ADVANCE CHAPTER EXCERPT

LOSE up to a POUND a DAY,
Reclaim ENERGY and FOCUS,
Upgrade Your LIFE

From the Inventor of Bulletproof Coffee

THE Bulletproof Diet

DAVE ASPREY

FOREWORD BY *NEW YORK TIMES* BESTSELLING AUTHOR J J VIRGIN

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THE BULLETPROOF DIET

LOSE Up to a **POUND** a **DAY,**
RECLAIM Your **ENERGY** and **FOCUS,**
and **UPGRADE** Your **LIFE**

DAVE ASPREY
FOREWORD BY JJ VIRGIN

RODALE

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INTRODUCTION

THE BULLETPROOF EXECUTIVE

Nearly 2 decades ago I was a young, brand-new multimillionaire entrepreneur in Silicon Valley. Life should have been awesome, but there was one problem—I was obese, weighing in at almost 300 pounds. For 18 months straight, I had tried restricting my eating to 1,500 to 1,800 calories a day and working out for 90 minutes, six times a week. I poured my initiative and willpower into losing weight, and while I did get stronger, the extra fat wouldn't go away. By the time I was 30, I was diagnosed with the rapid onset of second-phase thrombin-induced aggregation. Basically, my blood was thick, like sludge, and my physician was concerned that I would die of a stroke or heart attack—not at some indeterminate time in the future, but soon.

Despite my career success, most of the time I felt too awful to appreciate it. I was always tired and consumed by stress, and I was sick all of the time with chronic sinus infections and strep throat. My brain felt foggy, and I had trouble focusing. When I was getting my MBA at the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania while also working at a startup, my performance on exams was horrible. I'd get a couple questions right, and then despite my best efforts, I'd make unconscious mistakes on the rest. It felt like something in my brain was betraying me. I knew how to do the work, but when I really tried to concentrate I just couldn't "bring it."

This was frightening. Being fat was bad enough, but if I was going to

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be fat and also be stupid, there was no way I could make a living doing the work I love. This motivated me to research the latest brain imaging techniques, and I finally decided to undergo a then-controversial brain imaging technique called a single-photon emission computed tomography (SPECT) scan so I could finally learn why my brain was betraying me. On the appointed day at Silicon Valley Brain Imaging, a technician injected radioactive sugar into my arm. My brain then used the sugar, and a radioactive tracer revealed that in my prefrontal cortex—the most advanced, recently evolved part of the brain—there was essentially no activity when I tried to concentrate. I was losing not only my health in what should have been the prime of my life, but also experiencing failure of my brain's basic "hardware." The worst part was that I didn't understand why this was happening. After all, I was doing everything that my doctors and all mainstream medical professionals were telling me to do.

I grew up in the world of hard science, and this has informed the way I look at problem solving. My grandparents met on the Manhattan Project and my grandmother won a prestigious lifetime achievement award for her work in nuclear science. Since I got my own computer at age 8, I'm also one of the few 40-somethings who's been working with computers for more than 30 years. My undergraduate concentration was in decision support systems, a specialty within the field of artificial intelligence. The power of science and technology has been a part of my life for as long as I can remember, and when faced with a health and career crisis, I turned to this power to try and find some answers.

I was an early innovator in the Internet, (i.e., a hacker), and before attending Wharton I ran an instructional program at the University of California extension offices in Silicon Valley. From 1997 to 2002 I taught engineers there how to manage the Internet. This was notoriously hard to do back then because engineers (like medical specialists) like to know every bit of data about the system they're working with, and it just wasn't available then. With the Internet, you often have to "make it go" even when you don't have the luxury of seeing what all of the pieces involved

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are doing. In this way, our bodies and the Internet are not all that different. They are both complex systems with big pieces of data that are missing, misunderstood, or hidden. When I looked at my body that way, I realized that I could learn to hack my biology using the same techniques I used to hack computer systems and the Internet.

This was a major turning point and the beginning of my journey into biohacking—the art of using technology to change the environment both inside and outside of your body to take control and make it do what you want. I was excited by the idea of monitoring my own health to uncover the hidden variables that were affecting how I felt, how I looked, how I performed, and even my relationships and overall happiness. Computer hackers map out a computer system and then attempt to find one little hole they can exploit in order to take over, often by trying each potential flaw until finding the one that lets them in. This is the same process that makes biohacking work. I started to measure my physical output and experiment with my body to troubleshoot the world around me and see what was influencing my performance. Nothing was too "out there" or too small. I got my blood chemistry done and measured my stress levels through adrenal hormone testing. After compiling the results, I started using "smart drugs" to turn my brain back on, adding supplements, and experimenting with countless diets to see what worked, what didn't, and why.

Since then, I've explored private brain-hacking facilities hidden in the Canadian forest, spiritual practices in the Andes, and remote monasteries in Tibet. I installed an electroencephalogram (EEG) brain-wave monitoring machine in my home office and became certified in using a biofeedback technique called heart rate variability to learn how to control my nervous system's stress response. As I used these techniques to master my brain, it became clear that what I ate had a direct impact on my biology and my thinking. When my biology changed, my mental and physical performance did, too. Using these devices to monitor my brain allowed me to see which foods improved my mental performance and which ones destroyed it.

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This was the genesis of the Bulletproof Diet. By experimenting with so many different variables, correlating the feedback, and peeling back layer after layer of the available research, I learned about the complex roles that inflammation, toxins, hormones, neurotransmitters, gut bacteria, and many other factors play when it comes to weight loss, hunger, and energy levels. Lots of these discoveries are in obscure research journals and haven't been widely used, and others are the result of my own careful observations, and observations shared with my by other biohackers. These findings were surprising, but they allowed me to lose weight at the rate of up to a pound a day and look better than ever while gaining amazing levels of performance, resilience, and focus. I learned how to fuel my body and my brain properly and, just as important, to rid my life of the things that were secretly holding me back.

My results were so counterintuitive that at first I thought it was just me. Perhaps there was something odd about the way my personal biochemistry responded to food. But as I shared my discoveries with friends and family members and saw them rapidly losing weight too, while also increasing their mental focus and gaining willpower, I knew I was on to something. Now it's your turn to benefit from my years of research and experimentation. By following the Bulletproof Diet, you'll be able to lose weight, improve your overall performance, and gain an edge on life through increased energy and resilience. For more than a decade now, I have maintained a 100-pound weight loss and even grown a six-pack while lowering my biological age and turbocharging my immune system. My 40s are truly better than my 20s, and yours can be, too.

The truth is that although I say I've lost 100 pounds, I've actually lost far more than that, because every time I tried a new diet I lost a bunch of weight and then ended up gaining it back and then some. Then I'd move on to the next diet, lose weight, and gain it back again. Low-calorie diets, high-protein diets, low-fat diets, liquid diets, Zone, Atkins—I tried them all, even spending almost a year on a raw vegan diet. This cycle continued for years, as I gained and lost the same weight over and over

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again, all the while monitoring how each diet influenced my energy, mood, and cravings.

If you're overweight, does this sound familiar? Do you have a pair of "fat jeans" hiding in your closet because deep down you know that no matter how many diets you try, you'll always need them again once you run out of willpower, "fall off the wagon," and then feel guilty for eating the pizza you told yourself you weren't going to eat? For years my fat jeans sat in my closet just waiting for me to fail again. They had a 46-inch waist.

It wasn't until I hacked the Bulletproof Diet that I was able to finally throw those jeans out for good and stop wasting my willpower on food. And now you'll be able to get rid of your fat jeans, too, as you start kicking ass, losing weight, and living up to your full potential.

Chances are that if you picked up this book, you're not just looking to lose a few pounds. Your life is stressful, and you also want to improve your performance while experiencing easy and sustained weight loss that feels great and tastes even better. Imagine trying to negotiate a business agreement, staying up all night with a sick kid, and then focusing at work the next day, or attempting to think of a new solution to a complex problem when you're fighting food cravings and your body feels like it's been inside a cement mixer for a few days. If you're like me, your life is a tour de force, or maybe you just want it to be. Looking and *feeling* sick, tired, fat, or weak is not an option, and you were not meant to be that way.

We live in a fast-paced world where so many people waste time feeling sluggish and confused, wanting to look, feel, and perform better but not knowing how or understanding why it's not happening for them. They imagine it's because they simply lack the willpower or don't try hard enough. The Bulletproof Diet is the antidote to all of this. It's not just about losing weight fast and feeling fantastic; it's a road map to upgrading your body and your mind from the inside out, simultaneously suppressing the inflammation and guilt that often come with high stress, high expectations, and high performance. On the Bulletproof Diet, guilt is a thing of the past. Most people feel guilty when they have a food craving, but biohackers look

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for the environmental trigger that might have been the cause. The Bulletproof Diet works to remove these potential triggers so you'll never have to waste time feeling guilty about food again.

My personal experience has been reinforced by a decade of leadership in the antiaging field as president, chairman, or a board member of the Silicon Valley Health Institute. There, I've had the opportunity to host conversations with more than 100 top medical professionals and researchers, and I've learned from more than 100 other top experts in human performance on my number 1–ranked health podcast and nationally syndicated radio show, *Bulletproof Radio*. The information in this book is based on the distilled knowledge of those experts and the results of the more than $300,000 I spent biohacking myself with self-experiments.

For you, becoming Bulletproof might mean having more energy on less sleep, losing weight with minimal exercise, or simply feeling like the lights in your brain have turned on for the first time and you finally have the power to be your most awesome, powerful self. What will you be capable of when you're no longer distracted by hunger, energy crashes, or food cravings? Whether you're a superstar, an entrepreneur, or a busy mom or dad who needs to do more in less time, this is your chance to find out. Throughout the book I've included personal stories and anecdotes that illustrate how the Bulletproof Diet has worked for me, but you can ignore those entirely as you learn to customize it so that *you* operate at your optimal level. Remember, you're the one who matters, and what works for one person—including me—may not be the precise formula for you, but the core principles are the same!

I'm not the only one to have benefited from the Bulletproof Diet. In my thriving consulting practice, I use the information in this book to help

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celebrities, athletes, entrepreneurs, CEOs, professional poker players, and hedge fund managers perform at the very top of their fields, where a tiny boost in performance can make the difference between winning and losing. Elite athletes, fitness models, Hollywood celebrities, and Billboard artists have also turned to the Bulletproof Diet to achieve ultimate focus and energy along with camera-ready looks. Online, more than 50,000 people are using the Bulletproof Diet principles to realize the same life-changing weight loss and performance enhancement that my consulting clients and I have, and the results they've shared are spectacular—amazing energy levels and improved brain power along with weight loss, often at a rate of 1 pound per day for sustained periods of time.

You may be surprised to realize that your diet has so much to do with your mental and physical performance, and at first I was, too. The truth is that there are many elements of your environment that affect your performance, but there is no more powerful variable than your diet when you're trying to control your body to get the outcome you desire. Even exercise pales in comparison. This may seem like hyperbole, but your diet is the foundation behind not only your weight, but also your IQ, stress levels, risk of disease, physical performance, aging, and even willpower. You *are* what you eat. What would it feel like to improve in all of these areas simply by making better choices about what you put on your plate? When you begin following the Bulletproof Diet, you'll know the answer within only 2 weeks while losing up to a pound a day and never feeling deprived or hungry. Are you ready to become Bulletproof and start living in a constant state of high performance? Let's get started!

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