THE 8-WEEK, 3-STAGE PROGRAM
TO CALM YOUR GUT, REDUCE SYMPTOMS
AND RESTORE YOUR HEALTH

GUT TRANSFORMATION JOURNAL

Your Personal Guide to Lasting Gut Health



REMOVE
Remove what's holding you back

REPLACE
Replace with better foods and habits

REBUILD
Rebuild and thrive for life



PRACTICAL STRATEGIES. SUSTAINABLE HABITS. REAL RESULTS.

ERIC BAKKER, N.D.

The Gut Transformation Journal

Your Step-by-Step Companion to the Lite Guide

An 8-Week, Three-Stage Program to Restore Gut Health, Rebuild Confidence, and Create Lasting Healthy Habits

REMOVE • REPLACE • REBUILD

Eric Bakker, N.D.

Eric Bakker N.D.

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The Gut Transformation Journal

A Companion to the Lite Guide

An 8-Week Guided Journal to Help You Restore Your Gut, Rebuild Your Health, and Create Lasting Wellness

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A Personal Welcome from Eric

Thank You for Inviting Me to Be Part of Your Journey

First of all, thank you…

By opening this journal, you've already taken an important steps on your journey towards better health. You've decided that your health matters, and that it's worth investing your time, effort and attention into creating a healthier future.

For almost 40 years**,** I had the privilege of helping thousands of people overcome digestive and gut health problems. Candida, fungal, and bacterial overgrowth, SIBO, IBS, ulcerative colitis, bloating, constipation, diarrhoea, heartburn, food intolerances, fatigue, brain fog, skin conditions and other chronic health challenges became part of my everyday clinical practice.

For many years I typically saw between seven and ten patients each day, listening to their stories, understanding their struggles, and helping them rebuild their health one step at a time before retiring from full-time clinical practice in 2019.

In 2004, I began to offer online consultations, before the term “telehealth” had entered everyday language. During those years I met and worked with people in almost 60 countries from every walk of life.

I've worked with professional athletes, actors, doctors, surgeons, scientists, academics, CEOs, teachers, pilots, truck drivers, mechanics, police officers, military personnel, students, mothers and fathers trying to care for their families, and people from almost every profession you could think of. I also cared for people living in genuine financial hardship.

Although their lives were very different, I noticed something remarkable. The person's story was often far more important than their actual diagnosis. Long before I considered laboratory tests or treatment plans, I wanted to understand the person sitting in front of me.

- How had they been living?
- What had they been eating?
- Had they taken repeated courses of antibiotics?
- Were they under constant stress?

- How well were they sleeping?
- When did their symptoms actually begin?
- What had changed in their life before they became unwell?

Every answer helped explain another piece of their story. Over time I realised that successful recovery rarely came from finding that one magic pill, one miracle diet or one expensive laboratory test.

It came from understanding the combination of factors that had gradually led someone to where they were, and then helping them patiently rebuild their health, one step at a time.

Today we live in a remarkable age where information is available almost instantly. I used a typewriter and library when I was studying, getting my first computer at the age of 36, and first mobile phone when I was 46. Today, tools such as Chat GPT, have made health information much more accessible than ever before. These technologies are incredibly valuable for learning, understanding medical terms, exploring research and helping people ask better questions.

But information doesn't restore health. Chat GTP can't sit across from you and understand your story. It can't notice the emotion in your voice or see your facial expressions or body language. It can't appreciate the many small details that often explain why one person recovers quickly while another struggles for years.

Thousands of uniquely human conversations taught me over time more than any textbook could. These conversations also shaped everything you'll find in this journal.

Other lessons became equally clear:

- Most people tried far too hard.
- They jumped from one restrictive diet to another.
- They bought cupboard after cupboard of supplements.
- They chased the latest cleanse, detox or miracle protocol.
- They spent thousands of dollars searching for that one missing answer.

Eventually many became discouraged because nothing seemed to work. Looking back now, I realise they weren't failing because they lacked determination. They were simply trying to rebuild their health in the wrong order.

They were fighting their body instead of supporting it, and true recovery rarely comes from doing more. It comes from doing the right things, in the right order, while giving your body the time as well as the conditions it needs to respond. That simple philosophy became the foundation of the 3-stage Lite Program.

Over the next eight weeks, my goal is to help you understand your body with more clarity, improve your digestion and gut function, rebuild your confidence around food and develop habits that support your health for many years to come.

Please... don't worry about being perfect. Perfection has never been the goal.

Consistency is the goal. If you keep showing up, making small improvements and trusting the process, you'll be amazed how much can change over time.

I'm honoured to be part of your journey.

Incipiamus!

Let us begin...

Your Personal Gut Transformation Journal

I'd like to make it clear this isn't simply another workbook, I want it to be your personal health story. Throughout this program I encourage you to print these pages and write in them. Record your thoughts, symptoms, questions, goals, successes and even your setbacks.

Be honest. Nobody else needs to read these pages, not even me. They're just for you. As the weeks pass, you'll probably begin noticing small improvements that are easy to overlook in everyday life.

- Perhaps your bloating becomes a little less frequent.
- Your bowel motions are a little more regular or are better formed.
- You sleep more soundly a few days of the week.
- Your energy is slowly beginning to returning.
- Foods that once caused discomfort gradually become easier to tolerate.

Many of these changes happen *so gradually* that people don't appreciate how far they've come until they look back. They're gold to me, you're *slowly* getting better.

And that's exactly why this journal is important. Whatever you consistently track, you become more aware of. And greater awareness almost always leads to better decisions. And better decision making inevitably results in better health.

Have you noticed our memories are surprisingly unreliable? Particularly when we've been unwell for a long time. This journal gives you something more valuable than memory. It gives you evidence.

Six months from now, I encourage you to take this journal off your bookshelf and read your first few entries. I think you'll be surprised, you'll probably remember how uncertain you felt when you began.

You'll see how your habits changed, how your confidence grew. How many small improvements gradually became major improvements over time.

And who knows, maybe one day this journal may become much more than a workbook. It may become a reminder of the moment you decided to change your life.

So please underline what is important to you personally. **Highlight** it. Write notes in the margins. Circle important ideas. Make it completely your own.

My hope is that years from now you'll open these pages, smile, and quietly say to yourself this: *"That was where everything began, and look at me now"*

The Lite Program at a Glance

Throughout my clinical career I discovered that people recovered best when they followed a logical sequence instead of trying to do everything haphazardly, or all at once. That's exactly how the Lite Program was designed.

Each stage builds naturally upon the one before it. Don't rush ahead. Trust the process.

Stage 1 – REMOVE

Prepare Your Gut for Healing

Healing begins by removing the biggest obstacles standing in your way. I used codes in the margin of a patient's paper file, more about that later in the Remove section.

During the first three weeks you'll gently support healthy bowel function, improve digestion, reduce foods and habits that place unnecessary strain on your digestive system, and begin creating the right conditions for healing to occur.

Think of this stage as clearing the runway before an aircraft takes off. A clean and strong foundation makes everything that follows much easier.

Stage 2 – REPLACE

Restore Digestion and Nourish Your Body

Once your digestive system has been prepared, it's time to restore healthy digestive function. You'll learn how to replace ultra-processed foods with nourishing whole foods while supporting healthy stomach acid, digestive enzymes, bile flow, and beneficial bacteria.

As digestion improves, your body becomes better able to absorb nutrients and restore balance throughout the digestive tract. Food gradually becomes something to enjoy again, not something to fear.

Stage 3 – REBUILD

Create Lifelong Gut Health

The final stage is where everything begins to come together.

You'll strengthen your gut microbiome, improve food confidence, support your intestinal lining and immune system, and develop sustainable habits that help you stay well for years to come.

REBUILD isn't about finishing a program. It's about creating a healthier lifestyle that becomes your new normal.

How to Use This Journal

This journal has been designed to guide you through your recovery one week at a time. Every week contains practical teaching, real patient stories from my clinic, reflections, meal planning, habit trackers and simple exercises to help you apply what you've learned.

To get the most from the program, I'd encourage you to follow these simple principles.

Read the journal in the 3-stage order.

Each stage builds upon the previous one. Resist the temptation to skip ahead. Good results usually come from taking one step at a time.

Write in your journal every day.

Track your meals, bowel function, symptoms, sleep, mood, energy, water intake and anything else you notice. Patterns often become obvious once they're written down.

Make one change at a time.

Avoid changing several things at once. When you improve one habit at a time, you'll have a much better understanding of what's helping and what's not.

Progress—not perfection.

Your health is like the weather. There will be good days. There will also be difficult days. There may be poor days. There will be wonderful days. All normal. Don't judge yourself by one meal or one setback.

Simply return to the next healthy decision. Don't be concerned about falling down. It's the getting-up part that's important.

Support yourself wisely.

If you choose to use digestive enzymes, probiotics, or antimicrobial supplements, I recommend selecting high-quality products that align with the principles taught throughout this program. You may choose to use products from the Yeastrix range, but there is absolutely no obligation to do so. The choice is entirely yours, and you should use whatever products you feel are right for you.

Seek professional advice when appropriate.

If you're taking prescription meds or have a significant medical condition, speak with your healthcare professional before making major dietary or supplement changes.

What's Included

Over the next eight weeks you'll discover:

- A simple three-stage gut restoration program
- Weekly learning sessions
- Daily and weekly habit trackers
- Meal planners
- Water, sleep, exercise and symptom tracking
- Reflection pages
- Clinical stories from my practice
- Practical tips to keep you motivated
- Weekly challenges to help build healthier habits
- Space to record your own journey

This journal is designed to be practical. The more you write, the more valuable it becomes.

What to Expect

One of the most important lessons my patients taught me is this: **Healing takes time.** Please don't expect perfection overnight. Instead, look for steady, consistent progress.

Over the next eight weeks you'll gradually build healthier habits while learning to understand your body in a completely different way.

Weeks 1–3

REMOVE

During the first stage you may notice this:

- More regular bowel function
- Less bloating and digestive discomfort
- Better hydration
- Greater awareness of how food affects you
- Small improvements in energy and wellbeing

For some people these improvements are subtle. For others they're surprisingly noticeable. Both are perfectly normal.

When REMOVE is done properly, your gut becomes calmer, cleaner, and more stable, and ready for the cleansing diet that follows.

Clean the gut, Reduce microbial load, Stop feeding the problem, Identify causes.

Weeks 4–5

REPLACE

As digestion begins improving many people notice:

- More comfortable digestion
- Better energy
- Fewer cravings
- Improved confidence around food
- Better concentration
- A growing feeling that their body is finally working with them instead of against them

Restore digestion, Improve nutrient absorption, Feed the gut, Balance the gut.

Weeks 6–8

REBUILD

The final stage is about creating lasting change.

Many people notice:

- Greater food confidence
- More stable digestion
- Healthier daily routines
- Better resilience
- A renewed sense of wellbeing
- Confidence that they now have the knowledge to continue looking after their gut for years to come

Build microbiome diversity, Strengthen gut barrier, stabilise diet long-term, Integrate lifestyle foundations.

I'd like you to remember that everyone progresses at a different rate. Your personal recovery journey is very unique. Please avoid comparing yourself with anyone else.

Continue Your Gut Health Journey

Your learning doesn't end when this journal does. I've created a free online companion resource centre to support everything you've learned throughout the Lite Program.

By scanning the QR code below you'll have instant access to additional resources on a webpage including:

- The Lite Program email series
- Educational video lessons
- Gut-friendly recipes
- Downloadable guides
- Practical tools and resources
- Program updates
- Educational articles
- Information about practitioner-formulated Yeastrix® products that complement the principles taught throughout this journal

My goal is to continue educating, encouraging and supporting you long after you've completed these eight weeks.



A Final Word Before We Begin

Before we go further, I'd like to leave you with one final thought. Please don't become a cure chaser. I've rarely seen a person rebuild their health because their main focus was on trying to get rid of symptoms or by following the perfect diet.

However, I have seen countless people rebuild their health because they became patient, they stayed consistent and they kept showing up.

Some days you'll eat well. Some days you won't. Some days you'll feel fantastic, while there will be other days you may wonder whether you're making any progress at all. And then there are the days you just want to quit. That's completely normal.

Never let one difficult meal become a difficult week, and never let one setback convince you that you've failed. You'll often discover your recovery is measured by your persistence, determination and discipline.

Every healthy meal. Every walk. Every good night's sleep and healthy decision you make. These are all investments in your healthy future.

Nature has given your body has an ability to heal when it's given the right conditions. However, I've found that a person's ability to heal becomes extraordinary when they give their body extraordinary conditions for this to occur.

My hope is that over the next eight weeks you'll discover just how remarkable that healing response really is. Thank you for allowing me to be part of your journey, I appreciate the trust you place in me.

Eric

Now... Incipiamus!

Welcome to Your Gut Transformation Journey

WEEK 1 of 8 (Lite Guide - up to page 15)

CLEAR THE RUNWAY

Stage 1 - REMOVE

"Healing doesn't begin when you find the right treatment. It begins when you remove what's standing in the way of it."

Greetings, my friend, welcome to REMOVE

You've reached the first stage of your 8-week Gut Health LITE Program.

This is where we begin by looking at what may be getting in the way of your gut working well**.** Before we start adding foods, supplements, probiotics, or other treatment or healing strategies, I want you to pause and take a closer look at what's already happening in your daily life.

- What are you eating?
- How are you eating?
- What are you drinking?
- How well are you sleeping?
- How much stress are you carrying?
- What medications or supplements are you taking?
- And what habits have quietly become part of your routine?

Sometimes the biggest improvements don't come from adding another product or following a more complicated diet plan. They come from identifying a few things that may be working against you and gradually removing them.

REMOVE is about creating space.

Over the next few weeks, we'll look at some of the common obstacles that can interfere with digestion and gut health. Some may be obvious. Others may surprise you.

You won't be asked to change everything overnight. You won't need to follow a perfect diet, and you certainly don't need to become obsessed about food.

Instead, we'll focus on **simple changes that you can realistically maintain**.

This is not about punishment or restriction. It's about becoming more aware of what your body is telling you and making better choices based on what you discover.

Your first job is to observe.

Pay attention to your meals.	Notice your energy.
Notice how you feel afterwards.	Think about your sleep.
Look at your bowel habits.	Think about your emotional state

Pay careful attention to bloating, gas, reflux, cravings, food reactions, and other changes in your digestion. Don't judge what you discover, simply **record it**.

Awareness comes before change.

As you work through REMOVE, you'll begin identifying the things that may be placing unnecessary stress on your digestive system. Some will be things you can change immediately. Others may take more time, and that's perfectly fine.

The goal isn't to create a perfect gut in eight weeks.

The goal is to **understand your gut better**, remove some of the obstacles standing in its way, and build habits that you can carry forward into the next stages of the program.

So let's begin. I want you to take your time and remain observant and curious.

Keep your journal close. And remember...

You don't have to change everything in one day.

You just need to discover **what needs to change first.**

Identifying Causes and Triggers

Healing Begins by Removing Barriers & Obstacles

Clinically I've found that most people who struggle to recover don't have a treatment problem. They have an *obstacle* problem**.**

There was one principle that guided many difficult cases I worked with throughout my clinical career. It developed gradually over many years after seeing countless people become trapped in what I came to call **treatment loops**.

They had tried one doctor after another. They had taken drug after drug, supplement after supplement. Many were eating well and following all the right advice.

Yet they still weren't recovering. As a naturally curious clinician, I couldn't simply accept that and wanted to understand why this was occurring**.**

I was never satisfied with simply treating symptoms. It's one of the reasons I chose naturopathic medicine. I wanted to know what was preventing healing in the first place, not just become a symptom treater.

Why did one person recover quickly while another remained unwell for years? What obstacles were being overlooked? One patient changed the way I approached difficult cases forever. He was a retired private investigator. One day he said to me: "Eric, look very carefully for the fingerprints, the hidden clues. They're there if you know where to look."

Those words stayed with me. The more I reflected on them, the more I realised that practising naturopathy at a deeper level required me to wear several hats. I wasn't just a physician. I also had to think like a private investigator and psychologist.

Every patient left fingerprints, and every stalled recovery had a reason. That simple shift in thinking transformed my clinical practice.

Instead of asking this: *"What treatment does this person need?"*

I began asking this: *"What is preventing this person's body from getting well?"*

Those are two very different questions.

Over time I realised that successful healing wasn't just about choosing the right diet or the right pill. It was about identifying—and removing—the factors standing in the way of recovery. The barriers or obstacles to cure.

I learned that healing doesn't begin when you find the right treatment. It begins when you remove what's standing in the way of it.

MY CLINICAL CODES

Looking Beyond Symptoms

During consultations I developed a simple shorthand that I wrote in the margins of my patient notes. These weren't medical diagnoses. They were reminders to look beyond symptoms and uncover what was potentially standing in the way of healing. Three of those codes became invaluable.

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1. - NBWS – Never Been Well Since

Primary Causes - an event that started the health decline (the trigger, the turning point).

One of the most revealing questions I ever asked a patient was this:

"Have you ever felt you've never been well since something happened, one major event in your life?" I found in most instances that every difficult case had a defining moment.

People would often say this:

- "I've never been well since that course of antibiotics".
- "Since having my gallbladder removed".
- "Since I had glandular fever".
- "Since I had COVID".
- "Since my divorce".
- "Since moving into that house".

Those few words often revealed where the healing story began.

For many people with gut health problems, repeated courses of antibiotics, steroid medications or other pharmaceutical treatments were important pieces of the puzzle—but everyone's story was different.

2. - The CD – Central Disturbance

The biggest underlying driver (the root issue).

Every difficult case seemed to have one issue influencing almost everything else.

- Chronic continual low-grade stress.
- Unresolved grief or emotional trauma.
- Working permanent night shifts.
- Living in a mouldy home.
- Living in an unhappy relationship.
- Chronic sleep deprivation
- Years of eating highly processed foods.

I came to think of it as the spanner in the healing works. When the patient's central disturbance was recognised addressed, many smaller problems often began improving almost automatically.

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3. - The OTCs – Obstacles To Cure

Maintaining Causes - Barriers preventing recovery (ongoing obstacles, the fuel).

The OTCs were the everyday habits, behaviours and circumstances that continually prevented healing, quietly sabotaging the patient's recovery.

Unlike the central disturbance, there were usually several obstacles to cure, and they were different and specific for every person, but commonly included:

Smoking or vaping	Poor sleep patterns
Recreational drug use	Chronic stress
Alcohol	Lack of exercise
Food cravings (sweet, salt, or fatty)	Excessive screen time
Highly processed foods	Ignoring the body's warning signs
Eating too quickly	Stressful relationships

Through years of clinical work, I learned that most patients leave small clues behind. The key is recognising those clues and improving or removing as many obstacles as possible. Once obstacles are, we can begin improving gut function.

In Simple Terms:

1. **NBWS =** When did the problem begin?
2. **CD =** What's driving the illness?
3. **OTCs =** What's preventing recovery?

Now It's Your Turn

Now it's your turn to become your own investigator. Forget treatments for a moment, and forget changing diets. Instead, ask yourself the same questions I asked countless patients over many years. Be completely honest. Nobody else needs to read your answers. These pages are for you.

1. Can I finish this sentence?

"I've never been well since..."

2. What do I believe is my Central Disturbance?

What one issue seems to influence many areas of my health and life?

2. What are my current Obstacles To Cure?

What habits, behaviours or circumstances are quietly holding me back?

3. Can I finish this sentence?

"I've never been well since..."

Eric's Clinical Perspective

I came to appreciate that people don't always fail to recover because they haven't found the right treatment. In many cases, they haven't clearly identified the obstacles standing in the way of healing.

That's exactly why the REMOVE stage begins here. Before we add anything to your health, let's first uncover, change, or remove what may be holding your healing back.

Before We Go Further...

Take a few quiet minutes in contemplation to answer these questions. There are no right or wrong answers. Just be honest.

Why have I decided to begin this program now?

What am I hoping will be different eight weeks from today?

If I could improve just ONE symptom first, it would be:

☐ Bloating ☐ Fatigue ☐ Skin problems

☐ Constipation ☐ Brain fog ☐ Sugar cravings

☐ Diarrhoea ☐ Food intolerances

☐ Other:

_____

_____

_____

From My Clinic

My Own Story

Many people assume I've always been a healthy male. Nothing could be further from the truth. Many years before I qualified as a naturopath, I struggled with serious digestive problems, recurring fungal infections, fatigue, brain fog, depression and skin issues after recurring antibiotic prescriptions for a chest infection.

Like many people, I searched everywhere for answers, hoping there would be that one amazing treatment that would fix everything. This was in 1986, no internet, no support, except to be told by doctors that “antibiotics will cure you.”

Instead, I discovered that recovery came from learning to understand my body, changing my daily habits and giving my digestive system the time it needed to heal. I also had to let a few friends go who didn't support my new healthy lifestyle.

Looking back now, I'm grateful for that awful experience. Without it, I probably would never have become a curious naturopathic physician.

Eric's Clinical Insights

Sometimes your greatest health challenge becomes your greatest teacher. Healing begins the moment you become more curious about the cause of your problems than the symptoms. The creator designed your body to heal, your job is to find what's standing in its way.

Pause & Reflect

What part of my story sounds most like your story?

Have you ever felt frustrated because you couldn't find answers or nobody listened?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Sometimes

We Begin with REMOVE

Think of an aircraft preparing for take-off. Before the engines roar into life, the pilot works carefully through a checklist.

The aircraft is inspected, the weather is checked. But most importantly...

The runway is cleared, the barriers and obstacles are removed. Without a clear runway, even the best aircraft struggles to take off safely. Any obstacles need to be identified and dealt with first if possible, and your digestive system deserves the same preparation.

Over the next three weeks we're going to identify barriers and begin gently clearing your runway. Not with harsh cleanses or extreme diets. And not with fear or hype.

We'll simply begin removing the things that place unnecessary stress on your digestive system while creating the best possible conditions for healing.

That's what **REMOVE** is all about.

What's On Your Runway?

Tick the things you believe may currently be slowing your recovery.

☐ Constipation
☐ Constant snacking
☐ Fast eating
☐ Low energy
☐ Sugar cravings
☐ Frequent antibiotics
☐ Alcohol
☐ High stress
☐ Bloating
☐ Brain fog
☐ Processed foods
☐ Other _____
☐ Not drinking water
☐ Eating while distracted
☐ Problematic relationship
☐ Poor sleep

Which ONE obstacle would you most like to improve first?

Why did you choose this?

From My Clinic

Jean Thought She'd Tried Everything

When Jean (60yrs) first walked into my clinic she carried a medical file more than four inches thick. For about forty years she'd lived with bloating, diarrhoea, weight loss and severe food intolerances. She'd seen specialist after specialist and almost accepted that this was simply how life was going to be.

Jean expected me to recommend another complicated programme, lots of tests, etc.. Instead, we slowed everything right down. We focused on the very basics — improving her upper and middle digestion, restoring bowel function, simplifying her meals, improving her sleep and allowing her body the time it needed to heal.

Six months later she was eating foods she'd avoided for years, had regained healthy weight and felt like she had her life back. After twelve months Jean was recovered. Jean became one of our clinic's greatest success stories.

Eric's Clinical Insight

One of the greatest lessons Jean taught me was this: Healing often begins when we stop searching for a miracle cure and start trusting in getting the basics as good as we can possibly get them.

Your Reflection

What part of Jean's story reminds you of your own journey?

Have you been searching for a quick fix?

☐ Yes ☐ Sometimes ☐ Not really

If so, what have you tried?

_____
_____
_____

My biggest takeaway from Jean's story is:

_____
_____

WEEK 2 of 8

Understanding Your Patterns

Stage 1 - REMOVE (Lite Guide - pages 16 - 20)

"Self-awareness is the first step towards lasting change."

By now you've probably started noticing something. Better gut health isn't just about changing *what* you eat. It's about becoming aware of the habits, routines and behaviours that influence your digestion with every meal, snack and every single day.

And that awareness can be incredibly powerful. Many people spend years searching for another diet, another supplement or another doctor. Yet they rarely stop to observe what their own body has been trying to tell them, failing to listen to how the gut communicates.

This week I'd like you to become a careful observer. Don't judge yourself or aim for perfection. Just pay careful attention. Notice what helps you feel better, and notice what doesn't.

Your gut is constantly sending you messages. The more you learn to recognise those messages, the easier it becomes to understand what your body needs. Think of yourself as a detective, collecting clues rather than jumping to conclusions.

Your gut may be trying to tell you things like:

- **You feel bloated after eating certain foods** or particular food combos.
- **You rush your meals**, and notice more discomfort than when you eat slowly and chew thoroughly.
- **You feel tired or sleepy after eating**, which may suggest a meal doesn't agree with you or was simply too large.
- **Your energy is steady on some days but crashes on others**, often reflecting your food choices, meal timing or stress levels.
- **Your bowel motions change** after certain foods, travel, stress or poor sleep.
- **You experience more gas or abdominal discomfort** when you're anxious, busy or eating on the run.
- **You wake feeling lighter and more comfortable** after eating an earlier, simpler evening meal.
- **You notice your stools are better formed** the following morning when you don't snack after your evening meal.
- **Your cravings become stronger** after highly processed or sugary foods, but settle when you eat balanced whole-food meals.
- **You notice when you skip meals or have smaller portion sizes** it improves your level of mental clarity.
- **You notice certain foods leave you feeling satisfied**, while other foods seem to leave you hungry again within an hour or two.
- **Your digestion improves** when you take time to relax before eating and remain present during your meal.

These small observations may seem insignificant on their own. But when you record them consistently over days and weeks, patterns begin to emerge. Those patterns often reveal far more than any single symptom ever could.

Those self-observations can become the clues that guide your gut recovery.

Becoming a Gut Listener

In clinical practice, I found that people who recovered well weren't usually the ones who knew the most about gut health. They were the ones who became the best **gut listeners** and students of their own body.

Remember, your body is not working against you. It's trying to communicate with you. Every symptom, every improvement and every change is valuable feedback. The more carefully you listen, the better equipped you'll be to make choices that support lasting gut health. The more you record, especially in the early days, the more likely you'll start seeing patterns and make the necessary changes.

That's exactly what we're going to continue doing this week.

From My Clinic

Aaron's Story

Aaron was just nineteen years old when he first came to see me. For several years he'd suffered recurring sinus infections. Every winter meant another course of antibiotics. Eventually he developed bloating, loose bowel motions, sugar cravings and constant fatigue.

Like many young men, Aaron wanted one thing. "Eric, what's the strongest supplement you've got?" Instead, I asked him a different question: "What habits do you think have been feeding this problem?"

That stopped this young guy in his tracks. Together we simplified his meals, improved his bowel habits, removed all processed and take-away foods, encouraged regular mealtimes and eliminated snacking entirely. We also agreed that alcohol needed to take a complete back seat while his gut recovered.

Only then did we begin introducing additional support like probiotics and digestive enzymes. Several months later Aaron smiled and said, *"Man I can't believe the difference this has made to my life."*

Eric's Clinical Insight

People often overestimate what treatments can do, and completely underestimate what excellent daily habits can achieve, especially in the long-term.

Pause & Reflect

Have you ever found yourself *constantly searching* for the next answer?

- ☐ Another diet
- ☐ Another practitioner
- ☐ Another test
- ☐ Another supplement
- ☐ Another miracle cure
- ☐ Another health forum

What have you tried?

Looking back now, what do you think you were really searching for?

Your One Priority

One of the biggest mistakes people make is trying to change everything at once. This week I'd like you to choose **one habit** that will make the biggest difference.

Not five or ten - Just one Which habit would you most like to improve?

- ☐ Eating more slowly
- ☐ Walking every day
- ☐ Quitting sugar, junk food
- ☐ Chewing food better
- ☐ Improving sleep
- ☐ Managing stress
- ☐ Drinking more water
- ☐ Reduce processed food
- ☐ Eating without distractions

☐ Other _____

My one priority this week

_____

Why did I choose this?

_____
_____
_____

Digestion Begins *Before* You Eat

One of the most fascinating things about digestion is that it begins even before the first mouthful reaches your stomach. The moment you see food, smell food, or even think about eating...

Your brain begins preparing your digestive system. The saliva increases and stomach acid begins flowing. Digestive enzymes are released from your mouth and your stomach as your body prepares itself for nourishment.

But if you're answering emails, scrolling through your phone, watching TV or eating in the car, your brain receives mixed messages.

Instead of entering a relaxed **rest-and-digest** state, your body often remains in a **fight-or-flight** state. Digestion becomes less efficient.

One of the simplest ways to improve digestion is also one of the easiest.

Sit down. Slow down. Chew thoroughly. Enjoy your meal.

_____

From My Clinic

Gerry's Story

Gerry, 58, spent most of his working life driving trucks long-haul across America. Breakfast came from a service station, lunch was eaten behind the wheel, and dinner often happened late at night at a truck stop. He didn't smoke or drink alcohol, but he did drink soda every day and had struggled with chronic constipation for many years.

His diet wasn't necessarily terrible, but his routine was working against him. One of our first priorities was to improve his bowel function and reduce some of the things that were getting in the way. Like his lack of movement.

I recommended a bowel cleanse using magnesium, and it made a huge difference to his regularity and overall comfort. We also made four simple changes: quit soda completely, added one piece of whole fruit each day, stopped eating on the run, and walk every day.

I asked Gerry to pull the truck over, sit down and take 15–20 uninterrupted minutes for his meals. No phone. No rushing. Just eat, chew and relax. I also urged him to walk at least one mile or more each day.

A few weeks later, Gerry said, *"Eric... I never realised the things getting in the way of my bowel function."* His bloating began improving, his bowel movements became much more regular, and he noticed better energy and steady progress with his weight and blood sugar levels.

Eric's Clinical Insight

Sometimes the biggest breakthrough isn't changing everything you eat. It's getting the bowel moving properly, removing the daily habits that are working against you, and giving your digestive system time to do its job.

This Week's Mealtime Challenge

Choose one meal every day **and give it your full attention.**

- ☐ Sit at a table.
- ☐ Put that phone away.
- ☐ Turn the television off
- ☐ Chew every mouthful thoroughly.
- ☐ Eat slowly, smell and taste your food.
- ☐ Finish your meal feeling relaxed.

Your Light Bulb Moment 

After practising mindful eating for several days...

What did you notice?

_____

_____

Did your digestion or bowel function change?

_____

_____

What surprised you the most?

_____

_____

_____

Why Bowel Cleansing Matters During REMOVE

Before you can rebuild a healthier gut, you need to make sure waste is moving out properly. Regular bowel movements are one of the foundations of the REMOVE stage. But bowel cleansing isn't only for people who are constipated. You can have a bowel movement every day and still benefit from giving the colon some attention.

I often describe this as clearing the runway. A gentle bowel cleanse or flush can help remove accumulated waste and create a cleaner environment before we move into the later stages of the program. The goal isn't to repeatedly empty the bowel or aggressively "detox" the body. It is to improve elimination and prepare the digestive tract for what comes next.

This can be particularly important when we're thinking about the long-term gut microbiome. A well-functioning, regularly emptied bowel provides a better environment for the beneficial bacteria we want to establish and support during REPLACE and REBUILD. In other words, we're not just thinking about getting you to go to the toilet—we're thinking about preparing the terrain for healthier long-term bowel flora.

For some people, a short magnesium-based bowel cleanse can be a useful way to get things moving. Once regular elimination is established, the focus shifts to

maintaining healthy bowel function through adequate fluids, fibre, movement and appropriate food choices.

Remember: the goal of REMOVE isn't to empty your bowel repeatedly. It's to clear the runway, restore comfortable elimination and create a better foundation for rebuilding a healthier gut ecosystem.

WEEK 3 of 8

Reflection and Commitment

Stage 1 - REMOVE (Lite Guide - pages 21 - 32)

"True healing begins when consistency becomes stronger than excuses."

Congratulations.

You've just completed the first stage of the Lite Program. Three weeks may not seem like a long time, but don't underestimate what you've already achieved. You may not feel dramatically different yet—and that's perfectly normal.

The **REMOVE** stage was never designed to produce overnight miracles. Its purpose is far more important than that. It's about creating the right conditions for your body to begin healing.

Over the years, I've noticed that this is often the "Will I stay, or will I go?" stage.

What do I mean by that? After working with thousands of people, you begin to recognise two distinct groups. There are the stayers and the leavers**.**

Those who leave are often searching for the quick fix. They expect dramatic changes within a few weeks—fireworks, a miracle, massive symptom relief, or an instant cure. When that doesn't happen, they move on in search of the next promising solution.

The stayers understand something different.

They know that lasting health isn't built overnight. It's built one choice, one habit and one day at a time.

Over these past three weeks, you've started paying closer attention to your body. You've started to have a closer relationship with your gut, you're becoming a better "gut listener". You've begun removing habits that no longer serve you. You've created routines that support better digestion, and you've taken the first real steps towards understanding what your gut has been trying to tell you.

Perhaps most importantly, you've started proving something to yourself:

I can actually do this.

That confidence doesn't arrive all at once! It grows every time you make another healthy decision. Every nourishing meal, mindful moment, and positive choice strengthens your belief that lasting change actually just may be possible.

So now the question remains:

Will you stay, or will you go?

Only you can answer that. If you've come this far, I encourage you to keep going.

The foundations are now in place. The work you've done during REMOVE is preparing your body for what comes next. In the weeks ahead, we'll begin restoring digestive function, rebuilding your gut microbiome and creating healthy habits that can support your health for many years to come.

The best part of your journey may still be ahead of you.

Pantry and Refrigerator Make-Over

Your kitchen environment matters tremendously. During REMOVE, clear out ultra-processed foods, sugary drinks, refined sauces and dressings, expired items, and anything you know triggers symptoms or cravings. Then restock with simple, whole foods such as fresh vegetables, low-sugar fruit, quality proteins, healthy fats, and foods with ingredients you recognise.

Think of this as clearing the runway for healthier eating. When your pantry, refrigerator and freezer are organised around nourishing foods, making better choices becomes much easier. Don't just move the foods that work against you to the back of the cupboard—remove them! For a practical step-by-step guide, see pages 21–22 of the Lite Guide: *Pantry and Refrigerator Make-Over*.

Pause & Reflect

Take a few minutes to think back over the past three weeks. The biggest thing I think I've learned about my digestive health and body is this...

The habit I'm most proud of changing is...

The biggest challenge I faced was...

From My Clinic

Mandy's Story

Mandy (36yrs, Jeweller) arrived at my clinic carrying three shopping bags full of supplements. She'd read dozens of books, joined online forums and tried almost every diet imaginable. Yet she was exhausted, bloated and frustrated.

She kept asking: *"Eric, what else should I take?"* I asked her this question: *"What healthy habits we've discussed over the past hour have you actually been able to keep long-term?"*

She smiled, laughed and said: *"None of them to be perfectly honest"*

Instead of adding more products, we simplified everything. I only recommended three supplements - not thirty. Regular and very basic meals. Better sleep, daily walking, no sugar, much better chewing and a lot less stress around food. No more take-aways, but home cooking. I also recommended a pantry and fridge clean-out. A few months later Mandy told me this:

"Eric, for the first time, I stopped trying to find the perfect diet and supplements...and instead focus of getting the basics we talked about perfect. That's when I finally started improving."

Eric's Clinical Insight

Getting the basics right along with consistency will always beat perfection. Every single time.

Your Reflection

Did Mandy's story remind you of your own experience?

☐ Yes ☐ A little ☐ Not at all

Have you ever found yourself searching for another answer instead of trusting the process of getting the basics in your life just perfect?

What is *one lesson* you'll take from Mandy's story?

Your Progress So Far

Tick every statement that applies to you.

- ☐ I've become more aware of my eating habits.
- ☐ I'm eating more slowly.
- ☐ I'm drinking a lot more water.
- ☐ I'm paying much more attention to stress.
- ☐ I've stopped all alcohol.
- ☐ I feel more hopeful than I did 3 weeks ago.
- ☐ I'm becoming more aware of my bowel habits.
- ☐ I'm chewing my food more thoroughly.
- ☐ I'm snacking a lot less.
- ☐ I'm eating far fewer processed foods.
- ☐ I'm completing my journal regularly.
- ☐ I'm committed to continuing.

My Biggest Win

Sometimes the biggest victories aren't physical, sometimes they're emotional.

- Maybe you've realised you're becoming more patient.
- Maybe you've stopped fearing food.
- Maybe you're beginning to trust your body again.

My biggest personal win over the past three weeks has been:

Week 3 Theme

Preparing for Growth

Think about a gardener. Before planting anything new, the gardener prepares the soil, they removes the weeds, water the ground, improve the conditions for growth.

That's exactly what you've been doing. You've been preparing the soil for growth. This allows next stage of the Lite Program to build on everything you've started.

Don't rush. Strong foundations support lasting health. We are replacing some foods and lifestyle habits for others.

Eric's Clinical Insight

After working will all kinds of people, I noticed something interesting. The people who made the biggest improvements rarely made the biggest, most dramatic changes. Instead, they quietly improved one habit after another, and kept these habits longterm. They didn't fall back into previous habits.

They drank a lot more water, even in winter.
They walked a little further every day.
They chewed their food more carefully
They went to bed much earlier.
Stopped snacking at night after dinner.
Reduced and eventually quit sugar.
They hardly drank alcohol at all
They managed stress much more effectively.

None of those habits seemed dramatic on their own. Together they're monumental... They change lives.

Notes

Which Habits Are Becoming Easier For You?

Circle the number that best describes you today.

Habit	Not Yet	Becoming Easier	A Habit
Drinking enough water	1 2 3	4 5 6 7	8 9 10
Chewing well	1 2 3	4 5 6 7	8 9 10
Eating slowly	1 2 3	4 5 6 7	8 9 10
Walking daily	1 2 3	4 5 6 7	8 9 10
Avoiding snacks	1 2 3	4 5 6 7	8 9 10
Managing stress	1 2 3	4 5 6 7	8 9 10
Avoiding alcohol	1 2 3	4 5 6 7	8 9 10
Cooking at home	1 2 3	4 5 6 7	8 9 10

Looking Back

Complete these sentences.

The biggest surprise over the past three weeks was...

The easiest change was...

The hardest change was...

One thing I'm going to keep doing is this...

One thing I'd like to improve leading up to REPLACE is this...

My Commitment

Next week I commit to:

- ☐ Drinking enough water every day.
- ☐ Staying patient.
- ☐ Walking every day.
- ☐ Trusting the process.
- ☐ Listening to my body's signals
- ☐ Eating without distractions
- ☐ Eating more whole foods.
- ☐ Completing my journal each day.
- ☐ Continuing to improve my digestion.
- ☐ Celebrating every small win

Let's Celebrate!

Before you turn the page. Stop for just a moment. Three weeks ago you decided to do something positive for yourself. Since then you've made several healthier decisions. No matter how small they seem, they all matter.

I want you to be proud of your progress, and not because you've been perfect. Because you've kept showing up, and that's exactly how lasting change happens.

Eric's Tip of the Week

Another great lesson my patients ever taught me was this: The people who recovered weren't the ones who never stumbled. They were the ones who always seemed to find their way back, even after a soda drink or doughnut.

If you remember only one thing from the REMOVE stage, let it be this: Your progress is never destroyed by one bad day. It grows from hundreds of good days that follow. These changes becomes so easy they end up becoming your new default settings.

Looking Forward

Next week we begin **REPLACE**. You've spent the past three weeks clearing the runway. Now it's time to strengthen digestion, restore what your gut has been missing, and continue building the healthy habits that will support you for years to come.

The best part of your journey is only just beginning.

WEEK 4 of 8

Restore Digestion & Restore Balance

Welcome to Stage 2 - REPLACE (Lite Guide - pages 36 - 40)

"Food becomes nourishment. Digestion becomes stronger. Your body begins working with you instead of against you."

Congratulations, you've already completed the first stage of the Lite Program.

Take a moment to appreciate what you've already achieved. Over the past three weeks you've been clearing the runway—improving your daily habits, paying closer attention to your digestion and removing obstacles that may have been standing in the way of better gut health. Now we begin the second stage.

REPLACE.

This is one of my favourite stages because it's where people begin noticing meaningful improvements, even though they may be small improvements. Not because we're adding different kinds of treatments. Because we're restoring the things your digestive system has been missing. We are scrutinising our diet more, replacing some foods and drinks for others.

Instead of asking this: *"What are the best foods to eat?"*
We begin asking this : *"What foods should I replace or stop altogether?"*

Now that's a very different question!

Pause & Reflect

Before moving on... Think back over the past three weeks.

The habit I'm most proud of developing is:

_____

_____

The biggest improvement I've noticed is this:

_____

_____

One habit I still want to improve is this:

_____

_____

_____

From My Clinic

Sharon's Story

When Sharon (43yrs, nurse) first visited my clinic, she was scared to eat. Almost every meal seemed to cause bloating. She had gradually removed more and more foods from her diet until there were very few she felt comfortable eating.

Sharon was a coronary care nurse who worked at a large hospital; her husband was an experienced pilot who was frequently away overseas, flying big jets long haul between Asia and New Zealand. Sharon worked several different shifts and frequently works long hours and at unusual times, leading to sleep and energy issues. This in turn has resulted in her often skipping at least one meal per day and relying instead on foods from vending machines.

She believed food was the problem, because most of her meals were good. It wasn't. Poor digestion and lifestyle was. Instead of removing more foods, we focused on improving digestion. She slowed down, chewed properly and supported her digestive function with digestive enzymes and probiotics. She reduced stress around meals.

Over the following months Sharon gradually began enjoying foods she'd avoided for years. More importantly, her bloating and gut pain gradually diminished and eventually disappeared altogether. Best thing is this - Sharon stopped fearing food.

Eric's Clinical Insight

One of my goals is to help you rebuild confidence around eating. Food should nourish you. It should never become something you fear or become anxious about.

_____

Your Reflection

Have you become anxious about certain foods?

☐ Yes ☐ Sometimes ☐ Not at all

Which foods make you feel uncertain?

What would you like your relationship with food to look like six months from now?

What Does REPLACE Really Mean?

Many people assume REPLACE means replacing one food or supplement with another.

While it does mean we want you to continue replacing poor food choices, it is more about restoring digestive function, replacing a weakened digestive function with a stronger one. We're helping your body do what it was designed to do.

That includes supporting:

- Healthy stomach acid
- Digestive enzyme activity
- Pancreatic function
- Nutrient absorption
- Liver function and bile flow
- Comfortable bowel function
- A calmer digestive system
- A more varied whole-food diet

Our goal isn't simply to improve symptoms or focus on removing them. Our goal is to improve your digestive and gut function. You'll discover when your digestion improves... everything else seems to becomes easier.

Light Bulb Moment 💡

Complete this sentence.

Today I realised...

One thing I'd like to understand better about my digestion is:

_____

_____

_____

This Week's Challenge

This week I'm going to practice eating with intention.

Each day I will:

- ☐ Sit down to every main meal
- ☐ Take digestive enzymes with meals.
- ☐ Focus on how foods make me feel.
- ☐ Chew thoroughly and slow down.
- ☐ Put my phone away & turn the TV off.
- ☐ Take probiotics morning and night.

At the end of the week... Which meal of food combination was the most enjoyable?

_____

_____

What difference did slowing down make?

_____

From My Clinic

Robert's Story

Robert (53, real estate agent) believed he had a weak stomach. In many ways he was right—but the problem wasn't his stomach. It was how he treated his digestive system. He also suffered from irritable bowel syndrome, bloating and unpredictable bowel function.

Breakfast was eaten while making calls on his phone. Lunch was a take-away meal and coffee rushed between appointments. Dinner was usually in front of the television with a glass of wine.

His digestive system never had a chance to properly prepare for a meal.

One of the biggest improvements he made was also one of the simplest. He began treating every meal as if it really mattered. We also discussed how drinking wine with dinner every night was working against his digestion, and how important it was to reconnect with the experience of eating better meals instead of treating meals as an afterthought.

His digestion became stronger—not just because he took digestive enzymes and probiotics regularly, but because he developed a new understanding of how digestion actually works and enjoyed hundreds of calmer, better quality, and more mindful meals.

Six months later, his bloating, irritable bowel syndrome and unpredictable bowel function had all but disappeared.

Eric's Clinical Insight

Digestion doesn't improve because of one good meal. It improves because of hundreds of better meals and healthier daily habits. Never underestimate the healing power of an unhurried meal.

My Mealtime Score

Today I...

Habit	Yes	Needs Work
Ate sitting down	☐	☐
Put my phone away	☐	☐
Chewed well	☐	☐
Took enzymes	☐	☐
Ate slowly	☐	☐
Felt relaxed	☐	☐

What distracted me today?

What will I improve tomorrow?

WEEK 5 of 8

Let's Improve Digestive Strength

Stage 2 - REPLACE (Lite Guide - pages 41 - 54)

"The goal isn't to eat less. The goal is to nourish yourself better"

When you give your body *real food*, you naturally feel fuller for longer, your energy becomes more stable, and your blood sugar is better balanced throughout the day.

Take a moment to appreciate just how far you've already come. Five weeks ago you began preparing your gut for healing. Since then you've started identifying causes and triggers, paying closer attention to your digestion, building healthier daily routines, and learning to work with your digestive system instead of thinking of it as something that simply "needs fixing." That's significant progress.

One thing I hope you've discovered by now is that this program isn't built around deprivation. Quite the opposite. The Cleanse Diet is based on eating real, fresh, whole foods that nourish your body and support a healthy digestive system. We should have already removed the "top tier junk" from our diet during the **REMOVE** stage, the take-away and junk foods, those ultra-sweet, ultra salty, and ultra fatty foods.

You can read much more detail about the Cleanse Diet on this link **HERE**

Rather than counting calories or constantly feeling hungry, you'll be replacing ultra-processed foods with foods that are naturally rich in fibre, vitamins, minerals, healthy fats and quality protein.

You don't have to eat tiny portions or constantly battle hunger. In fact, most people discover they feel far more satisfied eating wholesome foods than they ever did eating processed snacks, takeaway meals or convenience foods.

The focus during **REPLACE** is about fresh whole foods your digestive system recognises and knows how to process. Every healthy meal feeds not only you, but also the trillions of microorganisms living within your gut microbiome. Junk foods and processed foods don't.

By gradually moving away from ultra-processed foods and embracing the Cleanse Diet, you'll help reduce inflammation, support healthy digestion, have access to more nutrients, improve bowel function, encourage a more balanced microbiome and create the ideal environment for long-term gut health.

Every healthy choice you make becomes an investment in your future. This week we'll continue strengthening your digestive foundation, restoring confidence around

food, and making healthy eating feel less like a diet—and more like a sustainable way of life.

Pause & Reflect

Before we continue... Think back to the past five weeks.

What change are you most proud of?

What habit has become easier than you expected?

What still needs a little more work?

From My Clinic

Susan's Story

Susan (47yrs) was the CEO of a tech company. When she first visited my clinic, she arrived carrying several pages listing foods she believed she could never eat again—including fruit, bread, rice, potatoes and many vegetables.

She was convinced food was the problem. As we talked however, another entirely different picture emerged.

Susan rarely cooked. Almost every breakfast, lunch and dinner was eaten out, usually as part of business meetings or client lunches. Although she believed she was eating well, many of her meals included rich sauces, sweet desserts, highly refined carbohydrates and ultra-processed foods. Meals were often rushed, eaten while discussing business, and accompanied by coffee or wine.

Even healthy foods had become frightening. Years of conflicting advice from dieticians and naturopaths had convinced her that the answer was to keep

eliminating more and more foods. I smiled and remember saying: *"Our goal is to get rid of that list."*

Instead of searching for more foods to avoid, we focused on really improving her digestion and changing her relationship with food. She was instructed to support her digestive function for 6 months with digestive enzymes and a good probiotic formula.

Susan began preparing simple meals at home several times each week. I taught her to *slow down*, to reduced stress and work diligently on improving her sleep.

What a difference after several months. Stopped fearing every meal, and month by month, her confidence returned.

About nine months later, she was comfortably eating sourdough bread, most fruit and many of the vegetables she'd avoided for years. More importantly, she'd discovered that improving gut health wasn't about creating a longer list of foods to fear—it was about creating a much healthier way of eating *and* living.

Eric's Clinical Insight

Food should nourish you, not frighten you. One of my goals is to help you build confidence around eating again, and a healthy lifestyle should be part of the way you live as well. When digestion and lifestyle improve, food often becomes your friend again, not your enemy.

Your Reflection

Do you have foods you're currently afraid to eat?

☐ Yes ☐ Sometimes ☐ Not at all

Please list them here:

_____
_____
_____

Do you think foods are truly the problem, or could your digestion need more support? It's why I recommend enzymes and probiotics throughout digestive restorative stages.

_____
_____
_____
_____

Digestion Is So Much More Than Food

Earlier in the program, during the REMOVE stage, we learned that digestion begins before the first mouthful of food reaches your stomach, the cephalic phase. Now let's take that understanding one step further. Your digestive system works optimally when your body feels safe, relaxed and well-cared for.

When you're under continual stress, even low-grade, rushing from one task to the next, or feeling anxious, scrolling your phone, your body shifts subtlety into fight-or-flight mode. This response is designed to help you deal with danger, not digest food.
During these times, blood flow is diverted away from your digestive organs. Your stomach produces less acid, the pancreas releases fewer digestive enzymes. Bile production and flow reduces as well, slowing bowel function.

As a result, food isn't broken down as efficiently, particularly carbohydrates, protein, and fats. Instead of being properly digested, these foods may ferment in the bowel, producing gas, bloating, discomfort, even constipation. Even low-grade stress can cause all of this.

Many people assume they have a food intolerance when, in reality, they may simply not be digesting and absorbing food properly due to their lifestyle.

That's why the **REPLACE** stage isn't just about replacing processed of junk foods with whole foods. It's also about replacing stressful lifestyle habits you may not even be aware of with healthier daily routines that support digestion and absorption or nutrients.

Take a few slow deep breaths before eating. Enjoy your meals without your phone or television. Go for a daily walk. Stretch your body more.

Spend time outdoors in the sunshine. Take the stairs instead of the elevator whenever you can. Practise simple slow deep breathing exercises or mindfulness, and above all, make your sleep a priority.

Even a gentle abdominal massage can help stimulate bowel function and improve circulation.

These small lifestyle habits encourage your body to move from **fight or flight** into **rest and digest**—the state where your stomach, pancreas, liver and intestines work together most efficiently. The difference can be staggering for some.

Remember, healthy digestion is the result of dozens of small decisions you make every day over a long period of time. Every walk. Every good night's sleep. Every relaxed meal or glass of water. Every deep breath or meaningful conversation. Every healthy choice brings you one step closer to better digestion and a healthier gut.

This Week's Mealtime & Lifestyle Challenge

For the next seven days, choose several habits to practise every day.

During meals

- ☐ Sit down
- ☐ Eat slowly and mindfully.
- ☐ Turn the television off.
- ☐ Chew your food
- ☐ No phone or screen
- ☐ Take enzymes & probiotics

Throughout the day

- ☐ Go for a 30 minute walk.
- ☐ Limit screen time.
- ☐ Stretch or practise gentle movement.
- ☐ Make time to relax and unwind.
- ☐ Take the stairs when possible.
- ☐ Listen to people without interruptions
- ☐ Spend at least 15 - 20 minutes outdoors
- ☐ Aim for a consistent bedtime.
- ☐ Take five slow breaths before each meal.
- ☐ Spend time with your partner or friend

Remember, lasting gut health isn't built by eating perfect meals. It's built by the small healthy food and lifestyle choices you make throughout the entire day.

What differences did you notice?

From My Clinic

Brian's Story

Brian (48, accountant) came to see me convinced he had developed multiple severe food intolerances. His biggest complaints were bloating, abdominal pain, excessive gas and persistent acid reflux (GERD). Brian also had a big issue with insomnia. He never went anywhere without his antacid tablets and had been taking them regularly for years. As we talked about his daily routine, the real problem became much clearer.

Breakfast was eaten at a cafe while on his laptop and mobile phone. Lunch was usually standing up between business meetings. Dinner was in front of the television with a TV dinner after another stressful day at work. He was even answering emails in bed before sleep as well as on holidays.

Brian worked in a high-pressure corporate job, rarely slowed down, and spent most of his day in a constant state of low-grade stress. His digestive system never had a chance to enter rest and digest.

Before making major changes to his diet, we first changed how he lived. I finally convinced him to find a less stressful job. He replaced ultra-processed convenience foods with simple home cooked meals. He sat down for every meal and stopped eating in front of the television. I got him to take a few slow, deep breaths before eating and to focus on chewing his food properly. I also recommended enzymes and probiotics with meals to assist digestion.

Eventually he started walking most days and made his sleep routine a priority. Within just a few weeks, his bloating, abdominal pain and gas had reduced dramatically. After three months he joined the gym. Twelve weeks later, his reflux had completely settled, he no longer needed antacid medication, and he was enjoying meals again without fear or discomfort. within six months his bowel motions normalised. Brian learned that replacing stressful habits with healthier ones and allowing his digestive system to do what it had been designed to do made all the difference.

Eric's Clinical Insight

Many people blame food when the real problem is that their digestive system isn't working efficiently due to how they live. Stress, rushing, poor sleep, inactivity and tech-distracted eating can reduce stomach acid and pancreatic enzyme production, making even perfectly healthy foods seem difficult to digest.

Sometimes the most powerful treatment isn't eliminating more foods, it's replacing a stressful lifestyle with one that allows your body to enter rest and digest.

My Mealtime & Lifestyle Score

Habit	Yes	Needs Work
I ate sitting down and relaxing.	☐	☐
Put my phone and screens away during meals.	☐	☐
I ate without rushing my meal.	☐	☐
Chewed my food thoroughly.	☐	☐
Felt relaxed before eating.	☐	☐
Took 3–4 slow, deep breaths before meals.	☐	☐
Took my digestive enzymes and probiotics.	☐	☐
Drank plenty of water today.	☐	☐

Habit	Yes	Needs Work
Ate mostly fresh, whole foods.	☐	☐
Increased the variety of healthy foods I ate.	☐	☐
Avoided ultra-processed foods.	☐	☐
Finished dinner 2–3 hours before bedtime.	☐	☐
Went for a walk or exercised.	☐	☐
Spent some time outdoors.	☐	☐
Took time out to relax a little today.	☐	☐
Made sleep a priority today.	☐	☐

What distracted me today?

What will I improve tomorrow?

Let's Build Health, Not Fear

I've noticed that people who consistently recover well eventually stop asking questions like: *"What foods am I allowed to eat?" or "Do I really need to exercise?"* Instead, they begin asking, "*What habits can I incorporate each day to help my body become healthier and stronger?"* That's a completely different mindset.

The REPLACE stage isn't only about replacing poor food choices with nourishing ones. It's also about replacing certain lifestyle habits with healthier ones**.** Perhaps you replace sitting for hours with a daily walk, rushed 5-minute meals with relaxed eating, late nights with better sleep, constant screen time with time outdoors in green spaces, or chronic stress with simple breathing and relaxation practices.

Lasting health isn't built by avoiding foods you fear or lifestyle habits you are averse to. It's built by creating optimal conditions for your body to heal and function at its best. Those conditions include **what you eat, how you eat, how you think, and how you live your life**—nourishing whole foods, regular movement, quality sleep, fresh air and sunshine, stress management, good communication, intimacy with a partner, healthy relationships, relaxation, and enjoying your meals instead of rushing them.

Think of REPLACE as a swap, not a restriction. You're gradually replacing habits that drain your health with habits that support it. Daily walking, stretching, yoga, breathing exercises, massage, spending time outside, taking the stairs, limiting screens while eating, and making time to relax can all become small but powerful parts of your routine.

When these conditions are consistently met, your body's vital healing response has a much better opportunity to do what it was designed to do. Your goal isn't to create lists of foods to fear or an aversion to healthy lifestyle habits. Your goal is to build a healthier body—one that's capable of comfortably digesting a wide variety of nourishing whole foods while enjoying a balanced, active and fulfilling life. As balance returns, many people find that their symptoms gradually become less intrusive and their confidence in their body begins to return.

Light Bulb Moment 💡

This week I realised...

_____
_____
_____

The one habit making the biggest difference is...

_____
_____
_____
_____

Weekly Meal Planner

Breakfast

Monday _____

Tuesday _____

Wednesday _____

Thursday _____

Friday _____

Saturday _____

Sunday _____

Lunch

Monday _____

Tuesday _____

Wednesday _____

Thursday _____

Friday _____

Saturday _____

Sunday _____

Dinner

Monday _____

Tuesday _____

Wednesday _____

Thursday _____

Friday _____

Saturday _____

Sunday _____

Healthy Snacks (if required)

Healthy Habits Tracker

Habit	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
Ate mostly whole, nourishing foods	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Ate slowly and chewed well	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Drank enough water	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Took enzymes & probiotics	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Took my microbial balancer	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Had dinner 2–3 hours before bed	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Walked or exercised	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Spent time outdoors	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Took time to relax	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Slept 7–8 hours	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Looking Back

The biggest improvement I noticed this week was:

One meal I really enjoyed was:

One food I feel more confident eating now is:

The habit I'm most proud of is:

A Question I Often Asked

One question I frequently asked patients was this: "What do you think is stopping you from getting well?" The answer was rarely: *"I eat too much bread."*

More often, it sounded more like this:

- *"I work 70 hours a week."*
- *"I haven't slept properly in years."*
- *"I'm drowning in debt."*
- *"My marriage is falling apart."*
- *"I'm constantly anxious."*
- *"I feel overwhelmed."*
- *"I haven't had a vacation in ten years."*
- *"I have an addiction to (drugs, booze, sex, etc)"*
- *"My life feels completely out of balance."*
- *"I hate where I live."(or I hate my boss, etc.)*

Those answers often told me far more than any lab test ever could. Sometimes, the greatest obstacle to healing wasn't on the plate. It was in the person's problematic lifestyle. Those conversations often revealed the real deep-seated obstacles to healing that no doctor had ever enquired into.

Eric's Clinical Insight

One of the greatest privileges of my career has been watching ordinary people achieve extraordinary improvements simply because they refused to give up on themselves. REPLACE is not about changing everything at once. It's about making a few smart swaps that you can actually maintain.

Perhaps you replace one food that doesn't agree with you with a more nourishing option. Replace sugary drinks with water. Replace rushing your meals with sitting down and eating slowly. Replace an evening on the couch with a walk. One or two small replacements at a time can create surprisingly powerful changes.

My hope is that this journal challenges the way you think about your health. Rather than constantly asking, *"How do I get rid of this symptom?"*, begin asking, "What can I replace that may be preventing my body from recovering?" In my experience, this shift in thinking is often where genuine, lasting improvements begin.

Looking Ahead

Next week in week 6 we begin Stage 3 – **REBUILD**. This is where everything starts coming together.

We'll begin strengthening your gut microbiome, supporting your intestinal lining, expanding food diversity and creating habits that help you stay well—not just get well.

Because ultimately, getting well changes your life, but learning how to stay well changes your entire future.

WEEK 6 of 8

Building Your New Normal

Welcome to Stage 3 - REBUILD (Lite Guide - pages 58 - 64)

""Good health isn't something you find. It's something you build."

Welcome to **REBUILD**.

Take a moment before reading any further. Close your journal for just a second. Now think back to the day you first opened it, reflect on it. How were you feeling?

Maybe you'd tried different diets, supplements or programs before, or maybe you were simply hoping your digestion would feel normal again. Now look where you are.

You've learned to understand your digestive system and body more. You've built healthier routines, made better food choices, and started trusting the process.

But most importantly, you've shown yourself that change *is* possible, regardless of age or how long you've had these symptoms. Isn't that just amazing?

Let's Pause & Reflect

Looking back over the past six weeks...

The biggest thing I've learned about myself is this:

Today I feel more hopeful because:

One thing I never thought I'd achieve was this:

From My Clinic

Tracey's Story

When **Tracey (39yrs, travel agent)** first came to see me, she was exhausted and in pain. Tracey was a travel agent who had been diagnosed with rheumatoid arthritis several years earlier and relied on immune-suppressing medication as well as regular pain relief just to get through the day.

She also worried constantly about her digestion. Eating out made her very anxious. Travelling made her anxious. Even visiting friends revolved around whether the food would upset her stomach.

As we talked about her diet, another pattern became obvious. Tracey wasn't eating a wide variety of foods. Like many people, she had grown up eating the same four or five vegetables—potatoes, carrots, peas, pumpkin and broccoli, with very little variation. Fruit intake was minimal.

I remember showing her a list of more than 30 different fruits, vegetables, herbs, nuts and seeds that I regularly ate over several weeks. She looked at me in shock and disbelief. *"What, you actually eat all of those?"* she asked.

That's when we stopped focusing on what she couldn't eat and started focusing on what she could gradually introduce.

Every week we added one or two new fruits or vegetables. There was no rush and no pressure—just steady progress. We also worked with antimicrobial supplements, probiotics, and enzymes. Her stool test results revealed elevated Candida species and Klebsiella (bacteria) levels, and a virtual absence of beneficial bacteria - Lactobacillus and Bifidobacteria..

Six months later, her comprehensive stool analysis showed a significantly healthier and more diverse gut microbiome than when we had started. One year later, the changes were stunning.

Her rheumatoid arthritis symptoms had reduced by 80 percent. She no longer relied on pain medication, and her specialist had significantly reduced her immune-suppressing medication, eventually taking her off medication entirely.

As her gut microbiome became more diverse and resilient, her immune system appeared to become calmer and better regulated. Not only had Tracey's digestion improved... She had her life back.

A few months later she emailed me a photograph eating pizza and drinking red wine in Italy, smiling with friends. The message underneath simply read:

"Eric... I didn't even think about the pain in my feet today. I'll be forever grateful."

Eric's Clinical Insight

One of the greatest lessons I learned by interpreting thousands of comprehensive stool tests was that you don't build a healthy and diverse gut microbiome by eating the same 5 vegetables and fruits on a continual basis. Diversity really does matter.

Every different fruit, vegetable, herb, legume, nut and seed provides unique fibres and plant compounds that nourish different groups of beneficial bacteria.

The more diverse your diet becomes, the more diverse your gut microbiome has the opportunity to become. And a healthy, diverse microbiome doesn't just support digestion. It plays an important role in controlling your mood and cognitive function, as well as educating and regulating the immune system throughout your life.

Your Reflection

What parts of your life has your digestion affected?

- ☐ Socialising
- ☐ Relationships
- ☐ Work
- ☐ Self-confidence
- ☐ Travelling
- ☐ Energy
- ☐ Sleep
- ☐ Mood or cognition
- ☐ Other _____

What would you love to do again without worrying about your gut?

_____

_____

_____

_____

What Does REBUILD Really Mean?

Some people may think rebuilding their health means taking special foods or dietary supplements forever. I don't. Supplements definitely have their place, they can provide valuable support while you're rebuilding your health over a period of time.

But they're never meant to become permanent crutches. The real goal is much bigger. REBUILD is about creating a digestive system that's stronger, more resilient and better able to look after itself in the long-term.

We're now shifting our attention towards:

Building a diverse gut microbiome.	Supporting the intestinal lining.
Expanding our whole food confidence.	Increasing plant diversity.
Developing lifelong eating habits.	Supporting immune health.
Developing healthy lifestyle habits	Preventing future setbacks.

Our goal isn't simply to recover. Our goal is to stay well to prevent future relapses.

From My Clinic

Paul's Story

Paul (51) was an air-conditioning technician who spent his days driving from one job to the next. He came to see me because of persistent bloating, excessive gas and unpredictable bowel function, something he wasn't happy about due to his job.

Like many busy tradesmen, eating was something he squeezed in between appointments rather than something he enjoyed. Breakfast was usually two or three cups of coffee and a snack bar, whereas lunch typically came from a service station or McDonalds Dinner wasn't much better either.

When I asked him what meals he regularly ate, he thought for a moment. "Carrots, peas, potatoes, steak or sausages." That was about the sum of it.

Paul was technically brilliant at his job, he could diagnose and repair the most complex air-conditioning systems and was in demand. Yet he had never really stopped to think about how he was fuelling his own body.

His focus was always on this one thing: *"What pills can I take to stop the bloating?"*

My answer surprised him, and instead of searching for another pill, we began discussed how to rebuild his health. Every week I got him to introduce one or two new fruits or vegetables. He gradually reduced the coffee to one per day, and started drinking more water. He stopped drinking beer.

I taught him to how to prepare simple meals and snacks to take to work. He walked most evenings instead of collapsing in front of the TV and became increasingly interested in feeding his gut microbiome rather than simply chasing symptom relief.

Six months later, Paul wasn't just experiencing less bloating and gas, I had him eating more than 20 different plant foods on a regular basis, he had far more energy throughout the day, and his bowel function had become completely predictable.

Paul found the symptoms that had dominated his life for years had quietly faded into the background. He discovered something I'd seen many times before.

You don't rebuild your health by looking for the next miracle cure. You rebuild it by changing the way you eat and live.

Eric's Clinical Insight

My goal was never to create patients who depended on me. It was to help people understand their body well enough that they no longer required my assistance. **REBUILD** is about becoming the kind of person who naturally creates health every day.

Building My New Lifestyle

These are the habits I want to continue long after this journal is finished.

Three habits I'll keep for life

1.

2.

3.

Three foods I'd like to eat more often

1.

2.

3.

Three habits I'd like to leave behind

1.

2.

3.

Feeding My Gut Garden

Just like a healthy garden, your gut microbiome needs regular care and nourishment.

This week I'll support my gut by:

- ☐ Eating 20+ different plant foods where possible.
- ☐ Choosing a wide variety of colourful fruits and vegetables**.**
- ☐ Eating more prebiotic foods to feed my beneficial gut bacteria.
- ☐ Including probiotic foods regularly where appropriate.
- ☐ Including enzymes, probiotics, and antimicrobial supplements
- ☐ Adding nuts and seeds to my meals and snacks.
- ☐ Using a variety of herbs and spices**.**
- ☐ Drinking enough water throughout the day.
- ☐ Walking or moving my body every day.
- ☐ Making sleep a priority.
- ☐ Taking time to relax and manage stress.
- ☐ Enjoying my meals and eating mindfully.
- ☐ Continuing my Gut Transformation Journal

Light Bulb Moment 💡

This week I realised...

_____
_____
_____

The habit making the biggest difference is:

_____
_____
_____
_____

Healthy Habits Tracker

Habit	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
Ate mostly whole, nourishing foods	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Ate slowly and chewed well	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Drank enough water	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Took enzymes & probiotics	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Took my microbial balancer	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Had dinner 2–3 hours before bed	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Walked or exercised	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Spent time outdoors	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Took time to relax	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Slept 7–8 hours	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

From My Clinic

Val's Story

Val (62yrs, retired) came to see me because she wanted to "fix her gut." When Val first came to see me, every day revolved around her digestion. Before leaving the house, she'd wonder where the nearest toilet was.

She always worried about eating out, and travelling made her very anxious. Every social invitation began with the same question: *"What if my tummy plays up?"*

Six months later, she smiled and said: *"Eric... I don't spend my day thinking about my gut anymore. I'm too busy enjoying my life, I truly appreciate your help."*

To me, that was one of the clearest signs of recovery. Not because every symptom had disappeared overnight, but because her health was no longer controlling how she lived in a continual state of fear or anxiety.

Eric's Clinical Insight

One of the greatest compliments I receive from patients was this: "I forgot I even had a digestive system." Now that's exactly how it should be. Healthy digestion works quietly in the background while you get on with enjoying your life.

One Conversation With Eric

Imagine it's twelve months from today. You've continued making healthy decisions and stayed consistent. You've trusted the process.

I'd like you to now describe the healthier version of yourself.

- How do you feel?
- What are you eating?
- What are you doing that you couldn't do before?

Write about that person below:

Looking Back

Today I feel proud because...

The healthiest habit I've developed is this:

The habit I want to continue forever is this:

_____

_____

_____

Eric's Thought For This Week

Don't measure your success by how good your diet or supplement regime is. Measure it by how much you've changed your daily habits. Those habits will still be serving you years after your diet has become stable and every supplement bottle has been thrown away.

_____

Looking Ahead

Next week we'll continue building your gut microbiome, increasing food diversity and creating the kind of healthy routines that become so natural you hardly think about them. Because that's the real goal.

Not finishing a program, but creating a life where good health simply becomes your new normal.

_____

WEEK 7 of 8

Building Resilience For Life

Stage 3 - REBUILD (Lite Guide - pages 66 - 76)

""Good health isn't something you find. It's something you build."

Seven weeks ago, you made a very important decision. You decided to stop being a symptom chaser and start understanding your health on a deeper level. That single decision has taken you much further than you may realise.

Over the past seven weeks, you've learned that better health isn't built on a perfect diet, supplement or one miracle treatment.

You've learned that it's built by understanding your body, removing obstacles to healing, restoring healthy digestive function, rebuilding your gut microbiome, and creating a lifestyle that allows your body to really thrive. That's what **REBUILD** is all about.

You'll never create a body that never gets sick, but you'll create one that's stronger, more adaptable and much more resilient. Because life will always have its challenges, there will be stressful days and the inevitable meals that aren't ideal.

You'll find that holidays, celebrations and unexpected setbacks always occur. That's all part of living. But the difference is that your body is now much better equipped to respond, recover and return to balance, and to me, that's what real health looks like.

Not perfection, but resilience.

Let's Pause & Reflect

Before you read any further, please take a moment to appreciate how far you've already come.

The biggest improvement I've noticed in myself is:

_____
_____
_____

I've noticed something that feels easier today than it did 7 weeks ago:

_____
_____
_____

One thing I'd like to continue improving is this:

_____

_____

_____

From My Clinic

Karen's Story

Karen (34, marine biologist), came to see me because she was exhausted by recurring vaginal yeast infections.

They had started in her early twenties and, over the years, had become increasingly frequent. She'd been prescribed numerous antifungal creams, pessaries and oral medications. They would help for a while, but the infections always seemed to return.

Like many women, Karen had been treating the problem where it appeared. Very little attention had been given to what might be happening elsewhere in her body.

Years of study, long working hours, irregular meals, extensive travel, broken relationships, poor sleep and repeated courses of antifungal drugs had gradually taken their toll. Her resilience had slowly diminished.

I explained that while a vaginal yeast infection is a local problem, the gut microbiome plays an important role in immune health**.** If the gut ecosystem is significantly disrupted, it can become much harder for the body to maintain a healthy microbial balance elsewhere. Besides, the gut and vaginal microbiome were more closely related than she had realised.

A comprehensive stool analysis revealed significant intestinal dysbiosis, including multiple Candida species alongside an overgrowth of unfavourable bacteria and very low levels of several beneficial bacteria. Our focus shifted away from only treating the symptoms. Instead, we worked on restoring her gut microbiome environment that supported great immune health.

We used targeted antimicrobials to help reduce the gut microbial imbalance, followed by a structured programme to rebuild her gut and vaginal microbiome with a more diverse diet, probiotic foods, beneficial bacteria and healthier daily habits.

Over the following months, her digestion steadily improved, her energy returned, and the yeast infections became progressively less frequent.

One year later, Karen told me she hadn't experienced another infection for many months. She smiled and said: *"For the first time in years, I feel like my body is working with me instead of against me."*

_____

Eric's Clinical Insight

One of the biggest lessons I learned in my practice over time was that the body should never be viewed as a collection of separate parts. The gut, immune system, skin, brain and hormonal system are constantly communicating with one another.

Sometimes the place where symptoms appear isn't where the real problem begins.

That's why **REBUILD** is about more than restoring digestion. It's about rebuilding a healthier internal environment that supports resilience, balance and a person's longterm wellbeing.

Your Reflection

How much does your digestion control the quality of your life today still?

Please circle one.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Scale: 1 = It controls everything 10 = I rarely think about it is silent.

What would you love to enjoy again without worrying about your gut?

Why Gut Microbiome Diversity Matters

One of the most exciting discoveries in gut health is the importance of gut microbiome diversity. A healthy gut microbiome doesn't thrive on eating the same foods every day. It thrives on variety, and this includes different vegetables, fruits, herbs and spices, nuts and seeds, legumes, and different fibres.

Every plant food brings something unique to your gut garden.

So instead of asking this: *"What food should I avoid?"*

Try asking this: *"What healthy food can I add this week?"*

It's a small shift in thinking but it can make an enormous difference over time.

My Diversity Challenge

This week I'd like to try these five new foods I haven't tried before:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

Which one did I enjoy the most?

_____

_____

From My Clinic

Robert's Story

Robert (45, farmer) was a sheep and beef farmer who lives not far from where I do. He came to see me because of chronic constipation, fatigue, recurring arthritis and prostate problems. As you'd expect, he was physically active. Walking several kilometres every day around the farm certainly wasn't the problem.

His diet, however, told a very different story. It seriously lacked diversity and contained far too much meat protein. Like many farmers, Robert ate large amounts of meat every day, up to three times a day.

He hardly ate any fruit, rarely included more than a few vegetables with his meals, never ate legumes, and nuts and seeds were virtually absent from his diet. His vegetable intake was largely limited to potatoes, pumpkin, carrots and peas. He didn't drink coffee, but he did enjoy up to six beers most evenings.

His naturopath told him he was eating well because he was following a meat-heavy, paleo-style way of eating. I explained that while quality protein is important, so is feeding your gut microbiome**,** and that because meat lacks fibre it can contribute to constipation.

A healthy gut thrives on diversity. It needs the fibres and plant compounds found in fruits, vegetables, legumes, nuts, seeds, herbs and spices. Without them, beneficial bacteria struggle to flourish.

This is one reason I'm no fan of very meat-heavy diets. In my experience, they often lack the diversity of plant foods needed to support a healthy gut microbiome over the long term. Meat is fine occasionally, but not sausages for breakfast, lamb chops for lunch, and beefsteak for dinner most days.

Rather than taking meat away, we slowly focused on adding more plant foods. Each week Robert introduced a few new vegetables, some fruit, legumes, nuts and seeds. He gradually reduced his beer intake and began enjoying a much wider variety of whole foods. I encouraged him to quit beer during the week, and only have a couple on the weekends, this made such a difference to his urinary (prostate) problems, that he eventually quit alcohol altogether.

Over the following months, Robert's bowel function became much regular, his energy improved, and his gout attacks became much less frequent. He was surprised that reducing meat and adding foods could make such a noticeable difference.

Eric's Clinical Insight

One of the most common problems I saw wasn't that people ate too much of one food. It was that they either ate too little variety, or way too much of one type of food, like meat**.**

A healthy gut microbiome depends on diversity. Every different fruit, vegetable, herb, legume, nut and seed provides unique fibres and plant compounds that nourish different groups of beneficial bacteria. The more diverse your diet becomes, the more diverse and resilient your gut microbiome has the opportunity to become.

This Week's Focus

This week I commit to:

- ☐ A greater variety of colourful plant foods.
- ☐ Reduce any kind of canned food
- ☐ Trying at least five new foods.
- ☐ Reducing my alcohol intake further
- ☐ Less meat protein and more plant protein.
- ☐ Include spices in my cooking.
- ☐ Include garlic and ginger most days
- ☐ Drinking water daily.
- ☐ Prioritising sleep.
- ☐ Walking or moving every day.
- ☐ Chewing well & eating without rushing.
- ☐ Managing stress much more effectively.
- ☐ Continuing to enjoy food rather than fear it.

This Week I Ate Foods From These Colours

How many different fruit and vegetable colours did I eat today?

☐ Green	☐ Blue	☐ White
☐ Purple	☐ Red	☐ Yellow
☐ Orange	☐ Brown	

Can I add another colour tomorrow?

Aim to eat foods from every colour group each week. Different colours provide different fibres, vitamins, minerals and plant compounds that help nourish a diverse and healthy gut microbiome. Here are a few examples:

Green: cabbage, spinach, broccoli, kale, kiwi, avocado
Red: tomatoes, strawberries, raspberries, red capsicum
Orange: carrots, pumpkin, sweet potato, oranges
Yellow: corn, yellow capsicum, papaya, pineapple, lemon
Purple: beetroot, eggplant, purple cabbage, blackberries
Blue: blueberries, blue grapes, damson plums, blue oyster mushroom
White: garlic, onions, cauliflower, mushrooms, parsnips
Brown: walnuts, almonds, flaxseed, chia seeds, lentils, mushrooms, whole grains

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Healthy Habits Tracker

Habit	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
Ate mostly whole, nourishing foods	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Ate slowly and chewed well	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Drank enough water	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Took enzymes & probiotics	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Took my microbial balancer	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Had dinner 2–3 hours before bed	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Walked or exercised	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Spent time outdoors	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Took time to relax	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Slept 7–8 hours	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

From My Life

My Dad's Story

My father struggled with digestive problems for as long as I can remember.

During the 1980s he bought several books on Candida after years of seeing bowel specialists, undergoing countless investigations and searching for answers. Yet one of the biggest clues was sitting right in front of him. His diet completely lacked diversity. Fruit was non-existent.

Vegetables were limited to the same few varieties he'd eaten all his life. He never ate nuts (apart from roasted and salted peanuts), seeds or legumes.

What he did enjoy was sugar, and plenty of it. Sweet biscuits, copious amounts of ice cream every day. Several cups of coffee every day, each with multiple teaspoons of sugar. His pantry was filled with sugary biscuits and lined with tins of sweetened condensed milk, while his freezer was packed with ice cream and frozen TV dinners.

My brother once watched him eat an entire packet of sweet biscuits within a few hours and quietly said to me: "I wonder if that's got something to do with his bowel problems?"

Dad lived with constant bloating, tremendous amounts of gas, and diarrhoea for many years. As his weight ballooned, so did his blood pressure. Unfortunately, healthy eating was never something he truly embraced. He often told me,

"Son, I just love food that tastes good."

In my experience, when somebody say "food that tastes good" that usually meant very sweet food - food loaded with refined white sugar, something Candida thrives on.

Looking back, I wonder how different things might have been if Dad had understood what we know today about the importance of dietary diversity, the gut microbiome and the profound effect that food, especially sugar, has on our long-term health.

He sadly passed away from a stroke in 2004 at the age of 72. Like any son, I wish I could have helped him. But one of the hardest lessons I learned is that you can't change someone who isn't ready to change themselves.

That experience strengthened my belief that education is one of the greatest gifts we can give ourselves, and it's another reason I'm passionate about the work I do.

Eric's Clinical Insight

One thing I learned from my father—and later from thousands of patients—is that our body reflects the choices we make repeatedly over many years**.** A diet dominated by refined sugars, saturated fats, and salt and lacking diversity doesn't just affect your waistline. It also affects your gut microbiome, your metabolism, your immune system and, ultimately, your long-term health. It shortens your lifespan potentially by decades.

The great news is that your microbiome can begin changing within days of improving your diet. Every colourful piece of fruit. Every colourful vegetable, and every handful of nuts or seeds.

One Conversation With Eric

Imagine you and I are sitting together one year from today. It's a beautiful sunny day and you're feeling well. Your digestion is working well, and your life feels normal again. What would you tell me?

Please write that conversation below right now:

My Healthy Lifestyle Plan

Three habits I'll continue every day

1.

2.

3.

Three habits I'll continue every week

1.

2.

3.

Three things I never want to return to

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Looking Back

The greatest improvement I've noticed so far is:

_____
_____

The new habit I'm most proud of is:

_____
_____

The biggest lesson I've learned is:

_____
_____

Eric's Final Thought This Week

One of the greatest privileges of my career has been watching people realise that they were stronger than they thought. My hope is that you're beginning to discover that person within yourself, because you've developed more self-confidence and have become more resilient.

_____

Looking Ahead

Next week we'll celebrate everything you've achieved. We'll create your long-term gut health "blueprint", identify the habits you want to keep for life and make a personal commitment to staying well . The real goal was never to finish this journal, it was to create a healthier life you'll continue living long after you've completed the past 8 weeks.

WEEK 8 of 8

Building Resilience For Life

Stage 3 - REBUILD (Lite Guide - pages 78 - 82)

""Let's make great gut health your new way of life!"

Greetings, my friend,

Eight weeks ago you made a decision that your health deserved another chance. I've tried to encourage you to stop searching for another quick fix and started building something much more valuable a, healthier future.

Take a moment and think back to what it was like for you two months ago, your gut, but also your mindset. Maybe you were tired, frustrated, and confused.

Some of you reading this were perhaps at the point of giving up, wondering if you'd ever enjoy food again, or that bloating or brain fog would ever get better.

Now look at where you are, I hope you've learned to understand your body instead of fighting it. I hope you've improved your daily habits and maybe even begun trusting your digestion again.

Throughout this program I've tried to emphasise that lasting health isn't built through perfection, but through consistency. I've also tried to emphasise that going on the healthiest diet isn't necessarily going to cure you, nor is any single supplement going to transform your health overnight. I think you've probably worked out that It was the hundreds of healthy decisions you made along the way that made all the difference.

And that's something definitely worth celebrating.

Let's Pause & Reflect

I'd like you to think back to the person you were eight weeks ago.

The biggest change I've noticed in myself since starting is this:

Today I feel more hopeful than I did two months ago because of this:

_____
_____
_____

The healthiest decision I ever made in the past two months was this:

_____
_____
_____
_____

From My Clinic

Jean's Story... One Last Time

We first discussed Jean back in Week 1. She'd spent decades searching for answers. When she first came to see me, she had almost accepted that poor digestion was simply part of her life. It wasn't, she patiently rebuilt her health one habit at a time, one meal at a time, and one day at a time. Several months later she was eating foods she'd avoided for many years.

Jean slowly regained healthy weight and had energy again. But what struck me about Jean is that the greatest change wasn't physical - *it was emotional.*

She smiled more, could travel and laugh more, she had her life back. That's why I wanted you to meet Jean, not because her story is really unique. Because I've seen many versions of Jean before. People who patiently rebuild their health.

Eric's Clinical Insight

Your body has an incredible ability to heal. Sometimes all it needs is enough time, the right mindset and the right environment.

_____

Your Reflection

Which patient story throughout this journal has inspired you the most?

☐ Jean ☐ Tracey ☐ Susan ☐ Brian ☐ Mandy ☐ Robert ☐ Aaron ☐ Gerry ☐ Val

☐ Other _____

Why?

My Gut Health Manifesto

Complete these statements.

I choose to...

I believe...

I will continue to...

I will no longer...

My Daily Non-Negotiables

These are the habits I choose to protect every day.

☐ Drink enough water.	☐ Walk or move my body.
☐ Eat whole foods.	☐ Manage stress.
☐ Eat slowly and chew well.	☐ Listen to my body.
☐ Avoid poor food choices	☐ Stay consistent.
☐ Prioritise sleep.	☐ Continue learning.
☐ Minimise alcohol	☐ Get outside for fresh air and sun.

Other habit:

_____

_____

_____

From My Clinic

Ofir's Story

Ofir (40) had served in an elite special operations unit in the Middle East. He had survived military missions that demanded extraordinary courage, discipline and resilience under unimaginable pressure. Yet nothing he experienced during his military career prepared him for the battle he would face within his own body.

After contracting a condition called Q fever during one of his tours, he was prescribed doxycycline continuously for more than a year. By the time he contacted me in early 2018, his health had deteriorated to the point where he could barely function.

He struggled to swallow, and his digestion was in ruins. He lived with severe bloating, relentless abdominal pain and debilitating bowel problems. He suffered constant tinnitus, intense pain around his kidneys, pain in his lower abdomen and scrotum, overwhelming fatigue and a long list of other distressing symptoms.

His quality of life had become almost unrecognisable.

By then, Ofir had exhausted every avenue available to him. He had consulted countless medical specialists, including gastroenterologists, psychologists, urologists and leading medical centres. His army had flown him to the Mayo Clinic in the United States in search of answers.

Despite exhaustive investigations, nobody could explain why Ofir remained so desperately unwell. Rather than guessing, we began where I often begin—with the gut. A comprehensive stool analysis revealed one of the most profoundly disturbed gut ecosystems I had ever encountered in my entire career.

Multiple Candida species, several intestinal parasites, a lack of sufficient pancreatic enzymes, severe gut inflammation, significant dysbiosis and a complete depletion of beneficial bacteria painted a picture of a microbiome that had been devastated after such prolonged antibiotic treatment.

For the first time in a long time, there was a logical explanation for what his body had been trying to tell him. We developed a structured programme based on the same principles you've been learning throughout this journal.

First, we carefully reduced the microbial overgrowth, introducing treatment gradually to minimise die-off reactions before increasing intensity as his body became stronger. Next, we restored digestive function with simple foods, enzymes, and probiotics.

Finally, we began the long process of rebuilding his gut microbiome, increasing dietary diversity, restoring beneficial bacteria and giving his body the time and support it needed to heal. Recovery was anything but quick, and it unfolded month by month.

Each follow-up stool analysis showed encouraging progress. Ofir's gut microbiome gradually became healthier and more balanced. His digestion strengthened. His energy steadily returned. He regained the weight he had lost, and, perhaps most importantly, he began believing in his body again.

By the end of the year, Ofir estimated his health had improved from around 15% to almost 80%**.** For the first time in years, he could see a future beyond his illness.

What impressed me most wasn't how sick Ofir had become. It was his incredibly strong determination. Over the years in clinical practice, I've treated thousands of people. Only very few possessed the level of discipline, patience and commitment that Ofir brought to his recovery.

He never asked for shortcuts. He simply trusted the process, did the work, and kept moving forward—even when progress felt painfully slow. Even when it stalled, and even when he went backwards instead of forwards.

Ofir reminded me that the body has an extraordinary capacity to recover when given the right conditions. But it also reminded me that recovery requires something else. The courage to keep going even when you can't yet see the finish line.

Eric's Clinical Insight

Throughout my career, people often asked me this: *"Eric, how long will it take before I recover?"* My answer was always the same: *"As long as your body needs."*

Healing isn't some race, you just can't force it. You can only create the conditions that allow it to happen.

The people who achieved the greatest improvements were like Ofir, they remained patient, committed, stayed consistent and trusted the process, even when progress felt slow. Sometimes, the greatest breakthrough isn't finding the perfect treatment. It's finding the determination to keep going despite all odds.

My father's case taught me that you simply cannot force people to change, they only change when or even if they're ready to change.

Perhaps that's why I'm so pleased you've completed this journal. Because you were ready to make that change, and I'm really proud of you. Nobody can make healthy decisions for you, but once you decide to make them consistently...

Your entire future changes, and so does the future of those around you.

My Relapse Prevention Plan

If my symptoms begin returning, I won't panic. Instead I will:

- ☐ Slow down.
- ☐ Return to the Lite foundations.
- ☐ Improve my sleep.
- ☐ Ask for help if I need it.
- ☐ Drink more water.
- ☐ Walk every day.
- ☐ Review my eating habits.
- ☐ Give my body time to respond.
- ☐ Reduce my stress.
- ☐ Learn to be less hard on myself.

My personal reminder to myself:

_____
_____
_____
_____

Looking Back

The greatest lesson of all I've learned so far is this:

_____
_____
_____

The habit that has changed my life the most is:

_____
_____
_____

The biggest surprise for me has been this:

_____
_____
_____
_____

Looking Forward

One year from today I hope to be able to say this...

_____
_____
_____
_____

Five years from today I hope to be able to say...

_____
_____
_____

A Final Letter From Eric

My Dear Friend,

Thank you.

Thank you for allowing me to walk beside you through these past eight weeks. I may have created the Lite program and written the journal, but you are the one who has done the real work. Every meal you changed, every habit you replaced, every walk you took, every time you chose to keep going — those were all your decisions.

Even though I retired from clinical practice, I have never really retired from caring about people's health. I still love teaching, sharing what I've learned and connecting with people who are willing to take responsibility for their wellbeing. That is why creating this program has meant so much to me.

I hope these eight weeks have taught you something important: your body is not an enemy to be conquered with drugs and surgery. It has been trying to work for you all along. Sometimes it simply needs better conditions, better habits and a little more time and love. Give your body the right environment and it can do *remarkable* things.

And please don't put this journal on a shelf and forget about it. Keep it and use it. Come back to it. Read through your notes six months from now. Notice what has changed, and add new observations. Keep learning. Keep making those small, sensible replacements that gradually become part of who you are.

Because the goal was never simply to have a better gut, the goal was to become someone who naturally looks after their health. That is a much bigger achievement.

I hope this isn't really goodbye. I'll be continuing to share what I've learned on YouTube**,** and I intend to stay there for a long time to come. I'll keep talking about gut health, nutrition, digestion, the microbiome and the practical lessons I've learned

through nearly 40 years in this field. So keep watching, keep learning, and keep in touch.

And if life takes you somewhere else for a while, that's fine too. You can always reconnect with me. I'll still be here. If this journal has helped you take even one meaningful step towards a healthier, more confident life, then every hour spent creating it has been worthwhile.

I wish you good health, good digestion, plenty of energy, and many good years ahead. Keep going. Your journey doesn't end here, it's only beginning.

Congratulations

You Actually Did It!

You've completed **The Gut Health Transformation Journal.**

Not because you finished reading some health book, because you actually invested in your own health. You reflected, learned, and made healthier decisions. You showed up day after day, week after week, not that deserves celebrating alone.

Eric's Final Thought

One belief has never changed with me after working with many patients.

Small daily habits practiced consistently change people's lives.

I want you to take care of your body and be patient with yourself. To keep learning and showing up. And whenever life knocks you right off course—as it sometimes will—simply return to the basics. Self-efficacy. One healthy meal, one good walk, one early night, and one good decision after another. That's how lasting health is built.

Incipiamus!

Warmest regards,

Eric Bakker, N.D.
The New Zealand Naturopath
August 2026

A PRACTICAL JOURNAL. A PROVEN PROGRAM.
YOUR ROADMAP TO REAL, LASTING CHANGE.

The Gut Transformation Journal is your companion throughout the 8-Week Lite Program. It's designed to help you understand what's really going on in your gut, make the right changes with confidence, and build habits that create lasting health and vitality.

INSIDE YOU'LL DISCOVER:

- A clear, step-by-step framework based on the REMOVE, REPLACE, REBUILD system
- Daily guidance, reflections and action steps to keep you focused
- Food, lifestyle and mindset strategies that support healing and balance
- Tools to track progress and celebrate your wins
- Encouragement and insights from 39 years of clinical experience

THIS JOURNAL IS FOR YOU IF YOU WANT TO:

- Calm your gut and reduce uncomfortable symptoms
- Improve digestion, energy, mood and immunity
- Build a stronger, more resilient body
- Create a healthier relationship with food and your body

Small daily changes. Big long-term results.

YOU HAVE THE POWER TO TRANSFORM YOUR GUT – AND YOUR LIFE.



ERIC BAKKER, N.D.

Candida and Gut Health Specialist
39 Years of Clinical Experience

Eric has spent nearly four decades helping patients worldwide recover from chronic Candida, digestive dysfunction, and microbiome imbalance. His approach emphasises simplicity, physiology, and long-term results, not restriction or fear.

KEEP LEARNING. KEEP CONNECTING.

Watch me on YouTube for weekly videos on gut health, nutrition, lifestyle and natural medicine.
I'll be here for a long time to come!

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