

How To Make The Right Decisions When You Are Surrounded By All The Wrong Choices

BY AMA OPARE

5 Strategies To Help You Stick To Your Convictions



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Contents

Contents

The Four Pillars Of Success 4

Healthy Lifestyle Journal 7

Plan Ahead 8

Eat Food You Love 9

Keep Your Eyes On The Prize 10

Never Give Up! 11

About The Author 12

The Four Pillars Of Success

Are you new to the plant-based or vegan lifestyle? If so you've probably discovered that your environment is not always supportive of your new commitment to eating healthy.

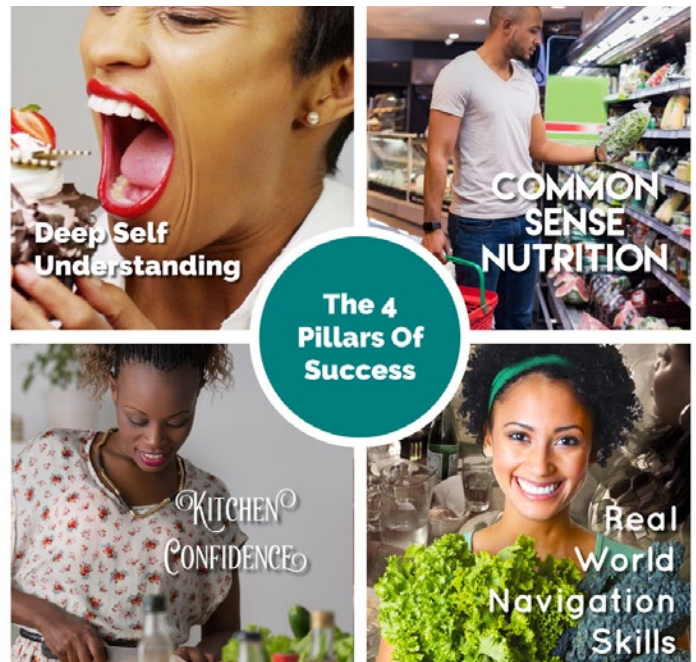
Are any of these things true for you?

- Do you give into bad cravings especially when people around you are eating that way?
- Do you sometimes feel like you have no will power?
- Do you do great for a while then give into your cravings and feel like garbage?
- Do you have a hard time sticking to your convictions when your house smells like bacon?

In this guide you'll learn 5 strategies to help you gain the confidence, clarity and resilience to stay consistent and make the right decisions even when you are surrounded by all the wrong choices.

The Four Pillars Of Success

Before we dive into the strategies let's look at the four critical areas that could trip you up. I call these the Four Pillars of success. They are the foundation of being able to stick to your convictions and staying consistent regardless of your stress levels, inconsistent schedules, or when people around you are eating the things you want to avoid.



Without building strong pillars you are more likely to struggle. With strong pillars you can handle whatever comes your way.

Pillar #1 Deep Self Understanding

It's vital that you explore your inner emotional and psychological framework to understand where you are now and why.

Without this awareness you won't understand why you do what you do, or how to change that framework to one that works. We all have issues in some form, like the messages we learned about food as a kid, maybe your body image and self esteem.

What triggers your cravings? How does living in an oppressive culture impact



your choices? What keeps you strong and motivated?

By taking the time to discover what's driving your choices you'll crack the hold your cravings have over you.

Pillar #2 Common Sense Nutrition

You've heard the famous quote from Imhotep "Let food be thy medicine and medicine be thy food." But what does that actually mean?

Most of the information out there being passed around on social media or hyped up in the news does not stand the test of real scrutiny or even of common sense. Once you understand what your natural diet is, what your body really needs to stay healthy and how your diet is related

to disease you'll have the power of good health in your hands. With this knowledge you'll cut through the confusing, conflicting information you hear and see all around you.

You'll know exactly what works best for your body so you can relax and stop worrying.

Pillar #3 Kitchen Mastery

Of course you want to eat to live instead of live to eat. But you want to do it in the most taste fulfilling way!

It's hard to stay committed when you're feeling bored with your food and deprived. You've got to try new recipes and learn the skills for making vegan or raw dishes. Become a healthy gourmet in

your kitchen so you and your family can enjoy satisfying meals. If you don't, your choices will be limited and you'll get bored with the few recipes you do know. Or you end up eating out all the time.

With the right recipes and confidence in the kitchen, you'll create healthy vegan and raw vegan dishes that satisfy your taste buds and that you and your family will actually eat and enjoy.

Pillar #4 Real World Navigation Skills

Let's face it, we live in a non-vegan world.

If you don't plan ahead for success you're more likely to fall back to your old habits. I'm sure you're often in situations where eating healthy food requires extra effort. Without a plan for success, your stress and cravings or your work, social and family situations will throw you off track. Before you know it, you're back to your old unhealthy ways.

These navigation skills allow you to adapt your day-to-day life to fit and support your healthy, plant-based lifestyle so that you can eat healthy AND enjoy your life.

Each of the 5 strategies in this guide will address one or more of the Four Pillars of Success. They are the core of what I focus on in my programs and with my coaching clients.

Healthy Lifestyle Journal

Strategy #1: Start a Healthy Lifestyle Journal

This is part food journal, part health record, and part diary. Each day write about what your day was like. Include what you've eaten, what you've had to drink and why you made those choices. Include the setting and situation around your meals.

Also include other factors such as how you slept, medications taken, any health numbers you track such as blood sugar or pressure.

Note how you felt physically, spiritually, emotionally and mentally throughout the day. Note who you interacted with and the character of that interaction.

If you are consistent and thorough, over time you will have created a road map of which behaviors, situations and people help you do your best and feel your best and which are likely to lead to bad choices and not feeling good. Review your Healthy Lifestyle Journal from time to time to identify the patterns and lessons it has to offer.

Take Action: Identify a journal you'll use for your Healthy Lifestyle Journal and set aside at least 30 minutes a day to write in it. Commit to writing in it every day.

If you ONLY do this, you will have taken a big leap ahead. But let's not stop here!



Plan Ahead

Strategy #2: Plan Ahead For Problem Situations

There's no reason you can't eat healthy **and** enjoy time with friends and family. Plan ahead and incorporate a few real world navigation skills into your plan so you'll be able to make the right choices.

What situations have been troublesome for you in the past? What about those situations led you to make bad choices? Was it seeing your old favorite foods? Was somebody pressuring you? Or not knowing how to find what to eat? Was it stress cravings? Make a list of what led you to make the choice you regretted. Now you are ready to create a plan.

First, decide what your bottom line is. For example: "I will eat as much as I want but only plant-based food. It doesn't have to be the 'healthiest' vegan food but NO animal products."

Next, identify 2-3 decision points that you'll need to master to stay true to your commitment to yourself. Maybe when the appetizers are being passed around. Or facing the dessert table. Or when the whole house smells like bacon!

Lastly, come up with at least 1 thing you can say or do to help you make a better choice this time. For example:

Create a vegan only section in your pantry and refrigerator so you won't have to dig past the tempting food to get to yours.

Eat something before you go out to eat so you aren't starving.

Check out the restaurant menu online and decide what you're going to eat. Make sure it's something that will be satisfying.

Bring your favorite vegan dish to a family meal (have enough to share)

Take action: Identify what's likely to be a potential trouble spot in the next week or two. Create your plan for success.

Rest assured that over time it will get easier. They'll get used to you being "weird" and you get used to making sure things work for you.



Eat Food You Love

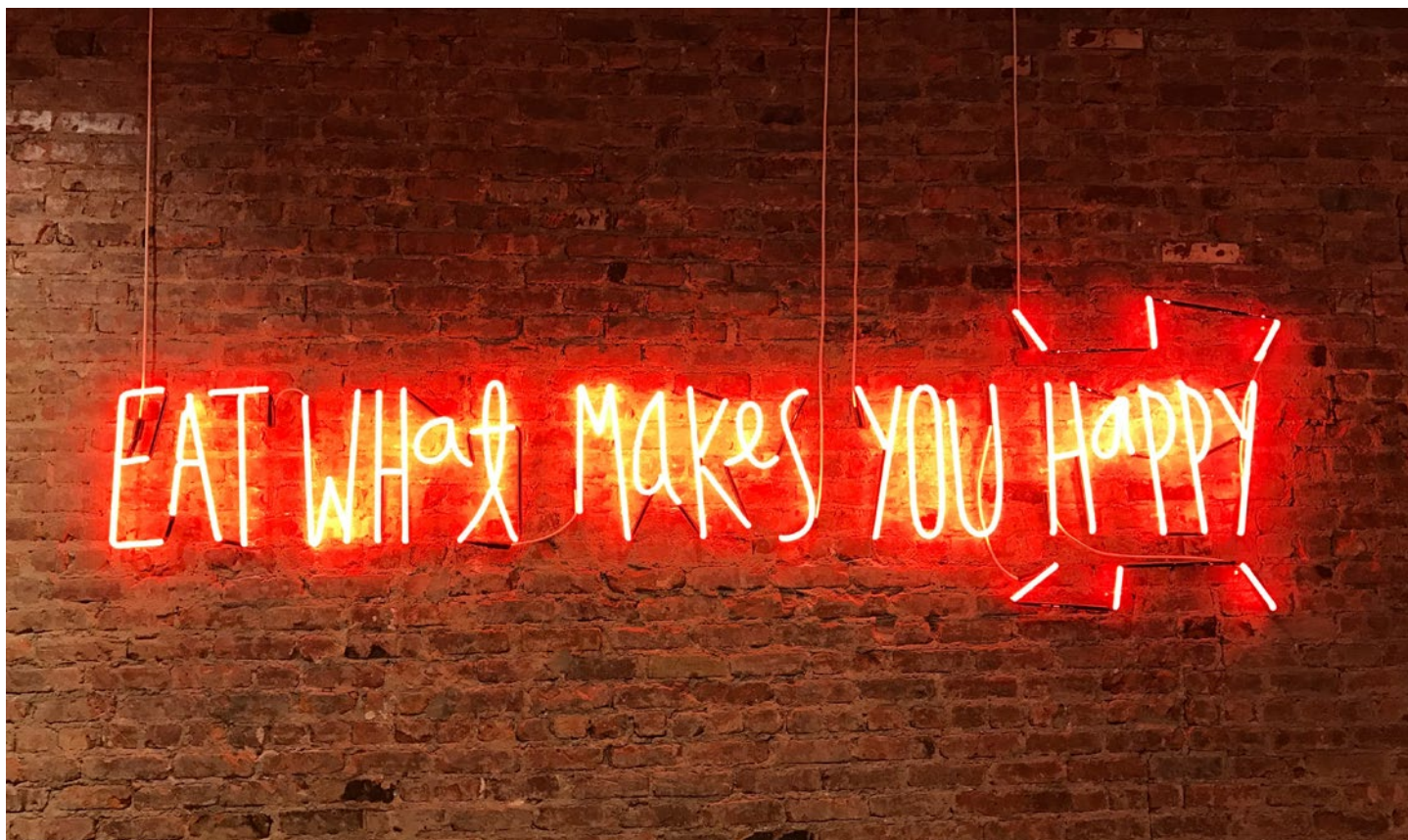
Strategy #3: Collect or create 8-10 recipes you really LOVE.

This strategy will help you avoid boredom or getting into a rut with your meals. It will also help you resist temptation if there are meat eaters in your house.

Start looking for recipes that entice you. Look in recipe books and on the internet. I've got some great ones on [Food For The Soul](https://foodforthesoul.me). Each week, try at least one new recipe. If it doesn't come out just right, make it again and see if you can create a winner. Make sure you LOVE it and that it will satisfy you even if there are tempting animal products on the table.

Repeat until you have your 8-10 recipes that will become a regular part of your menu rotation. (You don't have to stop there of course, keep adding more recipes as you desire.) Make sure you have the spices and other pantry items on hand so that it's easy to whip up a masterpiece any day.

Take action: Do an internet search and choose the one recipe you'll make this week and put the ingredients on your shopping list.



Keep Your Eyes On The Prize

Strategy #4: Keep Your Eyes On The Prize

So why is it you're making this lifestyle change? Is it to address a health problem? Lose weight? To boost your energy? Keep those goals in mind to keep you on track.

Imagine it's one year from now and you've reached your goal. What does your life look like now that you're healthier/thinner/more energetic? What are you doing now that you couldn't or didn't do before? What impact has this had for you and your family?

Now imagine you DON'T do it. What will your life look like then? What will it cost



you? How do you feel after you eat that piece of non-vegan cake or those French fries?

Each time you're tempted by a wrong choice keep those thoughts in mind. Will this help me get to where I'm going? Do I want to eat that back pain? That high blood pressure?

Or do I want to eat this high energy, this clear skin, this longer life to spend with my family. Keep your eyes on the prize.

Take action: In your Healthy Lifestyle Journal create a detailed vision of where you want to be in 12 months and what benefits it will bring into your life. Also write down what the cost is to you and your family if you don't make this change.



Never Give Up!



Strategy #5: Never Give UP!

This is a journey. You will likely mess up from time to time. Most of us do. If that happens, pick yourself up and get back on the wagon/horse/path and keep on going. Make sure you write about it in your journal.

Each misstep is an excellent learning opportunity. If you take the time to pay attention to what happened and why you'll have the opportunity to take what you learn and make a plan for what to do instead the next time. With this mindset you can't lose!

Keep studying and learning about the lifestyle and about yourself. Keep trying new foods and recipes. Keep taking steps forward.

Throughout it all pay attention to what your body tells you. Keep journaling to record your experiences and your insights.

It gets easier I promise if you are willing to put in the work. Are you willing?

Bonus Strategy: You're Not Alone

I know it can seem overwhelming at times. There is so much to learn, so much to understand. I'm here to help!

As your **vegan lifestyle coach** I'm your personal support team. I'll help you look at the problems or obstacles you've been struggling with, with new eyes...and to get creative with solutions so you can find new ways to fix what needs to be fixed and start thriving.

These are priceless life skills that will stay with you long after our coaching relationship ends. Find out if 1-on1 or group coaching is right for you at <https://foodforthesoul.me/vegan-lifestyle-support/> and unlock the healthy future you desire.

About The Author

Ama Opare is a plant-based lifestyle coach, vegan chef, educator, and author. She has been trained in vegan nutrition and the Afrikan Natural Hygiene philosophy of healthy living under Nana Kwaku Opare MD, MPH, CA for 10 years.

In 2006 Ama was 49 years old, recently divorced, overweight, worried about her health, and eating the Standard American Diet (SAD).

She felt discouraged and out of control because she was unable to stop herself from eating sugar, fast food and processed food. She was frustrated because she couldn't keep her weight under control.

Most of all Ama was worried and afraid that she was headed for the same fate as her family; diabetes, high blood pressure or cancer.

Ama says, "I felt like I was running out of time and I dreaded going to the doctor for fear I would get some bad news.

I knew I should be eating better but I didn't know how to do it. My cravings seemed to control my choices. I was confused by all of the conflicting claims and "facts." I was overwhelmed by trying to figure out what I should and shouldn't eat. I tried to figure it out by myself but I ended up more confused than ever.

My diet didn't get any better. I was eating fast food, processed food and too much salt and sugar. Even though I knew better my diet only got worse



over the years and so did my health. I was depressed, disillusioned and ready to throw up my hands in defeat."

Then, in 2007, with Dr. Opare's help, Ama was finally able to make the changes she'd been longing to make.

"I was amazed by how much energy I had. The extra pounds I'd been struggling to lose, quickly melted away. My skin cleared up. My headaches went away and my digestion was better. Soon I had my life back!"

By applying the Four Pillars Of Success Ama was finally able to do what she had been trying to do for years.

"Now I feel younger than ever, like I did decades earlier, and I can't imagine going back.

I have dedicated myself to helping you make living a healthy plant-based lifestyle a reality no matter what your life situation is."

Visit Ama at www.foodforthesoul.me.

