

Frances O’Neil, MSW, RDN, CDE
Author “10 Minute Healthy Rice Cooker Meals”
www.FoodRx.co

Sports were my first love. I started swimming competitively at age 10 and later added running. I swam and ran cross country in high school and in college (NCAA). I took a nutrition class early on in college. It hooked me and I decided to combine my love of sports with nutrition and become a sports nutritionist. During my dietetic internship, I wrote and had published in The Journal of the American Dietetic Association an article on sports nutrition. My first job was with a physical therapy clinic that was attached to an elite fitness club. I thought I had landed my dream job. Instead, I saw primarily wealthy, unhappy housewives who knew more about nutrition than I did. I soon realized that I could not help these women because of what I perceived as unresolved psychological and emotional issues that interfered with their ability to change. This led me to obtain a master's degree in social welfare.

I'm still fascinated with the field of Sports Nutrition and have a minor in exercise physiology, but my schooling in human behavior and psychology, combined with my experiences as a team player, captain, and later coach makes me a great fit for any position that requires understanding what motivates people. Currently I work in a health education department and in a dialysis clinic, both of which require good motivational interviewing and active listening skills and a solid teamwork ethic. Dialysis also requires good clinical skills and feeds my need for a challenge. My job as a health educator nourishes the coach/team player in me as I get to cheer participants on in their journey to better versions of themselves.

I am at my best, though, when I combine my cheerleading/coaching style with cooking. I dread cooking, but it was that struggle that led me to write a cookbook and perfect cooking meals in a rice cooker, a “one-pot, one-button, set-it and forget-it” method that resulted in a service mark from the US Patent and Trademark Office for cooking healthy meals in a rice cooker. I now have a portable cooking class that I can set up anywhere and teach people how to prepare easy, healthy, tasty meals in one pot. How better to motivate a person to change than to not just *tell* them how and why, but to *show* them? All of my recipes are designed to improve health and prevent disease. As I prepare the dish, I talk about the benefits of the different ingredients and show the audience how easy it is to prepare and then let them sample the dish. It is for this unique combination and service that organizations and practitioners seek me out.

The one thing I've come to know for sure is that changing behavior is hard. It's a battle every day; and there are some people who cannot change, or for whatever reason refuse to, despite the threat of death, or if nothing else, disability. I now believe that in order for a person to be successful, they need someone who believes in them, who will walk alongside them, and someone that they believe in. I've had patients tell me that when faced with a challenge they ask themselves, “What would Frances do?” Knowledge is important, but the human factor is just as important, if not more so, because “no one cares what you know until they know that you care.” That is why I communicate in a way that shows that I am human, approachable, and relatable as well as knowledgeable.

I take great pride in what I do and constantly seek ways to do it better. I continue to marry my love of human psychology/behavior and science. I am currently training to become a motivational interviewing mentor. I am also working towards a certification in the field of functional medicine. I would like to better communicate with my Spanish speaking patients. I would like to collaborate with other professionals and revamp my cookbook and develop my cooking class into a product that can be purchased and presented by other professionals. I believe that dietitian/nutritionists are poised to make a huge impact in the worlds of medicine and science with the population at large. There is no time to waste, no room for self-doubt, and no opportunity to be left unexplored.



Connect with Frances: www.foodrx.co@gmail.com
www.FoodRx.co
<https://www.linkedin.com/in/frances-o-neil-70842342/>