The Strategy(ies) for Academic Success I plan to Work Towards and Why

I first saw the strategies for academic success handout in a workshop by Dr. Oler held during the Mesa Orientation before the semester started. I was also already enrolled into Psychology 10, but after hearing and seeing this helpful information, I was more eager to start class and learn more about this. During the first few weeks of our class, Dr. Oler went through the strategies for academic success on his website. It was also explained to the class that we have to read over the strategies for academic success on his website and write a paper on one or two of the strategies for academic success. I read over the strategies, and after thinking about what I don’t do enough of and what I do too much of, I decided that the academic success strategy I needed to work towards was to Eat Regularly and Healthfully.

There are multiple reasons why I want to eat regularly and healthfully. The primary reason is because now I’m more knowledgeable about proper nutrition, thanks to the nutrition and food information that Dr. Oler shared with us. It was shocking to hear that milk and “dead animal flesh” as Dr. Oler refers to meat as is so bad for your body. For the first time in my life I was glad that I didn’t like milk and most meat. Finally I had evidence to share with people that “encouraged” me to drink milk and eat meat because it was supposedly necessary for a good health. In addition, most of the foods that I eat are not healthy, and instead of making me feel energetic, I feel the opposite, tired and hungry most of the time. Also, I’m aware that I have major problems with my nutrition. When I heard Dr. Oler say “eat to live, don’t live to eat,” I realized that I was in trouble. I’m one of those persons who lives to eat instead of eating to live, and on top of this, I eat based on the taste and not based on what’s healthy. With the information given in class and the information I read in the book, I concluded that I have a mild level of eating disorder or I’m on the border of having one, such as binge eating, emotional eating and bulimia. I say binge eating because whenever I have a box of cookies available I won’t limit myself. I could eat the entire box in just a few minutes. However, I have never been to that extreme yet, but I have almost and I know I will if I don’t do something about it. I’m concerned about emotional eating because I notice that whenever I’m feeling sad I tend to eat
comfort food to feel better or not so bad because when I eat them I feel much better. I might not do it for every single occasion but for most I do, and I know it could get addictive and that it’s not the best method to overcome sadness. In addition, half of the bulimia definition fits me. I tend to eat large amounts of food even when all I need is a small portion to satisfy my hunger. I have never engaged in purging, but I have thought about it. The only reason I don’t is because it’s too nasty for me to do that.

The love-hate relationship with food applies to me as well. I love food because it makes me feel better and it tastes good, but I hate it because it makes me gain weight, it’s addicting, and because it makes me feel guilty for eating too much. I also eat even when I’m not hungry, and there have been times when I feel so hungry that I just want to eat at that moment whatever I find even if it’s cold or too hot as long as it satisfies my hunger. An interesting point that I became aware of is that at times I feel anxious about eating because I feel there isn’t going to be enough food and that I will be left unfed. For example, I have been in situations where I’m in a conversation with someone while food in being prepared for self-serve, and I just want them to stop talking so I will be able to go to eat. I also get frustrated when my mom makes small portions of food because I feel that there won’t be enough for all of us. These are the multiple reasons why I want to improve my nutrition. I want to eat regularly and healthfully.

My Goals to Achieve the Strategy for Academic Success

There are many goals that I have in mind that I will have to accomplish if I want to eat regularly and healthfully. My first goal is to eliminate unhealthy foods. That includes a wide variety of foods such as milk products, meats that I don’t eat too much of, but the small portion that I do eat is not healthy for my body, and besides, animals deserve to live as well. Soda pop is also going to be out of my diet because they have no nutritional value, and are nothing but carbonated water and artificial colors and flavors. I want to reduce the amount of sweets and salty foods in my diet as well. I’m also going to reduce the amount of times I consume fast foods to once a week. I know this should be on my elimination list, but compared to what I’m used to, it’s a big improvement. My second goal is to eat to live and not to live to eat, and not focus on the taste of the food, but rather how healthy it is for my body. It has clicked in my mind that just because it tastes good I don’t have to eat it or eat more. Another goal is to stop and prevent eating disorders in my life, now that I’m still able to control it because they sure can get out of hand. Lastly,
by eating regularly and healthfully, it will eliminate the love-hate relationship I currently have with food.

**What I did (my plan) to Achieve the Strategy for Academic Success**

My plan in order to eliminate the consumption of unhealthy foods is going to be long and somewhat difficult. If I could throw all the garbage in the garbage, that’s were I would start from. However, I’m unable to do that because my parents would think I’m crazy. I plan to throw all my unhealthy food away little by little, and stop buying them. I also plan to buy healthy foods when I go grocery shopping, and inform my parents and siblings about nutrition like I have already done, although it has been quite a difficult job for them to understand and believe me. When I go grocery shopping, I will buy healthy foods such as fruits, vegetables, whole grains, nuts and beans. I will not buy the foods that I have eliminated from my diet. By doing this, I won’t have them at home and won’t be tempted to eat them. To reduce the amount of times I eat fast food, when there’s nothing at home to eat, I’ll cook something. By doing this I will not only be eating healthy but I will also become a better cook. In order to be able to eat to live and not to live to eat, I plan to eat three healthy meals a day at set times, and two healthy snacks in between the meals if I get hungry. From now on, I will start my morning by eating a healthy breakfast such as a bowl of whole grain cereal with soymilk, or a breakfast sandwich on whole grain bread. I’ll get out of bed at 7:00 a.m. to make sure I have enough time to have breakfast. If for some reason I can’t have breakfast at home, I’ll make sure to take a healthy snack to eat on the way. After my first class, if I’m hungry, I’ll eat a healthy snack such as a piece a fruit or a food bar. At 1:00 p.m. I’ll have lunch brought from home. I will also make sure that this is my heaviest meal of the day because dinner should be something light. I will probably not be hungry between lunch and dinner because lunch is going to be my biggest meal, however, if I am hungry I’ll have another snack in my bag to munch on. Then around 5:30 when I’m home I’ll have dinner. I plan not to eat any fast food during the week because I have established a time to eat have food brought from home to snack on. Another thing that I plan to stop doing is eating every time I feel hungry because that doesn’t mean that I’m actually hungry, or that my body needs food. Instead of eating every time I feel hungry, I’ll drink a full glass of water which I need to drink anyway.
The Obstacles Encountered in Implementing What I Did (my plan) to Achieve the Academic Success Strategy(ies) and How I Addressed Them

Well there have been many obstacles in my way, primarily because most of the people around me aren’t in the same boat. For example, when I’m having a different dinner at home I keep on being reminded by my parents that I need to eat meat because I need the protein in my body. What I do in this case is I remind them that I get my proteins from other foods and that they should do the same if they want to be healthier. In addition, I said that I was going to eliminate milk and any milk products, but the hard thing about this is that some of the foods that I like eating contain milk, like cheese and ice cream. Before, I wasn’t able to have a sandwich without cheese because it would not taste good, but now I’m able to do it because I remember that I don’t have to eat based on the taste, but on how healthy it is. I’m not going to lie, there been a few times that I haven’t been able to resist and have added a little piece of cheese, but its only been a couple of times. Another obstacle that I have come across is that most of the food that I want to cook is not vegetarian. Most of it contains meat, cheese, or needs to be fried. At times I get stuck and I don’t know what to cook. To overcome this obstacle, I went online and looked for recipes or ideas on vegetarian meals. In addition, many places don’t offer many vegetarian meals. Most of them only offer salads and that gets kind of boring after a while. What I have done is order a normal meal but without meat. Furthermore, it’s been difficult to do the cooking itself. I leave home really early to go to school and usually come back home late in the evening after school and work. I get home pretty tired at times with some homework still to do, and I still have to cook something. There have been times where I didn’t need to cook because my mom has something that I’m able to eat, or I could simply take off the meat. The times that she doesn’t cook, I’ll just fix myself something quick.

The Progress I Made Towards My Goals

I’m happy to say that indeed I have made quite a lot of progress towards my goal. I have been able to eliminate meat out of my diet. There have been times where I have been tempted to eat a piece of chicken, but I remember a phrase I heard someone say, “You are eating a thing that has a mouth.” For some reason that just grosses me out so much when I’m about to eat meat. I can picture the animal alive and then being given a cruel death, and I take a second look at what I’m about to eat and I just can’t. One thing
that I’m really proud of is that not only have I been able to eliminate the consumption of milk, but also my whole family. We no longer buy cow’s milk, and instead drink soymilk. I was the first one to try it, and encouraged everyone else to do so as well. It took them about two weeks to give it a try, but now that’s all they drink. I have also been trying to find the rice milk, but I been unable to find it. About the other milk products, I still need to work more on it. I have been unable to eliminate ice cream. However, I have been able to stop drinking soda. Instead, I dink more water and juices. I have also been doing pretty good with keeping fast food down to once a week. Overall, I have accomplished my goals for the most part. I have been eating regularly and healthfully for about three months now. I eat breakfast every morning now and stick to my eating schedule as much as I can.

**My Future Plans (where I intend to go from here) Relative to the Strategy(ies) for Academic Success I Worked Towards**

My future plans are to keep doing what I have been doing, eating regularly and healthfully. Furthermore, I have been looking into taking nutrition classes here in Gavilan College. I found one, but I’m not too sure whether it covers the information I want. I want to take a class that can help me learn more about proper nutrition and what a serving is. I also want to be even healthier by exercising. I know that I have made a lot of progress by just eating healthier, but I also know that I’m missing the exercising part. I haven’t been exercising properly for a long time now, since my junior year in high school. When I completed the two years of physical education that high school students are required to take, I saw no reason to take more physical education classes. After high school, I kind of became allergic to exercise, but now I have realized the importance of exercising. I have enrolled in a swimming class for next semester, and am also thinking of adding either aerobics or palates because I’m only going to take two academic classes next semester and will have enough time to do exercise.

**What I Learned About Myself and Others (if applicable) from Completing this Paper**

What I learned from completing this project is that there are many people that are not aware of how to eat healthy. Many refuse to believe that milk is not good for our health, and I can understand why. Throughout our life, parents, physicians, and media have told us that drinking milk will give us a better health. I also understand why some
people, including me, don’t like the taste of milk and why others are even lactose intolerant. The reason is because we weren’t meant to drink cow’s milk in the first place. In addition, due to the fast life pace we have in America, we get pushed into eating unhealthy. By being in such a rush, we forget about the most important basic thing: eating well. Instead, many of us find it more convenient to grab an unhealthy meal from fast food restaurants. There needs to be more information out there about eating properly, or many people need to start looking for it, and most importantly start applying it to themselves.