

# THE REDBOOK REAL-LIFE, healthy life MAKEOVER

If you had even half a cent for every time you said you needed to get healthier, odds are you'd be sailing on your own private yacht right now. Unfortunately, our lives are filled with stumbling blocks that prevent us from being fit. The good news: We've found a path that, one step at a time, will lead to a healthier you. **by Nancy Rones photographed by Andrew Parsons**

CURRENT  
WEIGHT:  
**244**  
pounds

## ADRIENNE SCHIFFER, 33

Powell, OH  
Stay-at-home mom  
Married with two  
children, ages 6  
and 3

- HEIGHT: 5'3"
- WEIGHT: 244 lbs
- RECOMMENDED WEIGHT RANGE: 130 to 140 lbs
- BODY FAT: 34%
- BUST: 47¼"
- WAIST: 47"
- HIPS: 57"

“My self-esteem has nose-dived because of the extra weight I've put on.”

**MOST OF US DON'T GET THE CHANCE TO BE CONTESTANTS ON WEIGHT-LOSS REALITY TV SHOWS**, where success is virtually guaranteed (at least until the cameras stop rolling). Instead, we live in the real world—a place where restaurant chains tempt us with abundance in the form of “never-ending pasta bowls,” where we spend our downtime plunked in front of high-definition TV screens, and where, between working—either in or out of the home—and caring for our families, we find it a challenge to make exercise and balanced meals our top priorities.

Considering all those obstacles to good health, it's not a shocker that seven out of 10 women are either already overweight or will become overweight as they age. The fact that Americans spend \$33 billion a year on weight-loss products and programs signals that we *want* change. But research shows that diets simply don't work over the long haul.

Enter the REDBOOK Real-Life, Healthy Life Makeover. Our 12-month program is based on a simple principle: True weight-loss success (losing weight and keeping it off for a long time) and optimal health are entirely possible when you make a series of *small, gradual* changes in what you eat, how you exercise, and how you take care of your emotional self. (Because, really, if you think you can't find an extra 10 minutes to walk around the block, how are you ever going to spend two hours at the gym every day, starting tomorrow?)

Why are we so confident that you'll have success with our program? We've built our plan on the latest scientific research. But we also know that any woman who “does it all” (that's you!) can commit to little changes that, in the end, offer huge rewards.

WHY WE'RE OVERWEIGHT ● We circle the parking lot for the space closest to the store rather than parking anywhere and walking. ● We

# OUR expert PANEL

You're not in this life makeover alone. A highly credentialed team of pros have signed on to help Adrienne, Jennifer, and Julie—and you—reach their goals.



## GENERAL MEDICINE GURU Michael F. Roizen, M.D.

Hoping you'll be one of those energetic grandmothers (or mothers) who zip down the slide with their grandkids? Roizen, coauthor of *You: The Owner's Manual*, says, "No prob." Roizen encourages patients to live better lives by slowly making lifestyle changes that'll improve health.

■ **His game plan:** Each month, Roizen will provide a short list of health-enhancing actions. Each woman will choose the habits she's most comfortable taking on. "With each change, the women will get closer to achieving their own health and weight-loss goals—and looking and feeling younger," he says.



## FITNESS GURU Jillian Michaels, certified personal trainer

Michaels is known for the no-nonsense fitness approach she brings to NBC's *The Biggest Loser*. We're confident she can motivate you, too.

- **Her philosophy:** "People function in a comfort zone that is so far below their capabilities. Once you push yourself physically, you realize how strong you really are."
- **Get-started tip:** "It's essential to buy a pair of comfortable fitness shoes to protect your joints."



## NUTRITION GURU Lisa R. Young, Ph.D., R.D.

As author of *The Portion Teller: Smartsize Your Way to Permanent Weight Loss*, Young knows the challenges of temptations.

- **Her philosophy:** "A nutrition program should encourage small changes, one day at a time, and still allow eating to be pleasurable."
- **Get-started tip:** "Write down every single thing you eat and drink (including portion sizes) for a month. You will see your weaknesses, like snacking too much or eating giant servings."



## MIND/BODY GURU Dan Baker, Ph.D.

The founding director of the Life Enhancement Program at Canyon Ranch spa in Tucson, AZ, Baker is passionate about the power of positivism.

- **His philosophy:** "When you adopt a constructive mind-set, you get rid of the roadblocks that get in the way of your own success."
- **Get-started tip:** "Reframe the way you talk to yourself. Instead of, 'I wasted my money on a gym membership,' say, 'What would make getting there easier?'"



## ORGANIZATIONAL GURU Ronni Eisenberg

Eisenberg, a self-proclaimed "organizationalist," is going to prove that you can squeeze healthy habits into your schedule.

- **Her philosophy:** "By being selective about commitments and creating systems (there's a place for everything!), you can gain the most mileage in life."
- **Get-started tip:** "Each morning jot down your priorities for that day. Then mark which ones can't wait till tomorrow."



# Rx

For you  
Date today

## Lifestyle Changes for January

The way you choose to live has far more impact on health and longevity than your genetics (75 percent versus 25 percent), says Roizen. Here, the first set of small steps to improving your health.

**Walk 30 minutes a day.** Stride at a comfortable pace, and feel free to break the half hour down into two or three shorter blocks of time. Physical activity lowers total cholesterol, elevates your mood, and burns calories.

### PLUS, CHOOSE TWO OUT OF THREE BELOW

**Call a friend every day.** In a quick conversation, let a buddy know that you walked that day. This will help you feel more accountable to the program, and the social connection will help you reduce stress, says Roizen.

**Eat an ounce of nuts a day.** Start your biggest meal with ½ oz of nuts, and end with the other ½ oz. Choose any variety, though walnuts pack the most heart-healthy omega-3 fatty acids. Eating nuts also makes you feel fuller longer—and they contain disease-fighting antioxidants.

**Avoid white foods.** While processed carbs, such as breads, crackers, and pasta, are all empty calories that have no medical benefit—just detrimental effects. They raise blood sugar, which can ultimately lead to diabetes.

Physician's signature

*Dr. Roizen*



Olivia, Hagen, and pooch Sadie are certain Mom is up for the challenge.

## WHEN adrienne's BATTLE WITH WEIGHT BEGAN:

"I didn't really have a weight problem until I gained 70 pounds during each of my pregnancies. My youngest is 3 years old and I'm still nowhere near my pre-pregnancy weight of 145."

### BIGGEST WEIGHT-LOSS OBSTACLE

"It's really hard to find healthy foods that both my husband and I like. He refuses to eat fish and turkey, which I'll eat, or broccoli and cauliflower, which I love. He prefers lima beans and peas, but I can't stand the smell of those foods cooking! Because I'm not about to make three different meals, I always wind up making more fattening staples that the whole family likes,

## expert weigh-in:

"Adrienne needs to stop her negative pep rallies ('I'm so far in the hole already'); this will help improve her self-esteem and gain the right mind-set for change," says our mind/body expert, psychologist Dan Baker, Ph.D. "She also needs to wean herself off the steady stream of sugar," says our nutrition expert Lisa R. Young, Ph.D., R.D. High blood-sugar levels tend to be linked to weight gain and plaque buildup in the arteries.

such as french fries, pasta, and tacos."

### HEALTHIEST HABIT

"I eat a lot of whole-grain foods, including bread, pasta, and cereals."

### DIET DOWNFALL

"I have a total addiction to cookies, brownies, and ice cream. I'm always looking for one of these after every meal."

### HER DIETING PAST

"I've tried commercial diets, but couldn't stick with them. Usually, they just got too complicated, and I didn't have the time to follow the program. I lost about 30 pounds on one program, which involved prepackaged foods and shakes. But

I gained it all back when I went off the diet because I never really learned good eating habits."

### HOW SHE HANDLES PORTIONS

"I don't really know what a single portion looks like, and I also tell myself that because of my size, I need more calories."

### THE SWIMSUIT DILEMMA

"I'm not comfortable in a bathing suit at all. Still, I grit my teeth and go swimming with my kids in a one-piece. They shouldn't have to miss out on pool-time because of my weight problem."

### WHAT MAKES HER FEEL GUILTY

"My husband runs and lifts weights almost every morning, while I never exercise at all. I'm always ready with excuses. I tell myself that I'm too busy, too tired, or have to be around for the kids. I've pretty much given up trying to work out because I always think, I'm so far in the hole already."

### HER WAKE-UP CALL

"At 50, my dad passed away from a sudden heart attack and that weighs heavily on me. I also have high cholesterol. Beyond that, my self-esteem has nose-dived because of the extra weight. I feel self-conscious around my husband in intimate situations, and I even feel like all the young, thin mothers in my neighborhood aren't as friendly to me."

### HER MOTIVATION

"My kids are getting old enough to learn from my bad habits. They already ask for a treat every night after dinner, and I sometimes worry when my daughter wants second helpings. I wonder, is she really hungry or just stuffing herself like I do? My mother is overweight and I want to break the cycle for the benefit of my daughter and son."

husband. ● We let the dog out in the yard to "go" instead of walking him around the block. ● At work, we order in lunch every day instead

## WHEN **Julie's** BATTLE WITH WEIGHT BEGAN:

"When I was growing up, my single working mother fed me convenience foods like Hamburger Helper. This is probably what started me on my bad nutrition habits and why I've struggled with my weight since I was a child. These days, I'm carrying around an extra 30 pounds. Still, I'm in denial about my weight. For example, I have a crazy habit of cutting the tags out of my clothes, so I can pretend I'm a 10, rather than a 14 or 16."



Maxwell, Maya, and husband Anton say it's Julie's turn to lean on them.



### BIGGEST WEIGHT-LOSS OBSTACLE

"Between chauffeuring the kids to their activities, caring for my ill mother, volunteering at church, and working full-time, I don't have time to take care of me. I also entertain clients at lunch and dinner every day, and they choose the type of food we eat; it might be Chinese one day and a pasta chain the next."

### HEALTHIEST HABIT

"I recently cleared my treadmill of all the clothes and try to walk at least 30 minutes a day."

### DIET DOWNFALL

"In my mind, I deserve to be rewarded with food. If I work really hard or tackle a job I dread, such as doing my expense reports, I treat myself to nuts or miniature candy bars."

### HER DIETING PAST

"I've rejoined Weight Watchers 100 times since seventh grade. I'm gung ho, until I lose 10 pounds and start looking good. Then, I quit. Everyone asks how I do it all, and I think, If I can do all this, why can't I take control of food?"

### HOW SHE HANDLES PORTIONS

"Typically, I finish my plate. Quantity is usually more important than taste. I'd rather eat a whole bowl of olestra chips than a handful of regular ones."

### WHAT MAKES HER FEEL GUILTY

"Whenever I go out with my girlfriends, I blow it. The other night, I felt stressed before meeting them at a bar. I ate dinner at home first, but I still kept asking myself, What am I going to eat or drink? I planned on sticking to one light beer. By the end of the night, I polished off a second dinner and shared someone else's meal too."

### HER WAKE-UP CALL

"Last December, I had an abnormal mammogram and read a lot on how a bad diet and excess weight can increase your cancer risk. After that scare, I thought, I need to do a better job of taking care of myself. That's why I wrote to REDBOOK."

### HER MOTIVATION

"I'm approaching the big 4-0 on April 18 and I want to make a permanent change. If I got back down to my pre-kids weight of 135, I'd really be happy."

## expert weigh-in:

Julie's schedule has "superwoman" written all over it: "She has to work on carving out time to accomplish her health goals, even if that means dropping one of her other obligations," says Eisenberg. (There's a reason superheroes are fictitious.) "Julie has a history of making a number of changes all at once and then failing," Baker adds. "She needs to remember that gradual changes are the key to success."

cleaner at the end of the street. ● Even when we just have one or two flights of stairs to go, we use the elevator instead—even to go down! ▶

## WHEN jennifer's WEIGHT BATTLE BEGAN:

"The real problem began a year-and-a-half ago, a couple of months after I had my son; I suffered from postpartum depression. I was put on medication for the depression, but still eat to make myself feel better."

### MAJOR STRESSORS

"Five years ago, I began working as a road patrol officer and weight crept on from a continuous diet of soda and junk food. My son's father left when I was eight months pregnant, which added to my stress levels. This past October, I started a lower-paying job in a homeless shelter, so there's a lot of added stress—and stress eating."

### BIGGEST WEIGHT-LOSS OBSTACLE

"My busy schedule leaves me completely unmotivated to exercise. Besides having a 20-month-old son, I work eight-hour shifts at the shelter, which can sometimes either start or end at midnight. Plus, I go to school one night per week. Also, I'd rather not spend the time to cook for one. I'm happy just grabbing a cheesesteak from the sub shop."

### HEALTHIEST HABIT

"I like most fruits and vegetables—but when I eat them, I like to follow them up with brownies."

### DIET DOWNFALL

"I don't drink any water or juice. I have the equivalent of at least a two-liter bottle of Pepsi or Mountain Dew each day."

### HER DIETING PAST

"I've never been on a real diet. I'm just not into fads that completely cut out certain foods."

### HOW SHE HANDLES PORTIONS

"I always heap food on my plate. For me, a 'heaping serving' is five slices at my local pizzeria."

### THE SWIMSUIT DILEMMA

"It's a one-piece with a skirt attached. My favorite suit is low-cut, which I want to believe draws the attention upward!"

### WHAT MAKES HER FEEL GUILTY

"Because I always fill up on fast food, I wind up throwing away so many fruits and vegetables from my refrigerator."

### HER WAKE-UP CALL

"My mom is overweight and has the same soda habit. Recently, she was diagnosed with adult-onset diabetes. I don't want to be handed the same diagnosis."

### HER MOTIVATION

"My goal is not to be a size 2. Instead of worrying about the number on a scale, I want to build muscle and be strong. Big picture: I really want my son to see me as a role model—a single, working mother who can maintain a healthy lifestyle."



Jennifer is determined to be a healthy role model for son Keegan.



## expert weigh-in:

"Jennifer is operating under a lot of stress and she needs to find healthy ways to manage it," says Eisenberg. "She also has to get a handle on her soda consumption," adds Young. A study involving young and middle-aged women showed that drinking sugar-sweetened soft drinks increases the risk for weight gain and developing type 2 diabetes—exactly what Jennifer is concerned about.



### CHECK US OUT ONLINE

To talk to other readers following our plan and get the latest on these women's progress, plus bonus tips from our experts, go to [lifestyle.msn.com/redbook](http://lifestyle.msn.com/redbook).

■ **Coming next month** Make over your supermarket shopping habits. Our nutrition expert shows you how to stock the pantry without sabotaging your diet.

- We buy a muffin on our way to work each morning instead of eating breakfast at home.
- We consider surfing the Internet exercise.