

# *A Realistic Eating and Exercise Record Book: A Six-Month Weight Loss Log and Journal for Dedicated Individuals by Larry Zafran*

*Please visit [www.LarryZafran.com](http://www.LarryZafran.com) for more information*

## **WHAT THIS BOOK IS BASED ON**

This is the companion book to *Weight Loss Made a Bit Easier: Realistic and Practical Advice for Healthy Eating and Exercise* by Larry Zafran. It is highly suggested that the main book be read before using this one, but it is not necessary to purchase it. It can be read for free in its entirety on *Google Books*. Please visit [www.LarryZafran.com](http://www.LarryZafran.com) for information about where to purchase the book. It is available in paperback as well as low-cost, DRM-free eBook editions.

## **IS THIS BOOK REALLY NECESSARY?**

Neither this nor any other weight loss book is necessary for you or anyone else to lose weight. However, books can serve as guides and roadmaps for paths that each of us must ultimately travel on our own. With that said, one of the main points of *Weight Loss Made a Bit Easier* is that the key to losing weight is having total awareness of our eating, exercise, and mental/emotional states.

This book provides the means of tracking such over a period of six months. Still, the book does not fall under the category of “necessary.” It is easy to create your own journal based on this book or whatever you feel will work best for you. As another option, I provide on my website the means to print pages of this book for free, but you will need a folder or similar means to keep the pages organized.

## **THE PURPOSE OF THIS BOOK**

The purpose of this book is to provide a log of daily, detailed forms for documenting aspects of eating, exercise, and emotions. Each entry functions as a “snapshot” which can be referred back to in an effort to analyze patterns.

## **WHY THE BOOK HAS “REALISTIC” IN THE TITLE**

One of the main points of *Weight Loss Made a Bit Easier* is that it is important to be realistic about losing weight. There are aspects of eating and exercise which can easily and realistically be tracked, and those which cannot—at least not with any reliable accuracy. Although this book may appear complex at first glance, it was designed so that a dedicated individual can easily utilize it on an ongoing basis.

## **WHY THE BOOK HAS “DEDICATED” IN THE SUBTITLE**

On the subject of being realistic, this book was designed to be used by men and women who are dedicated in their pursuit of weight loss. It only takes a few minutes each day to complete a journal entry, but the entries will not complete themselves. The reader must find or make the time to use the book completely and accurately.

## **WHY THIS BOOK DOES NOT INCLUDE THE MEANS OF TRACKING CALORIES BURNED/CONSUMED**

This matter is described in detail in *Weight Loss Made a Bit Easier*. My philosophy is that in lieu of “counting calories” or any other numeric data such as grams of fat or carbs, it is more realistic and ultimately more advantageous to track matters of awareness as they apply to eating, exercise, and emotions. Once that awareness is fully cultivated, weight loss will occur naturally and automatically on its own, and will be consistent and permanent.

## **WHY THIS BOOK DOES NOT INCLUDE THE MEANS OF TRACKING CURRENT BODY WEIGHT**

Our modern society robs us of the credit that we deserve. You live in your own skin “24/7/365.” You do not need a scale to tell you whether or not you are losing weight. You will know based on the way you look, the way your clothes fit, and your overall level of energy and fitness.

## HOW THIS BOOK IS ORGANIZED

This book provides the means to record six months' worth of daily log entries. The following chapter explains the significance of the abbreviations used, as well as the significance of the various fields. After every seven daily entries, there is a self-explanatory weekly self-assessment to complete. As with the rest of the book, its purpose is to help you cultivate awareness, and to get you to think about your eating, exercise, emotions, and other aspects of weight loss.

After every 28 daily entries, there is a monthly self-assessment. It is similar to the weekly ones, but is broader in scope, and asks you to evaluate how your clothes are fitting, as well as your overall level of energy and fitness.

The book concludes with a semi-annual self-assessment to help you set goals for the next six-months. Remember, weight loss and maintenance is an ongoing effort, but eventually will become automatic and second nature, and you will not need to keep detailed records, if any.

## IN CLOSING: YOU CAN LOSE WEIGHT

You can lose weight. You can lose weight even if you have already “tried everything,” and even if “nothing is working” since you may not have tried an approach such as this and the main book. I’m a regular person just like you, and if I can lose weight, so can you.

# Completing the Journal Entries and Self-Assessments

## COMPLETE AN ENTRY EVERY DAY

To obtain the maximum benefit from this book, it is important to complete a journal entry every day, even if you had a “cheat day,” or you “messed up,” or several days passed, and you can’t fully remember everything that took place.

## A REMINDER TO FIRST READ THE MAIN BOOK

These instructions only provide a brief overview and background for using the journal. To put everything in context, it is important to first read the main book as previously described. Again, it can be read for free online.

## THE FIRST FEW LINES

Begin each journal entry by entering the date. Enter your *Wakeup* time as the time that you actually got out of bed. Enter a few words to describe the level of *Motivation/Focus* that you woke up with, as it applies to healthy eating and exercise. Enter a short description of your *Goals for the Day* as applied to eating, exercise, and emotional control.

It is suggested to start each day with a brief stretching/yoga routine. Use the *Stretching* field to check off if you did so, or to enter how much time you spent or other brief note.

Use the *Strengthening* and *Cardio* fields throughout the day to document your efforts in those areas. The main book defines *Strengthening* as exercises which are specifically intended to build muscles. Push-ups, sit-ups, and squats in some form are quick, simple, and practical examples. The main book defines *Cardio* as any activity that gets your heart distinctly pumping for at least five consecutive minutes. An example is a brisk walk while pumping your arms, or marching in place at a rapid pace while pumping your arms in the air.

The main book discusses *Meditation/Breathing* (Awareness) as it applies to weight loss. Use the field to check off if you did such, or to enter the time you spent or other brief note.

## DOCUMENTING YOUR MEALS AND SNACKS

Each daily entry provides room to log six *Eating* sessions. It is ideal to eat five or six times per day, two to four hours apart, with each session comprised of a small, portion-controlled combination of healthy food choices. If you eat less than six times in a given day, the last eating session should be logged in the bottommost *Last Eating* field.

For each *Eating*, begin by noting the time you started, followed by a short, abbreviated description of what you ate. At first, just enter very broad and general descriptions. Later, try to add some more details. Use the expanded *Notes* field as needed. In any case, do not omit anything eaten, even if it seems insignificant, or if you would prefer to forget about it.

Each *Eating* entry includes several other fields to complete, each on a scale of 1-10. *FL* stands for *Fullness Level*. Use 10 if you have the feeling that you can't eat any more. Use 10+ if you ate so much that you feel uncomfortable, and wish you had eaten less. Use 5 to imply a balanced feeling, meaning that you "could" eat, but would feel content if you didn't. Use 1 if your stomach is consistently growling, and you are truly having a hard time walking and thinking straight. You won't be coming anywhere near that, though, and even if you did, you are not even remotely close to dying, so don't worry.

### **MORE ABOUT FULLNESS LEVEL (FL)**

For each meal, you will be noting your FL before you start eating, as well as 20 minutes after you have finished. As a goal, it is ideal to eat when you have an FL of 3 or 4, and ideal for your FL to be 7 or 8 twenty minutes after you have finished eating. Don't assess your post-meal FL before 20 minutes have elapsed since it takes time to accurately register fullness. This often results in the FL10+ feeling described. If you eat very slowly and mindfully, you may be able to make your assessment 10 to 15 minutes after eating.

It is important to understand that your concept of FL as well as your ability to accurately assess it will improve with practice over time. For example, what you are now calling FL3 you may someday realize is really FL6. Doing meditation and breathing exercises will improve your awareness of such.

After noting your pre- and post-meal FLs, assess your *Food Choice*, *Portion*, and the extent to which you were *Calm/Aware* while eating. Use a scale of 1-10 for each, with 10 being the best or most optimal based on your goals and your pre-/post-meal FLs for the particular *Eating* session. For example, if your *FL(Pre)* was 3, and your *FL(20 after)* was 7, you would probably give yourself a *Portion* score of 9 or 10—you obviously chose an appropriately sized portion. You would give yourself a lower score if your FL went up to 4 (i.e., too little), or if it went up to 10 (i.e., too much). Rate your *Food Choice* based on how healthy your choices were, remembering that your concept of such will change and improve over time.

Note that for your *Last Eating* of the day, there is an additional field called *Hrs. Until Bed*. At the end of the day, note how many hours elapsed between the time you finished eating and the time you went into bed, even if it took a while before you actually fell asleep. The ideal figure for this field is at least three hours, so make that a long-term goal.

In addition to logging your food intake, there is also a field to log your *Water* consumption. Consider using a tick-mark for each 8 oz. of water you drink. There is also a field to note any *Alcohol* consumed. Consider using a tick-mark for each drink you have. A drink is defined as 12 oz. of beer, 5 oz. of wine, or 1.5 oz. of 80-proof liquor. If you are going to drink alcohol, avoid sugary mixed drinks, be conservative, and measure your consumption carefully. Alcohol stunts weight loss, but it can be a component of socialization, and may have the benefit of reducing stress. Find your own balance.

There is a field to give yourself a score (1-10) for how *Active* you were in general each day. Try to be as honest as you can, keeping in mind that your concept of activeness will change over time. There is also a field to give yourself a score (1-10) for how *Independent* you were each day, as far as the extent to which you made your own food and exercise choices. It is very common to make decisions based on the (negative) influence of others. Use the *Bedtime* field to note the time that you got into bed, regardless of when you actually fell asleep.

There is an expanded field for *Notes* to use as desired, and a field to record *Moods/Stress*. There is also a field to document any *Support/Sabotage* that you may have experienced during the day, with the latter unfortunately being common.

Complete each entry by self-evaluating the extent to which you achieved your goals for the day. Enter an *Accuracy* score from 1-10 based on whether you fibbed or forgot any information. Finally, give yourself a *Self Score* from 1-10 based on how you feel you did for the day overall. Again, keep in mind that your concept of such will change over time.

Don't skip over the weekly, monthly, and semi-annual self-assessments which are intended to get you to think about your weight loss efforts. If I can lose weight, you can too! ☺