

## **A Long-term Approach for Long-term Change**

If you want to change something in your life then you have to change something in your life. If you only want a temporary change then only make a temporary change, but if you are looking for a permanent change, then you need to be making permanent changes to support that.

That sounds pretty logical really doesn't it? But isn't it true that so often we try and achieve change without being prepared to actually make any changes, or hope to make permanent change as a result of a temporary action? How many people around the world every day decide they want to lose weight and they are going to achieve it by going on a diet? These people are looking for permanent change presumably, not just wanting to shed the weight for a few weeks or months and then pile it back on again. But they are aiming to achieve it by taking a temporary action. For a limited period of time they are committed to eating less, eating differently, perhaps using some form of food replacements and/or perhaps taking some kind of drug. They hope that by doing this for a defined period of time they will shed their unwanted weight, and then they can go back to eating normally. But using this approach how will they have changed their normal eating habits so that once they stop the diet they don't end up back at square one? I suspect generally the answer is they won't have changed those habits, and that is why this approach is generally so unsuccessful.

To achieve permanent change, you need to make permanent change. If your reaction to that is "but I like the food I eat now, I don't want to make permanent changes to my diet", then that's fine, and that's your choice, but if you're overweight please get used to the idea because it's not going to change unless you will.

I recently saw a quote from Deepak Chopra that perfectly sums up the fundamental problem – "Our society has a magic bullet fixation, waiting for the next miracle drug to cure us of every ill". This is equally true in all aspects of our life, not just when it comes to illness. We want a quick, easy and painless fix for everything. We want to be able to eat entirely for pleasure without taking any responsibility for the fact that the primary role that food serves is to nourish our body. We want to live entirely sedentary lives, driving our cars everywhere and sitting at an office desk all day and hope that a couple of hours at the gym every now and then will be enough to stop our muscles, joints and bones from completely wasting away.

It's time to make a change, and it's time to make it a permanent change. Keep constantly examining your life and asking yourself "is the way I am doing this really serving me well, and is it serving society well"? If not, then ask yourself what you need to change. Think about change in sustainable ways. Don't leap into something that you know in your heart you'll never be able to keep up. Take time to contemplate and analyse how you can approach things differently and how you, your family and society as a whole can benefit from that.

There is no miracle cure; there is hard work, perseverance and personal responsibility. If you want different outcomes then you need to change the inputs, it's as simple as that.