

praise for your whole life

"I highly recommend the plan to women who are looking to find balance in their life. It helps women to feed on God and healthy relationships instead of ignoring feelings and numbing emotions with food."

—Tonya D. Tuggle, PhD, River of Life Christian Center, Baltimore

"A group of employees formed our group. While we lost pounds, we gained support as we prayed for and encouraged each other on the journey."
—Linda Hardin, DMin, General Coordinator of Single Adult Ministries, Women's Ministries, and Young Adult Ministries, Church of the Nazarene

"Our women have grown more connected. Mission work isn't just what happens outside the church, it is also what can happen within. Women bonding and moving in a positive direction is a mission work of the heart."

—Victoria Mitchell, Broad Street United Methodist Church, New York

"I appreciate Showalter's and Davis's honesty about nutrition and exercise for bodies of all ages, and their slow and steady approach."

—Rev. Dr. Deborah Patterson, Executive Director,
Deaconess Parish Nurse Ministries

"Improper diet and inadequate exercise are at epidemic levels within the church. *Your Whole Life* examines this problem, providing answers in a 12-week program designed to improve your health—both physical and spiritual."

—Kara Davis, MD, Christian Community Health Center, Chicago

"We lost about 50 pounds and 25 pounds, respectively.

We have been so blessed by the program and have maintained our weight loss for about twelve years."

—Rev. Ben and Mrs. Beryl Benjamin Wright, St. James Episcopal Church,
Clovis, NM

"We started a 20-member group at our church. We are eating better, exercising more, and talking to God more."

—Karin Oehlwein, Friends in Christ Church, Morris, IL

"I have finally gained a few more pounds and I am happy about it.

[Your Whole Life] has more to do with health than weight."

—Carolyn, Presbyterian Women Nurture Committee

"This book has been a wonderful asset to our church's small group ministry.

We really enjoy the devotions. They're so down to earth."

—Lynn Helton, South Carolina Synod ELCA, Columbia

"I've been reminded that it is God that is helping me change my life
and not only my desire to lose weight."

—Peg

"I chose a faith-based program because I have grown to appreciate the
intricate connection between faith and wholeness of mind, body, and spirit."

—Sarah

"I first used this program back in about 1986. It was the best I have ever
participated in because of the DISCIPLINE it requires.

It teaches you how to eat right."

—Carolynn

"(Our group) has such wonderful fellowship. Some weight is being lost,
doctor reports are greatly improved, we are trying new activities, and
we are loving God so much more."

—Trudy

"What I like most about this program is that there are no hard, fast rules and
changes to make immediately. Changes that are suggested are small and
ones I choose to make. The daily reflections and questions are very helpful.

My life is being changed by God's grace and this program."

—Martie Aiello, St. Francis Spirituality Center, Tiffin, OH

"Besides teaching me to eat right and helping me with discipline,

I probably enjoy the closeness of the group and
the bond we have formed more than anything else.

—JoAnn Cepeda, Del Rio Christian Church, Del Rio, TX

“The website is wonderful and gives me good information to take back to the group. I feel this program fills a need in all of us to pay attention to the whole person.”
—Rev. Dr. Debra J. Hanson, Goodwins Mills United Methodist Church, Lyman, ME

“I have been in other weight-loss programs that promote healthy eating and exercise, and they were good, but they lacked the group support that comes from bonding with the same people week after week, and the spiritual strength and growth that comes from sharing the journey every day with God.”
—Barbara Burns, Our Lady of Peace Catholic Church, Erie, PA

“This plan helps you avoid your personal food and exercise traps by making you aware of them.”
—Brenda Thompson, Reading Program Specialist, Women’s Division, General Board of Global Missions, United Methodist Church

“I am really enjoying the devotions as they don’t concentrate on food, but on life. You can use this study even if food is not a problem for you. My weight is stabilizing and I am feeling better.”
—Cathy

“We find ourselves in such a fast-paced lifestyle where people are neglecting themselves to the point of frustration in their homes, on their jobs, and in their personal lives. *Your Whole Life* has been a tool for us to help get back on track.”
—Michele McKenna, New Jersey District Women’s Director, Assemblies of God, and Pastor’s wife of Lighthouse Tabernacle, Lumberton

“We have become so close through this study, grown in our walk with the Lord, and shrunk several sizes!”
—Kathi Palmer, Spiritual Development/Small Groups, Victory Church, Lakeland, FL

“I am convinced, after years struggling to keep my weight at a healthy level, that regulating my food intake is only part of the picture. What are the issues behind my overeating? This faith-based program is not afraid to address such deeper questions. I appreciate that.”
—Brad Lyle, First Baptist Church, Lexington, MA



Carol Showalter, founder of the 3D program, has been involved in Christian ministry for over 40 years. She has been featured in *Ladies' Home Journal*, *Woman's Day*, *Prevention*, and other publications, and frequently leads retreats across the country. Carol lives on Cape Cod with her husband, Bill, a Presbyterian minister.



Maggie Davis, MS, RD, LDN, FADA, CDE, is the founder and director of Live Nutrition (www.livenutrition.com). She is a frequent speaker at American Dietetic Association conferences.

your whole life

The 3D Plan for

- Eating Right
- Living Well
- Loving God

Carol Showalter
with Maggie Davis

MS, RD, LDN, FADA, CDE

Devotionals revised and edited
by Martin Shannon

PARACLETE PRESS
BREWSTER, MASSACHUSETTS

3D

Your Whole Life: The 3D Plan for Eating Right, Living Well, and Loving God

2010 First Paperback Printing

2007 First Hardcover Printing

Copyright © 2007 by Carol Showalter

Shaded text copyright © 2007 by Margaret Davis

ISBN: 978-1-55725-783-3

Unless otherwise noted, Scripture quotations are taken from the Holy Bible, New Revised Standard Version, copyright © 1989, 1995 by the Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America, and are used by permission. All rights reserved.

Scripture quotations marked NIV are taken from the Holy Bible, New International Version®, NIV®, Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984 by Biblica, Inc.™ Used by permission of Zondervan. All rights reserved worldwide.

Scripture quotations marked NLT are taken from the Holy Bible, New Living Translation, copyright © 1996, 2004. Used by permission of Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., Carol Stream, Illinois 60188. All rights reserved.

Scripture quotations marked KJV are from the Authorized King James Version of the Holy Bible.

In some cases, the author has paraphrased a Scripture verse; paraphrased Scriptures are marked CS.

The Library of Congress has catalogued the hardcover edition as follows:
Showalter, Carol.

Your whole life : the 3D plan for eating right, living well, and loving God / Carol Showalter ; with Maggie Davis.
p. cm.

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 978-1-55725-556-3

1. Reducing diets—Religious aspects—Christianity. 2. Nutrition—Religious aspects—Christianity. I. Davis, Maggie, 1975- II. Title.

RM222.2.S5278 2007

613.2'5—dc22

2007035889

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced in any form or by any means without the prior written consent of the publisher, except in brief quotations used in reviews.

Published by Paraclete Press
Brewster, Massachusetts
www.paracletepress.com
Printed in the United States of America

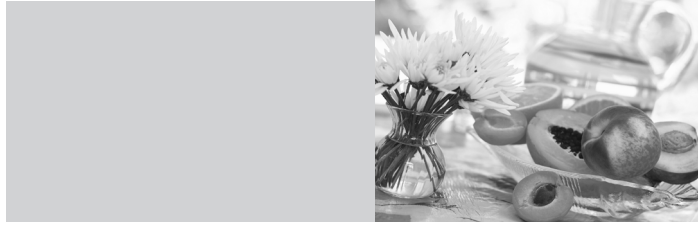
Your Whole Life is the new 3D plan for eating right, living well, and loving God. 3D (Diet, Discipline and Discipleship), a Christ-centered health program founded in 1973 by Carol Showalter, has helped over one million people.

Dear Reader,

This book is not intended to replace the expert advice that may be needed for your unique health issues. If you have specific medical nutritional needs, such as diabetes, a severe cardiac condition, a metabolic disorder, gastrointestinal disease, an eating disorder, or any other serious medical condition, it's important for you to seek the advice of your own Registered Dietitian, Licensed Nutritionist, Certified Diabetes Educator, Physician, or another qualified healthcare professional before making significant changes to either your diet or your exercise regime.

Carol Showalter

Contents



Introduction	1
What Are the 3Ds?	11
diet EATING RIGHT	11
discipline LIVING WELL	14
discipleship LOVING GOD	15
How 3D Began	17
Part One Have Faith, Be Whole	
Week 1 God Has the Answer	43
Week 2 Discipline and Preparedness	63
Week 3 Will Power—Yours or God’s?	83
Week 4 Learn to Listen	101
Part Two The Blessing of Obedience	
Week 5 An Expression of Love	121
Week 6 The Challenge of Change	143
Week 7 Finding the Balance	163
Week 8 Lifting the Burden of Guilt	183

Part Three A New Creation

Week 9	Understanding Your Emotions	203
Week 10	Accepting the Real You	227
Week 11	The Battle for Your Mind	249
Week 12	Your Whole Life: Body, Soul, and Spirit	273
The Next Step of the Journey		291
Acknowledgments		295
Appendices		
Initial and Quarterly Health Assessment		296
Body Mass Index (BMI) Chart		298
Recommended Daily Portion Guidelines		300
Guidelines for Leading a 3D Group		303
Notes	305	
The 3D Prayer		307
Resources		308

For additional resources go to
www.3DYourWholeLife.com

- Recommended Daily Portion Guidelines
- Weight and Target Food Intake Level
- Your Weight History Questionnaire
- Waist and Hips Measurement
- Food Record
- Menu Ideas and Recipes
- Testimonials
- 3D Groups Directory
- Monthly e-newsletter
- Online Group Community Message Board
- Information

Introduction



NEARLY FORTY YEARS AGO the first Christian diet program began, and soon it swept across the United States and many other countries. As the director of 3D, I wrote a book about the program, with sales reaching more than 500,000 copies.

The 3D program came out of my own personal need. I was a young minister's wife, with four children and many church responsibilities. I found that I could not cope with all the demands on my life. So I called out to God to help me. He heard my cry, and 3D was launched. This program was touched by the hand of God, and it continues to change lives wherever and whenever someone picks up a copy of the book. That is because 3D is more than a diet program. It is a program about living a whole life. And I have found wholeness as, to the best of my ability, I have lived the principles that were set forth in that book.

Although I have made many changes in my life over the past four decades, I am as passionate today as I was in the beginning of 3D about the vision of what can happen when people earnestly consider the whole person and not just the body. I am as convinced as ever that committed Christians are being challenged to look at the connection between the body and the soul. We must join with each other. Our health, our emotions, and our energy are all involved with our Christian walk. This

is a journey, not a destination. How can we do this better? We believe that in this book we have some answers that will move us along this journey.

As *Your Whole Life* was launched, I found myself filled with the burning excitement I had in the beginning. I expected God to work in my life again just as he will in yours. Though I am older now, I have the same need to want more of God and less of me. I am not interested

I am as passionate today as I was in the beginning of 3D about the vision of what can happen when people earnestly consider the whole person and not just the body.

in dieting, I am interested in eating right.

The 3Ds from the start of this program stood for Diet, Discipline, and Discipleship. I would like to define these terms with new words that carry a new understanding: Eating

Right (Diet), Living Well (Discipline), and Loving God (Discipleship). I want to challenge you to turn your head and your heart around to a new direction with one goal: to become *whole*.

Every year in the late fall I receive phone calls from writers and editors of the most popular women's magazines. This is what they often say: "We are doing a feature on faith-based diet programs and wonder if you can give me the names and phone numbers of women around the country that have lost at least half their body weight in 3D. And also we will need photos of before and after."

The first few years we worked hard to find names and numbers and make contacts so that 3D could have publicity in national women's magazines. Then I began to realize that these magazines wanted something else as well: they wanted only pretty faces, and wanted only those of a certain age bracket. They didn't tell me that on the phone, but after a while I began to ask them directly if that criterion was essential. With great hesitation they would tell me that those qualities very definitely would be important. (Take a look at the magazines at the grocery checkout counter this week. You'll see what I mean.)

I finally told one of those magazine editors that although I would like to comply with her request, it really went against everything that

3D has stood for. I stymied her because I didn't want to give her the names of the 3D "success" crowd. I have always been candid with every reporter and have told my age, and have made it clear that I am still fighting the weight battle. I never received anything but respect for my honesty. But now it was time for me to stand up for the integrity of 3D. That editor wrote me several e-mails saying how sorry she was that she couldn't use 3D program members, because she had read my book and loved what I was saying—so, she asked, would I please reconsider. "Your program does not center on being thin, and that's the story I want to tell—but also with pictures of your successes." I could not say yes, because to do so would have compromised my convictions. And we finished our e-mail correspondence with mutual respect for each other.

Although I would like to comply with her request, it really went against everything that 3D has stood for.

These experiences with magazines in recent years prompted us to create this new 3D book, *Your Whole Life: Eating Right, Living Well, and Loving God*.

In my walk toward good health I have benefited tremendously from the wisdom of well-known nutritionist and registered dietitian Maggie Davis. I went to Maggie for help with diet, but I got more than nutritional help. Maggie put many questions before me that pushed me to examine my whole life—questions that to her were obviously related to my weight struggle. So I took a spiritual inventory at the same time that I was learning new facts about nutrition. She and I worked as a team on this book to share how these things indeed work together.

This new paperback edition is chock-full of new concepts and a new understanding about nutrition and "diet." It is about transformation

I went to Maggie for help with diet, but I got more than nutritional help.

from the inside out, and it is about feeling good about yourself from the outside in! It has challenges for each one of us about what it means to live well and how to incorporate these changes into our daily lives.

THE BOOK THAT YOU ARE HOLDING IN YOUR HANDS today is one of reflection, understanding, and new challenges. It will challenge you to face yourself just the way you are. It will challenge you to come anew to a place where you can accept yourself, weaknesses and all, and to know beyond a shadow of doubt that God can help you. It will also challenge you to believe in the love and forgiveness of God, who is in the business of making all things new. There is no time to waste in looking back and counting our failures and wishing that we could have done things differently. That is all in God's hands. Now it is time to stand in the present and to look forward with open minds and hearts to new insights and new beginnings. Remember, God promises that the best is yet to come.

Many new insights and challenges will come from Maggie, who is walking alongside to share what she has taught me and so many others. *Your Whole Life* is our response to the millions of people who have gone through the 3D program or other diet programs, and still have questions and want to learn more about living well and becoming whole. Maggie brings forward new concepts and offers them through the interpretive framework of the 3D plan; her nutritional and wellness advice are presented in shaded sections of the book.

You will also encounter spiritual readings, devotions, hymns, and other forms of encouragement that have been tested through the ages by men and women of God. There are "Tips for Men" that speak specifically to men's concerns in the area of wellness and nutrition. And there are guidelines for anyone reading this book who would like to start a group.

This book is a tool for a twelve-week journey. There are different challenges presented each week in the three areas (eating right, living well, and loving God) and wonderful spiritual readings for every day of the twelve weeks. Take your time reading *Your Whole Life*. Browse through the book from cover to cover, but then take it a day at a time.

You can follow the 3D plan by yourself, or others can join you and form a support group where you can help each other, as we did in the first days of 3D. Guidelines for group leaders can be found on pages

303–304 of this book, and also on our website, www.3DYourWholeLife.com. You may call 1-800-451-5006 and talk to the 3D administrator anytime for assistance. There are also area coordinators around the country who are prepared to support and encourage you. As you move through the pages of this book, it is my prayer that you will see the concepts, challenges, and knowledge as tools for your own success. But don't expect anything in here to be the answer. Be open to new understandings of your weight struggles; be honest about your needs; and most of all, have *faith*. God is in the business of healing lives, and you are at the top of his list today. The Scripture verse that led us to the title of this book was one in which Jesus says to a woman, “Your faith has made you whole” (Mark 5:34, CS). I invite you to join me in this journey toward wholeness.

Jesus says to a woman,
“Your faith has made you whole.”

Carol Showalter

Maggie Davis



WHEN I FIRST BEGAN MY PRIVATE PRACTICE AS A NUTRITIONIST, I was often discouraged when working with people who needed to lose weight. I was trained to give people diets, including menus, recipes, and the like. I was educated to tell them what to eat, but within a few years I realized that this sort of approach simply didn't work. Attempting to follow restrictive "one-size-fits-all" menus often leads to repeated cycles of quick loss, then regaining all or more of the weight, followed by outright despair at the process.

Scientific evidence continues to document the dismal, long-term results of most weight loss programs. Repeated rounds of "dieting" erode the health of those who seek to become as slim as models we see in the media, trying and failing many times in their lives. Each new diet plan promises that if you refrain from eating a particular set of foods, you will be successful. Just the opposite seems to be true: you need balance. My objective is to help you find a way to include all types of whole and healthy foods, as well as occasional treats or splurges, while attaining or maintaining a healthy body weight. My goal is to educate you and inspire you to eat right for your whole life.

Long ago, I abandoned the use of rigid diets with my clients and adopted a system for gradual changes that are positive, practical, and likely to become permanent.

Long ago, I abandoned the use of rigid diets with my clients and adopted a system for gradual changes that are positive, practical, and likely to become permanent. I don't usually know at the outset of treatment exactly what will

work for a client, or how long the treatment will be needed. The first step is to get to know what and how a person eats. You will be doing this for yourself. It is also important to explore the why's of eating. In what sort of situations do you eat right, or not eat right?

The remaining work is a process that involves incorporating small but significant changes, applying food and nutrition knowledge, dealing with the obstacles and challenges, and continued self-knowledge. Over the years I have seen that those who are successful in eating right and managing their weight for many years are the ones who bring mind, body, and spirit into their work.

And work it is! The work can take anywhere from several months or years to a lifetime, being aware that treatment and intervention may be necessary again at various points in the future. I might add that my patients and clients have included individuals from nearly every ethnic and religious background. They have included people of faith as well as people who do not practice religion, but one thing they have in common is that they have experienced spiritual battles that involved food. They have collectively taught me that it takes a whole person to make a whole life.

So it is very exciting to be involved in a program that incorporates the whole person into the process. It is as if Carol Showalter and I have been working in parallel for nearly 40 years: I, as a nutrition professional in a community setting, and Carol, as a dieter in her own life and as a spiritual teacher through her books and through thousands of 3D groups across the world. We have had similar discoveries that we want to share with you.

Nutritional Starting Points

Food and nutrition are the **foundation of good health**, and *Your Whole Life* provides a nutritional program with the tools you need to eat right for your whole life. The “Eating Right” part of this program is based on the Dietary Guidelines for Americans and food pyramid recommendations, as well as on my work with individuals and weight loss groups. It is intended for use by women and men eighteen years of age or older. (Younger teens should consult a nutritional professional before making any significant changes to their diet.)

Although the dietary guidelines and food pyramid recommend specific ranges of various types of food, there are many ways of successfully applying such guidelines. *Your Whole Life* also incorporates a method of **self-assessment and gradual behavior change** that I have used in

my practice with individuals and groups for 35 years. We will work together so that you learn to develop personal goals and strategies for improving your food habits, implement changes, identify barriers to eating right, and ultimately establish a system for making healthy food choices to last a lifetime.

During this process, you will learn not only to enjoy eating right but also how to know yourself in a deeper and more meaningful way. This is a journey as much as it is a destination. There will be **speed bumps, stop signs**, and detours on the road—but you will use this program to keep you traveling on your journey to eating right and achieving better health.

Maggie Davis

give yourself PERMISSION

If you have children, or if you remember your own experiences as a child, the concept of the permission slip will be very familiar to you. Maybe you have signed many of these in the past.

Some of us—most often women—need to give ourselves permission to take care of our bodies, minds, and spirits. Often, we consume our time and energies with caring for others, and we neglect ourselves. We even convince ourselves that this is good—we might even tell ourselves that we are being better Christians by disregarding our own needs. But you need to know that this is *not* good. God wants you to care for this body called a “temple of the Holy Spirit within you” (1 Corinthians 6:19) and he wants you to be his child. **Pause for a moment, and actually give yourself permission to spend these next twelve weeks caring for yourself.**

What Are the 3Ds?

diet EATING RIGHT

The word *diet* does not actually mean losing weight. Diet means eating habits—*what* you eat. What do *you* eat every day? What is your diet? Think about this word in a new way as you delve into the 3D plan for the next twelve weeks. By the end of this program you will have a new understanding of the word *diet*. And it won't be such a negative force in your life.

You have probably picked up this book—and wanted this information—because you want to lose weight. And the word that drew your attention to the book was *diet*. For this reason, the first of the 3Ds has always referred to eating and changing our habits of eating. But this is not at all a typical diet book. I promise you that you will learn how to eat right, and if you faithfully incorporate these principles into your life over the next twelve weeks, you will certainly lose weight, but you will also come to understand your life in a whole new way.



The word *diet* does not actually mean losing weight.

You don't "go on a diet" in the 3D plan. Instead, you work with God to bring your life under divine will and guidance. This does not mean that God wants you to be skinny; and

You don't "go on a diet" in the 3D plan.

it doesn't mean that if you were more godly you would be skinny. God wants you to be whole. But it is important that you face the fact that the struggle is between accepting yourself as overweight, or being willing to battle all of the factors involved in making hard choices.

A good friend once said to me: "You can go to bed fat, or you can go to bed hungry. It's your choice." I found that a shocking statement! But it is one of those statements that I think about often. Many of my choices happen at the end of a long day. Will I stick the tablespoon into the half-gallon ice cream container in the freezer, will I grab a few candies from the candy dish in the living room, will I pop a chocolate chip cookie into my mouth on the way through the kitchen? Or will I resist these temptations and feel like I am going to bed hungry?

Your new diet will be about developing eating habits that will help you lose weight. Expect to lose weight. It *will* happen. But don't forget the important issue of finding your true self and knowing more about the love of God no matter what you weigh. That issue has to be settled in your life. God loves you!

Perhaps what you need is not so much another diet as guidance and support in ordering every aspect of your life as a child of God. If that is how you feel, please join us for twelve weeks, because that is what the 3D plan is all about!

THOUGHT  God be in my head, and in my understanding.

God be in my eyes, and in my looking.

God be in my mouth, and in my speaking.

God be in my heart and in my thinking.

God be at my end, and at my departing. 

(Old Sarum Primer, 1558, Salisbury, England)

A New Diet

In our culture, diet has more commonly come to have the meaning of a special, restrictive, or therapeutic regimen of eating to treat excess weight gain or a particular medical condition. But these sorts of diets are usually temporary. People go “on” and “off” popular diets; they never last forever. **When Carol and I use the word *diet*, we are referring to your daily way of eating.**

We all consume a diet that is unique to ourselves. In my practice, I have never seen two individuals, even twins, who eat exactly the same foods, in the same amounts, day in and day out. Your diet is made up of the foods you eat on a typical day, most days of your life. It consists of the type and amount of food you eat, the food you cook at home (and the food that you taste while making dinner), the food you order for take-out, the snacks you eat at work or in the car. Your journal and action plan will consider all of these factors.

As part of the 3D plan of eating right, you first need to evaluate where, when, why, and how you are eating now. What is your diet like today? You also

need to assess your health and your fitness level. You will want to examine your previous attempts to change your eating habits and determine what you have learned.

What helped you in the past? What didn't? What led you to abandon your previous attempts? These are important questions that can help you to gain insight before attempting changes now. Just as professional athletes examine videotapes of their past performances, you will benefit from looking back at your eating behaviors and seeing where you could do better in the future. Since no experience in life is ever wasted, what you considered failed attempts at dieting in the past may hold the key to your progress in the future.

This program will include setting realistic long- and short-term goals for your health and weight. You need goals that are positive, practical, and permanent. Unlike diets that promise that you will “Lose 10 pounds in 10 days,” you will be developing realistic goals for yourself and no one else.

You will be developing goals for this particular phase of your life, knowing that in the future you will probably need to review and revise them. Sometimes I liken eating right to making a good financial investment for your future or your retirement. What you eat can affect your life now and in the future

with dividends of good health, but the deposits need to be made gradually, with sound advice and regular re-evaluation of your goals. In short, eating right each day can be an important contribution to your nutritional IRA.

Maggie Davis

discipline LIVING WELL

Hebrews 12:11 says that no *discipline* is pleasant at the time, but rather is painful. But the verse also promises that discipline will produce righteousness. So it connects the idea of discipline—which some of us see only as negative—with what is positive: the promise of a righteous life. Discipline is the second key to wholeness; it is part of an integrated life.

I recently returned from a pilgrimage. I call my trip a pilgrimage for two reasons: first, because I visited many religious sites in Germany and Italy; and second, because I did some of it by myself. I walked through towns and cities and into churches, and my pedometer was counting, counting, counting, and my steps were many. But I also felt that I was on a deeply spiritual journey on the inside. My pedometer could not record the steps I was taking spiritually, but those inward steps were just as real as the outward ones.

Throughout the trip, somewhere in my heart, I knew that I was definitely learning discipline. It may not seem that traveling to beautiful places is a form of discipline, but for me, it was. In those unique settings, I was practicing living well. I was feeding my body beautiful, local foods; I was exercising my body with many steps of walking; my eyes were observing so much beauty; and my heart was responding to the overwhelming mystery of God in places like the catacombs of Rome.

Most of all, as I walked, prayed, and visited sites, I found myself in continual conversations with God. I would say, “Thank you for this gift of

such a trip,” and I would ask, “What do I need to know about you in all of this, God?” “What should I visit next?” “Should I walk, should I take a taxi, should I eat now or later?” My dialogue with God was unceasing.

Then I returned home. And even though the marvelous trip to Germany and Italy had ended, deep inside my heart, I know that this

Deep inside my heart,
I know that this very journey
was exactly what God plans
for me daily.

very journey was exactly what God plans for me daily—regardless of where I am. God wants me to enjoy beautiful food; he wants me to see the trees and the flowers and the water all

around me—these aspects of nature that awe me and show me the mystery of God; he wants me to turn to him for every direction I take; God wants me to care for my body through exercise. In short, God wants me to *live well*. To live this way is possible—but it takes discipline.

discipleship LOVING GOD

Webster's dictionary defines *disciple* as one who follows his or her master. Throughout this book, you will find pointers to assist you toward discipleship; and discipleship points you toward God, your true master. God is the most necessary component of a whole life—and that is what the average diet plan misses.

A soldier goes to boot camp and undergoes the rigors of training to succeed as a soldier. The athlete trains to attain a prize. The farmer rises early and labors long and hard to obtain a good harvest. Whatever we practice long enough becomes a part of us. So let's practice the wisdom of God. The words and the life of faith will become a part of you on this journey of twelve weeks.

Right now, we encourage you to enter into an important spiritual practice. Make a commitment to stick with the thoughts and the plans of this program for twelve weeks. That's a spiritual commitment, and this is where *Your Whole Life* differs from other “diet”

books. The spiritual insight and emphasis are the most important parts of this book and program, and they are essential to your success.

Commit to keep these regular practices over the course of the next twelve weeks:

- **Read the devotions for each day.** Included in this book are seven days' worth of devotions for each week. Resist the temptation to read ahead—something we tend to do when delving into a new program. Take this process slowly to ensure that the spiritual lessons can take root in your life. Every day we want you to have encouragement from the wisdom of God, as expressed in Scripture and in the thoughts of others.
- **Memorize Scripture.** As adults, we sometimes turn away from this sort of activity. You may even still remember verses you memorized as a child, but just as you put away your bicycle, you may have stopped memorizing God's Word. As you learn the Scripture verses, you will realize the profound effect they will have on all aspects of your life. Find ways to make this memorizing fun—as if you were learning a new recipe. Maybe you can even memorize Scripture together with others!
- **Pray for five people by name each morning.** These can be family members or co-workers. If you are in a 3D group, be sure to include those friends.
- **Write in your journal** the insights you are gaining in your whole life each day.

THOUGHT “ God always heals us,
and with the most amazing gentleness over time.
It does take time for us to heal in ways
that will bring God the most glory,
and us the most joy, forever. ”

(Julian of Norwich, 1342–ca. 1416)