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THE
MINDSET
DIET

Escape the trap of yo-yo dieting
and go from disillusioned dieter
to empowered eater

R^ethink

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Introduction

Confession: I am a recovering yo-yo dieter. In my teens, I had learned to 'go on a diet' to lose weight each time I put it on. Regularly. It never occurred to me to change how I was living.

In my forties, I was too busy and too stressed to keep going on a diet. I had little tolerance to starving myself anymore. Occasionally, out of exasperation with my weight gain, I would try a diet, lose some weight, and predictably put it straight back on again as soon as I returned to my old lifestyle and habits.

I had become increasingly disillusioned with dieting and didn't want to invest precious time and energy on depriving myself anymore, yet I wasn't happy in my body. I didn't like my photo being taken when

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I was on holiday, nor what I looked like in the mirror, nor the clothes I was wearing to hide my weight gain. I was judgemental and critical towards myself, somehow feeling not good enough as I wasn't looking successful.

It wasn't an empowered decision I had made not to diet – it was avoidance. I thought I was faced with an either/or choice: that I had to either ignore my eating while I focused on my career or work less and go on holiday less to find time and space to diet and exercise.

It seems I shared this yo-yo dieting pattern with many women. It never occurred to me that instead of going on a diet, I could *change* my diet; that a diet is not a temporary state of affairs, but part of my lifestyle. No one ever talked to me about keeping weight off as a long-term change.

Until I started learning Neurolinguistic Programming (NLP), I never questioned this going-on-a-diet strategy. NLP made me realise I could take a completely different approach to weight loss; it helped me change my thinking about dieting. I discovered I could make small changes to my lifestyle that would make me feel better and lose weight without feeling deprived.

After researching and reading around the topic of dieting, looking at factors that affect our weight, weight

loss and weight gain, and exploring other mindset tools, I decided to use my experience to help women to shift their thinking about going on a diet. I created *The Mindset Diet* and now I'm sharing it with you.

What is NLP?

NLP is an attitude, a mindset, a set of tools and concepts. It helped me change my thinking. NLP sheds light on how we structure our experiences, our beliefs, our language, our behaviours, and helps us get different outcomes. It helps us understand how we are all unique, which is why one solution *doesn't* fit us all.

NLP works with both the conscious and unconscious mind. It provides tools and techniques to bring both your minds into alignment so that they share the same intention. When that happens, you will be more successful in your goals.

There are more NLP tools that could help you change your relationship with food than I have included in the book as they need an expert practitioner. For example, Timeline Technique, N-Step Reframe or Submodality Belief Change can shift limiting beliefs very quickly. Other tools such as Like to Dislike and Swish, which I have included, may be easier to use and more powerful when done with a practitioner.

How I have structured the book

There are four steps to learning. I have broken the book into four parts to reflect these steps and help you learn and adopt new ways of thinking so that you can easily change your relationship with food and stop going on a diet.

STEP FOUR

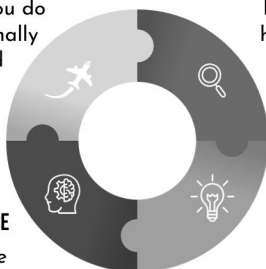
UNCONSCIOUS COMPETENCE

You've created a new set of beliefs, thoughts and behaviours you do naturally, occasionally readjusting should old habits creep back in.

STEP THREE

CONSCIOUS COMPETENCE

You've made some fundamental changes, you're focused and clear on your goal. You build new habits to support your goal.



STEP ONE

UNCONSCIOUS INCOMPETENCE

You don't know what you don't know – you have no awareness of how your environment and your habits are keeping you stuck in yo-yo dieting.

STEP TWO

CONSCIOUS INCOMPETENCE

You learn how your beliefs, values and thoughts drive your behaviours and start to unpick them and change some.

Four steps to learning

In Part One of the book, I guide you through the place to start any desired change, which is to observe yourself, your habits and how you do them. You can't change what you don't know, so I ask you to notice what unconscious behaviours, which in NLP are called

your strategies, are driving your outcomes. When you make your habits conscious, you have more choice and you can choose to change them. I ask that you enjoy this in a curious and non-judgemental way.

In Part Two, you will learn how your inner landscape works and realise just how much goes on in your unconscious. You get the chance to declutter the thoughts, values and beliefs that underpin your present eating habits, which will give you more clarity. In NLP, we believe it is our inner landscape – these thoughts, values and beliefs – that affects how we react to any given event, and whether we succeed at change. After decluttering, you will begin to create more empowering versions for yourself.

Once you understand how your mind impacts your eating habits, it's time to create a well-formed outcome, a goal. I have left setting your goal until Part Three, because I want you to make a fundamental shift in how you think and see your relationship with food before you create your vision for yourself. Because your goal should be about more than weight loss. It is a chance to design your future.

As our unconscious mind is outcome oriented, NLP considers creating conscious, well-formed outcomes key to achieving what we desire. When you set a clear goal, you help your unconscious mind to filter your thinking towards that desired outcome and to pay attention to the opportunities and choices with which

you are presented along the way. Part Three is also about building basic wellbeing habits that will help you achieve your goal.

In Part Four, we examine aspects of your environment and eating habits that can either support or sabotage your goal. I share strategies to make your eating more conscious, information to change your programmed attitude towards foods and what science tells us all about losing and gaining weight. This section also reflects my experience over several years after I stopped dieting. We'll explore both real and perceived barriers to achieving and maintaining your new lifestyle.

You can read *The Mindset Diet* in any order and try any combination of strategies, dip in and out, and utilise tools that feel right for you. I can't promise it will be comfortable reading, but it will help you to get off the yo-yo dieting rollercoaster.

I would suggest, though, that you start at the beginning so that you can understand how you got to this place of disillusionment. When you know what got you here, you can work out what will get you where you want to go and change more with every chapter. Read it through once, then flip back to what resonates most and the strategies you want to try. No one tool alone will be the miracle that will make it easier to lose weight and keep it off; it is a cumulative process.

Buy yourself a journal to work through the self-coaching activities so that you can really apply *The Mindset Diet* approach. Alternatively, you can download my bespoke workbook by visiting <http://workbook.themindsetdietbook.co.uk/home> or scanning the QR code at the back of the book. Reading this book will build your awareness, but it's only when you *apply* the knowledge that you will make meaningful change in your relationship with food.

The person with the greatest influence on you is you. Accessing your inner knowledge will give you wisdom and understanding to implement change. It will reveal the key to the sustainable lifestyle that is perfect for you. When you recognise that it will take a change in your eating habits and your lifestyle to have the body and energy you want, applying *The Mindset Diet* will give you tools to get there with more grace and ease and less self-judgement. After you've read the book, you'll end up making changes that impact on your confidence and impetus in business too.

Start making small changes right now. That's easy to do. You don't need to wait until you've lost weight to be an empowered eater.