

## *Where's the Menu?*

### *The Use of Daily Food Menus in Thin Over 40*

*By Dr. Gregg Jantz*

Since *Thin Over 40* came out, it's been pretty busy around my office in Seattle! I've been gratified to see the positive response to the book and how people from all over the country have made a decision to improve their health. I've gotten many calls from people under 40, wanting to know if this book will also be beneficial to them. In every case, I say **Yes!**

One of the recurring questions coming into my office at The Center is "where are the menus?" Most "diets" contain detailed daily menus, with how much of what food to eat each day. *Thin Over 40* is a little different in this regard. Frankly, I've got a problem with the carefully crafted daily menus in diet plans. Here are a few reasons why:

- ***They focus on rules not reasoning.*** They tell people *what* to eat, not *how* to eat.
- ***They promote perfectionism.*** People tend to view their compliance with "the diet" on how well they adhere to each and every ingredient.
- ***They don't work for everyone.*** They include types of meals and foods that individuals won't eat or like.
- ***They promote dependence, not independence.*** Once the menus are used up, people don't know what to eat.
- ***They put the focus on food and not on the person.*** It is much easier to focus on an external diet plan than on what is happening internally as you make decisions about meals and menus for yourself.

*Thin Over 40* gives you the tools you need to create your own menus, so you'll be able to continue week after week, month after month, year after year, long after you've forgotten where you put that orange and blue book! Here is what you'll learn over the 12 weeks:

- ***You'll focus on why you eat what you eat.*** You'll start out reviewing what you *really* eat. Not what you think you eat, or wish you eat or want just to eat – but what you actually do. What you actually eat is what puts on the excess weight year after year, diet after diet.
- ***You'll find the discipline within yourself.*** Most diets are severe and people believe that the discipline lies in the diet. If they can just put up with the diet, no matter how restrictive, for a month or two, then they'll lose the weight and everything will be all right. But the discipline doesn't lie in the diet; it must be developed from within. That takes time, patience and forgiveness. It's about progress not perfection.
- ***You'll learn about what types of foods are healthy and which ones are just right for you.*** Part of the joy of *Thin Over 40* is using your discernment to go out and explore where you shop for food, what's available, what you like and how you can increase the foods you eat and enjoy. In this way, it's you telling you what to eat

based upon what you like, not a third party who loves beets while you can't stand them!

- ***You'll be gaining skills for life.*** With the insight and skills you gain, you'll be able to continue making positive, healthy choices for yourself – for life. Healthy eating is not a momentary aberration to allow you to look better in your summer shorts; there's so much more involved than vanity! It's about life, health, longevity, vitality, and preparing yourself for life after 40 and beyond.
- ***You'll get to know yourself.*** *Thin Over 40* helps you to focus on the real power to lose weight – you. It's not about a diet; it's about you. You'll learn not only the healthy choices you need to make but you'll also learn why you've had trouble making them. Armed with this knowledge, you can learn to finally hurdle those long-standing weight barriers.

*Thin Over 40* is not a diet. It's not about losing twenty pounds in 4 weeks. It's about creating an environment where you can begin to make choices that lead to life-long health and vitality – and, yes, weight loss, along the way. The twelve week plan is designed not so you'll lose X amount of weight but rather to give you time to gain insight and learn skills to integrate a healthier lifestyle into your daily living.

### Get-Thin-Quick and Other Myths

For those of you who still want to scream, "Just give me my daily menus and I'll be happy!" I ask that you stick with me just a little while longer. It may seem that having a pre-packed "diet menu plan" is easier, and it may be in the long-run – if the primary goal is to lose weight fast (for that family or high school reunion coming up or your daughter's wedding or that social event). Anyone can lose weight if you only eat dry toast for breakfast, broccoli florets at lunch and boneless, skinless chicken for dinner day in and day out. We've all tried that and it doesn't work over the long haul. We've tried diet shakes and 7 grapefruit a day. We've even tried going without bread for months on end (it really was days – it just seemed like months!). And some of these things may even have been effective for you – for that wedding or reunion or event.

But, do you remember the feeling of "relief" when you were able to go back to eating "normally?" And do you remember what that "normally" meant to your bathroom scale? The overwhelming majority of people who lose weight this way gain it back and more. Research is coming out in droves about how harmful this kind of yo-yo dieting can be on your health. In fact, I've heard of some studies in the news that say it's even worse for you than not losing that weight at all. But that isn't really the answer either, is it?

No, the answer is the type of long-term behavior change accomplished through *Thin Over 40*. Gradually introducing and solidifying healthy behavior changes over time leads to life-long weight loss and maintenance. There is no magic diet. There is no savior food. But there is awareness and motivated self-change. It's not about changing your *outside*, it's about changing your *inside*!

There's a proverb that says give a man a fish and feed him for a day; teach a man to fish and feed him for a lifetime. *Thin Over 40* doesn't give you a fish – or a menu. Rather, it teaches you how to create your own menu so you can feed yourself healthy for a lifetime.