



Let Yourself Eat Cake

Written by Jill Grunewald and published in part in *tastebud* magazine, Apr. 2008

tastebud

There is a pretty widespread diet mentality in this country that doesn't seem to be working for many folks. Diets may work for a while, but the sheer willpower and energy it takes to maintain a restrictive eating plan takes an emotional toll and many people find themselves back to their old ways, with a profound sense of defeat and frustration. The energy it requires to employ strict dietary self-control actually leaves us a little depleted, making us weaker when the next temptation presents itself. Dieting is just plain hard to do.

As we've all heard time and again, the true path to weight loss is to eat less and exercise more. See, it's about *eating less*, not eating nothing (which leads to bingeing) or locking all of your favorite foods away until you reach your ideal weight. Cutting back doesn't mean eliminating the foods you love and subsisting on twigs and tofu. The key is to find the right exercise for your body type, and to eat foods that truly nourish and satiate you so that you're not reaching for a donut come bedtime.

Your Sweet Tooth May Not Be Your Enemy

Many people chide themselves for having a "sweet tooth," but our desire for sweets is innate and natural. According to Marc David, visionary health and nutrition consultant and author of *The Slow Down Diet* and *Nourishing Wisdom*, "From an evolutionary standpoint, our preference for sweets is highly advantageous for survival. Not only did it direct early hominids toward easily available ripe fruits and vegetables, it kept them away from poisonous plants, which are bitter in taste. No sweet foods are known to exist in nature that are poisonous."

A truly successful weight loss plan isn't a temporary "fix," but one that changes how you think about food. I'm a firm believer that you can eat all of your favorite foods and reach your weight loss goal; it's about eating sweets (and other "no-no's") in moderation and enjoying life. It's not about avoiding social engagements and parties for fear of the dessert table. If you're not already feeling deprived, then you'll sail through these situations with ease and control.

However if your sugar cravings really seem to be getting the best of you and that half a piece of cake at the birthday party just didn't satisfy:

- When a craving hits, drink two glasses of room temperature or warm water
- Eat fruit, especially berries, cherries, apples, and pears
- Eat more bitter foods (endive, some olives, radicchio, cooked greens)
- Incorporate more root vegetables into your meals
- Take a bubble bath or call a friend you haven't spoken to in a long time

HEALTHFUL ELEMENTS



The Real Weight Loss Challenge

If you're trying to shed pounds, I challenge you to give your bathroom scale away and forget about your "diet." I challenge you to let yourself off the hook so that you're not obsessing about your next meal or snack; obsessing about food makes you want to eat more. I employ you to focus on nutrient-dense, delicious foods that make you feel good and give you vital energy. And lastly, I ask that you give in to your sweet tooth, in moderation, so that you don't feel deprived and then dive into the deep end of the sugar pool.

* * *