

## Mind Tricks That Melt Flab

According to well-established scientific studies corroborated by doctors worldwide, the amount of calories your body burns per day is partially attributed to how much brain cells you actually use. This means that *the more you think, the more you burn*.

That sounds pretty incredulous given that I know of some really *smart* overweight people – and insinuating that weightier people don't use their brains as much as their skinnier counterparts is such a sweeping statement. While that's not necessarily true, it happens to be downright insulting.

But let's not take things out of context without first looking into some of the reasoning behind the research ...

### **So, what exactly are those all-important mind tricks?**

The brain, being an essential human organ, runs on food-converted energy in order to function.

Have you ever felt sluggish after a demanding day at the office? Or remember how awful you felt the last time you stayed up all night cramming for a test? That's your brain telling you that you're about to be depleted of all your energy; it's your cue to rest and recharge.

While it's common knowledge that you can lose weight through exercising, most people aren't aware that your body continues burning off calories even when you're asleep. As long as you're alive, you're burning off fats – albeit at different rates depending on how vigorous the activity is.

*How's that for doing nothing and getting toned?*

"But," you cry, "That's impossible!"

The fact is: Your brain doesn't ever shut down. The only time it actually stops any form of activity is when you're dead. In fact, your brain is solely responsible for 20 to 25 percent of your total calories burned each day.

### **Can you really think yourself thin?**

Well, for starters, stop sabotaging your mental well-being and you've got a huge shot at slimming down.

Stop telling yourself that you're fat.

Stop telling yourself that you're not allowed to love who you are just because you're heavier than most people.

Stop believing for even a second that you're too lazy to do anything about your weight issues.

At the risk of sounding like a deranged, "light at the end of the tunnel" self-motivation guru, remember that because thinking has already been scientifically proven to burn off calories, *you might as well think positively* and feel happier in the process.

### **But wait! If I can really think my flabs away, why am I still overweight?**

That's because the amount of calories you're putting into your body happens to be way more than what you're burning off.

Let's imagine that it's a lazy Sunday afternoon today and you're enjoying a television show while munching on a slice of chocolate-frosted cake. That slice of cake comes with 300 calories, and a Harvard study has found that watching television for 30 minutes burns off only a mere 33 calories for someone who weighs 185 pounds. Now do the math: You're eventually retaining 267 calories even though you're working out your brain cells *thinking* about the plot taking place in your television set.

If you accumulate 267 calories here and 240 calories there from a bottle of your favorite soda every other week – you're going to be desperately trying to shave off all that excess baggage before you know it.

### **Close your eyes and imagine yourself lean and toned right now ...**

... then throw that self-defeatist attitude right out of your mind! It's bound to creep in sooner or later, so be prepared to recognize it when it comes; kick it away the first instance you spot it. Don't let self-doubts beat you down when you've barely even started trying to lose weight.

If you're keen on losing that excess flab, we recommend incorporating mind-stretching activities into your daily routine. We believe one of the best approaches to attack the weight lost problem plaguing so many people is to integrate complex workouts such as yoga and pilates into your daily exercise regime.

These exercises do not necessarily require hard work, but they will force your mind to work harder because you are challenged to balance and coordinate your

movements. In the process, you continuously engage multiple parts of your brain and burn off more calories as compared to doing simple stretching exercises.

Eventually, it all boils down to disciplining your mind on what to think. When you stretch your brain, not only will it help in burning off more calories, it will keep you sharp and at the top of your game.