

Ouch Magazine

pop culture fashion lifestyle magazine and blog

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How to Mentally Prepare Yourself for Holiday Dining-Guilt Free

The health/fitness and beauty industries are two fields that are centered on striving to achieve the epitome of health & beauty both inside and out. This concept is reinforced through media, advertising, fitness trainers, doctors, and yes even by our own bathroom mirror each and every morning, when we wake up and take a peak!

During the holiday season, it can be quite stressful to maintain the “perfect” diet and exercise regime, when faced with a series of fat and sugar-laden indulgences that are part of the holiday merriment. Thankfully, there is no need to go into a deep black hole of depression, after enjoying your family’s holiday feast, AND you do not need to remove yourself entirely from the festivities to avoid the tempting delicacies either! I have a few secret weapons to help you navigate your holiday meals successfully, and survive the holidays fit as a fiddle!

1) Learn how to accept your imperfections, and accept them as the markers that make you unique from anyone else. Train your mind not to aim for perfection, but rather to aim for being perfectly human.

2) Pick your battles! When sitting down to a holiday meal, take a look around, and see what looks most appealing to you. Then make a choice. If you’re not very hungry, because you’ve been meal hopping from thanksgiving and then to Christmas, then choose your 3 favorites on the table, and eat small amounts of each! Eat enough to enjoy each food, but not enough to break the caloric bank! Conversely, if you were too busy holiday shopping, and sat down to thanksgiving dinner ravenous, then start with some soup or salad, before diving into the big bird! The water content in both will help satiate you a bit and quiet those hunger pangs, so by the time you pick up a serving

spoon to serve yourself the more indulgent foods, you'll be putting much less on your plate!

3) Mind over matter really does matter! Stress really can take over the body, causing everything from acne to cancer. It is a very potent agent in the human body, and can reap havoc not only on our emotions, but also on our hormones production, metabolism, hunger & satiety cues, and body weight. If you can learn to relax and embrace the family, friends, and joy that accompany the holiday season (rather than drive yourself crazy dieting and detoxing before and after) your body will thank you!

Source: Franci Cohen, Nutritionist and Fitness Trainer



Franci Cohen is a personal trainer, certified nutritionist, exercise physiologist and creator of SPIDERBANDS®, a total-body cardio resistance workout that leverages gravity and your bodyweight with other intense exercise modules such as rebounding, kickboxing and indoor cycling. With over 18 years of experience, Franci has been a mainstay in the fitness and nutrition industries. Franci believes in a tough love approach to fitness and health. “We all have our fitness wake-up call at some point in our lives and it can be a powerful catalyst for change,” says Franci.

“Unfortunately, many people overcompensate and try to change everything at once, which is a disaster. Making lasting change involves going through stages that aren’t necessarily linear. People fluctuate and transition between the stages. Knowing how to move through them can get you where you want to be.”

Franci devotes much of her time to Fuel Fitness, a specialty fitness center in Brooklyn, NY and continues to teach group fitness classes, train clients and broaden her perspective in all areas of fitness, nutrition and wellness. She designs unique fitness modules and group exercise programs for her clients utilizing the most effective and popular products, tools and exercise equipment available. “Exercise is one of the most important things you can do for your health, but sometimes it’s hard to just get motivated. My goal is to keep it fun and interesting by creating out-of-the-box programs that wow my clients with both the innovative nature of the classes, as well as with the rapid results they see in their bodies! My classes are the ultimate playground where fitness meets fun, and nothing is off limits!”