Leyla Weighs In: It’s 2018! A great time to establish healthy new habits



Experts say we don’t actually break a habit. We simply replace it with a new one, a new behavior.

How we eat is actually a behavior. For example, if you’re always the first one to finish your meal at the family table, you are likely eating too fast. Make it a new habit to eat more slowly. Remind yourself to put your utensils down between bites. Notice the flavors and textures—be present. It’s better for digestion and you’ll be able to recognize when you’re full and satisfied. You may be surprised (and delighted!) to find out you’re no longer a member of the Clean Plate Club.

You can change the behavior of making a not-so-healthy choice at breakfast like sugary cereal, muffin or a donut, to a healthier option like poached eggs, a vegetable omelet, or some sardines or leftover salmon with some cucumber, watercress, tomato and dill.

Another new habit worth implementing is to start packing your lunch rather than eating out. Typically, these should be leftovers from dinner the night before. Don’t like leftovers? Make chicken salad from your leftover roast chicken and stuff half a Haas avocado with it, or put it over a bed of spinach or baby greens. You can put together tomorrow’s lunch as you’re cleaning up the dinner dishes. Then pack an ounce of mixed nuts and seeds and a piece of seasonal fruit for dessert or a between-meal snack.

If you’re on the sofa watching TV after work, make it a new habit to exercise while watching your favorite show. Set up your treadmill or elliptical in front of the TV, or do squats, lunges, pushups and free weights if you don’t have room for such large equipment.

Decide that you won’t watch your favorite show unless you are exercising.

Enjoy your post-exercise quietude with a beautiful dinner like rack of lamb with sautéed spinach or asparagus, or a grilled steak or salmon with a salad made up of greens like arugula, various herbs and romaine, adding in some chopped peppers, radish, celery, onion, cucumber and tomato, dressed with a quality fruity olive oil and balsamic vinegar or fresh lemon juice. By the way, fresh lime juice is a wonderful substitute for lemon juice in a salad.

Strive to make these changes with optimism and a full and open heart, operating from a place of abundance and gratitude. Let it spill over into your daily life and carry it through all year long.

Wishing you a Joyful New Year!

Leyla Muedin, MS, RD, CDN

Leyla Muedin has clients all over the country via telephone consultations. No need to travel to New York City for a nutrition consult. Should you require her services, please call our office to set up an appointment.