

Just Stay Busy With Non-Food Activities!

We've all heard it — ***"Why don't you just find other healthy, fun, you know, POSITIVE things you like to do besides eating? Things that do not involve food or being around people who are eating junk food?"***

This certainly is a well-meaning, common nugget of advice tossed out at people who want to lose weight, and in a very short-term, narrow sense, for maybe the first month of "dieting" anyway, it might even be a little helpful. However, to me, for the most part it's an irritating piece of what everybody *says* overweight people *ought* to do. I'd bet if you asked 25 people who have actually lost weight and kept it off permanently for several years, they would tell you this was NOT a particularly helpful element of their journey to successful weight management.

In my opinion and experience, one, if not THE biggest part, of the long-term journey to permanent weight loss involves a slow process of learning to basically retrofit ourselves into our society's milieu of food "rules and rituals", into a culture that DOES pretty much on a daily basis---whether we like it or not, whether it's healthy or "right" or not---very much revolve around food, much of it junk food.

It never worked for ME to just avoid BEING AROUND junk food or people who eat eat it, or to try to control what is served at the social functions I attend. What DID work was for me to learn HOW to be around them, how to silently, and very personally reject only the way others decide their own eating, *without rejecting those people* and the many kinds of social rituals and gatherings different groups have that include food.

I did that NOT by avoiding being around them, but by being around them and eating MY food, by eating correctly for MY body while they were eating whatever they wanted for theirs. I did it by abiding the social awkwardness that doing this sometimes brought upon me, and slowly learning calm, gentle skills to help explain myself, and then allowing other people the time and space to learn that my decisions about this were mine and not any kind of rejection of them or their decisions. That's how this slowly became "oh that's just how she eats."

Sure it's easier said than done. It's still a million times worth it.

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