

DROP THE DIET DRAMA—AND THE POUNDS—
FOR GOOD!

THE

fit
BOTTOMED
girls

ANTI-DIET

10-MINUTE FIXES TO GET THE BODY
YOU WANT AND A LIFE YOU'LL LOVE

Jennipher Walters and Erin Whitehead

The founders of FITBOTTOMEDGIRLS.COM

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**To all of the FBG readers out there. You inspire us—and truly make our rockin’
world go round!**

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Introduction

Congrats! Knucks! Sparkle fingers! High five! Woo to the hoo!

Why exactly are we celebrating, you ask? Because you picked up this book! And in our experience, the hardest step in doing anything new is the first step. Maybe you're looking to lose some weight. Maybe you're tired of yo-yo dieting and obsessing about calories and the number on the scale. Maybe you're already a reader of our websites, FitBottomedGirls.com, FitBottomedMamas.com, and FitBottomedEats.com. Or, heck, maybe you're a Queen fan and the "Fat Bottomed Girl" song reference really rocked your world. (We couldn't really blame you there. We love a good homage to Queen, too.) No matter why you picked up this book, we are glad that you did. You're already one step closer to living a healthier, happier, and generally more awesome life.

We've been preaching for years that a healthy lifestyle isn't about deprivation or torturous workouts. Instead, it's about adding more fabulous stuff to your life. It's about doing the workouts you love, eating the healthy foods that make your taste buds do a happy dance, and treating yourself with the respect and self-love that you deserve. And then, from all that good stuff, you begin to feel awesome and allow that feel-good energy to create positive change in all areas of your life—not just the size of your pants. (Although that's certainly a perk.) It's not about depriving yourself or punishing yourself with nothing but carrots, grapefruit, and grueling gym sessions for the two weeks before your high school reunion to fit into that little black dress. It's about living well and feeling your best forever—and finding a healthy lifestyle that works for you and your life. And while that message has reached millions since the launch of our first site in May 2008, we've gotten greedy. We want to spread the word to every single woman (and dude, if you're a dude reading this book!) out there. We want to help you become your absolute best—and we want you to have a total blast while you're doing it.

On our websites, we talk a lot about "being an FBG," which includes picking workouts you love and eating according to your hunger; and it does not include letting the number on the scale determine your self-worth. But we never had a definitive guide on how to fully eat, work out, think, and live like a Fit Bottomed Girl, day after day. This, friends, is that guide. Based on our own experiences, our work with readers, and many hours researching what truly works and what doesn't, this book spells out exactly how to be a Fit Bottomed Girl, inside and out.

Now, this isn't designed to be a plan that you can knock out in two weeks and be done with, like so many of the diet books on the market. What we've put together is meant to help you transform your mindset about health and fitness in a lasting way. Like, in a *forever* way. Everyone wants the magic bullet or super-quick fix to getting healthy, but the real

secret is that having a healthy life is founded on a good attitude and a love of that life. So, in order to change your life in that forever way, you have to set yourself up to enjoy your healthy eats and workouts and find the joy in it every day. You have to believe in yourself and believe that you're worth taking care of. That's why, chapter after chapter, you'll get doses of self-love, motivation, and plenty of ideas to inspire your healthy life. Instead of giving you a "diet" to try to stick to until you reach your goal, we'll help you create your ideal healthy life. In fact, our goal here is that these principles will become so ingrained that you won't even have to try to "be healthy" anymore. You just are. And it will feel amazing.

Again, this book is truly meant to give you a full body-mind-spirit life transformation. Because—news flash!—your health is about so much more than just your body. But instead of having you make a whole bunch of massive changes that totally disrupt your life—which, let's face it, will never last, no matter how good your intentions are—we're going to help you make itty-bitty adjustments that will become permanent fixtures. These small shifts may not seem like a big deal as you make them one by one, but over time they'll add up to great changes that stick. And that's what we want: for you to be a Fit Bottomed Girl not for just the next month but for life. Tiny change by tiny change, you'll begin to feel better, inside and out.

And the best part? By just reading this far, you've already come that much closer to reaching your healthy living dreams! So pat yourself on the butt—er, we mean back—and dive in!

What Is a Fit Bottomed Girl, Anyway?

Over the next ten chapters, we'll detail the principles that will allow you to achieve these awesome changes and to become the Fit Bottomed Girl we know you can be. We'll discuss how to eat, how to work out, how to treat your body, how to talk to yourself, and how to get and stay motivated. But before we get into those guidelines, let's break down what a Fit Bottomed Girl looks, acts, and feels like.

A Fit Bottomed Girl ...

- Focuses her mental energy on what's really important in life
- Gets her self-confidence from within
- Listens to and honors her hunger
- Regularly does activities and workouts that she enjoys
- Eats everything in moderation
- Gets energy from feel-good workouts
- Talks to herself like she's her own best friend

It's equally important to bust down what an FBG isn't. And, spoiler alert: it has nothing

to do with the size of your bum!

What a Fit Bottomed Girl Isn't ...

- An obsessive calorie-counter
- Someone who lets the number on the scale determine her self-worth or mood for the day
- A meal-skipper
- Someone who uses exercise as punishment
- Someone who uses exercise to “burn off” foods
- Going to write off entire food groups
- At the gym for hours, forcing herself to do workouts she hates
- Her own worst enemy

Did you get all that? The “isn't”s are a lot of what many of us women have been trained to do to lose weight and “get healthy” over the years. But these methods don't work. You probably know that from experience. We certainly do. They are unhealthy behaviors that serve only to make you feel guilty, unworthy, and unsuccessful. Being obsessive about what you eat, beating yourself up for what you weigh, or feeling guilty about not getting to the gym every day is a surefire way to drain your self-confidence, which can carry over into all other areas of your life. When you spend all of your energy berating yourself for not being better, you're not going to have the energy left over to actually make changes that will help you reach your goals!

That's why being an FBG is about feeling in control of your life and your choices, rather than feeling as though your choices control your life. It's owning your decisions, being proud of who you are, and genuinely feeling good about how you use your body, no matter what the number on the scale reads. It's about respecting yourself, knowing that you deserve to live your best life, and tapping into your inner peace and happiness. As you read through the guidelines and progress through the book, keep this in mind: try being a Fit Bottomed Girl on for size. We think the FBG life will clearly be the more fulfilling path to be on. In fact, it's life-changingly awesome.

How to Use This Book

You may have picked up this anti-diet book because you wanted someone to tell you exactly what to do to get healthier. We understand—it's easy to get bogged down and overwhelmed by all the information out there, and it's easier to follow a strict plan. But do strict plans work for the long haul? Much like a cabbage soup diet can be “stomached” for only a day or two, it's unlikely that the average person can stick to a plan that has no wiggle room. Besides, we're more about having fun and less about being bossy around here, which is why we're not even going to tell you exactly how to use this

book.

Here's what we've done. Each chapter is built upon an unbreakable rule for being a Fit Bottomed Girl. We share some concrete steps on how to tweak your lifestyle, from what you eat, to how you move, to how you talk to yourself. These small steps will add up to huge changes by the end of the program. Each chapter's 10-Minute Fixes include tweaks to your lifestyle—your diet, workouts, and even your way of thinking—that you can implement now to improve your life, as well as journaling exercises we promise will be time well spent. We've even got workout ideas and recipes to get you started. We also help you find new ways to feel better—and we can promise that there's no cabbage soup involved (unless you really do like the stuff; then, more power to you and your cabbage soup!).

If you like structure, you can treat each chapter as a lesson plan and spend a week taking it all in, focusing on that one area and adjusting parts of your lifestyle accordingly. If you'd rather pick and choose what works for you, this plan allows you that flexibility, too! We have a detailed Two-Week FBG Plan at the end of the book on how to live the FBG life, with sample workouts and meals, but if you find one chapter zeros in on one of your particular trouble zones, feel free to linger there and explore. We won't tell you you're wrong. Promise.

WHAT'S WITH ALL THOSE SIDEBARS?

Each chapter has recurring sidebars—familiar friends who will visit you along your journey. The “From the FBGs” sidebars share our personal stories related to each of the principles and what we've learned along the way. We've been around the fitness, health, and body image block a time or two, so we hope our experiences can help you on your trip, too. Our “Energize” sidebars will have specific tips and tricks for finding energy all day, every day. Our “Fit Bottomed Mantras” throughout the book will give you those little motivational quotes and phrases to power you through the tough times—whether the tough times are on your couch conjuring up the motivation to get to the gym, during your last few squats at the gym, or trying to kick your negative thoughts to the curb.

The Power of 10 Minutes

Some diet plans promise big results over weeks and months. We can do better. We promise results in 10 minutes flat. Sure, that sounds like an infomercial. But we are certain that the 10-Minute Fixes you'll find in each chapter will have you more energized, fitter, healthier, and happier by the time you're finished with the first one!

We know how daunting it can be when you hear the recommendations for exercise and healthy eating. You're busy already; how on earth can you fit in an hour of exercise? How can you find time to cook a healthy meal when you have kids and an hour-long

commute? But *everyone* has 10 minutes. Heck, you probably spend 10 minutes mindlessly surfing the Internet or watching TV every day. And the good news is that we're not telling you to put down the remote control; you can do a lot of these 10-minute changes *while* you're online or catching up on your favorite shows! You'll be surprised at how little time and effort it takes to make healthy adjustments to your lifestyle—and you may even start to like it! (In fact, we're betting that you will.) You'll start to think of these changes as something positive you're adding to your life instead of the deprivation that so many diets require. We're not about deprivation—deprivation is sad and restrictive, and it's not sustainable. Once you see some of the fun things you can add into your life, you'll never want to go back!

ENERGIZE!

The Power of a Smile

Need an instant pick-me-up? Put down that coffee cup and turn that frown upside down! The clichés “fake it 'til you make it” and “grin and bear it”—they're actually rooted in smile psychology. Turns out, when you smile, your facial muscles send signals to your brain, letting it know what emotions you're feeling. Studies suggest that simply flashing a smile can give your mood a boost, and it can also help you recover from stressors. Even relaxing your face—like when you're eking out that last push-up—can help control your emotions. So flash that toothy grin and feel the effects on your psyche. It takes more muscles to frown than it does to smile, but this is one time we actually advocate working fewer muscles!

Don't think 10 minutes is enough time to do anything? We'll prove you wrong. Throughout the book we've provided dozens of 10-Minute Fixes, or tricks, to get you on the path to success—from fast ideas for healthy meals, to super-quick workouts, to tweaks for better sleep. Remember how we said that sometimes the first step is the hardest? Our 10-Minute Fixes help to make those steps feel like something you will actually be able to do. They're manageable and fun—and they'll set you up for success. And once some of these new habits take hold, you'll start to see the benefits and want to add more. It's a health spiral!

Now, Let's Do This!

By now, we hope we've convinced you that being a Fit Bottomed Girl is pretty rad. And as you go through each principle, you'll begin to feel that in your body and soul. Because, truly, becoming a Fit Bottomed Girl is about more than just being at a healthy weight, eating right, and working out. It's about life. And it's about making the most of that amazing woman you already are and believing in yourself to step into and claim your best and happiest life.

When you're trying to eat right, work out, and change your life for the healthier, it can seem like a lonely pursuit. But as we've come to realize over the years, people who are really successful at reaching their goals are those who feel like they have their very own cheering section. So as you begin your journey, principle by principle, know that we—and the thousands of others reading this book right now—are that cheering section. We may be writing to you in book format, but we are real people who live these principles each and every day. And, girlfriend, we—and all of the other FBG writers and readers on FitBottomedGirls.com—have your back. So just by picking up this book you have people all around the world who are doing this with you and cheering you on with fist pumps and corny you-can-do-it chants!

Change can be hard and scary, but don't let fear get in the way of becoming your best self. You aren't doing this on your own. You can always tap into the FBG online community by reading our daily posts and joining our conversations in the comments sections and on social media for instant pick-me-ups and motivation. So many women have become FBGs, and we're all ready to help you to become one, too!

The Fit Bottomed line? *You deserve to be the best version of yourself.* So join us on this journey to becoming a Fit Bottomed Girl!

CHAPTER 1

Ditch the Diet (and Weight) Drama

Drama, drama, drama.

That's how we'd sum up the attitude that many women have when it comes to food, exercise, weight, and body image. It's like *The Young and the Restless* up in that headspace. But living a healthy lifestyle doesn't mean ricocheting among high highs, low lows, and badly acted plot twists. In fact, being a Fit Bottomed Girl is more like watching an episode of *Seinfeld* or *Friends*. You know what's going to happen, and you know you're just going to feel better because of it. Which is what this first principle is all about: *ditching the diet and weight drama, once and for all*.

"Diet"—as most people have come to understand it—is a four-letter word. It's about deprivation and torture and not having what you really want. It's about eating celery and carrots and going to the gym for hours *instead of* eating tasty food, spending hours on the couch watching movies starring Meg Ryan and Tom Hanks, and drinking copious amounts of wine (which, for the record, is how we spend many of our evenings and is a great use of a Friday night). This "diet" business is a drastic, unsustainable change in how you eat, with an end goal of reaching a number on the scale rather than achieving overall well-being. For many people, diet is about temporary results that lead to long-term dissatisfaction, guilt, and a sense of failure that chips away at not only your confidence to be healthy but also your overall sense of self-worth.

Like we said, drama, drama, drama ...

Why Dieting Stinks

We probably don't have to tell you that yo-yo dieting stinks. But we will anyway, because it bears repeating. In fact, let us scream it from the proverbial rooftops: Dieting sucks! It blows! It's not a good way to live!

As we said, for many people the word *diet* is synonymous with deprivation. It means being "good." (Which, ahem, implies that you're "bad" the rest of the time?) Some diets feel like a torturous period you endure for as long as you can before going mad and

being driven back into the warm and inviting arms of cheese, carbs, and chocolate. Some diets are about eating when you're "supposed to" and not eating when you're actually hungry. Many diets leave you saying no to the foods you love, totally ignoring your body's cues as to when and what you should eat. But if you're thinking about "going on a diet," doesn't that imply that you're going to eventually go "off" it? Whether you make it to the end of a specific program or give up beforehand, this attitude about dieting is not a permanent, healthy way of life.

There are too many ridiculous fad diets for us to list here—and anyway, we wouldn't want to give them the attention they don't deserve! But suffice it to say that most of these diets involve seriously restricting calories and/or food groups. And it's a given that they are not sustainable in the long term.

Why is it so hard to stay on a yo-yo diet for more than a week or two? First, your physiology plays a major role. Your body likes the status quo, and it wants to survive. And when you drastically cut the number of calories your body is used to getting, it thinks it's going to wither away and die. So all of these amazing and complicated processes start happening in your body, cranking your hunger levels way, way up. We won't bore you with the scientific specifics, but if you've ever heard of the hormones ghrelin and leptin, they're at play here, making the odds of your long-term weight-loss success virtually impossible. Tricky little bastards.

You know that saying "Old habits die hard"? Well, it is true. While your motivation can power you through a crash diet for a week or two, in our experience it's just too much change all at once for any person to handle. Especially when you add in those aforementioned tricky little bastards causing you to want to eat your arm without sauce. Not only that, but when you are changing everything about how you eat and exercise at the same time, you have to spend a lot of time thinking about all of that. And that means a lot of brainpower goes to thinking about what you should—and probably what you shouldn't—be doing. As you undoubtedly know, human nature dictates that as soon as something is labeled "off-limits," we can't help but want that darn thing. Whatever the forbidden food is, it simply becomes incredibly irresistible—a giant pink elephant that you cannot stop thinking about. So instead of focusing on all the foods you can have, your brain becomes fixated on the ones you can't have, leaving you feeling deprived and miserable.

This is the reason many people don't keep their New Year's resolutions past January. Despite our best intentions and biggest aha moments, we are all creatures of habit. And while you can change your habits for the healthier, it's simply unrealistic to try to change all of them at once. That's why, as *Fit Bottomed Girls*, our goal is to tweak a little here, bit by bit, so that new habits are made and kept forever.

Crash and fad dieting have also been shown to do all kinds of other nasty stuff to factors other than your weight, such as weakening your immune system, harming your heart, and making you super cranky. (Okay, so there's no formal research on that last one, but we have had enough experience with it to know that being "hangry" is a real thing.) Extreme dieting has even been shown to reduce brain function, impair memory, and make someone more prone to depression. When you crash-diet, you're simply not giving your body the energy, vitamins, minerals, and nutrients it needs to function at its best!

Despite the fact that crash diets never work in the long term, we seem to all be obsessed with them. We all know people who have tried every fad diet out there, and

they've "failed" at each and every one. But can we really call this "failure" when the fad diets don't work for anyone? Clearly, it's the culture of dieting that's broken, not you.

Which leads us to the reason we really discourage crash dieting: it drains your self-confidence. Because it is so hard to follow a crash diet for more than a few weeks, most people begin to think that they are personally to blame for not having the willpower to overcome their food demons. You think you can't do it. You think you'll never get healthy. You get beat down. And no matter how many different diets you try, the results are always the same. You lose some quick pounds, only to go back to your old ways, regain the weight, and feel that you'll never succeed. Every pound that creeps back on has chipped away at your self-confidence. This is no way to live.

How Not to "Diet"

In the next chapter, we give you some specifics of what and how to eat to really tune in to your hunger and listen to your body when it comes to cravings. But for now, we're asking you to make a vow to treat your body with respect. No matter what amazing results the next fad diet tries to sell you, remember that they're out to make a quick buck, not to give you the healthy lifestyle of your dreams. The short-term results you get from a fad diet are not worth the blow to your ego that will come when the pounds inevitably start sneaking back on.

Your body really does know what it's doing, and it will lead you down a healthy path—but you have to stop and listen to what it's telling you. Through years of extreme eating (that's what crash dieting really is!) we've spent so much time being told that we can't trust our instincts. But that's wrong. So instead of trying to make massive changes to your life and cutting out entire food groups, think about what foods give you energy. Pay attention to which foods bring you joy and which foods leave you wanting more. After eating a big ol' greasy pizza dinner, how do you feel? And how does that compare to the feeling you get after a meal of chicken, veggies, brown rice, and a piece of chocolate? What about when you hydrate with water instead of a diet soda?

Stop seeing foods as either "good" or "bad" and instead start really nurturing your body with food. While no foods should ever be totally off-limits, once you start to clue in to what foods make your body feel good, the decision of what to eat will become pretty darn easy. And be sure to check out the 10-Minute Fixes at the end of this chapter to help you to start listening to your body more attentively and to begin replacing junk food with simpler and more whole foods.

FROM THE FBGs

What We Wish We Could Go Back and Tell Our Younger, Non-FBG Selves

FROM JENN: It wasn't until before my wedding in 2007 that I "got" what living a healthy lifestyle was really about. In high school, I was active and worked out, sure, but did I do it for health? Eh, I did it more to fit in and be "skinny." It

wasn't about how I felt or the energy I had—it was about looking a certain way. Or, really, *not* looking a certain way, as I definitely focused more on avoiding certain things (being fat) than on adding goodness to my life. By college, I was full-out obsessed with the number on the scale, the calories consumed, and how many hours I spent at the gym. I over-exercised, under-ate, yo-yoed, binged, drank too much, and was not being my own best friend.

That all changed before my wedding, though. I refused to walk down the aisle focused more on what I weighed than on what I was about to do: marry the love of my life. So I found a registered dietitian and I learned how to eat intuitively, listen to my hunger, and honor it (more on that in [Chapter 2](#)). I dropped my obsessions through lots of time and trial and error and unwavering self-love (oh, how I wish this book was around then!), and I got on track. The process and difference inspired me so much that it became the inspiration for the mission of FBG. So what would I tell my younger self? Oh, plenty:

1. Any guy who thinks you'd be great if you just lost 10 pounds is never, ever worth your time. (And probably deserves a kick in the nuts.)
2. Use your time to study, laugh with friends, and be creative—not to add up calories or fat grams.
3. You are beautiful as you are, right this very second.
4. Cultivate friendships with those who bring out the best in your true nature.
5. Enjoy the journey. Everything is going to be A-okay.

You Are More Than the Number on the Scale

Who can relate to this scenario?

You wake up fresh in the morning and with tons of energy. You feel great. You've been working out, eating well, sleeping the right amount, and you are ready to tackle the day—no, you're ready to tackle the world! So you bound, naked as a jaybird (always weigh naked, right?), into the bathroom and hop on the scale. But ... what's that? The number on the scale reads more than it did yesterday and even last week? But ... but ... You've been working so hard. How can it be? And then the destructive thinking starts: *I'll never be skinny. I can't do this. I'm destined to be overweight and unhealthy my whole life. I suck.* Head down, you get dressed in all black and have a terrible day.

Or how about this one: You've been eating healthy and working out regularly for a few days now, but then your boss comes in, drops a major last-minute project on your desk (sending you into a stress-filled panic), and before you know it you're in the break room eating donuts. Then you spend the rest of the day obsessively calculating how many calories you ate and what it'll take to burn them off. Later, you hit the gym and punish yourself with running, your least favorite way to work out but the only way you'll be able

to burn the calories to make up for the donuts.

Now, looking at these two scenarios objectively, can you agree with us that it's crazy for your good mojo to be obliterated by a number that's flashing on some metal object you probably bought for less than \$30? Should your confidence be shattered by a couple of dumb donuts? It's crazy. Instead of tying your self-confidence to things that really matter to your worth, like your character, your inner value hinges on how much you weigh or how many calories you eat. This means that one day you can be totally awesome and the next day totally suck. Not a great way to measure self-worth! Let's face it: there are going to be days when you snack on donuts instead of vegetables; there are going to be days when the scale tells you something you don't want to hear.

Never mind the fact that the number on the scale isn't even the best indicator of your health or progress. In fact, your weight can greatly swing—up to five pounds in just a day or two—based on simple things like hydration, sodium intake, or even if you've pooped lately. (TMI? No such thing in our—quite literally—book.) So if you're using the scale more than once a week to gauge your progress, you are not getting the most accurate picture of what's happening in your body.

You've probably heard about the body mass index (BMI), too. It's calculated based on your weight and height, but this number is too simplistic and—like the scale—doesn't take into consideration how much muscle versus fat you have on your body. In fact, based on the national guidelines of what a normal BMI is, many professional athletes are deemed overweight while many lower-weight and unfit people are called healthy.

And don't even get us started on those “ideal weight” charts that give a standard number for what men or women of a certain height should weigh. Really? With the diversity of bodies out there, we should all be a specific weight to be healthy? Sure, extra weight has its risks, but study after study has shown that you can have a few extra pounds and still be fit and healthy. This is why we focus on measuring progress by other means.

ENERGIZE!

Pump up the Jams

Wish there were something to motivate you to exercise, to feel better while you're working out, and to keep your energy level up longer? There is, and it's no wonder drug. It's music! A 2008 study showed that people who listen to upbeat, high-energy tunes when they work out (Queen, Madonna ... we bet your mind jumped straight to your favorite guilty-pleasure songs) can increase their endurance by 15 percent and generally feel more positive about their exercising experience.

The next time you need an energy boost, turn on some of your favorite high-energy tunes. If you're dragging at work around 3 P.M., pump up the jams rather than hitting the vending machine. And before your next workout session, put together a killer playlist. Try to pick songs that have a beat that can also act as a pace-keeper. You'll be amazed at how much the right song can keep you going—and keep you getting stronger!

So stop beating yourself up because of the number on the scale or obsessing about the calories you had at lunch. There is no magic number that will lead to eternal happiness, total fulfillment, and worry-free bathing-suit shopping. When you're living a truly healthy FBG lifestyle, you'll naturally settle into the right size for your body. You will look good, you will feel good, and you will be able to face any dressing room without fear. Promise.

Get a Cheering Section

You've likely heard the phrase "It takes a village" when it comes to raising kids. The same can be said for living a healthy lifestyle. Studies have shown that obesity can be "socially contagious," meaning that the habits and lifestyle choices of your friends can have a far-reaching effect on you. But the good news is that it also works for weight loss. Networks of supportive family and friends can play a role in your weight loss—and that's the reason commercial diets like Weight Watchers have meetings and support groups. Having a cheering section can make a lot of difference! Plus, it can make it tons more fun.

If you're at a loss as to where your cheering section may be, take a look around you. Maybe it's your partner, who is there for you through thick and thin (oh, we love our puns). Maybe it's your best friend, who is supportive no matter what. Maybe it's another family member whom you know you can go on a Fit Bottomed journey with or a co-worker who wants to avoid the unhealthy office munchies, too. Look at the people in your life to find your cheering squad.

If you've taken inventory of all of the people in your life and still can't find that special support person, go online! That decades-old stigma of online relationships and friendships is gone, and there are now wonderful communities of supportive people just a few clicks away. Sites like SparkPeople.com and PEERtrainer.com are great for finding like-minded people. And we've also got daily doses of encouragement on FitBottomedGirls.com, so stop in frequently for encouragement and a sense of community. We'll also gladly take your emails with the success stories we know you'll have! No matter who is in your cheering section, check in often so that you can both give and get encouragement, and you can share your successes and stumbles.

FIT BOTTOMED MANTRA

"The past does not define you, the present does."

—JILLIAN MICHAELS

It's a Way of Life

You'll hear us say over and over that this book is about establishing a new kind of

lifestyle, not going on a diet. We will hit you over the head with this point because we want you to really embrace this new mentality. Diets have start and stop points. But this is the best part of living the FBG lifestyle: *there is no destination and no end point*. This means that you can't fall off the wagon, even when you slip up! All of those typical diet no-nos? We're not going to tell you that you can't have them. Let there be chocolate. Let there be wine! We're going to help you find a way to enjoy what some diets might label as off-limits and also to enjoy the things that usually feel like burdens when you are dieting. (You might think we're crazy now, but by the time you reach the end of this book you are going to look forward to the times of day when you get to do some exercise!)

We think you'll find that once those foods aren't forbidden, they'll lose some of their appeal, and you'll enjoy them on occasion and in moderation, without ruining your progress. And guess what? When you're eating tons of foods that give you energy and make you feel awesome, you'll discover that some of your regular eats don't make you feel all that great anymore and you'll naturally stop craving them.

And did we mention that you can start living like an FBG only 10 minutes at a time? Read on, our little FBG in training, to put this principle in action. Ready ... set ... go!

10-Minute Fixes



So, we say to ditch the diet and weight drama, and we hope that this sounds like a good idea by now. But how do you actually do it, you ask? *For the love of all that is holy, HOW?!!!* First, have your inner drama queen stop using all caps and multiple exclamation points. Then, check out our 10-Minute Fixes. These quick fixes are designed to help you learn how to track your progress in ways other than stepping on the scale and to drop the diet mentality for good. They may seem simple, but once you start incorporating them into your lifestyle, they add up to a big difference in your Fit Bottom.

- ① **BREAK UP WITH THE SCALE.** If you find yourself hopping on the scale faithfully every morning—or worse, multiple times a day—it’s time to break up with that scale. (We recommend weekly weigh-ins at most!) Take a minute to weigh yourself, then put the scale under the sink, throw it in your closet, or store it under the bed. Now, write yourself a note you can tape to the mirror that will tell you to turn away the next time you’re tempted to dig your scale back out and weigh in. In the note, give yourself a short pep talk, and throw in a compliment or two, along with the reason you decided to kick the scale to the curb.

“Out of sight, out of mind” isn’t working? If you need a momentary distraction to break the cycle, reach out to your support system to get your mind back on the positive. Pop onto FitBottomedGirls.com—we hear they’re always good for a healthy distraction over there. Once you break the scale cycle and move on to paying attention to other indicators of your well-being, you’ll realize you’re better off with just small doses of the scale.

- ② **MEASURE UP!** You know how people say muscle weighs more than fat? Well, that’s not really true, as a pound of muscle actually does weigh the same as a pound of fat. What *is* true, though, is that a pound of muscle takes up four-fifths less space on the body than a pound of fat. This is enough of a difference to give two people of the same weight yet different body-fat compositions totally different clothing sizes! So as you get healthier and

replace fat with muscle (check out [Chapter 3](#) for specifics and workouts!), you'll measure key points on your body as a fab way to track that *sah-weet* progress. Just because the number on the scale doesn't budge, it doesn't mean you're not making real progress.

So rather than using that silly scale, get out a tape measure. It may seem old school, but it's a fantastic way to kick the obsessive "weighing yourself" habit, as well as to forgo the panic over day-to-day fluctuations. Tape measures are easily found in most sewing kits or at craft stores, and they are a simple yet effective way to really track your body as it adapts to a healthy lifestyle.

How to do it: This is easier to do with a buddy or loved one, but no worries—you can also do it as a party of one. Using a cloth tape measure, measure the fullest part of your chest, hips, thigh, and upper arm. Find your natural waistline—where your waist naturally curves in, not where your low-rise jeans hit you—and measure that, too. Make sure the tape measure isn't too tight or too loose, and keep it as level as possible. It's best to take your measurements *sans* clothes or in just your skivvies or swimsuit; just make sure to keep it consistent, whichever you choose. Most important: *Write it down so you can see your progress over time!* Over the weeks, you'll begin to notice some numbers going down (that's true weight loss), while a few might even go up a bit because you're building muscle (biceps, what what!).

We know it's tempting to bring out the tape measure weekly, but unlike the scale that fluctuates daily, inches take a bit longer to register. So, measure no more than every other week. Ideally, give yourself a month to see numbers that'll wow you. If after a month you haven't seen change, that's okay! Consider it a progress report and revisit the tweaks and changes you've made to your lifestyle to figure out what may not be working for you. Make sure you're following the FBG principles, and then hit up [Chapter 6](#) about getting out of your comfort zone—it can do wonders for your progress.

③ **SAY GOODBYE TO THE SKINNY JEANS.** Do you have a pair of skinny jeans that is taunting you? And we don't mean the skinny-leg jeans; we mean the pair that really hasn't fit you for two years but that you consider your gold standard for slim—the ones you try on to see if you've still got the ability to fit into them. Like measuring inches, fitting into a certain pair of pants can be a good indicator of progress. But—and this is a big *but*—if you find yourself stepping into them too often just to get frustrated that you can't zip them up, step away from them. Pack them away. Donate them. Put them in the back of your closet. They are driving you crazy, and FBGs do not let pants determine their success or failure!

Just as you're more than the number on the scale, you're also more than the size on the label of your skinny jeans. And your obsession with the pants? It may not even be about the pants themselves. Those pants likely take you