

THE FUTURE OF HEALTH | NOW 2012

Dr. John Berardi

*The following is taken from **The Future of Health Now** interview conducted by Ann Wixon with body transformation and weight loss expert, Dr. John Berardi.*

We have taken the best, most valuable, easiest, and most applicable “to do’s” from this amazing interview so you can begin to implement them today, as you strive to live a happier and healthier life now and in the future.

Who is Dr. John Berardi



As a nutrition coach and exercise physiologist, I have coached hundreds of elite athletes, among them, professionals and Olympic gold medalists, as well as thousands of everyday folks. I received my Ph.D. in Exercise Physiology and Nutrient Biochemistry at the University of Western Ontario, and am currently a faculty member at Eastern Michigan University and the University of Texas.

Over the last three years, through my company Precision Nutrition, I’ve conducted the world’s largest body transformation project. Along with my team, we’ve coached over 7,000 men and women, and these clients have lost nearly 120,000 pounds of body fat. Along the way, I’ve learned very valuable and surprising lessons on what it takes to really change your body.

The Problem with “Diets”

- Diets are a negative thing to most people.
- The success rate of what people conventionally call a “diet plan” is pretty abysmal.
- Most people assume, right out of the gate, that diets are going to fail.
- Most diets actually do work at helping you lose weight in the short term.
- Most of them don’t help you keep that weight off in the long term.
- Up to 95% of people who lose weight through dieting gain that weight back.

- The big question really becomes, “Why do diets fail people, and why are they unable to maintain their weight loss in the long run?”
- Two major psychological reasons and two major physiological reasons.

- On the psychology side: (1) make their weight loss plan too big and (2) we rely on willpower to take us through the process.
- On the physiological side: (1) for many people, diets set up the “restrict and binge” cycle and (2) loss of lean muscle mass.
- Willpower is like a bank account. You make making withdrawals, but you also need to make deposits.
- By depositing regularly into our willpower bank account, it helps in every aspect.
- It takes an effort to think about the things that bring you meaning and joy, and deposit those things on a daily basis.
- Historically, when we weren’t getting enough food, the signals to go out and eat were really strong.
- Fundamentally, our bodies pick up on a signal to go look for food.
- If we restrict for too long, we end up bingeing, overeating, and putting all the weight back on.

The Body Transformation Code

- We’ve worked with thousands of people, hundreds of thousands of pounds lost, and thousands of lives changed along the way,
- There’s a research piece as well as a coaching piece.
- Research piece is trying to uncover key factors involved in body transformation.
- We’ve had people lose as much as 20% body fat.
- As fat accumulates, your cholesterol and risk for diabetes, heart disease, and metabolic syndrome all increase.
- Functional independence comes from having enough lean mass reserve when we're younger.
- Body transformation is about lean functional gain in conjunction with fat loss.
- We strive for finding efficiencies that someone can fit into a full, rich, and complicated life.
- Find the minimum amount of exercise that’s required to get the result you're after.
- What's the minimum amount someone needs to do in terms of both exercise and nutritional change?
- Use a true learning and progressive model.
- Need to go through a mental re-orientation with the world.
- Most people already know what their next strategy should be.
- They already know and they have all the resources and the reasons within them to change.
- It's a matter of helping call those forth.
- It's a self-driven process.

Guided Self-Experimentation

- In the beginning, someone should be kind of walking alongside as a guide, helping you choose which things to experiment with.
- That helping comes from questioning.
- What is most meaningful to you?
- What is most important to you?
- We like to use the Toyota “five whys.”
- Why are you interested in losing fat or changing your body?
- “Okay, so your doctor said you should lose some weight, but why?”
- Ultimately, it gets down to something much, much deeper than weight loss.
- We are big proponents of “motivational interviewing.”
- In motivational interviewing, one of the main points is to help people elicit positive change talk. Rather than telling you what to do, motivational interviewing helps elicit positive change talk from you.

Mindedness vs. Mindlessness

- The most important thing we've discovered is eating with awareness and present-mindedness versus mindlessly rushing through meals.
- Begin with some simple questions:
 - Where do you eat? In your car, in restaurants, sitting down, standing up, in front of the TV?
 - With whom do you eat? Alone, with other people, with other people who encourage good habits, or other people who encourage bad habits?
 - How fast do you eat? Do you quick or are you in a hurry or do you eat slowly?
 - Do you pay attention to the food, how it tastes?
 - Do you pay attention to how your body feels when you eat it? What do you notice when you eat? Do you notice the taste and smell? How full you are?
 - Are you distracted by television or the newspaper or something else?
 - Why do you eat? Are you physically hungry or are you sad, angry, bored, anxious?
- Choose your food thoughtfully, focusing on the quality of that food.
- Eat sitting down, relaxed, without distractions.
- Eat with others as often as possible, sharing a meaningful connection with them, and avoiding enabling behaviors.
- Pay attention to your food, treat it with care and respect, while paying attention to your body, especially how your stomach feels and how the rest of your body is doing while you're eating.
- Ask simple questions after your meal:
 - How do I feel right now after I ate that?
 - Do I feel stuffy?
 - Do I feel congested?

- Do I feel nervous?
- Do I feel jittery?
- Do I feel alert?
- Do I feel sluggish?
- It should take about 15-20 minutes to eat a meal.
- When you slow down your eating and you start paying attention, you eat fewer calories.
- Our body is full of sensors.
- We need to slow down, because you can't hear the sensors over the TV.
- There are certain foods that people have intolerances to immediately after eating.
- Those are foods you should eat less of.
- Stop eating at about 80% full.
- It takes about 15-20 minutes for our brains to sense what's happened digestively and give us satiety signals or fullness signals.

Comfort Food

- Don't place value judgments on food.
- People have their own motivation and feelings around particular foods.
- If you want a food to give you comfort and happiness, ask yourself, "What's another way you could have sought happiness in that moment, instead of food?"
- Would it have been some physical activity? Reading a book? Calling a friend?

Concrete Take Aways

- Slow down and pay attention.
- When it's time to eat, eliminate distractions.
- Take 15 minutes to complete your meal.
- Ask yourself some important questions.
 - Why am I eating this?
 - How am I feeling leading up to the meal?
 - How do I feel during?
 - Am I stopping before I'm stuffed or am I stuffing myself because that makes me feel happier?
 - How do I feel after?
 - Did that food make me feel calm, confident, and energetic?
 - Did it make me feel bad and nervous?
- Boost healthy food instead of taking away unhealthy ones.
- Each time you sit down to eat — breakfast, lunch, dinner, snacks — eat more lean protein and more vegetables.
- Make new projects, specifically fitness projects, smaller than you think you can handle.
- On a scale of zero to 10, how confident do you feel that you can do something?
- That might mean you commit only five minutes of exercise a day.

- It may mean you commit to having just one healthy meal.

Weight Loss Myths

- Fitness shouldn't be a big overwhelming project.
- You don't feel like you have enough information to get started? I guarantee you do.
- Breakfast is NOT a necessity, as long as you don't overeat later in the day because you're so hungry.
- The low fat, low cholesterol diet is not necessarily more heart healthy.
- A low fat and high carbohydrate diet often leads to excess body fat gain, and excess body fat is very strongly correlated with heart disease, diabetes, and high cholesterol.
- Sometimes for a paradigm to change in the world, it doesn't get changed through data or information, it gets changed when the old guard retires or dies.
- A decade ago, we thought exercise helped us get leaner and healthier by burning calories *during* our exercise session.
- Now we think that it has very little to do with what you burned during the activity, it's what you burned after the activity that's very important.
- Exercise acts like a nutrient traffic controller.
- When you exercise, it changes hormones and genetic expression, so that when you go to eat the next time, that food goes to different places than it would have.

Organic Isn't ALWAYS Best

- In terms of nutrients, locally raised, non-organic food is superior than organic food that's traveled across the country to get to your door.
- As soon as a food or vegetable is picked, it starts losing its nutrient quality and value.
- The nutrients start oxidizing.
- Organic food is grown without pesticides.
- Eating too many pesticides can have carcinogenic problems associated with it.
- Some foods don't keep pesticides over time.
- The Environmental Working Group has two lists: the "dirty dozen" and the "consistently clean."
- The dirty dozen lists foods that, when grown with pesticides, those pesticides stick around and can cause a problem.
- The consistently clean list includes the fruits and vegetables that, even if they're raised with pesticides, don't contain very much when they get to your refrigerator or to your home.

Your Weight Loss Plan

- Start with small habits.
- Follow it anywhere from 2-3 weeks before introducing a new habit.
- Take fish oil and a multivitamin.
- Take 1 gram of fish oil per percent body fat, up to about 30%.
- If you're 20% body fat, you use about 20 grams of fish oil.
- Use liquid fish oil. A tablespoon is 15 grams.
- Most of the world has a host of nutritional deficiencies.
- Add a light exercise program.
- Eat slowly.
- Our Web site has a program that tells you your daily habit, workout, and lesson.
- Eat to 80% full.
- Next, aim for five servings of veggies a day.
- A serving is the size of your fist.
- Next, shoot for a serving of lean protein with each meal.
- For women, a protein serving is the size of your palm. For men, it's two palm-sized portions.
- Next, introduce healthy, dietary fat with each meal.
- Things like raw mixed nuts, avocado, fish oil, olive oil.
- Use a thumb size portion.
- Eat fewer carbohydrates.
- Eat your carbs after you've exercised, which is when the body best utilizes them.
- Build habits slowly over time, one at a time, in the most effective progression that helps the body increase its metabolism, lose weight, and get healthier.

Final Thoughts

- Getting healthier, losing body fat, doing a body transformation is a process that is both mental and physical.
- We spend far too *little* time thinking about the mental part and far too *much* time thinking about the physical part.
- It's not what we do for exercise or what we eat. It's how we do our exercise and how we eat.
- Our relationship with food is our relationship with the world.
- Do you rush through your meals? If so, you probably also rush through life.
- If food is a release for you then you're probably overburdened somewhere else in your life.
- If you feel deprived when on a diet, you probably need some more abundance elsewhere in your life.
- Our relationship with the world is our relationship with food and activity.
- The habits are simple:
- Eat slowly and pay attention.

- Boost healthy foods instead of taking away unhealthy ones.
- Make your new projects smaller than you think you can handle.

Resources:

- Tim Ferriss interview
- Daphne Oz interview
- Dr. Philip Miller interview

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