

CLEAN (ISH)

**EAT (MOSTLY) CLEAN, LIVE (MAINLY) CLEAN,
AND UNLOCK YOUR BODY'S NATURAL
ABILITY TO SELF-CLEAN**

BY GIN STEPHENS

REFLECT AND TAKE ACTION

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HOW TO USE THIS RESOURCE

- First, read each chapter of Clean(ish). Remember that Clean(ish) is not designed to be a read-at-one-sitting type of book.
- At the end of each chapter, take time to reflect and/or take action. To make the most of this process, take the time for these reflections/actions. Change doesn't happen from the reading, it happens from the doing. The reflections and actions are the keys that ensure you'll actually apply what you have learned.
- Use the pages here to complete the reflections/actions for each chapter. It's okay to pick and choose from these activities, selecting the ones that are the most meaningful for you.
- Be empowered! You are the navigator of your own journey. Identify changes that feel doable and start with those. Rather than all or nothing, remember that every little step gets you to your destination in the end.

INTRODUCTION

REFLECT: IDENTIFY YOUR WHY

It's time to identify your *why*. What do you want to accomplish as you read this book and work through the process of becoming clean(ish)?

As you read through this list, check all statements that apply to you and write a few sentences with your thoughts about each one that you checked.

I'm worried about the chemicals that are ubiquitous in my modern environment, and I'm feeling inspired to make changes in both what I eat and how I live.

What am I especially worried about, now that I have read the introduction?

I'm confused about what foods are "clean," and if some foods are not "clean," then does that mean they are "dirty"? I want to understand what foods nourish my body so I can focus on those, but without worrying about every choice I make.

*Today, **before** reading this book, what does "clean eating" mean to me?*

I want to be able to eat foods that I love (and that taste good) without doing a math problem first. I'm tired of restricting whole food groups, and I have the feeling that there has to be a better way. I'm completely *over* counting and tracking.

What restrictive diets have I tried, and how did they make me feel while following them?

When it comes to what I eat, how do I want to live my life going forward?

What relationship with food do I want to nurture?

I'm stuck in diet-brain mentality, and I'm so confused that I'm not sure what to eat anymore. Should I choose a restrictive diet or maybe something in between? (*Spoiler alert: YES . . . the magic is in the "in between."*)

Why am I so confused about what to eat?

Where did this confusion come from?

I'm tired of living in fear, worrying that every decision I make might be a mistake.

What am I afraid of?

Which decisions am I having trouble making, and why?

I'm wondering about all the health claims being made about foods and products these days (Non-GMO? Organic? Grass-fed? All-natural?) and unsure which really matter.

When I'm shopping, how do I currently make decisions about which foods or products to choose?

What do I look for on the label?

- I'm interested in taking things up a notch when it comes to the foods I choose, with a goal of increasing the amount of nutrients I eat.

What foods do I already know I want to include more of in my day-to-day diet?

What foods do I already suspect I want to minimize?

- I want to learn about my body's amazing abilities to "clean up" a lot of this mess and how to promote more self-cleaning, just as nature intended.

What does "self-cleaning" mean to me?

What do I already know about how my body self-cleans and how to promote these processes?

- I'm looking for simple swaps that can make a big difference.

What are some things I already know I can easily swap out today to move me along the path toward becoming more clean(ish)?

I'm longing for a sense of balance in my life.

What about my life is currently unbalanced?

What could I do today to help me create more balance?

I'm ready to develop a personalized action plan that I can begin to implement today, add to over time, and maintain for the long term.

What's my preferred MO: Am I someone who wants to take my time and make changes gradually, do I want to jump right in and change lots of things at once, or do I prefer to be somewhere in the middle?

BETTER LIVING THROUGH CHEMISTRY

REFLECT: HOW FULL IS YOUR BUCKET?

Had you heard the phrase “better living through chemistry” before? What did it mean to you before reading this chapter, and what does it mean to you now?

Did anything surprise, shock, or even upset you as you read this chapter?

Reread the list on page 50. Are you experiencing any of the signs of a full-to-overflowing bucket? If so, which ones?

TAKE ACTION: MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Remember what I said in my author's note at the beginning of the book:

Let's come together as citizens of the world to insist that we have cleaner and safer foods, personal care products, and household cleaners, as well as a cleaner and safer environment in general. Becoming clean(ish) doesn't just help us individually, it can help us all.

Clean(ish) living is not about partisan politics, but you may feel like getting a little vocal after reading this book. No matter who you vote for or whichever side of the political aisle you embrace, I know we can agree that every human on earth deserves to live a healthy life. It should not be dependent upon socioeconomic status, disposable income, or zip code, either. I believe that health is our birthright, not just a political talking point. We have the power to vote with our wallets, and as we make changes to what we buy and which companies we support, the current trends toward a larger selection of cleaner and safer options will continue, and these options will become more affordable over time. That's already happening.

One by one, we can join together to demand that we head toward a safer and cleaner future that we envision together. Our planet, our kids, and our grandkids depend on us.

You may be someone who has never considered getting involved in environmental issues; however, now you're concerned. You want to do something, but you don't know *what*. You may also feel like any type of "activism" isn't for you, because it feels like something that other people do . . . other people who are different from you.

The key is to educate yourself and speak the truth as you see it, and don't be afraid of speaking up when it comes to issues that are important to you. Every single one of us, completely unrelated to political affiliation, should be alarmed by the information that I have shared in this chapter, and I only shared the tip of the iceberg.

Get involved: Find organizations you can support that are working on making a difference. Decide what is most important to you and start there.

What does this look like for me? One of the organizations I support is the Environmental Working Group (EWG). They are by no means the only organization doing this work, but the key is to start somewhere, with an organization that has a mission matching your personal goals.

Their mission statement:

Our mission is simple: To empower you with breakthrough research to make informed choices and live a healthy life in a healthy environment.

If you visit <https://www.ewg.org/take-action>, you can see all the ways you can support the work the EWG is doing and also how they recommend that you take action, right from your home and every time you shop.

Visit the Environmental Working Group's website (ewg.org) and take a look at the other resources there.

Also, do some searching on the web to find other organizations besides EWG with missions that match your personal goals. Use this page to take notes about the organizations you find.

1. Name of organization / website:

Mission:

How I can get involved:

2. Name of organization / website:

Mission:

How I can get involved:

3. Name of organization / website:

Mission:

How I can get involved:

4. Name of organization / website:

Mission:

How I can get involved:

HOUSEHOLD CLEANING PRODUCTS: WHAT'S IN YOUR BUCKET?

REFLECT AND TAKE ACTION: WHAT'S IN YOUR CABINETS?

Have you been fooled by greenwashing on cleaning product labels? Time to take a look!

1. Pull out some of the cleaning products you've been using that you chose because they seemed like "cleaner" options.
2. Download the Environmental Working Group's app. It's called EWG Healthy Living.
3. Use the search feature to check some of the products that you've been using.

GIN'S PERSONAL APPLICATION: DISH SOAP

There's a brand of cleaning products that I've used for years, assuming that they were a safer alternative because they have done a great job marketing their entire product line as natural and better for the environment. This is greenwashing in action. Well, they may be a better choice than many other conventional products that are out there, but I was shocked at what I found out when I took a closer look.

The dish soap I had been choosing, believing it was a great choice? It got a **D** ranking in the Environmental Working Group's EWG Healthy Living app. One of their scents actually gets an **F**.

Here's what was so surprising to me. One of the dish soaps I would never have considered to be "clean" (a major brand that is blue and we've seen it in the stores for years) has a foam version that ranks as a **C**.

All these years, I avoided the big-name blue brand and chose the "better" option, when actually the big-name brand would have been a better choice.

When I browse through the "Hand Washing Detergent Cleaners" list in the EWG Healthy Living app, sorted from best to worst, there's a long list of options that are available to me that score an **A** or a **B**. On the date that I wrote this, there are twenty-two different brands that have an **A** ranking, and so I know I have plenty of options to choose from. While I have said goodbye to the brand I thought was a good choice, the switch to cleaner options was painless. The dish soap I chose as a replacement? It has the same overall scent as the one I used to use, so other than knowing that it has fewer questionable chemicals, I can't tell there is a difference when I am using it. It was a painless swap to make.

Time to analyze your cleaning products. Use the chart on the following page to take a closer look at a few of your favorites.

My products and their ratings/concerns on the Environmental Working Group (EWG Healthy Living) app:

PRODUCT List items that I use frequently	PRODUCT RATING (from 1–10 or A–F)	INGREDIENT CONCERNS Which ingredients are identified as ones I should be concerned about?
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
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_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

After I've analyzed the information I just learned about my household cleaning products:

PRODUCTS WITH SCORES THAT GREATLY CONCERN ME: IT'S TIME TO CONSIDER ALTERNATIVES	PRODUCTS THAT I'M IFFY ABOUT	PRODUCTS THAT I COULDN'T FIND IN THE DATABASE	PRODUCTS THAT HAVE A GREEN RATING (1-2 OR A-B), SO I KNOW THEY ARE SAFE
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
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_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

Based on what I learned, I can make these easy changes today:

PERSONAL CARE PRODUCTS: ADDING TO YOUR BUCKET

REFLECT AND TAKE ACTION: WHAT ARE YOU USING?

In this chapter, I told you about my experiment: I went into my bathroom and imagined that I was going on a trip. I pulled out all the products that I would take with me on the trip, because those are the ones that I use every day. I counted twenty-six different cosmetic and personal care items that I considered to be essential enough to pack for my imaginary trip.

Now, it's your turn.

1. Go into your bathroom and pull out everything you consider to be a daily essential, something that you use every day. What is your count? Are you within the average (nine to fifteen items), or are you more like me (remember that I counted twenty-six)? Or is your number even higher?
2. Download the Environmental Working Group's app, if you haven't already done so. It's called EWG Healthy Living.
3. Use the search feature to check some of your staple products. It can be especially interesting to check things that you think are "safer" options, as you did in the last chapter.
4. Complete the activity to determine the safety rankings of your key products.

GIN'S PERSONAL APPLICATION: MOUTHWASH

One day, I used the EWG app to check a mouthwash that my husband purchased. The name of the product has **natural** in it, and the label also uses the word **healthy**. It contains aloe vera, and that's featured prominently on the label, as well. It's a product you'll find in health food stores or in the natural section of a regular grocery store. It claims to be formulated by a dentist and seemed like an excellent option to me. Who wouldn't choose a "natural" and "healthy" mouthwash with aloe vera in it that was formulated by a dentist? Thanks, greenwashing!

In the app, however, EWG scores it at a 3, indicating it has "limited" hazards. Since products get a score from 1–10, that's not bad at all, but that puts it into the yellow ("caution") rating area rather than in the green zone.

Why did this item get a 3? First, it has unspecified **flavors**. Just as manufacturers can hide behind the word **fragrance**, they also hide all sorts of ingredients using the word **flavors**, and **natural flavors** aren't necessarily any better than **flavors**. It also has an ingredient called polysorbate 80, which EWG considers to be low risk but still a concern due to what they call **data gaps**—meaning, we don't have enough data to be completely sure.

After realizing that this specific mouthwash was a 3, I checked the EWG database for other mouthwash options, and I decided to make a simple swap based on the data I could find in the app.

I typed in the word **mouthwash** and then sorted based on the filter "best score." There were only three mouthwashes with a rating of 1: two were spearmint flavor, and I don't like spearmint, and one of them was a tablet. I have no desire to use a mouthwash tablet, so that one was out. Because I am clean(ish), I always choose the safest option that both fits my preferences and is readily available to me. I can live with a 2 rating over a 1 rating, as both are in the green rating category.

I moved on to the 2-scoring section of the list. To my surprise, Listerine Original was the second choice in the 2 section. It actually had a higher score than many options from what most of us would consider to be a natural or more healthy-focused brand, many of which scored a 3, 4, or even a 5. (Side note: Yes, I know that 3, 4, and 5 are mathematically "higher" numbers than 2. But I am considering 1 to be the "top," and through that particular lens, 2 is "higher" than 3, 4, or 5.)

Listerine Original it is! I didn't select a mouthwash option with a formulation or flavor I don't like simply because it ranked higher. I'm clean(ish), and 2 is just fine with me.

What does my example illustrate? It shows that just because a product is in the natural section of the store and says *natural* and *healthy* on the label, that doesn't mean it's automatically a better choice. It also shows that products that we may perceive as "less healthy," such as a major brand name with no clean or natural claims on the label, may actually be a smarter choice.

One other interesting realization: this is the exact brand and flavor that my grandmother used. So, I feel a little nostalgic every time I use it.

Time to analyze what's in your bathroom. Use this section to take a closer look at your favorite products.

Date:

Number of personal care items I use daily:

The average number of personal care items used per day is around nine to fifteen different products.

My average is:

- Lower than the average of nine to fifteen
- Within the average of nine to fifteen
- Like Gin's, higher than the average of nine to fifteen

My products and their ratings/concerns on the Environmental Working Group (EWG Healthy Living) app:

PRODUCT List items that you use frequently	PRODUCT RATING (from 1–10 or A–F)	INGREDIENT CONCERNS Which ingredients are identified as ones I should be concerned about?
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
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FOOD, GLORIOUS FOOD

REFLECT AND TAKE ACTION: WHAT'S IN YOUR KITCHEN?

It's time to take stock of what is in your kitchen pantry and fridge. How many of the packaged foods you have on hand are made with at least one ingredient from the most common GMO commodity crops? How many foods do you have from the big fifteen?

Use this chart to record what you find:

PACKAGED FOOD ITEM IN MY PANTRY OR FRIDGE	DOES IT CONTAIN INGREDIENTS FROM ONE OF THE MAJOR GMO CROPS? HOW MANY OF THOSE INGREDIENTS ARE IN IT? Look for ingredients derived from corn, soy, sugar, canola oil, cotton (such as cottonseed oil)	IS IT A BRAND PRODUCED BY ONE OF THE BIG FIFTEEN COMPANIES? Look for: Nestle, PepsiCo, Anheuser-Busch, JBS, Tyson, Mars, Coca-Cola, Danone, Heineken, Mondelez International, Kraft Heinz, Smithfield, Unilever (Note: a product could include ingredients from Archer Daniels Midland and Cargill without being noted on the label)
<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>

Look back over that list. Are you surprised at what you’ve found? Write about it here.

Now that you have taken the time to read a few of the labels and identify what’s in your kitchen pantry and fridge, think about what you can do about it.

Based on what I learned, I can make these easy changes today:

TAKE A BREAK FROM FAKE: PROBLEMS WITH ULTRA-PROCESSED FOODS

REFLECT AND TAKE ACTION: FINDING FOOD

What do the words *overfed* and *undernourished* mean to you? Do you suspect you may be either *overfed* or *undernourished*? Explain.

Take stock of what is in your pantry and fridge. How much of it is actually food versus not-food?

Recall the continuum that has whole foods on one end, and ultra-processed foods on the other.

While you probably don't want to take the time to list everything in your kitchen, choose a few things that you eat frequently and consider where they would fall along the continuum.



<p>CLOSER TO THE "WHOLE FOOD" SIDE</p> <p>Items that would fit in groups 1, 2, or 3 on the NOVA Food Classification System</p>	<p>CLOSER TO THE "ULTRA-PROCESSED FOOD" SIDE</p> <p>Items that would fit in group 4 on the NOVA Food Classification System</p>	<p>WHICH PROBLEMATIC INGREDIENTS ARE IN IT?</p> <p>Look for refined/enriched grains, sugar, corn syrup, artificial sweeteners, emulsifiers, preservatives, artificial flavors, highly processed oils*, or MSG** (either obvious or hidden)</p>
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

*Highly processed oils might include soy, canola, sunflower, safflower, corn, cottonseed.

**MSG may be hidden using the words glutamic acid, yeast extract, autolyzed yeast, calcium caseinate, soy protein isolate/concentrate, hydrolyzed protein, plant protein extract, whey protein/concentrate/isolate, sodium caseinate, textured protein, malt extract, autolyzed plant protein, hydrolyzed oat flour, textured protein, sodium caseinate, calcium caseinate, natural flavors, bouillon, broth, or stock.

How are you doing? Based on your kitchen analysis, are you eating more ultra-processed foods than you realized? Which of your favorite foods may be problematic?

Based on what I learned, I can make these easy changes today:

WHAT'S A HEALTHY DIET? AND HOW DO WE KNOW?

REFLECT AND TAKE ACTION: EXAMINE THE DIET OF YOUR ANCESTORS

In the early-twentieth-century research done by Dr. Weston Price and others, and also in the work done by Dan Buettner within the Blue Zones, they all found that residents achieved excellent health by eating the foods that had been traditionally eaten in their regions for generations. They all ate local foods in season rather than the ultra-processed Western diet, and while what they ate varied widely from location to location, they all were thriving.

When we think of this from an evolutionary perspective, we understand that survival was linked to the ability to eat the foods that were available. Because of this, our ancestors' dietary patterns led to genetic adaptations that allowed them to thrive on the foods that were accessible to them within their environments.* As an example of this in action, only 35 percent of adults worldwide are genetically adapted to consuming dairy products into adulthood. This ability depends on whether you're "lactase-persistent" or not, and those who are lactase-persistent continue to produce lactase (an enzyme that allows for digestion of dairy) into adulthood. This genetic variation likely appeared in Europe as dairy became a part of the population's diet, and this enzyme is present in 89–96 percent of those with genetic roots in the British Isles and Scandinavia—though as few as 10 percent of the Asian population is genetically suited to digesting dairy.^{†,‡} Whether dairy works well for you (or not) depends very much on your genetics.

In another example, some populations adapted to a greater consumption of starchy foods, particularly when agriculture became a major part of their societies. These populations developed increased levels of amylase, a salivary enzyme required to break down starches. The more amylase, the more adapted the population was to consuming starchy foods.[§]

How can we use this information to help us figure out what foods may be ideal for us? Consider what your ancestors ate.

Experts used to suggest looking at what your grandparents ate, but my grandmother always had Bugles, Chicken in a Biskit crackers, and cans of Tab on hand. No, most of us need to go back further than our grandparents these days. We need to go *way* back.

* <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5628472/>

† <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3048992/>

‡ https://www.nichd.nih.gov/sites/default/files/publications/pubs/documents/NICHD_MM_Lactose_FS_rev.pdf

§ <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2377015/>

Do you know your genetic heritage? Thanks to one of the mainstream DNA analysis sites, I learned that I am 99 percent of European descent, with 86.9 percent of my heritage originating from the British Isles, with a small percentage of ancestors that are French, German, and Scandinavian, and around 1 percent of ancestors that are Western Asian and North African.

Because most of my ancestors are from the British Isles, I am more likely to be suited to eat foods that are traditionally eaten in that region. Dairy? Starchy foods? Yes and yes.

If you know your genetic heritage, take some time to learn about what foods are traditionally eaten in that region of the world.

What did your ancestors eat?

Make a plan to try some traditional foods that were eaten by your ancestors.
Write down some of the recipes you want to try here:

PARALYSIS OF ANALYSIS: WHEN GETTING HEALTHY BECOMES AN OBSESSION

REFLECT: AVOIDING AN UNHEALTHY OBSESSION WITH FOOD AND LIFESTYLE

Are there any foods that you are currently afraid to eat? What are they, and why do you feel that way about them? Are they foods that would fit into groups 1–3 on the NOVA Food Classification Scale, or are they ultra-processed foods? Do you want to find a way to incorporate these foods back into your life? Why or why not?

Write your thoughts here.

In conclusion, it's important for us to understand these words from Dr. Bratman:^{*}

Adopting a theory of healthy eating is NOT orthorexia. A theory may be conventional or unconventional, extreme or lax, sensible or totally wacky, but, regardless of the details, followers of the theory do not necessarily have orthorexia. They are simply adherents of a dietary theory. The term "orthorexia" only applies when an eating disorder develops around that theory.

If you suspect that you may have a problem, please go to orthorexia.com and take the self-test. It's a simple test with only six questions, but after you take it, you should have an indication as to whether your "healthy eating habits" may be going too far.

What did you learn about yourself by taking the self-test?

^{*} <http://www.orthorexia.com>

YOUR BODY'S SELF-CLEANING PATHWAYS

ACTION PLAN: SUPPORTING YOUR BODY'S SELF-CLEANING ABILITIES

After reading this chapter, take some time to make a plan for how you can live a detoxification *lifestyle* by supporting your liver, kidneys, lungs, skin, lymphatic and glymphatic systems, and your colon.

Go back and reread each section of this chapter and consider changes you can make today that support these important self-cleaning pathways.

What I can do to support my liver:

What I can do to support my kidneys:

What I can do to support my lungs:

What I can do to support my skin:

What I can do to support my lymphatic system:

What I can do to support my glymphatic system:

What I can do to support my colon:

Putting it all together:

What can I do to support my entire body as it self-cleans, fostering an environment where each organ and system is working together to perform all the important detoxification tasks my health depends on?

WHAT'S FOOD GOT TO DO WITH IT?

REFLECT AND TAKE ACTION: CONSIDER YOUR DIET DIVERSITY AND FOCUS ON NUTRIENTS

Look back at the chart on page 196 that lists the types of foods that support detoxification within the body.

What does your overall intake of these foods look like? Think about the past seven days and write down what you ate, but **only write down those foods that would fit into the NOVA classification scale in groups 1–3**. Record individual foods such as nuts, meats, whole grains, greens, beans, tomatoes, carrots, apples, oatmeal, potatoes, and even recipes such as hummus, guacamole, salads, soups . . . but don't include ultra-processed foods such as potato chips, crackers, hot dogs, pasta, and so on. We rarely eat foods in isolation, so consider the individual ingredients within what you're eating.

Don't overthink this; if you aren't sure what to write down, do your best. I promise I'm not giving a grade.

Here's how I might record my day for today. I had a tomato sandwich on high-quality whole-grain sprouted bread, and then for dinner, I plan to make a black bean and quinoa bowl with guacamole. The whole-grain bread that I choose is made from sprouted grains and legumes, so it's not what I would consider to be ultra-processed. The mayonnaise I put on my sandwich, however, is ultra-processed, so I didn't record it.

This is how I would record it:

1	Whole-grain sprouted bread, tomato, black beans, quinoa, onion, garlic, red bell pepper, zucchini, avocado
---	--

Now, it's your turn.

If you can't remember—and, HELLO, I get it—then you should plan to keep track of the foods that you eat for the next seven days and write them down day by day.

Day	Foods That Support My Body Nutritionally <i>(List only foods that fit into groups 1–3 on the NOVA Food Classification Scale)</i>
1	
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	
7	

How did you do? Did you eat a wide variety of foods over the week, or did you find that you ate the same few things over and over?

When you are planning what you will eat this week, find a new recipe that includes foods you don't normally eat and add it to your weekly rotation. Focus on foods from plants so you increase your intake of the powerful phytochemicals and fiber found within these foods.

New recipe to try:

This week when you are doing your grocery shopping, buy at least one or two items from the produce section that you haven't purchased or eaten in the past year.

This week, I plan to buy:

If you did try intermittent fasting in the past but stopped doing it, think about why you stopped. Would you consider trying it again now? Why or why not?

If you are someone who already incorporates intermittent fasting in your life, consider all the ways that it's a powerful self-cleaning mechanism and reflect upon your *why* for choosing it as a lifestyle. After reading this chapter, is your *why* reinforced?

If you are not currently incorporating intermittent fasting into your life, consider how you could make a few small changes that increase the number of hours you spend in the fasted state each day.

WHAT I AM DOING NOW

I usually eat all my food for the day between the hours of _____ and _____.

That means I currently have an eating window of about _____ hours from start to finish.

(For example, if you currently have breakfast at 8:00 a.m. and finish eating an evening snack by 9:00 p.m. each day, that would be an eating window of thirteen hours from start to finish.) I could increase the amount of time in the fasted state each day by: *(select all that apply)*

- Delaying my breakfast until _____ each day (list your new time for breakfast)
- Skipping breakfast and opening my eating window at lunchtime
- Closing my eating window by _____ each day (list your new time to stop eating)

By making these changes, I would have an eating window of about _____ hours from start to finish.

That would mean I spend _____ more hours in the fasted state each day than I do currently.

To learn more about how to customize an intermittent fasting lifestyle that suits you, make sure to read *Fast. Feast. Repeat.: The Comprehensive Guide to Delay, Don't Deny Intermittent Fasting*. You'll learn how to design your intermittent fasting toolbox, how to "tweak it till it's easy," and how to make sure it's a long-term and sustainable lifestyle.

EXTRA CREDIT: MORE TOOLS FOR SELF-CLEANING

TAKE ACTION: CHOOSE YOUR TOOLS

Which tools will you choose to boost your body's self-cleaning?

Exercise

Time to get moving! We want to keep our lymphatic system flowing, as well as increase our circulation and respiration and work up a good sweat. How can you increase your daily movement in a way that you enjoy?

Sauna

Promote a deeper level of sweating by spending time in a sauna. See if any gyms or health clubs in your area include access to a sauna as a part of their membership plans. List options here.

Massage

Schedule regular massages to reduce anxiety and boost mood. Use this space to remind yourself why you deserve to include massages as a part of your self-care routine.

Sleep

Our glymphatic system requires restorative sleep to flush toxins from our brains. If you know you are not getting the sleep your body needs, make a plan for ways you can improve the quality of your sleep. Look back at the list on pages 222-223 for ideas.

Blue-Light Blocking

Is your house full of “dirty” blue light after dark, coming from bulbs and screens everywhere you turn? What can you do to decrease your blue-light exposure after sunset?

Earthing

Connecting to the earth helps us “clean up” our personal electrical charge by increasing the flow of electrons, which act as antioxidants within our bodies and neutralize damaging free radicals. How can you spend more time connecting with the earth?

Indoor Air Quality

Since indoor air is often more toxic than outdoor air these days, it's more important than ever to have a plan for cleaning up our home's air. What strategies will you choose to clean up the air within your home?

THE PRECAUTIONARY PRINCIPLE

REFLECT AND TAKE ACTION: APPLYING THE PRECAUTIONARY PRINCIPLE

As you read about how big tobacco misled the public for decades, how did that make you feel?

Have you ever been confused by contradictions surrounding the safety of the chemicals in our foods and household/personal care products? As a consumer, how do you know who to trust?

Consider the saying: “An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.” How can you apply the Precautionary Principle to your life as you become clean(ish)?

Horizontal lines for writing.

ONLINE RESOURCES FOR BECOMING CLEAN(ISH)

ACTION PLAN: EXPLORING RESOURCES

Time to do some digging! Visit a few of the websites and/or download the apps that I shared with you in this chapter and take notes of what you find there, so you'll know where to go when you need information in a hurry.

With all these great resources, you never have to stand in the store staring with confusion at the products on the shelves (ending with you grabbing whatever looks good, rather than making an informed decision). Instead of grab-and-go, you'll be armed with knowledge to guide your selections.

Name of organization / website:

What I found there:

Name of organization / website:

What I found there:

Name of organization / website:

EAT (MOSTLY) CLEAN

REFLECT: CREATING YOUR PERSONAL DEFINITION OF CLEAN(ISH) EATING—WHAT MATTERS MOST?

There are many definitions of “clean eating” out there. In one book that I read, clean eating involved committing to being a vegetarian, and even dairy was off limits. In another, you could have dairy as long as it was low fat. Why isn’t full-fat dairy “clean” in that plan? I have no idea. One clean-eating plan had whole-grain foods as front and center, while another insisted that you must be gluten-free and avoid grains entirely. In another, meat was to be avoided but fish was okay. Confused yet?

In general, what do these varied definitions of clean eating have in common? Most of them include a focus on natural foods that are free of chemicals, artificial ingredients, and other potentially harmful additives, and an avoidance of ultra-processed foods. But many may stress an unhealthy level of perfection, and some also add in other restrictions based on the author’s personal dietary preferences (such as avoiding dairy, gluten, grains, meat, etc.).

Now, it’s time to forget about everyone else’s idea of what it means to “eat clean” and define *yours*.

First, we can agree on a fairly general definition that fits everyone: clean eating is when you prioritize whole foods and avoid both ultra-processed foods and foods that don’t work well for your body. Clean(ish) eating, then, is when you make choices that honor your health and wellness, yet also provide you with flexibility so you can enjoy your life.

As you create your own definition of clean(ish) eating, also remember this: we are supposed to eat for pleasure. Your definition of clean(ish) eating should include choosing foods that you love, and you also want to make sure you have the freedom to live in the real world. You *will* eat foods that are ultra-processed on occasion (or maybe even daily), and you will also eat foods prepared by others that contain ingredients you would avoid when cooking at home.

If I am at a restaurant, I eat the food that sounds good to me, while also considering how I will feel after I eat. As an example, I know that eating a meal that includes french fries deep-fried in cheap or old cooking oil is likely to give me a stomachache later. I don’t want to have a stomachache, so I usually choose a different side dish. There is a local restaurant, however, that features quality burgers and fries, and I’ve never had a stomachache after eating there. Are their cooking oils the type I prefer to use at home? No. But, because I am clean(ish), I enjoy the heck out of those fries when we eat there, dousing them in malt vinegar and salt. Do I put the vinegar on there because research shows that vinegar reduces the spikes of both insulin and

glucose that come after a meal? No. I add it because it's absolutely delicious, and any health benefits are just the cherry on top—or I suppose I should say the *vinegar* on top in this case.

As another example, if I'm at a wedding, I am not going to ask the bride what's in the cake, and I don't even care what's in the cake, to tell you the truth. I am clean(ish), and I will eat cake with zero worries about whether they used organic flour or if the frosting is made with funky oils or sweeteners. I don't even let those thoughts cross my mind, frankly. If I bake a cake at home, I can control what goes in it, and I do. But that doesn't mean I am stuck with only eating cake that I bake for myself for the rest of my life.

FOODS TO EXCLUDE OR LIMIT

Now, I want you to take some time to skim through the previous chapters of the book and decide which of these issues are most important to you. You aren't doing a full reread but simply a skim. You'll record the information within the chart, and I've included the chapters/page numbers in the chart for your convenience.

As you think about each one of these concerns, you're going to identify which are the most problematic to *you* based on what you've learned, and that will help you focus your attention.

I have also left space for you to add a few of your own concerns beyond those I have listed. If you know certain foods don't work well for your body, add them here. For example, perhaps you know a certain food (such as gluten or dairy) gives you a stomachache every time you eat it. You'll definitely want to include that as a consideration in your personal definition of clean(ish).

As you think about each concern on the list, your goal is to decide if there are any areas where you want to be completely clean, meaning you'll *always* avoid those ingredients when you know they are present. Or you may decide that clean(ish) is good enough, meaning you'll choose to avoid them some to most of the time, but won't stress about infrequent consumption. Alternately, you may find that you don't find the concerns to be compelling enough to require consideration from day to day.

Before you begin, I want to let you know that I thought about giving you examples from my own personal definition of clean(ish). There are a few ingredients of concern that fall into the "*I will avoid this ingredient completely and at all times*" list for me, a few that are in the "*I am not at all concerned about this ingredient, and I don't plan to avoid it*" group, and most things fall into the "*I will take a clean(ish) approach*" category.

But this isn't about *me*. It's about *you*. So, I decided to leave that part out entirely so you can decide for yourself. You're creating your *personal* definition of clean(ish), not simply following mine.

CONCERN	HOW I FEEL ABOUT IT	HOW I WILL APPLY THIS TO MY LIFE
<p>GMOs</p> <p>“Food, Glorious Food,” page 92</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> I will avoid this completely and at all times.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I will take a clean(ish) approach. I won’t consume it frequently, but I won’t stress if I encounter it on occasion.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I am not at all concerned about this, and I don’t plan to avoid it.</p>	
<p>Nonorganic meats</p> <p>“Food, Glorious Food,” pages 98-101</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> I will avoid this completely and at all times.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I will take a clean(ish) approach. I won’t consume it frequently, but I won’t stress if I encounter it on occasion.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I am not at all concerned about this, and I don’t plan to avoid it.</p>	
<p>Nonorganic animal products (dairy, eggs, etc.)</p> <p>“Food, Glorious Food,” pages 98-104</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> I will avoid this completely and at all times.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I will take a clean(ish) approach. I won’t consume it frequently, but I won’t stress if I encounter it on occasion.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I am not at all concerned about this, and I don’t plan to avoid it.</p>	

<p>Nonorganic plant foods (fruits, vegetables, grains, etc.)</p> <p>“Food, Glorious Food,” pages 101-107</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> I will avoid this completely and at all times.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I will take a clean(ish) approach. I won’t consume it frequently, but I won’t stress if I encounter it on occasion.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I am not at all concerned about this, and I don’t plan to avoid it.</p>	
<p>Ultra-processed foods in general</p> <p>“Take a Break from Fake,” page 117</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> I will avoid this completely and at all times.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I will take a clean(ish) approach. I won’t consume it frequently, but I won’t stress if I encounter it on occasion.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I am not at all concerned about this, and I don’t plan to avoid it.</p>	
<p>Toxic oils / highly processed fats</p> <p>“Take a Break from Fake,” page 122</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> I will avoid this completely and at all times.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I will take a clean(ish) approach. I won’t consume it frequently, but I won’t stress if I encounter it on occasion.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I am not at all concerned about this, and I don’t plan to avoid it.</p>	

<p>MSG “Take a Break from Fake,” page 123</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> I will avoid this completely and at all times.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I will take a clean(ish) approach. I won’t consume it frequently, but I won’t stress if I encounter it on occasion.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I am not at all concerned about this, and I don’t plan to avoid it.</p>	
<p>Highly refined grains “Take a Break from Fake,”page 124</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> I will avoid this completely and at all times.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I will take a clean(ish) approach. I won’t consume it frequently, but I won’t stress if I encounter it on occasion.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I am not at all concerned about this, and I don’t plan to avoid it.</p>	
<p>Sugar “Take a Break from Fake,”page 124</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> I will avoid this completely and at all times.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I will take a clean(ish) approach. I won’t consume it frequently, but I won’t stress if I encounter it on occasion.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I am not at all concerned about this, and I don’t plan to avoid it.</p>	

<p>High fructose corn syrup</p> <p>“Take a Break from Fake,” page 125</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> I will avoid this completely and at all times.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I will take a clean(ish) approach. I won’t consume it frequently, but I won’t stress if I encounter it on occasion.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I am not at all concerned about this, and I don’t plan to avoid it.</p>	
<p>Artificial sweeteners</p> <p>“Take a Break from Fake,” page 125</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> I will avoid this completely and at all times.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I will take a clean(ish) approach. I won’t consume it frequently, but I won’t stress if I encounter it on occasion.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I am not at all concerned about this, and I don’t plan to avoid it.</p>	
<p>Other food additives (artificial flavors, colors, preservatives, emulsifiers, etc.)</p> <p>“Take a Break from Fake,” page 126</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> I will avoid this completely and at all times.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I will take a clean(ish) approach. I won’t consume it frequently, but I won’t stress if I encounter it on occasion.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I am not at all concerned about this, and I don’t plan to avoid it.</p>	

<p>Supplements “Take a Break from Fake,” page 128</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> I will avoid this completely and at all times.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I will take a clean(ish) approach. I won’t consume it frequently, but I won’t stress if I encounter it on occasion.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I am not at all concerned about this, and I don’t plan to avoid it.</p>	
<p>My personal ingredient of concern:</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> I will avoid this completely and at all times.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I will take a clean(ish) approach. I won’t consume it frequently, but I won’t stress if I encounter it on occasion.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I am not at all concerned about this, and I don’t plan to avoid it.</p>	
<p>My personal ingredient of concern:</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> I will avoid this completely and at all times.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I will take a clean(ish) approach. I won’t consume it frequently, but I won’t stress if I encounter it on occasion.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I am not at all concerned about this, and I don’t plan to avoid it.</p>	

<p>My personal ingredient of concern:</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> I will avoid this completely and at all times.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I will take a clean(ish) approach. I won't consume it frequently, but I won't stress if I encounter it on occasion.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I am not at all concerned about this, and I don't plan to avoid it.</p>	
<p>My personal ingredient of concern:</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> I will avoid this completely and at all times.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I will take a clean(ish) approach. I won't consume it frequently, but I won't stress if I encounter it on occasion.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I am not at all concerned about this, and I don't plan to avoid it.</p>	
<p>My personal ingredient of concern:</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> I will avoid this completely and at all times.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I will take a clean(ish) approach. I won't consume it frequently, but I won't stress if I encounter it on occasion.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I am not at all concerned about this, and I don't plan to avoid it.</p>	

FOODS TO PRIORITIZE

Now that you have identified what foods you may want to avoid, it's time to think about what foods/nutrients you want to intentionally include.

Refer back to “What’s a Healthy Diet? And How Do We Know?” from page 134 and “What’s Food Got to Do with It?” from page 186.

You’ll want to focus on foods that have been part of traditional diets throughout history (including foods that your ancestors ate), foods that are enjoyed in the Blue Zones, foods that feed our gut microbiomes well (plenty of fiber, prebiotics, and probiotics), and foods that have all the vitamins, minerals, and phytochemicals your body needs to function well.

The good news is that they are all the same foods. Overall, your number one goal is to include a wide variety of REAL foods.

FOOD	WHAT'S MY CURRENT INTAKE?	HOW I WILL APPLY THIS TO MY LIFE
Organic foods (in general)	<input type="checkbox"/> I already include this in my diet in amounts that are appropriate for good health. <input type="checkbox"/> I already include this in my diet, but I know I need to work on including more/greater variety of this food. <input type="checkbox"/> I don't include this in my diet now, but I know I need to make an effort to add it in. <input type="checkbox"/> I think I may eat <i>too much</i> of this food, so I'll work on consuming less of it. <input type="checkbox"/> This is a food that I don't eat now, and I also don't think that it belongs in my personal diet.	

Vegetables	<input type="checkbox"/> I already include this in my diet in amounts that are appropriate for good health. <input type="checkbox"/> I already include this in my diet, but I know I need to work on including more/greater variety of this food. <input type="checkbox"/> I don't include this in my diet now, but I know I need to make an effort to add it in. <input type="checkbox"/> I think I may eat <i>too much</i> of this food, so I'll work on consuming less of it. <input type="checkbox"/> This is a food that I don't eat now, and I also don't think that it belongs in my personal diet.	
Fruits	<input type="checkbox"/> I already include this in my diet in amounts that are appropriate for good health. <input type="checkbox"/> I already include this in my diet, but I know I need to work on including more/greater variety of this food. <input type="checkbox"/> I don't include this in my diet now, but I know I need to make an effort to add it in. <input type="checkbox"/> I think I may eat <i>too much</i> of this food, so I'll work on consuming less of it. <input type="checkbox"/> This is a food that I don't eat now, and I also don't think that it belongs in my personal diet.	

<p>Whole grains</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> I already include this in my diet in amounts that are appropriate for good health.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I already include this in my diet, but I know I need to work on including more/greater variety of this food.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I don't include this in my diet now, but I know I need to make an effort to add it in.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I think I may eat <i>too much</i> of this food, so I'll work on consuming less of it.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> This is a food that I don't eat now, and I also don't think that it belongs in my personal diet.</p>	
<p>Meat</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> I already include this in my diet in amounts that are appropriate for good health.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I already include this in my diet, but I know I need to work on including more/greater variety of this food.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I don't include this in my diet now, but I know I need to make an effort to add it in.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I think I may eat <i>too much</i> of this food, so I'll work on consuming less of it.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> This is a food that I don't eat now, and I also don't think that it belongs in my personal diet.</p>	

<p>Seafood</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> I already include this in my diet in amounts that are appropriate for good health.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I already include this in my diet, but I know I need to work on including more/greater variety of this food.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I don't include this in my diet now, but I know I need to make an effort to add it in.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I think I may eat <i>too much</i> of this food, so I'll work on consuming less of it.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> This is a food that I don't eat now, and I also don't think that it belongs in my personal diet.</p>	
<p>Other proteins</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> I already include this in my diet in amounts that are appropriate for good health.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I already include this in my diet, but I know I need to work on including more/greater variety of this food.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I don't include this in my diet now, but I know I need to make an effort to add it in.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I think I may eat <i>too much</i> of this food, so I'll work on consuming less of it.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> This is a food that I don't eat now, and I also don't think that it belongs in my personal diet.</p>	

<p>Other animal products (dairy, eggs, etc.)</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> I already include this in my diet in amounts that are appropriate for good health.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I already include this in my diet, but I know I need to work on including more/greater variety of this food.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I don't include this in my diet now, but I know I need to make an effort to add it in.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I think I may eat <i>too much</i> of this food, so I'll work on consuming less of it.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> This is a food that I don't eat now, and I also don't think that it belongs in my personal diet.</p>	
<p>Healthy fats/oils</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> I already include this in my diet in amounts that are appropriate for good health.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I already include this in my diet, but I know I need to work on including more/greater variety of this food.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I don't include this in my diet now, but I know I need to make an effort to add it in.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I think I may eat <i>too much</i> of this food, so I'll work on consuming less of it.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> This is a food that I don't eat now, and I also don't think that it belongs in my personal diet.</p>	

<p>Herbs/spices</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> I already include this in my diet in amounts that are appropriate for good health.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I already include this in my diet, but I know I need to work on including more/greater variety of this food.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I don't include this in my diet now, but I know I need to make an effort to add it in.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I think I may eat <i>too much</i> of this food, so I'll work on consuming less of it.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> This is a food that I don't eat now, and I also don't think that it belongs in my personal diet.</p>	
<p>Clean(ish) sweeteners</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> I already include this in my diet in amounts that are appropriate for good health.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I already include this in my diet, but I know I need to work on including more/greater variety of this food.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I don't include this in my diet now, but I know I need to make an effort to add it in.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I think I may eat <i>too much</i> of this food, so I'll work on consuming less of it.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> This is a food that I don't eat now, and I also don't think that it belongs in my personal diet.</p>	

WHAT WILL I DRINK?

And, finally, no definition of clean(ish) eating would be complete without considering your beverages. Most of us have a beverage of some sort at our fingertips throughout our day, so you'll want to choose carefully.

Look back at pages 268-270 from earlier in the "Eat (Mostly) Clean" chapter and think about what you're currently drinking throughout the day and with your meals.

BEVERAGE	HOW I FEEL ABOUT IT	OTHER THINGS TO CONSIDER ABOUT THIS BEVERAGE <i>(CONTAINER, SOURCE, ORGANIC VS. NOT ORGANIC, INGREDIENTS, ETC.)</i>
Water, unflavored	<input type="checkbox"/> This is a beverage that I will prioritize throughout my day. <input type="checkbox"/> This is a beverage that I will avoid completely and at all times. <input type="checkbox"/> I will take a clean(ish) approach. I won't consume this beverage frequently, but I won't stress if I encounter it on occasion.	
Sparkling water or mineral water, unflavored	<input type="checkbox"/> This is a beverage that I will prioritize throughout my day. <input type="checkbox"/> This is a beverage that I will avoid completely and at all times. <input type="checkbox"/> I will take a clean(ish) approach. I won't consume this beverage frequently, but I won't stress if I encounter it on occasion.	

<p>Coffee, black</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> This is a beverage that I will prioritize throughout my day.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> This is a beverage that I will avoid completely and at all times.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I will take a clean(ish) approach. I won't consume this beverage frequently, but I won't stress if I encounter it on occasion.</p>	
<p>Tea, plain</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> This is a beverage that I will prioritize throughout my day.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> This is a beverage that I will avoid completely and at all times.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I will take a clean(ish) approach. I won't consume this beverage frequently, but I won't stress if I encounter it on occasion.</p>	
<p>Water or sparkling water, flavored</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> This is a beverage that I will prioritize throughout my day.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> This is a beverage that I will avoid completely and at all times.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I will take a clean(ish) approach. I won't consume this beverage frequently, but I won't stress if I encounter it on occasion.</p>	

<p>Coffee or tea, with additives (milk, creamers, sweeteners, etc.)</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> This is a beverage that I will prioritize throughout my day.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> This is a beverage that I will avoid completely and at all times.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I will take a clean(ish) approach. I won't consume this beverage frequently, but I won't stress if I encounter it on occasion.</p>	
<p>Sodas</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> This is a beverage that I will prioritize throughout my day.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> This is a beverage that I will avoid completely and at all times.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I will take a clean(ish) approach. I won't consume this beverage frequently, but I won't stress if I encounter it on occasion.</p>	
<p>Juice-based beverages</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> This is a beverage that I will prioritize throughout my day.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> This is a beverage that I will avoid completely and at all times.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I will take a clean(ish) approach. I won't consume this beverage frequently, but I won't stress if I encounter it on occasion.</p>	

<p>Alcohol</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> This is a beverage that I will prioritize throughout my day.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> This is a beverage that I will avoid completely and at all times.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I will take a clean(ish) approach. I won't consume this beverage frequently, but I won't stress if I encounter it on occasion.</p>	
<p>Other</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> This is a beverage that I will prioritize throughout my day.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> This is a beverage that I will avoid completely and at all times.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I will take a clean(ish) approach. I won't consume this beverage frequently, but I won't stress if I encounter it on occasion.</p>	
<p>Other</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> This is a beverage that I will prioritize throughout my day.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> This is a beverage that I will avoid completely and at all times.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I will take a clean(ish) approach. I won't consume this beverage frequently, but I won't stress if I encounter it on occasion.</p>	

TAKE ACTION: YOUR PERSONAL DEFINITION OF CLEAN(ISH) EATING

Now that you've taken the time to consider what to include in your definition of clean(ish) eating, summarize it here.

MY PERSONAL DEFINITION OF CLEAN(ISH) EATING

There are some foods and/or ingredients that I will avoid *at all times*. These include:

There are some foods and/or ingredients that I may consume from time to time, but I will limit or avoid them when it is convenient to do so, *or* I'll eat them if avoiding them affects my enjoyment of a recipe, *or* I'll eat them if I don't have another option available. These include:

There are some foods and/or ingredients that I will actively work to include more of/prioritize in my diet. These include:

When it comes to my beverages, I will choose:

LIVE (MAINLY) CLEAN

REFLECT: CREATING YOUR PERSONAL DEFINITION OF CLEAN(ISH) LIVING—WHAT MATTERS MOST?

Up to now, you’ve been learning about many of the issues and challenges that face us in today’s modern world, but soon you’ll be ready to begin the implementation phase of becoming clean(ish). That’s coming up in the chapter called “Slow and Steady Clean(ish) Change: Your Nine Focus Topics.”

Three of the nine focus topics are covered by the clean(ish) eating definition that you already created, but six of them fall into the clean(ish) living category. Your next task is to create your personal definitions of clean(ish) living as they relate to those six focus topics.

HOUSEHOLD CLEANING PRODUCTS

Go back to the “Household Cleaning Products: What’s in Your Bucket?” chapter. Decide how concerned you are about each category of product, and within each category, consider which specific products are the most important to you.

CONCERN	HOW I FEEL	WHICH SPECIFIC PRODUCTS AM I MOST CONCERNED ABOUT?
Bathroom cleaning products	<input type="checkbox"/> I am extremely concerned. It is important for me to choose products that are considered to be very safe (i.e., rated as Verified or A/B on the EWG Healthy Living app). <input type="checkbox"/> I am moderately concerned, so I’ll choose products that are very safe when I can, but it’s okay if some of my favorites are rated as a moderate hazard. <input type="checkbox"/> This is one area where I am not willing to make changes, so I plan to stick with my current options, no matter the scores.	

<p>Kitchen cleaning products</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> I am extremely concerned. It is important for me to choose products that are considered to be very safe (i.e., rated as Verified or A/B on the EWG Healthy Living app).</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I am moderately concerned, so I'll choose products that are very safe when I can, but it's okay if some of my favorites are rated as a moderate hazard.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> This is one area where I am not willing to make changes, so I plan to stick with my current options, no matter the scores.</p>	
<p>Laundry products</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> I am extremely concerned. It is important for me to choose products that are considered to be very safe (i.e., rated as Verified or A/B on the EWG Healthy Living app).</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I am moderately concerned, so I'll choose products that are very safe when I can, but it's okay if some of my favorites are rated as a moderate hazard.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> This is one area where I am not willing to make changes, so I plan to stick with my current options, no matter the scores.</p>	
<p>Other cleaning products used in my home or garage</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> I am extremely concerned. It is important for me to choose products that are considered to be very safe (i.e., rated as Verified or A/B on the EWG Healthy Living app).</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I am moderately concerned, so I'll choose products that are very safe when I can, but it's okay if some of my favorites are rated as a moderate hazard.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> This is one area where I am not willing to make changes, so I plan to stick with my current options, no matter the scores.</p>	

PERSONAL CARE PRODUCTS

Revisit the “Personal Care Products: Adding to Your Bucket” chapter. Decide how concerned you are about each category of product, and within each category, consider which specific products are the most important to you.

CONCERN	HOW I FEEL	WHICH SPECIFIC PRODUCTS AM I MOST CONCERNED ABOUT?
<p>Hair care products</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> I am extremely concerned. It is important for me to choose products that are considered to be very safe (i.e., rated as Verified or 1–2 on the EWG Healthy Living app).</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I am moderately concerned, so I'll choose products that are very safe when I can, but it's okay if some of my favorites are rated as a moderate hazard.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> This is one area where I am not willing to make changes, so I plan to stick with my current options, no matter the scores.</p>	
<p>Makeup/ cosmetics</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> I am extremely concerned. It is important for me to choose products that are considered to be very safe (i.e., rated as Verified or 1–2 on the EWG Healthy Living app).</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I am moderately concerned, so I'll choose products that are very safe when I can, but it's okay if some of my favorites are rated as a moderate hazard.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> This is one area where I am not willing to make changes, so I plan to stick with my current options, no matter the scores.</p>	

<p>Skin care products</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> I am extremely concerned. It is important for me to choose products that are considered to be very safe (i.e., rated as Verified or 1–2 on the EWG Healthy Living app).</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I am moderately concerned, so I'll choose products that are very safe when I can, but it's okay if some of my favorites are rated as a moderate hazard.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> This is one area where I am not willing to make changes, so I plan to stick with my current options, no matter the scores.</p>	
<p>Other products used on skin (deodorant, shaving cream, etc.)</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> I am extremely concerned. It is important for me to choose products that are considered to be very safe (i.e., rated as Verified or 1–2 on the EWG Healthy Living app).</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I am moderately concerned, so I'll choose products that are very safe when I can, but it's okay if some of my favorites are rated as a moderate hazard.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> This is one area where I am not willing to make changes, so I plan to stick with my current options, no matter the scores.</p>	
<p>Dental hygiene products</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> I am extremely concerned. It is important for me to choose products that are considered to be very safe (i.e., rated as Verified or 1–2 on the EWG Healthy Living app).</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I am moderately concerned, so I'll choose products that are very safe when I can, but it's okay if some of my favorites are rated as a moderate hazard.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> This is one area where I am not willing to make changes, so I plan to stick with my current options, no matter the scores.</p>	

<p>Feminine hygiene products</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> I am extremely concerned. It is important for me to choose products that are considered to be very safe (i.e., rated as Verified or 1–2 on the EWG Healthy Living app).</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I am moderately concerned, so I'll choose products that are very safe when I can, but it's okay if some of my favorites are rated as a moderate hazard.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> This is one area where I am not willing to make changes, so I plan to stick with my current options, no matter the scores.</p>	
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FOOD CONTACT CHEMICALS

Recall the topics from the “Better Living Through Chemistry” chapter, as well as the room-by-room topics listed in the “Live (Mainly) Clean” chapter. Choose which are the most important to you.

CONCERN	HOW I FEEL	WHICH SPECIFIC PRODUCTS AM I MOST CONCERNED ABOUT?
<p>Toxins in cookware</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> I am extremely concerned. I plan to make changes to the current items I use to find safer options.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I am moderately concerned, so I'll make safer choices when I purchase new items in this category.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> This is one area where I am not willing to make changes, so I plan to stick with my current options.</p>	

<p>Food storage containers, wraps, and bags</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> I am extremely concerned. I plan to make changes to the current items I use to find safer options.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I am moderately concerned, so I'll make safer choices when I purchase new items in this category.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> This is one area where I am not willing to make changes, so I plan to stick with my current options.</p>	
<p>Cooking utensils and cutting boards</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> I am extremely concerned. I plan to make changes to the current items I use to find safer options.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I am moderately concerned, so I'll make safer choices when I purchase new items in this category.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> This is one area where I am not willing to make changes, so I plan to stick with my current options.</p>	
<p>Beverage containers / bottles</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> I am extremely concerned. I plan to make changes to the current items I use to find safer options.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I am moderately concerned, so I'll make safer choices when I purchase new items in this category.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> This is one area where I am not willing to make changes, so I plan to stick with my current options.</p>	

CLEAN UP YOUR HOME AND YARD

Think back to the topics from the “Better Living Through Chemistry” chapter, as well as the room-by-room topics listed in the “Live (Mainly) Clean” chapter. Choose which are the most important to you.

CONCERN	HOW I FEEL	WHICH SPECIFIC PRODUCTS AM I MOST CONCERNED ABOUT?
<p>Pest control (indoors)</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> I am extremely concerned. I plan to make changes to the current items I use to find safer options.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I am moderately concerned, so I'll make safer choices when I purchase new items in this category.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> This is one area where I am not willing to make changes, so I plan to stick with my current options.</p>	
<p>Pest control (outside)</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> I am extremely concerned. I plan to make changes to the current items I use to find safer options.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I am moderately concerned, so I'll make safer choices when I purchase new items in this category.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> This is one area where I am not willing to make changes, so I plan to stick with my current options.</p>	

<p>Plastics (shower curtain, bathmat)</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> I am extremely concerned. I plan to make changes to the current items I use to find safer options.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I am moderately concerned, so I'll make safer choices when I purchase new items in this category.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> This is one area where I am not willing to make changes, so I plan to stick with my current options.</p>	
<p>Water quality (from my faucets and bottled waters)</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> I am extremely concerned. I plan to make changes to the current items I use to find safer options.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I am moderately concerned, so I'll make safer choices when I purchase new items in this category.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> This is one area where I am not willing to make changes, so I plan to stick with my current options.</p>	
<p>Home furnishings (furniture, floor coverings, paint)</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> I am extremely concerned. I plan to make changes to the current items I use to find safer options.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I am moderately concerned, so I'll make safer choices when I purchase new items in this category.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> This is one area where I am not willing to make changes, so I plan to stick with my current options.</p>	

<p>Mattress and bedding</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> I am extremely concerned. I plan to make changes to the current items I use to find safer options. <input type="checkbox"/> I am moderately concerned, so I'll make safer choices when I purchase new items in this category. <input type="checkbox"/> This is one area where I am not willing to make changes, so I plan to stick with my current options. 	
<p>Gardening practices (fertilizers, herbicides)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> I am extremely concerned. I plan to make changes to the current items I use to find safer options. <input type="checkbox"/> I am moderately concerned, so I'll make safer choices when I purchase new items in this category. <input type="checkbox"/> This is one area where I am not willing to make changes, so I plan to stick with my current options. 	

INTERMITTENT FASTING FOR SELF-CLEANING

Go back to pages 215-216 and read your reflections about autophagy and intermittent fasting. Also read what you wrote after reading page 206, where you considered how you could apply intermittent fasting to your life.

Now, choose one of these options:

I am already living an intermittent fasting lifestyle, and I love knowing that my body spends extra time self-cleaning each day.

I am interested in incorporating intermittent fasting into my life, and I plan to read *Fast. Feast. Repeat.* when I'm ready to get started. I'll start with the twenty-eight-day FAST Start and go from there.

Intermittent fasting doesn't seem like something that is for me right now. (Sorry, Gin!) Maybe one day.

OTHER TOOLS FOR SELF-CLEANING

Go back to the “Extra Credit: More Tools for Self-Cleaning” chapter and revisit these tools. Consider which you plan to include as a part of your personal self-cleaning toolbox.

TOOL	HOW I FEEL	MY PLANS
Exercise	<input type="checkbox"/> I am all in! This is a tool I plan to use. <input type="checkbox"/> This is not a tool that interests me at this time.	
Sauna	<input type="checkbox"/> I am all in! This is a tool I plan to use. <input type="checkbox"/> This is not a tool that interests me at this time.	

<p>Massage</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> I am all in! This is a tool I plan to use.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> This is not a tool that interests me at this time.</p>	
<p>Committing to quality sleep</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> I am all in! This is a tool I plan to use.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> This is not a tool that interests me at this time.</p>	
<p>Blue-light blocking</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> I am all in! This is a tool I plan to use.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> This is not a tool that interests me at this time.</p>	
<p>Earthing</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> I am all in! This is a tool I plan to use.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> This is not a tool that interests me at this time.</p>	
<p>Cleaning up my indoor air quality</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> I am all in! This is a tool I plan to use.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> This is not a tool that interests me at this time.</p>	

TAKE ACTION: YOUR PERSONAL DEFINITION OF CLEAN(ISH) LIVING

Now that you've taken the time to consider what to include in your definition of clean(ish) living, summarize it here.

MY PERSONAL DEFINITION OF CLEAN(ISH) LIVING

There are some products that I am most concerned about, and I plan to prioritize choosing safe products (list the products from each category that you are most concerned about):

Household cleaning products:

Personal care products:

Food contact products:

Products throughout my home and yard:

There are some products that I am *not as concerned about*, so I'll choose safer products when it is convenient to do so, **or** if it doesn't affect the performance of the product (such as the way Gin uses safer deodorant *most* of the year), **or** I'll use them if I don't have another option available. This includes:

Household cleaning products:

Personal care products:

Food contact products:

Products throughout my home and yard:

There are some self-cleaning tools (from “Extra Credit: More Tools for Self-Cleaning” and “Intermittent Fasting: A Powerful Self-Cleaning Tool”) that I use in my current routine *or* plan to add to my routine. These include:

If you have kids in your home, consider the strategies that I mentioned in this chapter and choose ideas from the list below that you would like to try. Check all the ones that apply, and make a plan for how to implement each.

- Model eating a wide variety of foods, including plenty of vegetables and fruits. Let your family see that you enjoy eating them rather than acting like it's a chore. If you aren't enjoying your veggies, they won't either. And if you *aren't* enjoying them, it's time to find new recipes—I promise that veggies can be delicious when you know what to do with them.

Plan:

- Repeatedly expose your kids to unfamiliar foods. As research shows us, it can take an average of *fifteen* exposures before a picky toddler is willing to try a new food. And remember—"average" refers to a number in the middle. Your kid may be above average and need seventeen exposures.

Plan:

Explain to your kids about the importance of nutrients and why our bodies need a wide variety of nutrients to be strong and healthy. When you are shopping or meal planning with your kids, take a few minutes to look up some of the ingredients you’ll be using so your kids will understand how they are healthy for our bodies. For example, a web search for the key words “carrots nutrition” brings up all sorts of websites that tout the health benefits of carrots. You can also search for terms like “carrots fun facts” and learn all sorts of things you didn’t know, which a lot of kids enjoy. Here’s one example: the deeper the orange, the greater the beta-carotene content of the carrot. Kids would have a lot of fun hunting down the “orangest” carrots for sale at your grocery store, and they would be more likely to eat them after doing so.

Plan:

Teach your kids to read food labels. When you are at the grocery store, compare labels and choose foods together. Give your kids the opportunity to verbalize why one option is a better choice than another—when they can explain it to you, you know they understand it.

CHOOSE YOUR CLEAN(ISH) TIMELINE

REFLECT: YOUR IDEAL TIME FRAME

Think about yourself for a moment. Which of these descriptions sound most like you?
Check as many as apply.

- I prefer to make a plan and stick with it. I work best when I have everything all mapped out.
- I like to figure out things as I go. If I plan ahead of time *too much*, I often get frustrated with myself and quit entirely. I need to be able to adjust my plans on an as-needed basis.
- If I give myself too much time to complete projects, I procrastinate and am less likely to take any action at all.
- I need time to work through any process, and I don't work well when I feel rushed.
- My time is variable. Sometimes, I have more time to devote than at other times, so it's important for me to remain flexible with any timeline I implement.

Now, depending upon which items you checked, decide how you want to approach your clean(ish) timeline.

- If you chose “I prefer to make a plan and stick with it. I work best when I have everything all mapped out,” then consider planning out your clean(ish) timeline ahead of time. Go ahead and fill in the timeline on the next pages with your nine focus topics, in the order that you want to address them.
- If you chose “I like to figure out things as I go. If I plan ahead of time too much, I often get frustrated with myself and quit entirely. I need to be able to adjust my plans on an as-needed basis,” then it's probably best for you to only choose your first focus topic for now. After you complete the first focus,

you'll choose your second focus, and so on.

- If you chose “If I give myself too much time to complete projects, I procrastinate and am less likely to take any action at all,” then you will want to choose shorter time frames. Nine months may be too long for you, as you may lose interest along the way. Consider choosing one focus per week.
- If you chose “I need time to work through any process, and I don't work well when I feel rushed,” then the monthly focus may be right for you.
- If you chose “My time is variable. Sometimes, I have more time to devote than at other times, so it's important for me to remain flexible with any timeline I implement,” then you'll want to choose one topic at a time, work on it as long as it takes, and then choose the next topic. Both the topics and the time it takes to complete them will vary as needed.

TAKE ACTION: YOUR INDIVIDUAL TIMELINE

Now that you've considered what approach may work best for you, use the chart on the next pages to organize your timeline.

- In the **Time Frame** column, record the month or dates for each topic you'll address.
 - If you want to focus on one topic per month and you are beginning the process in July, you'll write “July” for month 1, “August” for month 2, and so on.
 - If you want to take a week for each topic, you can list the weekly dates as your time frame.
 - Alternately, if you decided that you will take a more open-ended approach, you will fully tackle one topic at a time, spending the amount of time that is right for you for each one. Maybe it takes a week for the first focus topic, but the next one takes you three weeks. You can fill in the dates after the fact, to reflect the amount of time it took you to work through the topic. That's perfectly fine. Make the timeline work for you in a way that feels appropriate and doable.
- In the **Focus** column, you'll choose one of the nine focus topics and list one in each box.
 - For example, in the focus column for time frame 1, you may choose to begin with *Choose Safe Household Cleaning Products*, or perhaps you want to start with the topic *Limit Ultra-Processed Foods*, or *Extend Your Daily Fast*. What you choose and the order in which you select your topics is completely up to you.

- You may want to fill in all nine focus boxes now, or you may tackle one at a time, and choose the one you want to complete next after you finish the first one, and so on.
- In the **Notes** column, you can make any notes that are helpful for you as you get your timeline organized.

Keep in mind that you do *not* need to plan out your entire timeline all at once if you don't want to. Remember: you are in charge at all times, and I am providing you with suggestions—but they are only suggestions. Make this process work for you, your personality, your budget, and the time you have available.

The nine focus topics are explained in detail in the next chapter, but here is a preview:

Focus: Extend Your Daily Fast

Focus: Choose Safe Household Cleaning Products

Focus: Select Safe Personal Care Products

Focus: Avoid Food Contact Chemicals

Focus: Prioritize Quality Foods

Focus: Limit Ultra-Processed Foods

Focus: Add in Nutrients

Focus: Incorporate Tools for Self-Cleaning

Focus: Clean Up Your Home and Yard

TIME FRAME	FOCUS	NOTES
1 _____		
2 _____		
3 _____		
4 _____		
5 _____		
6 _____		

7 _____		
8 _____		
9 _____		

Now that you've made an implementation plan, let's get started with the focus topics.

SLOW AND STEADY CLEAN(ISH) CHANGE: YOUR NINE FOCUS TOPICS

Focus: Extend Your Daily Fast

Focus: Choose Safe Household Cleaning Products

Focus: Select Safe Personal Care Products

Focus: Avoid Food Contact Chemicals

Focus: Prioritize Quality Foods

Focus: Limit Ultra-Processed Foods

Focus: Add in Nutrients

Focus: Incorporate Tools for Self-Cleaning

Focus: Clean Up Your Home and Yard

FOCUS

EXTEND YOUR DAILY FAST

I'm sure you aren't surprised that I put this one first because I'm such a huge proponent of intermittent fasting. I believe it is one of the most powerful things you can do to promote health and longevity, if not *the* most powerful thing. But, as I said already, these focus topics are *not* written in any type of sequential order that you must follow.

So, you can choose to start here with the intermittent fasting focus, or you can leave this one until last. Or maybe you *really* don't want to do any kind of intermittent fasting—ever—in which case, that is also fine.

If and when you do decide to practice intermittent fasting, I encourage you to commit to a month for this particular focus, and that's because there's a very important period of time called the twenty-eight-day FAST Start. You'll understand why that first twenty-eight days is so important when you read *Fast. Feast. Repeat.*

IMPLEMENTING THIS FOCUS:

1. REREAD: Go back through selected parts of the book

Reread “Intermittent Fasting: A Powerful Self-Cleaning Tool.”

2. REVISIT: Read and consider what you wrote in the Reflect / Take Action activities

Go back to *Reflect and Take Action: Giving Your Body Time to Clean* and read what you wrote there.

3. REVIEW: Look back at your personal definition of clean(ish) living

Reread what you wrote about intermittent fasting within your personal definition of clean(ish) living on page 216.

4. RESOLVE: Set your personal course of action for implementing the focus-clean(ish) living.



FOCUS

CHOOSE SAFE HOUSEHOLD CLEANING PRODUCTS

This focus topic is pretty straightforward: you're going to take all the time that you need to examine the household cleaning products that you currently use and make a plan for making the transition to clean(ish) cleaning (try to say that ten times fast). If you have as many cleaning products stashed away as I did, this may take a lot of time. Remember to go through your kitchen, laundry room, bathrooms, garage, and outside storage areas in search of various cleaning products—I found them *everywhere*. The longer you've been in your current home, the more you'll likely have stashed away.

IMPLEMENTING THIS FOCUS:

1. REREAD: Go back through selected parts of the book

Reread “Household Cleaning Products: What’s in Your Bucket?” and applicable sections of the “Live (Mainly) Clean” chapter.

2. REVISIT: Read and consider what you wrote in the Reflect/Take Action activities

Go back to “Reflect and Take Action: What’s in Your Cabinets?” and read what you wrote there.

3. REVIEW: Look back at your personal definition of clean(ish) living

Reread what you wrote about household cleaning products within your personal definition of clean(ish) living.

4. RESOLVE: Set your personal course of action for implementing the focus

You'll want to choose tasks to complete as you work through this focus area. I have given you a list of a few suggestions, and I have given you space to create your own personalized implementation steps, as well.

Here are some of the tasks you can choose as you complete this focus:

- Gather all your cleaning products. Ignore any greenwashing on the label, and take the extra step to use third-party verification through one of the excellent apps or resources that lets you know whether a product is a safer choice or not, such as the EWG Healthy Living website and app and several sources from the “Online Resources” chapter: Consumer Reports, Gimme the Good Stuff, and the Environmental Protection Agency.

- Put all the products that don’t meet your definition of clean(ish) living aside.
 - Decide if you will dispose of any of them now, or if you will use them up before replacing. If you’re getting rid of them, call the appropriate local authorities/sanitation department and ask them how to dispose of the items safely if you are unsure.

 - Replace the products you remove (or use up) with safer choices.

- Less is more: a general all-purpose cleaner can replace many specialty cleaners.

- Consider concentrated formulations that you purchase and then add to your own spray bottle, along with water. You’ll save packaging waste and usually save money at the same time.

- Plan for success. The fewer decisions you’ll have to make going forward, the easier it will be to stick to the changes you’re making now. Identify your core products, the companies you can trust, and the best places to obtain these products as they run out. Even better: make sure you never run out by having a backup on hand. This will ensure that you’re never stuck making snap decisions that might lead to you grabbing something that is convenient (but not up to your clean(ish) standards).

What other things do you want to do as a part of completing this focus? Add your own personalized implementation steps or tasks here:



FOCUS

SELECT SAFE PERSONAL CARE PRODUCTS

This focus topic is also fairly straightforward, though it isn't going to always be easy; you're going to take all the time that you need to examine the personal care products that you (and your family) currently use and make a plan for making the transition to clean(ish) living. When it comes to personal care products, you're going to be surprised how much emotion may be tied into some of your choices, and change won't always be easy. (*I love the way toxin-filled deodorant works, darn it. Sigh.*) Never forget that every time you make a switch to a safer option, you have the potential to lower the number of toxins in your bucket.

IMPLEMENTING THIS FOCUS:

1. REREAD: Go back through selected parts of the book

Reread “Personal Care Products: Adding to Your Bucket” and applicable sections of the “Live (Mainly) Clean” chapter.

2. REVISIT: Read and consider what you wrote in the Reflect/Take Action activities

Go back to “Reflect and Take Action: What Am I Using?” and read what you wrote there.

3. REVIEW: Look back at your personal definition of clean(ish) living

Reread what you wrote about selecting safe personal care products within your personal definition of clean(ish) living.

4. RESOLVE: Set your personal course of action for implementing the focus

You'll want to choose tasks to complete as you work through this focus area. I have given you a list of a few suggestions, and I have given you space to create your own personalized implementation steps, as well.

Here are some of the tasks you can choose as you complete this focus:

- Gather all your personal care products. Ignore any greenwashing on the label, and take the extra step to use third-party verification through one of the excellent apps or resources that lets you know whether a product is a safer choice or not, such as the EWG Healthy Living website and app. Also, refer to sources from the “Online Resources” chapter: Consumer Reports, the Campaign for Safe Cosmetics, and Gimme the Good Stuff.

- Put all the products that don’t meet your definition of clean(ish) living aside.
 - Decide if you will dispose of any of them now, or if you will use them up before replacing. If you’re getting rid of them now, call the appropriate local authorities/sanitation department and ask them how to dispose of the items safely if you are unsure.

 - Replace the products you remove (or use up) with safer choices.

- Less is more: Do you really need all the products that you currently use? Pare down the number of items you use to just the essentials. You’ll save both time and money in the long run.

- Plan for success. The fewer decisions you’ll have to make going forward, the easier it will be to stick to the changes you’re making now. Identify your core products, the companies you can trust, and the best places to obtain these products as they run out. Even better: make sure you never run out by having a backup on hand. This will ensure that you’re never stuck making snap decisions that might lead to you grabbing something that is convenient (but not up to your clean(ish) standards).

What other things do you want to do as a part of completing this focus? Add your own personalized implementation steps or tasks here:



FOCUS

AVOID FOOD CONTACT CHEMICALS

Some of the swaps you'll make as a part of this focus will be simple and easy, while others will be more complicated and expensive (I'm looking at you, expensive-yet-toxin-coated pots and pans). It's okay to take this focus slowly and swap out a few things now and others as you can afford it.

IMPLEMENTING THIS FOCUS:

1. REREAD: Go back through selected parts of the book

Reread “Better Living Through Chemistry,” and particularly focus on the “Food Contact Chemicals” section. Also refer back to the applicable sections from the “Live (Mainly) Clean” chapter, particularly the “kitchen” section.

2. REVISIT: Read and consider what you wrote in the Reflect / Take Action activities

Go back to “Reflect: How Full Is Your Bucket?” and read what you wrote there.

3. REVIEW: Look back at your personal definition of clean(ish) living

Reread what you wrote about avoiding food contact chemicals within your personal definition of clean(ish) living.

4. RESOLVE: Set your personal course of action for implementing the focus

You'll want to choose tasks to complete as you work through this focus area. I have given you a list of a few suggestions, and I have given you space to create your own personalized implementation steps, as well.



FOCUS

PRIORITIZE QUALITY FOODS

When completing this focus, you're going to emphasize choosing high-quality foods that are non-GMO and organic, including meats and animal products that come from animals raised as nature intended. This is a separate topic from whether your foods are ultra-processed or not; remember that foods can be both ultra-processed and made with organic ingredients. For now, you're only examining any foods in your kitchen that are *not* ultra-processed. (If you can't remember how to tell the difference, reread the section about the NOVA Food Classification Scale.) There's a separate focus for limiting ultra-processed foods, and that is the next one coming up.

However, since *you* are in charge of how this process works, if you want to combine this focus and the next one into one big food-focus, you can. It's totally up to you.

IMPLEMENTING THIS FOCUS:

1. REREAD: Go back through selected parts of the book

Reread “Food, Glorious Food” and sections from the “Eat (Mostly) Clean” chapter that apply to this topic.

2. REVISIT: Read and consider what you wrote in the Reflect/Take Action activities

Go back to “Reflect and Take Action: What's in Your Kitchen?” and read what you wrote there.

3. REVIEW: Look back at your personal definition of clean(ish) eating

Reread what you wrote within your personal definition of clean(ish) eating that relates to topics within these chapters/sections (organic foods, non-GMOs, sustainably raised foods, etc.).

4. RESOLVE: Set your personal course of action for implementing the focus

You'll want to choose tasks to complete as you work through this focus area. I have given you a list of a few suggestions, and I have given you space to create your own personalized implementation steps, as well.

Here are some of the tasks you can choose as you complete this focus:

- Go through your fridge, freezer, and pantry and take a look at the basic foods you have on hand that would not be considered to be ultra-processed foods: butter, milk, cheese, meats, fruits, vegetables, grains, and so on.
- Set aside any foods that don't meet your definition of clean(ish) eating. Decide if you would rather eat them or get rid of them now. It's totally up to you, but for perishable items like these, it's likely a better choice to go ahead and use them up rather than throwing them away.
- Replace these foods with better choices the next time you shop.
- Understand which food labels really mean something and look for them when shopping.
- Prioritize organic/non-GMO/sustainably raised or grown foods when you can.
- Ignore greenwashing on the label, and take the extra step to use third-party verification through one of the excellent apps or resources that lets you know whether a product is a safer choice or not, such as the EWG Healthy Living website and app. Also, refer to sources from the "Online Resources" chapter: The Organic Center, Fair Trade Certified, Certified Humane, and the Monterey Bay Aquarium Seafood Watch.
- Consider changing your grocery store. We get into the habit of shopping where it is most convenient for us (or where the price is the lowest), but that may not be the best source for what you're looking for now. Some stores offer more options than others, so take a tour of stores you may not have visited recently to see who has the selection you need.

What other things do you want to do as a part of completing this focus? Add your own personalized implementation steps or tasks here:



FOCUS

LIMIT ULTRA-PROCESSED FOODS

To avoid being overfed and undernourished, it's important to consider our intake of ultra-processed foods. Now it's time to make some decisions about which ultra-processed foods need to go and which can stay—and this might not always be easy. You'll rely heavily on your personal definition of clean(ish) eating and look at the ingredient labels of your favorite products to see if they have any ingredients you identified as concerning to you.

IMPLEMENTING THIS FOCUS:

1. REREAD: Go back through selected parts of the book

Reread “Take a Break from Fake: Problems with Ultra-Processed Foods” and sections from the “Eat (Mostly) Clean” chapter that apply to this topic.

2. REVISIT: Read and consider what you wrote in the Reflect/Take Action activities

Go back to “Reflect and Take Action: Finding Food” and read what you wrote there.

3. REVIEW: Look back at your personal definition of clean(ish) eating

Reread what you wrote within your personal definition of clean(ish) eating that relates to topics within these chapters/sections (reducing your consumption of ultra-processed foods and problematic ingredients).

4. RESOLVE: Set your personal course of action for implementing the focus

You'll want to choose tasks to complete as you work through this focus area. I have given you a list of a few suggestions, but I have also given you space to create your own personalized implementation steps, as well.

Here are some of the tasks you can choose as you complete this focus:

- Go through your fridge and pantry and read labels. Look for ingredients that you included in your “foods and ingredients I will avoid at all times” list from your definition of clean(ish) eating. Set any of these products aside in a separate pile.
- Ignore greenwashing on the label, and take the extra step to use third-party verification through one of the excellent apps or resources that lets you know whether a product is a safer choice or not such as the EWG Healthy Living website and app.
- Use the NOVA Food Classification System to help you identify which foods are ultra-processed. Make a separate pile for “ultra-processed but still clean(ish) enough for me” items.
- Consider all the products that you put aside that don’t meet your definition of clean(ish) eating. Decide if you would rather use them up or get rid of them now.
 - One thing that you might struggle with: throwing food away. It feels like “wasting it.” Keep this in mind: you “wasted” it the day you bought it. Eating food you no longer want to eat isn’t going to help. Your body is not a trash can.
 - For anything that is in unopened boxes, cans, and bags, consider donating to a local food pantry. In an ideal world, every person would have access to organic and fresh foods. We are not there yet. Families with food insecurity would rather have the foods you donate now than go without a meal.
 - Replace the products you remove (or use up) with safer choices. The EWG app allows you to search by product name and also makes suggestions of “better rated products” for food items, and that can help you make sensible swaps. While not all the foods in your fridge or pantry will be rated in the app, it is still a great place to start.
- Plan to do more cooking at home. When you control the ingredients, you can make sure they are food rather than not-food.
- Think of ultra-processed foods as condiments rather than the main attraction. Your goal is to de-emphasize their role in your life as much as possible, while still enjoying your meals and eating experiences.
- Make swaps to less-processed versions with fewer problematic ingredients whenever you can. It may be as simple as changing from one brand to another.
- Prioritize making purchases from companies that focus on eliminating problematic food additives from their products.



FOCUS

ADD IN NUTRIENTS

We don't just remove foods that have ingredients we want to avoid—we also make sure that we choose foods that have all the nutrients our bodies need to support vibrant health—not to mention self-cleaning. Hippocrates told us to “let food be thy medicine and medicine be thy food.” And as Michael Pollan said a lot more recently, “Eat food. Mostly plants. Not too much.” Your goal is to eat a variety of real foods so that you'll maximize the number of phytochemicals you take in. Remember that there are so many phytochemicals in plants that scientists haven't even identified what all of them are or what they all do, so the only way to know that you're getting what your body needs is to go for variety.

IMPLEMENTING THIS FOCUS:

1. REREAD: Go back through selected parts of the book

Reread “What's a Healthy Diet? And How Do We Know?” and “What's Food Got to Do with It?”

2. REVISIT: Read and consider what you wrote in the Reflect / Take Action activities

Go back to “Reflect and Take Action: Examine the Diet of Your Ancestors” and “Reflect and Take Action: Consider Your Diet Diversity and Focus on Nutrients” and read what you wrote there.

3. REVIEW: Look back at your personal definition of clean(ish) eating

Reread what you wrote within your personal definition of clean(ish) eating that relates to topics within these chapters/sections (choosing what foods to add in).

4. RESOLVE: Set your personal course of action for implementing the focus

You'll want to choose tasks to complete as you work through this focus area. I have given you a list of a few suggestions, and I have given you space to create your own personalized implementation steps, as well.

Here are some of the tasks you can choose as you complete this focus:

- Get out of your current food rut—most of us get trapped in one, even though we may not realize it. We’re busy, so we gravitate toward the same few meals each week. Our bodies need diversity, so we have to take time to plan for it.
- Buy a few new recipe books that are plant-forward. This is not to suggest that you become a vegetarian—but most of us don’t have a problem getting sufficient animal products in our diets. It’s the vegetables that need some help.
- Overall, make sure to prioritize plants from day to day to up your intake of phytochemicals and boost your body’s self-cleaning abilities. You’ll also feed your gut microbiome well.
- Buy organic produce when you can, but don’t let whether it’s organic or not stop you from buying fresh veggies—a nonorganic zucchini is a better choice when it comes to nutrients than an organic chocolate chip cookie. Still, it’s helpful to use the EWG “Dirty Dozen” list (as well as the “Clean Fifteen” list) to guide your choices. If a food is on the “Dirty Dozen” list, choose organic.
- Include foods that your ancestors ate. Look for traditional recipes that are either unfamiliar to you or ones you haven’t made before and experiment.
- Make a plan to incorporate at least one or two new plant foods (these can be vegetables, fruits, herbs/spices, etc.) each week.

What other things do you want to do as a part of completing this focus? Add your own personalized implementation steps or tasks here:



FOCUS

INCORPORATE TOOLS FOR SELF-CLEANING

It's time to have some fun! All the tools for self-cleaning are also amazing self-care strategies. You'll be taking care of yourself both physically and emotionally, and that's a real win-win. As you work on this focus, make a plan for incorporating these strategies into your regular routine—not just one time as you complete this focus. As an example, after I get a massage, I always make an appointment for the next one before I leave. That means it's already scheduled and I don't even have to think about it.

IMPLEMENTING THIS FOCUS:

1. REREAD: Go back through selected parts of the book

Reread “Extra Credit: More Tools for Self-Cleaning.”

2. REVISIT: Read and consider what you wrote in the Reflect/Take Action activities

Go back to “Take Action: Choose Your Tools” and read what you wrote there.

3. REVIEW: Look back at your personal definition of clean(ish) living

Reread what you wrote about incorporating self-cleaning tools within your personal definition of clean(ish) living.

4. RESOLVE: Set your personal course of action for implementing the focus

You'll want to choose tasks to complete as you work through this focus area. I have given you a list of a few suggestions, but I have also given you space to create your own personalized implementation steps, as well.

Here are some of the tasks you can choose as you complete this focus:

- If you're not already active, make a plan to add exercise to each day.



FOCUS

CLEAN UP YOUR HOME AND YARD

Now it's time to focus on your yard, as well as the various other household items that don't fit into the other categories. This is a big topic, but many of the considerations don't apply to day-to-day activities the same way that our foods and cleaning or personal care products do.

In the chapter on how to live (mainly) clean, I mentioned a variety of concepts that applied to the various rooms of your home, and some of them were big-ticket items (such as getting new furniture) or once-in-a-while projects (such as repainting). While you included these in your definition of clean(ish) living, we all know that it isn't practical for you to rip up all your carpet, throw away all your mattresses, get all new furniture, or repaint your entire house as a part of becoming clean(ish).

Because things like buying furniture, getting a new mattress, replacing your floor coverings, or painting the walls are expensive and infrequent, these situations may not come up during your nine-week to nine-month timeline—but they will all come up in the future as you're living your life. When you face any of these big purchases or home improvements, you'll want to make clean(ish) choices, so always keep that idea in the back of your mind.

IMPLEMENTING THIS FOCUS:

1. REREAD: Go back through selected parts of the book

Reread “Better Living Through Chemistry,” as well as applicable sections from the “Live (Mainly) Clean” chapter.

2. REVISIT: Read and consider what you wrote in the Reflect/Take Action activities

Go back to “Reflect: How Full Is Your Bucket?” and read what you wrote there.

3. REVIEW: Look back at your personal definition of clean(ish) living

Reread what you wrote about cleaning up throughout your home and yard within your personal definition of clean(ish) living.

4. RESOLVE: Set your personal course of action for implementing the focus

You'll want to choose tasks to complete as you work through this focus area. I have given you a list of a few suggestions, and I have given you space to create your own personalized implementation steps, as well.

Here are some of the tasks you can choose as you complete this focus:

- Gather all your yard and garden products, and also your pest control products (both indoor and outdoor). Ignore any greenwashing on labels, and take the extra step to use third-party verification through one of the excellent apps or resources that let you know whether a product is a safer choice or not such as sources from the “Online Resources” chapter, Consumer Reports, Earth 911, the Organic Center, the Environmental Protection Agency, Fair Trade Certified, and the Green and Healthy Homes Initiative.
- Put all the products that don't meet your definition of clean(ish) living aside.
 - Decide if you will need to dispose of any of them now, or if you will use them up before replacing. If you're getting rid of them, call the appropriate local authorities/sanitation department and ask them how to dispose of the items safely if you are unsure.
 - Replace the products you remove (or use up) with safer choices.
- Prioritize making purchases from companies that focus on eliminating toxins from their products.
- Think of your yard as a habitat for native plant, animal, and insect species.
- Make choices that will thrive in your climate without the use of toxic chemical fertilizers, herbicides, or pesticides.
- Connect with your local extension/conservation service (or whatever it's called in your location) and use their services. They can help you plan based on your local area.
- Consider a water filtration system (either simple or more complex) for your home.
- Replace your shower curtain liner with a nontoxic option.
- As you buy new home furnishings or do home improvement projects, use resources from the “Online Resources” chapter to help you make cleaner choices—Consumer Reports, Earth 911, the Organic Center, the Environmental Protection Agency, Fair Trade Certified, and the Green and Healthy Homes Initiative.

