

Andrea Lindsay's

**No
More
Diets!**

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NO MORE DIETS!

IS THIS A MIRACLE CURE?

Having read the title of this 'e' book you might be asking "is this a 'miracle' cure" or "how can I lose weight if I don't go on a diet" or maybe even "does this mean I can eat what I like and still lose weight"?

People are often under the misconception that eating healthily is about willpower. This is generally based upon the experience of those dieting and the perceived deprivation of being on a restricted diet and the resultant human response of 'wanting what you can't have'!

How would it be if you could have a 'little of what you fancy'? How would you feel if you could say "no" to foods that in the past have controlled your life? What would it be like to wake up in the morning and your first thought **not** to be of food? This may seem impossible, particularly if you have spent most of your adult life trying different diets in an attempt to find a long term solution to losing weight and then maintaining your weight loss.

AM I REALLY HUNGRY?

The temptations of 'unhealthy' foods are all around us every day. Bright coloured, attractive packaging, advertising snack foods as if they are a 'trendy' essential accessory to life! Children's television constantly advertises the latest 'pop-up' this, 'juicy' that, or 'fill the hunger gap' something else! Hunger almost becomes a 'naughty' word. You mustn't feel it and if you do, you must certainly 'fill it' immediately! Hunger is the body's way of letting you know that you need to eat in the near future. It is however **not** a signal to quickly find whatever you can to 'fill the gap'! In fact, the majority of people I work with tell me that on reflection, they never *really* allow themselves to feel hungry (and I mean *hunger* in the true sense of the word!). Most people tell me that they eat more, when they are bored and/or alone. I call 'secretive' eating 'sneaky snacking'! These of course are not the only times when people over-eat, but they are certainly pretty high on the list. If this is the case, then willpower is not to blame. It's how you perceive your own internal responses to food and your desire to eat.

CAN I WANT TO EAT HEALTHILY?

Healthy eating is not about only ever eating 'healthy' foods. Healthy eating is about a balanced approach to eating and food. It's about making choices to help you achieve a

healthier weight and stay there. On the converse, 'dieting' as termed in today's world, is about restricted food and calorie intake. A 'diet', is generally eating in a certain way for a period of time, as opposed to healthy, balanced eating, which is a life-time approach to eating.

As I sit here typing this today, I reflect back to a session I had with a lady yesterday. It was a 2nd appointment and we were discussing how things had been since her first session with me the week before. Her exact words were "it's truly amazing, I am not thinking about food at all"! When she first came to see me and completed the form with all her personal details, she wrote that her expected outcome from the consultation was, "To achieve longer term weight loss and to be happier and to stop snacking constantly". I asked her how things had been over the last week compared to the many diets she had tried. She said that there was no comparison at all. For the first time in her adult life she was not thinking about food all day and that the best part of all, was that she didn't feel she was 'depriving' herself of any foods, because she was not thinking about eating in the first place! When she had dieted in the past, her focus was constantly on food and what she could/couldn't eat and when she could next eat. However now she didn't even have to think about eating until she was *genuinely* hungry (yes, *genuinely* hungry!) and when she was, all she needed to do, was ask herself if the food choices she made were helping her achieve her goal. The result was that about 80% of the time, she opted for a balanced healthy approach. Not a pre-packaged diet branded food, or a 'special food supplement' provided by the diet company, just 'normal' food in a reasonable food portion.

Hooray!! No more cooking separate meals for you and your family, no more weighing foods, no more counting points, in fact, no more weighing yourself! Does standing on the scales ever *really* tell you anything you don't already know about yourself? Before you get on them, don't you already *suspect* if you've put on a pound or two, or maybe even ten! If you feel a little slimmer, aren't you already excited about the prospect of seeing that gauge move a millimetre or two that confirms, yes, you have lost a pound – hurrah!

DO THIN PEOPLE EAT 'NAUGHTY' FOOD?

So, how do thin people achieve and maintain their 'thinness'? Do they weigh themselves regularly? Do they *never* eat chocolate, crisps, cakes and fried foods? Do they weigh their food, count the points or buy 'special' zero fat, zero sugar for '*people who want to be very thin only*' foods? NO, NO, NO! Of course they don't. Have you seen a thin person eat a pudding in a restaurant, or eat a chocolate bar, or worse still EAT A CREAM CAKE!! When they do, what do you hear yourself saying "look, it's alright for them, they can eat

whatever they like and just look at them, it's not fair"! I wonder if you watched their eating habits for a week, what would you see? Would they be a 'sneaky snacker' - a 'quick' slice of cheese when making the sandwiches for the next day? Just a mouthful or 4 whilst preparing the dinner, maybe the broken bits in the biscuit tin that no-one else would want (or notice they had gone!), or perhaps the chicken nugget that it's a shame to throw away just 'cause the children didn't want it – and it's only one anyway, so it won't make any difference (will it?). Would they be eating large food portions. Would they say "phew, I'm stuffed – what's for pudding – I'll find a little room". NO, they don't do this either. They just make choices. Eating a pudding when you are out with friends, having an ice cream when you take the children to the beach, having a cooked breakfast when you are away for the weekend – these choices "**DO NOT MAKE A FAT PERSON**", did you hear me "**THEY DO NOT MAKE A FAT PERSON!**" (Apologies for using the 'F' word).

IT'S ALL A MATTER OF HABIT!

Here we now reach the 'crux' of the matter! **HABIT!** The dictionary definition of a habit is "an action or behaviour pattern that is *regular, repetitive*, and often *unconscious*."

So, a habit is something you do regularly over and over again, often without even thinking about it. For an over-weight person, over-eating is an **every-day** habit. It's something they do regularly, it's **not** something they do **occasionally**.

What do we know about habits? Well, there are good habits and bad habits. Are we better at good habits than bad habits? Unfortunately not! We can become very good at anything we repeat often enough, good or bad. This means that we can become very good at a bad habit!

The good news is though, you weren't born with bad habits. All habits are *learned* behaviours and through repetition of that behaviour they 'shift' into unconscious responses. So, the answer lies – within *your* own subconscious! You may be wondering how you access your own subconscious to begin to re-program it. It may at this moment in time seem incomprehensible to you that you too could find yourself saying "it's truly amazing, I am not thinking about food at all", but I can assure you it is possible, if **YOU CHOOSE** for it to be so.

This is an important point. You cannot be made to do anything you don't want to do. You have free will and as such, if you choose to ignore the steps that will help you make the changes, the changes will of course not happen. But if you focus your mind on learning these new habits as if you were learning any essential new skill, through repetition, they

will become your new unconscious responses. It is relevant to point out though, that **you** have to make changes. No fairy is going to wave a magic wand, so that you wake up 3 stone lighter tomorrow! If however you do give learning these new skills the same attention as you would say, learning to drive, teaching your child how to hold a knife and fork, learning how to use the internet, you will master them, **if** it is important enough for you. So where to begin!

WHERE DO I START?

Many life coaches and gurus will tell you that the best place to begin is at the end! Stephen R. Covey says “Begin with the end in mind”. In essence, this means that you have to know where you are headed before you begin your journey. I liken this to sitting in a car with the engine running, but not having a clue as to your eventual destination! When we get in the car and turn the ignition, we usually know where it is that we are headed and on long unfamiliar journeys, we have even probably planned the route and the time it will take to get there.

So, if you think of your life as your journey, to get to where you want to end up, it's pretty important to know where you're going, so that you end up where you want to be! It's also important to give yourself a realistic timeframe to reach your destination and to check your progress along the way.

In a moment, I'll ask you to think of your destination in relation to your weight ie where do you want to end up and how long do you think it will take you to get there. But before you do that, I'd like you to consider a few other things. On most journeys there is usually more than one way to get there. Some roads may be faster than others, some may be quicker but may require more attention. As the driver and navigator **you have complete control** over your journey. You make the choices and therefore you arrive at your destination having travelled the road that you chose.

At this point, I'd like to draw you back to the earlier thoughts about 'free will' and 'choice'. Over the years I have been helping people, often those that achieve the most significant success, are those who have the farthest to go, which you might think is odd. You'd think it would be easiest for those that have little to achieve to get to where they want to be. The people that have almost lost hope of ever achieving what they want to, the people that tell me that I am their last resort are generally those that achieve the most.

WHY SHOULD I BOTHER?

Often it takes the most extreme of circumstances before we have enough motivation to

change our behaviours. So, before you think about where you'd like to be, just spend a moment, thinking about where you might end up, if you don't change your eating habits:

- Reflect back on the weight you've gained over the last 5 years. If you keep eating in the same way that you are now, how much will you weigh in 10 years, 15 years, or maybe 20 years?
- How will your health deteriorate over your life, what will this mean in terms of your ability to do the things you want to – holidays, activities with children or grandchildren?
- How will you feel about your body and the way you look? How will your weight have affected the clothes choices you make?
- What about the people you care about, how will they feel about you? Will they be embarrassed to go out with you? Will they be (and maybe already are) worried about your health. Do they want to help you but don't know what to do?

If your life is your journey and your destination is your own choice, is this the journey and destination you would choose for yourself? OF COURSE NOT!

So instead, think about this:

- You've arrived at your 'goal' and have maintained the weight you want to be for some considerable time. How proud of yourself are you, how good do you feel?
- How has your health improved, what wonderful things have you done, places you have visited, fun that you have had with those that you love, that maybe in the past you could never have imagined?
- What clothes choices do you make now that you are proud of your body? How do you wear your hair, have you changed your glasses or the colour of your lipstick? What do you think now when you catch a 'glimpse' of yourself when passing a shop window?
- How has it changed your relationships with those that you love? How proud are they of you? How excited are they about the new you?
- **HOW GOOD DOES IT FEEL!!!!**

So what are you waiting for?

Today is the day you change your life! Today is the day you begin your journey. You are in charge, you choose, you navigate, you **TAKE RESPONSIBILITY!**

Crickey – a bit scary! Taking responsibility. No-one to tell you what to eat, no one to weigh you and either smile or shake their head. No one to clap you when you've lost the requisite 2lb. No-one to give you your 'special food supplements'. So how does it work? Well here we go!!

1. **It's *your* choice** - every time you eat, ask yourself the question "does this help me get to where I want to be?" The more often you say 'no' to unhealthy foods, the quicker you will reach your goal.
2. **Am I *really* hungry?** – a crucial question! If you think you are hungry, have a large glass of water first. 70% of the time when we *believe* we are hungry, we are in fact dehydrated.
3. **Have I had enough?** – listen to your body. When you know you are satisfied, stop eating. Learn to leave a little on your plate.
4. **Be the last to leave the table** – eating more slowly allows your stomach to effectively communicate with your brain to let you know when you are full. The easiest way to achieve this, is to be the last to leave the table!
5. **Temptation be gone!** – make it easy for yourself to stop eating those 'naughty' foods by removing them from sight. If you were trying to stop smoking, you wouldn't leave cigarettes lying around the house!
6. **Eating regularly is OK!** – it's not about how often you eat, it's about what and how much. Don't allow yourself to become ravenous, as you are more likely to eat the wrong foods! Eating regularly is important, to get your metabolism working effectively and to stop it going into 'starvation' mode (ie storing fat).
7. **Less is better!** – as you serve up your food, have a serving spoon less of whatever it is ie rice, bolognaise, pasta etc. No measuring or weighing. Imagine all those serving spoons of food mounting up over the week – at the end of the week, how much extra food will you have **not** eaten!
8. **The more often you do it, the easier it gets!** – remember it's all about habit! Repeating something time and time again is what makes it a habit. The more often you repeat these good habits the easier they become, until they are your unconscious responses and you do it naturally without even thinking about it!

GOOD LUCK – YOUR JOURNEY HAS ALREADY BEGUN!

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