

# Rick Warren's 'Daniel Plan' Debuts on NYT Best-Seller List

Despite being the time of year for sweet treats and indulgences, *The Daniel Plan: 40 Days to a Healthier Life*, co-authored by **Rick Warren**, founding pastor of Saddleback Church, and Drs. Daniel Amen and Mark Hyman, has landed in the No. 1 spot on *The New York Times* Dec. 22 best-seller list in the Advice, How To and Miscellaneous list following its Dec. 3 release.

*The Daniel Plan* is Warren's first book published since *The Purpose Driven Life*, which has been identified as the best-selling nonfiction hardback in publishing history by *Publishers Weekly*, having sold more than 36 million copies. This marks the ninth best-selling book for Amen and the seventh for Hyman.

*The Daniel Plan* details a healthy lifestyle program based on five essential principles of food, fitness, focus, faith and friends, with the latter three being what Warren describes as "the secret sauce." The program was developed and originated at Saddleback Church in 2011, and within the first year more than 15,000 church members collectively lost more than 250,000 pounds while experiencing decreases in health issues and stress and increases in spiritual growth and energy.

"*The Daniel Plan* is far more than a diet; it is about living a healthier life based on biblical principles," Warren says. "You can't love if you don't have the energy to love. If you go home every night and lie on the couch because you're exhausted from not eating right and your blood pressure is too high, well, how can you make a difference? Change your life and change the world. That's our goal with this book."

Each essential within *The Daniel Plan* is intended to hold up one's life, enliven one's body, enrich one's mind and fill

one's heart. Warren dives into spiritual health and the importance of building a foundation on God for all other areas of life. Hyman, a family physician and functional medicine expert, discusses the power of food as medicine and a source of abundance, noting that eating real, whole food can be a doorway to reverse chronic disease and create resilient health, easy weight loss and a clear mind. And Amen, a physician and double-board-certified psychiatrist, helps readers boost their brain's physical health to turn his or her mind into a powerful tool to fight off cravings, bad decisions and toxic thoughts.

"It's your brain that pushes you away from the table, telling you that you've had enough, or gives you permission to have the third doughnut," says Amen, whose Amen Clinics have the world's largest database of functional brain scans relating to behavior, totaling 85,000 scans on patients from 93 countries. "I want to help people avoid the dinosaur syndrome. There are 140 studies now that say as your weight goes up, the actual, physical size and function of your brain goes down, which should drive anyone to want to get healthier."

*The Daniel Plan* focuses on practical tips, such as eating real, whole food; viewing physical activity as play, rather than exercise; setting SMART-specific, measurable, attainable, relevant and time-bound-goals; and finding a group of individuals to provide encouragement for healthy lifestyle choices.

"*The Daniel Plan* is not a book; it's a movement," Hyman says. "In addition to the faith element, what makes the Daniel Plan different from other healthy lifestyle programs is the essential of friends. We have found people who did the program together lost twice as much weight as individuals who did it alone. It is the power of the community. They shop, cook, eat and exercise together. And that accountability—the love factor—is what helps people change."

The concept for *The Daniel Plan* was developed by Warren after baptizing 827 adults in one day by lowering each under the water and lifting them back up. At that time, Warren literally

felt the weight of America's health problems while being simultaneously convicted by his own unhealthy weight and habits.

Warren enlisted three highly qualified doctors, Hyman and Amen, as well as Dr. Mehmet Oz, to develop *The Daniel Plan*, which was conceptualized from the Old Testament biblical account of Daniel, who refused to eat the rich foods from the king's table and challenged the ruler to a 10-day health contest.