

# greenhabit

Embark on a healthy journey



Chantal Linders

We become what we think about

*Earl Nightingale*



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Dreams are never too big.



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“Don't allow your mind to tell your heart what to do.  
The mind gives up easily”

*Paulo Coelho*

# Introduction

By reading this book and embarking on the Greenhabit journey, you will learn how to break ingrained (thought) patterns and change these to **good habits**. You do this through awareness, inner peace and by freeing yourself from painful emotions. You will gradually familiarise yourself with those things that tap into your **resilience**. But our brain sometimes does strange things, this is simply the way it works. The primal brain sabotages most changes. But once you understand the **interactions between the different parts of your brain**, you can become the master of your own life and make choices that are right for you. In fact, you can influence the growth of new connections in your brain. As long as you do this for long enough, in a fun way and in small steps.

## Small steps

With Greenhabit, you develop skills to do things in very small **steps**. You learn to be proud of what you have achieved and to focus on the things that are important. It is possible to change the way you think, feel or live, but it is never easy. Suppose you say to yourself, next year I'm going to run a marathon, you would immediately consult a training plan, or train with a group to prepare yourself for it. You would practice, practice and practice, until you have reached your goal. You would train both your body and mind, because your mind tells your body what you have to do. But it really takes time to achieve this, you can't change your body and mind in an instant.

This book explains the background of Greenhabit, about how it works in your brain and what methodologies we have used for behavioural change. Behavioural change requires three things - knowledge/skills - motivation and the environment. You learn how to live from your heart and how you can achieve personal goals. But also that you always have a choice and that you can enjoy the things that are good for you and the things that matter.

People who achieve something in life are not just 'lucky'. They are just people like you and me who don't freeze when they encounter circumstances that get in the way of their goals. They create circumstances that are required to achieve their goals and they believe in their own power. They are not hampered by thoughts and they think in terms of opportunities.





'Greenhabit' is all about: **eating** as **purely** as possible (additive-free food), **living** as **purely** as possible (based on your personal motives), paying **attention** to the world and people around you, helping **other people** and not **craving** things you don't have. The five icons below represent Greenhabit's reflection model.



Relaxation



Positive mindset



Healthy nutrition



Social interaction



Exercise



The monster in your head

TEDxVenlo



# Changing your perspective

## TEDx Amsterdam event

There was no turning back. I had already said "yes" and made a decision. It was the spring of 2019 when they asked me to participate in TEDx. Quite quickly, I said: "yes, I'll do that." I was quite casual about it, but the organisation really meant business. I was assigned a personal coach and given a tight schedule. I was only allowed to speak English with my coach, to get used to it, they said. Ahead of me were nerve-shredding months of hard work and practice, practice and even more practice. I honestly thought it was impossible to memorise a 12-minute English text. At the very last minute, just before I had to go on, I was reprimanded. And then I thought: "this is my moment, and I won't let anyone take it away from me." I closed my eyes, gathered myself and let it slide. That is exactly what my story is about. A couple of seconds later, I was standing on the red dot, with all eyes on me.

## The monster

My TEDx is about the monster in your head. That voice, that diminishes our courage and creates uncertainty. *"You really can't do that! You're no good at that. Do you really think that people are waiting for you? What if it goes wrong?"* But what if you could master that little voice? If you could look at the world in your own way?

## My unexpected turn

At the age of 21, firmly in the prime of my life, my life took an unexpected turn. After completing my training at the Central Institute for Sport Leaders (CIOS), I tripped over something. I was no longer able to stand upright. After weeks of therapy and investigations, it turns out there was only one solution. Back surgery. I didn't have a choice, despite my reluctant mother who tried everything to stop the surgery, even spiritual sessions. Meanwhile, I could no longer walk, gymnastics in my youth would be my downfall. I remember waking up from surgery like it was yesterday. After weeks of taking morphine, the searing pain had vanished, a major relief. I also realised that my future sporting career was over. I made this decision in hospital, where I lay for two weeks. To protect myself, but also to put an end to any form of self-pity.

Tough times in your life help you to develop **inner strength**. I learned this quickly. It has made me who I am today. I went to work at a large software company and ignored the little voice in my head that said: *"What are you doing here? You don't know anything about it do you?"* I had no idea what to expect, but I thought, I can learn anything, right? I was open to everything. The fact that I had one less vertebra and had to abandon my sporting career faded into the background. Here, in this company, I was given an opportunity. An opportunity to learn, to feed my curiosity with new

knowledge. I grasped that opportunity with both hands, allowing myself to be immersed in the world of software. I felt enriched with new knowledge. This was just the start of the path I would take ...

## Mesologist

I consulted a mesologist about five years ago. This is someone who looks at how the body works in a different way. I had a clear reason for this; for more than 25 years I'd been taking antibiotics for chronic cystitis. Within an hour, he'd already made a diagnosis. An imbalance in my gut was to blame. Incredulous, I went home and said to my husband: "if he's right, he's got a very poor business model." He advised me to eat only **slow carbohydrates** for a while. Preferably no natural sugars and definitely no added sugars. My inflammation disappeared after a couple of weeks. Surprisingly, it also stayed away. My energy levels doubled and my hair grew thicker. I have never taken antibiotics again.

This insight piqued my curiosity and I fully immersed myself in the science behind nutrition, but also behavioural change. I found the latter incredibly fascinating. I found myself questioning why people don't follow through when they have good intentions. I did research to find out why we do what we do. And it turns out that everyone I questioned said: "When I'm not feeling great, through stress or tension, loneliness or poverty, I eat anything I can lay my hands on. I drink more alcohol and I smoke more." That in itself is quite remarkable, that the cause of many behaviours can be traced to some form of emotional imbalance.

So it's about, "**how we feel**" and how we deal with life's challenges. The thousands of lifestyle apps I have come across mostly focus on the physical health, such as exercise, healthy eating and relaxation. But if you look at your health from the emotional and mental perspectives, and discover where the cause lies, people will naturally start making healthier choices. With this realisation, I designed an intervention to develop self-confidence, resilience and self-control.

By influencing our mindset, we are so powerful that we remain in balance under all circumstances.

The method I developed is based on a number of scientific models that contribute to behavioural change. The foregoing, in combination with positive psychology means that every person is capable of unlocking the power within themselves.

If you would like to see the TEDx, go to: [https://youtu.be/zz8tra\\_CVg4](https://youtu.be/zz8tra_CVg4)



### My motivation

My personal motivation is to help as many people as possible to **live a healthy life for longer**. Greenhabit gives you tools to improve your **self-confidence**, tap into your inner **resilience** and free you from unpleasant emotions. By believing in yourself, you start living according to your personal **motivations**. Your greatest strength is **believing** in yourself.

"You'll never change your life until you change something you do daily. The secret of your success is found in your daily routine."

*John C. Maxwell*

## People as a whole

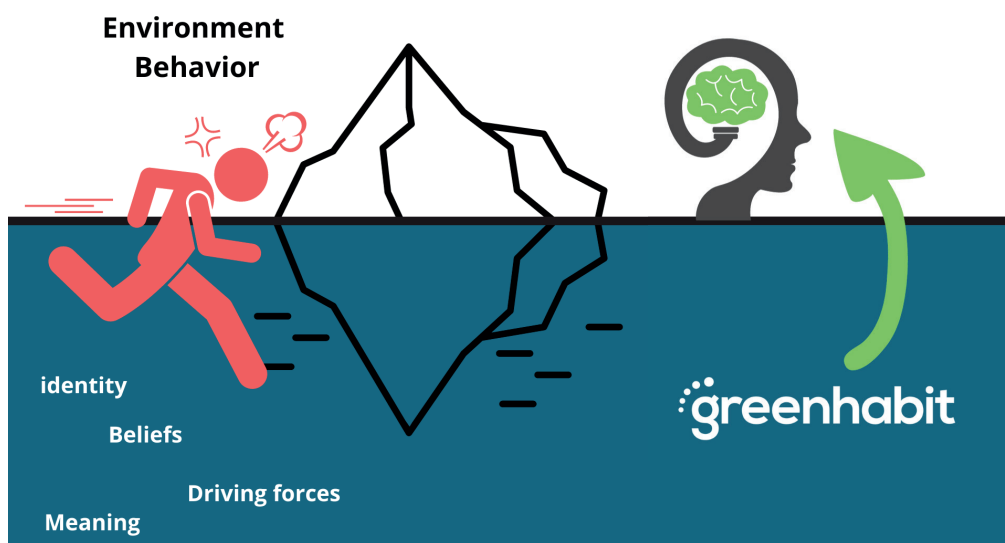
Health is therefore a valuable asset and is not just about the functioning of your body. Our mental well-being and social environment also play a major role. Our physical and mental health cannot be separated from our social environment. Being connected through strong relationships and meaning is an expression of good social health and contributes to physical and mental health.

Health therefore consists of three dimensions: **physical**, **mental** and **social**.

*'Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.'* (WHO, 1946)

Greenhabit looks at people as a whole and focuses on the things that motivate people from inside. Enhancing what you are good at and energising other people will help develop self-confidence. Greenhabit helps you to develop an emotional balance, thus creating more **resilience** and **self-control**. Self-control increases the sense of ownership, encourages participation and contributes to a healthy life expectancy. Greenhabit is about how we feel inside. The behaviour you see is a result of our motivations, standards and values and our thoughts.

You can influence the way you look at situations or people. If you have this strength (skill), you can get the best out of yourself and protect your heart. The only thing you can really influence is yourself. You don't become emotionally imbalanced through circumstances or people, but by the way that you look at these. We show this in the table below. The **visible behaviour** is the result of what happens beneath the surface. These are your beliefs, your motivations, your identity and are invisible to other people. Greenhabit helps you to live according to your personal motivations and to influence your thoughts in such a way that you achieve emotional balance.



*Iceberg model McClelland combined with the Greenhabit method*

## Challenges

The challenges in our lives sometimes make it difficult. You often have no control over these challenges; we all have challenges to deal with. People tend to make unhealthy choices because of the emotion that is released (grief, anger, fear). But why do we find it hard to admit we are facing challenges and we don't know the answers? Firstly, we don't want to bother other people. Secondly, we want to appear strong. And thirdly, we assume that people won't or can't help us anyway.

## Changing mental perceptions

I believe that we all have the ability to develop **inner peace** and therefore achieve enjoyment and happiness. We share both unpleasant and positive emotions that give us strength and peace. I believe it is important that we are aware of our abilities and talents and derive **self-confidence** from them. Sometimes we only see the negative side of things, which makes us feel helpless. By consciously working on and practising with your **mindset**, you can change your mental perceptions. This can make a world of difference, especially with your peace of mind.

If we have a **positive mindset**, we can maintain our peace of mind even in hostile environments. However, if our mindset is negative and defined by fear, suspicion, helplessness and self-loathing, we can be unhappy even when amongst our closest friends and in the most favourable circumstances. Accordingly, our mindset determines whether we experience happiness or unhappiness.

Human emotions are very powerful and we sometimes get carried along by them and this has a huge impact on our health, with the resulting repercussions. Greenhabit allows you to practise with this, by changing your mindset and distancing yourself from potentially powerful emotions before they well up inside you.

Many people pursue material goals, resulting in them neglecting their inner values. It is important to find a balance between material interests and inner growth. If you are able to share and you give thought to others, you are already halfway there.

## Free yourself

Personally, I'm able to let negative things slide off me. I am now the master of my own emotions and I always ask myself whether or not I can **influence** them. No longer freezing in difficult circumstances, but remaining strong. The moment you are able to look at situations differently, from different perspectives, you free yourself from the turmoil in your heart. By distancing yourself, you don't just see a problem, but also a shared interest. After all, we are all different and everyone looks at a situation from their **own perspective**. Being kind to another person goes hand-in-hand with being kind to yourself.

"Happiness is a direction,  
not a place."

*Sydney J. Harris*

## Balance

Balance plays a role in every part of your body. In your heart, your hormones, your blood sugar levels, your weight, but also in your brain. Your brain is always connected to your heart. That is why we pay a lot of attention to **physical, mental**, but also **social** aspects that positively influence your health. If you want to reach and maintain a healthy weight, you first have to get a grip on your brain. Once you have worked out the interactions between the different parts of your brain, you can lose weight without dieting. It's all about breaking **routines** and learning new **habits**. You will read more about that later in this book.

You can choose to be 'happy' or 'not unhappy' at any point in your life. Provided you have **a choice**, you won't be bothered by stress. Therefore, make sure you always have a choice. Some people live a life filled with misery, because the amount of pity they receive is greater than the reward of being happy. But choosing to be happy is sometimes easier than continuing to feel some of the things that confound your life on a daily basis. You are therefore free to choose **positive behaviour** over victim behaviour in the countless everyday occurrences.

## Decision

You have made a decision. To take part in Greenhabit and work towards a greater goal. A decision is not just anything. It differs to a good intention, which is what many people have. A good intention is actually an illusion as it's purely an ambition, whereas a decision is a **mindset**. Once you are able to influence your mindset, nothing is impossible.





## At the start of this year, I also made a decision

To run a hundred kilometres in one month. I challenged my friend, my buddy, to do this too. Not to run together, but to do it together. She immediately said 'yes' without thinking. Making a decision is much easier than having a good intention. After all, what good are intentions if you don't do anything with them? Take my running for example. Before, I used to keep thinking: "I really must go for a run this week." Sometimes, I would go two, sometimes four weeks without running. I did do plenty of other meaningful things, by the way. But even so, this was bothering me.

**Conflict cannot survive  
without your participation**

*Wayne Dyer*

Now I've decided to run that distance, something in my mindset has changed. I had calculated that if I did a little bit every day, it wouldn't be as bad. That 'little bit' became four kilometres a day.

So every day, I get up with the same thought "at some point today" I'm going to go for a run. It's no longer a question of "I would like to" but "I'm going to do this" today. Sometimes I dress in my sports clothes straight away, have a couple of Teams meetings (video call) and then I go. I am back within half an hour. And this thought "it's only twenty minutes" makes it easy.

Therefore, people who make a decision achieve great results. The decision gives them drive and motivation. So, **small steps** are needed. By now, hundreds of people who have taken part in Greenhabit have already lost kilos, taken thousands of steps, done dreaded jobs and feel more energetic and lighter than ever.

My friend got there before me. She was grateful and said: "Chantal, thanks to you I achieved this!" So making big goals small really works.

## The five obstacles to personal growth

*After 1,500 years, the Shaolin philosophy remains very relevant in today's modern era. It can still show you the path to personal growth. Along this path there are a number of obstacles and barriers that can cloud your vision, preventing you from seeing the world properly. These distract you from your path to achieve personal growth and your goals. So what are these barriers that impair your vision and how do you recognise them? The Shaolin Temple focuses on 'clarity'. With a clearer vision, you can more easily distinguish between connections. The path you want to follow will become visible. You will find the right path and make decisions to achieve your goals or ambitions.*

What potential **obstacles** could block your personal journey? These are the mental states that stand in your way of achieving your **goal**.

## 1 Sensual Desire

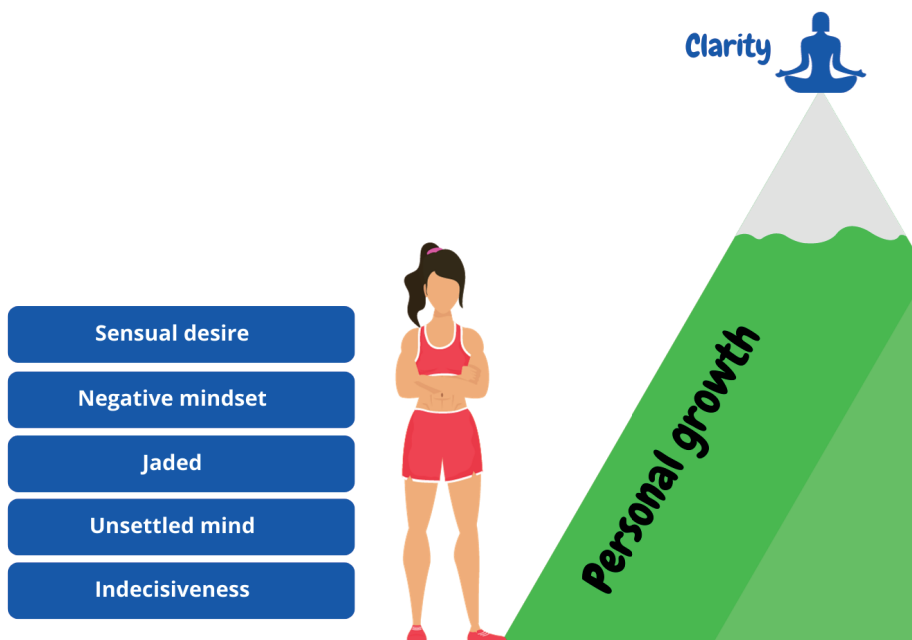
Sensual desire arises when you focus on your body's five senses: vision, hearing, smell, taste and touch. When focussing on these, you have a pleasant feeling (reward in your brain). So if your goal is to have a healthier lifestyle and, along your path, you are tempted by delicious sugary dishes, along with tasty drinks, you have encountered an obstacle on your path. This applies, of course, to all temptations. When the temptation becomes so strong that you don't want to leave that place, that sensory desire has turned into an obsession.

## 2 Negative mindset

This is a mental state resulting from negative emotions. In this state of mind you have an aversion to an object, a situation, or even a person. On the path to a healthy lifestyle, exercise and sports will be one of the five elements to receive attention. But if you have a negative attitude to exercise and you don't feel like it, you will find it difficult to achieve the goal. If you can let go of that aversion, you will be able to achieve the goal.

## 3 Jaded

This mental state is characterised by drowsiness, a lack of motivation and low energy and often manifests itself in a state of depression. In Buddhism this is often described as imprisonment. You feel as though you are confined to a cell. It becomes very difficult to exert yourself mentally or physically. To continue along your path, you therefore have just one option: you have to find a way to get out of that hole, out of that cell.



*The five obstacles to personal growth*

#### **4 Unsettled mind**

The fourth obstacle is called ***unsettled mind***. In this state, you cannot settle. You fret and worry about the future or past. You keep going around in circles and you have no focus. The problem is that this leaves you with no time to see clearly. The solution is to find peace in the present and live in the moment.

#### **5 Indecisiveness**

The last of the five obstacles relates to a state of mind of indecisiveness. In this state of mind, your mind can stop you doing the things you want to do. The thoughts that surface are: "Can I do this? Is this the right path? What will other people say? What if this, what if that?" This puts you at risk of not achieving the goals and aspirations you once set for yourself. Overcoming this obstacle starts with believing in yourself.

You are now aware of the five obstacles on the path to your goal, and you know what you can do about them. You could, for example, arrange and structure your life in such a way that these barriers do not arise. If that doesn't work, you can also use the following methods to remove them.

#### **Recognise your own resistance**

Recognise which mental state you are in. Learn to accept, acknowledge and permit a situation or a person, to be as it is or as they are. Ask yourself questions like: 'Why did it come up? Why do I experience resistance? What will the consequence be if I remain in that state?' Tell yourself that you can change it and that it doesn't define you.

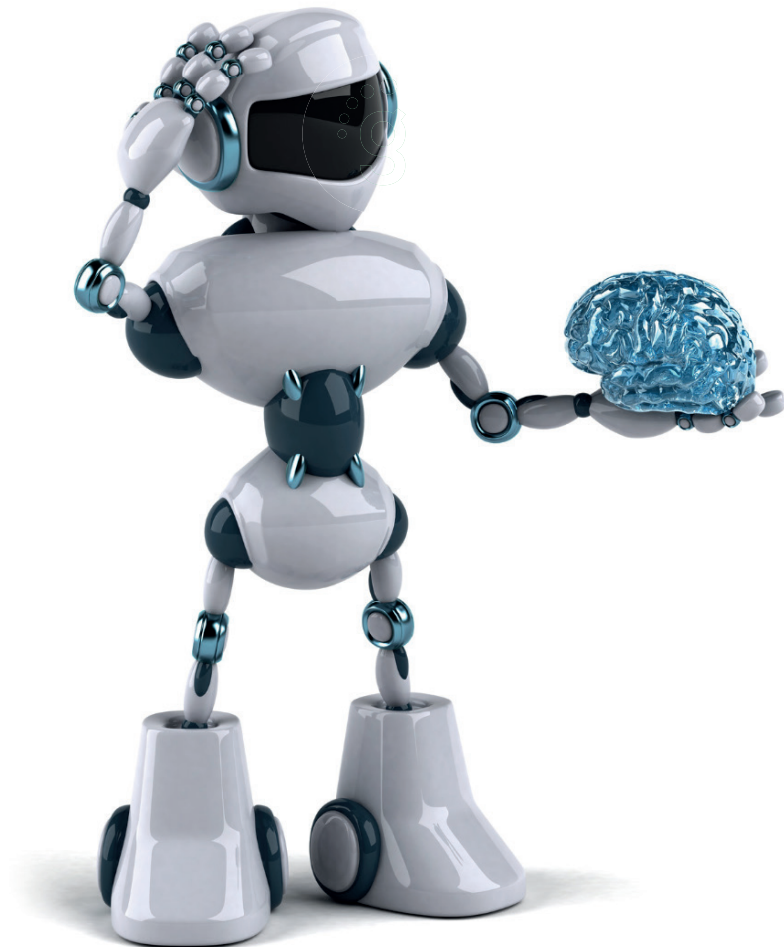
Everyone is unique, do not copy someone else's path, but always look for your own path. To bring meaning and value to your life, you need to learn and to control yourself, and not allow obstacles to block your journey.

**Perseverance starts where the fun ends.**

# The brain

Teaching without awareness of how the brain learns,  
is like designing a glove  
without knowing what a hand looks like.

*Leslie Hart*



## Brain-based learning

For me, the brain was Greenhabit's greatest source of inspiration. My fascination with the brain started when I immersed myself in the behaviour of individuals. I was particularly interested in the way in which people learn and think. To develop yourself and learn new behaviour, you can therefore very easily use brain-based learning techniques. Put simply, this is a method of designing an intervention based on the functioning of the brain. I have applied the five main techniques, which I also mentioned during my TEDx presentation, in the Greenhabit method.

But what do we really know about the brain? Our brain cells control everything that we think, do and feel. Our brain determines how we live, how we feel and determines our behaviour. The functioning of our brain provides numerous clues to designing learning more effectively. For example, that it will take you six weeks of frequent practice to master a new skill. That using several senses at the same time intensifies learning. That learning with another person accelerates the process and that emotions play a significant role in learning. Despite the immense complexity of the brain, you can boost your capacity for learning with a few simple brain-based learning techniques.

The plasticity of our brain allows us to learn new habits. Repetition is important; neurons that constantly work together will form connections. The more often they do that, the more we learn. This allows new habits to become ingrained. Conversely, habits, thoughts and behaviours that you neglect will become less powerful over time. The more senses you engage in learning at the same time, the stronger the connections. Greenhabit's sensory experience makes a habit stick. Our conscious mind makes micro-goals. When the senses are stimulated, a habit is learned; it is especially useful to discover where the differences in stimulation lie. Improvement generates motivation and the resistance decreases. Our mirror neurons allow us to learn to the best of our ability, when we observe a certain behaviour in other people. That's why Greenhabit allows you to follow the adventure with other people (social network). Positivity also significantly boosts the learning effect (Positive Thinking).

People learn better when they have to find the solution to a problem themselves. This is similar to the approach in psychology; solutions are not provided but people are given an insight into their own behaviour. This is a very important part which is why we ask people to work on their mindset, to improve the learning process.

## 95% unconscious

95% of our cognitive activity is unconscious. The unconscious mind determines 95% of our actions and is the filter through which we perceive reality. Only 5% of our cognitive activity is conscious, when we pay attention with our 'thinking' brain. However, one doesn't work without the other. The beauty of unconscious processes is that they require little energy and continue day and night. Even if we are not actively and consciously engaged with learning, the unconscious processes in our head will continue. We place a lot of emphasis on reason and analysis when making decisions. Whereas it is

the unconscious mind (intuition) that is incredibly powerful and can handle much more. Research suggests that a decision made because 'it feels right' (i.e. unconsciously), is better and more satisfactory than decisions made quickly and/or consciously. Your conscious mind can only do one thing at a time, you use it to process small amounts of information, to plan, to talk, to decide, to analyse. Whilst you use your unconscious mind to process large amounts of information. Memories, inspiration, creativity, intuition and emotions. Of course, your unconscious mind contains a huge amount of knowledge. In addition, the unconscious mind is responsible for automatic processes, such as respiration and heart rate regulation.

### The power of repetition



Repetition is necessary to learn something new. Repetition and practice are therefore required until permanent, strong connections have been made. It takes about six weeks to make these permanent connections. Incidentally, storing and embedding that information in the brain can sometimes continue for up to two or three years. The parts of the brain involved in learning new things, with the hippocampus playing a central role in this, work most effectively when practice takes place in different ways. Also, it isn't necessary to practise equally hard every day; once an individual starts to master the new knowledge or new behaviour, the intervals can become longer. A six-week learning programme during which a new behaviour is practised regularly, is therefore much more effective than a three-day course.

### Learning together

It is becoming increasingly clear that, during evolution, our brain acquired many strong functions that promote and facilitate social interactions between humans. We are equipped (as it were) with a social interaction system. The mirror neurons have an important function. Amongst the many neurons in our brain, there are groups of neurons with special properties: mirror neurons. These neurons don't only fire when they perform an activity, but also when they observe an activity being performed by someone else. Watching football activates the same neurons as actually playing football. Therefore, actions are unconsciously triggered in our brain that make us imitate the behaviour of others. Seeing someone eating makes you eat and laughing is contagious, yawning is irresistible. We imitate each other's behaviour all day long, consciously but especially unconsciously. Role model behaviour is therefore one of the strongest learning interventions at unconscious level.

Precisely because brains are so highly focussed on social interaction, people learn better when they are in contact with other people. The mirror neurons ensure that the behaviour of other participants (and the trainer) are imitated. People learn from watching the behaviour of other people. Positive interaction between people creates a constant flow of neurotransmitters that enhance learning. Also, quite literally: two heads are better than one. Dealing with an issue from different perspectives (brain patterns), helps new patterns to be established.



People appear to be more capable of comprehending and mastering learning materials if they share those with other people during the process of acquiring and processing it. This doesn't require an expert.

In Greenhabit there is a 'Social Community' in which this is encouraged. People inspire one another, celebrate small successes, but also obtain support from one another.

As your mind improves,  
the rest will naturally  
fall into place.

Lao Tzu

## Setting goals



Setting goals is very important. Your brain works simultaneously at a conscious and unconscious level. Your unconscious mind is much more powerful and yearns for short-term rewards.

Setting goals is something you do consciously, they help you to focus and make you aware of what is really important. Unconscious processes can get in the way of achieving your goals. Therefore, set realistic goals, otherwise you will feel stressed. In Greenhabit, we provide support by choosing up to three weekly goals each week. People always achieve one, usually two and sometimes three weekly goals. These small successes trigger dopamine in the brain and give you self-confidence. As a result, these actions are often repeated in the subsequent weeks. And we also train your 'will-power muscle'.

## Stepping out of your comfort zone

Taking part in TEDx was way out of my comfort zone. I worried that I wouldn't remember the English text, or that I would have a panic attack by standing on the red dot in front of such a large audience. But it was well worth it. Once I'd done it, it felt magical. Your comfort zone consists of the things in your life that you are used to, this even includes unpleasant things. It's nothing more than a psychological protective mechanism. That's because routine protects us against the possible danger of the 'unknown' and

helps us to avoid stress and tension.

Stepping out of your comfort zone is important to keep training your brain and harnessing your creativity. If you compare an exciting decision with your core values, your comfort zone will suddenly no longer be as important. Einstein once said: *'the definition*



*of insanity is doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results.'*  
So, if you want something different, you will have to do something different to what you are doing now.

Greenhabit will definitely present you with challenges that don't entirely fit within your comfort zone. The nice thing is, you can always choose whether or not you do something. We hope, of course, that you will experience what it's like to step out of your comfort zone. And that you will then be proud of the result. The true rewards in life are outside of your comfort zone.

## The interactions between the different parts of the brain

There are three main parts of the brain that influence behaviour.

### 1 The Hypothalamus

For ease, in this book we also refer to the 'hypothalamus' as the 'control brain'.

The control brain ensures that the body remains in balance by regulating needs, such as hunger, thirst, sleep, sex and emotions. It regulates body temperature, respiration, reproduction and adjusts your heart rate. In short, it is involved in many different functions of the autonomic nervous system. This control brain ensures that the endocrine glands produce certain hormones. For example, in stressful situations, the hypothalamus controls the pituitary gland, which triggers the release of the hormones cortisol and adrenaline via the adrenal gland. This makes us alert and ready to take action. This brain also has a specific role in motivation of behaviour, such as when eating. It monitors the food supply. If the food supply dwindles, this will lead to stress.

The control brain has three instincts:

- 1 A liking for sweet or salty
- 2 A liking for being lazy
- 3 A liking of stimuli

This brain contains a sort of hypersensitive scanner for stimuli. In prehistoric times, we always had to be alert to what might happen, in order to survive. This part of the brain, or the 'yes but' or 'suppose that', 'what if', 'take care', only sees dangers. We see problems and barriers, but unfortunately we don't have a part of the brain that thinks in terms of possibilities and opportunities.

### 2 Prefrontal Cortex

This is the part of the brain that makes decisions, for example, to lose weight, or makes plans to achieve something.

For ease, in this book we also refer to the 'prefrontal cortex' as the 'thinking brain'.



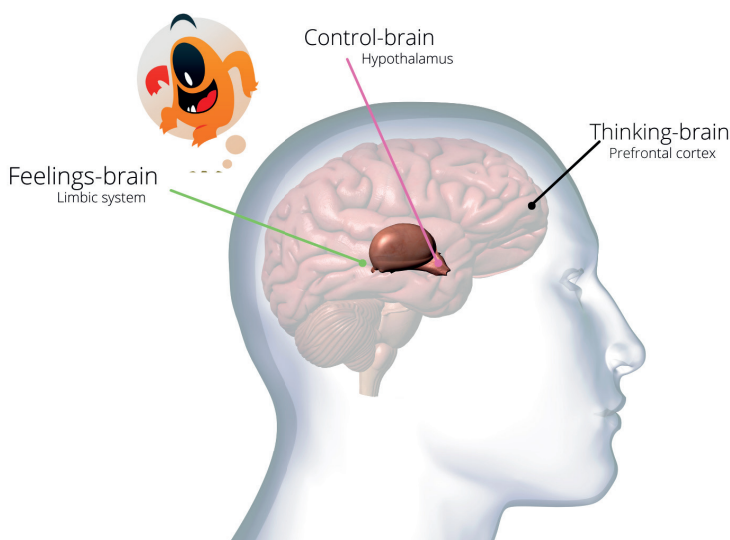


### 3 Limbic system

The part of the brain responsible for the control of fear, grief and other emotions.

For ease, in this book we also refer to the 'limbic system' as the 'feeling brain'.

The control brain is much older than the thinking brain. Say you had a 24-hour clock, the thinking brain has only been in existence for 5 minutes. The control brain prefers to remain in its comfort zone and is therefore always afraid of change. It stops us from taking action. The comfort we live in makes us lazy because we can control everything from where we are. But our body actually needs stimuli, action and curiosity. The control brain is reactive and just wants to function. The thinking brain is proactive and wants to set out your personal path.



### The monster

The monster in your head is one of the main reasons why a crash diet doesn't work, or only works temporarily. The monster in your head is a combination of two factors. The control brain that gives you signals to eat sugary and high-calorie foods and do nothing. This is the result of our primal instinct to stockpile for more difficult times and to be ready for fight or flight. The other factor is the reward, the sense of happiness (dopamine) that you get from the feeling brain when eating high-calorie food. These two factors trigger the monster instinct in your head.

In summary, when you act out the instinctive tendency to eat unhealthy food and be lazy, you are rewarded with a sense of happiness (dopamine). This further reinforces the instinct, possibly making you engage in more unhealthy behaviour. The only thing that can resist this is your 'thinking brain'. This is capable of reasoning and planning. You can prevent the monster behaviour by doing activities that also give you a sense of happiness, such as exercising and walking in the countryside. By not eating sugary high-calorie food, you stop the brain from continuing to crave more sugary high-calorie food.

## Your brain sabotages good intentions

Feelings and emotions play an important role with food. Are you aware that, with certain feelings and emotions, food can make you feel better. The result, of course, is that you take in too much energy and gain weight.

The control brain sabotages most changes and will do everything it can to maintain the homeostasis (balance). This is also known as the comfort zone.

So if you are low on energy, the control brain will make sure that you eat again by making you feel hungry. Your body regulates this by reducing the satiety hormone 'leptin'.

If you have eaten too much, the control brain will also make sure that you have a feeling of satiety, to stop you from overeating.

The control brain always aims for a positive energy balance, or eating more food than you are using. Your control brain receives various signals through your nervous system and hormones, telling it whether there is a shortage in your body. In response, your brain wants to eliminate the energy shortage and to do this, it releases hormones and mobilises your autonomic nervous system. This means that adjustments are being made to make you use less energy and signals are given (feeling hungry) to take in more energy (eat more).

In summary, your control brain will do everything it can to prevent you from dieting and running out of energy. Therefore, the only way to lose weight and keep it off is to do this very slowly and in small steps, so that your brain doesn't hit the emergency brake and give you signals to eat. Such as lowering the resting metabolic rate, feeling hungry and feeling stressed due to a lack of energy. By doing things stealthily, without waking up your control brain, you can still lose weight in a controlled way.

## All diets work

In reality, all diets work. You are focussed on losing weight, you receive compliments about your progress. Things are going fantastically. In a short period of time, you've lost many kilos. As soon as you lose focus, your control brain takes over from you and prompts you to take in extra energy in the form of high-calorie food. You can lose focus for many reasons, for example, if you are busy at work, have relationship problems, money worries or problems with the children. These are all reasons for losing focus about continuing to eat healthily and the control brain takes over from you, and you go back to overeating.

What can you do now to make sure you DON'T lose the focus to maintain your weight?

First, by making sure that your focus isn't distracted by any potential problems concerning your relationship, money and business. Make sure that you lose weight in very small increments which will stop your body from lowering your resting metabolic rate. So this is the reduction of your energy consumption at rest, resulting in you needing even less energy. The feeling brain can work both ways. Everything revolves around the chemicals produced by the feeling brain. For example, the feeling brain will produce a happiness chemical when you eat that tasty chocolate profiterole. On the other hand, the feeling system can also produce a happiness chemical when you feel good because you are able to refuse that chocolate profiterole and have a vegetable snack instead. This reward system can work both ways when achieving your goal, supporting your primal instinct or supporting your thinking brain. In both cases, you are rewarded.

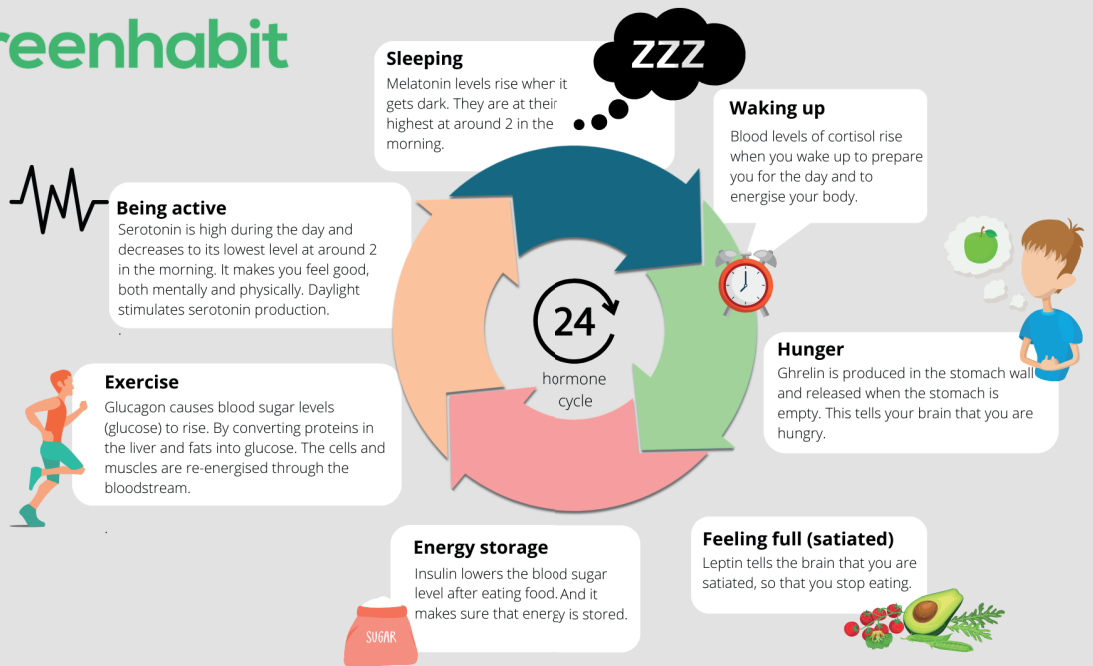
## Our biological system

Our brain is still in survival mode. In prehistoric times, humans spent most of their time looking for food and hunting. They were therefore constantly on the move. This meant that, when hunting, they had to attack or flee from dangerous animals. As soon as it got dark, they went to sleep and, when the sun rose, they went in search of food. Sometimes they might not eat food one day, because it wasn't available. Our bodies were fully equipped for this. When the humans had to fight or flee, their nervous system and hormone system would produce adrenalin. Our sensors to recognise danger. Fear, aggression and other emotions had a clear function to protect us or prepare us for a fight. For modern humans, all of these functions of the body can actually work against the body, instead of protecting and preparing it.

All the artificial light has completely disrupted our amazing biological clock as we no longer live according to the day-night cycle. Actually, society has evolved but the human body has not evolved with it and is only suitable for prehistoric times. Our body naturally wants to rest and store energy because this was scarce in prehistoric times. As they no longer have to search for food all day, modern humans can indulge in their natural tendency to do nothing physical and eat a lot.

Your natural systems in your brain are also no longer used properly. When you exercise, your control brain thinks you are searching for food and will send fewer hunger signals. Incidentally, if you exercise more, your metabolism will, of course, also increase. Green-habit will show you that balance plays a role everywhere. In your heart, your hormones, your blood sugar levels, your weight, but also in your brain. We explain this based on the 24-hour hormone cycle.





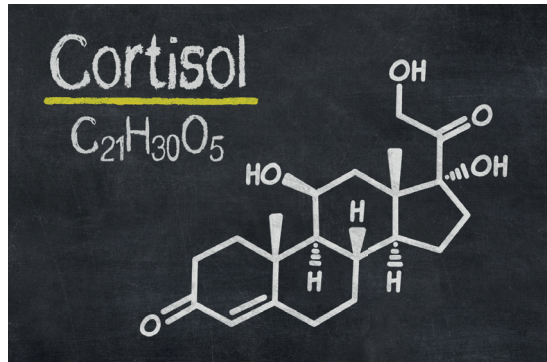
## 24-hour hormone cycle

Hormones are the chemical messengers which are needed to maintain a balance (homeostasis) in your body. How does your body know that it is becoming imbalanced? That is the job of the nervous system that is constantly measuring for which it uses all of your senses, such as temperature, sensation and light-dark. These data from the nervous system are processed in the control brain. This is constantly making adjustments, so that your body adapts to (among other things) the sleep-wake pattern, temperature fluctuations, hunger (energy requirement), stress, relaxation and excitement. To this end, the hypothalamus (control brain) is in contact with both the nervous system and the hormone system (endocrine system) through the pituitary gland (the master gland of the endocrine system, located in the brain).

As 'chemical messengers', hormones convey messages through the bloodstream in your body down to the cellular level, to keep your body balanced. Hormones prompt your body (among other things) to sleep, wake up, feel happy, store energy and feel excited. This enables your body to adapt to its environment. When chemical messengers in the brain are active to enable communication between the nerve cells mutually and with the muscles, these are known as neurotransmitters. You therefore have chemical messengers that are both hormones and neurotransmitters, such as adrenaline, dopamine and serotonin.

## Cortisol

If your body is out of balance due to long-term high stress levels, your adrenal glands will continuously produce the stress hormone cortisol. This gives your body more energy when you actually don't need it. After all, you don't have to immediately take action. Your cortisol level normally peaks at around seven in the morning, to wake you up and to give you energy to get started. Over the course of the day, the level should slowly decrease until a low level is reached in the evening. In combination with melatonin, you will then become tired and want to go to sleep.



## Body signals

Why are we explaining all these different hormones now? Your body gives the very best signal when it needs to rest more. For example, if you throw your back out, or if you have flu-like symptoms, if you are burnt out or you suddenly sustain an injury. A physical symptom (signal) always has a cause. This can often be traced back to an imbalance. What is the cause of signals given by our body?

Try to understand how your body and mind work. To understand the job of hormones and to balance patterns. Your eating pattern, your pattern of thinking, your patterns for sitting, relaxing and sleeping. If you are able to discover what you have lost on your life's journey, the body will cancel the signal. In the appendix you can read more about hormones in relation to your organs.

Acute stress is good for our body, such as a cold shower, eating a Spanish pepper, taking the stairs. However, because we are busy all day with all kinds of obligations and receive a lot of stimuli, we mainly experience **chronic stress**. Cortisol is continuously produced to prepare the body for exertion (fight or flight). But the natural enemy no longer exists. The effect of this is that due to this state remaining for a long time, we get various problems, such as cardiovascular disease, cancer, obesity and type 2 diabetes (we put on weight, feel more tired, irritable and sicker). We used to deal with infectious diseases, and in this day and age we are dealing with diseases of affluence. What we need is deep relaxation, curiosity and a stimulus to exercise. We live too much within our comfort zone. And our control brain does everything it can to remain here and is always afraid of change.

## Recognise excessively high cortisol

The stress hormone makes people eat more. It stimulates the hunger feeling and sugar cravings, resulting in belly fat being produced. You need cortisol for several biological functions in your body; it suppresses inflammation, determines your sleep-wake rhythm, regulates blood pressure and raises your blood sugar level to provide energy for fight or flight.

How do you recognise that your cortisol levels are persistently too high?

### ***Long-term stress can cause the following symptoms***

- Fear/anxiety (feeling depressed)
- Headache and forgetfulness
- Sleeping problems and difficulty concentrating
- Digestive problems and weight gain, or to the contrary weight loss
- A weakened immune system, as a result of which you may also suffer from visible skin problems or other symptoms.

If in doubt about your cortisol levels, your general practitioner can easily test these through a saliva test.

### **What can you do to lower cortisol levels**

- Get a good night's sleep of at least seven hours. A good night's sleep is not just about the number of hours, but also about the quality of the different phases of sleep.
- Take time to relax every day; meditation is a good way of doing this
- Exercise regularly, however more than an hour will raise your cortisol levels again.
- Work on your sense of happiness

Simply improving your lifestyle by eating healthier, sleeping well, exercising and relaxing (meditating) can significantly improve your hormone balance.

## Know your numbers

Prevention actually means preventing symptoms and diseases. **Risk factors** contribute to the development of disease. The risk of, for example, cardiovascular disease (80% is caused by our lifestyle) is determined by the interaction of your risk factors. A number is attached to many of these factors. It is important to be aware of 'your' numbers to keep your heart healthy.

Based on your numbers, try to monitor your own health. This will reduce your risk of cardiovascular disease.

## Target levels of a healthy body



Healthy weight, aim for a healthy BMI (<25)



Blood pressure (120/80 mmHg)



Cholesterol (5-3-1 rule)



Blood sugar (< 5)



### BMI

The BMI is a measure of obesity and uses your height and weight to work out if your weight is healthy. A healthy BMI is <25.

### Blood pressure

High blood pressure often goes unnoticed. Therefore, after the age of 40, measure your blood pressure every year. Your resting blood pressure should be around 120/80.

### Cholesterol

A cholesterol test measures several levels. The three most important levels are: total cholesterol, LDL and HDL cholesterol. The bad cholesterol, the LDL, is the most important level. High levels of LDL cholesterol can lead to clogged arteries. The 5-3-1 rule means that your total cholesterol must be below 5, the 'bad' LDL below 3 and the 'good' HDL above 1 mmol/l.

### Blood sugar

A healthy blood sugar level is below 5 (target level). The blood sugar level depends on the time of sampling. Therefore, always have the blood sample taken after you've had nothing to eat or drink for eight hours (a fasting blood sugar test).

# Behavioural change

Nothing is particularly hard if you divide it into small jobs.

*Henry Ford*

Results

My health dashboard  
All of your measurements together  
Show insights

Progress

Points  
Level up by completing activities. 13

Ranking  
How are you performing in this weeks leaderboard? #15

Awards  
Have you made enough progress to earn an award?

Challenges

Rewards

Gamification

Weekly goals

Nudging

Buddy

Social community

Learning themes

Measurements

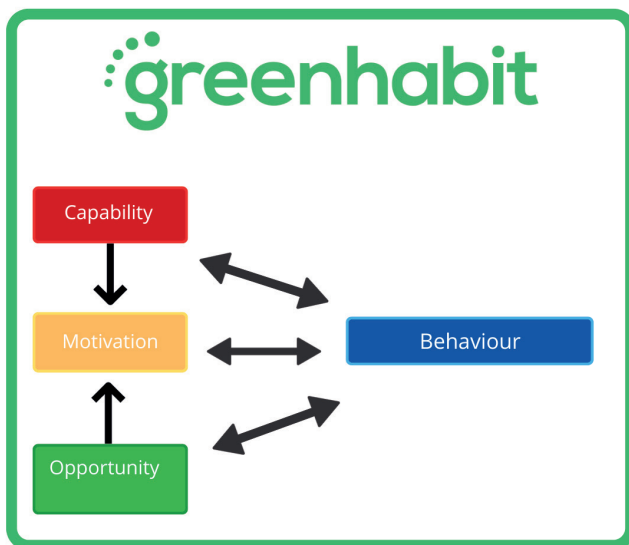
greenhabit

Google Play App Store



We all know that alcohol isn't good for us, that driving fast is dangerous and that more exercise is healthy for us. Yet we all give in to unhealthy temptations from time to time. Apparently there is something inside us that stops us doing what is good for us. And that relates to the fact that human behaviour is much less rational than we think. The government is also increasingly paying attention to 'behavioural change'.

For years, we have assumed that people make decisions based on knowledge, information and rational arguments. Based on this, people would alter their attitudes and therefore also change their behaviour. However, this is only partially true. For instance, it is said that people mainly make decisions quickly, intuitively and emotionally, and therefore irrationally. But in that irrational behaviour, there is often a degree of predictability: in everyday life, the behaviour of people is often 'predictably irrational', for example, choosing a sweet dessert in a restaurant whilst you are on a strict diet. You can take into account in advance that people are guided by habits, impulses and emotions. There are therefore several basic principles that strongly determine how people react (see the next page). Taking everything into account, it is possible to get people to head in the right direction with a small nudge.



### Motivation or behaviour?

Existing interventions (tools) often assume that people are not sufficiently motivated to want to live healthily or healthier. Those interventions therefore focus on increasing motivation or specifically on one or two elements (for example, diet, exercise or sleep). Research has shown that people are motivated to live healthily or healthier. However, it is not easy to transform that good intention into behaviour.

That is the infamous 'intention-behaviour gap'. People who have the intention to do the right thing, but face a gap between that intention and the actual behaviour. A gap that they are unable to bridge. At least, not on their own. Also, an intention (positive attitude) isn't yet a decision and often won't become a decision.

## Behavioural change in Greenhabit

How do we do it in Greenhabit? We have taken account of three elements involved in behavioural change: **capability**, **motivation** and **opportunity**. Having these three elements in place will ensure that behavioural change is achieved. These elements also influence each other and are therefore interdependent. If one of these three elements is not in place at the start of your Greenhabit journey, the result will be less successful. In Greenhabit, we increase opportunities (your environment) through your buddy and any other people (colleagues or peers) with whom you make the journey. We motivate you by challenging and rewarding you daily. And by arousing your curiosity.

## Knowledge and Skills

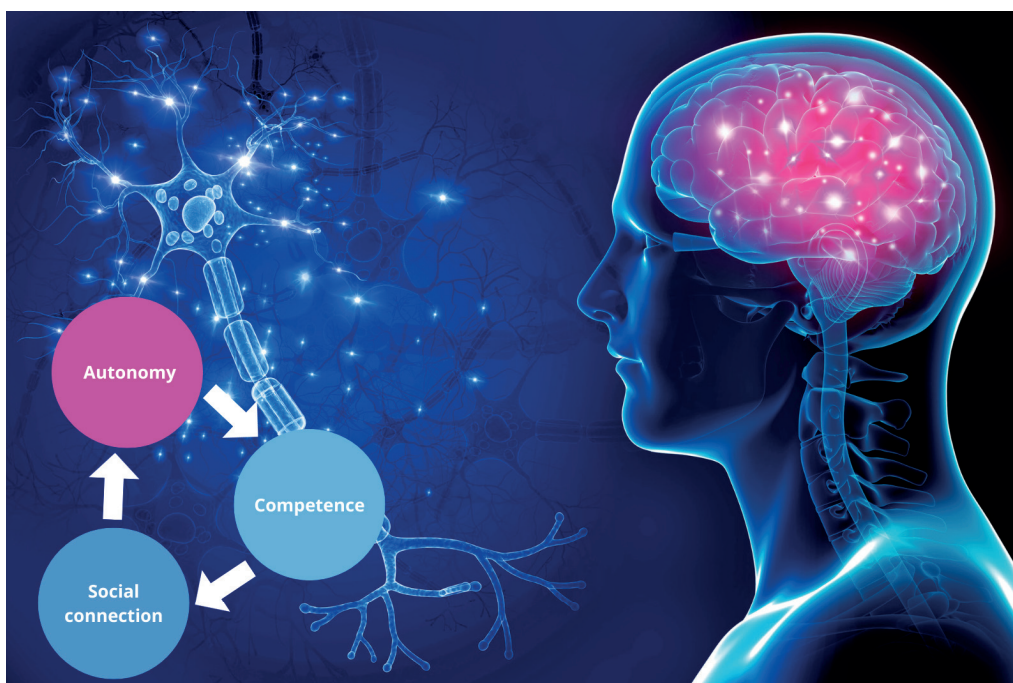
To achieve behavioural change in any area, you require knowledge and skills. These give you the roadmap, to find your way to your goal. Whether your goal is that you want to live healthier, or stop having negative thoughts. This is a process of becoming more aware through gaining more knowledge and through practice. For this element, you put both your thinking brain and feeling brain to work. The awareness process comprises the following stages:

**1 Unconsciously incompetent** This is the phase when you don't know that certain things are unhealthy, or how your brain and body work. The same applies to your negative thoughts where, when you are on autopilot, you automatically have negative thoughts in certain situations. During this phase, you go and explore in order to acquire knowledge. Building up intrinsic motivation is important here.

**2 Consciously incompetent** The phase when you learn about healthy choices and you become aware that things can be done better. During this phase, learning and broadening your horizons are very important. It can be very useful to receive the guidance of a coach during this phase.

**3 Consciously competent** During this phase, you put everything that you have learned into practice. You still do this very consciously, and developing routines during this phase is important.

**4 Unconsciously competent** Now you automatically apply everything you have learned about healthy lifestyle factors and methods. During this phase, however, you must invest in your routines and your environment. Keep trying new things in order to continue developing yourself. This will keep you focussed and you are at a lower risk of slowly being tempted by your control brain to start living unhealthily or thinking negatively.



## Motivation

Motivation is the second important element of behavioural change. Greenhabit requires motivation from you, so that you can face new challenges every day. Sometimes fun, but sometimes less pleasant challenges. Intrinsic motivation comes from within, because you have set a long-term goal using your thinking brain, aligned with your motivations. I always refer to this as the 'magnet', the place you would like to get to. Motivation helps you to maintain focus on what you want to achieve over a long period of time. This could be anything, such as starting a new course, or a healthy BMI. This element focuses on both your thinking and feeling brain.

How do you increase intrinsic motivation?

There is a clear distinction between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Intrinsic motivation comes from within the person, where someone wants to perform an activity because they enjoy it and they want to do it. Extrinsic motivation is when people engage in an activity to receive a reward or avoid a punishment. A combination of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation is also possible in relation to an activity or behavioural change. To increase your intrinsic motivation, there are actually three requirements.

(1) social connection (2) autonomy (3) competence

**Social connection** The connection with your environment, having trust in other people, is essential. A positive environment contributes to social connection. Space is needed to make mistakes. We have developed the buddy system for this purpose.

**Autonomy** The original meaning was being independent. The ability to do things at your own discretion. This doesn't mean just doing things with no regard for your environment. Autonomy is about feeling responsible for your own needs and feelings.

**Competence** The confidence in your own ability.

### Environment (opportunity)

The third important element of behavioural change is your environment. The people around you, social media, the temptations outside and inside your home, can strongly motivate, but also demotivate you.

For example, the app that motivates you, your teacher and parents who help you. Compliments that you receive and the support you feel.

Your environment can also have a negative effect, through the wrong friends, drugs, or a partner who has a very unhealthy lifestyle. But also all the information that you receive via the Internet and social media about what is healthy and what will help you to lose weight, or the image you want to show to the outside world. Form is also important. If good advice is given by a messenger that is perceived to be patronising or belittling, then the advice, however good, will not be followed. A role model can work very well once you accept that this is credible and reliable for you.

What measures can you take to help you achieve your goal?:

- Use your smartphone as an activity tracker or heart rate monitor, and your diary to remind you to drink water or exercise on time
- Meet up with your buddy or in groups to exercise
- Know your numbers: blood sugar/LDL/HDL/triglycerides/waist circumference/ heart rate and blood pressure, respiration, BMI
- Physiotherapist, psychologist or coach

External factors therefore also have a significant impact on your motivation.

**Habit is, as it were,  
a second nature**  
*Marcus Tullius Cicero*

When you want to change your behaviour, it is important that you are aware that you need to balance the three parts of your brain and your environment. They can reinforce, but also work against each other.

- Your thinking brain keeps you focused on your goals. It helps you to make choices, plan and rationalise. Your intrinsic motivation is the all-important factor here.

You should also investigate what actually drives you to lose weight, or why you want to have a more positive frame of mind.

- Make sure that your control brain doesn't force you to eat more, or watch five Netflix episodes in a row. You do this by losing weight in small steps. A routine in your sleep-wake pattern, allowing you to get deep, high-quality sleep. Your breathing is also important in relation to stress (cortisol). Learn to deal with disappointments and events that have a huge impact on your state of mind (stress is fattening!!).
- The feeling brain gets help in maintaining the good feeling through motivation from a coach or a compliment from your partner. Successes, looking at your performance in your app can also give you a feeling of happiness (dopamine in your brain). The slow decrease in your readings show that you are doing well.
- Your environment can help you focus by, for example, having a partner who buys and cooks healthy food. Who doesn't open a bag of crisps in the evening while sitting next to you. You can always set up a digital diary to send you alerts, reminding you to exercise or drink water. Or a buddy who asks you to join them for exercise.

In summary: for successful behavioural change, you need all three elements. Knowledge and skills, intrinsic motivation and your environment. The three parts of the brain play a central role in alternating dominance.



**Don't be afraid of slow growth,  
only fear stagnation**

## Willpower, not an endless source

### **Roy Baumeister's radishes**

*Some twenty years ago, the American psychologist Roy Baumeister did an experiment with people that clearly demonstrated that this is the case. He led people into a room that smelled of freshly baked chocolate chip cookies. Half of them were allowed to actually indulge in the biscuits, but the other half had to eat radishes and weren't given the sweet treats. They then had to work on a puzzle that actually couldn't be solved.*

*The result: the people who had eaten the radishes – and therefore had to make every effort to stay away from the chocolate chip cookies - gave up much quicker.*

*The explanation for this was that their willpower had already been depleted. During the subsequent years, countless variations of this test were repeated. For example, people were shown an emotional scene from a film and asked to suppress their emotions. Every time, the outcome was that they gave up earlier on the next task.*

*In 2010, a meta-analysis of 83 studies and 198 experiments appeared to show that this effect really existed: ego depletion, or willpower fatigue. In 2011, Baumeister even published a best-selling book about this:*

*Willpower: Rediscovering the Greatest Human Strength.*



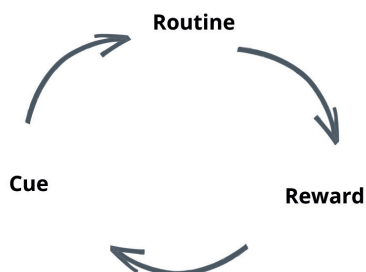
It transpires that we only have a limited amount of willpower each day. Willpower isn't only used to resist temptations, but also to make decisions. That explains why Steve Jobs always wore the same style turtleneck and Barack Obama and Mark Zuckerberg always wore the same type of suit and T-shirt. By wearing the same clothes, they cut down on the decisions they had to make. It can save you precious energy if you don't have to think about your outfit in the morning. That is why good habits are so incredibly important. They help us to save on willpower.

After 500 biceps exercises, you can barely lift your arm. After making countless decisions and resisting temptations, your willpower is also no longer able to perform at its best. That is why, after a hard day's work, you are more likely to reach for a bowl of crisps or a second glass of wine.

Why should you have to weigh up each decision individually? Salad or a sandwich? Walking or running? Watch Netflix, or read a book? Surely it would be much simpler to choose healthy eating as a habit just the once. Learning a new habit actually requires a lot of willpower in the beginning. But as soon as you are on track with the habit, you can go on autopilot (cruise control) with that new habit. Because of those new habits, you no longer waste precious willpower. Rituals and automatic responses make life easier, because they don't put unnecessary strain on your brain. The fewer small decisions you have to make, the more effectively you will make important decisions.

### Mastering new habits

The creation of a habit starts with a cue followed by a routine, followed by a reward. Charles Duhigg described the 'Habit Loop', and won several prizes for his work. He says, "every habit can be reprogrammed. But time and effort are required for this."



The three parts of the 'Habit Loop':

**Cue** The cue in your environment that makes you take action

**Routine** The action that you carry out, the habit itself

**Reward** The benefit gained from performing the habit

To understand your own habits, you first have to identify the three parts of the 'Habit Loop'. Once you have analysed these, you can start looking for ways to replace your old routines with new ones.

### Identify the routine

How can you break through a habit like this? First of all, by drawing the 'Habit Loop', to identify the habit. The interesting questions are: what is the cue? Is it hunger? Boredom? Low blood sugar? That you fancy something to eat before starting to cook? And what's the reward? The chocolate itself? The change of scenery?

The temporary distraction? Or the sugar boost?

It makes sense that it can sometimes be very difficult to change habits. The following four steps enable you to very easily change old habits to new ones. These are purely a guide that can help you to break old routines and replace them with new ones.

1. Identify your old habit
2. Experiment with rewards
3. Set the cue (for example, a timer)
4. Make a plan

An example: your goal is to drink three bottles of water a day. The 'Greenhabit bottle' is still full at the end of the day.



### **CUE**

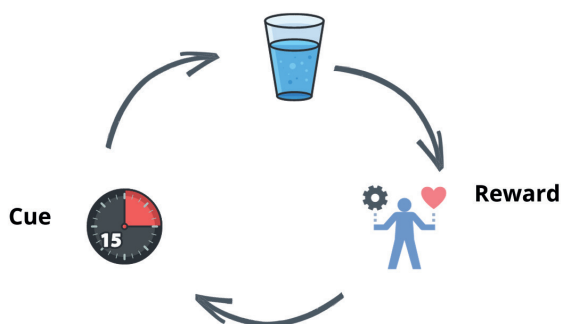
You could choose to drink a bottle of water in the morning, afternoon and in the early evening. Stick a post-it note on it with three squares and you tick a square in the morning/afternoon and early evening after you've drunk the water, or you set an alarm.

### **ROUTINE**

You drink the entire bottle of water three times a day.

### **REWARD**

The result is that you'll feel more alert, concentrate better and have fewer cravings for snacks.



## **A habit in 66 days**

*The psychologist Dr Phillipa Lally devised an experiment to find out how long it takes to learn a new habit.*

*The study was conducted amongst just under a hundred people with an average age of 27 years. The participants had to live healthily and continue to do so for 84 consecutive days. They could choose from walking for 15 minutes, having fruit with their lunch every day, or doing 50 sit-ups every morning. The experiment demonstrated that there was an average of 66 days between the conscious decision to perform the action and the time at which it became an automatic action. For complex actions, the process takes slightly longer than for simple actions. In this experiment, eating a piece of fruit with lunch was a simple action and doing 50 sit-ups every morning was a complex action. Even the people who occasionally skipped a day eventually reached their goal.*

After about 66 days, a new action becomes automatic, it becomes part of your life. Learning habits is not a matter of 'all or nothing'. It's fine to occasionally skip a day.





### **What happens in those 66 days?**

Your self-control is controlled by your 'thinking brain' and this is also what controls your willpower. You can train your willpower. Just like a muscle, the 'thinking brain' gets tired, but if you train it regularly, it actually gets stronger. Increased brain activity forms new neural pathways and strengthens existing ones. This form is called 'functional neuroplasticity' and is linked to learning and practising. Suppose, for example, you start juggling. The first few times, you can't keep the balls in the air, but after practising and over time (and possibly some frustration) it will gradually get easier. Therefore, if you want to meditate or walk around a

block every morning, it will take approximately 66 days for your neural pathways to be reprogrammed for these new activities. The same applies to a positive attitude, you can rewire your brain for this.

If you take a small step every day, over time the results of those steps will grow exponentially. It isn't the large-scale decisions that make us happy, but the sum of all those **small steps**.

### **Small steps, major gains**

Initially, the effects are minimal, but they become profound over time. Suppose you try to become more grateful and you notice small, seemingly irrelevant positive changes occurring. Three months later, gratitude and mindfulness are an integral part of your life. In the long run, this improves your relationships, you are more satisfied with your life and you are more optimistic in life. You sleep better, cope better with setbacks and your life is more fulfilling.

After one good habit, more will follow. By achieving a greater goal in small steps, you gain more self-confidence. This is a breeding ground for more good habits. Once learned, habits penetrate other parts of your life, such as exercise, meditating, reading or eating healthily. Habits are the best way to achieve your goals. Use Greenhabit to learn new habits in small steps, with the help of the weekly goals.

And don't make your goals too big.

**If it scares you, it might be  
a good thing to try.**

*Seth Godin*

Positive psychology has demonstrated this:

- 1 **Gratitude** is fundamental to your well-being.
- 2 A **rich life** is more important than wealth; material things, such as social status or money, do not play a determining role in personal happiness.
- 3 The **relationships** a person has are fundamental to their subjective sense of well-being.
- 4 **You can learn** happiness. You can become happy. It is not a matter of fate, fortune or adversity.

## Gratitude, the key to happiness

According to neuroscientist **Alex Korb** we may believe that 'practising gratitude' not only feels nice, but also actually affects the brain at a biological level. "Feeling grateful activates the brain stem region that produces dopamine," he says. "Additionally, gratitude towards others increases activity in social dopamine circuits, which makes social interactions more enjoyable."

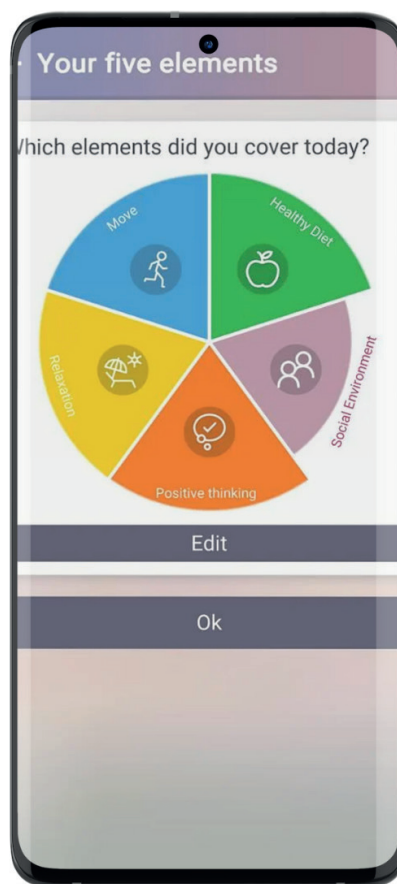
Also, gratitude can boost the neurotransmitter serotonin. "Thinking of things you are grateful for forces you to focus on the positive aspects of your life," says Korb. This simple act increases serotonin production in your brain.

## Greenhabit reflection model

Greenhabit includes a reflection model that involves you reflecting every day on: "How was your day? Did I eat healthily today (80-20 rule), did I have exercise, sufficient rest, a positive mindset and was there any social interaction?"

This model is completely personal; you don't have to compare yourself with anyone else.

It provides an insight into the part that requires more attention. Daily reflection creates the desired habits in your brain.





## Self-reflection

Self-reflection actually means reflecting. Looking in the mirror (but then figuratively) and taking a moment to reflect on your own actions in order to develop yourself. This can be from a personal, social or professional perspective. Self-reflection is a kind of path to your subconscious mind, where you can study your thoughts and emotions more closely. Looking at your own actions, the way you think, giving you new insights.

What does science say about this? People who are capable of self-reflection benefit more in almost all areas of life. They handle their emotions better, focus well and are disciplined. They make well-considered decisions, can plan well and are better at predicting problems.

**Dee Ward Hock**, the man who founded VISA in 1968, is convinced that people should spend fifty percent of their time on self-management. In order to better understand their goals, motivations, values and their own behaviour. 'The problem is never how to get new, innovative thoughts into your mind, but how to get old ones out'

# Your brain and nutrition

The doctor of the future will no longer treat the human frame with drugs, but rather will cure and prevent disease with nutrition.

*Thomas Edison*



## Your gut

There is a link between the condition of the gut and the brain. You might recognise this yourself - when you are stressed, you also have problems with your stomach. The gut and the brain are in constant two-way communication with one another. This is called the 'gut-brain axis'. Signals are sent from the gut to the brain, and vice versa. There is evidence that certain probiotic bacteria can influence signal transmission between the brain and gut. In part, the gut bacteria determine the activity of protease inhibitors, that protect the gut from substances released when someone is stressed. Healthy gut flora is therefore hugely important and has a direct impact on stress.

You are what you eat, so if you don't eat bad things, you also don't have to 'clear these away' in your body. The importance of paying attention to what you eat, by eliminating sugars from your diet, forms the basis of a healthier body. The right energy balance, input and consumption of energy result in a positive balance.

## Metabolism

Perhaps you've never previously given much thought to the usefulness of food. The bottom line is that we eat to keep our body functioning. Everything that enters the stomach is carefully taken apart and assessed for 'usefulness' for survival. The entire process of processing food and circulating and consuming nutrients is known as metabolism. Something comes in and something goes out, and in between numerous processes take place that purely and simply require energy. Everything is carefully controlled by the brain and good communication is essential for good health. The different parts of our food, such as carbohydrates, fats and proteins are all required and are all specifically dealt with by our metabolism.

Our daily diet is made up of different components. These components, that supply calories (energy) are fats, proteins and carbohydrates. Nutrients are also needed, in very small amounts, which provide little or no energy, such as minerals and vitamins. Fat from the food enters your gut and the gall bladder releases bile. Bile aids in the digestion of fats in the small intestine: bile emulsifies fats allowing enzymes to break apart the complex fats to form other fatty acids. The fatty acids are transported to the liver via the lymphatic system and bloodstream. The liver changes the structure of the fatty acids, allowing them to be used as fuel, or they are stored as an energy reserve in the form of glycogen, or as body fat.

## Resting metabolic rate

When your body is at rest, all kinds of processes, such as the beating of your heart, respiration and the digestion of food, also take place unnoticed. We refer to this as the resting metabolic rate, or resting metabolism. These are biochemical processes (energy consumption) and are necessary for our body to function properly. The older you are, the lower the resting metabolic rate. The amount of fat and muscle tissue also determine the amount of energy you consume. The energy consumption of muscle tissue is high and that of adipose tissue low.

Don't let your resting metabolic rate go down. Your resting metabolic rate consumes 60-80% of your daily energy requirements. As soon as you start to diet and your control brain realises this quickly enough, it will switch your body to economy mode (this is your body's survival technique in times of scarcity).

**Other factors that influence your resting metabolic rate are:**

- The amount of NON-fatty tissue in your body: bones, muscles and connective tissue. The more you have, the better for your resting metabolic rate.
- Your age, the older you are, the lower your resting metabolic rate.

A general weekly guideline for losing weight is 300 grams per week. At this amount, your control brain is not 'alerted' so it does not go into survival mode, otherwise it would force you to eat more.

**So why is change difficult?**

Change is still difficult for most people. This is partly because substances like sugar are addictive (combination of the control brain and feeling brain). When you eat sugar every day, your brain starts craving it. Therefore when you don't eat sugar for a while, your brain still wants it. After a while, however, this craving subsides and your brain needs less sugar. Sugar is in almost all ready-to-eat food without us being aware of it. The reason is that sugar helps to preserve processed food. We therefore eat sugar without realising. Check ingredients carefully, such as added sugars, that are listed on the packaging. Plus sugary products are often cheaper than healthy ones.

**How does the body deal with excess sugar?**

The body uses glucose as a basic fuel in all sorts of cellular processes. Pure glucose is fuel for the brain and glucose is converted into usable energy in muscle cells. As all cells in the body require glucose to function, glucose is circulated via the bloodstream. The presence of glucose in the blood can be measured and we call this the blood sugar level. When the energy balance is positive, all our body can do is convert the excess calories supplied into reserves. This is left over from evolution and is a very useful action of our primal brain. Back then, there was not an abundance of food. Building up reserves could make the difference between survival and death. As explained previously, this can also work against us in today's modern society. The liver converts excess energy into glycogen; when energy is needed again, this can soon be converted back into glucose. The excess is also converted into adipose tissue that we require to regulate our body temperature. This is used to produce hormones, for a healthy menstrual cycle and to provide the body with a form of physical protection. Adipose tissue is built up in and around the muscles, under the skin and in the abdominal cavity.

## Insulin

Insulin is very important for keeping the blood sugar (glucose) under control, it is also involved in processing fats from the blood. When you have eaten, the carbohydrates are broken down into glucose in the small intestine. All glucose is absorbed into the blood and the blood sugar then peaks. If your blood sugar rises, your pancreas releases insulin and insulin ensures that the muscle cells and fat cells absorb glucose, whilst the liver converts glucose into glycogen. Insulin also directs the adipose tissue to convert the glucose that is consumed into fat. When the glucose level in the blood starts to drop again, the glycogen is converted back into glucose and carried by the blood to all parts of the body as fuel.

## Positive energy balance

With a positive energy balance you take in more energy (fat and sugar) than you burn. This leads to the extra energy being stored in adipose tissue, which in the case of a long-term positive energy balance, will mainly be found in the abdomen and on the hips. However, this extra energy can only be stored in subcutaneous fat cells.

Additional fat cells are produced, and fat cells can also become larger, but at a certain point these collapse, which can lead to inflammation.

Inflamed cells are then drawn to the adipose tissue and this, in turn, leads to impaired insulin sensitivity. The problem is that the storage of all that fat in organs, such as the liver, muscles, heart and kidneys, leads to impaired insulin sensitivity. Your organs become fatty, you put on weight, your pancreas starts secreting more and more insulin and organs become unresponsive. Eventually, the pancreas also becomes fatty, then insulin production ceases. This insulin resistance can lead to type 2 diabetes.

## Prevention

Disease stems from an interaction (signal conflict) between your genes and your environment. There is a lot that our genes don't understand; on average people eat 6 times a day, they take small sips throughout the day and they sit for an average of 10.6 hours a day. Prolonged sitting is associated with breakdown of the muscles and tendons and causes problems with the organs and the brain. There is a severe lack of deep relaxation, or internal rest. However, acute stress is good as our body needs this (for example, eating a Spanish pepper, garlic or a cold shower).

Preventing insulin resistance is the very best course of action. By changing your lifestyle and understanding what food can do for your body, you can strengthen your resistance and you will feel more vital. This isn't difficult, but sadly this is barely covered at medical school.

What's the best thing to do? Adjust your eating pattern, give thought to which foods are high in calories and cut down on them. Eat more fibres and eat less (frequently).

## Don't wake the monster

A few weeks after adjusting your eating habits, you will notice resistance from your body. Your control brain and feeling brain are eager to keep hold of all the energy that is coming in. During the Greenhabit programme, there will always be a phase when you lose less weight, but then another phase when you lose more weight. Therefore, don't focus too much on your weight; it's better to lose weight very slowly than lose a lot all at once.

**Be careful not to lose** more than 300 grams a week, as you'll wake the monster!

This is useful to know, as many people give up if they stop losing weight. Accept that you'll reach a point when things don't go your way for a while, but you just have to get through this. You'll definitely reach another point when things will go your way again.

Bear in mind that one kilogram of fat has a greater volume than one kilogram of muscle mass. You will therefore weigh the same, but the volume will have decreased. If you are struggling, seek support from your buddy and focus on what you have achieved so far. You really do need at least twelve weeks for your body and mind to get used to this healthy way of life.

## What if you don't lose weight?

The physiological processes in your body will work better if you have a healthier lifestyle. You won't notice this, but your liver's sensitivity to insulin will improve. In turn, your muscles, kidneys, heart and many other processes will also improve. Except, you won't see that on the outside. If you were able to see your blood test results every single week, you would be able to see the changes. To be honest, what you are really aiming for is to restore your body's physiological processes. To monitor progress, you might consider having blood tests before starting the Greenhabit programme. The results of these tests ('know your numbers') are your baseline, you have an idea where you are starting from. You can then have a blood test at the end of the Greenhabit period. A comparison of the blood tests will give you an idea of the various changes in your body. You can request a blood test through your General Practitioner. In any case, try to focus less on your weight and more on how you feel and your waist circumference.

## Greenhabit's 80/20 rule

Try to ensure that 80% of what you eat during a day are healthy choices, and 20% less healthy choices. For many people, it is exactly the opposite. Give food and drink a score. For example, dark chocolate would be given an eight and coated nuts a six. From now on, only choose products that have a score of eight or more (aside from the normal healthy meals). So, suppose you are at a birthday party, don't stuff yourself full of six's (those snack bowls always placed on tables). The space they'll take up and the feeling you get from eating them just isn't worth it. Enjoy food that scores an eight or more, a piece of cake for example, it's better to have two helpings of that.



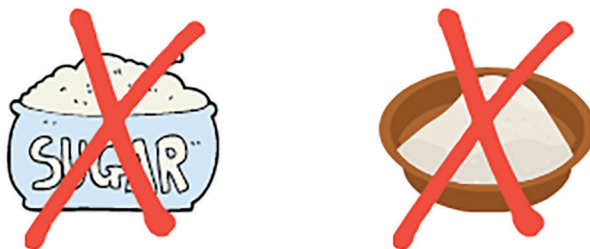


## The three ground rules if you want to lose weight

Science shows that these are the most important ground rules for achieving a healthy weight. Take small steps and you will find that you become the master of your own brain. This is important in everything you do. Make sure it's right for you and you feel good about it.

### Step 1 Reduce consumption of sugar and starch

The most important part of losing weight is reducing your consumption of sugar and starch (carbohydrates). By always eating fewer sugars and starch, you will feel less hungry. The craving for sugar decreases. What happens in your body? You start burning fat instead of carbohydrates.



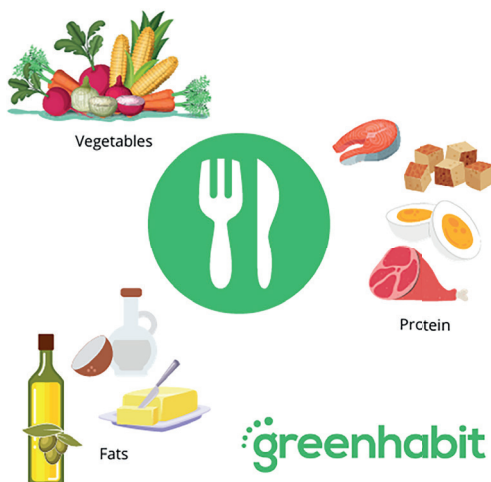
Another huge benefit of reducing carbohydrates is that your insulin level will decrease; your kidneys will then excrete excess sodium and water from your body. This reduces bloating and unnecessary water weight. The diagram below shows the results from a study in which low-carb and low-fat diets were compared in overweight or obese people.

### Step 2 Eat lots of vegetables, proteins and fat

If you really want to lose weight, try to include a source of protein and fat, and vegetables (slow carbohydrates) with every meal.

#### Proteins

Don't underestimate the need to eat sufficient protein (meat, fish, eggs, tofu) if you wish to lose weight. Various studies show that an average of 50 grams of protein a day speeds up your metabolism, so that you burn 80 to 100 additional calories a day. In addition, according to research, protein-rich diets can reduce your food and snack cravings by 60 percent.



### **Vegetables (slow carbohydrates)**

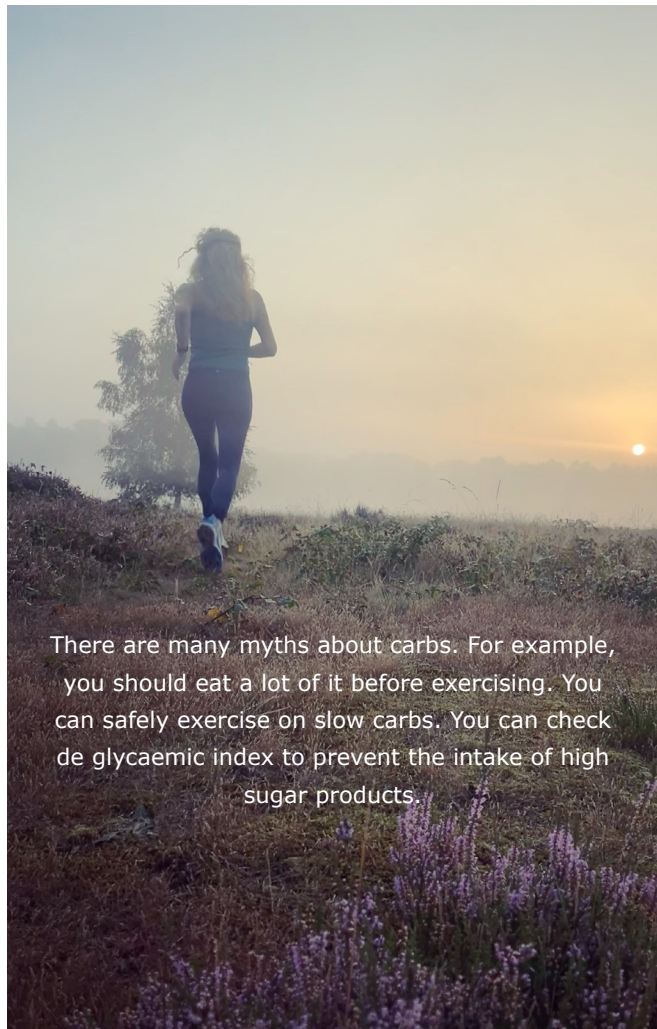
Vegetables also contain carbohydrates, but these are good carbohydrates. You can safely eat a large plate of these vegetables. These will give you all the fibres, vitamins and minerals that you need. High-fibre, low-calorie foods fill your stomach properly and stop you from feeling hungry. For example, spinach, broccoli, tomato, white, red and pointed cabbage, lettuce, cucumber, courgette and Brussels sprouts.

### **Fat**

Don't be afraid of eating fat, because trying to eat low-carbohydrate and low-fat food at the same time guarantees failure. Eat two to three meals a day and feel free to add a fourth if you feel hungry. Losing weight does not have to be torture. You can use olive oil, coconut oil, avocado oil or butter.

### **Step 3 Exercise**

Try to exercise at least twice a week, in addition to your daily exercise. Vary this with cardio - cardiovascular exercise - and strength training. Cardio has a positive effect on weight loss and waist circumference. Strength training, on the other hand, has a positive effect on the lean body mass (muscles). The more lean body mass, the higher your resting metabolic rate. Exercise is also a good remedy when you are feeling hungry. That is because this curbs hunger sensations, because your control brain thinks that you are looking for food. Don't forget to drink three bottles of water a day.



There are many myths about carbs. For example, you should eat a lot of it before exercising. You can safely exercise on slow carbs. You can check the glycaemic index to prevent the intake of high sugar products.

# Your Greenhabit adventure starts here



Start where you are.  
Use what you have.  
Do what you can.

*Arthur Ashe*

## Twelve weeks

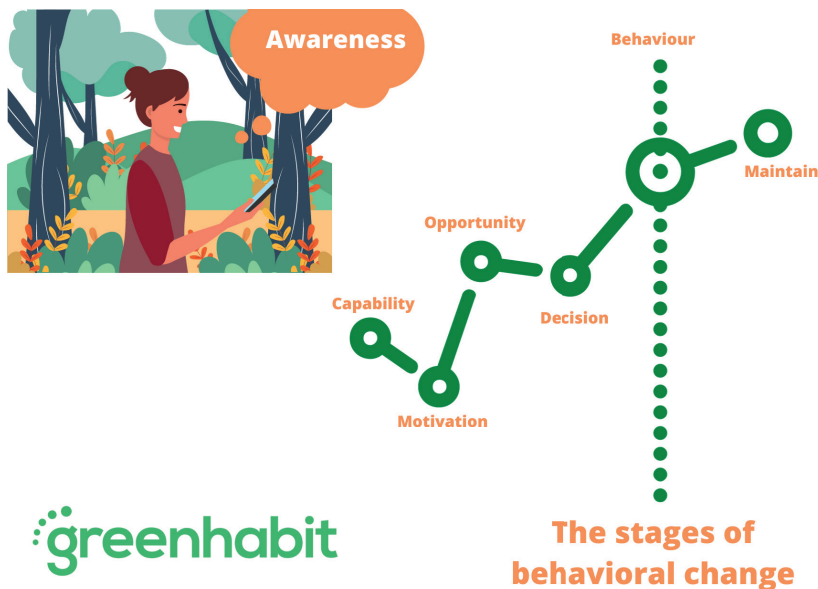
You have now read how your brain works and how new habits are formed. By stepping out of your comfort zone, focusing and reflecting every day, new patterns will emerge. This is also why the Greenhabit programme lasts for twelve weeks. It is a continuous journey in which you cannot take a break, but you actually won't need to.

You learn to respect your health under all circumstances and to do what *is* possible and what fits into your life. You could potentially face unexpected challenges that get in the way of your good intentions, for example, injury, loss of a loved one, a conflict with someone. This is part of it - it's just life. Feel free to skip a day and then pick up where you left off. Through Greenhabit, we give you a helping hand and in the programme we have included all elements that enhance 'learning'.

## Goals

The most important thing, of course, is why you are taking part in Greenhabit? You have consciously chosen to work towards a greater goal. What are your main goals? In Greenhabit, everything is about making big goals small, but also about things that really matter. About doing things that you've never done before. About your motivations, finding resistance and, above all, how to deal with that resistance.

So, on page 53, write down your main goals and your micro-goals in order to achieve



them. A micro-goal is a small, focused action towards a greater goal. Micro-goals are necessary to achieve your big dream goal, as small steps also make one big goal. And the smaller the steps towards your dream goal, the easier it becomes to take action. Just keep following your path and stay focussed, even if you sometimes encounter a challenge. Dare to ask for help if you need it. You can write down your goals in this book. In the game, you can choose your micro-goals every Monday, or write them down yourself.

### **Examples of main goals**

- "I want more energy and want to feel less stressed."
- "I want a better life-work balance."
- "I'm looking for meaning."
- "I want more self-confidence."

### **Examples of micro-goals**

- "I want to eat fish twice a week."
- "I want to sleep at least 6 hours a night."
- "I want to exercise intensively at least twice a week."
- "This week I want one evening to myself."

### **Think of why you're taking part in Greenhabit** (when deciding on your main goals)

- You don't have much energy
- You are often tired in the middle of the day
- You find it hard to focus
- You frequently worry
- You lack meaning in your life
- You're unable to turn off your thoughts
- Your tiredness prevents you from exercising
- You want more self-confidence
- You are looking for more structure and help with planning your time
- You need help making healthy food choices
- You don't have time for yourself and you feel that you are always forced to do things
- You have difficulty maintaining contact with people
- Your body prevents you from exercising
- You suffer from difficult bowel movements

### **Think about what it could bring you**

- You want more focus and concentration
- You want to learn how to deal with stress
- You are looking for more happiness
- Emotional balance
- Motivation
- Where your energy sources are
- Energy to 'get up' and to exercise
- You want the courage to do more
- You want more social contact
- Improved habits
- You want to learn to eat healthier and more moderately
- You want mental resilience

## Your personal details

Date of participation

---

I'm taking part in Greenhabit because

---

---

My main goals are:

1

---

2

---

3

---

My micro-goals are:

1

---

2

---

3

---

## Waist circumference

The relationship between belly fat and health risks has been demonstrated in various scientific studies. This is not the subcutaneous fat, but the 'visceral fat' - the fat that lies near to the abdominal organs. Even if someone has a healthy weight according to the BMI index, they may carry too much belly fat, which increases the risk of health complaints. Your waist girth therefore says more about where your body fat is located. That is more important than your BMI or your weight. The unhealthy white fat accumulates in your abdomen as a result of eating the wrong types of food. Once you start to eat healthier, you lose this fat first of all. Therefore, don't forget to record the measurement before you start Greenhabit. This number tells you more than, for example, your weight.

Measuring your waist circumference is very simple. On your bare skin, find the bottom of your ribs and the top of your hip bone and wrap a tape measure midway around your body between these two points. Relax and breathe out and make sure that the tape measure isn't too tight, then record the result.

Enter your measurements here, so that you can compare them with your previous measurements.

	<b>week 1</b>	<b>week 4</b>	<b>week 8</b>	<b>week 12</b>
Measurement				

	<b>too little</b>	<b>normal</b>	<b>too much</b>	<b>much too much</b>
Women	< 68 cm	68 – 80 cm	80 – 88 cm	> 88 cm
Men	<79 cm	79-94 cm	94-102 cm	> 102 cm

## BMI

The Body Mass Index (BMI) is an index for your weight to height ratio. The BMI gives an estimate of the health risk associated with your body weight. In the table below, you can see which category you fall into and whether you have a healthy BMI. As part of the Greenhabit game, each Tuesday you will see what your BMI is when you weigh yourself.

<b>Age</b>	<b>too low</b>	<b>normal</b>	<b>too high</b>	<b>much too high</b>
15	< 17	17 – 23.5	23.5 – 28.5	> 28.5
16	< 17.5	17.5 – 24	24 – 29	> 29
17	< 18	18 – 24.5	25.5 – 29.5	> 29.5
18-44	< 18.5	18.5 – 25	25 – 30	> 30
45-60	< 19.5	19.5 – 26	26 – 31	> 31
60+	< 20.5	20,5 - 27	27 -32	> 32

Enter your BMI four times in the table below and see if there are any changes. As well as your height and weight, your build, muscle and fat mass, age and gender play an important role.

	<b>week 1</b>	<b>week 4</b>	<b>week 8</b>	<b>week 12</b>
Measurement				

## New habits

The Greenhabit programme lasts for twelve weeks. The duration of the programme is related to forming new habits. As you have read, your brain needs at least 66-68 days to form a new habit. It is therefore important to repeat things 'consciously' every day until your unconscious mind has taken over. A new habit will embed itself even better if you link it to an existing ritual, such as cleaning your teeth, brushing your hair or showering.

## Treasure chest

Every day, you open a treasure chest which contains messages, challenges or measurements. You can embark on the journey with a buddy you have chosen (friend, sister or partner) who is also following the programme with their own main goals. Every day you reflect on how your day was. The health dashboard with your personal measurements shows you your weight, BMI but also your balance. In the App community, you can share photos of your adventure with people you have chosen. This will support you, but will also inspire and motivate you. As well as your own happiness photo album, you have a travel journal to reread what you have learned.



## Choice

Breaking patterns will help you to discover other things. Things that you otherwise would never see or experience. It makes you resilient to situations which you may face. Unexpected or unpredictable things. Your personality, your life experience, your environment make up who you are. And the most difficult moments in your life will make you strong inside. In this book, but also during your journey in the game, I tell you how to break patterns, how to lose weight without dieting and how you can stay close to your true self. You will find yourself challenged on many levels. Sometimes it fits, but sometimes it doesn't. The choices you make are entirely up to you. You are free to decide whether or not to do something.

## How does the game work?

- The Greenhabit programme always starts on a **Monday**. If it isn't Monday yet, whilst waiting you could watch the instruction video on the website (<https://greenhabit.nl/greenhabit/>) or read this book. Try to think about the goals you want to achieve. About what you have been dreaming about for a long time. Once you receive your login details, you can download Greenhabit and add your contacts.
- As soon as the first Monday arrives, answer the questions that appear on Monday on your timeline (your **baseline measurement**). The answers are shown in 'your insights'. 'Your insights' are only visible to you; your buddy, friends or colleagues can't see them.
- Once (or more) a day, post a photo in Greenhabit using the camera button in the 'Social' tab (a photo of one of the five elements, or just a moment you'd like to save). You can see the photos you post in your photo album and these can be shared with



your buddy, friends or colleagues who you have chosen. You can share different photos with different people.

- Each Sunday you will receive an **e-learning** message with a learning theme. These are themes that help you with your personal growth, but also about what sugar and stress do to your body.
- Tuesday is **measuring and weighing day**, this appears on your timeline. This isn't compulsory - if you don't have a tape measure or scales, or if you don't want to measure or weigh. These data are also only visible to you. After each entry, you can immediately see your BMI and you will also see these data in 'your insights'.
- Within Greenhabit you can earn points and **medals** by completing challenges.
- The Greenhabit points and medals that you earn will ultimately lead to a reward. You cannot choose the award yourself, Greenhabit will allocate this to you. This appears as a voucher in the game. It teaches you to discover new things.

### Notebook (Journal)

Greenhabit also includes a notebook (Journal). You can use this to jot down your thoughts, for example, but also to reflect on your day. It should especially be used in the mornings to write down the three most important things you want to do that day. It creates structure in your head, but it also relaxes your body. Make this a habit and you will find this pays off handsomely. You won't feel stressed when you go to bed by having not worked through your list. And you will get up every day with a fresh outlook and space in your head for new things. People who stick to this morning ritual will be much more productive for the rest of the day.



I will do these three things today

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

I am grateful for..

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

People who find three things to be grateful for at the end of the day experience a more positive attitude to life. Focussing your attention on all the things you are grateful for has a magnetic effect and attracts more things or situations to be grateful for.

## Greenhabit's Five Elements



Relaxation



Positive mindset



Healthy nutrition



Social interaction



Exercise

Bad habits are often the result of an emotional imbalance. Research has shown that when we are mentally resilient, we are able to regain our balance more quickly. Greenhabit looks at people as a whole. The way we feel largely determines our behaviour. Healthy behaviour is made up of multiple dimensions. Focussing solely on exercise will not make you feel fully balanced. And by focussing solely on your social environment, you are at risk of becoming inactive. We have learned that we can make

people aware by getting them to put into practice the five elements each day as they see fit. Using their thinking brain. This way, you activate your thinking brain every day to engage in healthy choices physically, mentally and socially, and you will see that you start to act accordingly. This means that if you feel that you did not exercise enough last week, your thinking brain will make sure that you exercise this week. You are less inclined to act on autopilot. You can decide what is best for you. And as every person is different, every result will also be different.

This reflection model is for you and not intended as a comparison with other players. In fact, you decide how to complete it and what the norm is for you. As you gradually learn more about the five elements, that will also change.

Through Greenhabit, you learn to do five things every day, which are micro-goals. You won't immediately be successful, but you will be given all the time you need for this. During your Greenhabit journey, you can see exactly which element requires the most attention from you. In your personal dashboard, you will see which of the 5 elements is the smallest. With practice and repetition, it will gradually get easier. In the game, every evening you will be asked which of the five elements you managed to focus on. This way, you can see exactly which element you need to pay more attention to. You don't have to give a specific amount of attention to an element. As long as you give it the attention you think is needed to remain in balance. Your body will also tell you this.

Once you have aligned the five elements in a way that works best for you, you will have achieved a balance. The intensity is less important than 'the doing'.



# Food



# Food

Healthy food is the bedrock of a healthy body. By eating healthily we can prevent diseases or disorders. Greenhabit is about PURE and HONEST food. In the past, our diet mainly consisted of fruit and vegetables (full of vitamins, minerals, antioxidants and fibres) and largely of nuts and pulses (fibres, fats and proteins). Our ancestors hunted game and fish (proteins and omega-3 fats).

They used honey as a sweetener.

We now eat new foods, like cereals, milk and sugar. These products did not exist in the past and can lead to (subtle) allergic reactions such as headache and depression. Instead of lean protein sources, we have fatty meat, and instead of the omega-3 fats we have processed fats that can damage the cells. Instead of honey, refined sugar is now used. A human consumes around 50 kg of refined sugar a year. The refined sugars (or 'empty' calories) affect our blood sugar levels, which has a negative effect on brain function.

Salt is added to nuts and pulses, meaning we eat much more potassium and sodium, resulting in raised blood pressure and possible strokes (possibly resulting in brain damage). Only a small part of our current diet consists of fruit and vegetables, resulting in insufficient intake of vitamins, minerals, antioxidants and fibres. Whilst our brain actually needs a 'primal diet' to function properly.



Greenhabit will help you discover healthy eating in a natural way (clean), using natural products. Simple and healthy, therefore not a diet. Not only the amount, but also the quality of your food is important. Your body needs time to get used to healthy food and a new lifestyle. It will therefore take time for your energy to increase after your eating pattern has changed.

It is, of course, possible that you obtain advice from a dietician or nutritionist in addition to following the Greenhabit programme. You can do this online through our Greenhabit dietician, or you can search for a partner in your area.

Greenhabit teaches you what suits you best and how you can eat healthily. After twelve weeks of healthy eating, you will lose surplus fat, feel better, healthier and your energy will double. Your skin and hair will also start to look healthier. Healthy eating will become second nature and you won't have to think about it as much.

Always remember the 80-20 rule: 80% healthy and 20% less healthy. We will help you to make healthy, safe and more sustainable food choices.

## Carbohydrates

In the past, fats were portrayed as the number 1 cause of obesity and digestive disorders ('diseases of affluence'). Nowadays, the word carbohydrates is quite loaded. We all know someone in our environment who eats low-carb. But carbohydrates, like proteins and healthy fats, are a basic component of a healthy eating pattern. Therefore, omitting carbohydrates from your diet, or minimising these isn't a good idea. You still need carbohydrates, but the right ones. We will provide advice about this, so that you can continue to eat carbohydrates, but then the good 'slow carbohydrates' (see the table below).

In humans, carbohydrates are digested in the small intestine. Enzymes in the saliva and the small intestine break down carbohydrates into basic building blocks (monosaccharides). These monosaccharides are the simplest carbohydrates; they contain a single module of sugar, such as glucose or fructose.

Monosaccharides can be absorbed directly from the digestive tract into the bloodstream. They have a bad name because of the 'fast' sugars used as sweeteners and the easy-to-digest starch. Starch is an important ingredient in many staple foods today. Pasta, bread, potatoes and rice contain a lot of starch. These 'fast' simple carbohydrates cause the blood sugar level to rise shortly after you have eaten. The body reacts to a high blood sugar level by releasing insulin, so that cells in the liver, muscles and adipose tissue can absorb the circulating sugar. Insulin also causes the body to only use fat as energy after all sugar has been used or stored in the form of glycogen.

## Type 2 diabetes

High blood sugar levels for a long period of time due, for example, to a diet high in 'fast' carbohydrates, can make cells that usually respond to insulin become insulin resistant. These cells become insensitive to the consistently high insulin level and start to ignore it – which is common in the development of type 2 diabetes. This impaired sensitivity can result in a dangerously high blood sugar level, potentially leading to heart disease, strokes and kidney failure.



## Vegetables

Try choosing vegetables more often, instead of potatoes, pasta or rice. You may think these won't fill you, but if you have them for a few days, you will feel the difference in terms of your energy levels. Another advantage: you will feel full faster, and it will take longer for you to feel hungry again.



<b>Slow carbohydrates</b>	
Tomatoes, aubergines, courgettes	10
Leafy vegetables, onion, garlic	10
Tofu (bean curd), celeriac	15
Fresh apricots, walnuts, peanuts	15
Soya beans (cooked), fructose	20
Green lentils, yellow and green split peas	22
Chocolate (more than 72% cacao)	22
Cherries, plums, grapefruit	22
Sugar-free fruit jam	22
Chickpeas, brown and yellow lentils	30
Raw carrots, green beans, white beans	30
Soya vermicelli	30
Dairy products	30
Peach, apple	30
Quinoa, Chinese noodles (from mung beans)	35
Indian wild corn, wild rice	35
Orange, pear, figs, dried apricot	35
Brown beans, fresh peas	40
Chinese sticky rice, ketan (Indonesian sticky rice)	40
Lontong, breakfast cereals (wholemeal, sugar-free)	40
Pumpernickel (dark rye bread)	40
Wholemeal rye bread, wholemeal pasta (al dente)	40
Grapes, organic apple juice, orange juice	40
Boiled bulgur wheat, marrowfat peas, oat bran	45
Spaghetti al dente	45
Tinned peas, brown rice, basmati rice	50
Wholemeal pasta, brown bread with bran	50
Buckwheat flour, buckwheat crêpes	50
Sweet potato, mango	50



Fast carbohydrates	
White pasta (soft cooked)	55
Shortbread	55
Muesli	57
Melon, banana, fresh dates	60
Rice, semolina	60
Swede, beetroot, potatoes	65
Brown bread, couscous	65
Raisins, chocolate bars, biscuits	65
Cola, soft drinks, orange juice	65
Jam with sugar	65
Noodles, ravioli, white rice	70
Breakfast cereals (with sugar), white bread	70
French stick, sugar	70
Pumpkin, watermelon	75
Dried dates, grape juice	80
Tapioca flour (cassava)	80
Broad beans (boiled)	80
Cornflakes, popcorn	80
Crisps	80
Boiled carrots, honey	85
Parboiled rice, rice cake, puffed rice	85
Hamburger bun	85
Potato purée	85
Baked potatoes	90
French fries, starch, rice flour	95
Glucose, dextrose, grape sugar	100
Beer	89



### Glycaemic index

Slow carbohydrates are carbohydrates that are good for your body as they have a low GI (glycaemic index) and the fast carbohydrates are the bad carbohydrates, with a high GI. A food's glycaemic index tells us how quickly the carbohydrates in that product will increase our blood sugar level after we have eaten. The monosaccharide glucose, which is absorbed fastest into the bloodstream, has a glycaemic index of 100. The glycaemic index ranks food on a scale of 0 to 100. Food can be rated as high (higher than 70), medium (between 56 and 69) and low (lower than 55). The more easily digestible carbohydrates a product contains, the higher its glycaemic index. White bread, white rice, white pasta and potatoes are examples of foods with a high glycaemic index.

Here's a useful list.



More important than the glycaemic index is a product's glycaemic load. The glycaemic index tells you how quickly the carbohydrates in a product make your blood sugar level rise. The glycaemic load looks at the amount of carbohydrates in a specific amount of food – for example, one serving – that causes your blood sugar level to rise.

### Pumpkin as an example

Because of the types of carbohydrates that a pumpkin contains, pumpkin technically has a high glycaemic index. But as you can see from its low glycaemic load, one serving of pumpkin only has a very small total impact on your blood sugar level. Most types of vegetables have a low glycaemic load.

In general, we can say that a GI (glycaemic index) below 55 is healthy. It's better not to eat too many products with an average glycaemic score (between GI 55 – 69), but it's fine to eat them occasionally. It's better to avoid products with a GI higher than 70.

The advantage of eating products with a low GI (glycaemic index) is that you will have energy for much longer and more time will pass until you feel hungry again.

The table below can help you to choose products with a low glycaemic index or load.

### Glycaemic load

It's good to average a glycaemic load of between 10 and 15 for each meal. If you have symptoms linked to the blood sugar level, then averaging 10 or lower each meal would be better.

<b>Glycaemic load</b>	<b>Value</b>	<b>Impact on sugar level</b>
High	>20	Rapid increase
Moderate	10-20	A more gradual increase
Low	<10	Slow increase

You can calculate the glycaemic load per 100 grams by multiplying the GI with the amount of available carbohydrates per 100 grams and then dividing this number by 100. Or  $GL = GI \times \text{available carbohydrates}/100$ .

*Example:*

The GI of a French stick is 95 and the weight of digestible carbohydrates is 50 grams. The calculation is as follows:

$$95/100 \times 50 \text{ available carbohydrates} \times 30 \text{ grams of the serving}/100 = 14.25$$

### Labels

It's quite difficult to find out the nutritional value of a product in the supermarket.

The words on the packaging are often difficult to read.

The Food Information Regulation lays down requirements for a food label. The most important compulsory information on this label are:



- calories
- fat, saturated fat
- sugars
- sodium
- proteins
- total amount of carbohydrates

It's not easy to recognise sugar. Sugar is by no means just listed as 'sugar' on packaging. Sugar also has many other names, such as dextrose, fructose, lactose, honey, maple syrup and sugar candy. A product's glycaemic load is unfortunately not listed.

### **Brain food**

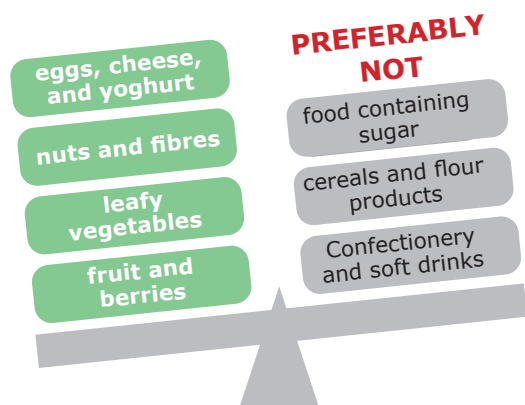
Nutrition has a huge impact on your brain. That's why it's important to eat the right food, so that your brain can develop and recover. Your brain needs sufficient oxygen, as well as nutrients supplied from the blood. Eating lots of leafy vegetables is good for brain development but also recovery. Try eating leafy vegetables, for example, spinach, endive, all types of lettuce but also cabbage, for a few days in a row (500 grams). Cabbage is very powerful and helps your brain to recover. There are many types of cabbage, they have completely different textures and flavours. They are very rich in fibres, vitamins and minerals. Preferably buy cabbage whole, not only is this cheaper but the flavour is much better too (pak choi, Chinese cabbage, red pointed cabbage, pointed cabbage, cauliflower, broccoli, bimi, white cabbage, Romanesco broccoli, kohlrabi, kale, Italian kale (cavolo nero)). Especially as you get older and your memory declines slightly, it is important to think about this.



I personally always start the day with vegetable juice that I make using the slow juicer. I use raw vegetables. By now, I also know which vegetables I like, because not all of them are nice once juiced. This gives me lots of energy, meaning I can start the day with a sharp brain. I make enough juice for two weeks and then freeze it. That saves a lot of cleaning work.

### Important Greenhabit guidelines

- make fruit and vegetables the main part of your meal
- eat as little bread or bread-type products as possible
- eat skinless chicken, lean meat or game
- eat beans
- eat vegetables instead of rice, pasta and potatoes
- eat nuts (walnuts and almonds)
- eat fatty fish (salmon, herring, tuna), shellfish and crustaceans
- limit the use of omega-6 fats, hydrogenated oils and trans fatty acids
- use as little sugar as possible and preferably no sodium (salt)
- reduce your use of processed and ready-to-eat foods;



## Fats

Fat is healthy, but what makes us feel bad about it? Sometimes you have huge cravings for fatty foods, such as a thick layer of butter or Greek yoghurt.

We still think that fat will make us put on weight and we therefore often choose low-fat products, such as lean meat, low-fat milk and the 0% fat products. Yet fat is an essential part of our health.

According to scientific research, for optimum health you obtain 65% of your calories from fats and just 20% from carbohydrates. However, most diets and dietary recommendations focus on cutting down on fat, which is why we obtain so many calories from carbohydrates (sugar, starch and grains) (source: the perfect health diet, Jaminet, 2010).

Research has shown that cardiovascular disease is mostly caused by an excess of sugars and carbohydrates that our bodies ingest.

### Why fats are so important for our body

Whilst we try to limit fat as much as possible (the more self-control the better is the norm), fat is essential for numerous essential processes in our body:

**Building cell membranes and nerve tissue (the brain):** polyunsaturated fatty acids are essential for building our cell membranes, especially the brain cells. The brain is made up of 50-60% fats. The fastest brain growth takes place in the womb and during the first eighteen months after birth. Breast milk is therefore also rich in brain-building fats (Source: Oergondisch genieten, Penders e.a., 2011).

**Immune system:** unsaturated fatty acids help the immune system to reduce inflammatory reactions. People with autoimmune diseases often benefit from eating plenty of oily fish. Absorption of nutrients: saturated fat helps the body to absorb nutrients, such as fat-soluble vitamins A, D, E and K. For example, vitamin K in broccoli, Brussels sprouts and cabbage are only absorbed if the meal includes fat

**Better digestion:** fat also makes protein easier to digest. Furthermore, fat is digested more slowly making us feel satiated for longer: therefore, fewer snacks (Source: Fat, McLagan 2008).

**Hormone production:** unsaturated fatty acids form the basis for certain hormones (including thyroid, sex and stress hormones) and hormone-like substances that play an important role in reducing inflammation.

The brain cells are made up of 60% fat. The type of fat that we eat affects the structure of the cells and the number of dendrites and synapses. Fat molecules also partly determine the number and type of neurotransmitters that brain cells create and fire. Therefore: intelligence, learning ability and memory, attention, concentration and mood are largely determined by fats. An incorrect ratio of fats leads to poor brain function and even the death of brain cells.

Eating the wrong fats causes the outer membranes of cells to shrink and harden. Whilst on the road, at stations or at 'food to go' stores, we are easily tempted by the smell of a croissant or a hot sausage roll. All of these contain the bad (saturated) fats.



## Fatty acids

Fatty acids are the building blocks of fat. Fat is always a mixture of saturated and unsaturated fatty acids. These are called saturated and unsaturated fats. There are several types of saturated fatty acids in foods containing saturated fat. The types differ from product to product. Saturated fat increases the LDL cholesterol in the blood (the bad cholesterol). Excess LDL cholesterol increases the risk of cardiovascular disease.

Make sure that no more than 10% of your daily calorie intake comes from saturated fat. Instead of saturated fat, mainly eat foods high in unsaturated fat. Saturated fat is found, for example, in meat, butter, coconut fat, croissants, biscuits, cake, crackers and snacks. Therefore, it's best to eat fish or nuts. Look carefully at product labels to see if the food contains saturated and unsaturated fats.

Saturated fat increases blood LDL cholesterol and the risk of cardiovascular disease.

Eat products high in unsaturated fat. Read the labels on packaging carefully.

monounsaturated	polyunsaturated	saturated	trans fats
Olives, rapeseed oil, nuts and avocados	omega 3: herring, mackerel, salmon, sardines, tuna, flax plant seeds, walnuts omega 6: grains, saffron, soya and sunflower oil, nuts and seeds	meat, poultry, butter, cheese, cream, whole milk, palm seed oil, processed food (crisps and fried food)	margarine, packed biscuits, cake, pastries, crackers, confectionery, fried food

## Trans fats

Trans fats are toxic to our bodies, but our bodies aren't aware of that. Trans fats are incorporated into cell membranes, where they damage various cellular processes. The result of this is a non-functioning immune system, cancer, obesity, sexual dysfunction and more (Source: Nourishing traditions, Fallon, 1995). Trans fats also raise the LDL (bad) cholesterol and insulin levels (Source: Oergondisch genieten, 2011). Trans fats are found in butter, crisps, biscuits, chips and deep-frying fat.

## Variation

Variation is very important and, above all, healthy. No single food can supply all nutrients in the amounts you need. A varied diet is therefore important as it will provide everything your body needs. Try new vegetables, for example, seasonal vegetables, and browse the internet for tasty recipes.



## Fibre

Fibre is hugely important for good health. Fibre is not digested in the stomach and it travels through the gastrointestinal tract. In the gut, the good bacteria feed on the fibre, which is very beneficial to our health. Dietary fibre helps promote weight loss, it lowers blood sugar levels and decreases the chance of constipation. Not surprisingly, research shows that people who eat the most fibre are also generally the healthiest. For example, they are at a lower risk of heart disease, obesity and type 2 diabetes and they also tend to live longer.

Food	Number of fibres	Portion
Lentils	12 grams	100 grams
Chickpeas	8 grams	100 grams
Raspberries	7 grams	100 grams
Kidney beans	6 grams	100 grams
Rye bread	6 grams	1 slice
Oatmeal	5 grams	5 tablespoons
Peanuts	4.6 grams	1 handful
Red cabbage	4 grams	100 grams

### How much fibre a day?

Women: 25 grams a day

Men: 38 grams a day

Foods like fruit, vegetables, wholemeal products, such as wholemeal bread, brown rice and wholemeal pasta contain fibre. Firstly, fibre makes you feel full for longer after eating, whilst it is relatively low in calories. Secondly, fibre has a beneficial effect on the intestines, ensuring good bowel movements. And thirdly, fibre can lower bad cholesterol levels in the blood. That is because fibre binds to cholesterol, carrying it out of the body with the faeces. Fibre therefore reduces the risk of cardiovascular disease.

Dietary fibre is very important for the gut; more fibre help you to feel full.

### Mindful eating

Feeling satisfied and satiated after a meal is improved by eating mindfully and by focussing fully on the meal. This means avoiding distractions, such as the TV, telephone, newspaper or social media. It is important to create a calm environment and to take time to eat. Taking time to let the smell and taste of food sink in will awaken the body's smell and taste senses and stimulate that feeling of satiation. Mindful eating will also help you feel full for longer.

### Chew properly

Chewing is the first step in the digestive process. This is where the first enzymes are released that digest the food. Chewing properly can prevent or reduce a bloated feeling after eating. When you start eating, the brain needs at least 20 minutes to receive the signal that the stomach is being filled. It's therefore important to eat slowly, take small bites, and chew at least 15 to 20 times before swallowing the food. This can prevent overeating. Another advantage: food that has been chewed thoroughly has a larger surface area, which allows nutrients to be absorbed more easily.

## Drinking enough water

The body finds it difficult to separate hunger and thirst signals. Therefore, if you think you're hungry, it's a good idea to drink a glass of water first, as you might be thirsty, not hungry. Drinking plenty of water is also important for your lymphatic system and for intestinal function. Water gives energy and helps your body to remove waste products.

## Don't count calories

Let your body get used to your new lifestyle when you eat as purely as possible and let it feel how much you need. This will calm your mind and allows you to enjoy yourself more. Don't count your calories, it's much more important, for example, to measure your belly fat.

## Fast once a week

It's good to fast once a week (intermittent fasting). You can do this by simply skipping a meal, which allows your body to detoxify. This will stimulate fat burning by lowering the insulin level in your body.





## Tips to remember:

- 1 Preferably eat 500 grams of vegetables a day, preferably organic and buy them uncut. Vegetable soup, smoothies and salads all count.
- 2 Try to eliminate wheat from your diet and eat as few grains as possible. Grains – wheat, spelt, rye, barley – contain gluten. Gluten can disrupt your gut function and therefore unsettle your immune system. They are found in bread, pasta, noodles, rice dishes, crackers, crispbread, rusks, biscuits and cakes. Pseudograins are a good substitute: quinoa, amaranth, millet, oats, teff and buckwheat. If you want to eat bread, instead of wheat bread, sourdough spelt bread may be an option, or YAM gluten-free dessem bread.
- 3 Eat enough protein. This can be plant protein and animal protein. If you eat meat, this should preferably be from animals that have walked, flown or swum. Eat fish two to four times a week, preferably oily fish, which are herring, sardine, sprats, salmon, mackerel, eel and tuna. White fish are a lean source of protein. Eat red meat preferably no more than twice a week (beef, pork, lamb, game), preferably eat no processed meat (sandwich meat, sausage) and preferably eat organic meat. Poultry, such as organic chicken, turkey, duck or goose is good. It's fine to eat two eggs a day several times a week. Regularly eat home-made broth from chicken legs, rump, soup meat or fish bones. These contain a lot of glucosamine and other beneficial proteins that are very good for the gut and joints.
- 4 Limit dairy products: milk, custard, dairy drinks. If you eat dairy, eat preferably acidified and unsweetened dairy, full-fat yoghurt or quark. Many people find sheep's cheese and goat's cheese easier to digest than cow's milk cheese.
- 5 Preferably don't eat added sugars or pre-processed products from supermarkets. These often have added sugar, glucose or fructose. Check the labels carefully, these are sometimes also called: `natural fruit sugar, glucose/fructose syrup, maize syrup, modified starch, maltose, maltodextrose or corn syrup.
- 6 Limit pre-processed products to which artificial sweeteners (aspartam, cyclamate, saccharine, sucralose, xylitol, sorbitol) or flavour enhancers (E 620 – 625, mono-sodium glutamate (vetsin), yeast extract) have been added.
- 7 Drink alcoholic drinks in moderation. You can occasionally enjoy a glass of red wine, but preferably just 1 to 2 times a week. Alcohol increases the production of the stress hormone cortisol over the next 24 hours by 30-50%. If you have a hormonal imbalance, it's best to avoid alcohol altogether (temporarily).
- 8 Don't smoke or use other drugs.

# Exercise



# Exercise

Exercise is important and extremely healthy. It contributes significantly to a healthy body and healthy weight. Greenhabit encourages you to exercise every day and to make your heart work hard (experience true tiredness) at least twice a week. Not only does exercise have a positive effect on your health, it also stimulates your brain. Exercise is needed to keep all your organs and physical processes in motion. Energy that flows keeps your body healthy. The effect depends on the type of exercise and how long you exercise, as it affects different hormones.

Physical activity (such as walking, cycling or dancing) draws on two areas of the brain, the little brain (cerebellum) and the brain stem. These areas regulate automatic processes, such as heart rate, respiration and posture.

## The benefits at a glance

- Exercise boosts healthy hormone levels
- A lower risk of cancer, less chance of stress
- Exercise strengthens the immune system (your natural defences)
- Less sickness
- Exercise helps your body to excrete waste faster
- More energy
- Exercise helps maintain a healthy weight
- Exercise reduces the risk of cancer, cardiovascular disease and diabetes
- Exercise at least 30 minutes every day and make your heart work hard twice a week!

## Exercise guidelines

Age group:

### Young people <18 years:

At least one hour of moderate-intensity exercise every day (for example: brisk walking, running, cycling, skateboarding, aerobics); the activities must focus on maintaining physical fitness (strength, agility and coordination) at least twice a week.

### 18 – 55 years:

Half an hour of moderate-intensity exercise (for example: brisk walking, running or cycling) at least 5 days a week.

### 55+ years:

Half an hour of moderate-intensity exercise (for example: walking or cycling) at least 5 days a week and preferably every day.

Besides the Dutch Standards for Healthy Exercise, there is also the 'Fitnorm' (fitness standard), which is the same for every age group; it maintains your cardiovascular health and helps to keep your heart, lungs and arteries healthy. 25% of Dutch people adhere to the Fitnorm.

**All ages:**

20 minutes of high-intensity exercise (e.g. bicycle racing, running, team sports such as football, tennis or hockey) at least 3 times a week.

Research has shown that the least active people are generally at the highest risk of negative health effects.

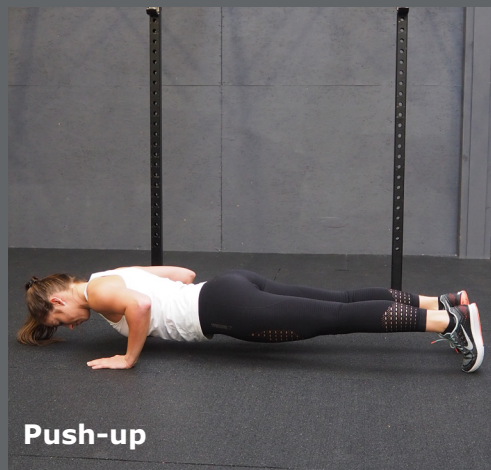
**Self-confidence**

There is evidence that physical activity also affects emotional well-being, particularly in children and young people. The evidence is especially strong when it comes to self-confidence and self-esteem.

**Example of strength training**

Strength training for 10-15 minutes 3-5 days a week (planking, squats, wall sits or the use of weights or kettle bells) is a good way of balancing hormones. There are various Apps with 7-minute workouts, a good start to the day.

# Strength exercises







**Triceps**



**Biceps**



**Skipping rope**



**Push-up**



**Stretch**



**Stretch**





## Mental impact

Physical activity has a positive impact on our mood and disposition. Scientific research has demonstrated that people who play sport and exercise regularly are at a lower risk of developing depressive symptoms. And that people with these symptoms will recover faster if they have an active lifestyle.

The body handles anxiety and stress better and your mental resilience improves.

Below are a few examples of sports that can help you age more healthily by having a beneficial effect on the health of your heart and they will help you to build muscle in a more sensible way.

- **Swimming:** Swimming protects your brain from age-related diseases and strengthens your heart. Swimming also engages all of your muscle groups. An incidental benefit to your mental well-being: swimming reduces the risk of depression and helps to alleviate stress.
- **Strength training:** A micro-workout is good for your muscles, heart and arteries. Easy to do at home, for example, use your body as a weight by pushing yourself up, pulling yourself up onto a bar or by planking.
- **Walking:** Walking is very healthy, ideal for people who don't really enjoy strenuous exercise. Not only good for the body, but great for the mind too.





### **Tips for getting started:**

- Exercise with someone else
- Choose a sport that you enjoy
- Build it up very slowly
- Plan it in your diary, prepare your sports bag and put it in the car or next to the front door
- Buy good trainers
- Start today!

### **Starting to run**

You can learn to run by walking and alternating this with short bursts of running. In the beginning, you mainly start with brisk walking and over the weeks, you will increasingly focus on the short bursts of running. This will help your tendons and muscles to gradually get used to the strain and prevent injuries.

For beginners, but also for advanced runners, you can find tailor-made running plans on the Internet, see, for example the website: <https://www.runnersworld.com/uk/training/beginners/a772727/how-to-start-running-today/> - and choose a free plan.

It's also very useful to download the Runkeeper or Strava app on your smartphone which will track your workouts for free. You can also opt for a paid subscription through the app to follow running plans which means you'll always have your personal coach with you.

## Calculating heart rate zones

When you run or cycle, it's useful to be aware of your heart rate.

Your heart rate tells you how intense a sporting activity is and how hard your body has to work to keep going. Your heart rate during a certain sporting activity depends on your age, fitness level, stress level and lifestyle.

If your resting heart rate is 60 and your maximum heart rate 190 and you want to train in the lowest zone, calculate this as follows:

Lower limit:  $190 - 60 \times 50\% + 60 = 125$

Upper limit:  $190 - 60 \times 60\% + 60 = 138$

See the tables below for the heart rate zones.

## Calculate your maximum heart rate:

Perform, for example, this exercise test:

- Warm-up: walk or jog at a slow pace for 10-15 minutes, gradually increasing your speed. You must still be able to have a conversation
- Interval 1: Run for 30 seconds at full speed
- Recovery period 1: Rest for 60 seconds
- Interval 2: Run for 30 seconds at full speed
- Recovery period 2: Rest for 60 seconds
- Interval 3: Run for 60 seconds at full speed

At the end of the last interval, measure your maximum heart rate.

	training	effects
Zone 5	maximum 90-100%	develops maximum performance and speed
Zone 4	intensive 80-90%	increases maximum performance capacity
Zone 3	average 70-80%	improves aerobic condition
Zone 2	light 60-70%	improves stamina and burns fat
Zone 1	very light 50-60%	improves the health and ensures faster recovery

	training	effects
Zone 5	anaerobic power and capacity	very intensive exercise e.g. jumping, hill workout and end of the race
Zone 4	speed and increase anaerobic threshold	intensive exercise, just before and around the tipping point, no need to talk, short chats possible
Zone 3	stamina	moderate exercise, strengthening respiration, talking in short sentences possible
Zone 2	fat burning	easy, breathing quickens slightly
Zone 1	recovery	very light exercise, easy, long continuous conversations possible

# Relaxation



# Relaxation

Relaxation doesn't come naturally, it's a learned process. Relaxation is just as important as exercise. In our lives today, we have almost forgotten to take time for things, and to give our bodies time to recover. Your body is your greatest asset. It's not so much that we work too hard, more that we don't relax enough. This is why Greenhabit teaches you to relax every day (this includes micro-goals). Your brain works better when it relaxes sufficiently and thinks positively. You must achieve a balance between 'exercise and relaxation'. Allow yourself to rest!

Having little or no rest has a huge impact both physically and mentally. You feel rushed and you are forgetful, anxious and confused, it doesn't do you any good. Busy with your family, your work and your social commitments. You get carried along by the everyday humdrum and before you know it, you feel exhausted, restless, burnt out and you are experiencing sleeplessness. Why do we feel guilty about doing 'nothing' for a while? We often wait until we've completed our list, but nine times out of ten the list is longer than the day. Your brain is ticking all day, but actually needs a rest.

## Long-term effects

What can happen in the long run if you carry on like this for too long?

- Increased risk of type 2 diabetes
- Due to an elevated blood pressure and heart rate, an increased risk of cardiovascular disease, such as a heart attack or stroke!
- Your skin deteriorates
- Fat accumulates around the abdominal area





### **What can you do to prevent it**

- Relaxation exercises give your mind and body a feeling of peace
- Playing sports and expressing emotions reduce the tension and stress in your body
- Take a step back

When something isn't going well, instead of continuing to work on it and feeling even more tense, take a step back both mentally and physically. You can then return to the work later on with a fresh perspective, allowing you to come up with more creative solutions.

### **Find your own form of relaxation**

What one person finds relaxing may be demanding for another.

Take exercise, for example. It is therefore important to explore what works for you when you want to relax. Just try out different things, such as reading a book, painting, knitting, playing a game, doing a jigsaw, or restoring a car or motorbike. Alternating activities in order to relax is also effective; as long as it feels right for you.

### **Sleeping**

In Japan, for example, it is very common for people to lay their head on their hands at their desks for 10 minutes and do nothing. Even a short period of meditation can be very effective.



Get enough sleep; adults need at least 7 to 8 hours sleep each night. Don't go to bed too late. Try to downscale your activities in the evenings and avoid the (blue) light that is emitted by monitors, laptops, tablets and mobile telephones during the hours before you go to bed. Did you know that if you eat nothing after 20:00 hours, your body gives the signal that you are going to sleep and it goes into 'rest mode'. Your immune system then gets plenty of time to detoxify. Do things that you enjoy and energise you. Build enough periods of rest into your week. If you feel like going to a concert, watching a film, or seeing a beautiful theatre play, don't put it off. Just do it. You'll find that it energises and motivates you.

### **Information diet**

Go on an information diet every once in a while. If you snack on too much information, you'll eventually feel that your head is too full. We all check our phones frequently - Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram. They make you feel that if you don't respond to or see a message, you've missed out on something. Connecting with other people is a kind of emotional food. However, it's like a quick snack, one 'like' makes you feel good for just a short time. But a good conversation with a friend energises you for longer and makes you feel good.

Smile, live, enjoy and feel. In this way, you give your subconscious mind time to recover and this optimises the energy that you and your body need to function effectively.

## Mood board

Create your own mood board. It gives your subconscious mind a clear direction to achieve your goals more easily. By placing it somewhere and looking at it, you will stimulate your brain. Your brain responds strongly to visual stimulation. Make your dreams visual.

## The importance of mindfulness

Mindfulness is about tuning into your senses and focusing on your environment.

Mindfulness makes you stop worrying, experience less stress, work more effectively and feel more comfortable in your own skin.

Mindfulness is especially good for people who keep fretting about the past or worrying about the future. People can become so engrossed in their past or the future that they 'forget' to live in the here and now. Mindfulness tries to change this.

The majority of people constantly live inside their heads – in their thoughts. The vast majority of these thoughts are about the future: "I must pop along and see my mum tomorrow," "This report has to be finished tomorrow," "I'll clean up later on and then I'll go and make those phone calls."

Mindfulness allows you to release stress and tension. The advantage of mindfulness is that you can live in the 'now' for a while and push all of your thoughts into the background. This helps you to relax or recharge.

## Not yesterday, but now

So, the things that occurred yesterday, aren't occurring today. Things that could happen in an hour's time, aren't happening right now. And the thoughts flying through your head are linked to memories or your expectations of the future.

Mindfulness is about getting out of your head and into the present moment.

You connect with what you can experience now:

- You see the leaves of a tree dancing in the wind
- You feel the warmth of the sun on your skin
- You feel grass blades on your back
- You feel an emotion in your belly
- You observe a thought in your brain and then you see it vanish
- You feel your belly move up and down when you breathe in and out

## Organised head

Mindfulness teaches you to take control of your own thoughts. This won't help you to empty your head, but you will have an organised head. Focus, choose what to pay attention to and engage with that completely. That is what mindfulness teaches you.



## Exercise

- 1 Take a walk and engage your senses. Feel your feet, smell your surroundings and listen. Leave your phone at home.
- 2 Do one of the following, giving it your full attention: clean your teeth, fold the washing, unload the dishwasher, listen to someone. Concentrate 100% on the event and push away all thoughts that enter your head. You feel, smell, hear and taste the moment. Use your senses.

The more you practise responding to a stressful situation in a pragmatic way, the more you will master the art of staying calm and balanced, no matter what happens. Take a deep breath, observe, don't judge, reflect, take your time. This is how you stay closer to yourself, and you become calm, friendly, relaxed and gentle. You can engage in mindfulness wherever you are.

Still finding it difficult to do it yourself? On the Internet you can find really nice mindfulness exercises accompanied by soothing music. Invest in your peace, your inner peace. Keep your heart peaceful by being mindful every day. You can, of course, also enlist the help of a mindfulness coach to help you with this.

# Positive thinking





## Positive thinking

Thoughts are just thoughts, positive or negative thoughts. It's up to you to decide what you will act on. Don't let yourself be guided by thoughts like "I probably can't do it" or "what will the people around me think?" You can do much more than you think, you are full of power and energy. Only you know what you can do! And you need a positive mindset to achieve your goals.

### Motivations

By setting goals, you awaken your inner motivations or passions. This reignites your dream or passion and makes something happen inside you. And if you are able to follow your passion and your heart, you will experience a flow state. This will increase your energy tenfold, but also give you life satisfaction and the love of the people who support you in following your heart. Let your heart set your course, and let go of your anxieties.

**'The man who thinks he can and the man who thinks he can't, are both right.'**

## But what exactly are motivations?

Your motivations give direction and meaning to your life, they embody what you find important at this time of your life. You might sometimes forget this, which is why it's important to choose five motivations. Our motivations determine our purpose in life, the direction that we choose and they spur us on to take action. You may decide on new motivations depending on your age and your stage of life. Someone who graduates and gets his first job, wants to progress in his career and will therefore focus on that. But once he has taken these steps and achieved his goals, he may want to do other meaningful work.

The goal of a father who is still raising children will be to raise his children well and teach them something. But when the children leave home, he will have to choose other motivations. Broadly speaking, it can be said that during your life you have to rethink and adjust your motivations every 10 years. See the next page for a table of motivations.

## What do I gain from motivations?

When you understand your motivations and you know how to turn them into actions, you will start taking good care of yourself. Even when things aren't great for you, such as when you're feeling stressed. Not only do motivations energise you, they also help you to make the right choices. For example, a job you really like, or a hobby you have wanted to do for a long time.

## What makes you really happy?

People who understand their motivations live according to their own values, are less dependent on their environment and live proactively. Which motivations are best suited to you? In the table below, enter the motivations that are best suited to you.



## Motivations

What makes you really happy?

People who are aware of their motivations live according to their own values, are less dependent on their environment and live proactively. Which motivations are best suited to you?

No.	Motivations	description
1	Self-respect	belief in own worth
2	Ambition	hard working, ambitious
3	Influence	impact on people and events
4	Capable	competent, effective, efficient
5	Intelligence	logical, thoughtful
6	Success	achieving goals
7	Spiritual life	emphasis on spiritual aspects, not material
8	A meaningful life	a purpose in life
9	Mature love	deep emotional and spiritual intimacy
10	True friendship	close, mutually supportive friends
11	Loyalty	loyal to my friends and group
12	Honesty	sincere, genuine
13	Helpful	working towards the well-being of others
14	Responsibility	reliable, dependable
15	Forgiving	willing to forgive others
16	Polite	courteous, well-mannered
17	Self-discipline	self-control, resistance to temptation
18	Honouring parents/elderly	showing respect
19	Compliant	dutiful, fulfilling obligations
20	Pleasure	satisfying desires
21	Enjoying life	enjoying food, sex, leisure time, etc.
22	Allowing myself things	doing enjoyable things
23	Social power	control over others, dominant
24	Wealth	material possessions, money
25	Social recognition	respect and recognition of others
26	Authority	the right to lead or command
27	Protect my reputation	to 'save face'
28	Maintain social norms	to not lose face
29	Feeling at home	feeling that others care about me

These motivations are best suited to me:

30	Social order	stability of society
31	National security	protecting my country from enemies
32	Repaying favours	avoid being indebted
33	Family security	security for my loved ones
34	Health	not being physically or mentally ill
35	Clean	hygienic, tidy
36	Freedom	freedom in action and thought
37	Creativity	uniqueness, imagination
38	Privacy	the right to privacy
39	Independence	self-sufficiency, self-confidence
40	Choosing own goals	choosing own goals
41	Curiosity	interested in everything, exploratory
42	An exciting life	stimulating experiences
43	Risk	seeking adventure
44	Respect for tradition	preserving ancient customs
45	Moderation	avoiding extreme feelings and actions
46	Humility	modest, self-effacing
47	Knowing my place in life	subject to circumstances
48	Devoutness	following religious faith
49	Equality	equal opportunities for everyone
50	Inner harmony	being at peace with myself
51	World peace	free from war and conflict
52	At one with nature	being at one with nature
53	Wisdom	a mature understanding of life
54	A word of beauty	beauty of nature and the arts
55	Social justice	combating injustice, defending the weak
56	Free-thinking	tolerance for different ideas
57	Protecting the environment	conserve nature
58	A varied life	full of challenge and change

## The 16 basic needs

What makes a person happy? What makes others happy? What makes me happy? Professor Steven Reiss looked for answers to these questions when studying motivation. In his research into personal basic desires involving 6,000 people, he identified 16 basic needs of humans. These are basic needs that motivate a person and keeps them motivated. They are clearly identifiable and help you to communicate with yourself, but also with other people.

- |    |                   |   |
|----|-------------------|---|
| 1  | Acceptance        | - the need for approval from a group                                  |
| 2  | Curiosity         | - the need to think   |
| 3  | Eating            | - the need for food   |
| 4  | Honour            | - the need to be faithful to the traditional values of your own group |
| 5  | Family            | - the need to raise children  |
| 6  | Idealism          | - the need for social justice   |
| 7  | Independence      | - the need for individuality and freedom                              |
| 8  | Order             | - the need for organised, stable and predictable environments         |
| 9  | Physical exercise | - the need for exercise   |
| 10 | Power             | - the need to impose your will on other people                        |
| 11 | Romance           | - the need for sex and affection                                      |
| 12 | Saving            | - the need to accumulate food and possessions                         |
| 13 | Social contact    | - the need for contact with friends and like-minded people            |
| 14 | Social status     | - the need for a social status, to be important                       |
| 15 | Tranquillity      | - the need to feel safe   |
| 16 | Vengeance         | - the need to retaliate   |



The Israeli psychologist Shalom Schwartz developed his theory of basic human values or motivations in the 1990s. He refers to these as motivational goals that serve as guiding principles in a person's life.

**The ten basic values according to Shalom Swartz are:**

- 1 Power: the value of power in life, control over people or resources
- 2 Achievement: the value of achieving things and achieving personal success
- 3 Hedonism: the value of enjoying life and having fun
- 4 Stimulation: the value of living an exciting and challenging life
- 5 Self-direction: the value of deciding on your own direction, curiosity, self-respect
- 6 Universalism: the value of wisdom and openness
- 7 Benevolence: the value of helping others
- 8 Tradition: the value of keeping to tradition
- 9 Conformity: the value of conforming, meeting social expectations
- 10 Security: the value of security in your life

These values can be subdivided into four categories:

Openness to change (6, 4 and 5)

Self-transcendence (6 and 7)

Conservation (9, 8 and 10)

Self-enhancement (3, 2 and 1)

### What can you do to think more positively

- Stop comparing
- Happiness is being happy about another person's success
- Try to resolve the problems that make you worry
- Avoid situations that lead to you worrying
- Celebrate small successes:

When you are stressed, you often focus only on negative events or signals and you forget to be happy about small successes. Give thought to the things that you have achieved and celebrate your successes. This will teach you to become more positive, meaning you will feel both mental and physical positivity with many positive effects.

### The effects of positive thinking

- Positive thinking enhances the learning process
- It expands your opportunities
- You become more imaginative
- You develop skills

The way you think affects your health. If your head is full of gloomy and negative thoughts, this can cause physical symptoms. It works the other way around too. Do you have a positive outlook on life? Do you see the bright side in all sorts of situations? Then your ability to put things into perspective ensures that negative thoughts won't hound you. Ultimately, this will make you more balanced physically, mentally and emotionally. This will have a positive effect on your health.



## Control over your life

You want control over choices that are important to you, in your personal and social life, and in your working life. For example, education, your career, living, community involvement, social contacts and leisure time. You can't, of course, control everything; in society there are things like entrance exams, assessments and selection criteria and that is normal. It is important that you get fair opportunities and you are not excluded based on perception and/or interpretation. The more you take control of your own life, the more opportunities you will discover for self-direction. Believing in your own abilities, improving your strengths, surrounding yourself with people who encourage you. This will ensure you have a meaningful life, based on your personal values.

## Proactive thinking

Every day, all sorts of things happen in your environment that can affect you.

For example, people around you may speak negatively about you! Ultimately, you will decide on your own reaction to these events. A nice quote along these lines is "Nobody can hurt you without your permission."

For example, there are problems that you can influence directly. By acting immediately, you can resolve these problems.

But there are also problems that you can influence indirectly. The behaviour of someone in your environment is irritating. You can talk to the person about it, or choose not to be bothered by it. There are also problems you cannot influence, such as the weather, a strike, etc. By distancing yourself from these emotionally and mentally, it will bother you less if the weather is bad when you wanted to go cycling.

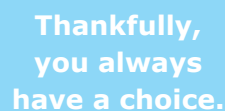
If you think from the outside in, you will be quick to blame someone else. For example, something happens in your environment and your reaction is as follows: they're not delivering on their promises, they're not cooperating, because they've cancelled I can't leave and so on.

You end up thinking you're the victim. We refer to this as 'reactive behaviour'.

It's better to think from the inside out. When changing your behaviour, always start with yourself, see what you can change based on your principles (honesty, justice, patience, simplicity, diligence, etc.). Think about your core values.

You will see that by looking at and changing your own behaviour first of all, you will gradually have a greater influence on your environment. In other words, you set an example and others will follow you. By considering things from a different angle, the world will look very different.

You are responsible for your own life and your feelings will become secondary to your values. When you feel the stirrings of guilt or jealousy, consciously examine the situation based on your values (honestly, candour, perseverance, etc.). We call this 'proactive behaviour', you are the director of your own life.



**Thankfully,  
you always  
have a choice.**

## Time management

Someone who is very good at Time Management spends most of their time on activities in quadrant 2. This does require practice, but by spending your time on non-urgent but important things, you will feel less stressed and the final quality of the activity will be better as you don't have to rush, but are able to take your time. Therefore, make sure you move as many activities as possible from quadrant 1 to quadrant 2. Try to spend as little time as possible in quadrant 4 and avoid activities in quadrant 3.

	<b>URGENT</b>	<b>NON-URGENT</b>
<b>IMPORTANT</b>	Quadrant 1: Commitments, meeting deadlines, resolving emergencies, resolving conflicts, seizing sudden opportunities	Quadrant 2: Working on quality and control, working on your relationships, realising long-term solutions, working on personal development, working on your health
<b>UNIMPORTANT</b>	Quadrant 3: Distractions, interruptions, distractions such as WhatsApp, telephone calls and emails, solving other people's problems	Quadrant 4: Wasting time, watching soaps, chatting, social media, following news sites containing meaningless information, gaming, mind-numbing activities

As an exercise, fill in the different quadrants.

	<b>URGENT</b>	<b>NON-URGENT</b>
<b>IMPORTANT</b>		
<b>UNIMPORTANT</b>		

# Social environment



# Social environment



You need each other. It's therefore important to have enough people around you who are there for you in both pleasant and difficult times. Do you have these people around you?

To prevent stress, it's important to have people around you with whom you can share situations or events. Spend time and energy on establishing and maintaining relationships. Pay attention to one another.

If you take part in Greenhabit, it's important to receive encouragement and support. Through Greenhabit, you will also get to know new people who are also taking part in Greenhabit, for example.

## **Train your social skills**

So it's all about the relationship with people. Whether at work, on the street or in your immediate environment. This will make your life nicer and more intense. You can depend on the people around you when you're having a tough time, you can laugh with them, brainstorm with them, or discuss your problems, you name it.

- be honest, that way you don't have to remember anything and you build trust
- talk about personal things and don't be afraid of getting hurt
- be nice to other people, and give away your knowledge, skills and experiences if the other person needs them
- listen sincerely and listen more than you talk

Invest in relationships and train your social skills, you will enrich your life by doing so.

## Make connections

Try to connect more and remain connected with everything and everyone around you. Don't close yourself off in a world with only your desires or things that enrich your life. That temporary desire is a temporary happiness, just like temporary possessions. Create memories, share your knowledge, enrich other people's lives, be loving, selfless and meaningful and make sure you have a meaningful existence. Life has so much more to offer than just possessions. Life itself is the true happiness, shared joy is a double joy!

## Social aspirations and your health

Did you know that social interaction has a positive impact on our health? Professor of Sociology Beate Volker says: "Three years of no social contact is unhealthier than three years of a bad diet." Social contacts are very important for your health, only most people aren't aware of that. The finding that people are unaware of the value of social contacts on their health is a consequence of advanced individualisation. We are more likely to talk about 'more time for myself' than about 'more contact with people'.



## What impact does it have?

- it contributes to improved blood pressure and better immune function.  
It is important to have a social connection with other people as a lack of social connection leads to a faster decline in mental health.
- focussed attention ensures social and emotional development.



# Recipes





# Banana bread

**With walnuts and raspberries**



Leftover bananas? Make this tasty banana bread using wholemeal flour. Delicious with raspberries and walnuts. Freeze it, so you can enjoy a slice each day as a snack!

## Ingredients

- 115 grams of raspberries
- 120 grams of maple syrup
- 200 grams of wholemeal (spelt) flour
- 190 grams of unsweetened soya milk
- 35 grams of walnuts
- 2 ripe bananas
- 1 teaspoon of cinnamon
- 1 tablespoon of baking powder
- 1 tablespoon of baking soda
- 1.5 teaspoons of vanilla flavouring

## Nutritional values

- kcal: 131
- Carbohydrates: 22 grams
- Fat: 3 grams
- Saturated fat: 0 grams
- Protein: 3 grams
- Fibre: 3 grams
- Salt: 0.01 grams

Pre-heat the oven to 175 degrees Celsius and allow the raspberries to defrost for 15 minutes. Chop the walnuts into small pieces, or break them into pieces using your hands. Place the flour, walnuts, baking powder, baking soda and cinnamon in a large bowl.

Using a fork, mash the 2 bananas into pulp on a plate. Then add the pulp to the large bowl. Also add the maple syrup, vanilla flavouring and soya milk. Mix well. Finally, spoon the raspberries through the mixture. Place the mixture in the cake tin and bake in the oven for 40-50 minutes.

Cut into 12 slices. You can freeze the slices.

# Brownies

## Fudgy no-bake brownies



These no-bake brownies are extremely easy to make and very tasty. The brownies do need to be left to harden in the fridge for a short time. From my own experience, refrigeration isn't strictly necessary, but they taste even better when they've been refrigerated! Sweetened with dates.

### Ingredients

- 100 grams of walnuts
- 200 grams of pitted dates
- 75 grams of almond butter
- 60 grams of cacao powder
- 35 grams of pecan nuts (or walnuts)

### Nutritional values

- 188 kcal
- 12 grams of fat
- 2 grams of saturated fat
- 4 grams of protein
- 14 grams of carbohydrates
- 4 grams of fibre
- 0.07 grams of salt

Place the dates and walnuts in the food processor. Chop them finely. Add the almond butter and mix thoroughly. Then add the cacao powder and mix thoroughly again. If the mixture is too dry, add a teaspoon of water at a time. You must be able to press the mixture into the cake tin without it 'breaking' from the dryness. Line the cake tin with the baking paper. Then spoon the mixture into the cake tin, press firmly. Chop the pecans. Press the pecans into the brownie mixture in the cake tin as a decoration. Place in the fridge for at least one hour. Then cut the cake into pieces and that's it!

# Pancakes

## Oatmeal pancakes with mango and grated coconut



The linseed is rich in alpha-linolenic acid, an omega-3 fatty acid. That is important for your heart and arteries. Linseed also helps lower elevated cholesterol levels. Linseed can also help enormously with bowel movements. The seed is very high in fibre which binds with water in the intestine and swells. This stimulates intestinal transit.

### Ingredients

- 120 grams of oatmeal
- 1 tablespoon of linseed
- 3 tablespoons of warm water
- 1 teaspoon of baking powder
- 1 teaspoon of grated coconut
- 1 teaspoon of cinnamon (or to taste)
- pinch of salt
- 200 millilitres of soya milk
- 1 ripe banana
- 100 grams of mango (or other fruit)
- 0.5 tablespoon of oil

### Nutritional values

- kcal: 131
- Carbohydrates: 22 grams
- Fat: 3 grams
- Saturated fat: 0 grams
- Protein: 3 grams
- Fibre: 3 grams
- Salt: 0.01 grams

Mix the linseed with the warm water and put to one side. Dice the mango. Mash the banana into pulp using a fork. Place the oatmeal, baking powder, cinnamon, salt, soya milk and the mashed banana in the blender. Finally, add the linseed mixture. Blend the mixture in the blender or the food processor to form a smooth batter.

Place a small amount of oil in a frying pan and heat over a medium heat. Once the frying pan is nice and hot, you can reduce the heat. Pour one sixth of the batter into the frying pan, try to create a round shape measuring approx. 10-12 cm.

Once the top of the pancake is dry, you can try flipping it over. Repeat for the rest of the batter. And your pancakes are ready!

# Oatmeal cookies

## Chewy oatmeal cookies



Don't bother buying 'healthy' snacks from the supermarket. Simply make them yourself. Lots of variations are possible with these biscuits. Add nuts, currants, coconut, whatever you fancy. That way they'll taste different every time! Just a side note: they are chewy! You'll therefore have to chew them well, so hopefully you enjoy that!

### Ingredients

- 1 ripe banana or 60 grams of unsweetened apple purée
- 80 grams of oatmeal
- 1 tablespoon of cacao nibs
- 1 tablespoon of cracked linseed
- 1 teaspoon of cinnamon

### Nutritional values

- kcal: 120
- 2 grams of fat
- 1 gram of saturated fat
- 4 grams of protein
- 19 grams of carbohydrates
- 3 grams of fibre
- 0 grams of salt

Preheat the oven to 200 degrees Celsius.

Finely mash the banana and mix this with the linseed, cacao nibs, oatmeal and cinnamon. Line a baking tray with baking paper, form 4 balls and flatten them on the baking tray. Until they form the shape you want them to be.

Bake the oatmeal cookies in the oven for 15 minutes until they are golden brown.

Allow them to cool for a while, which will make them more crispy.

# Smoothie bowl

## Yoghurt, pineapple, blackberries, pitaya and 4-grain flakes



The pitaya flesh tastes like a fresh mixture of watermelon and kiwi and is slightly sweet and low-calorie. Combined with pineapple and blackberries, this is a deliciously fresh and sweet breakfast. You can, of course, also create this smoothie using other types of fruit, such as kiwis or apple.

### Ingredients

- 1 pitaya (also known as dragon fruit)
- 40 grams of soya yoghurt or low-fat yoghurt
- 45 grams of pineapple (frozen)
- 45 grams of blackberries (frozen)
- 30 grams of 4-grain flakes or oat flakes

### Nutritional values

- kcal: 330
- Carbohydrates: 67 grams
- Fat: 3 grams
- Saturated fat: 1 gram
- Protein : 6 grams
- Fibre: 7 grams
- Salt: 0.11 grams

Slice the pitaya lengthwise down the middle. Peel away the skin. Dice a small amount for the garnish (see the photo).

Place the remainder of the pitaya, the pineapple and the blackberries in the blender, turn the blender on. Finally, add the yoghurt.

Pour the fruit-yoghurt mixture from the blender into a bowl. Garnish with the pitaya cubes and add the 4-grain flakes as the finishing touch. And your smoothie bowl is ready!

# Kernel and seed mix

## Low-carbohydrate



Super easy to prepare, this breakfast tastes delicious! Also handy to take with you. And low in carbohydrates! Eat yoghurt instead of bread more often.

### Ingredients

- 100 grams of sunflower kernels
- 100 grams of pumpkin seeds
- 50 grams of linseed
- 50 grams of sesame seeds
- 2 tablespoons of honey/agave syrup
- 2 teaspoons of cinnamon

### Nutritional values

- kcal: 134
- Carbohydrates: 4 grams
- Fat: 11 grams
- Saturated fat: 3 grams
- Protein: 4 grams
- Fibre: 2 grams
- Salt: 0.02 grams

Pre-heat the oven to 160 degrees Celsius. In a saucepan, melt the coconut oil and honey or agave syrup. Remove it from the heat. Sprinkle the teaspoons of cinnamon onto this mixture and stir well. Then add all kernels and seeds.

Line a baking tray with baking paper and spread the mixture over the surface. Bake in the oven for approximately 10 to 15 minutes. Keep an eye on it to prevent it from burning. Remove the tray from the oven and allow the mixture to cool down on the tray. Store in a sealed jar. Delicious served with (Greek) yoghurt or quark with some fruit! The nutritional values apply to each 20-g serving of kernel/seed mix (i.e. without yoghurt, fruit, etc.). The recipe is for 16 servings.

# Pink granola

## With raspberries



This not only looks beautiful, it also tastes delicious! Pink! An easy recipe, not to mention healthy.

This recipe creates 10 servings. Store in a sealed jar for 10 days for a tasty breakfast.

### Ingredients

- 190 grams of oat flakes
- 70 grams of buckwheat
- 15 grams of linseed
- 15 grams of pumpkin seeds
- 15 grams of sunflower kernels
- 15 grams of hazelnuts
- 1.5 tablespoons of coconut oil
- 3 tablespoons of agave syrup or honey
- 250 grams of frozen raspberries

### Nutritional values

- kcal: 178
- Carbohydrates: 23 grams
- Fat: 7 grams
- Saturated fat: 2 grams
- Protein: 5 grams
- Fibre: 3 grams
- Salt: 0.01 grams

Leave the raspberries to defrost on a plate. Pre-heat the oven to 180 degrees Celsius and line a baking tray with a sheet of baking paper. Mix everything in a large bowl, except for the honey/agave syrup, raspberries and coconut oil. Melt the coconut oil in a pan (do not boil). Save some raspberries for the garnish. Put the remainder of the raspberries in a blender and juice them. Push the juice through a sieve with a ladle or spoon, leaving the seeds behind. Mix the melted coconut oil and agave syrup/honey with the other ingredients and raspberry juice in the bowl. Stir well. Pour over the baking tray and bake in the oven for approximately 20 minutes. Turn the mixture every couple of minutes and keep a close eye on it to prevent it from burning. Allow to cool down for half an hour and it's ready! Store in a sealed jar.

# Granola

## Home-made Granola



This home-made granola is a hit at our house. Every so often, I make a huge jarful to keep us going for a while. The delicious smell of vanilla then lingers in the house for a couple of days! This recipe will make about 11 servings. Combine with some fruit and (soya) yoghurt for a nutritious breakfast.

### Ingredients

- 120 grams of oat flakes
- 80 grams of buckwheat
- 25 grams of walnuts
- 25 grams of pumpkin seeds
- 25 grams of sunflower kernels
- 25 grams of sesame seeds
- 25 grams of almonds
- 15 grams of linseed
- 2 tablespoons of honey or agave syrup
- 1.5 tablespoons of (coconut) oil
- 2 teaspoons vanilla flavouring/extract

### Nutritional values

- kcal: 173 kcal
- Carbohydrates: 16 grams
- Fat: 10 grams
- Saturated fat: 2 grams
- Protein: 5 grams
- Fibre: 2 grams
- Salt: 0.01 grams
- Fibre: 2 grams
- Salt: 0.02 grams

Pre-heat the oven to 175 degrees Celsius. Heat the oil in a small saucepan (do not boil!) and dissolve the honey and the vanilla flavouring into the oil. Stir well. Remove from the heat. Coarsely chop the walnuts, or break them into pieces using your hands. Then place all nuts, seeds and kernels in a large dish. Stir well again and pour the contents of the saucepan into the bowl with the nuts, seeds and kernels. Stir thoroughly. Line a baking tray with baking paper and spread the mixture over the surface. Bake in the oven for 12 - 15 minutes. Turn the mixture every 3 to 4 minutes. Keep an eye on it to prevent it from burning - that would of course be such a shame! And your Granola is ready! Allow to cool down and store in a sealed jar. It will keep for a couple of weeks at least.



# Healthy Yoghurt

**With 4-grain flakes, pecans and figs**



I used the 4-grain flakes for this tasty breakfast, containing rye, wheat, oats and barley. You can find these flakes on the organic food shelves in the super-market. Can also be served with oat flakes or muesli. Roasting the figs in the oven makes them taste even sweeter. The roasted pecans make this breakfast nice and crunchy!

## Ingredients

- 1 large ripe fig
- 150 grams of (soya) yoghurt
- 30 grams of 4-grain flakes
- 0.5 tablespoons of agave syrup/honey
- 15 grams of pecans
- Cinnamon

## Nutritional values

- kcal: 354
- Carbohydrates: 40 grams
- Fat: 15 grams
- Saturated fat: 2 grams
- Protein: 12 grams
- Fibre: 6 grams
- Salt: 0.38 grams

Pre-heat the oven to 175 degrees Celsius. Line a baking tray with baking paper. Sprinkle the pecans across the surface. Then roast these in the oven for 5 minutes. Cut the fig into 8 pieces. Remove the pecans from the oven after 5 minutes. Allow them to cool down. Place the fig pieces on the same baking tray and bake in the oven for 10 minutes. Then also allow the fig to cool down a little. Spoon half of the yoghurt into a glass. Sprinkle half of the flakes, fig pieces and pecans on the top. Sprinkle a little cinnamon and agave syrup/honey on the mixture. Then another layer of yoghurt. And the remainder of the flakes, fig pieces and pecans. Top with a little cinnamon and agave syrup/honey. And your dish is ready!

# Pumpkin soup

**With red onion**



This delicious soup isn't difficult to make. With just five ingredients, you can put a big healthy pan of soup on the table. Freeze leftover portions to take with you. Sometimes I heat it up, pour it into a thermos flask and take it to work with me for a tasty lunch.

## **Ingredients**

- 1.3 kilograms of pumpkin
- 2 litres of water
- 2 vegetable stock cubes (e.g. Maggi with reduced salt)
- 4 small red onions
- 2 teaspoons of cumin powder
- 1 tablespoon of olive oil

## **Nutritional values**

- kcal: 53
- Carbohydrates: 5 grams
- Fat: 2 grams
- Saturated fat: 0 grams
- Protein: 2 grams
- Fibre: 2 grams

Place 2 litres of water in a tall saucepan on the heat. Dissolve 2 stock cubes into the water. Cut the pumpkin in half and remove the seeds using a spoon. You can throw the seeds away. Dice the pumpkin. You don't need to peel the pumpkin. Coarsely chop the 4 onions.

Fry the diced pumpkin and the onion for a short time in the saucepan. I do this in two halves, otherwise it doesn't fit in. Season it with 2 teaspoons of cumin powder. You add this to the saucepan containing the stock and allow to boil for 30 minutes. Purée the mixture using a hand blender or the food processor. Season with a little pepper and perhaps some chilli (beware - it's hot!). And then the pumpkin soup is ready!

# Leek-pea soup

**With basil**



This soup can be prepared quickly, fills you nicely and tastes great. And it is, of course, super healthy! Make it even easier for yourself and buy ready-sliced leeks. Freeze as single portions to enjoy every now and then.

## **Ingredients**

- 2 tablespoons of olive oil
- 400 grams of leek (you can buy it ready sliced)
- 1 litre of water
- 2 reduced salt vegetable stock cubes
- 15 grams of fresh basil (or from the freezer)
- 450 grams of frozen garden peas
- 1 slice of wholemeal bread

## **Nutritional values**

- Carbohydrates: 20 grams
- Fat: 6 grams
- Saturated fat: 1 gram
- Protein: 7 grams
- Fibre : 9 grams

Finely slice the leek. Place the olive oil in a tall saucepan, add the leek and fry for 2 minutes. Add the water and the two stock cubes. Bring to the boil. Allow to boil for 5 minutes.

Meanwhile, shred the basil. Add the garden peas to the soup and continue cooking for another 2 minutes. Stir in the basil, turn off the heat and purée the mixture using a hand blender until the soup is smooth. If the soup is too thick, you can add a little more water. Toast the bread in a frying pan and then cut it into small squares.

Garnish the soup with the croutons.

And your soup is ready!

# Wholemeal toastie

With pesto, 30% reduced fat cheese, tomato and spinach



A simple recipe, but absolutely delicious! A toastie, but then with healthy ingredients, but still extremely tasty. And quick to prepare! Definitely one of my favourites!

## Ingredients

- 2 slices of wholemeal bread
- 30% reduced fat cheese for 1 slice
- a tablespoon of pesto
- a handful of spinach
- 8 cherry tomatoes (cut into pieces)

## Nutritional values

- kcal: 343
- Carbohydrates: 32 grams
- Fat: 14 grams
- Saturated fat: 4 grams
- Protein: 18 grams
- Fibre: 7 grams
- Salt: 1.6 grams

Take two slices of wholemeal bread. Place the 30% reduced fat cheese, the spinach leaves (amount as desired) and tomatoes on one slice.

Spread a tablespoon of pesto on the other slice (amount as desired).

Fry the toastie in the grill pan, or in the toasted sandwich maker.

And your toastie is ready!

# Sweet ginger soup

**With potato and carrot**



The flavour of the tropical tangy ginger with the sourness of the lime, along with the sweet potato and carrot is simply irresistible!

A few crispy cashews from the oven, with a little parsley sprinkled on the top, go for it!

### **Ingredients**

- 1.5 vegetable stock cubes (reduced salt)
- Punnet of fresh parsley (15 grams)
- 40 grams of cashews
- 1 lime
- 1 piece of ginger (a thumb of ginger)
- 800 millilitres of coconut milk
- 600 grams of sweet potato
- 600 grams of carrot
- 1.5 onions
- 10 grams of Berbere Spice blend
- Olive oil
- Pepper

### **Nutritional values**

- kcal: 308
- Carbohydrates: 29 grams
- Fat: 18 grams
- Saturated fat: 9 grams
- Protein: 5 grams
- Fibre: 5 grams
- Salt: 0.3 grams

### **Method of preparation**

Peel the carrots and sweet potato. Dice them into 2 x 2-cm pieces. Peel and coarsely chop the onion. Peel the ginger and cut into small pieces.

Heat 1 tablespoon of oil in a tall saucepan. Fry the onion and ginger for one to two minutes over a high heat. Season with pepper. Then add the carrot, sweet potato, 7 grams of Berbere Spice blend, coconut milk, stock cubes and 350 ml of water. If the water does not cover the ingredients properly, add more water. Place a lid on the saucepan and cook over a medium heat for approximately 18 minutes, until the vegetables are tender. If you prick a piece of potato with a fork and it falls apart, the vegetables are cooked.

Meanwhile, pre-heat the oven to 200 degrees Celsius (hot air). Finely chop the parsley.

Mix the remainder of the Berbere spice blend with two tablespoons of oil and the cashews.

Halve the lime, squeeze half and cut the other half into wedges.

Place the marinated cashews in an oven dish and roast them in the oven for six to eight minutes.

Season the soup with the juice of the half lime. Use a lemon squeezer, or squeeze the lime over a sieve. Then purée the soup until smooth. If required, add more water for a thinner soup. Season with pepper. Then spoon into bowls and garnish with the cashews and the chopped parsley. If you wish, you can cut the other half of the lime into wedges, so that each person can add some juice as desired. And then your sweet potato, carrot ginger soup is ready to eat!

# Yotam Ottelenghi's

**Pumpkin with chilli yoghurt and coriander sauce**



**A tasty side dish ! It's also great as a main dish! Not only does it look welcoming, it tastes delicious too!**

### **Ingredients**

- 1 butternut squash (large)
- 1 teaspoon of cinnamon
- 6 tablespoons of traditional olive oil
- 1 teaspoon of salt
- 1 teaspoon of freshly ground black pepper
- 50 grams of fresh coriander (extra for the garnish)
- 1 garlic clove
- 20 grams of pumpkin seeds
- 200 grams of Greek yoghurt
- 1.5 teaspoons of sriracha sauce

### **Nutritional values**

- kcal: 252
- Carbohydrates: 5 grams
- Fat: 23 grams
- Saturated fat: 6 grams
- Protein: 5 grams
- Fibre: 3 grams
- Salt: 0.56 grams

### **Method of preparation**

Pre-heat the oven to 220°C. Peel the squash using a peeler. Then cut the squash in half lengthwise, remove the seeds and dice the flesh into approximately 4 x 4-cm pieces. Place the diced squash in a large bowl with the cinnamon, the oil, half of the salt and a generous pinch of pepper. Mix everything together, so that the squash is covered with a thin layer. Roast the diced squash on a baking tray for approx. 20 - 35 minutes until it is cooked and the top starts to colour. If necessary, prick the squash with a fork to see if it is cooked. As is the case with cooked potato, if the squash falls apart, it is ready. Then remove it from the oven and let it cool down.

For the herb sauce, place the coriander, garlic, oil and a pinch of salt in the blender, purée everything into a paste and set aside. Reduce the oven temperature to 180°C. Sprinkle the pumpkin seeds on another baking tray and roast them in the oven for approx. 6-8 minutes. The husk will burst open and the seeds will be light and crispy. Remove them from the oven and let them cool down.

Just before serving the squash, stir together the yoghurt and herb purée. Finally add a small amount of sriracha sauce. Place the diced squash on a dish, sprinkle the spicy yoghurt/herbs/sriracha sauce mixture on the top. Sprinkle with the pumpkin seeds and the remaining coriander leaves on top if you wish, and serve!



# Cauliflower pizza

## Magioni garnished cauliflower pizza



It's hard to believe that there are 67 grams of vegetables in this pizza base. This is what you want! A healthy yet tasty pizza! And a pizza like this is quite filling. I've never been able to eat a whole one.

### Ingredients

- 2 Magioni cauliflower pizza crusts
- 250 grams of sieved tomatoes
- 2 garlic cloves
- 1 large red onion (or 2 small)
- ¼ teaspoon of chilli flakes
- 0.5 teaspoon of paprika powder
- 0.5 tablespoon of oregano
- 1 tablespoon of basil
- 4 chestnut mushrooms
- 1 red pepper
- 1/3 of a courgette

- 7 cherry tomatoes
- 2 handfuls of rocket
- 100 grams of grated mozzarella

### Nutritional values

- 605 kcal
- 15 grams of fat
- 7 grams of saturated fat
- 17 grams of protein
- 95 grams of carbohydrates
- 11 grams of fibre
- 2 grams of salt

Pre-heat the oven to 220 degrees Celsius. Dice the pepper and onion. Heat 1 tablespoon of oil in a frying pan and fry the onion. Crush the garlic into the pan and add half of the red pepper. Then add the sieved tomatoes and herbs. Meanwhile, pre-bake the pizza base for 4 minutes in the oven. Slice the mozzarella and cut the vegetables as required. After pre-baking, remove the pizza base from the oven and divide the tomato sauce and mozzarella over the base. Then back into the oven for another 2 minutes.

Remove the pizza from the oven and garnish it with the sliced vegetables. Finish baking for 10 minutes. Keep a close eye on it!

Sprinkle a handful of rocket over the top! And your cauliflower base pizza is ready!

# Filled wraps

**With white beans, avocado and spinach**



**These wraps don't take long to make, but the flavour amazes me every time. These wraps are perfect to take along to school or work. I find that two wraps are plenty for my evening meal!**

## **Ingredients**

- 1 teaspoon of olive oil
- 400 grams of white beans
- 1 tablespoon of soya sauce
- 1 tablespoon of white balsamic vinegar
- 1 avocado
- 2 tablespoons of lime juice
- Handful of fresh coriander
- 0.5 teaspoon of garlic powder
- 0.5 teaspoon of smoked paprika powder
- 0.5 teaspoon of mild paprika powder
- pinch of chilli pepper or cayenne pepper
- 0.5 teaspoon of onion powder
- pepper
- 4 Vegetable wraps (carrot/spinach)
- 1 or 2 tomatoes
- 3 handfuls of fresh spinach

## **Nutritional values**

- kcal: 650
- Carbohydrates: 61 grams
- Fat: 30 grams
- Saturated fat: 4 grams
- Protein: 24 grams

Rinse the white beans in a colander. Heat the olive oil in a frying pan over a medium heat. Add the beans and fry slightly. Add the soya sauce and stir until it has evaporated. Then add white balsamic vinegar and stir again until it has evaporated. Remove the frying pan from the heat. Mash the beans with a masher. Slice the avocado and spoon the flesh into a large bowl. Also mash the avocado until no large pieces remain. Add the beans, lime juice, coriander, garlic powder, paprika powder, onion powder and a pinch of cayenne or chilli pepper (very spicy!) . Stir well and add pepper to taste. Spread a wrap with the avocado bean mixture. Add some spinach and some thinly sliced tomato. Roll the wrap, and it's ready to eat!

# Couscous

**With pointed cabbage, mango chutney and falafel**



This delicious vegetarian dish is full of healthy nutrients and fibre. Easy to prepare and great instead of conventional dishes! Replace meat more often with something else.

## Ingredients

- 125 grams of couscous
- 3 tablespoons of olive oil
- 1 red onion
- 10 grams of fresh coriander
- 2 teaspoons of ground cumin
- 300 grams of sliced pointed cabbage
- 120 grams of falafel
- 70 grams of mango chutney
- pepper

## Nutritional values

- kcal: 680
- Carbohydrates: 92 grams
- Fat: 23 grams
- Saturated fat: 3 grams
- Protein: 20 grams
- Fibre: 12 grams
- Salt: 2 grams

Prepare the couscous as instructed on the packet.

Coarsely chop the onion. Heat 1 tablespoon of olive oil in a frying pan and fry the onion for 1 minute.

Stir in the cumin. Then add the pointed cabbage and fry for 4 minutes until crisp and tender. In a different frying pan, heat the remainder of the olive oil and fry the falafel for a few minutes until golden brown.

Use a fork to fluff up the couscous grains. Stir the couscous through the pointed cabbage. Season with the chutney and pepper. Spoon the couscous mixture and the falafel onto plates and garnish with the coriander leaves. And your dish is ready!

# Tempeh burgers

With ginger and red pepper



These burgers are delicious served with a traditional Dutch meal or with an Asian dish. Instead of the Za'atar spice mix you can, of course, create and use your own spice mix. The nutritional values are for two burgers.

## Ingredients

- 1 shallot
- 1 garlic clove
- 1 Spanish pepper
- ginger (a thumb of ginger)
- 1 tablespoon of peanut butter (100% peanuts)
- 0.5 tablespoon of lime juice
- 1 tablespoon of Za'atar spice mix
- 150 grams of tempeh
- wholemeal flour if required
- 2 tablespoons of liquid margarine

## Nutritional values

- kcal: 175
- Carbohydrates: 5 grams
- Fat: 13 grams
- Saturated fat: 2 grams
- Protein: 8 grams
- Fibre: 4 grams
- Salt: 0.01 grams

Peel the shallot and the garlic. Cut the pepper in half and remove the seeds.

Peel the piece of ginger. Remove the blender jug from the food processor, place the shallot, garlic, pepper, ginger, a tablespoon of peanut butter and half a tablespoon of lime juice in the jug. Add a tablespoon of za'atar spice mix.

Blend using the food processor to form a coarse mixture. Break the tempeh into pieces and add these. Blend the mixture again. If the mixture is too wet, add a little wholemeal flour. If the mixture is too dry, add a little water.

Divide the mixture into 6 and create patties. Fry the tempeh burgers in hot margarine for 6-8 minutes until brown. And your tempeh burgers are ready to eat!

# Baked cauliflower

## Oven-baked seasoned cauliflower



Something slightly different to a cauliflower cheese dish :) Delicious grilled oven-baked cauliflower, seasoned with a spicy marinade.

### Ingredients

- 1 cauliflower
- 180 millilitres of (soya) yoghurt
- 0.5 tablespoon of lemon juice
- 1 teaspoon of chilli powder
- 1 tablespoon of paprika powder
- 1 tablespoon of cumin
- 1 tablespoon of garlic powder
- 1 tablespoon of turmeric
- pinch of salt
- ground pepper

### Nutritional values

- kcal: 154
- Carbohydrates: 14 grams
- Fat: 4 grams
- Saturated fat: 0 grams
- Protein: 11 grams
- Fibre: 9 grams
- Salt: 0.31 grams

Pre-heat the oven to 180 degrees Celsius. Mix all the ingredients together in a large bowl. Slice the cauliflower into small florets. Add the florets to the bowl with the marinade. Place a plate on top of the bowl and shake to distribute the marinade evenly. Line a baking tray with baking paper and pour the marinated cauliflower over it. If there are any florets that haven't been touched by the marinade, use your finger or a brush to coat these.

Bake in the oven for 30-40 minutes. When the cauliflower is cooked, the top will be slightly darker. Prick it with a fork to check.

And your seasoned cauliflower is ready to eat!

# Curry sauce

**A simple curry sauce to pour over your vegetables**



When I eat vegetables, I often miss a flavour that brightens up the meal a bit. This curry sauce is tasty and healthy. And importantly ... easy to make! If you'd like the sauce a little spicier, you can also add a small amount of hot curry powder. Healthy eating can be so delicious and simple!

## **Ingredients**

- 0.5 tablespoon of curry powder
- 3 tablespoons of (soya) yoghurt
- 1 tablespoon of mayonnaise
- 1 tablespoon of lemon juice

## **Nutritional values**

- kcal: 63
- Carbohydrates: 2 grams
- Fat: 6 grams
- Saturated fat: 1 gram
- Protein: 3 grams
- Fibre: 1 gram
- Salt: 0.1 gram

Mix all the ingredients in a bowl (the curry powder, yoghurt, mayonnaise and lemon juice).

Taste the sauce to check it's to your liking, and add more of the ingredients if desired. And your curry sauce is ready!

If you wish you can thin the sauce a little by adding water, so you can use it as a salad dressing!

# Stuffed aubergines

**With nuts, coconut and raita**



This recipe takes a bit more time, but it's oh so delicious! Add some brown rice and you have a delicious, super healthy, filling dish. The nutritional values are for one aubergine plus half of the tasty raita made using cucumber, mint and (vegetable) quark.

### Ingredients

- 2 large aubergines or 4 small ones
- 35 grams of grated coconut
- 60 grams of unsalted cashews
- fresh coriander (20-gram punnet)
- 2 garlic cloves
- 0.5 Spanish pepper
- 3 tablespoons of tomato purée
- 1.5 teaspoons of ground cumin seed
- 1 teaspoon of turmeric
- 0.5 cucumber
- 125 grams of Alpro Go On plain yoghurt or low-fat quark
- 1 large red onion
- 10 grams of fresh mint
- Pinch of salt

### Nutritional values

- kcal: 433
- Carbohydrates: 31 grams
- Fat: 23 grams
- Saturated fat: 8 grams
- Protein: 20 grams
- Fibre: 13 grams
- Salt: 1 gram

### Method of preparation

Slice the aubergines diagonally lengthwise, but don't cut all the way through. Place them in a large bowl or a saucepan filled with cold water and set aside. Make sure that the part that has been cut open is underwater.

Put a frying pan on a medium heat and toast the grated coconut and cashews. Allow to cool for a minute or two.

Place the following in the food processor: the nut and coconut mixture, coriander, garlic, red pepper, tomato puree, 1 teaspoon of ground cumin seed, the turmeric and a pinch of salt. Use the pulse button to coarsely chop the mixture.

Dry the aubergines with kitchen roll or a tea towel. Using your hands, fill them with the mixture from the food processor.

Chop the onion. Fry this onion in olive oil in a large frying pan until translucent. Then add some water, so that there is about a centimetre of water in the pan. Then place the aubergines in the pan. Now turn the heat to high and cook for a couple of minutes.

Then turn the heat to low, place a lid on the pan and cook for another 30 minutes. Meanwhile, you can prepare the raita. Coarsely grate half a cucumber. Place the grated cucumber in a sieve and squeeze out as much water as possible. Finely shred the mint.

Place the Alpro Go On plain yoghurt, squeezed cucumber, mint, 0.5 teaspoon of ground cumin seed and a pinch of salt in a bowl. And your raita is ready.

Prepare some brown rice. And your stuffed aubergines are ready to eat!



# Mac and Cheese

**Plant-based**



A delicious filling meal with plenty of vegetables and flavour. Easy to prepare in advance, so all you have to do in the evening is heat it up in the oven.

### **Ingredients**

- 1 vegetable stock cube (reduced salt)
- 480 millilitres of water
- 1 onion
- 1 garlic clove
- 300 grams of carrot
- 230 grams of wholemeal macaroni
- 40 grams of yeast flakes
- 300 grams of broccoli
- 100 grams of sugarsnaps
- 1 teaspoon of smoked paprika powder
- 2 teaspoons of almond butter
- 2 teaspoons of lemon juice

- 2 teaspoons of miso (without is fine)
- 2 teaspoons of mustard
- 1 teaspoon of turmeric
- 2 teaspoons of paprika powder
- 1.5 slices of wholemeal bread

### **Nutritional values**

- 480 kcal
- 6 grams of fat
- 1 gram of saturated fat
- 24 grams of protein
- 75 grams of carbohydrates
- 16 grams of fibre

### **Method of preparation**

Chop the onion, cut the carrot into slices. Pour two thirds of the water in a frying pan, heat it up and dissolve the stock cube in the water. Add the onion, carrot and crushed garlic clove to this pan. Boil for 8-10 minutes, until the carrot has softened slightly.

Cut the broccoli into small florets. Place these in a saucepan along with the sugarsnaps and boil or steam for 10 minutes. Once cooked, set it aside.

Pre-heat the oven to 190 degrees Celsius. Cook the macaroni as instructed on the packet. Drain and leave to stand. Toast the bread slices and then crumble these - you can also chop these in the food processor if you prefer.

Open the food processor and add the cooked carrot, garlic and onion mixture, plus the remainder of the water. Also add the yeast flakes, almond butter, lemon juice, mustard, miso, smoked paprika and turmeric (actually everything apart from the ordinary paprika powder and the bread). Blend until the mixture is slightly thicker, approximately the thickness of yoghurt. Taste to see whether more herbs should be added. If the mixture isn't thick enough, you can pour it into a saucepan and reduce the mixture (by heating) to the required consistency.

Place the mixture from the food processor and the macaroni and vegetables in an oven dish and mix together. Sprinkle the crumbs over the mixture, along with a little paprika powder. Place the dish in the oven. After 20 minutes, remove it from the oven. And your Mac and Cheese is ready to eat!

# Healthy breakfasts

## Quinoa with melon



I was also sceptical, but am pleasantly surprised. The vanilla, cinnamon and melon give this a deliciously sweet flavour. Of course, you can choose another kind of fruit!

### Ingredients

- 15 grams of uncooked quinoa
- 200 millilitres of (soya) yoghurt
- half a teaspoon of vanilla flavouring
- half a teaspoon of cinnamon
- 100 grams of melon (or other fruit)
- 20 grams of chopped walnuts
- 125 grams of yoghurt or quark
- 10 grams of fresh mint
- Pinch of salt

### Nutritional values

- kcal: 309
- Carbohydrates: 19 grams
- Fat: 19 grams
- Saturated fat: 2 grams
- Protein: 14 grams
- Fibre: 4 grams
- Salt: 0.55 grams

## Overnight oats soya yoghurt



A perfect start to your day with this fresh and fruity breakfast. Prepare it the evening before. In the morning, you just have to eat it! If you have a glass with a lid, you could also take this with you!

### Ingredients

- 150 millilitres of soya or low-fat yoghurt
- 30 grams of oat flakes
- cinnamon to taste
- 1 tablespoon of linseed
- 40 grams of raspberries
- 40 grams of blueberries
- a little vanilla extract if desired

### Nutritional values

- 240 kcal
- 7 grams of fat
- 1 gram of saturated fat
- 12 grams of protein
- 28 grams of carbohydrates
- 7 grams of fibre
- 0.39 grams of salt

# Healthy smoothies

## Smoothie coconut water



The coconut water makes this smoothie deliciously tropical. Place all the ingredients in a food processor or blender.

### Ingredients

- 225 grams of spinach
- 480 millilitres of unsweetened coconut water
- 1 orange, properly peeled
- 165 grams of mango
- 1 banana
- 4 cubes of frozen kale (85 g)

### Nutritional values

- 94 kcal
- 1 gram of fat
- 0 grams of saturated fat
- 3 grams of protein
- 17 grams of carbohydrates
- 3 grams of fibre

## Smoothie with kale



Peel the ingredients (where necessary). Place all the ingredients in a food processor or blender. If the mixture is still too thick, you can add some water.

### Ingredients

- 1 kiwi
- 1 apple with peel
- Half a lemon
- 1 orange
- 40 grams of spinach
- 80 grams of kale (4 cubes)
- 1 banana
- A piece of ginger
- A couple of mint leaves
- 400 millilitres of water

### Nutritional values

- kcal: 102 kcal
- Carbohydrates: 18 grams
- Fat: 1 gram
- Protein: 1 gram
- Fibre: 4 grams
- Salt: 0.04 grams

"If you want something you have never had,  
you must be willing to do something  
you've never done."

*Thomas Jefferson*

# Dietary guidelines greenhabit

- Eat a varied diet, according to the 80/20 rule
- Eat lean meat, or no meat at all, and eat fish more often
- Eat plenty of vegetables, proteins and fats
- Avoid sugar and starch
- Go easy with the salt, it's better to use herbs
- Drink three bottles of water every day
- Eat at regular times with no snacks between meals
- Eat as much pure and unprocessed food as possible
- Enjoy your meals, relax and take your time
- Mainly eat 'slow carbohydrates'
- If you want to lose weight, make sure you don't lose more than 300 grams a week
- Eat or drink anything you have rated an eight or more



*With Greenhabit, there are no forbidden products. We will tell you which choices are healthier.*

# Hormone production

Our body has two main regulatory systems. The nervous system regulates short-term control using electrical stimuli and neurotransmitters. The hormone system (endocrine system) is responsible for adjusting long-term processes via chemicals in the bloodstream. Metabolism plays a key role in the release of hormones. Digestion, reproduction, growth and development, water and salt homeostasis, (sexual) behaviour and emotions (aggression, depression) are aligned to this.

Hormones have both a controlling and inhibiting effect on your body's functions, in order to maintain a balance. Your body's ultimate goal is to remain in balance and adapt to the environment. Just a small amount of hormone has a huge impact on the body's processes.

The hormones are regulated by the hypothalamus, which as the control system between the nervous system and the hypophysis (the master gland of the endocrine system), controls the body from the brain. The hypophysis releases chemical messengers into the bloodstream, to control other glands in the body.

As you have read, hormones have a huge impact on how you feel. If you have a hormonal imbalance, you can develop various symptoms, such as sleeping problems, fatigue, migraine, digestive problems, depression and obesity. If the imbalance persists over a long period of time, chronic illnesses, such as type 2 diabetes or cardiac or renal failure can develop. We have already highlighted a common hormonal imbalance as a result of the stress hormone cortisol. If you look at the effects of this on the body, you will see that stress hormones are dominant and take precedence over other hormones. That doesn't include digestion, reproduction, immunity and sleep, because you do not need them to fight or flee in order to survive. Melatonin (sleep hormone) is therefore suppressed by cortisol which keeps you 'switched on' and reduces your ability to sleep properly. Stress and sleep are therefore not very compatible.

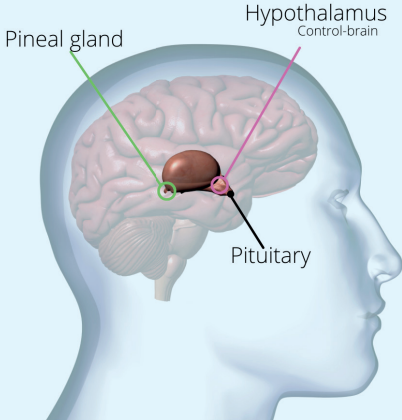
High cortisol levels also suppress the growth hormone and DHEA, both of which are needed for cell repair to delay ageing. Lower DHEA levels also reduce the production of thyroid hormones. Thyroid problems therefore often arise following protracted periods of stress. Cortisol has a negative impact on the hormones dopamine and serotonin (which make you feel happy), this can therefore cause depressive feelings.

Apart from the endocrine glands, cells in the body also produce hormones. These are tissue hormones produced, for example in the intestines, stomach and kidneys. For instance, ghrelin (hunger hormone) and leptin (satiety hormone) are mainly secreted by the stomach wall. These hormones tell your brain when you need food.

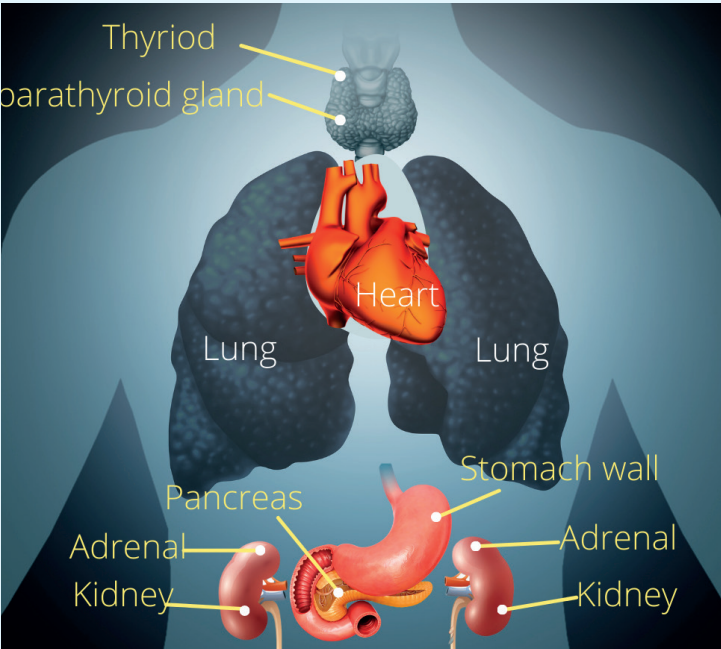
If you want to lose weight, these are important hormones to take into account. Along with dopamine (reward hormone) when eating sugary and high-calorie foods, these hormones can cause problems...

Hormones are broken down again in your body; this mainly takes place in the liver. Below are a number of important organs and tissues that form part of the hormone system.

**Control system for hormones**



**Organs and tissue that secrete hormones (yellow)**





In the table below, we explain in which organ or tissue a hormone is produced and this hormone's function in the body. The human body has various systems to enable it to remain in balance and to control itself.

Organ	Hormone	Function
<b>Hypophysis (pituitary gland)</b>	Growth hormone and other control hormones for organs	Control of the thyroid, adrenal cortex and gonads
<b>Pineal gland</b>	Melatonin	Important role in the sleep-wake pattern (biological clock with 24-hour pattern). Ensures that you become sleepy in the evenings. Melatonin is made from the hormone serotonin
<b>Thyroid</b>	Removes iodine from food to produce thyroid hormones (TH)	For metabolism control and growth. When the thyroid produces too many hormones, this increases the burning of fat in the cells, which makes you lose weight. If the thyroid doesn't produce enough hormones, you will feel fatigued and cold.
<b>Adrenal glands</b> Adrenal cortex (outermost layer) Control by Hypothalamus and hypophysis (CRH+ACTH)	Cortisol	Controls the glucose level, fat burning and has an anti-inflammatory effect. Activates the body and causes rapid muscle breakdown. Increases fat storage because, in stressful situations, your body converts muscle tissue into glucose, ensuring you have enough energy to face danger. But as you rarely need to flee in our modern world, you often don't need that energy. It therefore ends up being converted into fat.
	Aldosterone	Regulates the body's salt and water balance. Causes sodium to be absorbed from urine and elevates the blood pressure.
	Pregnenelone	Sharpens the memory and, as a prohormone, undergoes conversion to become other hormones.
	DHEA (dehydro-epiandrosterone)	A prohormone which undergoes conversion to become sex hormones, is an antagonist of cortisol, in the brain it possibly has the ability to improve depressive symptoms. It has slight androgenic effects on women.
	Sex hormone Testosterone	Stimulates muscle growth, has a masculinising effect, increases body hair, stimulates libido, increases sebum production on the skin.
	Sex hormone Oestrogen	Stimulates the growth of the uterine lining and breasts, gives a person a feminine appearance, makes the vaginal wall flexible, increases the female libido, makes the mucus in the uterus more permeable to sperm, slows the natural breakdown of bone tissue, keeps the skin firm.

<b>Organ</b>	<b>Hormone</b>	<b>Function</b>
<b>Adrenal glands</b> Adrenal medulla (innermost part) Controlled by the hypothalamus by electrical signals via the nervous system. This causes an immediate response.	Sex hormone	Prepares the uterine lining to allow effective egg implantation, increases the temperature of the body and relaxes the body, promotes bone formation.
	Progesterone	
	Adrenaline	Triggers the body's fight-or-flight response. Is also a neurotransmitter. Stimulates the liver and muscles to produce glucose. Increases blood pressure, respiration and heart rate.
	Noradrenaline	Keeps stress manageable and allows the blood pressure to rise making more blood available to your brain and muscles for a short time. This makes you more alert. On the other hand, digestion stops for a short time.
<b>Thymus gland</b>	Maturation of the T cells	T cells are part of the immune system and attack pathogens in your body to destroy them.
<b>Pancreas</b>	Insulin (lowers high blood sugar levels)	Prompts cells to absorb blood sugar. If there is more sugar than the cells can absorb, insulin ensures that it is converted into glycogen (energy) by the muscles and liver for emergencies. When there is too much sugar in the blood, this is converted into fat. This is unlimited and is stored all over your body.
	Glucagon (increases the blood sugar level)	Triggers the liver to produce glucose from proteins and fats. This re-enters the bloodstream, to give the cells energy again.
<b>Stomach wall</b>	Ghrelin	Produced in the stomach wall. This is produced when the stomach is empty. The hormone is secreted directly into the bloodstream to your brain, to tell your brain that food is required. You will then feel hungry and go and look for food. This hormone is also a major contributor to the yo-yo effect (when dieting).
	Leptin	Once your stomach is full, ghrelin production will stop. Instead, your body will start to produce leptin, the hormone that makes you feel full. So you don't need to eat again until your stomach is empty. This is a process that, in theory, should ensure that you eat precisely enough food.

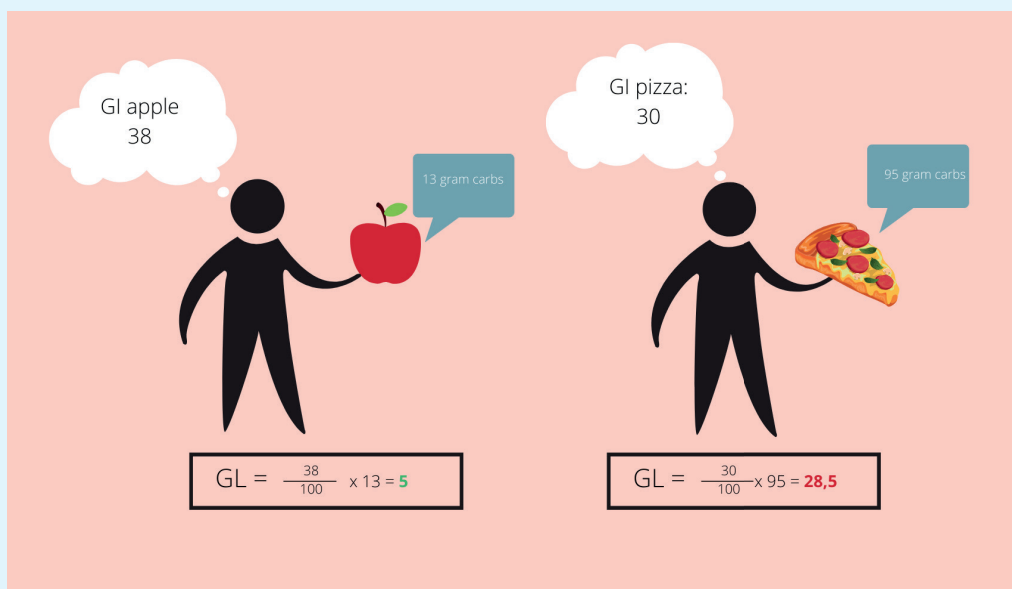
# Fast and slow sugars

## A simple explanation of the glycaemic index value

When you eat sugars, they are absorbed into your blood. More sugar is then present in your blood and your 'blood sugar level' rises. Your body produces insulin in response to this. This tells your muscles and liver that sugar is present. They then open certain doors, allowing them to absorb sugar. During exercise, your muscles will use this sugar as fuel. Because of the insulin, the sugar will be absorbed from your blood, causing your blood sugar level to fall again. When your blood sugar level is low, you will feel hungry and crave sweet food: your body once again demands fuel (sugar). Rapid peaks and troughs therefore cause a lot of hunger pangs, which is why we frequently snack. If you have snacks in the house, they are no longer safe.

## What is the glycaemic index?

All carbohydrates are made up of long chains of sugar molecules. Your body breaks down these chains into pieces to form individual sugar molecules. These are also absorbed into your blood. So when you eat fast carbohydrates, your blood sugar level rises. Your blood sugar level doesn't always rise as quickly or as much (see the image below). The length of time it takes for the blood sugar level to fall again will also vary. It depends on what you eat. This is shown by the glycaemic index (GI). Foods with a high GI cause a sharp, quick rise in blood sugar levels. These are 'fast sugars' and therefore actually 'fast carbohydrates'. Foods with a low GI cause a slower and lower rise. These are the 'slow sugars' and therefore, actually 'slow carbohydrates'.



*The GI of an apple is higher than that of a pizza, but because a pizza contains many more carbohydrates, the glycaemic load will be almost six times higher. The effect on the blood sugar level will therefore be six times greater.*



### Advantages and disadvantages of the use of the GI value

The glycaemic index isn't a perfect system. In fact, if you were to focus solely on the glycaemic index, you'd be more likely to eat a pizza than an apple, which isn't the intention! An important reason for choosing a lower GI is to prevent blood sugar spikes. A quick blood sugar spike makes you feel hungry faster and crave sweet food. Several studies have demonstrated this.

There are plenty of disadvantages of this system. A meal doesn't consist of one ingredient, but of several. These ingredients all influence each other. A meal consisting of proteins and fats slows down digestion and can lower the GI. Fibres, fats and proteins are also important ingredients, which will delay the feeling of hunger.

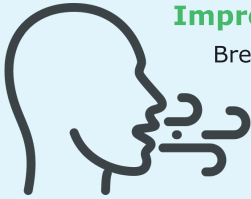
The GI value of an ingredient can vary dependent on the exact composition. These can differ from one country to another. The ripeness, cooking time and method of preparation will also change the GI of the ingredient.

In summary, the GI is a good indicator of better food choices, but you can only use it as a guideline, given its susceptibility to the way in which a meal is prepared.

### The ripeness of a fruit has an effect on the GI



# Breathing exercise



## Improve your balance and resilience with your breathing

Breathing differs from other body functions, in that it is an automatic process which is controlled subconsciously, but people can also control their breathing when they wish. Involuntary respiration is continuous and responds to all internal and external inputs: exertion, emotions, thoughts, behaviour and attitude. It finds its own rhythm appropriate to the situation.

The way you breathe therefore tells you a lot about your physical and/or mental **level of stress**. Rapid chest breathing when jogging is normal, but rapid respiration at rest can point to chronic stress. When at rest, many people breathe as they would if they were in danger, or carrying out strenuous work. They subconsciously breathe too rapidly, too slowly, too deeply or frequently hold their breath. This can lead to various symptoms.

The good news is that if you become aware of your own breathing pattern, you can randomly alter it. You can do this through a variety of breathing exercises. It is important to work out what suits you, your breathing pattern. It is important that it feels comfortable for you. This is why you should first become aware of your own respiration and breathing pattern.

The first step is to spend three minutes drawing your breathing in a wave pattern. Place the pencil on the paper and every time you inhale, your pencil goes up and every time you exhale, your pencil goes down again ... see the drawing below.

After three minutes, count the tips of the waves and divide that number by three. So, if you have divided 30 'tips' by 3, this would mean you are taking 10 breaths a minute. Do this exercise when you are resting.

If your body is balanced, you will breathe between 6 and 10 breaths a minute when you are resting. If this is higher, this is a sign of stress in your body. If you are breathing quickly, your body is tense. Thinking or worrying can make you breathe five times faster. You often won't even notice that your thoughts are affecting your breathing. So, you may find yourself continuously breathing twenty times a minute whilst sitting in a chair. This can point to a higher level of stress. Work out where the stress is coming from. During the week ahead, carry out the aforementioned exercise 3 times a day for 3 minutes. After a week, count the waves again and see whether there's been a change. It's all about experiencing it. Allowing your breathing to come and go naturally, without consciously intervening. You breathe in, you breathe out and wait until the breath comes again of its own accord.

Breathe in. Breathe out. And wait until the breath comes again of its own accord.

Before starting the exercise, sit up straight like royalty and make sure your shoulders are relaxed and low. Close your eyes for a moment and tune into your body. Be aware of your breathing and how you feel. Do this again at the end of the exercise and write in your notebook keywords of how you feel and what, if anything, has changed after the exercise.

### **A health benefit**

For your health it is important to breathe through your nose.

The benefits of nose breathing instead of mouth breathing:

- Filters the air removing many germs and bacteria
- Warms the air before it reaches the lungs
- Improves diaphragmatic breathing
- Activates the parasympathetic nervous system
- Provides approx. 50% more resistance to incoming air flow than mouth breathing, allowing better expansion of the lungs whilst using less air. This improves the oxygen intake by 10-20%
- The nose is a reservoir of nitric oxide; this gas helps to regulate high blood pressure, lower cholesterol and keeps the arteries young and flexible which prevents clogging

Don't judge each day by the harvest you reap,  
but by the seeds that you plant.

*Robert Louis Stevenson*

## Epilogue

I am incredibly lucky that, throughout my life, I have met people who have left a lasting impression on me. Greenhabit is the result of my interpretation of the wisdom and insights given to me by these people. I am extremely grateful to everyone who helped me to create the Greenhabit programme and this book. And especially my husband, with whom I run this business. My imagination and creativity, coupled with his strategic and financial insights, form the perfect blend. We keep one another focussed and we zero in on the things that really matter. Every individual possesses phenomenal inner strength. We have limitless capacity for resilience. Only you can make yourself happy. You have to take charge of your mindset and make the right choices for your health. However big your dream is, don't wait until you feel ready to pursue it. Simply follow that dream and everything you need will come your way. The only thing you need before you start is to believe in yourself.

Enjoy your Greenhabit adventure.

Chantal Linders

*Chantal*



**'Never give up on a dream just because of the time it will take to accomplish it. The time will pass anyway.'**



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## How to successfully develop healthy habits

What if you could change your whole life with simple adjustments? To be healthier, more useful and happier. Chantal has experienced how this is possible. She had struggled with bladder infections for over 20 years and by changing her diet, she got rid of them. For Chantal it was a wake-up call, which she also wants to share with others. And so she made it her life mission. She likes to pass on her knowledge and strength to make choices that are healthy for your heart. She developed a serious game called Greenhabit: a holistic reflection model to tap into the 'potential' of your mind. As a result, you start living from your personal motivations. Thousands of people have already followed the evidence based program.

After reading this book and playing the game, there is only one thing left to do: chase your dreams.

"You always have a choice."



*Chantal*