



## **The Healthy Bear Interviews Benjamin James**



This report is 100% free for readers of  
The Healthy Bear Blog  
<http://TheHealthyBear.com>

You have permission to share this with  
your friends who you think will find value  
in it's message.

Yours in good health  
Dr George Forgan-Smith

**Ben – Weight Loss**  
**For The Full Audio Click Over To:**

<http://thehealthybear.com/reader-of-the-week-ben/>

Dr. George: Hey there, guys, it's Doctor George here from thehealthybear.com, and today I've been really very lucky to have a fantastic bear on the line, called Ben, who's had some really fantastic success in his own sort of journey towards health, and he's kindly agreed to be able to do an interview. So, g'day, Ben.

Ben: How're you going, George?

Dr. George: Yeah, good thanks, mate.

Ben: Good.

Dr. George: So your particular success story is, you know, is... has been around weight loss, so...

Ben: Yeah.

Dr. George: ...can you tell us a little bit more about that?

Ben: Yeah, yeah, yeah. Three... I've been losing it for three years. I didn't sort of do the drastic thing of trying to shift it all at once, because a) life gets in the way and you can't always concentrate on handling that determination for nutrition and exercise, but I'd always found as I was losing weight, if the exercise wasn't up to scratch, keeping the nutrition on a straight path was just as good as long as I wasn't putting on what I'd already lost.

And I lost it in three stages. I lost twenty five kilos in about the first six months, which was three years ago, and then progressively I've had two blocks of weight loss up... after that, up until now.

Dr. George: Ok, so how heavy were you when you started?

Ben: Well I don't know, because when I first went to the doctor, the scales stopped reading at a hundred-and-forty, and I was over that. And from... because my partner and I at the time, we actually both went to the doctor and got a pretty grim diagnosis, so I think I was about a hundred-and-forty-seven, possibly a hundred-and-fifty.

Dr. George: Ok. So I...

Ben: Yeah.

Dr. George: ...one of the biggest issues that I've encountered with a lot of guys is that they come... they go to a doctor and, you know, that a lot of doctors

aren't able to, you know, when it comes to people who are, you know, in a situation, say, where the scales are off the radar, that...

Ben: Yeah.

Dr. George: ...that doctors don't know how to deal with that. Were you in a situation like that, or...?

Ben: I was fortunate enough that the doctor I saw in Surrey Hills in Sydney, she had also been through her transformation with her weight as well...

Dr. George: Ah!

Ben: ...so I sort of... my mate was seeing her for other circumstances, and he said 'you know, she's lost heaps of weight and you should go along and see what she's got to say'. And after Peter and I had been in there, which was... he was my partner, it was all pretty doom and gloom, and she just pretty much said that if you don't lose the weight you're going to have to look at surgery to lose it in the next three to five years, and if you put on more weight you're going to have hip and knee replacements and all these really invasive surgery. And Peter had high blood pressure and... and stuff like that, so we decided we were going to do it and we went home, and we cleaned out the whole house, because there was only two of us living in our place, so we cleaned out the cupboard and the fridge and the freezer and donated all the food, to friends, that we knew we weren't allowed to eat. Even tuna in olive oil – everything just went.

Dr. George: Wow! So... so, ok, you were given a fairly grim sort of opportunity, I suppose would be the term, where the doctor said look, you really do need to lose weight...

Ben: Yep.

Dr. George: ...and if you don't, there could be these... these... these issues...

Ben: Yep.

Dr. George: ...coming up. And, you know, they... they sometimes talk about diabetes, but also wear and tear of the joints and things like that.

Ben: Yeah. Well I was... I was already a Type 2 diabetic, and I was on medication to regulate that...

Dr. George: Yep.

Ben: ...and I also was using a CPAP machine for sleep apnoea...

Dr. George: Yep.

Ben: ...and since losing the weight and... and getting [unintelligible 04:12], I still have to get tested for diabetes because it never really goes away, but I now don't snore real loud and I don't use the CPAP machine anymore either.

Dr. George: Fantastic. And...

Ben: Yeah. Definitely.

Dr. George: ...are you still on medications for your diabetes, or has...

Ben: No.

Dr. George: ...that changed?

Ben: No. I'm on no medication at all for diabetes or weight-related issues.

Dr. George: That's fantastic. That's... that's...

Ben: Yeah, I know. Because when I first started off I said 'oh yeah, I might be able to lose five or ten kilos', and then it dropped and I got more inspired. And I've never... see people... people feel that you have to do all these really high-intensity exercise to get it off, but it's working out what you need as a daily fuel allowance by... from food, and then how much you have to exercise to burn off that... burn off what you've already taken in... ingested, plus more to burn off the fat that you've already sort of accumulated.

Dr. George: Ok. So it... let's... to go back one step, but did you... did you see a dietician to help you establish those numbers?

Ben: No.

Dr. George: No? You...

Ben: No, we just... we just took... took advice from the actual GP in regards to what she had been eating, which pretty much consisted of the least amount of processed... processing food needed to... to get delivered to the... obviously to the kitchen.

Dr. George: Yeah.

Ben: So it was a lot of fruit, salads, steamed vegetables, lean protein, gravy, which has got no calories and you can make it taste a bit better with some... a teaspoon of garlic, or bits and pieces to sort of make it sort of a bit different every time you have it.

Dr. George: Ok. Ok.

Ben: Yeah.

Dr. George: But it sounds like you... you pretty much... you made a plan...

Ben: Hmm-hmm.

Dr. George: ...you... and you... you ran the plan, you actually did the... did it each day.

Ben: Yep. Yep.

Dr. George: Fanta[stic]... and that... that's one of the big keys that I try to talk with people about is that you just have to choose something and do it, but...

Ben: Yep.

Dr. George: ...and keep it... keep on doing it.

Ben: Yep.

Dr. George: Now certainly, you know, a lot of the people talk about the... how muscle is built at the gym, but it's the... the weight-loss and things like that, that's built in the kitchen, and that's... that's through, again, simple decisions...

Ben: Yeah.

Dr. George: ...about what's going to go into your body.

Ben: Hmm-hmm.

Dr. George: Did you have... so you've... you obviously made that decision, what about exercise? What did you incorporate into your life?

Ben: Well one of the points we got from the GP was that incidental exercise is a key to incorporating into your lifestyle without actually going 'oh, jeez, I need to exercise', or 'I need to put my trainers on and go and walk for a couple of kilometres'. What she advised us to do was shop, but on an every day, seem to get fresh veggies or fresh fruit or whatever, make a trip where incidental exercise means that you have to walk somewhere.

Dr. George: Yep.

Ben: So what we did was every afternoon we used to walk from Alexandria, where we lived, up to Surrey Hills to the supermarket...

Dr. George: Ok.

Ben: ...and that was about a forty-five minute walk, and we used to do that at least five times in a week, plus extra walking.

Dr. George: Yep.

Ben: And in the end I was walking up to fifty kilometres a week, because I had the time and... and I enjoyed it. Since then I've started to do sort of exercise where I actually do [unintelligible 08:17] and I jog for a couple of hundred metres, and then walk again, and stuff like that. So it's never been where I've been on a treadmill and I've had to pretty much go full tilt...

Dr. George: Ok.

Ben: ...because I... I found that... like when I talk to people, I just say 'if you've got the time, just walk'. It's amazing what therapy it is for your body as well as your brain, because you listen to music and you... you're sort of, obviously, keeping an eye on traffic and stuff like that so you don't get hit, but you get to think about stuff and it just sort of filters through, like, I suppose, information through like a colander, and stuff goes through and you go 'oh yeah'. And I think about that for a little bit and then move on to something else, and it... it's actually really relaxing. I love exercise now...

Dr. George: That's great.

Ben: ...compared to what I was before.

Dr. George: Exactly. And I think, you know, slow, incremental increase in that movement can make such a...

Ben: Yeah.

Dr. George: ...difference to people.

Ben: Yeah.

Dr. George: And the other... the other thing is, and it's a really good opportunity to catch up with your partner as well, or if you've got a...

Ben: Hmm-hmm.

Dr. George: ...dog, to catch up with your doggie as well.

Ben: Yeah.

Dr. George: Ok. So you really got stuck into a good, hard focus on the food that was going into your body...

Ben: Yeah.

Dr. George: ...and then you started to include some movement into your day.

Ben: Yeah.

Dr. George: What happened then? Tell me about the success that you had. Was... when did you start to notice, holy crap, this stuff is really working?

Ben: I think the... I think I was really surprised because the... the GP only weighed us on a fortnightly basis, she didn't... she didn't say 'oh you can come in and weigh yourself every day' or 'every couple of days', she said 'leave it a fortnight', because from the way your body works and retains water some days and not the other days and all the rest of it, two weeks gives you a clearer indication of what you've accomplished in that fourteen day block.

Dr. George: Mm.

Ben: And after the first... after the first two weeks of doing what we did with the groceries and all the rest of it, I actually went back and I was a hundred and thirty-seven kilos...

Dr. George: That's amazing.

Ben: ...after a fortnight, and I just was sort of thinking ok, well if it stopped at a hundred and forty when I first got weighed, and I did sort of a comparison from Biggest Loser, because that's what we pretty much did, we went onto Diet Coke, coffee with skimmed milk, no extra sugar and all the rest of it, so I... I possibly could have lost up to ten kilos in that first fortnight...

Dr. George: Yeah, yeah.

Ben: ...that's why I'm not a hundred percent sure on what I was when I started. But being... being able to do that in that... in that first two weeks, and having the encouragement from the GP and also from Peter, because we were doing it at the same time, made it a lot easier. We didn't go out to dinner for a... for a long time, because we wanted to stay in that... that mode of knowing that it had to be food from home, pretty much, or food we knew that we could buy that was low in fat but high in fibre, and vitamins, and all the rest of it.

Dr. George: Yep. And I imagine that did you... because I think a lot of people worry that... that it's an expensive endeavour, but it's actually... from... at least from my experience, to be able to, you know, walk into the shops, getting some fruit and veggies and some good protein – the good protein costs a little bit, but the veggies are usually cheap as chips.

Ben: Yeah. Yeah. And that's the thing, they go... see, when... what we found was people seem to... food you've got to prepare, if it's a little bit more expensive and it takes you a little bit more time to prepare, they think that convenience food is cheaper and better. But if you actually wash a few lettuce leaves, chop up a tomato and some cucumber, it takes five minutes. Whereas if you put something in the over that's like a meat pie

or something like that, you've got a couple of hundred grams of food, but you've also got [SL – 12:30 five hundred] calories...

Dr. George: Yeah.

Ben: ...whereas you can eat a mountain of salad with lean sliced ham or something on it, and you've got a kilo of food compared to two hundred grams of food, but the same amount of calories, so it's actually the mindset of what's actually going in.

Dr. George: Yeah. And... and also to be able to make a couple of... you know, informed choices. I... I...

Ben: Yeah.

Dr. George: ...told a lot of my people who may have short lunch hours or something like that...

Ben: Hmm-hmm.

Dr. George: ...if they're near a Coles or a Woolies...

Ben: Yeah.

Dr. George: ...you... you can pick up a pre-made salad that doesn't have any dressing...

Ben: Hmm-hmm.

Dr. George: ...plus a hundred grams of, like, shaved ham or something like that...

Ben: Yep.

Dr. George: ...chuck it together and you've got a fantastic lunch there, and... and it... you get that for under ten bucks, and...

Ben: Yeah.

Dr. George: ...you know, you got to a... like a... one of the more expensive hamburger places you're looking at fifteen bucks for a decent hamburger, so...

Ben: Yeah. And they try and sweeten the deal by throwing in a drink or something like that, but it's like 'no, water's free'. You can get water everywhere.

Dr. George: Yeah. Actually, that's a... that's a... that's a very good point. Did... pre-weight-loss, were you drinking a lot of soft drinks?

Ben: Not... not sugary stuff because I already knew about my diabetes.



Dr. George: Hmm-hmm.

Ben: But I found out more information, once I started dieting, about how much instant sugar is in fruit juice and... and stuff like that. People... or I didn't know at the time but, yeah, it's amazing. You're better off eating the fruit itself, because you're getting in the extra vitamins and minerals, plus the fibre.

Dr. George: Absolutely. And, you know, that... I don't think people, because fruit juice is always promoted as a very healthy, vitamin-rich drink, that's... you know...

Ben: Hmm.

Dr. George: ...good for kids... they... it's...

Ben: Yeah.

Dr. George: ...always been promoted that way, at least from when I was a kid, we always had orange juice in the fridge, but...

Ben: Yeah.

Dr. George: ...you do, you miss out on... it's full of... it's very high in sugar, in particular fructose...

Ben: Hmm-hmm.

Dr. George: ...which the body has even more difficulty dealing with than glucose, but...

Ben: Yep.

Dr. George: ...also you miss out on all the other good stuff if you had... if you had the piece of fruit, like the...

Ben: Yeah.

Dr. George: ...as you said, the fibre and the water and the vitamins, and stuff...

Ben: Yeah.

Dr. George: ...like that. That... yeah, very good point, very good point.

Ben: Mm.

Dr. George: So it sounds like you've really come along in leaps and bounds. What sort of maintenance regime do you guys have now?

Ben: We, both of us now, actually, are in... before I was in banking and finance, and... and call centre work, but now we've both progressed to doing physical employment – we're both commercial cleaners.

Dr. George: Oh, ok.

Ben: Yeah. And, you know what I mean, as you get older some... like with customer services it sort of burnt me out a bit, and I don't deal with people too well, especially if you can't judge what their moods are going to be like.

Dr. George: Yeah.

Ben: But, yeah, mainly... mainly what we do is we always have smaller portions, if there's, say... say we're being naughty and we're having sausages, then we'll only cook half of the amount that come in the container and put the other half in the fridge, because if they're... all of them are cooked, you're more than likely to go back for a second one as they're cooling down, or... 'oh another piece of bread with a sausage on it', that's... that's... you know what I mean?

Dr. George: Yeah.

Ben: You... you convince yourself to make allowances where you shouldn't be.

Dr. George: Oh, ok, so if you...

Ben: Yeah.

Dr. George: ...only cook what you're planning on eating...

Ben: Yeah.

Dr. George: ...then it makes it... it's just one more impediment to going...

Ben: Yeah.

Dr. George: ...and having a little bit of extra treats.

Ben: Yeah. Unless you get to a point where you can actually cook advance meals and put them in the fridge. But, you know what I mean? Going... going from where I was to where I am now, there's still things I still have trouble with, you know what I mean? Like I love hot chips and I love bread...

Dr. George: Yeah.

Ben: ...but I know that they're not things that can be ingested every day or every couple of days...

Dr. George: Yeah.

Ben: ...and even within that option of the chips, we now only do the oven fried ones, we don't buy them from the shop or...

Dr. George: Ok.

Ben: ...or shallow fry them, because, when you get used to it, they actually taste a lot better...

Dr. George: Yeah.

Ben: ...without all the grease added to them.

Dr. George: Yeah. And I imagine that your palate has changed as well. Do you notice that foods that you used to enjoy, has it changed...

Ben: Hmm-hmm.

Dr. George: ...now?

Ben: Yeah. I can't eat butter.

Dr. George: Really?

Ben: I can't drink grog.

Dr. George: Yeah.

Ben: I... I get really sick, even if I only have maybe three or four beers, or three or four glasses of wine, I seem to a) get inebriated quicker...

Dr. George: Yeah.

Ben: ...but, secondly, I don't know what it is in... in... in the alcohol, but it just makes me really fucked for the next day and...

Dr. George: Ok.

Ben: ...I... I don't like getting up in the morning and just wanting to... to sit around, I actually... like I've been a bit blue with family health issues and... and someone passed away over Christmas, and for a week I just sat and did nothing, and I just thought 'why am I doing this, I might as well be out exercising', because if there's something genetically that's going to pop up down the track, if I'm keeping myself healthy, yeah, ok, something might pop up, but I'm going to be in a position to recover better from it if I keep on my own regime.

Dr. George: Absolutely. Absolutely.

Ben: Yeah, so...

Dr. George: Even if people have genetic dispositions towards certain diseases, that if you...

Ben: Hmm-hmm.

Dr. George: ...can keep your body running at its optimum, that makes such a massive difference. People recover...

Ben: Yeah.

Dr. George: ...from operations faster, people... people need less medications less often, it makes a huge difference.

Ben: Yeah, definitely. Definitely...

Dr. George: Yeah.

Ben: ...because you're not, you know, on the back foot going forward...

Dr. George: Yeah.

Ben: ...you're actually on both feet starting off.

Dr. George: That's... that's awesome. Awesome.

Ben: Yeah. So...

Dr. George: Ok, well look, mate, we've really... we've been chatting for nearly twenty minutes now, so that's... that's really great.

Ben: Yep.

Dr. George: I imagine that some of the listeners are probably wiggling a little bit on their chair at the moment, and probably might be keen to get a bit of movement in. So, you know, if you... if you had somebody come to you and say 'look, I've got thirty seconds and I'd love some... a hint', what would you say to them?

Ben: Exercise at your own pace.

Dr. George: Yeah.

Ben: Not... not putting on weight is exceptional, losing weight is a bonus.

Dr. George: Yeah.

Ben: And enjoy simple food. Don't... don't feel that everything needs... like you have a sandwich, you don't have to have cheese and ham and... and yada-yada-yada and so on on it...

Dr. George: Yeah.

Ben: ...a plain hamburger tastes just as good as what it does with egg, bacon and cheese.

Dr. George: Yeah. Yeah. Ben, thank you very, very much. It's... it's really, really appreciated.

Ben: No worries.

Dr. George: What I'm going to do is... underneath this recording there's going to be space if people want to, you know, either leave comments for Ben or...

Ben: Yeah.

Dr. George: ...if they want to... if they want to ask any questions...

Ben: Yeah.

Dr. George: ...please leave the comments below and I'll pass them on to Ben, and he may be able to help.

Ben: No worries.

Dr. George: Ok. That's awesome.

Ben: Excellent. Thanks Doctor George.

Dr. George: Thank you very much, Ben.

**Stay Up To Date By Joining  
The Healthy Bear VIP Members Group  
<http://TheHealthyBear.com/vip>**