FREE BOOK SAMPLE

CUT THE CRAP

A Sustainable System to Cut Through the Noise,
Lose the Fat, and Keep It Off

LUCAS HEFFNER



FOREWORD

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Foreword

Before I ask you to listen to anything I have to say, I think you deserve to know why I wrote this book—and why I'm worth listening to.

I am not someone who has always been lean, disciplined, or naturally gifted when it comes to health. I spent much of my life overweight. I believed I had bad genetics. I tried extreme approaches, lost weight, regained it, blamed myself, and wondered whether lasting change was possible for someone like me.

If any part of that sounds familiar, that is exactly why I believe we can understand each other.

During Army basic training, I lost fifty-five pounds in twelve weeks. The environment forced me to change, so my body changed. But I did not yet understand how to create that change for myself. When the environment went away, many of the results eventually went with it.

I didn't know at the time how valuable that experience would become—or how vital a different headspace would be to making the change permanent.

Years later, I lost more than 140 pounds over the course of about three years and went from approximately 44 percent body fat to about 17 percent. This time was different. No one forced me to do it. I did not depend on a temporary environment or follow an approach I could never maintain.

It was not fast, and that was never the point. I was not trying to win a race to a lower number on the scale. I was trying to build a way of living that I could keep.

I changed the system inside my own head.

I did not make this transformation because I had every advantage. I grew up surrounded by the same family recipes, celebrations, temptations, and deeply established habits that many people do. Healthy eating was not automatically built into my environment, and changing my life meant pushing against patterns that had always felt normal.

In fact, I remember thinking as a teenager how unfair it was that all my friends seemed healthy and trim while I seemed to pay the price for eating the same foods they did. At the time, it felt like evidence that I had simply been dealt a worse hand.

I am just a normal guy with suboptimal genetics who likes to learn. What I do have is the unusual experience of losing the weight the wrong way and watching the results disappear, then losing it the right way and making the results permanent.

I paid careful attention to what was different.

No one handed me these lessons. I built them through experimentation—through trial and error on myself. I studied my successes, my failures, the decisions I could sustain, and the approaches that worked only temporarily.

In many ways, I learned by touching the hot stove. I tried the extreme approaches, experienced the temporary results, regained the weight, and felt the consequences for myself. Then I paid careful attention while building an approach that produced permanent change.

These are the lessons I wish I had known when I started. They would have saved me time, prevented unnecessary

frustration, and made my journey much easier. I am sharing them because I don't want you to burn yourself on the hot stove the way I did while struggling to figure out how to build and maintain a healthy life.

The book itself started much more simply. Friends kept stopping me and asking some version of the same question: "How did you lose all that weight? What changed? What habits did you build? Can you share your recipes?" The first few times, I tried to spill everything I had learned into a five-minute conversation—often after church or over a lunch meeting with a customer at work. I quickly realized there was no honest five-minute answer. I was much better at collecting the lessons as they came to me and writing them down than trying to regurgitate years of learning in the hallway. Eventually I thought: the next time someone asks me "How?", I want to be able to hand them the complete answer. That is how this book was born.

Along the way, I continued studying nutrition, became a Certified Nutrition Coach, and began helping other people apply these principles to their own lives. I do not mention that because I believe I know everything. In fact, the older I get, the more I realize how little I know. The tip of the iceberg I have uncovered seems to represent a smaller and smaller percentage of everything that remains beneath the surface. I mention it so you know that the lessons in this book were built from lived experience, careful observation, continued study, and work with people facing many of the same struggles.

I have no authority over you, and I do not want it. Your body, your health, and your decisions belong to you. I am not standing above you. I am standing beside you, offering the information I gathered from traveling this road and taking careful notes along the way.

This book is a love letter to anyone who has struggled with weight, confidence, energy, or the fear that lasting change may not be possible for them—because I've been there too.

I will teach you everything you need to know to build a healthier life you can actually sustain. I will explain the lessons clearly, honestly, and practically. What you choose to do with that information will always remain yours.

I am not going to hand you another temporary diet. I am not going to ask you to eliminate every food you enjoy, purchase an expensive program, or organize your life around someone else's system forever. I want to help you understand the principles well enough to build your own system.

You will learn how your body uses energy, how to set meaningful targets, how to protect your muscle, how to rebuild the foods you love, and how to make decisions that move you toward your goals without surrendering your freedom.

I did not write this book to make you dependent on me.

I wrote it so that someday you can look at the body, health, habits, and life you have created and say:

I built this.

You do not need another promise of a shortcut. You need the truth, practical tools, and enough evidence to begin believing in your own ability to change. That is what I hope to give you.

A GLIMPSE INSIDE

Every food decision is a tradeoff



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WHAT IS A MYTH CHECK?

Cut the Crap includes 20 Myth Checks. Each one takes a familiar nutrition or weight-loss claim, explains why people believe it, separates what is true from what is misleading, and ends with practical marching orders you can use.

MYTH CHECK SAMPLE

One complete example from the book

THE MYTH: I lost weight while doing this, so this must be the reason I lost weight.

WHY PEOPLE BELIEVE IT: Personal experience is powerful. If the scale finally moves after you start keto, fasting, cutting sugar, avoiding bread, eating only during certain hours, drinking a particular shake, or following any other rule, it is natural to credit the most visible new behavior.

THE TRUTH: Correlation is not causation. A result and its mechanism are not automatically the same thing. Many very different diets can produce weight loss because they change total energy intake, energy expenditure, adherence, or some combination of those factors. Two people can lose weight using completely opposite food rules. The shared mechanism may be simpler than either person realizes.

THE PART THAT IS TRUE: The strategy may have genuinely helped you. A particular rule can reduce hunger, simplify decisions, remove foods you tend to overeat, create structure, or make a calorie deficit easier to sustain. That makes it a useful tool for you. It does not prove that the rule is a universal biological requirement.

YOUR MARCHING ORDERS: When something works, ask a second question: Why did it work? Separate the tool from the mechanism. Keep useful strategies, but do not turn your personal experience into a law that everybody else must follow.

“This worked for me” can start a conversation. It cannot settle the mechanism.

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