

Chapter 13: What's Between the Ears

Much of this book discusses the importance of what we eat. That is after all, one of the most important principles for weight loss and prevention of over 300 diseases ! However, if weight loss was so easy everyone would be of normal weight and free of chronic disease. We all know that it doesn't work that way. What goes on inside our heads is, in most cases more important. This chapter will discuss some resources and approaches one can use explore your own particular situation.

I often use the following example when speaking to a nonsmoker. If I left a pack of cigarettes on your kitchen counter at home, how long could I expect that they would stay there untouched? I often get the answer "forever" or "I'd throw them into the trash can". In other words, a nonsmoker does not think, behave, or is motivated to have a cigarette like a smoker. In the same way, we need to relearn the way we think about food. Let me repeat this for emphasis "WE NEED TO RELEARN THE WAY WE THINK ABOUT FOOD!"

When I show someone the list of foods to avoid on a low carb diet, I'll often get the comment "Aw Doc, you taking away all the good stuff". Then I reminded the patient that "we need to relearn the way we think about food. We need to get ourselves to the point when passing a plate of chocolate chip cookies in the break room at work we think to ourselves "I'm not going anywhere near those, they are not healthy for me and besides I like the way my new clothes are fitting. Thank you very much."

Binge Eating

Binge eating is a disorder where individuals can't help themselves. When they are stressed, for whatever reasons, they tend to overeat and then feel ashamed of themselves. There are books that can be read to address this. There is counseling that may be appropriate to address traumatic issues in an individual's past, and, there is an FDA approved medication, Vyvanse, that can be prescribed as well that may help.

Bulimia

Bulimia is an eating disorder associated with altered self image. These individuals almost certainly need counseling to address this issue. One variety of bulimia is characterized by bingeing (eating) and purging (making oneself throw up the previously eaten food). Physical signs include erosion of the enamel of teeth due to the frequent contact of stomach acid and scarring of the fingers from induced vomiting by poking the fingers into the back of the throat and making oneself gag.

Resources that take different approaches that may be helpful include the following:

- [Six Factors to Fit, Robert Kushner](#) - This is probably the book I recommend the most. If you go chapter 2 (or go to the author's website) there is a quiz. When you complete the quiz your score will place you in one of 6 food personality types. I generally recommend that if you think the quiz characterizes your weight issues the best, then buy book and read the chapter on your food personality type and tried to implement the suggestions. The book uses a

number of cognitive behavioral techniques and suggests practical tips to improve the home environment.

- The Anderson Method by William Anderson. The Anderson method is quite practical. And while it does suggest some cognitive behavioral therapy techniques, it suggests ways to make healthier food choices and a way to have opportunities to “cheat”. It is perhaps in the simplest read as well.
- The Beck Diet Solution by Judith Beck, Ph.D. This book is perhaps the most detailed in regard to cognitive behavioral therapy. It requires a good bit of homework on the part of the reader. But if details are your thing and you want a lot of suggestions, this book deserves a look.
- The Pegan Diet by Mark Hyman, M.D.
- End Your Carb Confusion: A Simple Guide to Customize Your Carb Intake for Optimal Health by Eric Westman, M.D.