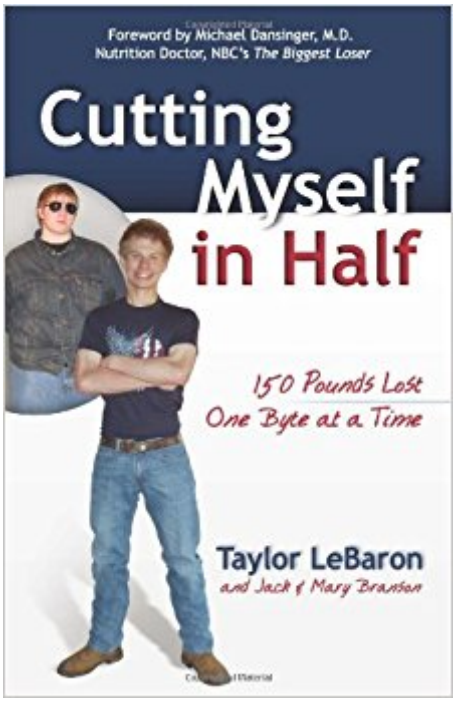
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Cutting Myself In Half: 150 Pounds Lost, One Byte At A Time



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Synopsis

At age fourteen, Taylor LeBaron was nearly 300 pounds. He had difficulty just getting to the mailbox without becoming short of breath. A chubby kid from birth who was prone to obesity, Taylor allowed his weight to skyrocket through mindless 'whatever' eating and his sedentary techie lifestyle. But a membership to the Y, a keen imagination, and an indomitable spirit changed all that. Approaching proper eating and weight loss as he would a new video game, Taylor made fitness into a fun challenge with his creation of THE ULTIMATE FITNESS GAME (UFG)Ã¢â ¬â ¢a method of tracking calories, avoiding pitfalls, overcoming obstacles, and working out by following hard-andfast rules that literally helped him shed half of his body weight in a matter of a year and a half. Cutting Myself in Half is Taylor's motivational strategy guide to THE ULTIMATE FITNESS GAME.Taylor shows kids who are currently where he was that weight loss and fitness are within reach . . . one workout, one calorie, one 'byte' at a time.

Book Information

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Age Range: 12 and up

Grade Level: 7 and up

Customer Reviews

Mary Kinney Branson is the author of seventeen books, including Murder in Mayberry, which she coauthored with her husband, Jack.Jack Branson is a retired federal agent. He is currently a licensed private investigator for Branson & Associates in Cumming, Georgia.Taylor LeBaron is an outgoing, articulate seventeen-year-old who loves a challenge. He is the student technology leader for Chrysalis Experiential Academy in Roswell, GA. Taylor has been the recipient of numerous

awards at his high school, including the Student Ambassador Award, the Young Entrepreneur Award, and the Community Service Award. Taylor's college plans include pursuing a degree in business and economics. He and his family live in Ball Ground, GA.

I'm a techie guy, and I love everything about computers and electronics. When I started my exercise program, I was playing a lot of military games on my PlayStation. So when I came across Marine Corps cadences at www.militaryrecordings.com, they were the perfect accompaniment to my exercise program. I purchased two Marine Corps cadence CDs and downloaded them onto my Zune and let them take me to boot camp five or six times a week. (There's a Marine Corps cadence CD for women, too.) I loved the beat, and I listened to the messages: Go strong! Don't give up! Endure! I discovered that I was a natural for Marine tactics. The cadences did more for me than the double workouts I'd done over the summer. I would like to thank the U.S. Marine Corps for my increase in speed and endurance. The cadences helped me run faster and longer. I repeated the messages back in my mind as I ran at full speed on the treadmill: One mile, no sweat. Two miles, no good. Three miles, we're going strong. Four miles, we're almost there. Five miles, we're going home. I felt like I was training alongside the Marines, listening to the sound of boots hitting the ground and dog tags jingling. Wearing my own dog tags tucked under my shirt, I imagined I was running at Parris Island instead of the Forsyth County, Georgia, YMCA. The cadences kept me disciplined and inspired. If I could keep up with Marine training, even if just on the CDs, I felt I'd accomplished something pretty great for a boy who, a year ago, couldn't run a 20-yard dash.I still wear dog tags when I work out, and I still listen to cadences. When I feel like I can't go any farther, I crank up the volume and let the Marines tell me I can.I tackled the physical part of my fitness program by turning my training over to the Marines. I let the cadences motivate me as I followed the YMCA's exercise plan. The more I worked out, the more calories I burned. It actually became fun. And without realizing it, I began approaching fitness just like I played a video game. I called my approach the Ultimate Fitness Game. THE ULTIMATE FITNESS GAME (UFG) In most video games, you follow a path and confront obstacles along the way. Dangers lurk in dark, narrow corridors. You enter a room and everything you click on offers you a choice. And there's always something you run out of: ammo, money, energy, stamina, health. I play UFG like calories are the money that I'll run out of if I don't spend wisely. I follow a road through my day, and I have a choice of transportation, just like I'd have in a video game. I can run down the road and increase my skill level, or I can hop in a car and drive. Every time I decide to walk or run, I add money to my account because I'm burning more calories. Obstacles are everywhere. Each room I enter offers choices. In

the kitchen and the school lunchroom, all sorts of 'dangerous' foods loom out at me. They look good, but they have high price tags and do nothing to advance me in UFG. In fact, they fight against fitness. I have to make my money last all day and cover my necessary expenses, so I can't be tricked into buying dangerous foods. They're the enemy. The Money Each morning, I calculate how much 'money' I have to spend for that dayÃ¢â ¬â ¢one dollar for every calorie I'll burn. I know that my BMR is 1,850. (That's the amount of calories I'd burn if I did nothing all day. You can find BMR calculators on a lot of Internet sites.) I know I'll burn a couple of hundred more calories just working at my computer, talking, walking to class, and doing normal stuff. And I know that my body will burn an extra 10 percent of the calories I consume just to digest my food. So if I'm sick in bed with a cold, I still have more than $2,000 to spend without gaining weight. For all other days, I factor in my exercise to determine my 'salary' for the day. I usually take a break from the Y on Saturday and just hang out with friends, see a movie, or work on my computer. I figure I can safely spend $2,000 on lazy Saturdays. My weekend treat is usually a 12-inch plain meat sub, so I know I'll spend $600 for supper. That leaves me $1,400 for the rest of the day. As soon as I wake up and determine my salary for the day, I start planning how to spend it. And I keep a running count all day so my money lasts the full sixteen hours I'm awake. I like math, so I figure everything in my head. But most cell phones and computers have calculators, so anyone can keep track of calories. I know that on a no-exercise day I'm on a tight budget, so just like I was shopping on a budget, I look for bargains. If I can find a two-for-one sale, that helps me stretch my budget. I can buy two pieces of whole-grain bread for $50 each instead of one piece of regular bread for $100. One frosted cupcake may cost $350, so I can't afford that kind of splurge too often. I have bills to pay: meat, milk, fruit, veggies, and whole grains. These foods are like my basic house and car payments, insurance, and utilities. Until I pay them, I'd be irresponsible to spend my money on luxuries. The basic foods are where I get my energy. If I don't pay for them first, I'll run out of energy before I run out of day. I consider snack treats like my real-life movie budget. Since I'm on a tight budget and don't have much money to go to the movies, I may be able to go only once a month. When I realize that my favorite candy bar will cost me $230, I know I will rarely have the money to buy a candy bar. On days I go to the Y, I feel like I got a big sales bonus at work and I have more money to spend. I know that just forty-five minutes of free weights will burn about 350 calories, so on days when I know I'm going to do free weights, I add $350 to my starting budget. On a regular busy day with exercise, I start my day with $2,500 to $2,600. That's more than enough if I play the game right. But if enemy foods lure me into spending too much of my money, I'll end up broke too early and GAME OVER will print across the day's screen. Then I'll have long hours that night with no money left to buy food.

I got this for my brother, who’s a bit heavy and I read it first so I could get an idea what was in it and how I could help. It’s my brother to a tee, it’s creepy. This is an excellent book, full of inspiration and hilarious analogies that will keep people reading even if it’s not an issue for them. It’s perfect for someone that doesn’t know how to get fit or is not quite ready to start that path, if they are willing to read the first chapter, they won’t put it down and even if they don’t start right away, it will give them something to really think about. This was written brilliantly for the younger person struggling with their weight and self image. I’ve already seen little changes in my brother and even though the conversation that had me giving him this book was a little..messy, I’m so glad I did.The only drawback I can think of would be that the young adult writer is a bit strict. I understand that’s how he is and his commitment to being fit, but it turned me off a little how he equated one cookie with the destruction of his fitness goals. I think it’s all about moderation and self control. Someone willing to get on the right path won’t be bothered by that though and, as I did, accept that’s just the way he went about it and it’s not right for everyone. What is detailed in this book is an excellent set of guidelines and ideas to get someone where they want to be physically and I consider this book a true investment in health.

Taylor is one positive kid and would make a great motivational speaker. He says not to put off having fun, enjoying life, or thinking of yourself as a totally awesome person until you’re thin. Two thumbs up to that! In ever-increasing numbers, "fitness gurus" are writing and publishing new books, promising to reveal the Great Secret of fast weight loss. We, the public, snap it up because we want somebody to tell us we can eat the same junk, never exercise, and still lose 20, 30, 100 pounds if we pop this pill or eat this food combination. Taylor comes out with it and tells us what we all already know: there is no secret. Exercise and eating the right food -- not isome fad diet -- but eating lots of fresh fruit, veggies, whole grains (and lean meat and dairy, if you aren’t vegetarian or vegan), drinking lots of water, with moderation and deliberate planning on sweets and soda, is the key to weight loss. He reminds us that true and lasting weight loss isn’t a "diet" and it doesn’t happen quickly. It took him a year and a half to lose 150 lbs, but he did it in small increments (1-2 lbs per week) by setting achievable goals of losing 20 lbs and weighed himself only occasionally. If you diet and lose weight quickly, it’s not healthy, and you are almost guaranteed those lost pounds will reappear and bring friends. Kudos to Taylor for getting fit, losing weight and keeping it off. You’re setting a good example for all the kids and adults who still struggle with their weight.One thing that did bug me were the constant plugs for Coke Zero. Diet soda is garbage -- the

Splenda/Equal/Sweet'nLow it contains is even worse for you than regular soda. Studies have shown that artificial sweeteners can actually cause you to GAIN weight, as well as make you sick and depressed. The carbonated water fills your stomach with gas. Soda is awful stuff and shouldn't be put in your body in any variation. It sucks to try and wean yourself off it (believe me, I'm going through it right now), but not drinking it in any form will also give your weight-loss efforts a boost.The book could have been written in fewer pages. A lot of things are repeated over and over. Not a bad book, but didn't tell me anything I didn't already know after struggling with my weight and going to nutritionists in the Army. I should've just checked it out from the library when they get a copy, but some of the money is going to charity, so I don't feel like buying it was a waste.

This is an awesome book written in a first person and articulate manner. From first hand experience Taylor shares what it's really like to be an overweight or even obese person, sparing few details. However, not accepting this as his fate in life, he creates a very interesting and effective way to lose weight and, even more importantly, to become a healthier person all around. Within this book there are very specific and practical guidelines that can be used, by not only teens, but by people of most any age. Also, impressive is the quality of medical and nutritional resources that he has used to back up his plan. I would recommend this book, not only to individuals seeking to improve their health by losing weight and increasing exercise, but to anyone working with teenagers in a counseling or leadership role.

Cutting Myself In Half can become a new way of eating for you. This book is a great read for those desiring to lose weight. Taylor tells it like it is and if you follow his guideline you can be on your way to a new you. I myself look forward to using his book to start a new way of life in my eating habits. Don't go on a diet. A diet is a temporary thing. Start eating your way to a new you and make it a part of your everyday life. This book can be read in a short while and is worth every minute you take to read it. Take notes and get ready to have others notice a new you. You will enjoy you now heathy lifestyle.

Great book for all of us. Taylor is an inspiring young man. He readily admits that there's no easy way to permanent weight loss but he describes realistic, attainable steps to achieve your goal... Lots of hints and ideas for you to try and see what works for you.

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