



SECTION 1: Fat & Stupid Is No Way to Go Through Life

I'm an ass.

For many years I was a "fat ass," though in early 2009, I started doing things and making changes to get the "fat" out. Two years later, with a few marathons under my belt and down seventy pounds, people ask "How did you do it?" like I found the cure for cancer or something. Hardly, and that's why I share the story of my journey so far because if you want to do it too, you absolutely can. Moreover, no special injections, crazy diet plans, or fat sucking Shop Vac® treatments are required. You just gotta want to.

For me, it all started with changing my role. "Fat ass" was a character I cast myself as because it was easy, comfortable. Not much is expected of a fat ass but laughs and gas, and so starting in high school, I rolled with it (literally & figuratively). Throughout this tale I will share some introspection stuff as to why I think I did that, and more importantly, how I'm changing my approach to avoid going back there, but frankly that's my shit and may or may not be relevant to you and your situation. The main thing I hope to provide you are practical experiences to consider as you do your thing – I

leave the deeper meaning, psycho-analytics to dudes like Dr. Phil and Dr. Drew (and if you really want to dig into that stuff, I highly recommend you read *The Four Agreements* by don Miguel Ruiz).

While I'm making disclaimers, please note this book is based on my opinions and personal experience. There's no science here, and I have no formal training in nutrition, diet, or fitness. I also don't have John Basedow six-pack abs or a body you'd want to see in a thong (unless you're freaky that way). If that's what you're looking for, put this book down right now and walk away. I don't have the ability to write such a manual, nor do I think most guys have an interest in reading one. My only qualification is I did it and keep doing it, though you should seriously question everything I say and most definitely see for yourself.



Because at the end of the day, that's what this or any of the thousands of diets, self-help guides, exercise plans, or other crap out there is about: your responsibility to yourself. For all the things in life we may believe "others" control – work, taxes, pro wrestling – your body is absolutely yours. You have complete control over what you put in it, do to it, and think about it.

That's not to say there isn't an onslaught of interests vying to influence that control. We don't necessarily think about the barrage of messages we're subjected to on an hourly basis, but they're out there, intended to implant in our minds a thought, feeling, belief, and ultimately a behavior. You deserve a break ... Have it your way ... Good mood food ... Love it ... Smile ... but when you press the mute button on all that crap, there's just one voice that matters: your own.

And it was March 2009, when above the din I heard my own voice say, "Hey, dumb ass, fat and stupid ain't no way to go through life." There were other voices, like that of my five year-old son saying, "Daddy, you're so mushy," as he squeezed my gut, and this doctor talking about out-patient surgery on my fat ass to fix an anal fistula (sorry for the visual). From time to time there was also this echo from the past when in my early twenties a doctor classified me as "morbidly obese" during a physical and prescribed high-blood pressure medication, but ultimately none of those voices could effect change. They might influence it, but they couldn't make it happen. That was all me.

Now, I know my "fat and stupid" voice didn't just suddenly one day emerge. It had been there for years and at different points in the past I had acknowledged it, even played along. There were periods I'd follow that voice's lead – gym memberships, special diets, New Year's resolutions, fitness rededication efforts – but those were all phases and I told myself as much. Inevitably, that meant I was bound to fail and would end up back in front of the mirror to convince myself that beneath the man boobs reflecting back at me were some ripped pecs.

But the voice in March 2009 was different, because it was a thirty-nine year-old voice. It was a voice that said, "Bro, you can go on deluding yourself and putting off what you need to do, but it's only going to get harder. Sure, you can run a few miles a few times a week, and get out there and

play tennis once in a while, but you're feeling it. Those aches in your knees from the weight you're pounding on them, that ain't no phase, and you've got a choice to make: be fat and stupid about taking care of yourself, or change the game."



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I opted for the latter, the difference this time being my recognition that the "game" never ends. It's not over when the gym trial period expires, or on the thirtieth day of the miracle diet, or when my innards are duly cleansed. Losing weight and getting right with yourself is for life, not something you just give up for Lent.

So when you do start down this new road, don't cast it as some big, dramatic LeBron James-esque decision. Hoopla like that distorts and carries too much pressure. Shedding pounds and taking care of your body is a constant series of little choices and minor decisions that ultimately lead to big, maintainable results. Everything doesn't all of a sudden change in one day, and there's no point somewhere in the future where you're done ... except for the day you die, and then you'll probably have bigger things to deal with than choose between the chili cheese dog platter or grilled chicken salad for dinner.

A few weeks back after an indoor cycling class I was chatting with the instructor – a great guy who absolutely makes fitness fun and accessible to everyone – when a woman from the class came over to us. She enthusiastically started telling him how much she enjoyed the ride and wanted to know all she should do to get in shape. The woman was adrenalized, pumped up, and raring to go. "I'm going to work out seven days a week," she announced. "I've been at it for three weeks, changing everything, and this time I am going to lose the weight. I am going to do it."

"That's not sustainable," the instructor smiled, not wanting to see this woman burnout before she had a chance to get going. "How you do it is making life changes, and that means a program you can live with," he said and then went on to encourage her with suggestions for a more balanced approach.

Sustainable. That's it. Find the things that'll keep you heading where you need to go and make them part of your routine. These are what I call "Game Changers" and you'll find some of mine highlighted throughout the guide for your consideration as you determine what steps will realistically work best for you. As I'll get to later in the book, I believe you've got to keep adding goals along your journey, but the destination remains the same. There's no magic to starting, or frankly what you do, it's simply a matter of staying at it. If you can commit to that, then you are well on your way.



Summer Vacation 2011

*Hiking mountains
with the family at
approximately 202 lbs.*

FAT FACTS

It will cost an estimated \$549,907 for an obese 18 year-old to remain obese through adulthood.

Have you looked into college savings plans?



No, but we've got an obesity fund started for Wilbur.

