

STEP AWAY FROM THAT DIET

*Five Simple Steps to Help You Lose Weight
and Gain the Confidence You've Been Searching For*



SUNDI JO GRAHAM



Hey, friend!

Let me start by saying that I'm SO excited you're here! Your willingness to take time out of your schedule to read this little, yet powerful ebook, tells me you're ready to take the next right step in tossing those diets out the window and gaining your health back!

I'm truly so **proud of YOU** for getting started. So proud, in fact, that I want you to stop reading (yes, before you even get started) and stand up and give yourself a pat on the back for taking this step. If you want to take a step further, jump up and down, clap your hands, stomp your feet (unless you live in an upstairs apartment), and do a little dance. I'll be right here when you get back.

Back? Great! Let's continue.

I've put together 5 steps to help you get started on the right track to taking back your health and finding the true freedom Jesus longs for you to have. This is not an exhaustive list by any means, but it's a great starting point.

You are **not** here by accident, my friend. God has big plans for your life and He's ready to take you to the next level in your walk with Him.

Are you ready?

My first challenge to you throughout this ebook is to remember that **dieting is not your friend**, but **changing your lifestyle is**. My second challenge is to remember that **you can't do this without Jesus**. Ain't nobody got time for that!

I'm rooting for you, friend, and I'll see you on the other side of this little book. May it bless you, inspire you, and challenge you to keep taking the next right step.

You. Are. Valuable.



#DIETHATERS

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INTRODUCTION

If you're reading this, hopefully you're past the point of thinking, this is just another scam to tell me how I'll lose weight and keep it off forever. No scams here, my friend. Just real life application I applied to my own life that helped me lose 145 lbs. without surgery and without any crazy diet gimmicks.

Here's what I won't promise will happen:

I won't promise you will lose 30 pounds in 30 days.

I won't tell you if you take a magic pill you will burn the fat in your sleep.

I won't tell you that you'll lose all the weight you need to lose if I mix up a magic formula for you to drink 3 times a day.

Here's what I promise will happen:

If you follow the recommendations I give you in this book, **you will see results.** Following these steps won't always be easy, but they are simple.

As a matter of fact, if you are looking for a quick and easy solution to weight loss, you should probably stop reading this book now. I can't offer you that.

Ready to keep going? Sweet! Let's do this!

Let me start by introducing myself.

I'm Sundi Jo (sun-dee-jo). Some of my friends call me SJ. This was me in 2008ish at the age of 25.

Oh... and I weighed 330 lbs.

I had no energy. I had no motivation for life.

Walking up and down the steps felt like I had just run a marathon.

I had to buy my jeans online because I couldn't find a store that carried size 30. To say that walking into a store was humiliating is an understatement.



Mountain Dew and pizza were two of my closest friends, so I convinced myself. The reality? I was using them to destroy myself.

I was a pretty new Christian at that point in my life. Though I loved Jesus and I was still learning to live life with Him (and still am), I was so broken and in such bondage to the things controlling my life.

I wasn't living life. I was just surviving.

The picture to the right is me today.

Did I mention I lost 145 lbs?

In June 2010 I actually ran my first 5k race.

I'll never forget the day I crossed that finish line. It was one of the most victorious days of my life in every area - emotionally, mentally, physically, and spiritually.

I no longer have to go through the humiliating and shameful process of ordering my jeans online. But let me be clear.. I still hate shopping for jeans. Why, for the love of all things Dolly Parton can't every store just offer the same size? Anyway.. I digress.

I don't rely on food to be my best friend. That doesn't mean I get it right every time (we'll discuss that more later).

But I believe, most importantly, I learned my true identity in Christ, which changed everything. Knowing who we are in Christ is the real icing on the cake. Pun intended.





→ FREEDOM ACTIVATION ←

I want you to take a minute and think about something you love to do. Is there something you've never done before or something that you haven't done for a long time? Is your weight keeping you from achieving your goals and desires?

I've left you some space below to process and journal through that. Take as much time as you need.





My friend, those things keeping you from doing what you love - they don't have to. Not anymore.

I want to help you!

Why in the world should you listen to me? Well.. I'm not a weight loss expert. I'm not a nutritionist. I'm not a fitness instructor. I'm not a doctor.

But... and it's a big but... I do understand something quite well...

I know the frustration of the ups and downs of weight loss. I know the devastation that comes from yo-yo diets. I know the shame attached to food addiction.

I also know the victory that comes from choosing the right steps to a healthier you.

Do you find yourself avoiding people because you're not happy with who you are?

Do you find yourself making excuses instead of facing the reality that your poor health choices are what's destroying you?

I've been there, my friend. You are NOT alone!

But... there's an escape – a way out of the torturous cycle of being overweight. I know this because I found the way out and I want to help you find your way out.

If you're ready to start on the new path towards freedom and a healthier you, I'm so excited to help you get there, my friend!

I have found the answer to getting back on the path to health and I want to share it with you.

Are you ready?

Feeling inspired and warm and fuzzy inside?

Great! Now, let's get started. Drop down and give me 20 push-ups! I'm kidding....



Or am I?

Think about this for a second. The diet industry is a multibillion-dollar enterprise, raking in over \$70 billion per year. That's billions!

According to a [2021 Yahoo article](#), the U.S. weight loss and diet control market recorded \$78 billion in 2019. That's mind boggling, isn't it?

If diets worked, would there really be a reason for such a large industry?

Nobody ever tells you the mental strain dieting will put on you.

Or that the majority of today's television and magazine ads try to convince us women that if we're not a size 3, then we're just downright fat. Girl, I'm pretty sure I came out of the womb bigger than a size 3.

Those "magic" diet pills and other "quick fat-burning" solutions often do more harm for your body than good.

Mason Cooley, college professor and aphorist, said, "At the end of every diet, the path curves back to the trough."

I couldn't have said it better myself.

In my opinion, and it's just that... my opinion... **every diet you try will lead you back to where you started.**

In my own case - and what I've experienced with others - we always gain back what we lost, plus more. Can you relate to that?

No wonder the depression rates in America are climbing so rapidly. **It's hard to get out of the pit when we keep digging the pit deeper.**

There's an old English proverb that says "Don't dig your grave with your own knife and fork." There is so much truth in that statement, isn't there?



If you have believed the lie that there is nothing else you can do and that you're just destined to be "fat" for the rest of your life, let me speak some truth to you, my friend.

MALARKEY!

MA-LAR-KEY /Mə 'LÄRKĒ/NOUN.

NONSENSE; FOOLISH TALK.

My friend, there is a way out!

It's not an overnight rescue. There is no quick fix.

If you are going to succeed in weight loss, you are going to have to learn to be determined. To keep going. To work hard.

I wish I had started a lot sooner.

I wish I had saved all the money I spent on trying new diets.

I wish I could have been healthier in high school and enjoyed more activities with friends.

But I didn't do those things.

Instead, I made excuses. I quit. I gave up time and time again.

Maybe you have too.

Maybe you are ready to give up today.

But, my friend, don't do it.

Choose life today. Choose a new path today. I'm on the path with you!

It's time to stop waiting for an easy fix and start a new journey to taking the next right steps to achieve the results you want.

It's so easy for us to say, "I just need to get my head wrapped around the idea of losing weight, then I can do it."



Here's the truth, my friend. **It starts with your feet.** Don't wait to get your head wrapped around the idea. **Just focus on the next right step.**

As my friend Jennifer once said, "Change what the body does and the mind will follow."

I've learned the secret to successfully losing weight and keeping it off.

And guess what? **THERE IS NO SECRET!**

We're about to dive into five steps to help you lose weight and gain the confidence you've been searching for, but I want to say again that this is not an exhaustive list. These are just some simple, but not always easy steps to get you on the right path.

We must start slow and simple or we'll set ourselves up for failure.

With that said, let's dive into step one, shall we?

STEP ONE: SAY GOODBYE TO DIETING

I want you to make it a goal to completely eliminate the word “diet” from your vocabulary. Remember when your mom used to tell you after you said something you weren’t supposed to, “I’ll wash your mouth out with soap?” No? Just me?

I want you to consider the word “diet” a dirty word.

Losing weight is about getting healthy. It’s about a lifestyle change. It’s about saying goodbye to everything that didn’t work in the past and saying hello to something that will work. (That’s tweetable right there, my friend.)

How many diet books do you have sitting around in your house today? At least a few I would bet.

Here’s what I want you to do. I want you to gather them up and throw them in the trash.

Sundi Jo, are you crazy? Do you have any idea how much money I’ve spent on these books?

Yes, my friend, I do. I’ve done it, too.

But if you’re going to get out of the diet mentality so that you can find true freedom and get on the right path to a healthier you, you have to get rid of those things weighing you down, and those diet books promising you temporary outcomes are part of the problem.

 **FREEDOM ACTIVATION** 

Go ahead.. I’ll wait. Toss em’ out! You might be thinking about skipping this step and going straight into step two, but I encourage you not to do that, my friend.

Take this step. It’s scary, I know. You might stare at the trash can and think you’ve gone mad, but I promise you haven’t.

I’m even willing to negotiate on this a little, but freedom is about one step at a time, right? If you feel overwhelmed at the thought of throwing them away, just pick one. That’s right. Pick one diet book and toss it in the trash can.

STEP ONE: SAY GOODBYE TO DIETING

Maybe try another one tomorrow and another one after that. Just commit to doing it one next right step at a time. **Whether you do it all at once or a little at a time, you've taken a victorious step and you're on the right path.**

Everything new is a little bit scary, right? You can do this! Don't put them aside to give to anyone else either. Ain't nobody else needs those shenanigans in their life either.

Remember, my friend, change is what you make it. You ready to make that change? Go for it. You can do this! I'm waiting right here for you!

Want to share your brave next right steps? Share with us on the socials and use the hashtag #diethaters.

One of the diet world mentalities is that you must give up all the junk food, cheeseburgers, french fries, pizza, etc., immediately.

I personally think that is a bad idea.

Here's why..

It's the same reason you shouldn't quit taking medications cold turkey. Your body needs to adjust to the changes when you decide to stop taking medicine.

So does your mind. Your emotions. Spiritually. **Shifting your eating habits isn't an overnight thing.**

To just stop everything at a moment's notice doesn't set you up for success.

Don't wake up one day and decide you are only going to eat salads and rice cakes for the rest of your life. That's the diet mentality and what did we say earlier about that word?

One of the things we will dive into in my course, [*Diet Haters University*](#), is how to slowly implement changes with our food.

STEP ONE: SAY GOODBYE TO DIETING

But for today I just want you to throw away those diet books and don't try and convince yourself that you have to stop everything at once to start being successful.

You've just taken the next right step by saying goodbye to dieting!

STEP TWO: STAY HYDRATED

Water is one of your best friends. Or in the words of Bobby Boucher from Waterboy, “That’s some high quality h2O.”

Seriously, though, your body needs water. I repeat, **needs water**.

Your organs need it. When they get water, they tell the toxins in your body to go fly a kite. The more water you drink, yes, the more you will pee, but that’s the way we were designed. God created us to pee - and pee a lot! We should probably put that on a t-shirt.

There are a lot of opinions out there on how much water you should drink each day. Some say 8 glasses/day. Some say ½ your body weight. But I want to keep this as simple as possible for us, so here’s what I’m recommending as you get started:

Commit to drinking 64 oz. each day. I actually have a water bottle that I use everyday that’s 64 oz. I can fill it up at least once and know that when it’s emptied I’ve hit my goal. I use the [Aikico Stainless Steel 64 oz. bottle](#) and I love it. They even have different colors available.

Make it easy for yourself not to have to track how much water you’ve had. Want to shoot for a gallon a day? Get yourself a gallon jug and fill it up each day. Your goal is right in front of you and now it’s just up to you to reach it.

If you hear 64 oz. or a gallon of water and start to freak out, don’t panic. You’ll be surprised how quickly you can implement this habit, but remember to take your time.

If that goal seems too big, then start smaller. If you only drank 32 oz. of water today, celebrate that, and make an effort to increase it tomorrow.

Remember.. one next right step at a time brings sustainable results.

STEP TWO: STAY HYDRATED

And for all my water-hating friends who say they can't stand the taste of it, don't worry. There are healthy ways to make your water taste good.

Consider adding some cucumbers or lemon. I personally love to add lemon essential oil to mine. It's also a great detoxer. There are also some great flavoring powders out there, too.

You can find some of my favorite recommendations at sundijo.com.

STEP THREE: SET BOUNDARIES

What and **who** we surround ourselves with matters. That doesn't mean it's easy to just say, "I'm never going to that place again, or I'm never spending time with that toxic family member again."

But you'd be surprised what you can control about your environment, especially when you implement one next right step at a time.

Avoid Buffets When Possible

One boundary I try to implement in my life is avoiding buffets. It's not always possible to avoid a buffet when eating with family, but it's a rare occasion that it happens.

I certainly don't take myself out to eat at a buffet, because I know the likely outcome. I've played the movie in my head already. Why would I put myself through starting at 50-100 different food items, trying to decide what I will and won't eat, then fighting the battle in my head as the items I didn't eat scream at me, "Hey! Why didn't you pick me? Come back! Come back!"

We all have a choice, yes. We can all choose self-control, yes. **But... why put ourselves in that position in the first place?** If someone who knows having just one drink is impossible for them, it wouldn't be real wise for them to go sit at the bar, right?

Let's count the cost of our decision before we do it. Preaching this to myself, by the way.

Don't Go to the Grocery Store Hungry

Have you ever gone to the grocery store when you're hungry and the moment your feet walk through the door everything on your list goes out the window because you suddenly get this idea in your head that you have to have one of everything?

STEP THREE: SET BOUNDARIES

Don't go to the grocery store when you're hungry. Again, why put yourself in the position of sabotaging yourself when you don't have to?

I realize life isn't perfect and sometimes it's going to happen, especially if you're trying to feed a family and you have to stop on the way home from work before dinner.

If that's the case, set your boundaries ahead of time.

Make an agreement with yourself that you will stick with your list. And avoid the malarkey aisles as I like to call them; the aisles filled with crap you don't need, like cookies and greasy chips and candy bars, oh my!

Now.. remember.. **I didn't say you couldn't ever eat those things, but going after them at the grocery store while you're hungry probably isn't the wisest thing to do.**

Order Your Groceries Online

One way to avoid this is by ordering your groceries online. I swear this is the greatest thing since sliced bread.

I have my plan for the week so I know what groceries I'm going to need. I order online, pick them up while running errands, and I've not had to step foot in the grocery store whether hungry or not.

I've saved at least 45 minutes of walking around the store getting everything on my list. I don't have to wait in line. And I can't decide at the last minute that I need to put that extra candy bar in my cart because my boss ticked me off at the end of the day. No stress. No overstepping boundaries.

Everyone wins! **Instacart** is one of the best investments in my health I've ever made.

STEP THREE: SET BOUNDARIES

Now.. if for some strange reason you actually enjoy grocery shopping, go for it, but I'm gonna pray for you, cause I can't wrap my head around how anyone enjoys that. When I get married, it's going in the wedding vows that I will **NOT** do the shopping! Hmm... maybe I have some unresolved issues I still need to work on. Oh.. and I'm currently accepting applications for a husband.

Control Your Portions

You'd be surprised how implementing this one small step can cause you to lose weight quickly, especially when going out to eat.

Remember.. You're not dieting. You're choosing a healthy lifestyle.

If you know what your boundaries are and you want to eat some chips and salsa at the Mexican restaurant, then let yourself. But again, try to play the movie out before you get there.

How much will you allow yourself to have? If you do chips and salsa, should you do Queso also, or pick between the two? If you're planning to drink a margarita would it be beneficial to skip the chips and salsa altogether?

What will your decisions cost you? What will you gain?

Living a healthy lifestyle isn't about guilt trips and condemnation. Don't be legalistic about your choices, just be smart.

A boundary that works well for me is controlling my portions before I ever take the first bite. If I'm eating out, I ask for a to-go-box when I place my order.

For example, if I order fajitas, I put ½ in the to-go-box and I eat the other half. Because I've done that, there's a little room for me to have some chips and salsa if I want, or some queso, or some rice and beans.

STEP THREE: SET BOUNDARIES

And guess what? I have lunch for tomorrow! Two for the price of one!

You can do the same thing at home, too. If you think you'll be tempted to go back and get seconds, even if you're not hungry, go ahead and put the food away before you eat. You've eliminated the distraction of more.

Now.. if you find that you're still hungry, then go get more, but 9 times out of 10, that won't be the case.

Setting boundaries and sticking with them leads to success. But don't beat yourself up if you get off the beaten path. You're not perfect - you're human!

Remember, freedom is about taking one next right step at a time, but if you take a wrong step, just get up and keep going.

We dig more into how to set boundaries in my course, [*Diet Haters University*](#).

STEP FOUR: FIND ENCOURAGEMENT & ACCOUNTABILITY

We were not meant to do life alone, my friend. God puts people in our lives to walk with us through the good times and the bad, to fight with us in the battle, and to fight for us when we feel like we just can't do it anymore.

There's a story in the bible about Moses and his battle against the Amelekites. ([Exodus 17:8-13](#)). He stood at the top of a hill as his main man, Joshua, went down on the battlefield. There was a very significant reason Moses was standing at the top. When he held his staff up in the air, the Israelites got the advantage over their enemies. But whenever Moses dropped his hands down, they'd start losing.

Have you tried to hold something above your arms for longer than 30 seconds? It starts to burn a little and your arms get tired. Moses could feel the burn and his arms were getting pretty darn tired.

Knowing the importance of the battle, and the importance of Moses' obedience to holding the staff up in the air, his brother Aaron and his buddy Hur came up with a game plan. They sat Moses down on a rock, stood on each side of him and held up his hands.

The bible says "his hands held steady until sunset" and as a result, "Joshua overwhelmed the army of Amalek in battle."

Moses couldn't fight the battle on his own. He needed support. He needed encouragement. He physically needed someone there to help him fight the battle.

We weren't meant to fight the battle on our own either, my friend.

Reach out to those people in your life whom you can trust - those you know have your back when times get tough. Those you know will not only support and encourage you with their words, but will literally hold your arms up when you get too tired to fight the battle on your own.

STEP FOUR: FIND ENCOURAGEMENT & ACCOUNTABILITY

Tell them your dreams and desires about becoming a healthier you, then ask them to help hold you accountable as you create a plan to pursue those dreams and desires.

Be honest with your struggles. With your fears. With your goals.

Want them to ask you how you ate today? Tell them that. Want them to pray for you regarding something specific? Tell them so. Having what seems like the hardest day emotionally in a long time and all you want to do is stuff your face with ice cream and cookies? Call them and tell them, “Hey.. I need you to hold my arms up. I can’t do this on my own!”

“Accountability breeds responsibility.”

- Steven Covey

I recommend choosing more than one person to be your encouragement/accountability source. Consider at least two. The more the merrier.

Please remember this though.. Make sure they are safe people in your life, not people who will throw your struggles in your face or gossip to others about you. Make sure they are trustworthy.

I have 3 close friends that I lean on for encouragement and accountability almost on a daily basis. They pray for me and speak truth to me, even when it’s hard. And when I ask them to hold me accountable for something specific, you can bet they’re going to follow through with that. Sometimes I don’t like them for it and convince myself I’m going to find new friends. Truth is not fun sometimes, but boy do we ever need it.

STEP FOUR: FIND ENCOURAGEMENT & ACCOUNTABILITY

Decide ahead of time how much contact you will have with them, especially as you begin your journey. Will you check in daily? Twice a week? Weekly? I encourage at least weekly, as it keeps you consistent and reminds you that someone is there for you for the ups and downs of life.

Who knows.. they may even want to get on the health journey with you! If they see your desire to change, maybe they want to do it as well. How fun to get healthy together.

If you're having a bad day, reach out. If you want to open the refrigerator and eat your feelings away, call them first. Let them help you save yourself from making a bad decision vs. overcoming the stupid shame the enemy tries to beat you over the head with when you do make a bad decision.

But.. if you do mess up, process through it with them. Ask them to pray for you. Get it out in the open so you can keep moving forward on your freedom journey.

Want some extra encouragement and accountability? We offer that in the *Diet Haters University* private Facebook group.

→ **FREEDOM ACTIVATION** ←

Before we move onto our final step, I want you to take some time and work on your encouragement/accountability partners. Make a list of 3-5 people you think would make great partners on your new journey to freedom. I've left space on the next page for you to write them down.

STEP FOUR: FIND ENCOURAGEMENT & ACCOUNTABILITY



Now, reach out to them and ask them if they'd be willing to be on this journey with you. Set your boundaries up front with them. What will it look like for them to walk on this journey with you? When will you check-in with one another? At what level do you want to be held accountable? Be specific about your needs.

I've also provided a template on the next page to help get you started.

STEP FOUR: FIND ENCOURAGEMENT & ACCOUNTABILITY

Name,

I wanted to let you know that I'm starting a new journey to get healthy and find freedom and I'd love to have you walk through this journey with me.

I'm seeking an encouragement/accountability partner to join me and you immediately came to mind.

I'm seeking someone who will both encourage me in the good and bad times, as well as hold me accountable to creating a better version of me. I'd be interested in doing check-ins (time), praying together, and just knowing I can reach out if things get too hard.

Would you be interested in joining me as I get healthy?

Now that you've found your encouragers, let's move onto our last and final step.

STEP FIVE: LOOK AT THE INSIDE

Frankly, this should be the first step, but if I made it number one I'd probably freak you out and send you running to the hills for cover.

What in the world does looking at the inside have to do with weight loss?

E.V.E.R.Y.T.H.I.N.G.

If you take nothing else from this ebook, remember this last step. I believe it's the most important step you can take in pursuing your new lifestyle change. This step is what leads to true change and lasting freedom.

Please hear my heart when I say this, because it's not said with an ounce of condemnation... If you are overweight, it's most likely because there's a heart issue, and I don't mean the physical kind. I mean the emotional, mental, and spiritual kind.

I mean there's a struggle with your soul (mind, will, emotions) and you've got to get to the root of the problem.

We didn't become overweight because we woke up one day as little girls and said, "Wow, I can't wait to grow up and be fat and miserable!"

No... we became the way we did because of something in our hearts.. Maybe one thing, maybe multiple.

Listen.. I'm not a medical doctor. I'm not a licensed counselor. **But I have experienced the freedom Jesus Christ offers** and I'm not about to sugarcoat anything for you. Speaking the truth, with grace of course, is what sets people free.

As I said in the beginning of this ebook, I weighed 330 lbs. and I was only 25. I was miserable. I was depressed. I was so broken I didn't know if I could ever be fixed. I'd just grown accustomed to the fact that this was how life was supposed to be.

My life was filled with running to food to fill the voids instead of actually trying to figure out why I had a void in the first place.

STEP FIVE: LOOK AT THE INSIDE

I was sexually molested as a child by multiple people who were supposed to be safe for me. I was raped as a teenager. My father was an alcoholic and I spent my life feeling abandoned by him. My mom had her own struggles and I didn't get to see her much as a little girl.

The overarching theme in my life was rejection, rejection, rejection.

Food became a way for me to numb the pain, if only for a moment. It also became a "protector" for me.

You see, the heavier I got, the more withdrawn I became. Shame and fear and anger controlled me. I refused to make eye contact with others. I used my weight as a shield to keep men from getting too close to me, as I had convinced myself from an early age that all men were bad.

Food wasn't protecting me. It was killing me! I was literally dying inside from shame and bitterness and fear, but also destroying my body physically.

I finally came to a point in my life where I was ready to end it all. Life was just no longer worth living. I couldn't stand one more minute of pain.

But there were people in my life who loved me too much to watch me stay stuck - they loved me too much to allow me to destroy myself and the dreams and desires God had put on my heart. They intervened, refusing to allow me to continue living in the ways that were destroying every part of me.

It was time to do something about the brokenness raging inside of me - the brokenness causing me to run to food time and time again.

For the first time in my life I had to stop running from the things that had happened to me and the pain I'd caused myself and others with the decisions I'd made.

I had to make the decision to stop running from my past. I had to make the decision to stop burying the hurts.

I had to make the decision to start facing my past head on.

It wasn't easy. It didn't happen overnight. But through the support of my friends and family, some intense counseling, and most importantly, my faith in Jesus, I walked through that fire and came out on the other side victoriously!

STEP FIVE: LOOK AT THE INSIDE

As Joyce Meyer says, “And I didn’t even smell like smoke!”

As the inside started to change, so did the outside. I started knocking walls down around my heart and guess what followed? The weight started to disappear, too.

I stopped running to food as the answer to my problems and started running to Jesus, the only one who could truly heal me.

Listen to me, friend. We can diet all day long and see temporary results. But until we make the decision to work on our hearts, temporary results are all we will see.

God made you for more than that!

Never be too afraid to reach out for help. You can’t fix your problems without Jesus. That’s all there is to it!

If you need counseling, find a Christian counselor who will walk through this journey with you. Go back to your encouragement and accountability partners. Get specific about your struggles and prayers.

You can’t keep holding all those feelings inside. You can’t keep holding onto the lies the enemy has been feeding you about who you really are. You can’t keep going in the same circles over and over again, expecting different results.

Well.. you can... but you’ll never truly find freedom. We’ve got to invite Jesus into the broken places so that we can find freedom. I wish I could write more about this here, but I’d go on for days and you’d probably get bored.

If you want to know more about finding freedom in Christ, I teach a free Facebook bible study in my *Winning at Warfare* Facebook group.

When we know who we are in Christ, our decisions reflect that. When we don’t know who we are in Christ, our decisions reflect that.

It’s time to find your true identity so that you can find true freedom!

STEP FIVE: LOOK AT THE INSIDE

And it's important to remember that what you expose yourself to matters. Everything we're exposed to - media, friends, family, etc., has an effect on our mind, whether positive or negative.

Philippians 4:8 says, "whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable —if anything is excellent or praiseworthy— think about such things."

What you think about, you become. Constantly thinking negative thoughts? You're going to become a negative person. Constantly hating yourself with your words? Your actions follow your thoughts and you're going to become a person you don't like very much, very quickly.

That's not who God designed you to be. He loves you. He created you. He desires great things for you. He says you are beautiful. He calls you beloved. He literally collects your tears.

When you believe those things, everything changes!

"Your thoughts are showing."

- Tommy Newberry

We treat our bodies poorly because we're believing a lie(s) about ourselves. We're believing lies because we've allowed the enemy (Satan) to have far too much control over our minds. Those lies become a perceived reality for us and we start making decisions based on them. Soon our identities are so jacked up that in the words of Dolly Parton in *Steel Magnolias*, we "don't know whether to scratch our watch or wind our butt."

Oh, my friend, I get so passionate about this because one of my deepest desires is to see people set free so they can live out the lives God designed them to live. I'm passionate about overcoming what's been controlling us because I know what it's like to live in bondage and I know what it's like to live in freedom. The latter is so much better.

I don't always get it right, but I'm so thankful God never gives up on us. Can I get an amen?

STEP FIVE: LOOK AT THE INSIDE

→ FREEDOM ACTIVATION ←

I know I've given you a lot to process in this step and it may seem overwhelming, but remember...
you only have to do one step at a time.

I want you to take some time and ask yourself what the next step is you need to take here.

Do you need to find a Christian counselor? How will you go about that? Do you need to make another appointment with your current counselor? Do you need to reach out for prayer? Do you need to journal your thoughts about what you've just processed?

Don't move past this freedom activation until you've gotten specific about your next step.
Remember, your freedom depends on it!



**If you're interested in learning more about freedom ministry,
visit shekinahfree.org/aboutshekinah or call 573.821.6782.**

CLOSING

We've gone through a lot together in these 5 steps, my friend. I'm so stinkin' proud of you for making it to the end. You should seriously be proud of yourself too!

Someone asked me recently, "Why didn't you talk about exercise in your book?" Well.. I actually used to have that step in here and I decided to take it out. I did so because I didn't want to overwhelm you. I didn't want you to think you had to do all these things right away in order to become a freer you. The original version of this book actually had 10 steps! You can thank me later for narrowing it down to 5.

Exercise is important, yes, but I want to help you focus on some simpler steps first before we move into the others. *Simple, Sundi Jo! You just told me I'm overweight because I have a heart issue and need to talk about my problems. You call that "simple"?!*

Yes I do. Don't confuse simple with easy. I didn't say anything would be easy, but these 5 steps I've provided for you are simple. **Nothing worth doing comes easy, right?**

We didn't become overweight overnight and we're not going to undo everything overnight, but one next right step at a time and one day we'll look back and say, "Wow, look how far I've come!"

Can you see it yet, my friend? I can see it for you!

I know these steps work because I've walked through them, and I won't share anything with you that I'm not willing to walk through as well.

Remember, simple doesn't always mean easy.

Before we end our time together here, let's do a quick recap of the steps we've gone over to getting healthy, losing weight, and finding lasting freedom.

1. **Say goodbye to dieting.** Kick that dirty word to the curb and get rid of those ridiculous diet books that make false promises.
2. **Stay hydrated.** Water is your friend. Drink, drink, drink.
3. **Set boundaries.** Plan ahead. Don't be surprised when it comes to your eating choices. You are in control of your health, my friend.
4. **Find encouragement and accountability.** Reach out. Be clear. Find safe people.
5. **Look at the inside.** Get to the root of the issue so you can be fully set free.

CLOSING

Just for good measure, let me give you a bonus step. **Step Six: Don't try to be perfect.**

You won't always do everything right. You won't always make the best choices. We're human for the love of Pete and we screw up!

But don't let a screw up put you back on the path of destruction.

When you mess up, get back up, shake the dust off and keep going, one next right step at a time.

Tomorrow is a new day.

We can be our own worst critics, and more often than not, when that feeling of defeat hits us like a ton of bricks, we throw in the towel, give up and find ourselves buried beneath the rubble of a pint of Ben & Jerry's ice cream. No, just me?

But that doesn't have to be the way it is. Focus on one next right step at a time.

You are an overcomer, my friend! Time to walk in that truth.

*"Decide either to do or not to do.
Commit 100% to the outcome you want."*

- Michael Hyatt

Are you committed to taking one next right step at a time? Are you committed to choosing a different path than the one you've been walking on? Are you committed to saying goodbye to dieting so you can find true freedom?

Girl... I hope so. If you're not there yet, go back and read this ebook again. I'll be here when you get back.

And one last thing... Remember to have fun! God didn't create you to be a fuddy duddy. Living a healthy lifestyle involves finding balance.

CLOSING

Want to eat pizza? Go for it, but be careful not to eat the whole thing. Want to enjoy that cake at the birthday party? Do it, but set boundaries for yourself.

Changing your lifestyle doesn't mean you have to eat the same ole' boring meals every single day (though some people love to eat the same thing everyday because it makes life simpler, myself included).

It doesn't mean you can never eat the things you used to enjoy. It means you're more careful to count the cost before doing so.

Learn your boundaries. Give yourself the freedom to enjoy those things every now and again. Notice I said "**every now and again.**"

Set limits. Figure out what works for you. Tweak things as necessary until you're making the daily choices that bring you health, strengthen your relationship with the Lord, and keep you on the path to freedom.

One. Next. Right. Step. At. A. Time.

READY FOR FREEDOM?

Thank you for sticking with me throughout these steps, my friend. I pray they've been encouraging and helpful to you.

I'm praying for you as you focus on taking the next right steps in your health journey. I've written a prayer for you at the end, so don't skip that part.

If you're interested in digging deeper into these steps and overcoming the challenges that get in the way of finding lasting weight loss results, I want to invite you to join my course, *Diet Haters University*. Enrollment only opens a couple times/year and I don't want you to miss out.

Whether you want to lose 10, 20, 50, or even 100 lbs., the principles I teach in this course work! I know because I've lived them.

Come on over and join us. You'll be glad you did!

And don't miss out on my *Diet Haters Podcast*, where I provide tons of free content to encourage and inspire women to get on the path to a healthier version of themselves and find lasting freedom.

If you've enjoyed this ebook, please tell others about it. Invite them to download it at sundijo.com/saftd.



ABOUT SUNDI JO

Sundi Jo is a Christian Keynote Speaker, sharing the truth of Christ with a dose of laughter. She's passionate about seeing others break free from their bondage so they can find freedom and live the life God called them to live - one full of hope and grace and health.

Sundi Jo teaches women to stop dieting, lose weight, and learn who they are in Christ.

She is the host of the [Diet Haters Podcast](#), creator of the weight loss course, [Diet Haters University](#), and the author of [Dear Dad, Did You Know I Was a Princess?](#)

Sundi Jo has a story filled with gritty redemption and has a deep desire to partner with God to help others climb out of the pit of shame and despair and replace those ashes with beauty.

In 2008, she weighed 330 lbs. and was short on hope with no direction of where her life was headed. She wasn't living life, she was just surviving. But after hitting rock bottom, she turned her life around, lost 145 lbs., and committed herself to helping others find and pursue their passions and God-given dreams.

Sundi Jo has been called a "passionate, versatile, and thought-provoking communicator whose authenticity connects her with audiences in a way few people can."

Her blog was named one of the top 100 Christian Women Blogs. She's been featured as a guest writer for various authors and speakers, including Mary DeMuth and Best-selling author, Jeff Goins.

Brokenness doesn't choose denominations. Whether we've been in the church 50 years or 2 weeks, we all have struggles to overcome. It's Sundi Jo's desire to help believers overcome those struggles and find the true freedom only Christ can offer.

In her free time, Sundi Jo enjoys reading, writing songs, going to the movies, playing Bingo with her awesome grandma, and spending time laughing with friends. She is a fan of flip flops, Dolly Parton, and sushi, not necessarily in that order.



FIND @SUNDIJO



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A PRAYER FOR YOU

Papa, I thank you so much that you have created this sweet friend for such a time as this. May she know that she is not reading this book by accident, but by divine appointment, led by the sweet and grace-filled drawing in of a loving Father.

May the words of this book penetrate her heart in a way she's never experienced, filling her with hope for a brighter future beyond anything she could ever ask or imagine.

May she experience a new level of relationship with you, fulfilling that longing in her soul for something more. May she see that you are far greater and more powerful than food. May she know without a doubt that only you can truly fill the voids in her life. May she hunger for more of you rather than the things of this world.

Jesus, you love this beautiful woman with an everlasting love. You call her beautiful. You call her beloved. You are El Shaddai, the almighty God who comes swiftly to rescue your daughter.

Rescue her in this moment from the trap of shame, fear, doubt, pride, anger, resentment, rejection, and abandonment, in the name of Jesus.

Fill her with hope, mercy, joy, love, gentleness, grace, and self-control.

You, Jesus, have come to set her free and I thank you for doing so, right now, in this moment. Thank you for paving a way for her to find lasting freedom and let go of the chains trapping her in bondage.

You are the God who restores what the enemy has tried to steal from her and I thank you for being the God of redemption. Hold her in the palm of your righteous right hand and protect her as she longs to find the true freedom only you can bring.

Hug her tight today, Papa, and may she experience your love in new ways today, tomorrow, and forever.

In Jesus' name, amen!