



Conviction over Convenience: Staying Healthy in a Country That's ANYTHING BUT!

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*What makes it so hard to live “with conviction”?
Important facts we need to know!*

- As a culture, burgers, fries, pizza and soda are everywhere.
- Over the past 20 years, restaurant portion sizes have more than doubled.
- Ninety percent of the food ads on TV are for unhealthy foods.
- Only 2% of children (aged 2-19 years) eat a healthy diet. (*Pediatrics* 1997; 100:323-9)
- Childhood obesity rates have tripled while diabetes has doubled.
- Only 3% of people meet the basic recommendations for a healthy lifestyle: 1) doesn't smoke, 2) exercises regularly, 3) eats at least 5 fruit and vegetables a day, 4) are at a healthy weight.
- Yale University's food policy expert, Kelly Brownell, PhD, calls our food environment “toxic” since people who are exposed to it get sick. They develop chronic diseases such as diabetes and obesity in record numbers.
- Health experts predict... **this generation of kids may be the first to live fewer years than their parents!**

According to David Kessler MD (former FDA commissioner) and author of *The End of Overeating...*

- **Hyper-palatable foods**—those high in any combination of fat, sugar, salt and even chemical flavor enhancers—can literally “rewire” and change the circuitry in our brains. Stimulating neurons, leading to the release of dopamine, endorphins, and opioids, ultimately becoming only **one step less addictive than cocaine**. YIKES!
- **The result: true food addictions.** This means, the more regularly a person eats hyper-palatable foods; the more difficult it becomes to say no. It's the exact result restaurants and food manufacturers want – and it's completely legal.

Combined with gargantuan proportions—It's a “Perfect Storm”!

Rewiring brains in 4 simple steps...

1. **Create a “health haven” at home, free of hyper-palatable foods.** Limit the amount of highly processed cookies, cakes, donuts, ice cream, chips, soda and white bread. Few people can resist temptation existing among a “den of iniquity.” Load up a giant fruit bowl and place it on the counter. Have ready-to-eat veggies in the fridge (plus a tasty dip). Choose fresh, unprocessed meat. In general, create a “health haven” with natural food, choosing lighter, wholesome recipes for sweet treats (see *Lickety-Split Meals*).
2. **Dial down our sweet, salt and fat preferences.** Understand that over the years you may have inadvertently allowed your “taste acuity” for fat, sugar and salt to climb higher than it needs to be. “Hyper-palatable foods” have created “hyper-palatable taste buds.” But studies prove that we can change our taste buds to actually prefer the taste of water, unsweet tea and sparkling juice instead of soda and sweet tea; low-fat milk over whole; plain Cheerios over Honey Nut; baked and broiled foods over fried; diluted fruit juice instead of full-strength; and cookies and cakes made with half the fat and sugar over the traditional high-fat, high-sugar varieties. Set your goal to start “dialing down” your taste buds.
3. **Create a new “code of ethics” for “sometimes” foods.** People in other countries have a sweet treat just once a week or even month. Or fried foods just once a year. How about us? Could we create a new code of ethics for our sometimes foods? Repetitive use rewires the brain.
4. **Exercise!** Studies show that vigorous aerobic activity causes appetite suppression for 2-3 hours. It also helps restore the sensitivity of brain cells involved in helping us feel full as well as “happy” from the “feel good” endorphins.
Who needs a brownie?

Inspiring Families to Move!

1) *Play Music!*

Not only does music help motivate people up and off the couch, studies show that anyone who exercises to music works out at a harder intensity and for longer. (Not mention, they enjoy it more!)

- Mute the TV during commercials, crank the music & dance! Strips of party streamers (or toilet paper) in each hand make it more fun!
- Turn off the TV, have a “who’s got talent” dance contest. Take turn judging and video-tape it!
- Create an obstacle course in the house-over the couch, under the table, down the hall, over the bed, race back to the finish line! Time each other!
- Blow up a few balloons, have contests to keep it in the air, only using your feet!

2) *Have “Family Challenges”!*

- Have every family member wear a pedometer, and have a daily challenge to see who can take the most steps. Losers do winner's chores the next day.
- Have relay races around the house. Winners get a back massage from losers.
- Have a “LAP IT” rule. Where ever you go, walk the perimeter at least once before shopping.
- Have a hula hoop contest. (Try jogging while hula hooping!)
- Have a contest to see who can do the most sit-ups, push-ups, jumping jacks, squat thrusts, etc!
- Set a family goal to visit (and picnic) at every park in town. Hike every trail they offer.
- Take family bike rides. (Take a photo each and every time!)
- Sign up for a charity walk/run as a family. Train for it. Do it. Take pictures!

3) *Move for Moola!*

There’s nothing better than getting paid to be more active!

- Offer to walk your neighbor’s dog daily (yes, many people will pay you to do this!)
- Rake leaves, pull weeds, pick up sticks, mow lawns, wash cars or windows, vacuum or dust.

4) *Take a Class!*

And that class can simply be “rent a video” or search youtube.com for “how to....”

- Learn yoga or a martial art
- Learn how to “double dutch” jump rope (watch it on youtube.com, you will be amazed!)
- Learn how to “moon walk” or pogo stick jump rope, or how to juggle or to twirl a baton.
- Learn hip-hop dancing, ballet, jazz, or tap dancing.
- Consider posting your new-found and unique talent on youtube.com!

5) *Master ALL the Basics!*

Being a kid is REALLY fun! Make your goal to enjoy doing as many things on this list as possible. Remember, every year you age, your likes, dislikes and abilities change.

Master (or at least do once!) all by age 16, or 14, or 12!

- Play tag, hopscotch, shoot hoops
- Jump rope (single, cross your arms and double and double-dutch!)
- Play frisbee (catch under your leg, throw from behind your back!)
- Rollerskate, rollerblade, skateboard, play badminton and tennis
- Ride bikes (set long distance goals plus speed goals)
- Play soccer, softball/baseball, football (touch or flag)

6) *Make “Screen Time” ACTIVE Time!*

- Visit America’s Got Talent i.e. Dylan Plummer the 12-year old jump rope star for inspiration!
- Log onto Youtube.com and search on any kind of dance you want to learn! Even how to play an instrument...Learn anything, instantly!
- If the gift list includes video games, make them active! Like: Dance Dance Revolution, (www.ddrgame.com) or Wii sports or Wii Fit.