



The Power of Numbers

Getting Healthy – Part 2 of 6

Dr. David Katz is a friend and at one point he was Chief Medical Officer of a company I co-founded. He has a new book out called "Disease-Proof: The Remarkable Truth About What Makes Us Well - The skills you need to slash your risk of heart disease, cancer, diabetes, and more—by 80 percent." Dr. Katz also writes regularly for Huffington Post. Here's an excerpt from one of his recent articles:

"Okay, so our federal government is shut down, ostensibly over health care reform. That makes it pretty clear that health care is important, and health care reform controversial. But here's the thing: The CDC is projecting that should current trends persist, by about the middle of this century, one in three Americans will be diabetic. One in three! That's over 100 million people. There are only about 27 million diabetics in the U.S. today, and already medical coverage is a contentious enough issue to shut down our federal government. But, let's be blunt. The whole argument over so-called "health care" reform is moot if one in three of us is going to be diabetic. There is simply no way to pay that bill. If we think coverage is a challenge now, just wait and see what life is like then."

Dr. Katz makes a compelling case that 80% of non-communicable chronic disease can be eliminated without the use of prescription medication, surgery, or intervention done TO us rather than BY us. In other words, each of us has the power today to save ourselves, our children, and our families IF we know what constitutes a healthy lifestyle and healthy behaviors and therefore

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Written by Jamie Wolf

Tuesday, 22 October 2013 12:03

know what our goals should be. Knowing and attaining are two different things, of course. Read Disease Proof to learn "skill power" so you don't have to leave everything to willpower!

With regard to determining goals, consider, just for a moment, that you are an entrepreneur. You have decided to open a business, and that business is YOU. You are the sole asset, your productivity determines the profit or loss in the business, you have invested all your life savings in the business of you, and without you the business of YOU has to shut its doors. Hmmm. To my mind that makes it imperative that not only had you better make your health (physical and mental) a number one priority, but you had better understand the metrics involved. Just as it's imperative that you know your numbers from a business perspective, it's imperative that you know your numbers from a health perspective.

Clearly, for any health condition and information you should see or ask your doctor. However, basic information is widely available. If it's been awhile since you refreshed your memory, here are the guidelines (from the Mayo Clinic) you must pay attention to for yourself and your family:

Blood Pressure: If you are completely healthy, meaning you have no known medical conditions, your blood pressure should be 120/80 or less (children and teenagers may have lower ranges). If your blood pressure is as high as 159/99 you should actively make changes in your lifestyle (such as quitting smoking, increasing exercise, reducing weight) to lower it. If you also have heart disease, diabetes, or other medical conditions in addition to elevated blood pressure, you need to be even more aggressive in lowering your blood pressure.

Cholesterol: There is some controversy that perhaps the medical community (and pharmaceutical companies) have paid too much attention to cholesterol over the last few decades with a new suggestion that C-Reactive Protein, as a measure of inflammation, is more relevant to overall health. Nonetheless, cholesterol is a commonly measured indicator so here are the numbers: Total cholesterol for an otherwise healthy person should be under 200 mg/dL (US units.) Your (bad) LDL (low density lipoprotein) should be below 70 mg/dL, and your (good) HDL (high density lipoprotein) should be above 60 md/dL. The ratio of total to "good" cholesterol is given more significance than total cholesterol, with the ideal ratio target of 2.5:1 or less. (For example, your total cholesterol = 175 and your HDL is 70. $175/70 = 2.5$ so your ratio is 2.5:1) Your triglycerides should be below 100 mg/dL. Different governing bodies and schools of thoughts propose slightly different numbers as acceptable dependent on other risk factors, but if you meet the numbers reported here, consider yourself in great shape! And great shape is the target, yes?

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CRP: Again, the use of C-Reactive Protein, an indicator of inflammation, as a predictor of risk is controversial. Nonetheless, here are the numbers. If you have a CRP lower than 1 mg/L you are at very low risk; over 3 mg/L you are considered at high risk for heart disease . . . if you are in the camp that considers this a true measurement of risk.

Blood sugar: If you do not have diabetes, a normal blood glucose range is 70-100 mg/dL. If you have been diagnosed with either type 1 or type 2 diabetes (understand the difference), here are target levels – fasting (for 8 hrs) range is 90-130 mg/dL; 1-2 hours post-prandial (a fancy way of saying 'after a meal') should be less than 180 mg/dL; just before meals the target range is 70-130 mg/dL.

A1C: If you DO have diabetes (either type) you must also know your A1C. From the Mayo Clinic, "The A1C test is a common blood test used to diagnose type 1 and type 2 diabetes and then to gauge how well you're managing your diabetes. The A1C test goes by many other names, including glycated hemoglobin, glycosylated hemoglobin, hemoglobin A1C and HbA1c. The A1C test measures what percentage of your hemoglobin — a protein in red blood cells that carries oxygen — is coated with sugar (glycated). The higher your A1C level, the poorer your blood sugar control and the higher your risk of diabetes complications." Ideally this is a test you should have 4 times per year, or every 3 months. An A1C for a person without diabetes ranges from 4.5-6%. Based on some very large and long studies, the recommended target for a person with diabetes is to have an A1C no higher than 7%. This corresponds to an average blood sugar level of 154 mg/dL.

Weight/BMI/Bodyfat: It's undeniable that the majority of us, regardless of age, weigh significantly more than our corresponding counterparts did 50-75 years ago. It's undeniable that our weight, our body mass index, and our percent body fat directly influence our health and likelihood of developing a chronic disease. Recommended body fat composition for a woman aged 20-60 ranges from 20-35%. For a man aged 20-60, it is 8-22%. I don't think the belt sizes sold at West Marine reflect that sort of body fat! Which means there is a lot of room for improvement!

Remember, health is not only relevant to you individually and as a business owner, it is big business worldwide. Dr. Margaret Chan, Director-General of WHO (the World Health Organization) - the world's largest health policy-making body – addressed over 3000 participants from around the world in its 66th session this past May, "In these troubled times, public health looks more and more like a refuge, a safe harbor of hope that allows, and inspires, all countries to work together for the good of humanity." There is power in numbers; here's to knowing yours and setting goals for success in business and life! Here's to the business of

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YOU!

Meanwhile, on Saturday October 26, plan to attend the inaugural "A Novel Wine Tasting and Literary Festival" featuring Lowcountry authors. Held at September Oaks Vineyard in Ridgeland from 11-6, wine tasting, books signings and sales will abound; yours truly and her book will be there, too.

Beaufort resident Jamie Wolf is the author of "Start Over! Start Now! Ten Keys to Success in Business and Life" available on Amazon with 10 accompanying guidebooks. She has started over a number of times and now focuses on helping people who are ready to Start Over with their health

and wealth through getting fit, feeling fabulous, and becoming financially free. She can be reached at jamie.wolf@thestartover.com

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