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FirstPlace4Health.com

**March 2011**



***Dear Ones,***

For the last couple of months, I have written about why we are *better together* because of being involved in a First Place 4 Health class. I called this series the “ABC’s of being Better Together.”

In January, I wrote about **Accountability**. In February, I wrote about **Belonging**. This month I will finish the series by writing about **Commitment**. If you didn’t read the first two articles, you can find them in our e-newsletter archives.

Commitment is something that is hard to pin down and we usually think about it as a singular activity—I make the commitment and then I carry out the commitment. So how does the word “commitment” fit with why we are better together?

Recently, I was in Sacramento, CA, for a Hope 4 You Conference and talked to many First Place 4 Health people. I would like to tell you that I heard some new stories, but that is just not the case. I hear the same kinds of stories everywhere I go and they all center around the word “commitment.”

Jessica Tanihana gave her testimony at the event and she is a living, breathing testimony to the word commitment! Jessica has lost over 80 pounds and is at her weight goal. She has taken up walking, running, biking and swimming and has finished a Triathlon. Jessica leads a FP4H group and is heading up a 5k race in the near future. She has plans to ride from Seattle to Washington, D.C. this summer for the “Big Ride Across America” to raise funds and awareness for the American Lung Association’s critical research, education and advocacy programs. Jessica has made a commitment to wellness for the rest of her life and she is walking out that commitment every day. Even though Jessica has had success in the “physical” part of the program, she needs the group for encouragement in every area. See Jessica’s First Place 4 Health story at [http://www.firstplace4health.com/stories/109/jessica\\_tanihana](http://www.firstplace4health.com/stories/109/jessica_tanihana)

I met another lady who confessed to me that she is not filling out her Tracker, having her quiet time, or exercising and that she is doing her Bible study the night before her meeting. When she told me that she is the leader of her First Place 4 Health group, I asked how the group was doing and she said, “not very well.” We are better together when the leader is doing the program and inspiring her group to follow her example. Everything rises and falls on leadership. When the leader is not committed, the group follows the leader’s lead.

**Matthew 6:33:**

But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.

***Dear Ones***

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Another lady shared with me that her group was a “rogue” group. When I asked her what that meant, she said that her people couldn’t afford the Member Kit so her church bought a Group Starter Kit for the leader to use and she teaches the group. She shared that they started out with 20 people, but it has dwindled down to the same five attending weekly, mainly for the Bible study. She asked what I would suggest she do as the leader? I had two suggestions;

1. Start a new group at a different day and time and do it right. Everyone is required to buy a Member Kit and a Bible study. After the first session, they will only need to buy a Bible study. When this happens, new people will be drawn to a group using the entire FP4H program. People who really want to lose weight need all the materials. We really are *better together* when we commit to purchasing what we need for success.
2. Go back and talk to her present group and share that the reason they are not doing well is that they lack the tools needed to succeed. I suggested that they close out the present group and that the ladies save \$5.00 per week (by not eating out) until they have the money to buy the Member Kit.

When we join a FP4H class and invest in the Member Kit and Bible study, we are making a commitment not only to ourselves, but to the group. We all have everything we need to succeed and as we meet together, we can all read and learn together as a group. We are truly *better together*.

Blessings,

**Carole Lewis**

## Simple Ideas for Leaders

### Motivational Idea ~

After the holidays, I realized that I had allowed some pounds to creep back on and decided I needed some help! Where does a leader go for help? Her class, of course! I decided to wear a suit that was snug (about a size too small) to my first meeting. I announced to the class that I would be keeping all the commitments with them and especially wanted to lose weight. I told them that I would be wearing the "tight" suit each week and wanted them to be able to actually see my progress as the session went along. Each week my class would ask me to take my suit jacket off to reveal what the waistband looked like. This was just the motivation and accountability I needed. I have lost 10 pounds so far and the waistband has gotten loose! I am really tired of wearing the suit, but my class looks forward to seeing how I have progressed each week. It has also motivated them and shown them another way to measure success other than the scale.

*Leader in Houston, Texas*

You might want to try this for your next session. If you do, please let me know how it goes!

**Remember** ~ A leader is one who knows the way, goes the way, and shows the way." *John Maxwell*

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*Please share your leadership tips and creative ideas for your class. We would love to include them in our new Simple Ideas for Leaders column in future newsletters. Send them to [lisa.lewis@firstplace4health.com](mailto:lisa.lewis@firstplace4health.com).*



## Leadership

# Leading Your Class Through the Valley of the Slump



**Vicki Heath**

vicki.heath@firstplace4health.com

I have heard from many of you regarding, “How do we encourage our members around week five?” It seems that a lot of classes hit a low point or a plateau in their weight loss and motivation. We certainly do not want to lose any of our members at this point so we, as leaders, can make a difference in our matriculation with just a few simple ideas.

**Stop and celebrate.** On week five, plan a surprise half-time party. Come with party hats, blowers and fun food. I recommend my “Party Punch Bowl Fruit Toss.” The recipe follows this article. Use your class time for each person to share what they have to celebrate at week five. Give everyone an opportunity to blow their horn about what God has done so far. Everyone has something to celebrate. God is at work, but sometimes we get distracted from the good things He is doing. Postpone going over the assignments and Bible study for that week and just celebrate! I realize you will have to make up this week near the end, but in the long run it will be worth it!

**Review.** After all have shared their celebrations, ask them to reflect and remember their initial motivation for coming. Review with one basic question: “What did we come together to do?” Let each share and in so doing, it will remind them of their purpose for joining FP4H. We, as a class, promised to love and pursue the Lord with all of our hearts, soul, mind and strength. Studying, recording, eating well and exercising are all part of the reason we came in the first place. Remind the member that if we sow sparingly, we will reap sparingly! More study, more good choices, more exercise will be an investment of enormous sowing and will bring about a harvest.

**Renew.** As a class, recommit your love for the Lord and willingness to pursue him with a whole-hearted commitment. Please feel free to use my personal

prayer of renewal I say out loud to the Lord on a weekly basis. It’s based on Galatians 2:20.

Galatians 2:20 says “I am crucified with Christ, and I no longer live but Christ lives in me, and the life I now live *in this body* I live by faith in the Son of God who loved me and gave himself for me.”

*Therefore*

*I will not give up on myself.*

*I will not give in to temptation*

*I will not give out to exhaustion.*

*I will finish the race God has marked out for me.*

*I will not compare myself to others, but allow God to change me into Christ-likeness with ever increasing glory. (II Corinthians 3:18).*

*I will keep my eyes fixed on Jesus, the one who started this good work in me, and trust him to complete it.*

*(Hebrews 12:2 - Philippians 1:6).*

*I will focus on the eternal benefits of a healthy lifestyle and not my pain. I will not exchange the eternal for the temporary. I know that Christ lives in me and He is my source of hope. (Galatians 2:20 - Romans 15:13)*

*I will live for the Lord and love Him with all my heart, soul, mind and strength. (Mark 12:30-31).*

*In Jesus’ name. Amen.*

**Go For It! Begin – right now!** As a leader, you want to encourage them to take steps immediately to do the next right thing. Here are the steps you can take in class before you dismiss. 1) Take a deep breath, 2) tear out the next week’s Tracker and fill it in – starting with the cup of fruit you just ate at the half-time party, 3) end the class time with everyone reciting the week’s memory verse out loud and in full voice, one by one. After all have recited, say the big AMEN!

You are well on your way to a successful second half!

**Vicki Heath**



## Party Punch Bowl Fruit Toss

- 2 cups fresh strawberries – sliced
- 1 large can peach slices in light syrup, drained (or fresh)
- 1 cup fresh blueberries
- 2 Kiwi peeled and sliced
- 1 large can pineapple chunks, drained or 1 cup fresh chopped pineapple
- 1 large banana, sliced
- 1 package sweetener of your choice (optional)

Combine all fresh fruit in punch bowl and sprinkle with sweetener if desired. Mix well. Makes 8 one cup servings. 150 calories per cup. Or 16 ½-cup servings at 80 calories per ½ cup.

# Weigh To Wellness for Women

APRIL 3-8, 2011



4<sup>first place</sup> health  
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**B**ecause physical wellness affects vibrancy in every facet of life, Sandy Cove is offering our very first conference dedicated to restoring health and balance to the amazing bodies given to us by God.

**Hurry! Deadline to register – March 13, 2011**

### Message from Vicki about Sandy Cove ~

Last spring I had the opportunity to visit Sandy Cove Conference Center not far from Baltimore, Maryland. I remember sitting in my beautiful room looking at a most beautiful sunset, and imagining what it would be like to be here with some of you. What a great place! I don't know what your plans are for spring but I encourage you to consider investing in a week of self-care with eternal value. Do something good for yourself. Located on the Chesapeake Bay, Sandy Cove is the location for our FP4H spring wellness week. Coming out of this harsh winter, I can't think of anything better than five days of wonderful worship; sweet fellowship; great food; all kinds of exercise opportunities and some time with Carole Lewis and staff. We are praying and asking the Lord for this to be the best week for YOU.

***Vicki Heath***



## Balanced Living - Physical

### One Step at a Time



**Jeannie Blocher**  
jeannie@bodyandsoul.org

Many of you have heard of “Upward Sports” for kids. It’s the world’s largest Christian sports program for children. The vision to develop character in every player while providing an equal opportunity for improvement, stressing sportsmanship in every situation. If you haven’t checked this out for your kids, go to their website and read about it at [www.upward.org](http://www.upward.org). It’s a great way to start a lifetime of fitness for your children!

In addition, I urge you to think about “upward fitness” for yourself! Have you made an effort to combine physical fitness with spiritual fitness in your personal life? Pray about it and God will give you creative ideas. You may want to start a walking program with a friend where you pray together, or memorize Scripture and check each other, practicing your verses as you walk or jog together. You can add a spiritual element to your workout at the gym if you listen to Christian music or the Bible on your iPod as you go through your exercise routine. In Body & Soul Fitness classes, we work out to motivating Christian music and include spiritual nuggets during the class time frame that facilitate spiritual discussion with both the Christ followers and those who want to know more about Christ.

It is a powerful thing when we can combine faith and fitness. God created us in earthly physical bodies, and yet we are spiritual beings, destined for heaven once we take the step of faith in Jesus. In I Timothy 4:7-8, the Bible says “...train yourself to be godly. For physical training is of some value, but godliness has value for all things, holding promise for both the present life and the life to come.” There is a proper balance expressed here: there is value in physical training—that is, physical fitness—but godliness, (spiritual fitness) has even more value because it has value in this life, as well as the next.

With that in mind, doesn’t it make sense to blend the two together? When we discipline ourselves to become physically fit, it flows over into spiritual fitness and vice versa. Think about it and ask God to show you how to become more physically and spiritually fit! In heaven we will have new bodies, but while we are here let’s get to work to improve the bodies we have!

Wishing you both faith and fitness,

**Jeannie Blocher**

President, Body & Soul Fitness



## Upcoming Events

### **Hope 4 You ~ Pennsylvania**

March 26, 2011

Crossroads Church

Oakdale, PA

Speakers:

*Carole Lewis*, Director, FP4H

*Vicki Heath*, Associate Director, FP4H

### **Weigh to Wellness for Women**

April 3-8, 2011

Sandy Cove Ministries Retreat Center

North East, MD

*Carole Lewis*, Director, FP4H

*Vicki Heath*, Associate Director, FP4H

& More!

### **Texas Area Leader's Meeting & Training**

April 9, 2011

Pleasanton, Texas

Contact: Jeanne Ulrich

Phone: 830.569.5301

Email: [robertl.ulrich@hotmail.com](mailto:robertl.ulrich@hotmail.com)

### **Mississippi Area Leader's Meeting & Training**

June 18, 2011

Pearl, MS

Contact: Joyce Ainsworth

Phone: 601-825-1136

Email: [glenna@netdoor.com](mailto:glenna@netdoor.com)

### **\*Leadership Summit 2011**

July 29-30, 2011

Houston's First Baptist Church

Houston, Texas

Speakers:

*Carole Lewis*, Director, FP4H

*Vicki Heath*, Associate Director, FP4H

and many more!

**\*All are invited to our 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration at Leadership Summit 2011 – leaders, members, friends, supporters.**

### **Hope 4 You ~ Massachusetts**

September 10, 2011

Attleboro, MA

Speakers:

*Carole Lewis*, Director, FP4H

*Vicki Heath*, Associate Director, FP4H

Contact: Monique Johnson

Email: [FP4H\\_FAC@yahoo.com](mailto:FP4H_FAC@yahoo.com)

### **Wellness Retreat**

October 6-13, 2011

Round Top, Texas

Speakers:

*Carole Lewis*, Director, FP4H

*Vicki Heath*, Associate Director, FP4H

and more!

~ ~

**For more information or to register for  
any of these events, visit our website, [www.firstplace4health.com](http://www.firstplace4health.com)**

~ ~



## What's On Your Mind?

**Steve Reynolds**  
sreynolds@capitalbaptist.org



*For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he... Proverbs 23:7a*

For the last several months we've explored the impact each part of the body has on our efforts to maintain good health. Until I began my journey to achieve a healthy lifestyle, I had never given any thought to how each part of the body is involved in the process. During all the years I've faced challenges with my weight, I never considered how my body parts were involved. Have you ever given it much thought? For example, the mind has a huge impact on your health. The process follows this pattern:

- Watch your thoughts for they will become your actions.
- Watch your actions for they will become your habits.
- Watch your habits for they will become your destiny.

The bottom line is if you want to do what it takes to have a healthy body, you must first think in a healthy way.

Philippians 4:8 provides the standard for our thought life and it says, *Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.* We need to filter all our thoughts through this standard.

The Bible says, *Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus* (Phil. 2:5), That's a huge goal, and we will spend the rest of our lives striving to have the mind of Christ by surrendering our thoughts to Him in all things. We protect our mind from evil when we discipline the rest of our body parts. If we don't allow evil to come into our mind through our eyes, ears, mouth and hands, we are protecting our mind. That's half the equation. The other half is learning how to access the mind of Christ. How would He think about certain things?

In order to think like Jesus you must begin by accepting Him as your Savior and Lord. Just how do you do that? Romans 10:9 says, *If you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.* You have to dedicate your heart to God through forming a relationship with him. You have to become a follower of Jesus Christ. The way to do this is to realize you are a sinner who has broken His laws and you need a savior. Confess and believe and you will be saved.

A few years ago there was a popular campaign in the Christian community asking, "What Would Jesus Do? It's still a valid question. One way to know how Jesus would think and act is to stop before acting and ask the question, "What *would* He do?" Of course, to know the answer to the question we need to be reading the Word of God. It has all the answers for life and it will tell us what Jesus would do in any given situation.

Dedicate your mind to God. Allow Christ to renew your mind on a daily basis. Use your mind to research and gather new information on health. Accept Jesus Christ as your Savior and Lord.

### **Steve Reynolds**

*Steve Reynolds is the Senior Pastor of Capital Baptist Church in Annandale, VA. He is also the author of the book Bod4God and the creator of the Losing to Live Weight Loss Competition. Steve has lost over 100 pounds and has led his church to lose over three tons of weight.*



## Devotional

### Keep It Simple

*He has showed you, O man, what is good. And what does the LORD require of you?  
To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.*

M I C A H 6 : 8

God's will for us is quite simple, but we try to make it really hard. If we honored the three commands in this verse, our lives would be richer and fuller than we could ever imagine. God's requirements are so different from man's requirements. Let's look at each one:

- *Act justly:* To do the next right thing—all the time. If I do this, I'll be able to accomplish even the things I dislike doing.
- *Love mercy:* To treat others with the same mercy I want from God. This means I treat kindly the rude person at the grocery store or the mouthy person at the gas station.
- *Walk humbly with your God:* God wants to have a relationship with me. He wants to be my friend. He doesn't want me to be prideful about our friendship but humbly show others how they can have the same friendship with God. I will become "just one hungry beggar telling another where to find the bread."

Do the right thing, treat others with kindness, and humbly share my friendship with God. That sounds like a recipe for a beautiful life, doesn't it?

#### PRAYER

*Dear Lord, You have showed me what is good in Your sight. Help me today to do the next right thing, to treat everyone I meet with mercy and to walk in humility with You.*

**Journal:** Write the three phrases from today's Scripture in your journal, and then jot down some areas in which you might need to improve, asking God to help you fulfill His gentle requirements today.

Carole Lewis  
Houston, Texas

*Taken from Living Well, FP4H Devotional Book. To order, visit our website,  
[www.firstplace4health.com](http://www.firstplace4health.com) or call 800.727.523, x1002.*



## Success Story



**Jessica Tanihana**  
Roseville, CA

Last Monday I spent my morning riding my bike in the Placer County Foothills. If you had told me three years ago I would be climbing 3,000 feet and pedaling 50 miles, I would have never believed you.

My first memory of being fat was at about age 10 or 11. Not fat, I think the word was husky. I wore boy's clothes and anything baggy to hide my developing body. The next five or six years I was a very ungodly and self-centered teenager. I lived for myself and I also gained the first of many pounds.

I would climb and slide for eight long years. In the midst of all of this, I met a woman, at church, who referred me to her daughter for help with my business. She gave me her business card and on the back wrote the words First Place. I had no idea what those words meant then or what they would someday mean to me. I had reached 251 pounds, ten pounds more than my fat roommate from college and had a 41.5% BMI.

Five years later, our church was having their ministry fair and offering opportunities to sign up for small group Bible studies. I approached the ladies table and began to glance down the list of classes and there it was, popping off the page at me, a Bible study called "First Place 4 Health." I immediately recalled the business card with those words on the back and actually found it. I signed up as quickly as I could. I had a glimpse of hope, but at the same time signed up in spite of my husband. I would show him that this too would fail. Failure is what I did best!

I hardly remember the first class. I watched the videos and listened to the food plan. I was sure I could screw this up too. I sat through this lesson on a four-sided program. I understood balance from my skiing days, so that made sense. What didn't make sense was the leader talked about this God that loved and cherished me. She asked me "Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God?" I thought the whole thing was a bit out there but decided it couldn't hurt to attend. I went home that night and wrote a note to God. No, I poured out my heart to him.

### **God had a plan for me and answered my prayer.**

I did lose weight during the twelve-week session. In fact I was the "Biggest Loser." But more importantly was the healing that was occurring inside of me and the relationship that was being built. I had always known God, but never let him into my heart. The First Place 4 Health program was so simple. I put God first in my life. I worshiped him and not food. I felt satisfied and full by spending quiet time with him each day. I memorized his words and used them to stand upon in time of difficulty. I allowed him to know me and my innermost secrets. And he allowed me to know Him—His grace, understanding and love. He opened his arms to me, pulled me onto his lap and embraced every bit of my brokenness. What had been missing for so long from my life was right there in front of me. All I had to do was ask for it.

*Continued on page 10*

It would be easy to end my story at this point. Tell you that I lost 20 pounds during that first session, but the words from my first First Place 4 Health meeting keep coming back to me, “God is equipping me for His plan!” Not my plan but His plan. Now that I had found what was missing, I had to hang onto it. I started the second session of First Place for Health in January 2009, after losing six pounds over the Christmas break.

**This time I asked God what I could do for him rather than asking him to do for me.**

I remember going home after the first meeting and having a familiar conversation with God. This time, however, I was asking him what I could do for Him rather than asking Him to do for me. He wasted no time in his response. He wanted me to start moving. And so I did—starting with walks that turned into runs, and bike rides that turned into races. I was moving more than 150 miles per month! By the end of the second session I was down another 19 pounds. I wondered, “Am I finished? Are you done with me? Have I done everything you have asked?” Summer was quickly approaching and it would have been easy to take a break but God had yet another plan.

Relationship established, body strong and healthy, it was now time to share his good news. I ran into friends and people I hadn't seen in months and the questions of my weight loss were flying and everyone asked the same question. “How did you do it?” They wanted what I had. Now I had a choice to make. How would I respond? I could have easily said I ate less and moved more, which is true, but my response, which often shakes them is, “I put God 1<sup>st</sup> in my life and surrendered my fork and my eating to Him” God loves me and has healed me and he wants to do the same for you. I will admit from some I got interesting looks, but it was the truth and I was overjoyed to be sharing with complete strangers that it was God's love for me that enabled me to overcome the bondage of my weight. I also shared his love for each of them and his desire to know them.

By the end of the summer, I had completed a number of mountain bike races, 5K and 10K runs, found a workout group called Body & Soul and completed my 1<sup>st</sup> triathlon. My total weight loss was around 70 pounds and as the fall session approached and the one year anniversary of my journey grew closer, I could feel God calling me into a position of leadership. I accepted the call, but on my terms. I would lead in January. Let me tell you something; don't negotiate with God--He always wins.

Two days prior to that fall session starting, I got an e-mail from our leader stating that we were expecting over 30 women. I did what I now knew best and went to God for direction and clarity. And boy was he clear. I would lead the fitness and nutrition aspect of the program, but I would begin in two days not in four months. Without hesitation, I agreed but asked him to work through me. I have the pleasure of being a conduit for God. He worked through me by planning the lessons, choosing the small groups, planning the recipes that were shared and gave me the words that he knows the ladies are seeking to hear. I am so humbled, amazed, blessed and in awe of his compassion for me and the ladies in this program.

**Never in my wildest dreams did I think I would be in this position.**

A few weeks after starting the fall Session, I participated in my second triathlon and won my age group. The plaque sat in my lap on the way home from the race and as I looked down on it, I realized it read “First Place”. I knew immediately that I was where I was at that point, 80 pounds lighter, lean and fit, not because of what had had been missing from my life but because of Who had been missing, and the position that I have placed Him.



*Continued on page 11*

Since that October day in 2009, I have made a daily conscience effort to put God 1<sup>st</sup>. To be his light that shines onto people that needs to know his love. God and I have completed 5 half marathons, one full international marathon, numerous trail runs, too many cycling events to count and an Olympic distance triathlon. We just finished the cyclocross season and every time I step up on the podium I remember how I got there. This coming summer, God and I will ride my bike across America in Support of the American Lung Association. I believe that once again he has bigger plans than a 4- day bike ride!

I am constant amazement of how God has worked not only in my life, but in the lives of my entire family. Our special needs son, Joseph, is learning to talk and is doing better and better every day in school. My daughter, Molly, has lost 15 pounds, is actively reaching out to her peers to share God's love, and is competing in and winning cycling events. My oldest son, Logan, accepted Christ as his Savior this past Christmas. And, my husband, Martin, who loves me unconditionally and supports everything I do, including riding my bike across the country, joined First Place 4 Health, lost 50 pounds and is now a Bod4God leader

Getting fit for God, allowing him to have complete control and accepting his unconditional love is not always easy, even now. We are reminded by God's words in 1 Corinthians 6:19 & 20, "You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore, honor God with your bodies." There have been and will continue to be challenges along the way, but with God's Love, my hope and the support of my family I know that "nothing is missing" from my life!

Thank you!

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## ~ Notes from First Place 4 Health ~

### **Register Your Group!**

Hey leaders! Don't forget to register your group on our website so that others can find you. It's a great outreach tool that will help introduce your church to the community and help your neighbors find their way to healthy living. (Special Note – If you have already registered online, don't forget to update your listing for each new session. Thanks for helping us keep our web listings relevant and updated!)

### **A Thank you from FP4H!**

Did you know that when you purchase directly from First Place 4 Health, it benefits our ministry. Thank you!

### **Prayer Requests**

We need help! Would you pray with us about finding an experienced grant writer to help us? Our prayer is that we would be able to use these grants to:

- Provide materials to groups in lower economic areas.
  - Fund training for FP4H leaders.
  - Train and equip our staff in the areas of wellness, nutrition and exercise.
  - Scholarship Pastor's and wives to attend wellness weeks, etc.
- 
-



## Recipes

### Send us your favorite *UNHEALTHY* recipes!

Please send us your favorite recipes that you want made healthier. Lisa Cramer, our resident cooking queen, will look for ways to make it healthier, but still taste delicious! We'll post it in future issues of the newsletter in our new recipe makeover segment, so send us your recipes!

### Breakfast Time

#### *Fruit & Pecan Bars* Serves 8

- 1 large egg
- 1 large egg white
- 1 cup light brown sugar
- 1 tablespoon canola oil
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1 1/2 cups toasted oats
- 2/3 cup chopped dried cranberries or raisins
- 1/4 cup chopped pecans
- 1 tablespoon flour

Preheat oven to 325°F. Line a 9-by-11-inch pan with foil. Coat with cooking spray. Whisk egg, egg white, sugar, oil, cinnamon, salt and vanilla in a large bowl. Stir in oats, cranberries (or raisins), pecans and flour. Spread in prepared pan. Bake until golden brown, 30 to 35 minutes. Cool and cut into bars.

**Nutritional Information:** 119 Calories; 3 g Fat; 0 g Sat; 1 g Mono; 13 mg Cholesterol; 22 g Carbohydrates; 2 g Protein; 1 g Fiber; 44 mg Sodium; 17 mg Potassium

**Tracker:** 1 1/2-oz. equivalent grain

Quick & easy breakfast on the go!

### Lunch Time

#### *Ravioli & Vegetable Soup* Serves 4

- 1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil
- 2 cups frozen bell pepper and onion mix, thawed and diced (or fresh!)
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1/4 teaspoon crushed red pepper (optional)
- 1 28-ounce can crushed tomatoes
- 1 15-ounce can vegetable broth
- 1 1/2 cups hot water
- 1 teaspoon dried basil
- 1 6- to 9-ounce package fresh or frozen cheese (or meat) ravioli
- 2 cups diced zucchini (about 2 medium)
- Pepper to taste

Heat oil in a large saucepan or Dutch oven over medium heat. Add pepper-onion mix, garlic and crushed red pepper (if using) and cook, stirring, for 1 minute. Add tomatoes, broth, water and basil (or marjoram); bring to a rolling boil over high heat. Add ravioli and cook for 3 minutes less than the package directions. Add zucchini; return to a boil. Cook until the zucchini is crisp-tender, about 3 minutes. Season with pepper.

**Nutritional Information:** 264 Calories; 9 g Fat; 3 g Sat; 3 g Mono; 28 mg Cholesterol; 38 g Carbohydrates; 11 g Protein; 8 g Fiber; 763 mg Sodium; 762 mg Potassium

**Tracker:** 1 oz.-equivalent grain, 1 cup vegetable, 1 fat

**Tip:** This is a very quick recipe that you can make ahead. Cover and refrigerate for up to 3 days. Thin with broth before reheating.

## Dinner Time

### *Chicken Piccata with Pasta & Mushrooms*

Serves 4

6 ounces whole-wheat angel hair pasta  
1/3 cup all-purpose flour, divided  
2 ½ cups reduced-sodium chicken broth  
1/2 teaspoon salt, divided  
1/4 teaspoon freshly ground pepper  
4 boneless, skinless, chicken breasts (¾-1 pound total), trimmed  
3 teaspoons extra-virgin olive oil, divided  
1 10-ounce package mushrooms, sliced  
3 large cloves garlic, minced  
2 tablespoons lemon juice  
1/4 cup chopped fresh parsley  
2 tablespoons capers, rinsed  
2 teaspoons butter

Bring a large pot of water to a boil. Add pasta and cook until just tender, 4 to 6 minutes or according to package directions. Drain and rinse. Meanwhile, whisk 5 teaspoons flour and broth in a small bowl until smooth. Place the remaining flour in a shallow dish. Season chicken with 1/4 teaspoon salt and pepper and dredge both sides in the flour. Heat 2 teaspoons oil in a large nonstick skillet over medium heat. Add the chicken and cook until browned and no longer pink in the middle, 2 to 3 minutes per side. Transfer to a plate; cover and keep warm. Heat the remaining 1 teaspoon oil in the pan over medium-high heat. Add mushrooms and cook, stirring, until they release their juices and begin to brown, about 5 minutes. Transfer to a plate. Add garlic and wine to the pan and cook until reduced by half, 1 to 2 minutes. Stir in the reserved broth-flour mixture, lemon juice and the remaining 1/4 teaspoon salt. Bring to a simmer and cook, stirring, until the sauce is thickened, about 5 minutes. Stir in parsley, capers, butter and the reserved mushrooms. Measure out 1/2 cup of the mushroom sauce. Toss the pasta in the pan with the remaining sauce. Serve the pasta topped with the chicken and the reserved sauce.

**Nutritional Information:** 397 Calories; 9 g Fat; 3 g Sat; 3 g Mono; 54 mg Cholesterol; 45 g Carbohydrates; 28 g Protein; 5 g Fiber; 544 mg Sodium; 609 mg Potassium

**Tracker:** 2 oz-equivalent grain, ½ cup vegetable, 3 ½ oz. meat.

## Dessert & Snack Time

### *Healthier Kettle Corn*

Serves 3

½ tsp. paprika  
½ tsp salt  
¼ tsp ground coriander  
¼ tsp. white pepper  
1/8 tsp cayenne pepper  
5 tbsp. sugar  
1 tbsp. butter

Mix paprika, salt, ground coriander, white pepper and cayenne pepper in a bowl. Make a bag of low-fat microwave popcorn. While it pops, cook the sugar in a saucepan over medium heat until it melts and turns light brown. Remove the mixture from the heat and stir in the butter. Pour the caramel over the popcorn in a bowl, sprinkle with the spice mix and toss. Spread out on a baking sheet to cool.

**Nutritional Information:** 207 Calories; 7.7g Fat; 10mg Cholesterol; 16.5g Carbohydrates; 2.6g Protein; 375mg Sodium.