

jena la flamme

# PLEASURABLE WEIGHT LOSS

THE SECRETS TO FEELING GREAT LOSING WEIGHT & LOVING YOUR LIFE TODAY



**+7 DAYS**  
of simple  
& delicious  
recipes

“The entire solution to sustainable body confidence and permanent weight loss is pleasure. And this book outlines the path.”

**Christiane Northrup, MD** Bestselling author of *Women's Bodies*, *Women's Wisdom*

## NO POINTS. NO CALORIE COUNTING. JUST TRUST PLEASURE AND THE WISDOM OF YOUR BODY.

“The key to losing weight is not about enjoying less,” teaches Jena la Flamme, “it’s about enjoying more.” This revolutionary insight has allowed thousands of Jena’s students to lose weight without boring food plans, arduous rules, or punishing exercise. Why does it work? Because pleasure is the secret to switching off the stress triggers that are the real culprits behind emotional eating and weight gain. With *Pleasurable Weight Loss*, Jena invites you to discover a graceful, feminine way for attaining the body of your dreams, featuring:

- Taking the “guilty” out of pleasure—why pleasure is a trustworthy and intelligent guiding force in your life
- Accessing your body’s wisdom—embracing your “animal nature” and turning your instincts and cravings into allies
- Discovering your “ideal ecology”—creating the right conditions for weight loss with your food choices, thoughts, and lifestyle
- Making it safe to be sexy—untangling the social and psychological issues of body image so you can feel good while looking your best
- Exercise, cooking, and savoring life—everyday tips and no-stress practices for liberating your natural radiance

How you feel about your body and how you relate with pleasure matters more than what you eat when it comes to successful, sustainable weight loss. With *Pleasurable Weight Loss*, Jena la Flamme brings you a comprehensive, life-changing approach that

*continued on back flap*

# PLEASURABLE WEIGHT LOSS

THE SECRETS TO FEELING GREAT,  
LOSING WEIGHT,  
AND LOVING YOUR LIFE TODAY

*jena la flamme*



sounds true  
BOULDER, COLORADO

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To lose confidence in one's body is to lose confidence  
in one's self.

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SIMONE DE BEAUVOIR

# 1 Embracing the Wisdom of Your Female Animal

YOUR FEMALE BODY is capable of amazing feats. Pleasurable weight loss is one of them. I'm here to teach you the secrets you need to know to lose weight effortlessly and to keep it off for good. It all begins with being respectful to your body—starting right now.

It's helpful to think of your body as your own personal plot of Mother Earth, tapped into the intelligence of nature, just as powerfully as any other living creature or plant. Think about it: without the mind's direction, the body's heartbeat and breath keep it alive. What's more, the female body miraculously creates, births, and nurtures the lives of whole new beings. When you are fully connected to your body's wisdom, you'll have no problem figuring out what to eat or how to move to be fit. At that point, losing weight will be second nature.

I wasn't always in tune with my body's messages, though. I struggled with compulsive eating as a teenager and throughout part of my adult life. I hated my body and felt like I was in food jail. I was caught in a punishing cycle of bingeing and restricting. I thought that the discipline of control was the only way to lose weight.

A day came, however, more than ten years ago, when I first heard my body's voice talk to me. I was standing on the deck of a floating barge near the banks of the Hudson River with movement educator Bill Hedberg. After hearing me drone on with tales of woe about my years of compulsive eating and body shame, Bill asked me, "Would you like to get over your struggle with food and weight?"

"Yes, of course I would," I replied. "I just don't know how."

"I know how," he said matter-of-factly. "The reason you're still struggling is you're not listening to her."

"Listening to who?" I asked.

"Your body, Jena," he replied. "Right now, you think you're the voice in your head, but that's only one part of you. In reality, there are two of you. There's your mind, and there's your body. And your body is an *animal*, specifically a female animal. Your body is a *she*, not an *it*. She's a warm-blooded, furry creature, and she is directly connected to the wisdom of nature. Your mind is intelligent, but your body is also intelligent, in different ways. All this time you've been thinking your body isn't worth listening to, but she is."

Bill paused to see how this was landing, and seeing that I was enraptured, he carried on, sharing teachings that changed my life. "All animals in nature know what to eat to be in balance, Jena. And yours is no exception. The problem is you haven't been respecting her."

All of a sudden, I felt her ears prick up on the sides of my head, as if she had just heard her name for the very first time. Her voice cried out too, "Hello! At last! Finally someone is acknowledging me. I am wise, and I do know what to eat. I'm aware of much more than you've ever been willing to give me credit for. I haven't revealed my secrets to you because you have never sincerely inquired. You've been treating me like your enemy!"

I gulped. I was guilty as charged. Suddenly, I could see all the years of pain I had inflicted upon my body with my compulsive eating and bad body image. Until this moment, I had blamed my body for my problems with food and weight. I was certain it was my body that had wronged me. I thought that the bloating, headaches, and energy crashes were my body's fault. I hadn't

connected the dots to realize that the bloating, headaches, and energy crashes were reactions; they were my body's attempts to communicate the consequences of my compulsive eating.

With a new perspective, though, I could interpret my symptoms as my body's way of telling me that this was not what she wanted. When she felt bad, it meant that whatever I was eating felt bad to her. I could see now that her warnings were clear but that I had been ignoring them. Where I had previously felt she had betrayed me, I now realized it was I who had blindly betrayed her.

I had regarded my body as a possession, something I owned and could use (or abuse) as I pleased. I was now beginning to understand that my body is not a possession but rather my mind's partner—a living, breathing, feeling, and wise female animal that belongs to life itself. The blame I'd projected onto my body for years flashed before my eyes. Now, I was rapidly becoming aware that my body was not the culprit. I realized that my body *is* smarter than I had been willing to consider. There were the times I had tripped but caught myself before hitting the ground, or the times when I'd had a cut and the wound healed. It wasn't my mind that was in charge then—it was my body! Once I recognized how brilliant my body is, my anger and resentment toward her began to melt away. For the very first time, instead of focusing on complaints about my body's appearance, I began to bask in wonder and awe at all she does for me.

I knew then that to lose weight and to find peace with food and my body I had to start listening to my female animal. As soon as I began to own the damage I had inflicted upon my body with my crude treatment, as soon as I restored to her a sense of dignity, my body responded. I felt a surge of energy well up inside of me. And that was the moment, for the first time, when I fully felt her. My body. My female animal.

I had been treating my body as if she owed me something, but the truth was very different: it was I who owed her for my participation in life. I became painfully aware that when the body dies, the life we know ends. In that respect, your body, your female animal, is your very access to life.

I also began to see my pattern of putting my attention on only her flaws. I remembered all the cruel words I'd used to describe



her: disgusting, gross, fat, and worse. For the first time, I realized how much it hurt her to hear me talk about her like that. I had been so preoccupied with my mind's righteous criticism of my body that I never noticed how much anguish and stress it gave her to be accused in this way.

This was when the whole game changed for me, and the seeds of the Pleasurable Weight Loss approach were laid. Once I stopped trying to control my body and instead started listening to her, a paradigm shift occurred. As my view of my body shifted from *it*, a possession of my mind, to *she*, a living creature, my entire notion of what my "problem" was also changed. As these realizations sank in, I was also filled with an enormous sense of gratitude for my body—a 180-degree shift. My body was no longer the bane of my existence—an overweight, pain-in-the-neck source of shame. My body was now my life's heroine.

### **PLEASURE PRACTICE**

#### *Getting in Touch with Your Female Animal*

I used to think of my body as an object that my mind could manipulate to create the body shape I wanted, but I discovered that she is a being unto herself, with wisdom to contribute to the conversation on my well-being. The concept of controlling her went out the window, and the new goal of collaborating with her took its place. How could I get along with her? How could I be in sync with her? How could I understand her needs? How could she, the body, and I, the mind, join forces? The following daily practice allows us to get back in touch with our female animals so that we can fully inhabit our bodies. Do this practice each morning and at any other time in the day when you want to connect with your animal.

Sit in a comfortable position. Take a few deep breaths to relax, right down into your lower belly. Put one hand on your belly and the other on your heart, and as you feel the breath moving in and out, sense the life force inside your body. Notice the part of you that is doing the breathing. This is your animal. She is the sensing part of you, the

feeling part of you, and the female part of you. Once you wake up to her voice, you will always be able to hear her, even if at first it is only a faint whisper.

Allow your mind to relax and invite a sense of trust in the wisdom of your female body to be present. Then ask her the following questions:

- Beloved animal, what do you need right now?
- Beloved animal, what can I do to support you today?
- Beloved animal, what do you most desire?

Listen for the answers. They may be expressed as feelings, sensations, and intuitions. You might want to write them down in a journal and keep track of them. The more you listen for the voice of your female animal, the clearer it will become. Over time, you'll find it easier to discern the source of your food cravings, whether they stem from habit or your female animal. Listening to what she wants fosters better food choices, which become easier and easier.



Intimately connect with your animal by getting down on all fours. Feel your paws on the earth. Arch and curl your spine, and imagine you are a jungle cat with sharp instincts. Crawl, pounce, stretch, and roll on your back. Stick out your tongue and let yourself roar.

## YOUR BASIC INSTINCT

All creatures in nature know how to eat to thrive. It would be absurd to think that a monkey in a tropical rainforest could be confused about what or when to eat. I began to realize that my body, like a monkey's or any other creature's body, has been groomed through the course of evolution to know how to nourish herself. She isn't stupid. Her impulses are not flawed, corrupted, or deadened, as I had feared.

Even if you've spent years abusing your female animal through compulsive, unfeeling behaviors, rest assured that her ancient wisdom cannot be lost. Over millions of years, nature has programmed your body with the wisdom to know how to nourish herself, and this instinct cannot be erased. Although your disappointing past efforts might appear to be irrefutable evidence

that you should give up trying to lose weight, reinforcing a how-could-I-possibly-change-now attitude, the reality is that in Mother Nature's time frame, mere decades occur in the blink of an eye. You still have time.

Christopher Ryan, author of *Sex at Dawn: How We Mate, Why We Stray, and What It Means for Modern Relationships*, told me, "We carry the past within us. We are the past. We are designed by hundreds of thousands of years of the past that has accumulated in the shape of our bodies, in our appetites, and in the things we need to be healthy and happy. If someone thinks she can disconnect from that, then she has a very unsophisticated impression of what she is."

### **PLEASURE PRACTICE**

#### *The Chapel of Wonder and Awe*

It's easy to fall into the trap of putting our attention on only the things we don't like about our bodies. To balance those critical voices in your head, make it a practice to notice all the brilliant things your body does for you every day. The more you notice all the ways your body supports you and allow yourself to feel gratitude for the body's wonders, the more receptive you will become to the signals she uses to communicate with you.

Let yourself feel wonder and awe for the myriad ways your body serves you every single day. You wake up every morning after a night of renewing sleep. Your feet allow you to move freely to discover the world. You digest the food that you put in your mouth. You flush out toxins and repair from a variety of illnesses and injuries. You receive pleasure through each of your senses. These are some of the many miracles your body performs in the service of keeping you alive.

Your instinct is your body's primal intuitive power. Reflect on the ways your female animal has instinctively served you well, and invoke sincere gratitude for the phenomenon of this intelligent life force.

## WEIGHT LOSS IS A RELATIONSHIP ISSUE

This shift in perspective—which elevates the body from an object to a being, and in a woman’s case, a feminine being—is the crux of Pleasurable Weight Loss. As soon as your body rises in status from an object without feelings to a wise female animal with guidance worthy of loving consideration, you have created a completely different dynamic for weight loss. Now that there’s you and this “other,” you have a relationship. Instead of weight loss being a numbers game of calories in and calories out, it becomes an intimate relationship in your life, worthy of tenderness and respect. Once you approach your body as a relationship to discover rather than a problem to fix, you start thinking in a whole new way. Embracing your instinctive female ability to nurture and applying it to the care of your female animal is the most effective strategy I’ve come across for losing weight in a healthy and sustainable way.

If you take a step back to look at what I’m suggesting here, you may find it ironic: I’m asking you to think about your body as a separate being in order to wake up to the need to treat her with compassion and kindness. When you think of your body as “me” or “mine,” it’s easy to treat her poorly. You might let your own cup run dry in a way you would never allow for others. But when you think of her as someone else, all of a sudden treating her better takes on a whole new light.

Even if you’ve always had a brutal relationship with food, hated how you looked, and struggled with weight for longer than you care to admit to yourself, I’ve seen that once a woman awakens from the cultural trance that her body is a possession or a slave of the mind, she straightaway feels drawn to treat her body more kindly. Once she grants her body the dignity of being a rightful force in her life, with whom she has a real relationship, everything changes.

A powerful tool to bring her perspective to your awareness and deepen your relationship is to continually refer to your body using the personal pronouns *she* and *her*. Do this whenever you speak of your body—most importantly, in your inner dialogue with yourself. As you’ve already seen, I’ve incorporated this practice into my life, and it has been a complete game changer.

My client Sandy once told me how this tool liberated her from the web of spinning thoughts in her sometimes confused mind. She felt so connected to the idea of using personal pronouns to describe her body that she shared the concept with her boyfriend, Richard, who enthusiastically embraced the practice. Richard thought Sandy was gorgeous, but Sandy struggled with her body image and weight. One evening, as they were thinking about what to have for dinner, Sandy started to get anxious: “I don’t know what to eat! Should we go out to eat or stay home and cook?” Seeing her exasperation, Richard chimed in, “What does *she* want?”

“As soon as he said it like that, the answer came to me with crystal clarity,” Sandy said. “All of a sudden, I knew that she wanted to go to our local Italian restaurant to have tilapia with potatoes and leeks, and there was no longer any confusion about it.”

Understanding that weight loss is at heart a relationship is good news for women because we are hardwired to excel at relationships. We are relationship ninjas. We are daughters, sisters, mothers, aunts, and loyal friends, and we intuitively know when a relationship is healthy and when it is not. We have been programmed by evolution to ensure social harmony. We have a greater natural affinity for relationships than men, a trait that can be detected throughout every stage of our life cycle, starting as early as infancy when girls demonstrate more responsiveness than boys to the stress of others in their environment. We have a sixth sense for the unspoken needs of others, an ability related to social conditioning and a byproduct of evolution that has shaped our neural wiring.

Women are highly attuned and responsive. We can hear nuances of emotion in a voice and read the unsaid in a face. Louann Brizendine writes in *The Female Brain* that a woman’s ability both to decode an infant’s needs and to predict what a bigger, more aggressive male could potentially do to her gave her a distinct survival advantage.

We are not only instinctive caregivers but also proud of this trait and readily acknowledge it. We live in a culture where women are conditioned to play down our achievements—except this one. Being a great caregiver is the one thing that is culturally

endorsed for a woman to have high self-esteem about, making it all the more potent a trait to hijack for pleasurable weight loss.

Once I realized that mending my relationship with my body was at the root of my challenge, what had been an obsessive quest to lose weight and heal my compulsive eating patterns took on a completely new, more inspiring quality. Where my quest had previously been all about control, it now centered on listening. Where it had been about mentally mapping “the right way” to accomplish a change, it was now about leaving room for the wordless wise guidance of my body to be heard.

Weight loss went from being a war that my mind intended to win over my body to being a team effort, an act of co-creation between two brilliant parts of myself. I knew I would never lose weight following the old rules. Once I saw the bright light of a more compassionate approach to my body, I could never turn back. From this point on, trying to lose weight without engaging my female animal and listening for her opinion seemed barbaric.

One of my personal heroes, horse whisperer Ray Hunt, had a similar transformation with his approach to horses. “I look back at how rude or crude or misunderstanding I was to the animal,” says Hunt in the documentary about his work, *Turning Loose*. Hunt eventually became renowned for taming and training horses through gentleness instead of forced submission. But he didn’t start out that way.

“The part that I had been overlooking was that I was working with a living, breathing, feeling, decision-making animal. I thought, if he didn’t like it, too bad. I didn’t think the horse was entitled to an opinion. He was just meant to do as I said,” explains Hunt of his previous mindset, which mirrors the unfeeling attitude many women inflict upon their bodies in the name of weight loss.

When Hunt recognized that horses have feelings of their own, he revolutionized his training style. “It became a new challenge for me to get in harmony with the horse. To be able to do it *with* them. I wanted it to be as fun for the horse as it was going to be for me,” he says in *Turning Loose*.

The partnership that you are creating between your intellect and your animal needs to be fun for both. That’s why I call my

approach to weight loss “pleasurable.” On this journey, you’ll discover how to fully enjoy this new and authentic relationship with your animal, while you relish the foods you eat and find real and lasting pleasure in all aspects of your life.

### **PLEASURE PRACTICE**

#### *Interviewing Your Animal*

It’s time to open up the lines of communication so that you can talk directly with your female animal. At first it may seem strange, as if you are talking to yourself, but soon it will be second nature to tune in to this part of yourself. Let her know of your desire to lose weight, heal your relationship with food, and enjoy your feminine body without reservation, and reassure her that you want to do it with her.

In this exercise, the mind interviews the female animal. Your mind’s job is to listen intently for the voice of your animal. Your body has her unique way of speaking, and it’s different from the way your mind communicates. Listen to your body and learn to be a translator.

Ask her the following questions:

- How can I make losing weight more fun for you?
- Which of your needs or desires have I been neglecting?
- What foods make you feel great?
- What makes you feel alive?
- What can I do to make you feel appreciated?
- What can I do to make you feel beautiful?

Be receptive to what you hear, and write down her answers.

### **LOVING YOUR ANIMAL**

As you shift your experience of your body as an object and begin to animate her as a creature, she will come alive as your primary partner, particularly on your quest for pleasure. Your body is the physical part of you that allows you to experience life through the senses. Though we can enjoy the mental pleasure of a crossword puzzle or a book, the types of pleasure that are going to make the biggest difference for weight loss are those you experience through your senses.

I use many affectionate terms for my female animal, such as my girl, my lady, my partner, and my friend. And while happy, healthy, nourishing relationships with others is a crucial component of a satisfying life, the relationship you have with your body is most important. Saida Désilets, author of *Emergence of the Sensual Woman*, describes this bond between your body and mind as your “primary relationship.”

You can be a rock star in all of your other relationships, but if this primary relationship between your body and mind is not flourishing, then it will cast a shadow over everything else in your life. No matter how rich you are, no matter how popular you are, and no matter how thin you are, if your primary relationship is not intimate and loving, then all other pleasures and sources of delight available to you will be soured. Losing weight offers no guarantee that you will love your body. From the stereotype of the gorgeous model who still doubts her attractiveness, to the countless women who are oblivious to how great they look and continue to be discontented with their bodies, deep down we all know, as reluctant as we may be to admit it, that it takes more than looking good to feel good about ourselves. Only when you learn to love your body unconditionally will you open the way to loving your physical form in her full feminine glory.

When you have a great primary relationship with your body, you will love your body and be in harmony with her, no matter her size. With a healthy foundation in place, when you do lose weight, you will already have practiced loving yourself unconditionally, and you will continue to do so in your new size. This understanding, that love for your body must come before lasting weight loss will occur, is one of the cornerstones of the Pleasurable Weight Loss approach.



Your animal desires physical attention, including the pleasure of your loving touch. Breathe deeply as you stroke your hair, caress your face, and hug your arms. Touch your breasts. Rub your belly, lower back, hips, and legs. Relish the sensations that arise.



*continued from front flap*

starts with your mind—helping you relax, build self-esteem, and develop a sense of joy and trust in your body. Filled with inspiration, recipes, and practical guidance for women of all ages and body types, here is a powerful guide for transforming your relationship with food and exercise—a natural, enjoyable, and lasting path for looking and feeling your best.



**JENA LA FLAMME** has dedicated herself to helping women around the world heal emotional eating, reach their healthy weight, and look and feel fabulous and feminine. Her live seminars, Pleasure Camps, private coaching, online programs, social media outlets, and website teach women a natural, sustainable, and joyous approach to weight loss—without giving up chocolate. For more, visit [jenalaflamme.com](http://jenalaflamme.com).

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