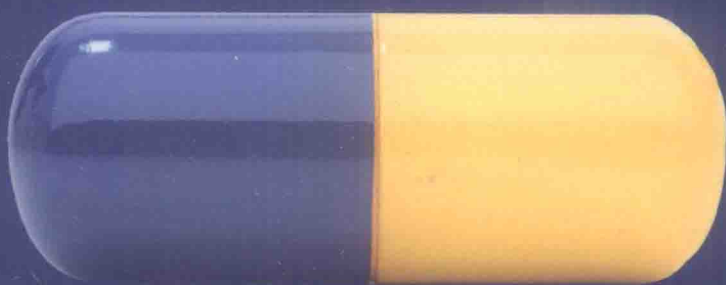


# THE MAGIC PILL

Your Prescription for a Longer, Healthier, and Happier Life



Matt O'Brien

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Healthier, and Happier Life

MATT



iUniverse, Inc.  
Bloomington

# **The Magic Pill**

## **Your Prescription for a Longer, Healthier, and Happier Life**

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*For all those who have struggled to find the motivation  
to change. You are my inspiration because I am you.*

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# INTRODUCTION

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## *The Magic Pill*

**I** imagine for a minute I was your personal doctor and during a routine check-up I told you there was a pill with seemingly magical powers now available to everyone and I was incredibly excited (bouncing off the walls, jumping up and down, shouting from the mountain tops) to tell you about it. So excited, in fact, I believe the whole world should be taking it, every doctor should prescribe it to their patients and it is now up to me and a few select others in the know, to get the word out starting with you right now!

I'm telling you as sure as you are now reading these words, this pill does exist. Some doctors have already branded it the true "Fountain of Youth." This magic pill has been scientifically proven to lengthen your natural lifespan, improve your self-esteem, increase your energy level, decrease your body fat, improve your skin tone, increase the natural production of your body's youthful hormones, improve your sex drive, increase your bone density, and improve your memory.

At this point you're probably thinking out loud... *"Wow 'Doc' that's truly amazing! There's really a pill for that?"*

Yes there is, but this pill does so much more. Taken just once a day, it significantly reduces high blood pressure, improves the flow of blood

throughout the body, lowers your bad cholesterol and also raises your good cholesterol. The magic pill can reduce your risk of getting cancer by 55%, reduce your risk of having a heart attack by 50%, and reduce your risk of having a stroke by over 40%. Scientific research has also discovered it can help prevent type 2 diabetes because it controls blood sugar, decreases insulin resistance and improves metabolism.

*"Okay, okay already," you say, "what is this 'magic pill,' where can I get it, and how much is it going to cost me?"*

All excellent questions, but before I tell you, I must let you know about some of the side effects. But because this truly is a magic pill, the side effects are good, not bad. When you start taking it, you may notice it will improve your posture, increase your strength and muscle tone, improve your mood, improve the quality of your sleep, release the tension in your body, decrease your appetite, and even reduce your anxiety.

*"Come on now, you're killing me! Let the cat out of the bag so I can get my hands on this pill. It sounds like a true miracle... the elusive Magic Pill."*

Alright, it may surprise you to learn this pill does exist, is already available to everyone and at the most, might cost you one to two dollars a day. The "Magic Pill" which we should all be taking is a daily dose of exercise, pure and simple. Thousands upon thousands of scientific studies have proven the undeniable and almost countless benefits of exercise and we are learning about more and more benefits each day as new studies are conducted and published. Exercise is the ultimate preventive medicine because it will improve your overall health, fitness, and well-being, while also helping to prevent or decrease the probability of getting many illnesses, reduce your likelihood of getting sick, and likely keep you out of the hospital during most of the days of your life.



## **Every successful journey begins with a single step**

Congratulations! If you are reading this now, you have taken the first step on your journey to a healthier and happier life. You have made a decision to make your life better. My job is to illuminate your journey with helpful signs to guide you in the right direction. These signs will motivate, educate, and inspire you to take positive action, eliminate your fears, and forget about any guilt from past failures.

All of our time on earth is priceless. Time is hearing the emotion-provoking sounds of beautiful music, seeing the majesty of an eagle in flight, tasting the savory flavor of your favorite foods, and feeling the warmth and security of true love. Time is the precious moments we have with our family, loved ones, and closest friends. I want to give you more of this time and all it takes is a little effort on your part. We are going to take this walk together and our destination is a younger, healthier, and happier you.

For most of my life, I have been searching for a way to help people with their health and happiness. I want people to feel the way I feel and experience the positive, life-altering benefits I've experienced from exercise. Initially I was thinking a career in medicine might be the best approach to achieve this goal. But I was convinced by people I respect and my own internal voice, this might not be the best way for me. Instead, I decided to become a practitioner of the ultimate preventive medicine, which I'm convinced is exercise. I'm convinced not only because of the overwhelming preponderance of scientific evidence and the hundreds of people I have personally seen improve their lives with exercise, but primarily because of the influence exercise has had in my own life.

Let me briefly tell you a little about my story and why I am here today. I realized at an early age that I was lazy and I also really loved food — I mean I liked to eat! I always felt like I could eat a whole cow when we sat down at the dinner table and I think on some occasions I came pretty close. Growing up on a farm as the oldest of two brothers and two sisters, I exercised my “king of the jungle” sibling birthright

when it came to the leftovers at mealtimes. We were very lucky because we had a hard-working father providing for us and a loving mother who did anything and everything for us. We were never without food in the pantry, milk and eggs in the fridge, and plenty of meat and fish in the freezer. I definitely took advantage of the convenience of this “food proximity” and the bounty we had to choose from. My only saving grace was how highly active my parents kept us working on the farm, doing chores, and playing sports year round. Sitting around the house was not an option at the O'Brien house and this is what probably saved me from childhood obesity because I'm sure I ate enough to get me close.

Even so, I still accumulated a great deal of pudge on my bulky frame and my mom shopped for most of my clothes in the “Husky” section. I'm not sure if it still exists today, but back when I was an adolescent, I thought husky meant big and bulky like a football player. I later realized this was a polite, ego-stroking way of putting overweight kids into clothes that fit. To think I used to strut around proudly displaying the Husky logo like it was a right of passage to a future NFL career is hilarious to me today.

The outward signs of my love of food first became apparent around the age of seven and by the time I was 12, the embarrassing rolls of good eating were unmistakably displayed on my waistline. These rolls, which today would earn you the nickname “muffin top,” coupled with a matching pair of “man boobs” were the kind of liabilities you want written off your physical balance sheet when you are about to enter high school. Throw in a first name that rhymes with “fat” and I'm sure you can imagine the nickname quickly bestowed upon me. I will always credit my wonderful mother for getting me through those awkward developmental years without a lifetime of psychological damage. But the pain, verbal suffering, and humiliation were certainly real at the time and definitely had a lasting impact on my self-esteem.

Thank God for what happened next in my life. I was introduced to weight training and professionally designed exercise programs. If you are not familiar with high school football in the “Sunshine State” of Florida,

well let me tell you that it is taken very seriously. As a freshman at Pine Forest High School, I learned to lift weights three to four days a week with the skill and enthusiasm of an Olympic athlete getting ready to break a world record. This changed my body and it changed my life.

Within the first three months of this training, I already looked better and felt a lot better about myself. My dad recognized the change and my passion for exercise and signed me up for a membership at a local health club. While he and my brother were taking karate classes, I would lift weights and ride the exercise bikes. By the time I was a sophomore, I was a different person, changed on the inside and out. Despite relocating to the intimidating hustle and bustle of New York City, a new, confident persona began to emerge.

I walked on the football team at Stuyvesant High School in Manhattan. I continued to get stronger, faster, and happier with the way I looked. This culminated with a senior season as team captain and selection as the most valuable player. Besides other distinguished awards, I was offered the chance to play football at a number of colleges who recruited me. The most important benefit of this self-transformation was the opportunity I received to go to the US Air Force Academy, fulfilling a dream I had since I was in seventh grade.

If you have never been to the US Air Force Academy campus in Colorado Springs, Colorado, and especially if you have young children, you owe it to yourself to visit... like my Dad did with our family when I was 12 years old. While I was standing there on one of the many scenic overlooks peering down on the stunning architecture of the Cadet Chapel, the amazing monuments, airplane displays, proud cadets marching in formation, and unparalleled athletic fields and facilities, I made it my goal to attend this wonderful institution when I graduated high school. Without the confidence in myself I gained from athletics and exercise, I'm convinced this dream would have been a fading reality and would not have been a part of my life today.

The day I received my acceptance letter, which is called an "Appointment" by the Academy admissions office, was probably the

proudest day of my life. In hindsight, it is certainly the most significant. Besides getting an unbelievable academic education, I learned incredibly valuable leadership skills and discipline which I have used throughout my career and lifetime relationships. Having achieved my first big dream with the mental and physical changes that exercise brought to my life, I decided to study the science behind it. I majored in Biology and took every class possible on exercise physiology, biomechanics, sports psychology, and human anatomy. I wanted to learn how this stuff works and why it works, so I could "pay it forward" to other people someday down the road.

I continued to study exercise science after graduation by reading everything I could get my hands on. I continue this practice to this very day. After six and half years of military service for the Air Force, I soon put this knowledge and my own personal experience to work as a personal trainer in New York City and eventually, here in Tampa, Florida, where I reside today. Despite the long workdays and tremendous physical energy it requires, being a personal trainer is the most rewarding occupation I could ever imagine. On a daily basis, I have the privilege of helping people change their bodies, mind, and spirit, and ultimately improve their lives, the same way I did for myself years ago.

Over the past twenty years, I have had the great fortune to be mentored by some of the best exercise, nutrition, and self-help gurus. I've attended hundreds of scientific lectures, read almost every current book published on diet and exercise, and reviewed thousands of scientific studies related to health, nutrition, exercise, and nutritional supplementation. Like Tony Robbins would say: I tell you this not to impress you, but to impress upon you the



validity and credibility of the information I will present to you. While I may not have completely captured all of the information and research I reviewed for this book, please be assured that I tried my best to summarize the essence of it throughout the book. For more information on selected topics, I have included a references list in the appendices.

In *The Magic Pill*, I hope to educate you on the substantial benefits of exercise, inform you on the latest research and guidelines on cardiovascular and resistance training, and motivate you to begin and maintain a consistent exercise program that meets the current exercise guidelines recommended by the US Department of Health and Human Services, the American College of Sports Medicine and the American Heart Association. I will help you with goal setting, recommend useful tools for accountability, take you through my systematic approach to designing a progressive exercise program, and teach you about nutrition and supplementation. Most importantly and above all else, I want you to attain the lasting health, energy, and self-worth you deserve.

***The mediocre teacher yells.***

***The good teacher explains.***

***The superior teacher demonstrates.***

***The great teacher inspires.***

William Arthur Ward

Inspiration is a powerful force that can launch us closer to our hopes and dreams. The Merriam-Webster's online dictionary defines the word inspiration as "a divine influence or action on a person believed to qualify him or her to communicate sacred revelation." Nothing inspires me more than helping people achieve their goals. Everyday I get to share in the joy and sense of accomplishment my clients and friends feel as they experience all the benefits exercise has to offer. I've been fortunate enough to see people lose 40, 50, 60, and even 100 pounds in less than 12 months with consistent effort. These are real people with real jobs, real kids and real problems, living in the real world.

I have worked with people of all ages, race, ethnicity, and any other demographic you can think of which is why I call exercise the universal law of health. Besides the visibly obvious cosmetic benefits of exercise, the changes that happen on the inside, in the heart, soul, and spirit are even more beautiful to see. When you see someone regain their sense of hope, self-confidence and self-esteem after living without it for years, it can move you emotionally. Quite frankly, this highly rewarding aspect of my profession keeps my motivational flame burning and served as the inspiration for writing this book. I want you to be inspired too. So throughout this book I have included the stories, results, and photos of everyday people who incorporated *The Magic Pill* prescription into their lives. For many people “seeing is believing” so I hope their testimonies will serve as convincing evidence to inspire you whenever you need it.

Your commitment, discipline, and achievement will motivate others to follow in your footsteps too! People tend to model the behaviors and attributes of the people they are around the most. I have had many clients whose success inspired others to make positive changes in their own lives. The secret to accomplishing this is by focusing on you. Let your results be the beacon of light that illuminates the pathway to success. Others will follow. If you have children, parents, friends, brothers, sisters, or anyone you care about, keep this in mind. Your actions (not your words, best intentions, suggestions, or nagging) will always be the best example of positive leadership.

I wish you good luck on your journey, but I have a feeling you will not need luck. You have asked for the *Magic Pill* and that decision, coupled with your desire and determination, will steer you in the right direction. You are already on your way!

## HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

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If you are like many people I know, you may not have a lot of spare time for reading but still want to increase your knowledge and improve your motivational skills. I encourage you to invest the time to read this one book, because it is like reading 20 books. *The Magic Pill* is truly an executive summary or cliff'snotes on many fitness related topics including: anti-aging, preventive medicine, exercise, diet and nutrition, weight loss, and supplementation. It goes even further and includes self-help topics like: how to join a health club, how to live in moderation, how to hire a personal trainer, how to empower yourself, and how to set and achieve goals. Your knowledge, motivation, health, and longevity can only be improved by reading the content that follows.

That being said, the book is written and arranged like a collection of short stories where each chapter can stand on its own. But as a body of work, I believe it will serve its greatest purpose. There is something for everyone and I would recommend you explore what interests you the most. Use the table of contents to find the chapter that covers a topic you want more information about. If you get bogged down reading the scientific details, just move on to the next section or next chapter. There are also many helpful tools and tables located throughout the book. I have listed their respective page numbers for your reference at the end of the table of contents.

I sincerely hope this book will have a positive impact on your life and help change the course of obesity in America. If you benefit from the information, please share it with others and pay it forward. Individually we can change ourselves, but together we can change the future health and prosperity of our great nation.



**PART ONE:**

# **MOTIVATION**

*Get the Facts*