

Hi!

Many people are looking to this Challenge as a way to lose a few extra pounds, and that is understandable, but remember that weight-loss is not the goal.

Losing weight is a common side-effect of ridding sugar and processed foods from our diets, but it isn't our main motivation for taking on this Challenge.

I have a suggestion for you that has helped me become healthier and much more aware of how I am caring for my body.

Stop counting calories.

Why?

Because a calorie is simply a unit of measure. Calories are a measure of energy. Nothing more, nothing less. We require energy to live. Therefore, we eat food. Because food is energy.

I get crazy when I ask someone "what is in that product?" and the answer is "it only has 150 calories per serving."

Because if anyone can tell me how many calories there are in a serving of broccoli, I would be amazed. The truth is, when we talk about "counting calories" what we really mean is "how much of this junk food can I eat and still feel like I am in control?"

Let's face it, for most of us, we never count the calories of a couple of hard boiled eggs or a chicken breast. We don't seem to care about calories then. We only obsess about calories when we are trying to manage portion sizes or the amount of junk food we are eating.

So, stop counting calories and stop reading nutrition labels. Instead, read the ingredients labels. That is where you will find out what you are eating.

On the Challenge, we will be eating whole foods. And guess what?! They don't have labels. The food is the ingredients list, and that is exactly what our bodies know how to use....REAL FOOD.

Isn't that exciting?! I love thinking about food as giving me LIFE; The energy I need to fuel me throughout my day and show up as I really am.

We really ARE what we EAT.

It's amazing.

Reducing or removing our sugar habit is about regaining control and feeling strong and empowered in our lives, loving ourselves and showing our bodies respect instead of feeling like we are slaves to our cravings.

It is about developing emotional stability and finding other tools of coping with our stress, fatigue, frustration, boredom or loneliness, rather than reaching for sugar.

That said, as we inch our way closer to the start of the Challenge, **you may want to consider taking your measurements.**

MEASUREMENTS

So, if you choose to do so, measure yourself with a flexible measuring tape and re-measure only once a week or every 2 weeks and **BE SURE of the exact spots you originally measured in order to get accurate results. You only need to measure one side of your body, for example:**

Neck

Chest (around breasts/pecs)

Stomach (on top of belly button)

Thigh (measure the thigh in between the knee and the top of the thigh—RIGHT SIDE ONLY)

Calf (measure the calf at the thickest part, or between the ankle and the knee—RIGHT SIDE ONLY)

Arm (measure the arm at the thickest part, or between the elbow and the shoulder—RIGHT SIDE ONLY)

NOTE: I NEVER recommend weighing yourself on a scale (I do not even own a scale!) as this is the **least effective method** of measurement.

Remember that we will be exercising on the Challenge, and you will be gaining muscle mass, so while you may not lose any weight (and in fact you may gain some due to increased muscle), you will certainly be getting fitter, healthier and stronger.

Personally, my preferred way of seeing where my body is gaining or losing weight is **simply to try on a particular dress.** You can also use jeans and a top or anything else you like to measure yourself with clothing-wise. **I find this the easiest method and the most accurate!**

TRACKING SUCCESS

Along with my Food Journal, as we start the Challenge on the 16th, I will be using a calendar where I will mark of the days with some kind of satisfying check mark or icon. I think it will feel good to do this at the end of each day, as a visual reminder that I have succeeded in my goal for that day and I am one step closer to Day 28. :)

Feel free to do the same, and we can post our pics to the **Facebook group!**

We are getting so close and I am getting so excited to launch!

The next email you see from me will have a sample shopping list and some easy recipes for you to try. I can't wait to share them with you!

You are awesome.

xo Sarah

P.S. How are you feeling about everything? Send any questions or comments you have.