

Gratitude:

Now this may seem out of left field however the benefits are extensive.

Have you noticed that it's really easy to race through the holiday season stressed and pressured by things that are actually privileges to be enjoyed and appreciated?

Another Xmas party? Getting on top of your inbox and xmas shopping before that 3 week holiday? Finding the perfect party out-fit?

These are great 'problems' to have.

To focus on what you are grateful for will not only attract more of the same into your life.

It's also a vastly more enjoyable approach to take, for you and all those you spend time with. You can feel appreciation for the 7 days off you have or lament that it's not a month.

My personal experience is that I have always felt lucky to have 7-14 days off at the end of the year. It feels like a generous amount of time for me to rest, relax and come back fresh and excited for the year to come.

It's actually the same during the year when I tend to take a 3-4 day long weekend. My believe is that that's long enough for me to benefit from it... and so I do.

Conversely I know people who grumble that they 'only get' 2 weeks off before they're grudgingly back to work.

Whatever you've got - be grateful to have it... AND if this doesn't come easily then perhaps it's worth taking a step back from YOU and looking into what other people have. Or, more-so haven't got. It's a reality check.

Your implementation steps:

What are 5 things you feel grateful for?

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A great time to focus on these things is directly before sleep.

=> your unconscious mind Loves questions. If you ask it a question it will go hunting for evidence and won't stop till it gets it! So, best to drift off feeling grateful for what you've got and asking your unconscious mind the question "HOW CAN I be even more focused on living my ideal healthy, grateful, successful day tomorrow?"

Ensure your time before bed is for all thing POSITIVE.

Goals. Affirmations. Gratitude's. Visualizing the perfect day tomorrow... get protective of your unconscious mind and what you allow it to dwell on.

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Start on a Peak:

In mid November I start to hear “*but it’s Xmas*” as I ask my clients about their nutrition and alcohol. Now I guess this isn’t surprising as the supermarkets generally flaunt cheap Xmas chocolates and other such crap-o-la from October.

If it’s important enough you’ll find a way to take the actions you need to take and if it’s not you’ll find an excuse. Don’t kid yourself. You absolutely will not maintain your current physique, let alone make any progress if your ‘holiday season’ indulgences last for a couple of months.

My approach is to choose the period of time I relax the guidelines and to ensure I hit a peak with my health prior to that more relaxed time.

This ability to **delay gratification** is something you already display in the areas of your life you’re most successful. It’s a matter of **taking the actions that may not be most pleasant right now because your focus is on the results they will allow you to enjoy in the future.**

Equally, isn’t the anticipation of a pleasurable experience almost as good as the experience itself? That’s why it’s great to book your yearly holidays at the beginning of each year, so you’ve always got one to look forward to.

It’s why I get so much more enjoyment from eating bread on the weekend than I did when I ate it everyday... (with the happy primary result being not the extra carb-gobbling enjoyment - rather the satisfaction of maintaining my goal body composition long term).

Your implementation steps:

1. *When will you start your period of relaxed guidelines?*

(for me it’s a 2 week period and that is the maximum I recommend) Date:

Until then here are the tactics to employ to get you to that date in peak state...

When consuming those holiday season beverages - be it xmas parties or catch-ups with friends always choose the low carb option. Yes, it absolutely makes a difference.

Zero carb mixers. Low carb beer. Alternating your alcoholic drinks with mineral water.

Set yourself up to succeed before a cocktail party by ensuring you don’t arrive starving. For example have a protein shake prior.

Unless you have a vastly less emotional attachment to food than I do, I promise you the “just one” approach will only make it tougher. You 100% know the best choices when that greasy-salty-high caloric-density-more’ish stuff gets passed around, so ask yourself “what would (insert most fit and healthy version of you or person you are inspired by) do?” ...and follow suit!

You’re likely dining out a lot more frequently, and even the best choices out will not be as ideal as what you could eat at home... so that means *every* meal and snack you do have at home need to be as ideal as possible. Build these meals around lots of fibrous veg and lean protein.

2. *When these tactics get challenging, then focus on the results they will allow you to enjoy in the future... Ask Yourself:*

For what purpose do I want this. What will this mean to me - to my ideal life?

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To delve deeper into **how to achieve your ideal health by aligning your health goal with your Values and Beliefs** [check out this blog post on creating a winning fat loss mindset...](#)

Plan:

If you're traveling it's essential you have a plan of attack (yep, you're attacking the holiday fat!) BEFORE you leave. For both your exercise and also your nutrition.

Now it doesn't need to be as locked and loaded as your regular at home training and eating plan... however some guidelines set in advance are important.

With **EXERCISE** I recommend deciding on the Type and Frequency so that you know it'll compliment your holiday routine.

=> Now to be clear, this is what you'll do during your 'period of relaxed guidelines' - yep, relaxed doesn't mean *do nothing*... perhaps, it's swimming, cycling or hiking.

Your holiday leanness guidelines are 30 minutes per day. (more if desired).

AND, if you can find 30 minutes a day ([as I ask for in my 30 day body transformation B3Blitz](#)) when you're working, then you can 100% most definitely find it when you're holidaying!

Focus on making it Fun, perhaps spending time with those close to you rather than dragging yourself off to the gym. It's also likely also a great opportunity to get your exercising groove on outdoors and give your body a rest from heavy weights.

Schedule some ACTIVE activities (!) before you leave - actually book them so you're committed, holidays are a great opportunity to try adventurous, exotic new things.

In case something happens to stall your outdoor exercise intentions or you're super short on time... Prepare a 15-20 minute do anywhere body weight work-out, or find someone who can put together one for you. There really is a lot you can do with zero or minimal props but if you don't have it sorted prior to the trip the odds of it happening are near non-existent.

=> [Oh wait, I've got you covered here...](#)

To give you an idea here's my exercise plan for my 2 week holiday with the family in stunning Noosa:

Weights once per week MAX (so I'll train full body for around an hour)... I want to give my joints a rest and that's why I'm dropping from 4 times weights a week to 1.

Running 1-2 times per week... I never run except when I'm on holiday somewhere stunning and in that case I really enjoy it. (from 45-60 minutes)

Body-weight metabolic resistance training circuit (20 minutes only) once per week.

Walking any day I'm not doing the above and also any day I do the above ONLY IF I FEEL LIKE IT!!! (from 30-90 minutes)

Basically, I'm moving everyday but I've got a lot of flexibility with what I do and when.

If you will have access to a gym and would like a basic full-body weights program here you go:

Exercise	#	Muscle	Reps	FINISHER?
BW/DB SQUAT/STEP UP	1	Quads/Gluts/Hammies	8-15	20 seconds work:10 seconds rest. •20:10 times 4 squat with shoulder press. •20:10 times 4 pull-ups or inverted rows. •20:10 times 4 push ups. •20:10 times 4 reverse lunge with bicep curl. •20:10 times 4 oblique v-ups. Throw this finisher in at the end of '3' circuits of exercises #1-6!
LAT PULL-DOWN (rev grip)	2	Lower back + biceps	8-15	
DB/BB PRESS (flat)	3	Chest + shdrs/triceps	8-15	
SUPPORTED ROW (wide grip)	4	Upper back	8-15	
BENCH DIP	5	Triceps + chest/shdrs	8-15	
LEG LOWERS	6	Transverse	8-15	

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With **EATING** while away from home source some healthy eating options in advance.

If possible get a room with a kitchen or at least a fridge and do a supermarket shop for fresh food as soon as you arrive.

Prior to traveling search online for restaurants that are a good option for a healthy meal so you can avoid the desperation of trawling from establishment to establishment when you're already tired, hungry (and outta-control-moody with starvation to the point where irrationally it *MUST* be *the* most delicious possible meal you now choose - oh, is that just me?!)

I also recommend having a quick and easy **Go2HolidayMeal** up your sleeve for those times you've over indulged the meal before or get home late/over-hungry or whatever it may be. Some sort of quick salad, omelette or smoothie work well.

Here's a salad you can steal from mama Galli:

can of salmon in spring water.

bed of salad greens.

steamed snow peas, asparagus, broccoli. (last nights left overs are good!)

half tomato.

cucumber.

1/4 avocado.

salt+pepper.

If you don't plan then you'll be more likely to go for the 'light dinner' of 2 toasted cheese sandwiches (made with yellow cheese, 4 pieces of white bread and butter)...after your big lunch out. :(...that's *not* light!

Or perhaps you skip dinner after a big lunch and then snack on left-over pudding with custard, ice cream and cream that evening?

Try a smoothie like this instead:

1 cup unsweetened vanilla almond milk or coconut water or just plain H2O!

1 serve vanilla protein powder (aim for at least 20gm Protein and only 2-3gm of Carbohydrate and Fat per serve)

1 tbsp ground flaxseed (optional)

75gm frozen unsweetened raspberries or strawberries OR use up some of that those left over berries that are hanging out ready2go in the fridge!

½ cup raw frozen spinach (you won't taste it!)

1 tbsp natural peanut or almond butter

3 ice cubes

Easy - dump all ingredients in the blender and blend!

Absolutely enjoy those meals you eat out **HOWEVER** make sure the meals that you are in charge of (ok, I'll dispute you can be charge of everything you put in your mouth)...however, those meals that you're even more easily in charge of, are always supportive of your health goal.

It's also great to have a yummy yet creatively healthy food option for when you're taking a plate or preparing for guests. Holiday season is all about eating. eating. drinking. and eating... or some order of the preceding!

How many people do you know who *wouldn't* like to shed a little fat?

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Most people will thank you for providing the refreshing, guilt-free option... so,

Here's one of my fav holiday salads:

- 1 juicy mango chunkily cut
 - 3 nectarines cut in about 8 slices each and dry fried till it's golden and caramelized
 - 50gm dry roasted almonds roughly chopped
 - 100-200gm rocket
 - 100-200gm baby spinach
 - 1 avocado
 - ½ red onion finely sliced
 - 200gm firm ricotta cheese crumbled
- The juice from the fruit will spread over the salad when you lightly toss it, however add balsamic vinegar to dress if desired.

As I'm a throw-together-kinda girl and cooking isn't one of my skills a) you'll find any of my recipes super easy and b) I'm sure the Galvanize face-book community could absolutely benefit from some more shared recipes :) [If you have a good one please post it here...](#)

Finally, dependent on where you'll be over the holidays some **Go2Snacks** can be body savers - such as protein powder/bars or portions of nuts. I'm off to a supremely well-stocked house. I'll still take my trusty protein powder... that's because I know I love to snack and I also know if I snack on all the treats on offer I'll be struggling to squeeze into my jeans within a week.

Your implementation steps:

What Type and Frequency of exercise will compliment your holiday routine?

Type:.....

Frequency:.....

Two quick and easy Go2HolidayMeals:

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Your Creatively Healthy food option for guests or if dining out is more likely do a quick google search for a suitable local restaurant:

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Set Your Standards:

Set your standards prior to leaving (if you're not traveling, then set them prior to starting your 'period of relaxed guidelines').

Standards are the absolute Must-Do's not vague 'goals' that are oh too easy to let slip on hols...

Such as how frequently you will exercise and your strategies when eating out. You laid the foundations in the 'Plan' section, now let's get more specific. For example: lunch in and dinner out.

- 1 serving at the buffet where you prioritize salad and veggie room on the plate.
- making a restaurant booking to avoid excess nibbling and pre dinner drinks while waiting for a table.
- dessert OR wine.

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How strict you need to be with your standards is going to be dependent on how long you're away for. If it's a month it'll be necessary to stick as close as possible to your day to day 'ideal' fat burning day.

Personally, for a 2 week period my standards are a little more relaxed, the important thing to note is that it's a conscious planned decision to train less and eat more treats (I do this once a year only) as I see the value for both body and mind in doing just that.

As food is such a huge part of holiday season I even decide on some guidelines that make the decision making process easier. These are some of mine;

Non-negotiable (I don't eat this during the year or on holiday): lollies, biscuits, cake/dessert unless it's my #1 most fav in either case, cheap-nasty-crap-o-la-yet-convenient take-away.

In moderation (aside from bread on the weekend the following rarely features in my regular nutrition but on holidays it can, in moderation): bread, yoghurt, beer, Lindt dark choc, hot chips (they have to be super awesome though!).

Free for all (as much as I want, seriously...this is where I get the "where do you put it" looks (and the only thing that stops the guzzling is me is feeling self-conscious that my relatives think I'm a gutz!): fruit, veg, mum's roast or pretty much any low carb main vego meal I happen to get my mitts on.

Is assessing the above it's also useful to consider your **trigger foods** - you know, those ones that once you start you can't stop? ...and to come to an agreement with yourself as to whether they should fall into the "I have zero self-control" *non-negotiable* list or perhaps you can accommodate them *in moderation*.

I find buying in one portion sizes and/or eating once per day only, help me with my trigger foods

Your standards will guide the decisions you make and once you're clear on your standards the day to day choices you make with regard to your exercise and nutrition will become much easier.

Your implementation steps:

What are your personal standards for the holiday period?

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Include your trigger foods and your...

Non-negotiable

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In moderation

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Free for all

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=> When these tactics again get challenging, you guessed it - it's time to focus on the results they will allow you to enjoy in the future. *Remind Yourself:*

3. *For what purpose do I want this. What will this mean to me - to my ideal life and also to all those I LOVE?*

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Be Proud to be Contrary & Communicate Why Effectively:

Again this may seem less obvious than some of my previous points however it is a key component in surviving this holiday season in a fit and energized condition.

Unless you want to look, feel and perform like everyone else it is necessary to resist ordinary behaviour. Ordinary behaviour will involve the following to name just a few:

(so this is your AVOID IT list)

Let an existing or planned exercise routine slip whenever a better, easier, more enjoyable or more socially acceptive alternative presents.

Eat the canapes and whatever beverage happens to be provided free because they are right there in front of you... and 'all you can eat/drink' is too good an opportunity to miss.

Skip meals when busy and overeat crap-o-la to compensate later that evening.

Buy the 'on special' chocolates, biscuits etc because they are right there irresistibly flaunting their festive wrapping at you.

To enlist the support of all those close to you it's important that you are able to communicate exactly why you're choosing contrary. The person who no longer has the pudding they never even loved anyway or stops at one big serve of roast rather than stuffing themselves to the point of discomfort or asks for an adjustment to the menu when eating out. This person who perhaps gets up early to get a walk in or buys vodka when beer and bubbles are part of the bar tab... will INITIALLY have to deflect some questions.

We teach others how to treat us. The first couple of times you take a new habit for a spin, it'll likely attract some attention. As you stick with it it'll become normal, for you and for the people closest to you - who are likely just trying to justify their own indulgences by drawing attention to your choices.

In saying this I am laboring 'choices' ...what you eat and when you exercise is your business. As is what the people closest to you eat and whether they exercise. ZERO JUDGEMENT.

The goal is to get you feeling and looking awesome, certainly not to leave anyone else feeling worse. You know the couple where the 'naturally skinny one' always critic's whatever the 'bigger one' consumes? Not effective. Not nice.

If it's important to you to fuel your body the food that best helps it look and function as you would love it too - to prove to yourself that you can - then there is no shame in that. It's not fussy, it's a simple decision to take the actions that allow your to achieve your goal.

Finally, it does not matter whether you've just decided a few days ago or whether you've maintained your goal physique for years and are committed to continuing that path.

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(likely you're in between) ...my point is if you were to fear judgment in the form of 'why is she/he even bothering' then you'd never start anything new and positive.

Back your ability to achieve this goal and feel confident communicating it's importance to those who love you.

Your implementation steps:

1. *For what purpose are you committing to take these actions that will allow you to achieve this goal? (focus on the positive it will allow you and those you love to experience rather than any negatives you're looking to avoid)*

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(YES. It's *that* important to focus on the Why)

Love what you indulge in ...also your regular meals & how you exercise as much as possible:

Long term there is no place in your eating regime for those high calorie, carby, fatty foods that you don't absolutely LOVE. **If you're choosing a treat - then make it worth it!**

You work hard in your exercise sessions, so don't waste that effort on some average bowl of half soggy chips or a bunch of bland biscuits or a sickly rich dessert.

Here are some easy guidelines that I follow:

=> Generally I'm really not tempted even by 'the best' as I crave what I eat and when I'm not eating it I find I feel like eating it less and less ...however if I do want it I know I can have it, still stay lean and also avoid feeling deprived.

I'll only eat my very favourite biscuit (Anzacs) or cake (carrot) or ice-cream (hokey pokey) or chocolate (Lindt dark) or dessert (tarte tartin)... and so on!

Plan your indulgences. Eat a generous amount - never feel guilty and ensure you only buy enough for that planned serving (no left-overs!).

Never eat crap-o-la out of laziness or a lack of planning or because everyone else is. This simply comes down to planning and preparation.

A crucial component in being able to feel ok about only eating the best of your indulgences is to really enjoy or Love the vast majority of everything else you eat.

Know that it's possible to get joy from a food because of more than simply the way it tastes... for example I love certain foods for the nutritional value they give my body. Also for the fact that I know they will never lead me to gain fat... so called 'free foods' that I don't waste brain time wondering "can I get away with this?"

Bother to have your meals looking attractive and looking generous - visually appealing food will be more enjoyable... as a decent serving of food (built around 'free' fibrous veg) will be more satisfying.

With regard to your exercise, in an ideal situation you would Love the most effective forms of exercise... lifting decent weights and high intensity interval training. If you don't, there are still plenty of options to find the love (!) or at least find tolerable and work towards more enjoyable.

Focus on getting enjoyment from an exercise because of more than the process... how about the result? Or how good you feel once it's over - whether that be the endorphin rush or the sense of achievement.

Could you love that sticking with a way to exercise is an opportunity to get better at moving beyond your safe and boring comfort zone? ...and that skill is applicable to every area of your life.

Finally, be conscious of the power your language holds and choose the communication that makes exercising easier by either downplaying or reframing any negative emotional intensity and amping up any positive emotional intensity.

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For example: "I hate horrible hard cardio" could become "I love feeling energized and satisfied when I finish my cardio".

Your implementation steps:

What are your 'best of the best' foods in any relevant category?

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What are some past situations - people, places or emotions - that have led you to consume sub best of the best (!) indulgence food... and what can you do next time instead? It may be a better quality food swap, an alternate action (like calling a friend or getting a manicure instead of reaching for the choc biscuits) or simply not putting yourself in the danger/trigger situation.

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SO, THERE YOU HAVE IT!

To festive season fun, fitness and fat loss... I believe they can co-exist!

That's why I put together this blue-print and I hope it's been of value to you too... of course feel free to pass it on as you see fit.

BEYOND THE BLUEPRINT?

If your ideal health in 2015 means staying as you are or even shedding just a little fat over the holidays then this blue-print is really all you need.

However, if you've been struggling with your weight for years... if you're frustrated by restrictive diets and steadily losing faith in your ability to *ever* change your body...

I can help you sculpt the mindset that means staying lean and energized no longer conflicts with and instead supports your ideal lifestyle.

I believe "**When your mind is stuck you're wasting your time moving your body**".

I also *know* when it comes to BODY GAIN the resolve to Back Yourself and to give it 100% trumps any and *every* quick-fix-silver-bullet-over-promising-hope-eroding-MYTH!

On the 2nd Jan 2015 I'm hosting a webinar to share 3 Mindset Hacks to Build Your Belief In YOU and create the fit, lean, healthy body you were born to ROCK 24/7 365 Days.

Details to register for this free live webinar will be available **from the 16th Dec via brainb4body.com** - all you need to do is search **181** in the search box at the top right.

If you're listening after the 2nd Jan - Huge Happy New Year!!! - and it's all good, I'll have details to listen to the webinar recording at that same spot brainb4body.com and search **181**.

Questions, help, more information - I'd love to talk with you. Please contact me at info@brainb4body.com.

Happy healthy holiday season!
Kate