



with Chef Charles Michael

Author
Nutrition Consultant
Culinary Chef
Healthy Cooking Guru

Live from The Eat Right Studio

Sample Q & A

Questions:

Q: What is the key to your program's weight loss secret?

Q: Why did you create this program?

Q: Just how fat were you?

Q: You say diet and exercise is a waste of time for weight loss, why's that?

Q: What did you do to lose that 100 pounds?

Q: What do you mean by this statement? "Trying to prevent people from digging their own grave with their knife and fork"

Q: What is the hardest part of this program?

Q: How does this program work to demystify weight loss?

Q: In your opinion what is the best and worst things for your health?

Q: Do you think the food pyramid is flawed?

Q: Are you saying food can cure cancer?

Q: You make diet suggestions for chronic disease. Are you a doctor, nutritionist or dietitian?

Q: You're not that keen on organic foods?

Q: Many personal trainers will argue the positive benefits of a gym workout?

Q: Why did you go to chef school and began to preach nutrition as a chef?

Q: Have you gained weight, since losing 100 pounds?

Q: What's Next?

Q: What is the key to your programs weight loss secret?

A: We teach you to eat right, not forcing diet, exercise or products on you. There is no secret. We base all of our information on the only two proven ways to lose weight; calorie reduction from eating smarter and calorie burn from exercise. The real key to our program is determining a participant's personal point of weight loss and eating below that level until you lose all the weight you want. Our program helps you find that critical point, and keeps you eating at or below it.

Q: Why did you create this program?

A: Two fold. I was obese and suffering from multiples diet related chronic diseases. Obesity and some forms of chronic disease are nearly non existent in Asia. So I studied their diets, cooking techniques and foods they ate and introduced them into my way of eating. I had immediate results. I had a simple goal to lose 1 pound a week for a year and get off meds for high cholesterol and blood pressure. I was so obese I could barely walk or climb stairs let alone exercise. After the first 50 pound loss, I became convinced that eating right was the solution, not dieting and exercise which I had failed at multiple times. Second, my best friend was diagnosed with breast cancer. Before she even asked me for nutrition advice I had already begun reading about the curative properties of food. I have read hundreds of books on cancer, diabetes and cardiovascular disease and so many more books on nutrition and dieting. What I found out was there was no single book that takes you through the process of eating right for you health, be it for those suffering from a chronic disease, want to lose weight or those seeking longevity.

Q: Just how fat were you?

A: When I turned 40 my best friend died. His wife was a dietitian, he weighed 145 lbs and was in perfect shape financially, physically a pretty stress free life. Two day after the funeral I weighed myself, thinking I was the one who should have died. I was 6' and before the scale settled between 285-310 pounds, I jumped off. I had a Buddha belly hanging over my 46 waist pants. That day I tried to walk to my local Starbucks for a Carmel Macchiato and nearly passed out at less than a ½ mile on this first exercise attempt. I realized then I needed to stop reviewing restaurants and drinking like a lush and get my health back. I immediately did a detox and cut soft drinks which I was drinking a 2 liter bottle of or more a day, all the alcohol, dairy and red meat out of my diet for 21 days. When it was done I stepped on the scale and weighed 285 pounds, but I suspect I was close too or over 300 at one point.

Q: You say diet and exercise is a waste of time for weight loss, why's that?

A: Well most people can't out run their appetites. What this means is that until you learn to eat properly, all the exercise in the world won't help. Case in point, look at the average people getting ready to take a 30 minute walk. Sports drink, check. Energy bar, check. Piece of chocolate for a reward when I'm done, check. A 30 minute walk burns approximately 100 calories. If someone eats the previous mentioned food to get energy or motivation to work out, they effectively have caused an exercise depict of 2-3 hours, not even burning enough calories to offset what they ate. Until we learn to eat right, take water and a banana to exercise so that we don't go into the hole calorie wise from exercise. Let's also not forget the guilt-free excuses to eat ice cream, muffins and lattes, "Well I exercised, I deserve this treat" that negate any benefit from exercise. And diets are self explanatory, 95% of people gain the weight back or more within a few months of losing it.

Q: What did you do to lose that weight?

A: I set a realistic goal to lose 1 pound a week for a year. I can thank my attraction to martial arts and the Asian culture for my course of study. I hadn't met a fat Asian, at least a first generation one that had come to America. I dove into my 750 cookbook and a few nutrition books and decided that I would focus on eating stir fry's with brown rice with lots of vegetables and fruits with 3 oz portions of lean sirloin steak or chicken breasts. After losing the first 50 pounds, I introduced yoga and walking a few times a week for an hour as a start to exercise. Adding some muscle weight from exercise, I eventually lost another 10 pounds, but was stuck at 235 pounds for months. A friend of mine suggested a stricter detoxify program where you eat just fruits and vegetables and water for 21 days, similar the one I'd taken before. Well I did lose 14 pounds, but more importantly I studied and tested various vegetable recipes to make my meals tasty. I went 30 days straight as a vegan and didn't miss all the other food a bit. I then geared my meat portions to about 5% on the days I wasn't in chef school of which I was now enrolled. I kept losing all the way to 200 pounds where I felt so good that I started exercising more. At first I was disappointed, I was gaining weight, but it was muscle and my waist had shrunk to a 36. 4 months later I hit 185 pounds, finally normal and not overweight or obese. I then kicked up yoga, Pilates and cardio 6 days a week, sometimes times twice a day. I've jumped back up to about 200 pounds but my chest went to a 52 from a 46 and waist from a 46 to a 34 jeans now. In total, I trimmed about 100 pounds of fat and gained about 30 pounds of muscle.

Q: What do you mean by the statements; "You are trying to prevent people from digging their own grave with their knife and fork?"

A: People may have an idea that choosing one product verses the other may have less calories, fat, salt or more fiber, but few have an idea of the consequences of that decision. When people are taught that for every 3500 calories over your daily point of weight-loss you will gain a pound, or that saturated fat will block your arteries, or the amount of sugar in the product can

cause diabetes or that high fat and sugar diet may feed tumors and cause cancer they finally get the connect between food and diet. What you eat has its consequences and if we eat improperly we will mostly suffer from obesity and a wide range of diet related chronic disease. Many times our eating habits drive us to a premature death.

Q: What is the hardest part of this program?

A: Getting to your personal point of weight loss. For some this might be cutting a soda, bag of chips, cookie, candy bar or bowl of ice cream out of their daily routine. For others it might be cutting all of the above and in multiples of each. Getting to the point of weight loss is where the weight gain stops and is where you will maintain it once you reach your goal. Eating below this level to lose weight will be a temporary thing and is done at a pace you feel comfortable with. For most, by the time they get to this point, they are enjoying all the healthy food choices they are making and don't mind cutting calories by eating more healthier foods.

Q: How does this program work to demystify weight loss?

A: There are four phases to the program, it requires a total makeover with a goal of becoming a lifestyle change:

1. We start off teaching you lifestyle changes which are pro health and pro weight loss. We get in the right mind frame to think about eating right.
2. We try to educate participants on the nutrition label on the foods you are about to put in your mouth so that you eat the right foods.
3. Next we teach you, if you are to have control of the food you eat you should prepare it yourself with the best ingredients. We basically teach you to cook the right foods by using the best of ingredients and substitute foods in the recipes you like.
4. Finally we arm you with information to make decisions in the restaurant and grocery store. We help you find the best product choices for your health and introduce super food into your diet if you suffer from diet related chronic disease. We basically teach you how to eat right outside of your home.

Q: In your opinion what is the best and worst things for your health?

A: The best thing that you can do for your health is to drink 8-10 glasses of water a day. Not only to replace your body fluids (body is $\frac{3}{4}$ water), but it may keep you from drinking everything bad for you. By bad, I mean soft drinks, sweetened juices, sports drinks, designer coffees, beer, wine and alcohol. Many of these items drank for thirsts have more calories than an entrée in a meal. I think the worst thing for your health is not paying attention to the condiments like dressing and sauces that you put on otherwise healthy food. You can make a healthy salad unhealthy, by adding the wrong things like cheese, dressing, eggs, bacon, croutons, etc. Worst, besides not drinking water.

Q: Do you think the food pyramid is flawed?

A: Yes, and for several reasons.

1. The primary emphasis is on grains which favored farmers who originally grew whole grains and non genetically modified food. Now the grains we eat are mostly refined. The American public isn't educated enough to know the distinction, but too much emphasis is on grains (that are not whole) and these were not intended to count in the 8-11 previously recommended servings which has been now, cut to half that number.
2. The portions of fruits and vegetables should be increased while meat decreased. Our meat consumption should be minimized from 30% to 5-10% similar to many Eastern diets. Protein from other sources should make up the other 20-25% difference.
3. Finally the pyramid should be a diamond with the top pyramid telling you what to eat and the bottom pyramid telling you what not to eat. A statement should be noted to

eat items above the line and avoid items below the line as much as possible. These items below the line include refined grains, canned in syrup fruits, sweetened soda, fried potato chips, sweetened drinks, cookies bakery products, some cereals and alcohol.

Q: You make diet suggestions for chronic disease. Are you a doctor, nutritionist or dietitian?

A: No. My nutrition knowledge is self taught, but I have been trained as a chef which includes nutritional training which is in excess of what most doctors receive. The fact is most doctors that are treating you have less than 20 hours of nutritional training. I have much more than that just from chef school, plus have studied all the books covered by someone getting a dietitian degree. I also have read about 500 books that are far reaching topics such as curative foods, all the major diet books and many cellular level and hormonal white papers put out by major research hospitals. In formulating recipes, menus designed for chronic diets we use the same nutritional analysis programs as dietitians do. I also have a sports nutritionist certification, which is used by many instructors at health, fitness and wellness centers. It's amazing that the CDC states 80% of cardiovascular disease and diabetes and 40% of cancer could be avoided by diet, exercise and to stop smoking. When was the last time your doctor asked you what you eat?

Q: Are you saying food can cure cancer?

A: Certain foods have antioxidant properties with specific vitamins and minerals that are known to have curative or preventive properties for chronic diseases like cancer. Foods like berries, spinach, squash and tomatoes are super foods. In parts of Asia where the diet is fresh fruits and vegetables, rice and minimal meat there are many countries where the incidence rates of cancer are less than 1 in 100,000. Is it what they eat? Or what they do not eat? Or is it the environment? The verdict is still out, but research ties it to their diet and the fact that they are working class folks that don't sit at a desk all day. Their rates of chronic disease are less than 40 times developed countries rates. When you hear doctors make fun of vegans who turn to holistic treatment, instead of devastating chemotherapy, many doctors don't have a clue that chemo treatments maybe up to 70% derived from plant extracts, they just prescribe it. Story after story of breast cancer survival in the late stages, where no help was in site, finds that those who that beat the odds changed their diets. While Western medicine may kill cancer cells, to rebuild the body successfully, one needs to eat right food to repair itself. Why shouldn't we think if we ate right in the first place we might avoid cancer all together?

Q: You're not that keen on organic foods?

A: Well that's only because many people feel that because it comes from an organic store its automatically healthy and for those who can't afford organics they pass on eating regular fruits and vegetables because they think they are chemical laden and bad for them. For the most part I feel that if we can reduce the chemical we introduce into our bodies it a very good thing. But, a product that is not nutritious from the start is no better for you nutrition wise organic or nonorganic. Case in point, both organic milk whole and whole milk both have 160 calories and the exact same RDAs. The organic product is sometimes three times the cost with added sugar. If you're not eating the peel of an organic banana, orange or grapefruit there is little benefit for the additional cost. Spend your money on fruits, vegetables and meats if you do go organic, but realize that if you can't afford organics, normal produce is highly regulated and safe to eat. And remember organic foods in the middle of the store are typically no better than items in the middle of a traditional store. If it comes in a bottle, jar, can or bag, there are probably better choices.

Q: Many personal trainers will argue the positive benefits of working out for weight-loss?

A: Exercise has many positive benefits, I will not argue with that. Psychologically it's a major stress reducer. Exercise and a workout will also tire the body to help you sleep better. Many

people who use a personal trainer have a different goal than weight loss. Many have a goal to increase body mass to “Get Big” or in shape. These goals differ from the person who is already big and is trying to get small losing weight. Yes, working out can increase your metabolism and burn calories faster. But it is more beneficial for an obese person to learn to drink water instead of a super big glup soft drink. If a person drinks water instead of the soft drink each day they can effectively avoid 14 hours of walking exercise needed to burn those empty calories. It is not until one learns to eat right that they can finally learn to out run their appetite and really benefit from exercise.

Q: Why did you go to chef school and began to preach nutrition as a chef?

A: I went to chef school after losing most of my weight and writing my first nutrition book for two reasons. First, I believed cooking schools are turning out trained killers, serving dishes that cause obesity. Second, I wanted to learn the classical preparation taught to most chefs and utilize my knowledge, nutritional software and alternative flavoring to make these dishes fit enough to be served at a spa. The popularity of celebrity TV chefs was far greater at capturing a potential audience than that of a good dietitian or nutritionist an alternative I had looked at and still have an interest in receiving a degree. For now, being Chef Charles Michael has given me lots of exposure that I may not have ever received as a dietitian.

Q: Have you gained weight, since losing 100 pounds?

A: Yes. Once I lost the weight, I reached about 185 pounds. I felt so good that I then took up yoga, Pilates, track workouts and light weight and resistance training. I put on about 30 pounds of muscle mass, a good thing. Upon moving to Wisconsin to film and put this program together, I went under a major diet change. First the availability of fresh produce, organics, lean meats and items of a healthy fare were virtually non-existent and less than 2% of the offerings of our local grocery store. I would have to travel 100 miles round trip to get to a Wal-mart that at least had a nice produce department. The closest Whole Foods store I loved in Dallas which was walking distance was now a 700 mile round trip. Second, almost every restaurant food served in the area is a frozen and fried offering as there is very uncertain traffic for a restaurant to take a chance on fresh. The most creative side dish that wasn't fried was typically a baked potato, loaded. Salad bars are almost non-existent and typically the only salads served are ice berg lettuce with little nutrition. Six months after being here my mother told me you looked so skinny when you came and now you look like you gained some weight. She was right I gained 30 pounds. I had to stop going out to eat and shopping locally and start traveling for food to get back to my ideal weight. A huge garden I planted helped. It was a lot more difficult than I thought, and makes me understand the complexities people will face in remote areas.

Q: What's Next?

A: I have put together multiple companies which all deal with eating right. I have a plan to take this program, as part of corporate wellness programs to companies interested in healthier employees. I am also planning a tour of American top 25 fattest cities with cooking classes, lunch seminars and book signings. Various companies will be wholly owned, franchised or hired to service each city.

For more information visit ChefCharlesMichael.com or www.Burn500.com

Chef Charles Michael
214-690-7715
ChefCharlesMichael@gmail.com