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Preface

When I was 26 years old I had to engage in military service – the scale showed 65 kg, and that at a height of 187 cm. The length of my body remained the same, but the kilos began to add up over the years. When I finally gave away my tennis racquet following two knee surgeries, and was exercising much less, my weight rose to 91 kg, which was very unusual for me. Since things could not carry on in the same vein, I resolved to lose weight. I began reading diet books, but they only confused me. One book praised the healing powers of fasting, while another warned against fasting. Sometimes fat was the enemy, then it was carbohydrates. One book banned various foods, while another warned against depriving oneself of your favorite foods. Furthermore, many guides on losing weight are simply cookbooks and I am not a cook. I do not enjoy cooking and enjoy doing dishes even less. As none of the diet books spoke to me, I decided to write my own guide and that is precisely what you are holding in your hands right now.

In the first part of the book I write about Antarctica and a few expeditions that took place there. In the second part you will find information on diet and weight loss.

The book will discuss various methods of weight loss. Whether or not you apply them in your own life is up to you. The author cannot be held liable for any personal injury or injury to property or other assets.

The Antarctic

Earth revolves around its axis. The piercing points of this axis of rotation are the North Pole and the South Pole. The region around the North Pole is called the Arctic, while that around the South Pole is the Antarctic. (Experts refer to the entire southern region as ***Antarctic*** and the actual continent as ***Antarctica***. That is much too complicated for laypeople, so I will simply use the term Antarctic in this book.) Many people have trouble differentiating between the Arctic and the Antarctic. The Arctic is frozen sea water that is surrounded by continents. Near the North Pole, the sea is about 4 km deep. The most well-known animal of the Arctic is the polar bear. The Antarctic is located at the other end of the Earth's axis. The approximately 13 million km^2 large continent is surrounded by pack ice and sea. During the six months of summer, the pack ice covers an area of about 2.5 million km^2, while during winter in this southern region, it can grow to span an area of 22 million km^2. The Antarctic is surrounded by different shelves of ice, the greatest of which is the Ross Ice Shelf at around 530,000 km2. The Antarctic is the coldest, driest, stormiest, most inaccessible of all continents and is also the most hostile to life. The interior of the Antarctic is far away from the oceans and is thus very dry. It has an annual precipitation of less than 100 mm. The temperature during a polar night is measured to be around –50°C.

The best known animal of the Antarctic is the penguin. The emperor penguin looks for breeding areas on the Antarctic continent or ice that are relatively far from the coast. The pack ice border shifts with the seasons and penguins sometimes have to waddle 80 km to reach the sea. After the eggs have been deposited, it is the males who incubate them on the ice. Temperatures can fall to –50°C

and raging wind storms are common. This is when the animals gather into a close-knit herd, to prevent as little heat from escaping as possible. The males burn 160 g of fat every day. During this period, the females head to the sea, eat until their bellies can hold no more, filling up their body fat reserves, and then bring food back for their offspring in their stomachs toward the end of August and assume care of the new born chicks. Now it is the starving males who head out to the pack ice border in search of food. After four weeks they return to feed the chicks. The chicks lose their downy coat in December. Now they too head into the sea where the feeding grounds lie. From the example of the emperor penguins we can see that their method of raising offspring would not work without body fat. The constant weight gain in the sea and the fasting on the ice are simply part of life for penguins. With people we refer to it as the yo-yo effect. Although constant weight loss and gain allows emperor penguins to survive, and is the only way they can provide for their offspring, it is not recommended for humans.

The Weddell seal is warm blooded like humans, yet it spends most of its life on ice and in the cold ocean mainly around the coastal area of the Antarctic. It is only thanks to a thick layer of fat under their skin that they are able to survive the constant cold, because fat is a good insulator. Fat is also a key source of energy for the female Weddell seal and one it needs to produce milk. The milk on which they raise their young is as thick as mayonnaise and has a fat content of 35%. I can just see nutritionists on their way to the Antarctic on a mission to convince Weddell seals of the evils of high-fat milk, urging them instead to drink low-fat milk.

James Cook

Ever since ancient times, people have believed there must be a giant continent in the southern hemisphere (Terra Australis Incognita) – as a sort of counterweight to the land masses of the north. England was interested in developing these new territories and that is how James Cook came to be hired to find the unknown continent. During his second major journey (July 13, 1772 to June 30, 1775), Cook went in search of the legendary continent in the South and on January 30, 1774 he even reached the 71st parallel. Icebergs and pack ice forced him to turn around; thus he never laid eyes on the Antarctic. Naturally, it is easy to understand why the Antarctic has no native population, in contrast to the northern regions.

The greatest danger for seafarers besides their ship sinking was scurvy, an illness caused by a Vitamin C deficiency. Since sailors on the high seas lived on non-perishable foods such as zwieback, they tended to have vitamin deficiencies. After a few months at sea without fresh food, they began showing symptoms such as gum bleeding and a poor ability to heal wounds. The illness often ended in death. James Cook took sauerkraut and vats of boiled malt wort with him on his expeditions to fight off scurvy. When the ships finally reached land after years of travel, fruits and vegetables were stashed away on board and Cook had lemon juice administered to his crew.

Every time a new magical diet is presented in a magazine today that recommends living off a single food, not only will you have lost weight after a few months but you will probably begin to show signs of deficiencies. Well-balanced nutrition can be important to your survival.

Roald Amundsen

Roald Amundsen was a Norwegian explorer and leader of expeditions. He became famous for his journey through the Northwest Passage, from Greenland to Alaska. He learned the practice of sled dog mushing from the Canadian Inuits. He adopted the native population's form of clothing for his polar excursions – reindeer and seal fur were the best isolation against the cold.

Amundsen had actually wanted to go to the North Pole, but two American researchers claimed they had already been. So he changed his goal, and his travels now took him to the South Pole instead of the North Pole. He took more than 100 Greenland sled dogs with him on the ship Fram. The expedition involved a total of 18 participants. On August 9, 1910 the Fram departed the Norwegian harbor town of Kristiansand. Everyone thought they were headed to the North Pole. It was not until they reached Madeira that the team was informed of the new goal.

On January 14, 1911 the Fram hoisted its anchor into the Bay of Whales on the edge of the Antarctic. The bay borders the Ross Ice Shelf, which looks like a 60 m high barrier when viewed from the ocean. This sheet of ice floating in the sea is larger than France and is formed by glaciers from the inland ice, which come from the Antarctic Plateau moving against the flow of the sea. The Bay of Whales develops in that sheet of ice as there is an island that slows the flow of the ice mass. It also makes the barrier low enough at that point that ships can anchor.

The Bay of Whales is the closest point to the South Pole. This is where the Norwegians set up their base camp in those first weeks. During this multi-week excursion, the team deposited supplies for the next summer along the 80^{th}, 81^{st} and 82^{nd} parallels and marked them well. They