



Lesson 14: Recovery Fasting

Hi, everyone, welcome to day 14 of our fasting masterclass. I can't believe we're here already. It's been such a pleasure to get to know each and every one of you who've come to the Q&A sessions and who have reached out in the fasting circle. And just so you know, the fasting circle is still going to be active until the morning of February 1st. If you have any questions, need any help troubleshooting, want to go over concepts that were taught in this fasting masterclass, anything fasting or nutrition related, I'm happy to help answer those questions in the fasting circle. Myself, my fellow coaches and our wonderful community mentor volunteers will all be there, checking in and sharing their tips, tricks, resources as well, with you for the next several days. Don't worry, you're still not alone. And if you have time and you need to catch up or go over concepts, we still have a good week to go.

All right, let's discuss today's lesson topic, it is recovery fasting strategies. Now, this topic in general, we've sort of broken down over several lessons actually in this masterclass. But I think it's really critical that we bring these concepts and loop them together, connect them together, in one particular lesson, as you begin to start this journey.

The most important principle to remember is just because our minds want to do one fasting protocol, it does not necessarily mean that our bodies are capable of doing it. You've got to be patient with your body, and you've got to say, "Hey body, are you up for this today, or do you think you're going to be up for this particular challenge this week?" We can mentally want to do all of the things in the world, but we do have physical limitations.

And especially as we're new to fasting, we are going to have weeks where fasting feels much easier and weeks where fasting feels much more challenging. And that's likely due to the fact that the weeks where fasting seems easier, and we push it and we stick out and do some longer intermittent or extended fast, we do become a little bit dehydrated. And that can make it feel really rough starting another round of the same fasting protocol the week ahead. Often we find that we may have to scale back to rehydrate ourselves. Now, all of these little kinks, you just need to be mindful of them, to help you troubleshoot so you can get up to doing certain base fasting protocols on a continuous basis.

What are some of these things that you can do to help make sure that you can have a few consecutive weeks of the same fasting protocol? What are some things that you can do to support your body? Well, keep playing around with those electrolytes everybody. Keep playing

around with salt and you might find that you need to experiment with the different ways you get salt in just to keep it interesting, so you don't necessarily turn off your appetite for salt.

Similar to the fat-fasting concept of monotony, if you're always taking your salt in the same manner over and over again, it sure as heck can get boring. This is why mixing in things like pickles juice, salt tablets, salty water, broth, using those Keto Chow fasting drops, mixing it all up. Well, and that helps you stay engaged with sodium on a regular basis.

And it is really important to develop consistent practices for taking your magnesium as well. We often find that taking these electrolytes to other habits we have throughout the day is the best way to establish these new, tiny habits. So often we'll try to loop these habits to a certain time, nine o'clock, 12 o'clock, three o'clock, six o'clock, so on and so forth. And we'll set alarms on our smart devices and we'll put calendar notifications. But truth be told, if we're really busy doing something else, we're going to put those notifications to sleep or skip through them in our calendar.

More often than not, it's best to keep your electrolytes in places that you're going to be prompted to take them. A great example in the morning was sodium and magnesium. If you take your magnesium in the morning, leave it next to your coffee maker or next to your tea kettle. That way you'll have the visual prompts. And while you're waiting for your coffee or your tea kettle to boil, well, then you can take your electrolytes with some water. Tying them into these strategies is really helpful.

Also, leaving them at your desk so they're in plain sight. And coming up with practice perhaps if you're taking magnesium to help with sleep and you typically take it around the dinner hour, well, actually leaving it at your desk. And then that way, as you wrap up your workday, you can take your magnesium before you leave your desk and it's right there. And now you've tied it into a particular habit.

Or keeping your magnesium on your nightstand so you can take it before you start reading in bed, before you fall asleep every night. It's important to help come up with these practices to become consistent with taking the right amount of hydration during our fast. And this can help us have more consistent weeks of fasting.

Other practices that are important really revolve around both sleep hygiene and stress management. Sleep is absolutely critical. It is not a pillar of health, it is the foundation of health. And if you do not have good sleep, well, you could have some serious health complications down the road. Sleep deprivation over time leads to all kinds of unwanted metabolic issues, as well as puts you at risk for other chronic diseases regardless of how good your diet is or how much you're fasting.

We often really neglect this, but it's important that you start to work on it. Unwinding in the evening, disengaging from technology, wearing blue blocker glasses when you do have to look at screens in the evening, and coming up with a bedtime routine. Actually having a bedtime routine dramatically reduces your stress, your physiological stress and your cortisol before you go to bed, which can help promote better sleep quality. It's really, really important.

And stress, like sleep, stress undoes everything good that you try with your diet, absolutely everything. You need to work on stress management. And I understand, I've been there. There's certain things that you absolutely just cannot control when it comes to stress. Things like parents' illnesses, for example, or family illnesses in general. They can be overwhelming. Or this global pandemic, for example, is hugely overwhelming and a lot of it's not in our control. It's challenging for sure. And we can't make the pandemic go away and we can't make an ill relative's disease disappear. Or if we injure ourselves, we have to allow time for recovery as frustrating and aggravating as it's going to be. But we need to focus on doing what we can for good self-care to reduce our stress, or it doesn't matter.

It doesn't matter what you fast, it doesn't matter how you eat, you're not going to see your blood sugar levels come down. You're not going to see your body lose fat. Stress management, meditation, breathing exercises, journaling, physical activity, just going for a half an hour walk a day, well, that's a great way to get started. Especially meditation, just you don't feel it's ever going to happen. Practicing stress management is again absolutely critical.

Now, there are just going to be some weeks where your body is worn out in general, and we always liken fasting to being like a muscle. And we all understand that there's certain weeks at the gym and we go really hard, we push ourselves to the max. But we have the common sense understanding that because this week I pushed myself to the max, well, next week I'm going to have to recover a bit. I might be doing more yoga, more stretching, more mobility work. And we show ourselves that grace, but we often do not do the same thing with fasting.

If you're coming off of your first streak of three weeks of consecutive, 42-hour fast, three times a week, and you get to that fourth week and it feels next to impossible for the body, absolutely feels impossible, what happens? Well, most of the time, we'd beat ourselves up emotionally for this. We're failures. Yet again another thing that we're sucking at. Why is this so easy for everybody else and why is it not for me? It's simple. I just did it for three weeks.

Well, it's not you. It has nothing to do with your failure, your success, your ability to succeed. It has nothing to do with that. Think back to how many years and decades you ate multiple times throughout the day, you ate the wrong foods because, well, that's what they told you to eat. It's pretty wild when you think about it. You've had these three solid weeks now of consecutive three by 42s.

And yeah, sure, it should get better with practice, but that's a huge change to your previous lifestyle and that's a lot of work on the body. That's a lot of adjustment and adaptation, all different types of things that are going on physiologically in the body. Come that fourth week, you might be just feeling burnt out, just like we do after an aggressive training week or even training month. We need to allow ourselves some recovery time.

The purpose of this lesson today is to help you understand that scaling back your fasting that's not a sign of failure. That's not a sign of your body being broken beyond repair. It has nothing to do with broken willpower or not enough of it. It is completely normal, and it is also the inability to accept that it is normal.

One of the biggest reasons why I see people give up on their fasting journeys and fail to reach their goals is because they do not show themselves grace and just general understanding that, "Hey, I can't fast like a machine all of the time." Now it's true over time you will get better though. Instead of having three weeks of consecutive fast as your base protocol, you might have four or five or six, over time.

But just like a pro athlete, they start somewhere and they have to take more rests and more recovery breaks. And over time as they start to see their work pay off, they're able to have longer stretches of time with needing less recovery breaks. It's the exact same thing with this. Show yourself some grace. Be mindful that not every week you can do these longer fasts.

What happens if you just can't reach that desired goal? Well, you just scale it back a notch or two. If you've been doing the 48s, maybe you would try to play around with the 42s. If you've been doing the 42s, well, maybe try to play around with the 30/16 or the 24s. And even sometimes a week of 24 hours of fasting, well, that can feel really challenging too. And it's okay every now and then to just throw in a week of 16 or 18-hour fast or even 14-hour fast where we're not stacking and we're really focusing on food quality.

Often than not, people think that if they reach a stall or a plateau, that the answer is more fasting. And often more fasting will serve you very well. But sometimes scaling things back and eating more is a wonderful way to change things up and to keep you moving forward, keep that progress coming.

Often people will go on, say a vacation, and we will have so many staycations in 2020, where people have more control over what they are eating than ever before. Well, what did many of the fasting-method community members come back to report?

"Megan, it was the wildest thing. I was doing a 66 and 48-hour fast for the last six weeks before this vacation and I just stopped losing faith that fat loss wasn't coming. I wasn't seeing my waist change, my blood glucose, not much improvement especially in those morning numbers. And I felt so guilty going into this one-week vacation at the cabin, but it was my vacation time and my family bubble was going to be there.

I just said to myself, 'well, I'm going to make sure I have complete control over what I'm eating.' I went on vacation and made sure to skip breakfast. I just had my coffee in the morning and then I had brunch with everybody else and then we had an early dinner, and I completely controlled what I ate for the most part, a good 80 to 90% of that trip. I'm still human too. But the wildest thing has happened. After that trip, well, I've lost two pounds, my blood sugar levels seem a bit better."

Changing it up is really key for keeping you moving forwards towards your goals, and that does not always mean more fasting. Even more eating every now and then can really shake up the system, and confuse the system, especially if you've been doing long chunks of significant fast. It can make a big difference in helping you bust through those plateaus.

What does this all have to do with recovery fasting directly? Well, it's about your mindset, knowing this information and how it can affect your mindset in a positive way when your body is just feeling so desperately burnt out of fasting. Embrace it, embrace these weeks as, "Okay, I'm going to eat more. I'm going to change it up. I'm going to work really hard on not snacking. I'm going to work on eating great foods and it's going to serve me really well because I'm still going to be working in a forwards direction and I'm probably actually going to see some fat loss and blood sugar improvement and metabolic improvement. And then when I go back to my regular fast, well, that's going to be even more effective because I've just changed things up and I'll be changing things up again by going back to my base fasting protocol."

Don't get yourself down. Address the mindset, it's a wonderful thing. I look at holiday eating with a big positive view about how this is more eating, and how I get to try new recipes and then learn new types of real food so I can incorporate it into my life on a regular basis. And for me, it's exciting because I know it's going to be a strategy if I change things up. It's going to serve me well in the long-term, and I'll learn a few new meals that I can add in on a routine basis to help make my diet more exciting.

Embrace these periods, don't feel down on yourself. And what happens when we feel down on ourselves is we don't end up eating the right things, because we're fatigued as well as feeling bad. There's no need to feel bad. There's all of the reasons in the world, but you should positively embrace this week of changing things up, fasting less and eating more, because they will help serve you well. You're changing it up and it's going to make, when you resume your fast, even that much more effective.

Everybody, be kind to yourself, show yourselves some grace and embrace these weeks because they really do make a positive impact in the long-term if you embrace them with wise eating habits.

All right, everyone, that is a wrap. I do think this is a really important lesson. Hopefully, you might not realize that today, but in a month or two I think this lesson will really help you get through some sticky points. Again, it's been such a pleasure to connect with you all during this session and I really look forward to continuing to connect with you.