**Part 9 – Breaking Through Plateaus**

**Key Takeaways**

* Plateaus are **normal and expected**—especially as you get leaner.
* A plateau means your body has adapted, and **you’re no longer in a deficit**.
* Before making changes, confirm it's a **true plateau** (not from inconsistent tracking, water retention, etc.).
* Small, consistent adjustments to food or exercise break most plateaus.

**Action Steps**

1. **Confirm It’s a Real Plateau**
   * At least 2 weeks of no change in weight, girths, or visible progress
   * Be sure you’re tracking food accurately, weighing consistently, and not retaining water
2. **Use This Checklist to Rule Out a False Plateau**
   * Are you weighing/measuring food?
   * Are you logging **everything** (snacks, bites, sauces)?
   * Has your activity decreased?
   * Are you retaining water (menstrual cycle, stress, illness)?
   * Are you constipated?
   * Are you sleeping enough?
3. **Create a New Deficit (Choose One or Combine)**
   * **Lower calories by 5–10%** (mostly from carbs and fats)
   * **Increase activity by 5–15%** (add sets, reps, or minutes to workouts)
4. **Wait 2 Weeks, Then Reassess**
   * Don’t rush adjustments. Let your body respond
5. **Example: Combining Adjustments**
   * Lower calories by 3–5%
   * Add 5% more training volume (e.g., extra reps or time)

**Common Mistakes to Avoid**

* Cutting calories too aggressively
* Making changes after just 1 week of stalled progress
* Ignoring lifestyle factors like stress, sleep, hydration, or digestion