck of cards or the palm of a small woman's hand.
- One cup of cooked rice, pasta or vegetables is about the size of a small fist; a large fist can be as much as two cups. Measure a cup of cooked rice at home, then compare it with your fist -- a "handy" reference.
- One ounce of cheese is the size of four stacked dice.
- One teaspoon of mayonnaise, peanut butter or salad dressing is about the size of the tip of your thumb, from the end of the thumbnail to the first joint. Guidelines suggest limiting added fats such as margarine or mayonnaise to one teaspoon per meal.
- One ounce of nuts or raisins is the amount you can hold in your cupped hand, if you have a small hand.

Here are a few more tips to help you avoid Super Size Thighs!

1. Record Your Process:

Research has shown that proper eating habits and accurate record keeping are responsible for 60-90% of successful weight loss initiatives. Use your **daily food journal** to keep track of when you ate, how much you ate and what time you ate! It doesn't take much time and it helps keep you on track!

2.. Know Your Triggers:

Stress, depression and major life changes are common reasons people stop eating right and exercising. Remind yourself that over eating will not solve the problem. In the long run you will probably feel worse when you don't reach your weight loss goals. Instead try exercising, you cope by reducing stress and improving your mood and it will increase your fat burning abilities by 60%! WOW...That's amazing!

3. Save Some Time:

Plan ahead! When preparing your meals double the amount you make then use your measuring tools to get the amount specified in your food plan and place it into a plastic baggie for your next meal!

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Amazing Facts!

==The gesture commonly known as "The Finger" Derives From Early Medieval Times When Archers were caught, they're middle fingers were cut off, so that they could no longer use a bow. The gesture came about by archers taunting enemies by showing them that they have they're middle finger.

==More people die from eating sharks than from being eaten by them. This is due to a poison in shark meat.

==The word "McJob" will be added in the Merriam-Webster's Dictionary. It is defined as "a low-paying job that requires little skill and provides little opportunity for advancement."

==One percent of Greenland's population lives in one single apartment building, named Blok P.

==It's not only zebra's fur that is striped, their skin is also striped.

"Our life is shaped by our mind; we become what we think. "
(Buddha)

"In reading the lives of great men, I found that the first victory they won was over themselves."
(Harry S. Truman, 33rd President of the USA, 1884-1972)

"A man who does not think for himself does not think at all."
(Oscar Wilde, Irish writer, 1854-1900)

"Remember no one can make you feel inferior without your consent."
—Eleanor Roosevelt

**Get *Free* health and fitness tips, nutritional guidelines and powerful weight loss and body-shaping "trade secrets" at my website:
*VitalSignsFitness.com***

Busting Through the Roadblocks

Let's face it. Whether it is at work or working out, we all run into roadblocks from time to time. Here's how to bust through them to stay on track, courtesy of sports psychologist Eric Goldstein, Ph.D:

BLOCK BUSTER #1—Get Started. It sounds simple, but making a commitment to regular exercise is key. Make a list of why you want to exercise and refer to it often.

BLOCK BUSTER #2—Plan to Exercise. By making a commitment, either to your schedule or to another person, you are more likely to keep your appointment. Be specific with times, locations and activities.

BLOCK BUSTER #3—Determine Your Exercise Personality. Exercise has many components—social (high to low), competition (high to low), mood state, location preference and optimum time of day. By determining what's best for you, you will choose the activities that suit you best.

BLOCK BUSTER #4—Set the Right Goals. Many people focus on outcomes—say, losing 30 pounds—instead of process, such as exercising 30 minutes a day four days a week. The problem with an outcome goal is that if you do not meet it, you'll feel like a failure. If your process goals are realistic, the outcome goals will take care of themselves.

BLOCK BUSTER #5—Hold Mental Rehearsals. By frequently picturing events, you can program your mind, body and emotions to perform the way you want them to. Visualize the activity you want to perform and the outcome you seek.

BLOCK BUSTER #6—Reward Yourself. Rewards are a great way to keep you going. After you have reached a milestone, treat yourself to a massage, a gourmet dinner out, a new CD. In time, the benefits of exercising will become their own reward and the exercise habit will reinforce itself.

A Final Note

"A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step," Confucius said. The same applies to fitness. Get started, set your goals, track your progress, be consistent, and in no time you will discover you joined the millions of others who've embraced an active lifestyle! We hope this will motivate you to get and stay active . . . for life.

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It's That Time of Year Again.

We're overcome by the thrill of holiday shopping, parties, family, and everything else holiday. Just how long should those festive food trays stay out in the open air?

WARNING:

Perishable foods: include cooked meat, poultry and seafood products, and should never be left at room temperature over two hours.

Eggnog: The best way to serve eggnog is to buy it in a carton, it's pasteurized and is safe. If you make your own eggnog, use only pasteurized eggs, not raw ones.

Apple cider: If you aren't sure if a product is pasteurized, boil it for a minute.

Turkey and stuffing: Cooking stuffing in a turkey or chicken should be avoided. Unless you make sure the temperature reaches 180 degrees Fahrenheit in the innermost thigh, while the center of the stuffing inside the turkey reaches 165 degrees. The bird cooks both from the outside and the inside. When you stuff the bird, it reduces heat penetration. Your best bet is to cook the turkey and stuffing separately. Bacteria can survive in stuffing that hasn't reached that temperature.

The elderly and individuals with compromised immune systems are at the greatest risk.

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Resources: Reuters News
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About.com

CNN News

Great Quotes.com

Jokes.com

Idea Fit.com

Facts.com

American Heart Association

BBC News

Yours Truly

“Who Else Wants To Win A \$50 Transferable Gift Certificate?”

Take my Fitness Trivia Quiz and you could win too!

This is one of my favorite sections. Each month I'll give you a new health or fitness related trivia question. The first *TWO* people who call my office with the correct answer win a Free \$50 reduction on any personal training service I provide (one certificate per person, please). And best yet, your certificate is *transferable*. Use it yourself, or give it to a family member, friend or neighbor and help them reach their fitness goals (a truly priceless gift). Take your best guess, then call me at 212-677-3185.

Here's this month's 2-part Trivia Question...

1. What has more vitamin C, a 4 oz serving of red peppers or one cup of fresh grapefruit juice?
2. What has more beta carotene, one cup of fresh spinach or a 6 oz serving of cooked sweet potato?

Call me right now with your answer, if I'm not in, my answering machine will date and time stamp your message. Good luck!
212-677-3185

Do You Have A Health Or Fitness Question You Want Answered?

I love hearing from all of my good friends and clients who enjoy reading my monthly newsletter. And I'm always looking to answer pressing questions you might have about anything related to health and fitness. If you have a question, tip or idea, please feel free to call me at 212-677-3185. Perhaps I'll feature you in a future issue!

I've had a number of clients asking about their weakened immune system, Why am I constantly coming down with something?

Vitamin & Herb Supplements will soon be featured on www.vitalsignsfitness.com for your continued quest for staying healthy and living longer.

Vitamin A is an immune system powerhouse! Studies have shown that vitamin A deficiency can lead to damage in the mucosal linings of the respiratory, gastrointestinal and genitourinary tracts. Vitamin E helps protect the body against cardiovascular disease and cancer.

Zinc aids the immune system in many ways, it appears to help produce T cells, the small white blood cells essential to the adaptive immune system. It may also help produce *phagocytes*, the large white blood cells that patrol the body on ready alert. Zinc may even help produce *natural killer cells*, which help destroy foreign substances in the body as well. You know where to get more info. www.vitalsignsfitness.com