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## Back to Eating Food—Whole, Real and Clean

### ***How did we drift so far away from the basic eating styles of a generation ago?***

The answer to that question is that many influences have contributed to our confusion regarding our food choices. *Lifestyle changes, advances in food technology, and our media age* all have made a contribution. If you suffer with chronic symptoms, are of a higher weight or plagued with food or eating issues, there is little doubt that the food plan you are following now, is not in your body's best interest. The latest advice on our basic nutrition is difficult to keep up with. This is due in part to the food companies advertising to a consumer already overwhelmed with data. They have created tasty non-food choices carrying the correct ratio of sugars and fats to become addictive, leaving us overfed yet often undernourished. The role we as individuals have placed upon food and eating—(social, emotional satisfaction, convenience) has not been in our best interest, either. It's not surprising that sometimes we *just eat what is in front of us*, because it is available and easy! Our goal now is to choose a food plan that is bio-chemically correct for your body .

Let's be reminded of basic nutritional facts. Food sources are categorized into proteins, fats and carbohydrates as a way of distinguishing what role they play in our body's life processes. Along with pure water these food groups supply our body's needs. Proteins supply the amino acids, which are the building blocks of all cells and needed for cellular activities. Fats provide the essential fatty acids, which our body cannot make without certain foods. These, too, contribute to the natural health of our cellular structure and are the building blocks for hormones. Complex carbohydrates supply vitamins, minerals and sugars, which are necessary for additional energy production, and fiber, critical to digestion and assimilation of nutrients.

*Remember, the outcome you are looking for is to feed your body the nutrients it needs for optimal health and weight balance, to satisfy your hunger and be free of food cravings—and to do this while **matching your requirements with your body's ability to absorb and assimilate the food you eat.***

Requirements and abilities—what does that really mean? First let's refer back to our nutrient sources, protein, fats and carbohydrates (and water.) These are what our body requires to stay alive. These food sources need to be pure and clean when they enter our body for optimal use. So much of what is found on our grocery shelves now has been compromised with additives for tastiness, preservatives for longer shelf life and toxins that

have crept in from our environment. Our body does not require these and is not designed to metabolize them. Though we are all alike in our basic physical makeup, no two of us are the same metabolically. How our bodies absorb and assimilate what we eat is unique to each of us. What works optimally for someone else may not work well at all for you.

Any dietary recommendations you adhere to while based on sound nutrition, also must take individual body chemistry into consideration. If your cells are nutrient-hungry while you are overfeeding, your body is on a collision course for disaster and disease.

If you are nutritionally deficient, or have imbalanced brain chemistry, or are loaded with yeast or heavy metals you will not be free of cravings for certain foods—no matter how nutritionally balanced the diet. Cravings defy logical thinking and willpower. They are physiological in nature, although they may have a psychological component, too. Likewise, it can be disastrous to recommend a diet that included even moderate amounts of sugar to someone who has metabolic issues related to sugar, like pre/diabetes or hypoglycemia. If the diet suggested that a certain amount of pasta or bread is ok, from a caloric standpoint, to someone with a gluten allergy or intolerance, that moderate amount of pasta is sure to add weight or trigger a binge or wreak havoc in the GI tract. The *just eating a little bit of everything plan works well*—but only for those who aren't encumbered with inter-related chronic risk factors. Not very many people, by the way, are this fortunate. Is it any wonder that we are confused and think we are eating well?

The answer is not another pre-designed diet. No one but you can make the correct decisions about what foods to eat. I will offer though, what I call a *Simplified Eating Plan*—one that you can personally customize work to meet your body's specific requirements and abilities. The first steps in simplified eating include: clarifying your biochemical needs; detaching your emotions from eating; and consuming healthy, non-contaminated whole, non-processed foods, like the majority of people were able to do until the last half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The statistics on obesity as well as disease symptoms have increased dramatically since our food sources have been compromised with processing, preserving and being made convenient, while grown in mineral-depleted and contaminated soils. These have affected us all.

### **Creating A Simplified Eating Plan**

To start designing your personal eating plan first, forget everyone else's rules and regulations for eating, even though they may be good and well intentioned. Concentrate on the overall look of each plate of food eaten at meals and satisfy your physical hunger with whole, nutritious and clean food. You may not be able to appreciate this now, but once you

accomplish that goal of eating to satisfy your body and your physical hunger, your body won't want to eat any differently. Your body is waiting to take back the control it was always intended to have. In return there are many rewards for you—more far reaching than anything you have ever tasted.

Next, start clearing the clutter surrounding your food-related beliefs. New beliefs about food and eating will help create your new eating plan. Coming up to speed quickly about the proper foods for your body is an early goal to set even if implementing the changes takes longer. You need to map out and pictured clearly your food plan. You will come to the right foods in the correct portions for yourself, in your own time. That too, is part of your change process. You will meet your body requirements and abilities. With some important changes your abilities will increase and your requirements will become clear.

As you make your choices remember, it may not even be the nutrient *per se*, but what is “laced-in” with the nutrient or how that nutrient interacts with your body that may be causing a problem.

### **—A Simplified Eating Plan**

*Reminder: Nutritional requirements are met by unprocessed, whole foods as proteins, fats, carbohydrates (and water.) Your body's ability to absorb, assimilate and metabolize these nutrients may vary with your health status, lifestyle choices, age and genetic vulnerability.*

**1. If you are able to eat carbohydrates, start with vegetables and fruits,** preferably whole and fresh, organic or lightly steamed. If you have weight or eating issues, it is likely that your carbohydrate metabolism, at this point, is compromised. How many carbohydrates your body can handle in the long term, may yet to be determined.

**2. Pick a protein source that is compatible with your body's metabolism.** For many it will be meats, poultry, fish, dairy, soy. For others it will be whole grains, beans, legumes, nuts, seeds. And for some, it may be a combination of both types of proteins sources.

First, before you make a commitment to a protein type, it is necessary to rule out any food allergies or intolerances. Food allergies or intolerances are your body's reaction against certain proteins.

Secondly, before you make a commitment to a protein type, identify whether or not you are consuming excess sugar/carbohydrates. Whole grains and legumes are high-carbohydrate protein foods.

**3. Use fats, but in moderation** (mono-unsaturated fats) natural oils: olive, peanut, canola and nuts, and some saturated fats—real or organic butter, meats, dairy (unless allergic) and in amounts that your body will metabolize without increasing cholesterol or weight.

**4. Drink fresh, non-polluted water.** Some recommend half your weight in ounces. (e.g. If you weight 120 pounds your body needs approximately 60 ounces of water per day.)

**5. Avoid processed sugars and carbohydrates and all hydrogenated fats.** (That's a lot of avoiding of the good tasting stuff to consider!)

**6. Limit intake** of sodium, and food additives, caffeine and alcohol. (And that's a lot of limiting to consider, too!)

**7- Reduce all portion sizes except vegetables which should be increased—unless you have difficulty digesting fiber.** Eat the amount of food needed to not feel hungry. If you are overstuffing, you are probably stuffing emotions.

Though you may already know about all of the above, the question is whether you are ready to make the commitment to return to eating this way. At first there may be some discomfort while your body adjusts to reducing or eliminating processed foods, sugars and carbohydrates. Many choose to cut back slowly—each meal at a time while this detoxification process lasts. In a short time *your* simplified plan will not only be easier, but also more satisfying. Once all the extraneous things are removed from your body and you are nutritionally fed, you will want to eat that way, since it will become the only way you will feel good and feel satisfied. That doesn't mean that you won't eat 'goodies' or 'junk' ever again, but when you do they will be a very small part of your total intake. You will be able to eat as much of the goodies that your body can handle without tipping the scale—literally and figuratively, away from your optimal health and weight and without a flare-up in chronic symptoms

**For your step-by-step *BACK TO EATING FOOD* plan, contact Lynda at 239-330-4414**