



FAITH + FOOD + FITNESS + FOCUS + FRIENDS

THE  
**DANIEL**  
PLAN

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40 DAYS *to a*  
HEALTHIER LIFE

LEADER'S GUIDE



**THE**  
**DANIEL**  
**PLAN**

Leader's Guide

**The Daniel Plan Leader's Guide**

40 Days to a Healthier Life

Leader's Guide, Edition 1.0

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# Welcome to The Daniel Plan

We are excited that you have started your journey toward better health, and we want to help you lead others to join you. The Daniel Plan is a practical lifestyle program designed to improve your health at every level. You'll be taking this journey one step at a time, but you will quickly discover that small changes equal big results.

Our program is made up of The Daniel Plan Essentials: Faith, Food, Fitness, Focus, and Friends. We have found that when individuals address health in each of these areas, they attain transformational results that last. In the first year of The Daniel Plan, over 15,000 people from 190 countries participated. The results were life-changing—collectively those participants lost over 250,000 pounds, improved their health, increased their energy, started sleeping better, and reduced their need for medication.

Take a look at the Essentials that you'll be focusing on as you lead others in The Daniel Plan:

- **Faith:** God is the power and energy behind all transformational change and that includes making the lifestyle choices necessary for you to become healthy. As you follow The Daniel Plan, you will discover that you have a part to play in getting healthier, but God will energize your efforts and give you his strength to do it (Philippians 4:13).
- **Food:** The Daniel Plan is about abundance, not deprivation. You will be invited to eat delicious whole foods that bring vitality and energy to your body and mind. It's all about learning that even your food choices can honor God and his purposes for your life (1 Corinthians 10:31).
- **Fitness:** We believe the most effective form of exercise you can do to achieve lifelong health is the one that you will actually do. We encourage you to discover movement that you will enjoy and treat your body as a gift from God (1 Corinthians 6:19–20).
- **Focus:** In a world where so many distractions compete for your attention, it is more important than ever to renew your mind with truth (Romans 12:2) and break negative thought patterns. Focus your thoughts on God's plan and priorities for your life. Express your gratitude to God and make the choice to dwell in God's goodness.
- **Friends:** When it comes to getting healthy, two are always better than one (Ecclesiastes 4:9). The Bible says God created the universe in such a way that we need each other. One of our key beliefs in The Daniel Plan is that every body needs a buddy because, in truth, we are better together.

Integrating the Essentials can lead to a more vibrant life. Our hope and prayer is that, by following the plan, you and your group will develop the energy necessary to fulfill your God-given mission here on earth. God will provide the power for all that is ahead for you as you lead others on this journey.

Encouraging you as we walk this road together,

Dee Eastman, Director of The Daniel Plan

Sean Foy, Daniel Plan Wellness Advisor

# The Daniel Plan Dream

Before you gather others to follow The Daniel Plan with you, we want you to dream a little. Picture your family, friends, and church or ministry as healthy as they could possibly be. What would that look like? What would be different?

By leading a Daniel Plan program in your sphere of influence, you are joining a host of individuals who have a dream for better health:

- **A dream to help transform those we love**—where those closest to us meet regularly to support, share, care, and learn about how to be faith-filled, joyful, strong, fit, healthy, productive, nurtured, and whole.
- **A dream to transform our cities**—where Daniel Plan support groups, 5K walks and runs for charity, healthy cooking classes and demonstrations, grocery store tours, hiking clubs, free nutrition counseling, and health coaching are available through city-wide health and wellness outreaches.
- **A dream to transform our country**—where thousands of Daniel Plan programs stretch across every state. Where the brightest minds in the areas of faith, food, fitness, focus, and friends gather to launch initiatives to dramatically impact the health and well-being of millions in our country.
- **A dream to transform world health**—where countries from Argentina to Zimbabwe receive Daniel Plan training and resources in their language to multiply the message of faith-based health and wellness.

Can you imagine it? God is bringing together the team members to make these dreams a reality. And the one team member we've been waiting for is . . . you!

We are so excited to have you dream with us.

# Your Daniel Plan Team

The idea of leading a health and wellness program could feel a bit overwhelming. You may be thinking, *I don't have all the answers when it comes to faith or fitness or food.* You may feel like you have to be in perfect shape to be a good leader. Rest assured, that's not the case with The Daniel Plan and that's why we don't want you to do it alone.

With The Daniel Plan, you can be yourself no matter where you are with your own health. We have a team of experts who will provide all of the education and training you need to help you enjoy and facilitate the journey toward better health with your small group or church (see pages 138–139 in the study guide for more details).

Your responsibility? Just be a great host. You won't have to teach or answer complicated questions. If you are inviting, excited, open, and comfortable, then your group will feel the same. That's all you need to do. The Daniel Plan Team will do the rest.

# The Challenge: The Current Health and Wellness Crisis

Most likely, you are already familiar with The Daniel Plan and how important your health is to God. *The Daniel Plan: 40 Days to a Healthier Life*<sup>1</sup> includes plenty of information about the state of our health and what we can do about it. But we want to give you a snapshot of the health and wellness crisis that can help you minister to others. For the first time in history, while millions of people suffer from not having enough to eat, millions are struggling with the effects of being overweight.<sup>1</sup> With the increase in child and adult obesity over the last decade, health professionals throughout the United States have been searching for a comprehensive intervention. More than 72 million U.S. adults are obese, and no state has less than a 15 percent obesity rate, which is the recommended national goal, according to the Centers for Disease Control.<sup>2</sup>

But weight isn't our only health concern; chronic disease, stress, depression, and so much more have affected many people in our country. At the same time, movement has been slowly removed from our daily living, and we are, unfortunately, reaping the costs with compromised health, excess weight, aches and pains, premature aging, and weak muscles.

We are in a health crisis that is affecting our bodies as well as our brains, yet many people don't know it. They don't know how their healthiness—or lack of it—affects their energy, fitness, productivity, abilities, and stability. That's why we are so glad you are taking on the challenge to lead others in The Daniel Plan lifestyle toward better health and wholeness the way God intended for them to live.

- 
1. Stephen Adams, "Obesity Killing Three Times as Many as Malnutrition," *The Telegraph*, 13 December 2012. <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/health/healthnews/9742960/Obesity-killing-three-times-as-many-as-malnutrition.html>
  2. Centers for Disease Control, Vital Signs, "Adult Obesity," August 2010.

# Benefits of a Daniel Plan Health and Wellness Program

Despite the health crisis in our country and much of the world, awareness, education, and action are the simple steps to turn around poor health. A Daniel Plan health and wellness program will bring a number of life changes to your church and could affect the community around you. Take a look:

Healthy and fit individuals are:

1. At a healthy weight and stronger
2. More energetic
3. Less stressed
4. More creative, productive, and confident
5. Able to think and learn better
6. Looking for opportunities to deepen their relationships
7. Less sick and absent from church services and work
8. More enthusiastic about learning and life

A healthy church or ministry has:

1. Strong small groups
2. Healthier relationships and morale
3. The ability to attract new members, increase in attendance
4. Stronger, healthier more energetic members with a better ability to contribute to their family, church, and community
5. The opportunity to be a model and example of faith-based wellness
6. Faith-based solutions for the whole person—body, mind, heart, and soul.
7. A nonthreatening opportunity to draw interested seekers to their church, positively impact members, families and the community

# Your Daniel Plan Vision

We already asked you to dream a little bit, but now we want to inspire you to envision the future for your specific group. The Daniel Plan is inspired in part by the character and choices of the prophet Daniel in the Bible. One of the things that made Daniel so *incredible* was that he was a dreamer and visionary (he actually had the gift of interpreting dreams).

Before you embark upon this journey of leading a Daniel Plan group, take some inspiration from Daniel and dream big. We want to encourage you to think of what Pastor Rick Warren calls “exponential thinking.” The idea is simply this: Identify the results you think you can achieve with your group, then dream beyond them to a goal that would only happen with God’s power. Here are some steps to help you dream big:

## Step 1: Seek

Ask God to give you a big Daniel Plan vision.

## Step 2: Pray

Write down the names of individuals you feel led to be a part of your Daniel Plan Group and begin to pray for each of them.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_
7. \_\_\_\_\_

## Step 3: Dream

With God in charge, what could he possibly do with your group? Imagine you have a digital camera in hand and you are going to take a picture of your group one year from now. Picture everyone in your group as healthy and as fit as they could possibly be.

- What would your group members be able to do that they are not able to do today?

- What thoughts, emotions, and experiences would they enjoy if they were as fit and healthy as they could be?
- What “Big God-sized dreams” could they accomplish with their strengthened faith, health, and fitness?

## **Step 4: Plan**

Set a date to begin your Daniel Plan Group.

Continue to seek, pray, dream, and plan, and watch what God does.

# Getting Started: Step by Step

Now you're ready to start leading others in The Daniel Plan lifestyle. So we've created a plan to help you begin a Daniel Plan group full of individuals who are Daniel Strong.

*Daniel Strong = A pursuit of excellence in body, mind, and spirit for God's glory*

We will help you:

- Become familiar with Daniel Plan resources
- Learn how to host a Daniel Plan group
- A.I.M. for your goals

## Step 1: Equip Yourself with Daniel Plan Resources

We have provided you with all the materials you need to implement a meaningful health and wellness program that will help transform the lives of your participants. Take a moment to review and become familiar with the Daniel Plan resources:



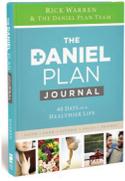
*The Daniel Plan: 40 Days to a Healthier Life* is an innovative approach to achieving a healthy lifestyle where people get better together by optimizing their health in the key areas of faith, food, fitness, focus, and friends. Within these five key life areas, readers are offered a multitude of resources and the foundation to get healthy.



*The Daniel Plan: A DVD Study and Study Guide*—a six-session video-based, small group Bible study from Rick Warren that includes interviews with Dr. Daniel Amen, Dr. Mark Hyman, and The Daniel Plan Wellness Team—is an innovative approach to achieving a healthy lifestyle that is both transformational and sustainable because it is about abundant choices, not deprivation. The Daniel Plan small group study gives individuals, small groups, and whole congregations the encouragement and accountability needed to succeed in a healthier lifestyle.



*Danielplan.com* is your go-to site to set up your personal health profile, read articles, watch videos, and find tools that will help you on your journey toward better health. Sign up for a weekly newsletter, and stay connected to The Daniel Plan community at large through our Facebook page.



*The Daniel Plan Journal* is a practical and experiential tool filled with daily encouragement. Scripture and inspirational quotes are also included. The journal was designed so users can record milestones related to all of The Daniel Plan Essentials: Faith, Food, Fitness, Focus, and Friends. This is an important element for those who want to accelerate their weight loss and achieve their goals.



*The Daniel Plan Cookbook: Healthy Cooking for Life* is a four-color cookbook filled with more than 100 delicious, Daniel Plan–approved recipes that offer an abundance of options to bring healthy cooking back into your kitchen. This eye-appealing cookbook is filled with easy-to-prepare, mouth-watering recipes.



*The Daniel Plan App* is the perfect companion to The Daniel Plan. It allows you to track your personal progress, share updates, connect with others, and receive daily encouragement from The Daniel Plan Team.

## Step 2: Host a Daniel Plan Group

Can you imagine what your group would look like if every member were Daniel Strong, pursuing excellence in every area of their lives ...

- With strong and healthy bodies,
- Focused and renewed minds, and
- Faith-filled and dedicated spirits?

This is a wonderful picture, isn't it? But you may be wondering, how do we make this a reality? How can you help your group become Daniel Strong? First, we want to encourage and remind you that you are not alone. Remember, you don't have to be a teacher. You don't even need any experience in hosting or leading a group of any kind. To host a group, all you need is to have a heart for people and to open your home or office to a group of friends who want to live healthier.

All of the material and instructions you need are provided in The Daniel Plan Kit. The DVD curriculum provides the experts and instructors. There's no experience necessary—just a desire to support others on the journey toward better health!

## Step 3: A.I.M. for Your Goals

No matter if your Daniel Plan program or group has just a few individuals or thousands of people, one of the most important steps to reach your goals is to take careful and precise A.I.M., a proven process to achieve progress.

**Assess:** Encourage all participants in your group to assess their present level of health and fitness. Direct them to set up their health profile online at *danielplan.com*. They will need to know their numbers for blood pressure, heart rate, weight, height, and body measurements (e.g., waist and hips). Also direct members to complete the “5 Essentials Survey” on pages 121–125 of the study guide. Let participants know they will take this survey again in six weeks. This simple survey will help participants identify where they currently are in relation to their faith, food, fitness, focus, and friends. The assessment will also help them to identify goals for their health.

### OPTIONAL

Optional: You may also encourage participants to complete additional assessments on their own with a doctor or fitness professional. Here are a few assessments your group members may be interested in:

- Body composition
- Fitness testing: (e.g., push-up test, 1-mile walk test)
- Blood chemistry (e.g., cholesterol, triglycerides, glucose)

**Instruct:** Once all of your participants have completed their health profile and assessment, you are ready to begin providing support and guidance. Remember, you are part of a much larger team, so this is where you’ll be handing off all of the teaching and instruction to experts in the fields of The Daniel Plan Essentials: Faith, Food, Fitness, Focus, and Friends.

Each week, you’ll be watching a 25-minute video session and using *The Daniel Plan Study Guide* to discuss and dive deeper into each subject. It’s that simple.

**Monitor:** At the end of The Daniel Plan six-week program, ask all participants to complete the same “5 Essentials Survey” on pages 121–125 of the study guide and update their numbers and progress in their online health profile to reassess their health. This is a valuable tool for your participants to measure their progress as well as make any necessary changes and goals for their next steps. Also, this assessment serves as a wonderful tool to evaluate The Daniel Plan program.

## OPTIONAL

Encourage your group members to reassess their health and fitness after you've met regularly together for at least six or twelve weeks. Recommend that your participants visit their doctor or a fitness professional to evaluate items such as their blood pressure, weight, measurements, etc.

By following the A.I.M. approach, you'll see progress and be able to better support your group; you'll also be a part of ongoing research to improve and enhance The Daniel Plan program and ministry.

# Group Meetings Weekly

## Session Guide

*"For where two or three gather in my name, there am I with them." (Matthew 18:20)*

Over the next six weeks, you'll gather with friends to study the Five Essentials of The Daniel Plan: Faith, Food, Fitness, Focus, and Friends. We'll conclude with a session on Living the Lifestyle, which offers practical help on sustaining the healthy changes you've made.

### Session 1



**Faith: Nurturing Your Soul**

### Session 2



**Food: Enjoying God's Abundance**

### Session 3



**Fitness: Strengthening Your Body**

### Session 4



**Focus: Renewing Your Mind**

### Session 5



**Friends: Encouraging Each Other**

### Session 6



**Living the Lifestyle**

# Promoting and Preparing for Your First Daniel Plan Meeting

Since Session 1 is different than the other weeks, you'll want to familiarize yourself with following ideas.

## PROMOTION:

Before your program begins, go through the sign-up or registration list of participants you've invited and or who have registered for the program through your church campaign. (See *The Daniel Plan Success Guide* for more information on how to promote a Daniel Plan program.)

**Two weeks** before your first session:

- Email or call those who signed up to welcome them to The Daniel Plan program.
- Remind members to order or download their Daniel Plan resources for the six-week program:
  - *The Daniel Plan Study Guide*
  - *The Daniel Plan: 40 Days to a Healthier Life*
- Remind participants:
  - Of the date and time of your first meeting
  - Of the meeting location and your contact information
  - To bring their study guides
- Encourage all members to go to [danielplan.com](http://danielplan.com) to set up a FREE Daniel Plan Health Profile. Be sure to emphasize the importance of completing this health profile because this will determine their starting point for the program as well as help them identify areas they would most like to improve. You can also encourage participants to obtain additional optional assessments by going to their doctor or a fitness professional to test items such as blood pressure, blood chemistry, body composition, fitness testing, etc. Let all members know they can also track these and other health related goals by using the Daniel Plan App and Journal.

**One week** before your first session, call or send out a friendly reminder to all group members via email or text:

*"I am looking forward to seeing you at our first Daniel Plan Group meeting! Remember we will be meeting on [Insert date] at [Insert Location]. Be sure to bring your Daniel Plan study guide. I can't wait to travel on this journey of health and wellness together with you!"*

## **PREPARATION:**

Before your first meeting, you'll need the following:

- Name tags and Small Group Roster (See page 134 in the study guide for a blank roster.)
- Refreshments—See ideas on page 126 in *The Daniel Plan Study Guide*, Chapter 10 of *The Daniel Plan: 40 Days to Better Health*, *The Daniel Plan Cookbook*, or [danielplan.com](http://danielplan.com).
- Daniel Plan resources for show and tell:
  - *The Daniel Plan Study Guide*
  - *The Daniel Plan: 40 Days to a Healthier Life*
  - *The Daniel Plan Journal* or *The Daniel Plan App* (optional)
- TV and DVD Player
- The Daniel Plan DVD—Watch Session 1 before your first meeting. Select one "Group Activity" found on pages 25-27 of the study guide to do with your group during the Better Together segment.

# Group Meeting Format

Each group session is structured to help create an easy-to-follow and inviting experience for your members every week. Each group session is designed to be 60–90 minutes and include the following segments:

## 1 COMING TOGETHER: (10 Minutes)

This time is a chance to “warm up,” get to know each other better, and cheer each other on. Keep the tone positive and uplifting. Greet everyone with a warm welcome to set the tone for your meetings.

- Encourage all members to sign in on the small group roster.
- Session 1 Only:* Introduce yourself, where you live (if you are not meeting in your home), and how you first learned about The Daniel Plan. Then ask all group members to introduce themselves in the same way.
- Session 1 Only:* Ask everyone to turn to The Daniel Plan Group Guidelines (see page 130 in the study guide), then read through the page and ask if participants have any questions or comments. Ask participants to sign and turn in the form.
- Session 1 Only:* Instruct all participants to turn to pages 121-125 to complete the “5 Essentials Survey” and their free health profile online.
- Instruct all participants to turn to the week’s topic in the study guide and read the Scripture for the week.
- Introduce the video segment.

## 2 LEARNING TOGETHER (Video Segment): (25 Minutes)

Each lesson in the study guide begins with a video clip that includes testimonies, a message from Pastor Rick Warren, and an interview with a health expert. Encourage your participants to use the outline in *The Daniel Plan Study Guide* to take notes.

### 3

#### GROWING TOGETHER: (15 Minutes)

Facilitate a discussion about the teaching you just watched. Use the discussion questions for each week's focus from *The Daniel Plan Study Guide* or come up with your own. Put the focus on how to apply the information to your lives. Discussing the content of the teaching will help group members understand it better, retain it, and begin to live out what they've learned.

### 4

#### BETTER TOGETHER (10–15 Minutes)

Since this study is about changing your lifestyle—actually being healthier—we don't want you to *only* study the concepts and principles. We want you to put them into practice *right away*. So each week you will have an opportunity to move together or eat together. In the study guide, you'll see next steps, an application point, food and fitness tips, and food and fitness activities. Since we don't want you or your group to feel overwhelmed by the options, simply select one to do together during your group meeting.

Here are a few group activities and ideas you can use for weeks 1–6:

- Session 1: Make healthy smoothies or go for a 10- to 15-minute walk together. See additional group activities in *The Daniel Plan Study Guide* on pages 26–27.
- Session 2: Watch the bonus video on how to create a healthy taco bar and/or provide a healthy snack found in chapter 10 of *The Daniel Plan: 40 Days to a Healthier Life* or in *The Daniel Plan Cookbook*. See additional group activities in *The Daniel Plan Study Guide* on pages 43–45.
- Session 3: Watch the 1-minute Daniel Plan Move of the Week video, found on page 61 in the study guide and perform the move together as a group. See additional group activities in *The Daniel Plan Study Guide* on pages 61–62.
- Session 4: Instruct participants to go to page 77 in their study guides and answer the question, "What are you most grateful for?" Have participants take a moment to share with the group, or pair off and ask pairs to share with each other their answers. See additional group activities in *The Daniel Plan Study Guide* on pages 78–79.
- Session 5: Ask your group members to share how this group has helped them on their journey toward better health. See additional group activities in *The Daniel Plan Study Guide* on pages 96–97.

- Session 6: Make this meeting a potluck, and ask group members to bring a healthy dish, maybe a recipe they learned by going through The Daniel Plan. See additional group activities in *The Daniel Plan Study Guide* on pages 114–115.

## 5

### PRAYING TOGETHER: (10 Minutes)

End your group session with a time of prayer for each other, ask a volunteer to pray for the group, or read the following benediction:

*Father, thank you so much for what you're going to do in our lives. Thank you for giving us the desire to become healthier. We want to get well. We trust that by living out the biblical principles of The Daniel Plan, we will feel better, have more energy, and, Lord willing, live a healthier and longer life. Increase our faith so that we might be a better witness for your glory. We pray this in Jesus' name. Amen.*

### ENRICHING YOUR MEETINGS

- Encourage members to follow the reading plan for *The Daniel Plan: 40 Days to a Healthier Life*. See page 133 in the study guide.
- Circulate the Host Interest Form to individuals in your group who may be interested in helping with healthy snacks, hosting meetings at their house, praying for members of your group etc. (See page 28 in the appendix.)
- Invite everyone back, and ask him or her to bring a friend.
- Offer an optional weigh-in. Research demonstrates that weekly weigh-ins can be beneficial for long-term weight maintenance. Some of your Daniel Plan group members may benefit from a weekly weigh-in. However, we encourage you to make this feature optional, since other members of your group may not be interested and or may struggle with weighing regularly. You can also instruct participants to track their weight using the Daniel Plan App and or by writing it down in their journal or study guide.

# Navigating Session 6

For your last meeting, you'll still use the group meeting format for Coming Together, Learning Together, and Growing Together. When you are ready for the Better Together segment, maximize this time with a few new activities to celebrate what you have accomplished as a group.

- Instruct all participants to turn to pages 121–125 to complete the “5 Essentials Survey” and then update their health profile online.
- Ask the group to answer these questions: What lasting changes have you made? How, specifically, has your health improved (lower blood pressure, reduced body weight, medication, or spiritual renewal, etc.)?
- Ask each member to track their progress and information using The Daniel Plan App or in their health profile at *danielplan.com*.
- Ask, “What one next step do you need to take in order to keep on running the race set before you?”
- For next steps, encourage your group members to consider:
  - Leading a Daniel Plan group of their own
  - Going through the Daniel Plan six-week program again
  - Participating in ongoing health and wellness events, challenges, and or groups
- Brainstorm how this group can help you continue in your journey toward greater health? Discuss continuing to meet weekly as a group, including the following:
  - Weekly accountability about goals
  - Exercising together
  - Sharing healthy recipes and snacks ideas
  - Focusing on one of the Five Daniel Plan Essentials
  - Praying together
  - Buddying up for ongoing support

- Encourage each participant to share what his or her next steps will be. Talk through the ideas on page 23, “Continuing Your Daniel Plan Journey,” and pass out copies of The Daniel Plan Next Steps Form in the appendix (page 29).
- Take a picture of your group and submit it to *danielplan.com*.
- Encourage participants to reassess their health and fitness by going to their doctor or a fitness professional and performing the same tests they did in the beginning of the program.

# Weekly Tips for Leaders

## Session 1: Faith

One of most practical and powerful things you can do before, during, and after leading your small group is to pray. Before you meet each week, invite God to move in the lives of each person who attends. During your group time, ask participants to share their prayer requests, especially in the Essential that they have chosen to focus on. Designate one person in your group to record and email prayer requests each week. On your own after your group, pray for each person's requests, and watch God move!

## Session 2: Food

It's important to understand that talking about food may uncover a variety of thoughts and feelings among members in your group. The Daniel Plan principles about food could feel overwhelming for some people. Remind your members that small steps are the key to long-lasting success and to adopt one simple food principle a week or two at a time that feels doable to them.

## Session 3: Fitness

Encourage your group members to give themselves grace if they don't reach all of their personal health and fitness goals every week. Discourage *all-or-nothing* thinking, which only leads to guilt, self-blame, and an excuse to quit. This journey toward better health is about progress not perfection!

## Session 4: Focus

Your group is now officially halfway through the Daniel Plan program. Just as each member had a different starting point, each will be at a different stage of progress. Express empathy and understanding for where each person is at with his or her health. Encourage group members that this is not a sprint, but a lifelong journey of small consistent steps toward a healthier life. Help them to focus on making healthy choices one day at a time.

## Session 5: Friends

To help your group members understand the power and importance of support tell them about the MIT Study that demonstrated that having a friend with similar interests to yours, such as exercising, eating healthy, and improving health, increases your likelihood of accomplishing your health and fitness goals by three times! Encourage group members to

begin to think about friends or family members with whom they would like to continue to meet with on a regular basis.

## **Session 6: Lifestyle**

While it may take 21 days to develop a new habit, consistency in your choices over time is what will help you develop a new lifestyle. This is your official sixth week of The Daniel Plan program, but it doesn't have to be your last session. Encourage and help your group members to keep growing by setting new goals that are attainable. Develop plans to continue ongoing care, encouragement, education, and support.

# Continuing Your Daniel Plan Journey

Your Daniel Plan group doesn't have to end after six sessions, and we certainly don't want to leave you wondering what to do next. In fact, research demonstrates that to change for good, ongoing support, encouragement, and care are crucial to sustaining a new lifestyle. It's true that we are much better together. If you've been in a small group or led one, you've seen the power of meeting together on a regular basis and supporting one another. You might be wondering what happens after the Daniel Plan six-week program is over and you enter Day 41 and beyond.

You can offer your group members ongoing support to continue on their pathway of the Daniel Plan lifestyle. Here are a few ideas:

## **1** Encourage members of your group to become Daniel Plan leaders.

One of the best ways to maintain a healthy lifestyle is by supporting and encouraging others to do the same—becoming a small group leader of their own group. By providing weekly encouragement, care, and support to others, you are reinforcing your commitment to a healthy lifestyle. To help others in your group consider becoming a Daniel Plan small group leader, take the time to share your experience with your group. Be honest, and let them know what impact leading a group has had on your personal health and ongoing commitment to the Daniel Plan lifestyle.

## **2** Challenge your members to integrate Daniel Plan principles into their Sunday school classes, another small group, or Bible study.

For instance, if Daniel Plan members are already involved in other Sunday School classes, Bible studies, or other small groups, encourage them to incorporate the Daniel Plan lifestyle into those settings:

- Set aside time for accountability check-ins on their Daniel Plan progress or share health and fitness goals with others before or after their group meetings.
- Ask the members of these groups if they would be interested in going through a six-week Daniel Plan program.

- Start incorporating elements of The Daniel Plan into their current group or study, such as offering healthy whole food snacks or short fitness segments.

### **3** Recommend ongoing meetings:

For those who feel they are not ready or interested in becoming a Daniel Plan small group leader, suggest continuing to meet together on a weekly basis. Repeat another six-week cycle. Let your group members know you'll be hosting another Daniel Plan program, and ask interested members to recommit for another session. Encourage them to also bring a friend or family member. For your next cycle, you may want to focus on just one of The Daniel Plan Essentials (Faith, Food, Fitness, Focus, or Friends):

- Come Together: Each week share your highs, or victories, for the week, as well as any lows, or challenges.
- Better Together: Determine your goals for the week and share them with one another.
- Pray Together: Continue an email prayer list just for your group members. Pray for one another and throughout the week.

### **4** Learn and grow together on a monthly basis.

Use Daniel Plan resources to continue to learn more about Faith, Food, Fitness, Focus, and Friends outside of a Daniel Plan group meeting. For example,

- Host a Daniel Plan Rally—Invite local health and church professionals to provide training in Faith, Food, Fitness, Focus, and/or Friends.
- Bring in a Daniel Plan Expert Speaker—Invite a Daniel Plan speaker or show a DVD or webinar to inspire and motivate your church to get involved.
- Offer Daniel Plan Cooking Classes—Invite local nutritionists and chefs to provide healthy cooking classes or demonstrations to your group or at your church.
- Schedule a Daniel Plan Retreat—You can put the power of *The Daniel Plan DVD Study* to work in a relaxing retreat weekend experience.

## 5

### Exercise together.

Meet weekly or multiple times during the week to exercise and pray together. Be creative, or use the following ideas:

- Walk and worship together (see ideas in chapter 5 of *The Daniel Plan: 40 Days to a Healthier Life*).
- Follow an exercise DVD.
- Meet at a local gym, boot camp, or park to workout.
- Participate in a weekly sporting activity on the same team, such as basketball, soccer, tennis, golf. Be sure to talk about your health needs and journey before or after the game and pray together.

## 6

### Stay connected with apps and online social networks.

Encourage group members to share their weekly goals, tips, recipes, and inspiration that have helped them on their health journey.

- Daniel Plan App
- Danielplan.com
- Facebook
- Twitter

# Daniel Plan Tools and Events

Stay tuned: The Daniel Plan Team is working on additional tools and resources that your church can use to offer ongoing health events and challenges. Our goal is to equip you with ongoing resources that will help further the dream of making health a reality for your congregation and community. Visit [danielplan.com](http://danielplan.com) to stay updated on what we have to offer.

We also want to encourage you to work with your church leadership to provide additional Daniel Plan touch points for your group members as well as bring ongoing awareness to interested individuals in your church. We encourage coordinating quarterly or semi-annual Daniel Plan–inspired events as an outreach to your community to spread awareness and education about health, as well as bring awareness to your community about your church.

# APPENDIX

# Daniel Plan Host Interest Form

If you'd like to volunteer for a role in our group meetings, please write your name below.

SESSION	DATE	HOST MEETING LOCATION	RECORD AND DISTRIBUTE PRAYER REQUESTS	PROVIDE SNACK
1				
2				
3				
4				
5				
6				

# Daniel Plan Next Steps Form

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

What are your Daniel Plan Next Steps: (Please select from the following)

- Become a Daniel Plan Small Group Leader
- Complete another six-week Daniel Plan program
- Combine Daniel Plan resources with your current Small Group Bible Study
- Exercise with a Daniel Plan Buddy or Group
- Schedule and meet at a Daniel Plan Event. Next Event: \_\_\_\_\_
- Stay connected through social media
  - Danielplan.com
  - Facebook
  - Twitter
- Meet weekly with a Daniel Plan friend: \_\_\_\_\_ (friend's name)

# Implementing The Daniel Plan

The Daniel Plan name is a registered trademark. In a desire to protect the integrity of the broader ministry, Daniel Plan Team requires that if you use The Daniel Plan name that the following guidelines are a part of your program offering.

1. The Daniel Plan is a faith-based health and wellness ministry, centered on teachings of the Bible.
2. The Daniel Plan strives to transform world health by empowering and educating leaders, like yourself, to bring faith, food, fitness, focus, and friends in a grace-filled environment where true healing and life transformation is realized.
3. The Bible and The Daniel Plan resources and curriculum—campaign guide, leaders guide, *The Daniel Plan: 40 Days to a Healthier Life*, six-week *The Daniel Plan A DVD Study and Study Guide*, journal, and cookbook—are to be used exclusively as part of a Daniel Plan–approved program.
4. The Daniel Plan health and wellness ministry is designed to be implemented in a group setting, with a buddy system, or online (although it can also be completed alone). We highly recommend meeting in small groups to enhance your sense of community. Follow The Daniel Plan “Five Small Group Guidelines” in this leaders guide every time you meet with your group.
5. We expect each Daniel Plan group to be accountable to Christ, a local church, or the sponsoring organization, and the model of The Daniel Plan established at Saddleback Church.
6. An organization may decide to use The Daniel Plan curriculum and mix it with other materials and other health and wellness programs, which is certainly up to their discretion. *However*, if that route is chosen, The Daniel Plan Team prohibits the use of the The Daniel Plan name.
7. Items reproduced for commercial sale using the The Daniel Plan name are strictly prohibited.