



# **3 Powerful Habits to Improve Your MS**

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Prior to 2008, my life was filled with work, good friends, family, and the activities I loved. A beautiful wife, two kids and I had just earned the designation of All American at the ½ Ironman Triathlon distance. From the outside, it looked like I had it all but during all of this good fortune, I always felt that it was not enough.

During this time, I had bouts of depression and my stress became worse at work. The mistakes and lack of accomplishments in my career left me feeling like I was not enough, as my lack of self-worth increased. I was trying to fill a bottomless hole with external accomplishments, ignoring what really mattered, me.

Then in 2008, I paralyzed my right leg taking away what I loved, who I thought I was, and the identity I desperately held onto.

During my journey of healing my paralyzed leg, the negative thoughts of not being enough led me to career, family, and health struggles. These negative thoughts plagued me as I avoided the changes to my life. At this time, I was pretending and acting like I was going to be OK. I acted confident and strong to everyone else, but inside I was scared and lost. The self-denial of my injury and pretending to be OK led me to depression and thoughts of suicide.

I had to make a change but did not know how. As I grasped tightly to my old sense of self, I went back to my old familiar ways. Out of sheer determination and a desire to have my old life back, I completed Ironman in 2011, 3 years after I paralyzed my leg.

This amazing accomplishment did not come close to what I really needed. The act I was putting on, of being OK, continued. Along with the cycle of high levels of stress and fear. I did not ask for help and thought I just needed to deal with it.

My previous identity of not being good enough or deserving left me living in fear and shame. Holding on too tight, kept me from exploring other options, and being open to receiving help.

I kept walking through life with my eyes closed.

My journey was not over, in 2017, I was diagnosed with Primary Progressive MS (Multiple Sclerosis) and told I was less than a year away from a wheelchair. My fear and worry surmounted and I did not like the options my MS neurologist was giving me. I began seeing many MS experts from around the country that only confirmed this grim prognosis. At this time, I avoided all medication due to the side effects, and deep down I knew there had to be a better way. This was the wake-up call I needed.

I began researching alternative methods and studying doctors like Dr. Terry Wahls and the Wahls Protocol. I researched why symptoms happened and what was causing them. I read stories and spoke to many people that have healed incurable diseases by using alternative means like meditation and diet. Through this journey of discovery, I began to feel better physically and if I had a challenging day with flare-ups, I knew why.

I realized that the next step was up to me and to ask for help. I later discovered that being diagnosed with MS would be one of the greatest gifts ever presented to me, because I woke up to what was truly important, me.

The gift I soon began to realize happened when I was given the choice to address who I was, what I wanted, and more importantly deal with the mental roadblocks and stress of not feeling like I was enough.

When I began to look inward and begin loving myself for who I am, I discovered and believed that "I am enough" and my old identity was holding me back from taking control of the disease and living the life I wanted.

When I opened my eyes to the beauty and joy of my life, not accomplishments or prestige, I started to see life as the joy it is.

I began studying and exploring how to control MS and limit the symptoms and episodes it gave. During my journey, I became a Certified Health Coach, studying Food as Medicine, understanding what foods helped me thrive and others that made my MS symptoms worse. I also studied and practiced meditation and breathwork to calm my nervous system and decrease my stress.

Along this journey, I came across many teachers, guides, and resources that have all helped me. I live daily, the power of Food as Medicine, the calm that comes from sitting quietly, exercise that is balanced, love that gives from an open heart, and an awareness of who I am.

There is a difference between your outward appearance and who you are. Your diagnosis does not have to be who you are, you have an opportunity. You have an opportunity to know yourself on the inside and not just what we present on the outside. We have an opportunity to feel good and not be a victim to what has happened to us.

As a Certified Health Coach, Meditation Practitioner, host of the podcast "Identity of Health," author of Identity of Health, and public speaker, I took my experiences, to help recently diagnosed individuals develop the Identity of a survivor and the habits necessary to be one.

I want to encourage and guide you to live your best life with MS no matter what that means for you. We can live the life we want and what our heart calls us to be.

This eBook is meant to be a guide for you, to understand what may be causing your flare-ups and challenges with MS and steps that you can easily and immediately implement to control them.

This book has been broken down into what I have learned through my own ups and downs with MS. I now want to teach you what has helped me and many others thrive with MS. By the end of the book, you will know 3 powerful habits that can improve your MS today.

**Let's Get Started!**



**MS DOES  
NOT  
CONTROL  
YOUR LIFE**



**YOU ARE IN  
CONTROL  
OF YOUR  
MS**

# First, let's check out what is a cause of these MS symptoms?

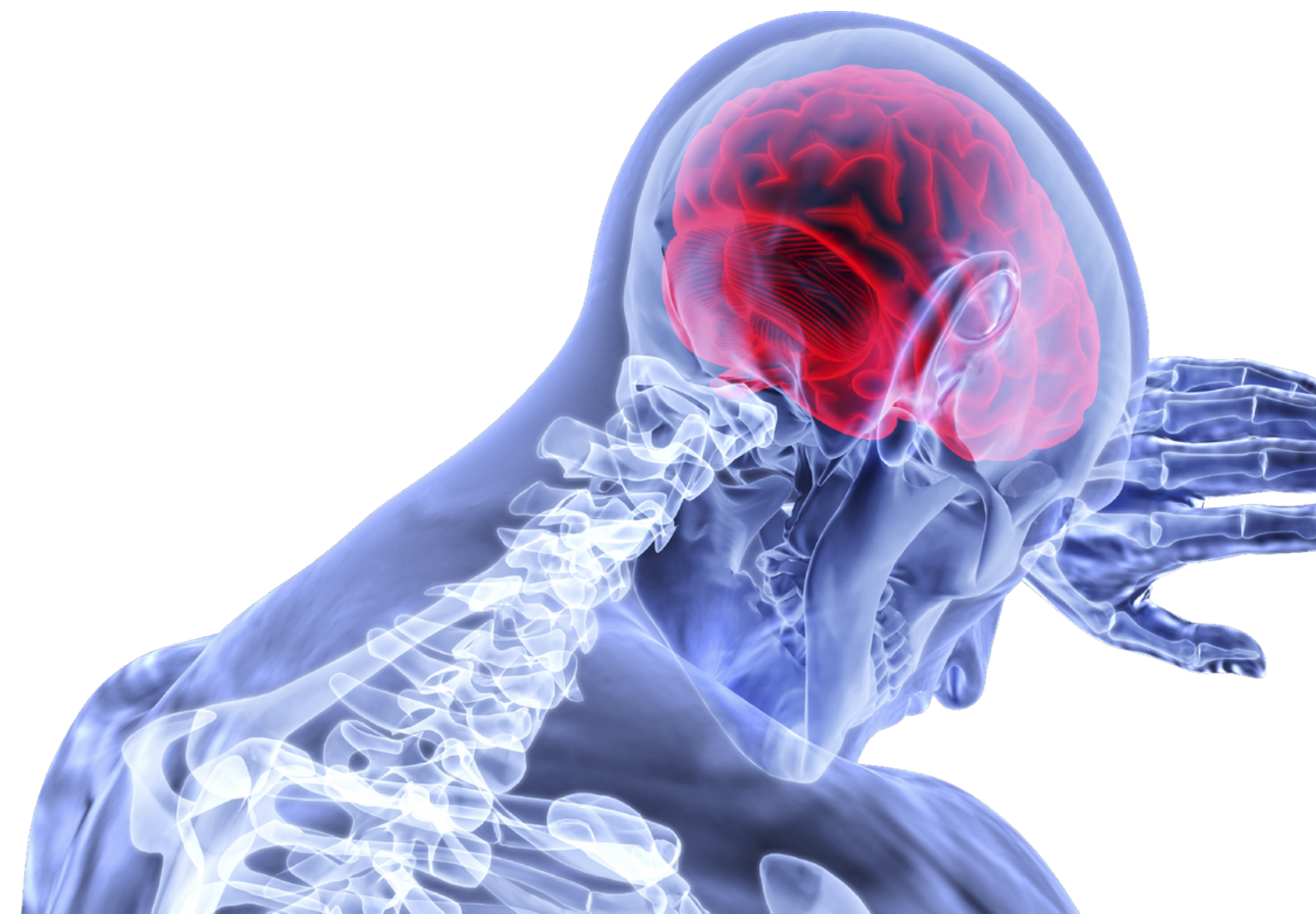
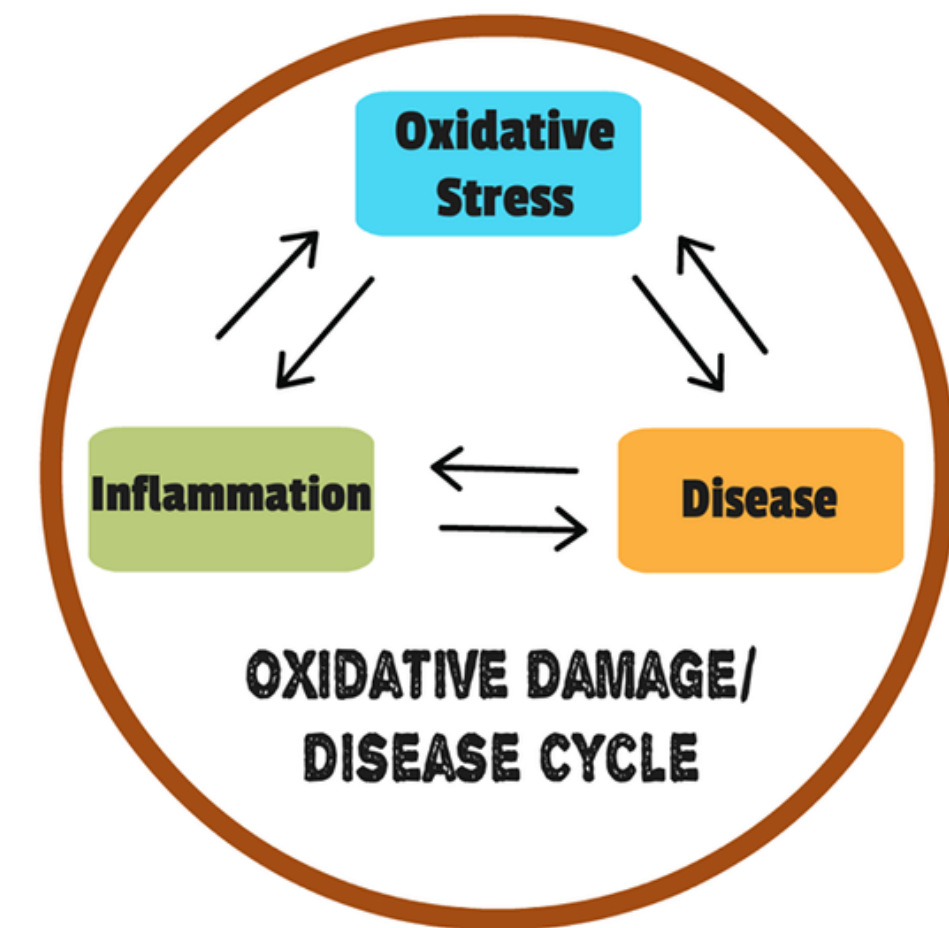
## in·flam·ma·tion

noun

1. a localized physical condition in which part of the body becomes reddened, swollen, hot, and often painful, especially as a reaction to injury or infection.

If our symptoms increase because of external events like stress, certain foods, and overactivity then this external negative stimulus could be causing increased inflammation within our bodies.

For example, when I do not slow down and I try to do too much in hot weather, my symptoms increase. My balance is off and I notice I am more tired and irritable.



# LET'S LOOK AT 4 COMMON ACTIVITIES THAT INCREASE INFLAMMATION AND MS SYMPTOMS



# #1 HEAT

MS damages the protective sheath around nerve cells in your brain and spinal cord. This slows down nerve signals, so your body doesn't always respond the way it should. Heat can slow these signals even more. MS can also affect the part of your brain that controls your body's temperature.



*Overexertion, Trying  
to be a superhero*



*Not listening to your  
body and slowing down*



*Not drinking enough  
water*



*Not taking Breaks*

# #2 STRESS

Our brain starts believing we're constantly running from that tiger or that every person we see potentially has a knife, even if it's day-to-day stressors or small traumas — like microaggressions or a high-stress job. This constant nervous system activation leads to chronic inflammation.

## *Work*

- High Demands • Deadlines
- Pressure from Boss, Colleagues or Self
- Deadlines • Long Hours

## *Family*

- Obligations • Challenges of Raising kids
- Events • Arguments • Regret

## *Environment*

- Toxins in your living space
- Toxins in your work environment
- Toxins in your food • Noise
- Fear



# #3 FOOD

Foods that cause inflammation are refined carbohydrates, such as white bread and pastries. French fries and other fried foods, soda, and other sugar-sweetened beverages. Sugar processed foods and processed meat (hot dogs, sausage)

- Chemicals Sprayed on Crops Before and After Harvest
- Preservatives
- Additives
- Refined Sugars
- Water
- Allergies
- Unhealthy Soils



# #4 Inactivity

A lack of movement and exercise can decrease strength and balance, decrease bowel and bladder control, and increase spasticity related to MS.



- Allowing your Muscles to Atrophy
- Losing Range of Motion
- Overweight
- Strain on Your Heart (cardiovascular system)
- Poor Circulation
- Arthritis
- Cardiovascular disease
- Diabetes
- Osteoporosis
- Weakened muscles
- Joint pain



# Powerful Ways to Improve MS

**Start Here**

**Create good habits!**

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1. Reducing and Managing Stress
2. Being Aware of What You Eat
3. Staying Active





# 1

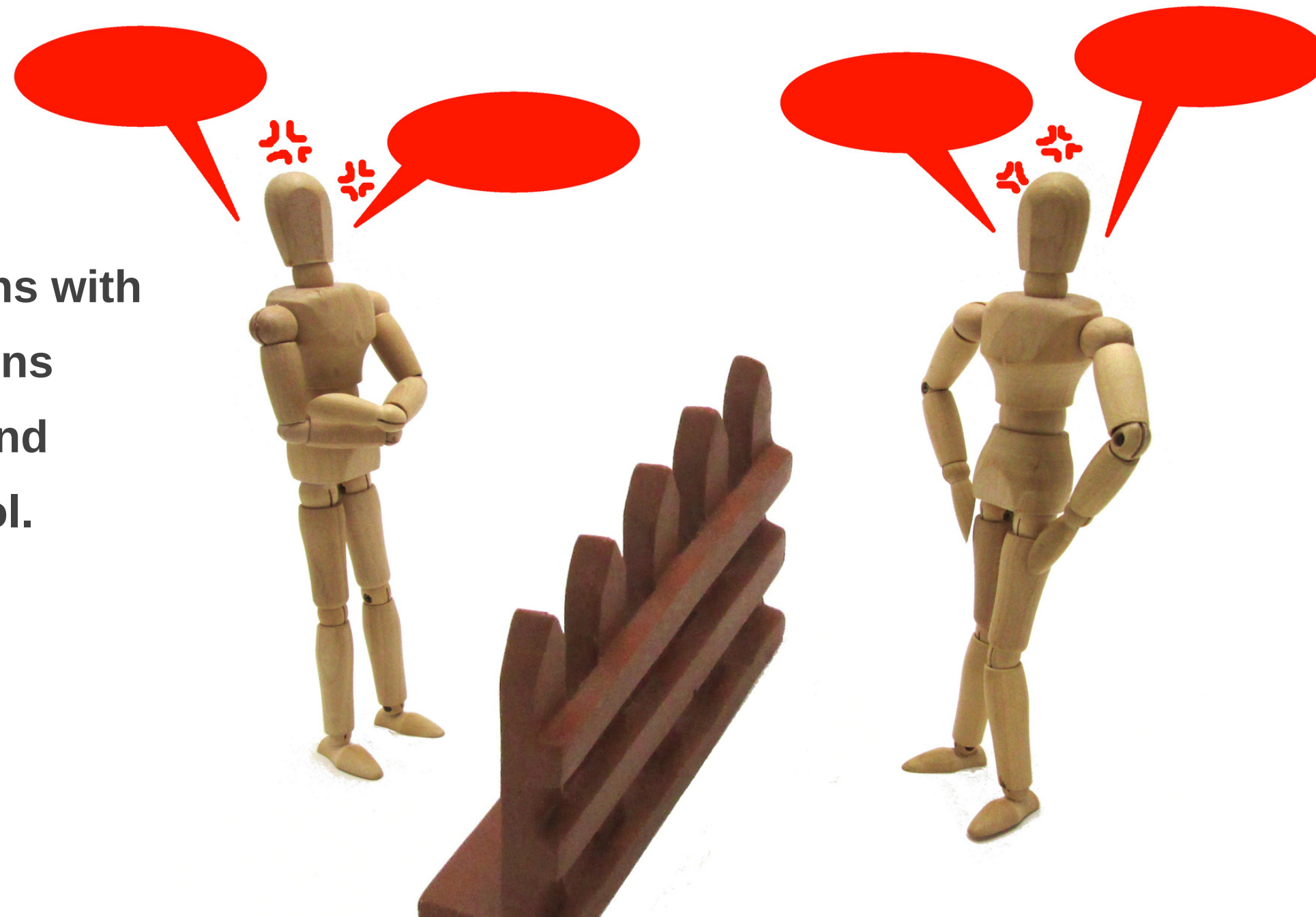
# Reduce Stress

1. Setting Boundaries
2. Finding Support
3. Meditation



# Setting Boundaries

**Letting those around us know  
what is OK and NOT OK**



Having these discussions with those that you love begins changing old patterns and habits giving you control.

- What language used is not appropriate
- What actions will you NOT respond too
- What actions and language will cause you to walk away or exit the situation

# Finding Support

Talking to someone that discusses how you feel with MS, challenges you to dig deeper into yourself and be aware of where stress is and how to address it, this can be freeing.

If you do not have or know someone begin searching.

1. Search the internet, Type “therapist, or MS Support Group as a good start.
2. Schedule a free discovery, 1st session
3. Pick a group or person that you like and challenges you to be better

**Do not take this journey alone.**



# Meditation

To meditate means to think deeply or focus one's mind for a period of time, in silence, or guided as a method of relaxation.



- Meditation is easy and free
- Meditation is a practice and habit
- Meditation is not goal-driven
- Meditation is going in and not driven by external outcomes
- Meditation is your own practice of self discovery

You can use great apps like Insight timer etc to begin slowing down and loving yourself

<https://insighttimer.com/>

**More Importantly....Meditation is About**

# Slowing Down and Loving Ourselves



# # 2

# Food as Medicine

## Our food system has changed

- Genetic modification
- Pesticides Sprayed on Crops
- Unhealthy Soils
- Sugar
- Toxins allowed in our food
- Processed Foods
- Chemicals in our water
- Nutrient Deficient Produce



# Try Removing These 4 Things From Your Diet

## Gluten



## SOY



## Dairy



## SUGAR



For just 2 weeks  
and  
see how you feel

# New Habits that Will Improve Your MS



- Stop eating highly processed foods that is no longer, food
- Increase your organic vegetables (9 cups a day)
- Avoid Gluten and Dairy
- Increase your healthy water intake



"In general, you should try to drink between half an ounce and an ounce of water for each pound you weigh, every day."  
For example, if you weigh 150 pounds, that would be 75 to 150 ounces of water a day

Turn your body into a science experiment

Use this as a launch pad to explore functional medicine like Dr. Terry Wahls or a functional nutritionist

# # 3 Exercise

**When we are in a movement we are sending the signal to our brain and bodies that we are still alive!**



- Regular activity reduces inflammation
- Activates our endothelium (our internal pharmacy)
- Keeps our muscles active and pliable

**Start slow - Record your wins for example 600 steps on a walk to 750**

# What Gets in Our Way

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- Not making changes a priority
- Starting too big and not seeing wins
- Not making it easy to start
- Accountability
- Not Celebrating your wins



# What Helps

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- Give Yourself a Break
- Create a Journal of Wins
- Self Love
- Support
- Journaling
- Loving Accountability



# Next Steps

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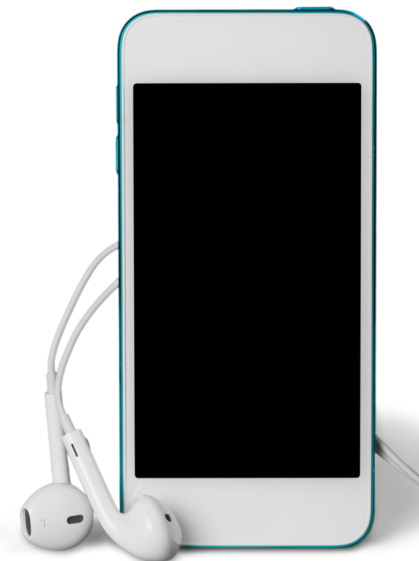
Identity of  
Multiple Sclerosis (MS)

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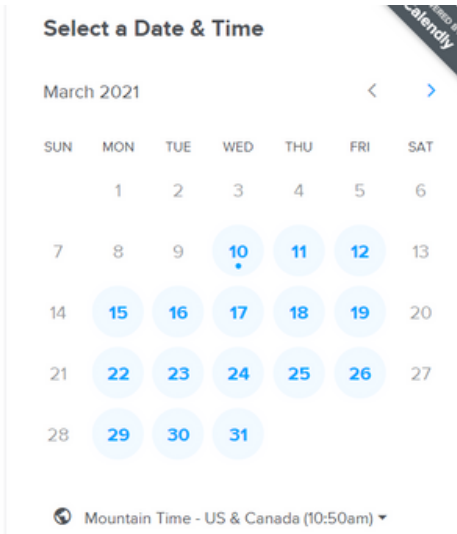


Matt Rowe  
**30 Minute Discovery Call  
with Matt Rowe**

🕒 30 min

💬 Web conferencing details provided upon  
confirmation.

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Schedule a free  
Breakthrough 30  
Min Discovery Call

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## Disclaimer

You should consult your physician or other health care professional before starting this or any other fitness or nutrition program to determine if it is right for your needs. This is particularly true if you (or your family) have a history of high blood pressure or heart disease, or if you have ever experienced chest pain when exercising or have experienced chest pain in the past month when not engaged in physical activity, smoke, have high cholesterol, are obese, or have a bone or joint problem that could be made worse by a change in physical activity or diet changes. Do not make any changes to your diet or exercise if your physician or health care provider advises against it. If you experience faintness, dizziness, pain or shortness of breath at any time while exercising or changing your diet you should stop immediately.

This book offers health, fitness and nutritional information and is designed for educational purposes only. You should not rely on this information as a substitute for, nor does it replace professional medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment. If you have any concerns or questions about your health, you should always consult with a physician or other health-care professional. Do not disregard, avoid or delay obtaining medical or health-related advice from your health-care professional because of something you may have read in this book. The use of any information provided in this book is solely at your own risk.

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If you are in the United States and think you are having a medical or health emergency, call your health care professional, or 911, immediately.