



Health journey update: one year later and feeling transformed

On May 8th, 2023 I shared that, after years of deprioritizing my health, I was finally on a journey to reclaim it. I posted an update on July 19, 2023, but have been pretty quiet about the topic since then, so I thought I'd share my progress, a few insights, and struggles as this journey becomes a way of life. (See previous posts in comments below)

Let's start with the headline

As of July 28, 2024: I'm down 82 lbs, I feel better than I've felt in decades, and I continue to see the benefits show up in just about every aspect of my life. I have 18 lbs to my target maintenance weight and for the first time in my life, this has simply become "the way" rather than a temporary change. All vitals and medical diagnostics are sustaining at "optimal" levels and I've seen noticeable increases in energy, sleep quality/duration, mental clarity, and all-around emotional well-being. It makes so much sense, and seems shockingly obvious, but I've learned that body (physical), mind (mental), and heart (emotional) are inextricably linked. We cannot – or at least I could not – compartmentalize health to just one thing and make any change stick.

Five highlights I am still doing

1. Eating the right things

Fresh, clean, and healthier foods... I'm still gluten free-ISH. I'd call myself gluten-reduced and make intentional choices to avoid it but I'm still a sucker for occasional fresh bread, dim sum, and anything resembling a pastry (and that's OK!).

2. Eating at the right times

I still snack, but cravings have subsided significantly. And when I do, I make better choices, which are always stocked and within reach. I still go out to eat and I still make the occasional late-night reservation, but on the whole, I'm consuming my calories during prime metabolizing hours.

3. Eating the right amounts

Binging and plate-cleaning is a thing of the past. I listen by my gut and stop when I'm full. This was one of the hardest things as I had to fight my competitive, type-A tendency to accomplish an objective of finishing my meal. The problem was: the objective was wrong!

4. Staying active

Exercise has been a big unlock and I've found it doesn't take much to feel a difference (even if it's just running around with the kids). I'm still working on making the gym more routine but I'm focusing on staying active rather than logging gym time for now.

5. No alcohol

It has been over 1.5 years and the longer I'm off alcohol, the more I realize just how toxic it was for my body, organs, and lifestyle. It was poisoning every part of my life. I didn't know if I'd miss it or if it would be socially awkward (especially in business settings), but neither of those have been true. Besides, have you

tried the NA and mocktail options these days??? You won't be disappointed.

...and of course sleeping more, drinking more water, and tracking/trending results backed by data.

Five new revelations

1. Will power may not be enough

I deeply admire people who can mentally will their way towards a goal, but in the case of permanent weight loss, I could not, and I suspect I am not the only one out there. Mental toughness, grit, and determination are heroic virtues but biology is a deeply entrenched enemy. Genetics, biological predispositions, and the cycles of learned bad patterns of behaviors are incredibly hard to break. If I wanted this change to be permanent, I needed to call in reinforcements. I went deep down the scientific research hole and enlisted a rock star medical board of directors to help. I've tried a few different things but the GLP-1 medications have been game changers in helping to eliminate the excessive "hungry chatter" that commands us to overeat. THE BIGGEST recent revelation for me: it's not our fault and there are now things we and our doctors can do to help stop the chatter. I am happy to share my experiences if you're curious or have been thinking about it.

2. Controlling cortisol

A year ago I am not sure I could have told you what cortisol actually was. I probably thought it was some kind of prescribed anti-inflammatory or anti-itch cream. Nope! Stress, anxiety, and lack of sleep (and so much more) can trigger cortisol hormone release which leads to weight gain, high blood pressure, heart disease, among other things! If you can take steps to reduce stress (exercise, yoga, meditation, or just taking time for yourself), you will curb the release of cortisol which can reduce the urge to overeat and greatly lessen those cravings.

3. Mental and emotional health

While items 1 and 2 above focus mostly on biological aspects, addressing mental/emotional root causes plays an equally important role in getting healthy. Many of us overeat, or eat the wrong things, but do we ever stop to question why? What triggers us? What's our x-factor? Where did all this come from (or coming from)? Investing time into improving mental and emotional well-being is one of the highest ROI activities you can do.

4. Align your operating model

Many of us tend to operate on "default mode," letting our schedules and external demands influence where we spend our time. But being intentional about where you spend your time on a daily basis is vital. Building a healthy lifestyle doesn't just happen; you have to create the conditions for success for you to thrive. Block time for work, exercise, family time, sleep, travel, etc. The difference is to be intentional and deliberate about it rather than letting the demands dictate your schedule.

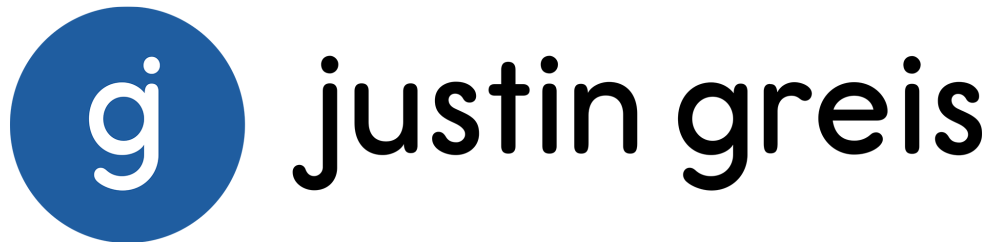
5. Find your people

Put your crew together and find like-minded people with whom you can talk to about this stuff. Share your experiences, get and give support, celebrate the victories and milestones, and share the challenging moments. It's hard (maybe impossible) to do this alone! Even if it's just a text or the occasional call (*GASP* I know, CALLS), your tribe can help you through it!

That's all for now, but I'll be back in a few months with another update on how things are going. A HUGE thank you to many of you who have reached out with your own inspiring stories, questions, and personal journeys to reclaim and prioritize your health – you know who you are! It means the world to me and I am always excited to hear from you!

Wishing you a wonderful week ahead!

This article was originally posted on [LinkedIn](#).



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(nice to meet you)

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