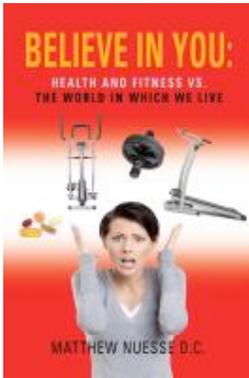


BELIEVE IN YOU:

HEALTH AND FITNESS VS.
THE WORLD IN WHICH WE LIVE



MATTHEW NUESSE D.C.



In an industry littered with gimmicks, gizmos, gadgets, pills and potions - the truth about health and wellness is almost always lost. The truth, however, is straightforward, inescapable, and, when understood - wholly liberating. Believe in You has been written during a period of eight years in clinical practice, while all along watching droves of disenchanted consumers struggle with their physical health and weight, while relying on faulty products and fictitious promises.

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1. Our Health? – A Long Introduction

If you are reading this then you may frequently ask yourself, “Am I fat?” You may think that you have a little too much padding around your backside, you may feel that your gut sticks out too far or that you have a double chin. You may be self-conscious when you look at yourself in the mirror. You may even feel uncomfortable or depressed when you are around people who you feel look better than you do or when you see images of “the ideal body” in magazines. If you consistently and/or constantly feel like this, or are consistently focused on areas of your body that you feel are not in the best shape, then the answer to “Am I fat?” is probably yes. You were probably not expecting this type of introduction right out of the gate. I would like to start by setting precedent right away, however. I am going to be as honest as possible with you throughout this book. Stretching the truth or sugar-coating the problems you may be having would be doing you a direct disservice. If you paid your hard-earned money for this book (or even if you are borrowing it), then this is something that I just can’t feel ok with doing. Some of what I am going to say may not be the easiest things to hear, but may be exactly what is needed.

First off, let me clarify my above statement. I am obviously not calling any one particular individual, or group of individuals, fat. I am simply stating that if you feel that you are fat or overweight in some way then you probably are, or at least you are to your **own** standards (which should be the one that counts the most). If you are not fat but believe that you are, then you may have a clinically defined condition called body dysmorphic disorder. This occurs when you view your body in a grossly different way than the general public does. It is a very real and very dangerous condition. Obviously a condition such as this is not going to be addressed in length here, and should be dealt with professionally. It is also certainly not hugely prevalent in our society, and as such, will hardly be the true cause of your feelings. But make no mistake about it; it is either one or the other. The problem is that in today’s society we are beginning to condition others to simply try and accept themselves and their own bodies, even if they are unhappy with them. While I understand attempting to accept things that we cannot change about ourselves so that we can maintain our happiness, as far as our health and in this case our weight go, we certainly can do things that will directly affect what we see as the problem. Most people will attempt to deal with feeling overweight or out of shape way by justifying why they look the way they do,

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comparing themselves to others whom they feel “look worse” than they do, or probably most importantly, by finding others that will tell them that they are not fat. The people that are sought out are generally not the most objective. They are close friends, family members, or co-workers that do not want to hurt the feelings of someone that they care about. They will most likely, in turn, lie about how they really feel to the person that they care about. The most cliché example of this is the wife asking her husband “Does my butt look big in this?” The real answer is, well, that you wouldn’t be asking the question unless you already knew the answer. And that answer is that your butt looks bigger than **you** would like it to. You may not necessarily consider yourself fat, but this is an area where you feel that your weight is a problem. So what is the husband to do? Whether out of not wanting to hurt the woman that he loves, or out of plain fear of the repercussions, the answer is rarely the most truthful one. Even if he thinks that you look great you have already planted the seed in his mind that you do look heavy. The standard answer of “no” is given, and the conversation (hopefully) ends there.

That being said, instead of trying to justify something about yourself that you do not like, I propose something radically different. I propose that we learn to accept the facts for the facts. If you are uncomfortable with your body then first identify and accept this fact. Do not simply bury this emotion in an attempt to ignore it and force it to go away. If you do, you will never truly be happy with the way you look or feel. Next, you will need to commit to diligently work on fixing whatever problem you have identified. This is true in all aspects of our lives. Identifying problems objectively and then making and executing plans to address them realistically will transform the quality of the lives of most people in a profoundly positive way. It will work, not only for the good of our own health, but in every aspect of our lives (In this book we will focus strictly on health). The downside (if you can call it such) is that this method takes guts, will power, time, and in most cases money. So there is lesson number one. I will champion this cause throughout this book. So let’s call ourselves “fat”, “overweight”, or “out of shape” and then, either truly accept the way we are or begin to do something about it!

Ok, let’s get the biggest misconception about health out of the way right away; there is **no** secret to losing weight, to getting into better shape, to losing fat, or to building muscle, none! I have been asked by plenty of patients in the past; “what is the secret to losing weight when..._____?” After the “when?” comes a variety of what I think of, very bluntly, as excuses. Excuses such as; “you are over forty”, “you don’t like to exercise”,

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“you like to eat this or that type of food”, “you have pain here or there”, “you have very little free time”, I could go on and on. I respond by stating that the question that they are asking is flawed. What I mean is that the question is implying something that is not true, namely that there is some secret to getting into shape that people in different situations in their life can capitalize on, if they only knew it. Ahh, if it were only that easy. The only people that end up capitalizing in these cases are companies selling the “next big thing” in fitness. The secret is that there is absolutely no secret. Losing weight/getting into better shape is the same today as 200 or even 2000 years ago. There are no pills, no machines, no DVD’s that replace hard work and dedication. And in the end, this is all you really need. The end. Thanks for reading....

Ok, so it’s not as bad as it seems. It’s not so much a doom and gloom scenario, as it is a statement to the contempt I feel for companies that profit on outright lies to the consumer when it comes to fitness (particularly weight loss). There is a certain predatory attitude by some “fitness” companies in this country that is accepted due to the general population’s desperation and, unfortunately, laziness (much more on this later). There is, however, a silver lining peeking out of this dark cloud, and that is that hard work works! It works for everyone. It works for men and women, fat and thin, short and tall, everyone. It has been tested over time and proven effective. Later we will take a step by step look at how you may be able to benefit from making progressive changes to your health.

Let’s briefly get back to these so-called “fitness” companies, and their products. When marketing a new product, the company producing the product, more often than not, cares far less about the results as it does about how many “units” are sold. This bottom-line thinking puts the needs of the consumer second and the profits of the company first. Effectiveness takes a backseat to gimmicks and marketing tricks. This has to be true, however, for if these companies marketed these products based exclusively on their effectiveness they wouldn’t sell unit one. The truth is that no product or supplement, by itself, will make a bit of difference. The health product industry is also very competitive. Just think of how many different machines there are to help perform some version of the sit-up. The combination of these two factors often leads to manufacturers making extraordinary claims, each one trying to outdo the other. The long standing joke about these products involves the small print at the bottom of these commercials. It often reads; “results shown not typical”. It is easy to poke fun of these claims, but

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let's look at the psychology of these ads from a different perspective. Imagine yourself in the market for another type of product entirely, let's say a computer. If the television ad stated that computer "X" had a 320 GB hard drive, a 20 inch monitor, and comes with a DVD burner installed, and the at the bottom of the screen, in fine print, stated "specifications not typical", no one would buy it. It is easy to see that in all other aspects of consumerism we expect to get what we pay for. And if we don't, most of us have no problem letting the company or manufacturer know about it until the situation is made right.

Many companies also spend a great deal of money performing pseudo-scientific research or hire doctors to vouch for their product. There is an obvious conflict of interest when someone is who paid to endorse a product, gives a favorable opinion. Time after time, however, we easily believe those we see in a position greater than ours (doctors, athletes, actors). This is a truth in all forms of marketing, and has been a successful strategy for decades. In some cases these people should know more than we do about certain products (i.e. doctors). When an athlete endorses a product, the general public may want to emulate them but they most likely do not think that he or she has any specific scientific knowledge about how the product actually works. This is much different than when someone with an advanced scientific degree endorses a product. If a doctor or a research scientist endorses a product for money, it is expected that he or she does have knowledge about how and why the product will work. These endorsements, therefore, often carry much more weight with the consumer. The problem comes in when a monetary transaction takes place. Money has a way of getting people of all kinds to do what the one who is paying them wants them to do. It is, therefore, a combination of desperation and a lack of knowledge that drives people to trust products that clearly state that they will most likely not work as well as advertised. These companies often feel so invulnerable that they pull absolutely no punches. They don't simply state that the product may not be as effective as shown. They clearly state that their product is more than likely not going to live up to its claims ("Results Not Typical"). This type of predatory behavior by these companies makes me personally angry. It's time that the bulletproof attitude and the near fraudulent nature of these companies are exposed. Now, I am not saying that all products or companies fall into these categories. There are useful pieces of exercise equipment, along with effective exercise programs and nutrition plans. An old rule in business applies even more appropriately here; "If something seems too good to be true it probably is".

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Now let's get to the purpose of this book. This book is intended to get one mentally ready to take on the responsibility of living a healthy lifestyle. Again, I intend to represent the truth about what is necessary to begin living a healthier lifestyle. Also, I would like to help people to look at the diet and exercise industry differently. In the second half of this book I will give step by step exercise protocols, as well as healthy eating instructions. The exercise methods and eating guidelines are proven effective. I have been practicing them for years, as well as teaching them to others. This, however, is not the main point of this book. There are many eating/exercise programs that can be effective when done properly, and most importantly **maintained**. The main point of this book will be to explain why most diets and exercise programs fail, and how anyone can succeed in living a more healthy life by deciding for themselves to take the proper steps.

Before we begin, I must admit that I do not, in any way, claim to be a clinically trained as a psychologist or a psychiatrist. I have, in fact, no formal psychological training. It is not my purpose to try and counsel anyone through a difficult time or to help you understand the way you feel about health and fitness. I do, however, have an extensive background in different types of disciplined athletics, along with a knowledge and understanding of human function, biology, biochemistry, and nutrition. I have years of training in human anatomy, physiology, and biomechanics. I have trained hundreds of people on how to exercise and eat correctly, so that they not only lose weight and maintain it, but also lower their chance of preventable disease (and the fact is that most of today's most prevalent diseases are, at least in some part, preventable). I am also a chiropractic physician, with a successful private practice in downtown Chicago. Most importantly, I live my own life based on the principles that I will suggest. Basically what I am saying is that I have spent my life observing, studying and implementing programs that make people healthier. I have used many different techniques to help people achieve their own personal health goals. Through my experience, combined with my training, I have learned what works and, even more importantly, what doesn't.

So what if you are already in good health. You feel good, you are not at risk for any disease, and you are happy about how you look. Well, first off, you probably wouldn't have read this far if this were the case. But in reality, this book is not being written for those who are already conditioned athletes, or even for those who have never found it that difficult to get into the gym three or more times a week, and have had no trouble skipping desert. Some people, whether due to genetics or upbringing, find it significantly easier to

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monitor their habits. Some people actually, gulp... like working out! If you fall into one of these categories you may find this book can help explain some of the difficulties in your training or help you find some extra motivation. For the most part, however, I would like to focus on those who just cannot seem to “get the ball rolling” when it comes to their physical health. Those that “can’t find the time” or don’t feel that they will ever get to where they want to be no matter what they do. Some people, I have worked with are on the verge of hopelessness. They are ready to give up all together on even attempting to lead a healthier lifestyle. Attaining goals such as fitting into a certain swimsuit by summer do not seem attainable, so the risk (or work) outweighs the reward. I intend to show that the risk of living a healthy lifestyle never outweighs the reward.

Along the same lines, this book is for parents. I feel that in these toxic times it is important for parents to focus more on the health of their children. Parents need to guide children towards being healthy. It is exponentially easier to continue patterns that you learn as a child than it is to adapt new ones later in life. The healthier a child is raised, the healthier, and consequently happier, he or she is likely to be as an adult.

Now, think of the last diet you tried or the last work out program you attempted. Chances are you, like most others, heard of a new diet program that you can lose twenty (maybe more) pounds in a month or so, or you were flipping between channels and stumbled upon an ad for a new ab or thigh machine that promised to shave inches if only used ten minutes a day, three times per week. Now, even if you stuck with the proposed eating plan or exercise routine you probably did not see the results that were promised. You were just set up, with unrealistic promises, to fail. But, I would not call the end result a “failure” in a physical sense, only in a mental one. What I mean by this is you probably didn’t come out of the diet or workout routine in worse shape than before physically, but you probably did come out in worse shape mentally. This inability to reach such lofty, and ultimately, unrealistic goals probably left you feeling like it is not even worth attempting to work out or eat properly if you cannot change your body with such a simple routine. The first step, therefore, in beginning to lose weight is to figure out what realistic expectations you should have based on what you will be doing. We must first face reality head on. Weight loss is not intended to be a rapid thing (just as weight gain should not be rapid). It should be slow and steady, and at some point end. That’s right; eventually you will have no more weight to lose. Everyone wants to lose weight, but what happens once you get there?

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Moving on...Maybe you have never really been into exercise, and have never really “watched” what you ate. Maybe you feel like it is too late and you are too old to get healthy. Maybe you even feel like living a healthy lifestyle is just not worth the hassle. None of these ideas could be further from the truth. Obviously the earlier you start, the easier making a health change will be. More importantly, however, the earlier you start, the more days of your life you will have that are healthier and likely happier (and often; the more days you will have, period!).

The difficulties many people have when attempting to lead a physically healthy life is 95% mental and only 5% physical. What this means is that in reality exercising and eating right is actually not that difficult if one does not consider it to be a chore. Begin to think of it this way; not many of us would get up and go to work or school if we did not see there being some type of reward for doing so (in these cases either a paycheck or a degree- and eventually an even bigger paycheck!). Many people in this world will do almost anything for money, but completely neglect the most valuable asset they have; that being their health. American humor writer Josh Billings (Henry Wheeler Shaw) once famously stated; “Health is like money, we never have a true idea of its value until we lose it”. I would go a step further and state that the value of health is even more difficult to determine while being, in reality, of much greater value than money. Contrary to what many believe; all the money in the world cannot buy back your health. Healthcare, while advanced, is not to that point. Many chronic conditions cannot be completely reversed later in life, no matter how much money you have to invest in your healthcare and no matter how good your medical team is. Those who abuse their body throughout their life will often be in some sort of chronic discomfort for the latter portion of their life. Again, for me this hits close to home, for I deal with patients in these types of situations on a daily basis. I am constantly faced with patients who let their health go for years and then, after developing a problem, what to be fixed immediately by the healthcare system. Again, modern healthcare is good, but not that good. At a certain point all the medications, surgeries, and/or therapies will not give you your health back. When you think about it, however, this is how we, Americans, are conditioned to think in many aspects of life. In today’s America we are allowed, in many cases, to not take responsibility for ourselves. Many of us pass the buck at work, expect the government to bail us out if we are in trouble, blame others, etc. It is no wonder we take the same attitude when it comes to our health. The truth is, without personal responsibility, taking care of one’s health will be very difficult. Mastering

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this mental battle with health is the only true way to ensure that one gets healthy and then, more importantly, stays that way. If your mind is right, the physical effort required should be significantly easier.

Now don't get me wrong, I'm not saying that avoiding deserts and hitting the treadmill on a regular basis doesn't require a significant effort. Anything worth doing will require some effort. I'm also not saying that those who are not in the gym regularly are inherently lazy, or that those who chose to have a piece of cake after a meal have no will-power. What I am saying is that, in today's society, our lifestyles put us at a natural disadvantage when it comes to health. We generally have a mindset that physical health is not a top priority in the grand scheme of life. It would be difficult, however, to find an aspect of our lives that can so dramatically impact every other area of how we live more than our general health. One's physical and mental health impacts daily life greater than any other factor. Generally speaking the healthier a person is, the more activities they can participate in, the easier of a time they have at their work, the better they feel overall and the better they feel about their self-worth. It is, therefore, very easy to see how becoming (and equally importantly staying) healthy is not simply about feeling good about yourself while wearing a bathing suit, but about having the ability to enjoy every aspect of life more while, also being around longer to do so.

Now, some people would argue that they can be out of shape and still be happy and productive in their lives. I would certainly agree. I also have absolutely nothing against anyone being happy about their given situation no matter what size or shape they are. I am not here to judge or make anyone feel that they should change. There are many, many people that are perfectly happy not being the ideal clinical weight. Just because you are not in the best physical shape does not necessarily condemn you to a life of unhappiness. If you are happy with the way that you are, no matter what size or shape you are, then you should be congratulated. If you fall into this category, this book is not intended to make you feel guilty or ashamed of your situation. Everyone is different, and everyone requires different things to make themselves happy. I believe in the American way of life whole-heartedly. By this I mean that all people should be able to pursue their own definition of happiness. Being happy in one's own skin is one of the most basic forms of happiness there is. If you are truly happy the way you are, don't let anyone try and convince you otherwise. I hope to simply present facts about the situation of health and healthcare in this country, and then give an alternate view on some of the restrictions people feel when it comes to living a healthy lifestyle. Again, I, in no way, mean to pass judgment on anyone. I want those

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who feel uncomfortable with their bodies, those with health problems related to their weight, those that feel lost when it comes to how to exercise and what to eat, to know that there is something they can do to change their lives, that there is hope, that there is light at the end of what may seem like a long and dark tunnel. I intend for each person who reads this book to take in, with an open mind, the topics I discuss and then make up their **own** minds about their health. It is ultimately you, and only you, who can make the decisions about what makes you happy in life (despite what many may believe).

I have personally seen people begin diets, only to first start cheating on them and then eventually quit. I have also watched people begin exercise programs only to begin skipping workouts, and then eventually quit. Then I have seen those who maintain a diet, exercise program, and overall healthy lifestyle. So what's the difference between these people? Are some people genetically hard-wired to be exercise nuts or fanatics about what they eat? Well maybe a few, but not nearly enough to explain why some people maintain their health and fitness level and some do not. This is where the boundary, which I will call "the hill", tends to separate those that are consistent with their fitness and those who are not. Think of "the hill" analogy in this way; a hill takes some effort to reach the top of, but once over the summit the rest of the trip becomes progressively easier. This analogy can be seen in many aspects of human behavior. Most of the time when someone begins something new it takes a period of time to adjust to the new way of living their life. After the new way becomes routine, however, it becomes increasingly easier to maintain. Let me use another example; when someone decides to quit smoking the initial few weeks are the most important. Not cheating, even once, is crucial to success. The withdrawal, or physically painful portion of quitting, will cease much sooner than the psychological/emotional, portion. Those who make it through this portion have established a new routine and have a much higher chance of success. While it may not seem like it, quitting smoking often requires a great change in everyday life. You won't go to the store simply to pick up cigarettes, you won't smoke while having a glass of wine, and you may even miss out on conversations with some of the people you used to talk to while outside on a smoke break. All of these factors work against the person trying to quit, and that's not even taking the physical addiction into consideration. It is the same for those who begin diets or exercise routines and fail. Those who begin diets or exercise programs and are not mentally ready for the commitment to their health begin the ascent up "the hill", but once faced with the continued effort needed they soon quit. They then fall back to the bottom of "the hill", only to

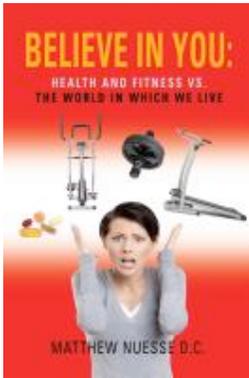
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begin the accent again (usually with an altogether different plan). This “hill” concept, along with the other concepts mentioned here will be revisited later in this book.

For now what I ask is that before you continue to read this any further you look within yourself. Determine for yourself how value your health, if you can see yourself allowing yourself to commit to a healthy lifestyle. This book is, after all, not a “quick fix” solution to a problem, nor is it simply a list of diets and exercise routines. While diet and exercise specifics will be covered later, the real purpose of this book, as mentioned before, is to help you mentally prepare to take on the challenge of becoming healthy. So think of this book as merely a tool to help you find the way within yourself to be successful in your own health.

In this book I am going to do my best to present facts about diets, exercise fads, society, etc. without “sugar coating” them (no pun intended). I will use clinical data, statistics, as well as my own experience. Using this information is the only way to find the true cause to the problem many of the people I know both personally and professionally, and the countless others I don’t know, face today. I hope to not come off as cold or insensitive in any of the subjects I present. My intentions are only to help those that just need the “kick-start” towards a more healthy future.

With all of this said I will feel that this book is a success if I can help just one person understand that they **alone** have the power to control their own destiny when it comes to their health. If just one person embraces the importance of a healthy lifestyle, and the value of becoming mentally prepared to deal with a world so intent on leading people away from health, then, this book was worth being written. This book will be truthful, sometimes painfully, in what it actually takes to lead a healthy lifestyle. Are you ready? Ok, let’s really get started...



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