



MY LIGHTBULB MOMENT

8 PROMINENT HEALTH PRACTITIONERS SHINE A LIGHT ON
THE DAWN OF THEIR TRANSFORMATION—AND BEYOND

ESTI ASHER

Title: Registered Dietitian Nutritionist

Location: Israel

Age: 34

Something interesting you probably didn't know about me: I am a trained and experienced medical clown!

Esti Asher is passionate about helping women reach their ultimate health and wellbeing potential; she shares credible, clear, and inspiring nutrition information with women via her virtual private practice.



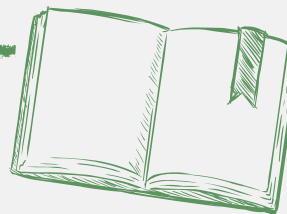
RABBI ELI GLASER

Title: CNWC, CWMS

Location: Lakewood, New Jersey

Something interesting you probably didn't know about me: I'm a former kiruv rabbi and current marathon runner.

Founder and director of the Soveya Weight-Loss Solution and an internationally recognized expert in the field of sustainable weight loss and behavioral change, Rabbi Glaser has been an executive coach and nutritionist for the past 20 years, as well as maintaining a 130-pound weight loss during that time. He is the author of the best-selling book, Enough Is Enough: How the Soveya Solution Is Revolutionizing the Diet and Weight-Loss World.



LAURA SHAMMAH

Title: Registered Dietitian

Location: Brooklyn, New York

Age: 48 and proud and blessed with every year

Something interesting you probably didn't know about me: I love chocolate. Vegetables are like candy to me; I love all vegetables.

Laura Shammah specializes in eating disorders but her clientele includes people dealing with hypertension, high cholesterol, PCOS, infertility, Crohn's, diabetes, or cancer. She also helps clients who run in marathons, are pregnant, or who are looking to lose or gain weight in a healthy way. Laura has a unique ability to relate to each and every client and help them reach their goals and acquire a healthy body and a healthy mind.



YECHIEL YEHUDA SCHRADER



Title: Certified Classical Homeopath (CCH)

Location: Lakewood, New Jersey

Age: 46

Something interesting you probably didn't know about me: Each person I've worked with is clearly engraved in my memory. When I take a case I study it carefully. I try to understand the person in terms of their physical issues as well as the mental and emotional challenges. I also look closely at the relationship between all these different details. This process for me is analogous to when I study a pasuk or a sugya in depth.

Yechiel Schrader delights in studying Hashem's Torah and the ways His infinite wisdom is expressed in our world in general and specifically in the art of healing.

SHAINDY OBERLANDER



Title: Integrative Nutrition Health Coach

Location: Toms River, New Jersey

Age: 33

Something interesting you probably didn't know about me: I recently decided to indulge in some self-care and signed up for guitar lessons.

Shaindy Oberlander, a graduate from Mercy college and IIN, runs her private nutrition practice in Toms River, New Jersey and caters to women on all continents, remotely.

BINA GOTTDIENER



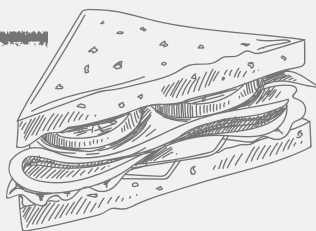
Title: CN, CHC

Location: Eretz Yisrael

Something interesting you probably didn't know about me: My dream to be a doctor, then a biological researcher, morphed into nutrition!

Bina Gottdiener is a certified nutritionist and health coach. She loves helping women feel their absolute best through personal counseling and her Healthy Minds, Healthy Bodies nutrition groups. Her focus is on practical, sustainable nutrition with a super positive attitude.

SHANI TAUB



Title: CDC

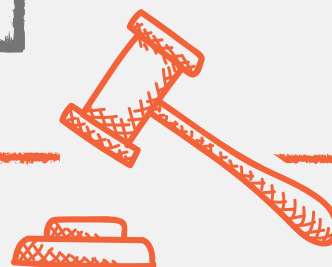
Location: Lakewood, New Jersey

Age: 40

Something interesting you probably didn't know about me: Although I am currently thin, if I deviate from my plan, I gain weight easily. I understand the struggle! I enjoy eating, but I enjoy being healthy more.

Shani Taub, CDC, has been practicing as a certified nutritionist in Lakewood for almost a decade, meeting with clients in person and on the phone. She also owns the highly popular Shani Taub food line, which carries healthy, approved, pre-measured foods and delicacies sold at supermarkets and restaurants.

TANYA ROSEN



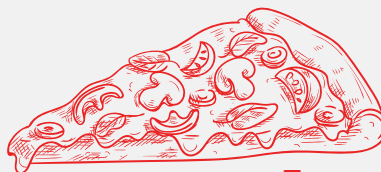
Title: Founder and Owner of Nutrition by Tanya

Location: Tristate Area, and all over the world

Something interesting you probably didn't know about me: Throughout my entire childhood, I always thought I would be a lawyer. I used to practice litigation on my dolls and later on with my friends.

Tanya Rosen went from law to exercise to nutrition—to just about everything healthy, delicious, and sustainable through her practice at Nutrition by Tanya.

GILA GLASSBERG



Title: MS, RDN, CDN, Certified Intuitive Eating Counselor

Location: Woodmere, New York

Age: 33

Something interesting you probably didn't know about me: I am the fourth of nine kids; I have five sisters and three brothers. I grew up in a town that had zero kosher restaurants. I started teaching nutrition/Intuitive Eating to high schoolers this year.

Gila Glassberg is a masters' level registered dietitian, on a mission to help women heal their relationship with food, and ultimately heal their relationship with themselves.

1 FIRST, TELL US ABOUT YOUR LIGHTBULB MOMENT.

ESTI ASHER

I didn't have a particular lightbulb moment; rather a gradual and natural shift toward an awareness of and interest in what I was eating and how it was affecting my body. My earliest memory of really having an interest in nutrition was in eighth grade. I was so fascinated and intrigued by the incredible body (and science/biology) Hashem gifted to us. However, a lightbulb moment I experienced relatively recently, occurred when I was reflecting on how sensitive I am by nature; I realized that it is this exact sensitivity that enables me to empathize with and support my clients in a particularly kind, thoughtful, and unique way.

YECHIEL SCHRADER

During my elementary school years, I experienced difficulties with learning. Around the age of bar mitzvah, it was particularly hard for me to study and do well in school. I had many other challenges outside of academics as well. I felt that something was getting in the way of my success, but I didn't know what it was. I was sitting in my father's study, which was filled with *sefarim* I felt a deep yearning to learn from, yet these subjects were so difficult. That night I had to daven without a minyan in that study. When I was davening *Shemoneh Esreh*, I reached the blessing of "*Atah chonen l'adam da'as*." Tears rolled down my cheeks, and the sobbing emanated from deep within my heart. I asked Hashem to help me be able to learn and understand Torah. I can't say that things changed immediately, but I felt then—and I feel to this day—that this was a turning point in my life. For me, that moment marked the root of my ability to learn and understand, as well as to help others.

RABBI ELI GLASER

It hit me, of all places, in the dressing room of a Target department store in August of 2002. In a few days I would be flying to Israel, and I simply couldn't stomach the thought of sitting so long in what was for me a very cramped airplane seat, with slacks that were popping at the seams and wearing out in all the wrong places.

For years I was convinced I would lose the weight and therefore rarely bought clothes that fit my actual girth. I deluded myself into thinking I could buy the size I thought I should be and that would induce me to slim down into them. It never worked. As my weight increased over time, my wardrobe was usually one size behind.

This time, however, I decided to face my reality and went for a pair of size 44 pants. I had been a 34-waist for my wedding eight years earlier and had been busting out of 42s for the previous few hard-headed years before taking the fateful trip to Target. There I was, sitting on the bench in the dressing room staring at a pair of 30-dollar khakis. I held them up, one hand on either end of the waist band, spreading my arms wider and wider apart, amazed at how much fabric it took to wrap around my 300-pound body. I kept staring and staring. I wasn't angry or resentful. There was no disgust or self-ridicule. Rather, a calming wave of acceptance and purpose engulfed me—serenity and certainty at the same time. It wasn't about trying to find the newest diet or most rigid workout routine. I had been there and done all that.

Sitting there with the slacks in my hands, I felt the vast separation between my head and heart finally come together. For the previous half year, I had realized intellectually that I needed to make a wholesale change in myself, in my coping mechanisms with life and obsession with self-indulgence. Despite all the time, money, and energy—the sweat equity I'd invested in trying to work off the weight—I was too intimidated to really go "all in." That was the irony of it all. I went to great lengths not to go to any lengths.

I was grasping at external solutions for an internal problem. That's why I could never get a grip. I hung on to the last rays of hope that I could somehow find the magic formula or quick fix to change my body instead of changing myself. I had a palpable fear of feeling restricted and deprived. I was enslaved by my "right" to indulge. Saying no to my urge to eat felt like a colossal confrontation from which I cowered. I was handicapped by my irrationality, living in the lie that only with excess food would I be sufficiently satisfied.

On an otherwise ordinary summer day, however, I accepted the challenge of unconditional honesty. I felt at ease and emotionally prepared to do whatever it took to change my relationship with food—not just to try and lose weight. I was ready to say no.

BINA GOTTDIENER

Rather than define a specific lightbulb moment, I can attribute all that inspiration to my mother, who is the most positive person I know. She instilled in us a love for Hashem's world, including His nutritious creations. She always spoke about "Hashem's candy store" and how food is meant to fuel our bodies so we can accomplish great things. When we came home from school, there was always a fruit and vegetable platter waiting for us, along with many nutritious options at meals and in the house. Simultaneously, we never felt deprived or restricted. We always had plenty of yummy treats and homemade baked goods. My mother is a phenomenal cook with a super proactive approach that inspires me until today, in my own nutrition practice. She taught us to love healthy food rather than avoid less nutritious items. The words "toxic," "poison," and "garbage" were just not in her vernacular. In fact, my friends loved coming over to eat because everything was so beyond delicious!

GILA GLASSBERG

My "lightbulb" moment was a culmination of a few incidents. I'd long nurtured a dream of becoming a dietitian but felt discouraged when I realized how much science was involved. Still, I pushed myself to do it, only to realize that it wasn't all it was cranked up to be and that I was now stuck for life (or so I thought!). I wanted to quit my job but feared I would never be able to run my own business.

At the same time, I was introduced to various powerful self-help approaches and to the incredible guidance of Mrs. Perl Abramowitz-Klein. I very much wanted to see her privately, but again, I convinced myself that it was irresponsible to spend the money for a private session. The more I heard Perl speak, the more I realized how much I was victimizing myself. I had so much work to do to surrender to Hashem. One of the main lessons Perl taught me was that if you really need something, Hashem will give you the money for it.

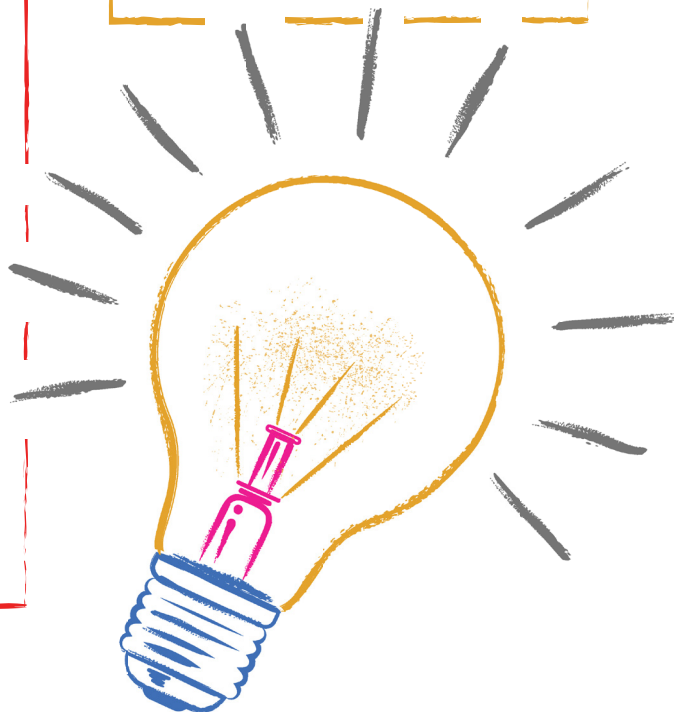
I started letting go a little bit. I started trusting my husband more. I started trusting myself more. I started trusting Hashem more. Just actually letting go and letting G-d. This was the hardest thing for me. As someone who likes to be in control, and struggles with anxiety, it was so painful and yet so freeing.

After finally making the commitment to pay Perl, to drive the long trip from Woodmere to Boro Park, that is when my life started to change. I remember her telling me, "If you can't find a better job by Pesach, can you just quit?" My heart began to race. *How irresponsible that would be; I have a family to feed!* But as we discussed further, I realized how miserable my job was making me and how unhealthy I was emotionally.

I took the plunge. I quit my job. I did the Intuitive Eating training. Eventually, I started my own practice. I was met with a lot of resistance from a lot of people, but I pushed through and continued to challenge beliefs that had really just been hurting me.

SHAINDY OBERLANDER

After battling with intense stomach pain for a while, I was diagnosed by a top GI at NYU with Crohn's disease. I was not ready to accept his diagnosis; I felt there was more to this story. My GI wanted me to go for one more colonoscopy to confirm my diagnosis, but my gut instinct pushed me to first explore alternative options before accepting my diagnosis. That was the impetus that led me to enroll in nutrition school. The rest is history.





SHANI TAUB

As a young child, I was very overweight. I loved eating—and I still do! My mother often encouraged me to see a nutritionist and learn to eat in a balanced and healthy way.

At the age of 13, I finally decided that weight loss was important to me. I wanted to feel good! From my own desire to do this, I started seeing a nutritionist and ended up being her prize client. She taught me skills that I've been practicing since then, and I've been feeling so good about them, *baruch Hashem*.

TANYA ROSEN

I got married and gave birth to my first child while taking the LSATs and applying to law schools. During that pregnancy, I gained 50 pounds. It didn't bother me so much until I went shopping with a friend who pointed out my new size. It was that realization that sparked the decision: I wanted to lose weight. I started eating healthy and exercising a bit, and took some exercise classes here and there. I really liked the results and I continued to lose weight and reach a healthy balance.

LAURA SHAMMAH

I've always been interested in the body and how food affects it since I was in elementary school. I didn't have any big moment or a realization; I just knew I wanted to know more about how the body works.

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2 HOW WOULD YOU DEFINE A “HEALTHY” LIFESTYLE—THE ONE YOU’RE TRYING TO LIVE NOW?

LAURA SHAMMAH

Healthy to me means balanced in every area of life. Healthy to me means calm. Healthy to me means a happy mind and body. Healthy is consistency.

ESTI ASHER

This may sound cliché, but I believe that a healthy lifestyle is very much connected to our mindset. There are many different variables and factors that contribute toward our overall health, and it is so important to feel that our choices are coming from a balanced, empowered, positive, and self-loving place. In my humble opinion, we would be completely missing the point of the beautiful gift of life Hashem has granted us all with if we spend too much time, energy and headspace being hyper-focused on categorizing food as “good/bad,” “allowed/restricted,” etc., and limiting ourselves to a restrictive set of rules for the sake of being “healthy.” While it is important to fulfill the mitzvah of “*venishmartem me’od es nafshoseichem*” and take care of ourselves, at the same time, we were given taste buds for a reason—to enjoy our food! We have delicious memories and traditions connected to different times of the Jewish year, and we use food as part of our *oneg Shabbos* and *simchas Yom Tov*. Therefore, from my perspective, it is essential to include an overall positive mindset, in addition to balance and flexibility, within the definition of a healthy lifestyle.

BINA GOTTDIENER

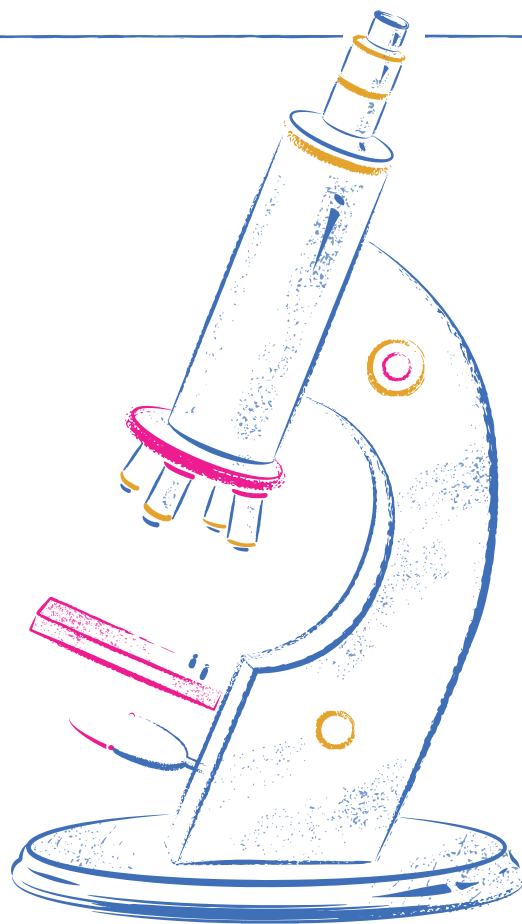
I define a healthy lifestyle as taught by my mother: a balanced, positive approach toward food. A heavier emphasis on the “*aseh tov*” portion of nutrition, rather than the “*sur mei’ra*,” and focusing on all the positive things we *can* do to foster our best health yet. In addition, I believe an important portion of nutrition is our attitude. We are valuable treasures who deserve to be fueled with foods that help us feel great. We never deserve to feel deprived, restricted, or guilty when it comes to our eating habits. Rather, like all areas in life, we should feel empowered that we can always choose to make great choices to elevate ourselves.

RABBI ELI GLASER

Eating to live, not living to eat. Using food to fuel my day and optimize my health in order to maximize the opportunities Hashem gives me each day.

YECHIEL SCHRADER

A healthy lifestyle is one that enables one to be who they are, to actualize their potential, and to serve Hashem happily, free of pain and discomfort.



GILA GLASSBERG

I think of health as a pie chart that contains multiple categories: physical, emotional, spiritual, financial, relational, and familial—all aspects of my life. That wheel has to be balanced in order to move properly. I used to think health was eating well and exercising. I've expanded my view of health now. I check in with myself when something feels off balance and notice where I need some help. To me, that is health. It's paying attention to all aspects of our life and giving proper attention to each thing so that we feel at peace with ourselves. As motivational speaker Charlene Aminoff says, "Hashem wants you to stretch, not stress." Keeping this in mind helps me a lot.

SHAINDY OBERLANDER

Balance. I really learned to listen to my body's whispers before it needs to scream. "Healthy" is to respect my body, but to do so in a very normal and non-restrictive way. I try to run my home the same way. On Rosh Chodesh Kislev, my kids came home from school to a platter of cut-up vegetables and a platter of donuts. It is my fervent hope that by personally living a balanced life, my children will imbibe it by osmosis.

TANYA ROSEN

My healthy lifestyle includes practices I implemented years ago, when I first made the change. To this day, I still write down what I eat and I'm mindful of when I eat more than my body needs. I work out, and I make up for when I can't manage to work out according to my set routine. I love living my healthy lifestyle and I'm fulfilled because healthy doesn't mean deprived.

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3 WHAT HAS BEEN YOUR MOST MAJOR CHANGE IN YOUR QUEST TO PURSUE THIS LIFESTYLE?

ESTI ASHER

One of the greatest aspects of my approach to nutrition—keeping in mind the positive mindset combined with balance and flexibility I mentioned previously—is that no major change is necessary in order to pursue a healthy lifestyle. When I meet with clients, I explain in very simple terms how the different foods we eat affect our body, and we can then use this knowledge to be strategic and intentional about what food we eat and when we eat it. I share that our food choices either bring us closer to our goals or may make it take longer for us to reach our goals, but both choices are celebrated and supported because they come from an empowered and proactive place. With this foundation and context in mind, “major” changes don’t take place; rather, gradual and intentional food choices and habits ease their way into a lifestyle that will *be’ezer Hashem* ultimately result in success in many areas.

RABBI ELI GLASER

Transforming the way I think, feel, and act with food. Using it for the purpose Hashem intended—not to merely pursue the next indulgence.

LAURA SHAMMAH

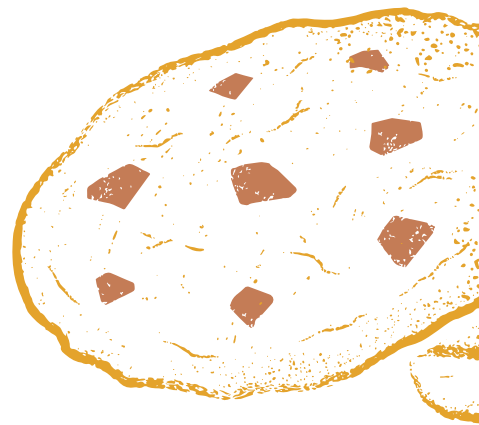
I stopped labeling foods as good or bad. I eat what makes me feel good, in moderation.

GILA GLASSBERG

In the beginning, it was supremely challenging to feel confident enough to run a business on many levels. I had to learn the skill of counseling. I had to learn so much about Intuitive Eating and how to actually implement the principles. I also felt so much resistance from so many areas. Some people just didn’t understand. Many people thought it would be best to stay safe at a nine-to-five job even though I was miserable. Or they thought, “Why not stick to weight loss? That’s what sells.” So I found myself doubting my decisions many times over.

YECHIEL SCHRADER

The most major change was being able to let go of things that seemed pleasurable but were not good for me.



BINA GOTTDIENER

My major change was when I began my own home and realized the work healthy eating entails. I took a large part of that for granted when growing up. I realized that if healthy eating is something I want to maintain for life, I have to work to make it doable and sustainable no matter what's going on.

SHAINDY OBERLANDER

Staying away from sugar and processed foods. I also learned to honor my body and eat until I feel 80 percent full. Additionally, I made it my lifestyle not to eat after 7:00 p.m. This has been game-changing. Not eating all night helps my body replenish, restore, and metabolize all nutrients efficiently.

TANYA ROSEN

Letting go of all my preconceived notions about health, nutrition, and food.



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4 INITIALLY, WHAT DID YOU FIND CHALLENGING ABOUT MAKING THE CHANGE?

ESTI ASHER

Of course, even when approaches are flexible, balanced, and sustainable, challenges may arise. One area that was more challenging for me was being intentional about the timing of my meals and snacks (i.e., when I would most benefit from my food as fuel, as opposed to when there was quiet and it was most “convenient”).

RABBI ELI GLASER

That, tragically, this is such a foreign concept in today’s *frum* world, in theory and certainly in practice.

YECHIEL SCHRADER

Most challenging was overcoming the years of bad habits.

LAURA SHAMMAH

Since I’ve always been a healthier eater, I never experienced a major change with regard to my food choices. For me, the change was more in my mind. I became more relaxed knowing all foods are good as long as I consumed them in moderation. Not labeling foods has helped me and many of my clients live a healthy lifestyle.

BINA GOTTDIENER

The most challenging part was learning how to give up on the labor-intensive aspects of healthy eating and finding all the shortcuts to make it happen. When I first got married, meal planning, prep, and shopping took so long. Over the years, systems fell into place and things got more efficient and easier. But of course, it’s always a work in progress!

TANYA ROSEN

Any transition in life can be difficult, but I made sure to remember my wants, needs, and goals that would allow me to become successful in all aspects of my life.

GILA GLASSBERG

I had to push myself so far outside of my “safe” comfort zone. For example, I had a profound fear of public speaking, but I really wanted to be able to do it. I felt handicapped.

SHAINDY OBERLANDER

Until the body does not break free from the craving for sugar, we feel like life cannot go on without it. However, once the body does break free and no longer craves sugar, we’re unshackled from its chains. I loved sour sticks and craved them badly. I had to quit sour sticks cold turkey. I am proud to say that I have not touched a sour stick in a few years now.

5 HOW DID OR DO YOU HANDLE THIS CHALLENGE?

ESTI ASHER

One tool I absolutely love to use with myself and my clients (it definitely takes time and energy, but it is well worth it) is keeping a food journal. I recommend my clients not only write down everything they eat and drink throughout the day but also take other notes so they can notice patterns that come up that may be connected to different variables, and they can then look back and analyze these. This makes our process of reaching goals and achieving that “healthy lifestyle” more efficient and individualized.

YECHIEL SCHRADER

Since for me the positive change was refraining from self-sabotaging behaviors, I would tell myself, “Just be lazy. The only thing you have to do is not to do.”

GILA GLASSBERG

Hashem blessed me with a lot of conviction. I read a book called *Feel the Fear and Do It Anyway*, and I just kept repeating to myself, “You can do hard things.” To be honest, sometimes I did feel defeated. In the beginning, when I wasn’t getting as many calls as I would have liked, I felt really dejected. But I realized that this whole process was just furthering my ability to push myself. I read so many self-help books that really helped change my perspective about challenges. I tried to re-program my brain to think “Challenges are good, they are opportunities.” I wrote notes to myself all over my bedroom wall, with affirmations like, “You can do it,” or “Hashem is in charge.” Every time I speak publicly, I still post the slogans on my bedroom wall beforehand to remind myself that I can do it.

RABBI ELI GLASER

With consistent reinforcement that this is Hashem’s will for all of us. Attempting to overcome our desire for pursuing immediate gratification and indulgence is the primary test of the generation preceding Mashiach, according to the *Sifri* as well as many other *mefarshai Torah*.

LAURA SHAMMAH

I stopped looking at food labels and nutrition facts and started to listen to my body and how it felt with certain foods. Did chocolate make me feel good? Did kale make me feel good? Did eggplant bloat me? I realized that eating what made me feel good in moderation was my answer.

BINA GOTTDIENER

Planning, planning, planning! I tell this to my clients all the time. A minimal investment in advance helps us sail through the week feeling positive and empowered to make great choices. It generally doesn’t take more than 5–10 minutes to roughly plan how we want our week to look. Of course, life doesn’t always go as expected. But when we have loose plans in place, we feel so much calmer about unexpected circumstances.

TANYA ROSEN

I stuck to and continue to stick to the guidelines I created—the same guidelines that for over 14 years now have been part of the lives of the thousands of people we have helped.

SHAINDY OBERLANDER

Time. Balance. Alternative natural sugars. I’m also a big believer in making meals look pleasing to the eye. Boring leads to burnout; change in your meal options is very important.

6 WHAT ARE THE RESULTS OF YOUR CHANGE?

ESTI ASHER

There are many results of these changes that I see within myself and within the many women I work with. Examples include increased energy (to keep up with children, manage house-cleaning, and accomplish daily tasks), feeling lighter and more productive, improved blood values, being able to manage more easily during fast days, role modeling healthy eating (and therefore seeing children make more balanced choices), and weight loss when that is a desired goal.

GILA GLASSBERG

The result is my life! I feel that I have balance in myself. I can focus on my physical health—like cooking and eating nutritious food or engaging in joyful movement—but not at the expense of my emotional or spiritual health. For example, I know in the past, if I had an exercise class, I might not have missed it even if a really important *shiur* was taking place at the same time. I now find myself being able to do that more easily. I know that may sound petty to some, but my personality is very rigid. Deviating from my usual schedule is hard. So now I've *baruch Hashem* built up the muscle to push past the anxiety and do the hard things anyway. I also stopped shaming myself for needing certain things to go a specific way. In the past I would find myself thinking, "How can you even think about going to exercise instead of listening to a *shiur*?" I've learned about self-compassion. I've learned to tell myself things like, "This is hard for you. Hashem created your personality this way. It's hard to change your usual schedule, *and* I know you can do it."

SHANI TAUB

I've been maintaining my weight loss for decades *baruch Hashem*, and feeling great.

RABBI ELI GLASER

Maintaining a 130-pound weight loss for more than two decades (without surgery, supplements, or starvation), freedom from food obsession, having the incredible opportunity to help so many people literally save their lives and share in this freedom, and being a vehicle for spiritual growth.

YECHIEL SCHRADER

A great feeling of empowerment.

LAURA SHAMMAH

I feel amazing. I have a healthy outlook and a healthy body.

SHAINDY OBERLANDER

As a human being, I'm far from perfect. The proof is in the pudding. When I eat well and respectfully, I'm a happier camper. I feel lighter on my feet, have a lot more energy, and love how my clothes fit me. On the flip side, when I do not listen to my body, I become physically unwell and see a major shift in my mood. For instance, high-gluten flour is not good for me, so I abstain from eating *challah* on Shabbos. When I do have *challah* on Shabbos, I am physically unwell and am by far not the best version of myself after Shabbos. It is black and white for me.

TANYA ROSEN

A healthy and happy body, mind, and soul.

BINA GOTTDIENER

I love helping others recognize that healthy eating is attainable and sustainable, and sharing all my tips and shortcuts to make that happen.

7 TELL US ABOUT A SURPRISE YOU DIDN'T ANTICIPATE THAT CAME UP ONCE YOU MADE THE CHANGE.

ESTI ASHER

There are usually fun and surprising changes that come up when starting to live a healthier lifestyle. One client shared that with her renewed energy she was now able to mop her whole apartment in one attempt, while beforehand she was only able to handle two rooms at a time. Another client shared how she had a specific line she had always noticed on her face that disappeared (perhaps related to hydration). Others were surprised to notice shifts in their hormones and other functions. So, while we have our initial “why” or “goal,” and it is completely valid, I encourage women to be open-minded and to also recognize the many successes and benefits along the way, even if they are unintentional.

YECHIEL SCHRADER

The improvements in my health were much more dramatic than I would have imagined.

GILA GLASSBERG

Over the years, I have found that this is a real exercise in *emunah* and *bitachon*. I don't have a set salary. I never know how much *parnasah* I will make. Remarkable things have happened the more I let go. For example, I might have a slower month with clients, but that month I'll have a speaking engagement, which is always an awesome opportunity. Or I've had nursing homes reach out to me out of the blue to help them with their menus. Obviously, we all know intellectually that Hashem runs the world and gives us the money we are meant to have. But when your income is different every month, you really see it. It helps me continue to let go, surrender, and try to stay calm.

RABBI ELI GLASER

That the “switch” is actually not as hard as we think.

LAURA SHAMMAH

My current lifestyle of everything in moderation has given me and many clients food freedom with a healthy body, mind, and soul. That's been a nice surprise!

BINA GOTTDIENER

Quite interestingly, I'm surprised again and again by just how great it feels to nourish myself and my family. When we make the effort to eat well, we feel so much better, physically and emotionally!

TANYA ROSEN

I didn't anticipate how easy it would be once this became my actual lifestyle. Now it's just part of my everyday routine and it's the best part, because a healthy lifestyle gives me the energy, focus, motivation, and opportunity to excel at everything else.

SHAINDY OBERLANDER

As much as the body runs with a system, it is unpredictable as well. I can sometimes reintroduce my trigger foods, and I am 100 percent fine, while other times, my reaction is severe. It leaves me baffled. I believe that hormones might be at play in such cases.

8 WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE WELLSRING READERS TO KNOW REGARDING A HEALTHY LIFESTYLE?

ESTI ASHER

The importance of being kind to ourselves—especially in the area of nutrition, where there can very often be a tone of restriction, self-deprivation, and other negative terms or associations. We have good intentions and are trying to take care of ourselves, but sometimes the messages conveyed about nutrition are negative, hurtful, and even false. I feel so sad for individuals hearing and listening to these messages. You are not a “cheater” or “bad” person because of your food choices. You should not punish yourself and make yourself meat before going to a dairy party. If you feel hurt, confused, or skeptical due to what you hear regarding nutrition, trust your instinct and ask questions—don’t follow blindly. Aim to keep your tone positive and kind, and to not lose sight of the big picture. Also, please know that whether you realize it or not, your attitude and perspective on nutrition is likely affecting and leaving an impression on those around you (such as your siblings, children, co-workers, friends, etc.), so there is an added dimension to consider. May you have *hatzlachah* with all your nutrition and health-related endeavors!

GILA GLASSBERG

If I could teach people one thing, it would be not to reduce health to just what they eat and how they exercise. There is so much more to health. I love nutrition and I think it’s fascinating to learn about how the body digests food and how it affects us. But we now know that the more you obsess about that, the worse off you are. Life is too short to spend so much time and head space on dieting. It never gets you the ultimate result you want. I know it’s hard to go against the tide when everyone is dieting and trying to be thin, but this lifestyle is so free. Remember to do your best and let Hashem take care of the rest.

RABBI ELI GLASER

Nothing tastes as good as feeling good feels!

YECHIEL SCHRADER

Never give up hope on your healing. With the power of *tefillah*, putting in your efforts, working on yourself, and then leaving the results up to Hashem, the potential is limitless.

LAURA SHAMMAH

Food doesn’t have a moral compass.

Listen to your body; honor your hunger. If you’re craving a food and want to enjoy it, then know it’s okay to eat your favorite foods in moderation without guilt or judgment. Every single meal doesn’t have to be the most perfect, most nutritious meal of your life. One meal, snack, or food does not define your nutrition status or self-worth.

SHAINDY OBERLANDER

As a woman, and as someone who is blessed to be part of the lives of hundreds *frum* women, I feel that we need to hear more about balance. As Jewish women, we know about *mutar* and *asur*, and black or white. When it comes to weight loss and healthy eating, I think it is also very important to understand the “gray” area. Balance is a hard thing to understand. Maintenance after weight loss is a hard thing to navigate. The healthy balance can be confusing, and I wish we could learn how to veer off track a little bit, respectfully, while also staying on course for the most part.

TANYA ROSEN

I know it’s not always easy. I’ve been there, I’ve struggled, and I fell many times. The best advice I could offer would be to keep trying. It’s never too late to start, and it’s always a great idea to try again.