

Deprivation, Pain and Agony

If we've heard it once, we've heard it a thousand times..."**I would like to lose weight, but I can't bear to feel deprived!!**"

Here are my thoughts on deprivation. When I ate like I ate before going lowcarb, even my first couple of years of "normal lowcarb," sure, I may have been "fulfilled" at least dietarily, in one very narrow sense. But when I was fulfilled like that, I was still fat (and slowly getting fatter), and THAT deprived me of so much more—it deprived me of a lot of my confidence and self-esteem, to say nothing of my ability to function effectively because I was so obsessed with food. In many, perhaps most, ways I hid and deprived *myself* of a lot of what life could offer me because I was fat, and getting fatter. THAT was big-time deprivation.

Aren't you really looking to food to deliver something it's pretty much incapable of producing?—a good feeling; a happy feeling; a loved feeling; a contented feeling; a comforting feeling, the feeling that you are "normal," lovable, and/or acceptable? *You will never find those feelings on the end of a fork.* It's the Madison Avenue advertising copywriters and their neverending quest for your money who work very hard to convince you to believe—so you will BEHAVE—otherwise.

All food need really do, all it really CAN do (without backfiring) is sustain us so we are free to lead full, fulfilling lives.

Sometimes you guys scare me with this confessing about the problems from falling off the lowcarb wagon.... I want to lose, but don't want to fear the pains and agonies I see so many people talk about.

First, notice that this poster phrased her question regarding her fear of fear?! She fears what she will FEEL? Perhaps it's semantics, sure, but all the same, we really do have to snap ourselves out of this naïve notion that a fear-free life, a trouble-free existence, a life with nothing but happiness, sweetness and so-called good, perfect, acceptable feelings, is *desirable* or *attainable*. That false notion, I believe, is ingrained in us by the oversaturation of advertising in our culture. No one can sell you a trouble-free life, it isn't out there. If this were easy or available for sale, Oprah Winfrey would have gotten slender and stayed that way 20 years ago.

Make no mistake, there absolutely WILL be pain and agony involved! Is anything worthwhile REALLY accomplished without it? Heck, just getting up every morning entails a little pain and agony. So do we just decide never to get up?

We can only MINIMIZE the pain and agony and get past it quickly by making a single decision that this is what we really want and that we are willing to do whatever it takes to get it.

For me it's turned out to be much like getting a college degree. Just like not everybody is ready or willing to go to college, not everybody is really ready or willing to lose weight. Sure, we're all ready for the results. Who wouldn't want to walk away with a degree after reading a book and seeing what other college graduates can accomplish.

But really doing it means finding the money, signing up for and attending the classes, buying the books, reading the books, participating in class, listening to the experienced instructors, learning the material, writing the papers, and passing all the tests. Then we move on to the next level and do it all over again only harder and more intensely until we pass all the exams and get that degree. All the while "missing out" (depriving ourselves?) of most of the recreational things we might be doing (club hopping, party-going, novel-reading, easy-life-living) instead of killing ourselves with the coursework.

Lowcarb is not a miracle, it's not a way to beat the lowfat system, although it is viewed and to some extent even marketed that way. Although it has some advantages over lowfat (well, really only one that I can see applies to virtually everyone), in most respects I'd say it's more difficult than lowfat. But that certainly doesn't mean it can't be done or I wouldn't be sitting here in size 8 jeans.

All we really get to choose are *which* kinds of deprivation, pain and agony we're willing to abide. Because I probably don't have to tell you that there is there is a hefty amount of deprivation, pain and agony involved in walking around this world overweight.

The biggest miracle of this journey is how my feelings have changed without me ever setting out to change them. I have come to love (and when sometimes momentarily I don't love, I VALUE) the foods that work for my body, foods that in so many senses "love me back." Now, incredibly, I like my body and have come to peace with how it looks. I never would have believed ALL that could be true at the same time. That, to me, is quite the OPPOSITE deprivation, pain and agony.

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