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Be Healthy, Etc.

www.behealthyetc.com

I have been on a diet for 48 years, until I finally came to the realization that diets just don't work.

You would think that growing up on a farm would equate to learning at an early age how to eat healthy. That wasn't the case. We were "poor" farmers. My father was a commercial chicken farmer and he dabbled in a variety of farming options until he finally found the "goose that laid the golden egg" literally. With over 30,000 chickens at one point, our farm was producing 2000 dozen of eggs a week.

He had no romantic notions of raising "free range, cage free or organic eggs". It was all about making money and the only way to do that then was through automated caged operations, with three chickens to a cage no bigger than a breadbox, all grain fed and antibiotic laden to ward off disease.

We had our share of grass fed cows and pigs and a full size garden to subsidize us but there were more times than not that my mother had to buy meats at the grocery store and make it stretch for a growing family of 6. A pound of ground beef could be pumped up with the likes of pasta, rice and potatoes to feed 6. Thus my love/hate relationship and aversion to carbs was born.

We all worked on the farm but none so reluctantly than my mother, who gave up her career in nursing to support my father in his dream. Over our formative years, our diets consisted of casseroles, vegetables and lots of home baked goodies.

When we got off the bus there was always a rack full of baked goods straight out of the oven. Homemade breads dripping with a butter glaze, warm chocolate chip cookies, brownies or cupcakes. These were our snacks before we were sent off to the barns to collect eggs.

I didn't know then that the baking and subsequent eating patterns were my first introduction to the concept of emotional eating. The more the farm grew, the more my mother baked, ate and expanded in size. Food and love were intricately entwined. Needless to say dieting became a way of life not just for my mother but for me and my sisters alike.

I came of age in the '60s. The British invasion brought the Beatles, Rolling Stones and Twiggy.

Being 5'4" with short muscular legs made it impossible for me to even come close to that anorexic wide eyed look that was plastered across every teen magazine available. Yet, I never gave up trying.

We tried them all; The Rotation Diet, the Grapefruit Diet, the Cabbage soup diet, even hypnosis at one point. I remember once as my mother approached 40 that she went on a stringent diet of 900 calories until she lost her desired weight in order to go on a Cruise only to gain it all back and then some on her return.

I should have learned then that diets don't work!

For many years, I missed out on whole food groups and many social events while I aspired to be "perfect" on a diet. One slip up would send me on a downward spiral until I could get back on the "diet."

Call it my "Ah Ha" moment when I realized that diets just don't work, at least for the long haul. Unfortunately, that moment didn't come all at once but over a course of years as I continued to invest time, energy and money into the latest miracle diet on the market. I could rattle off calorie counts of most foods as quickly as I can tell you my social security number, I can recite Weight Watchers points in my sleep, I can tell you exactly what I weighed 3 months ago, 6 months ago, 3 years ago as well as 10 years ago.

And guess what?

My weight is pretty much the same give or take 1-3 lbs. Slowly, I began to realize that eating according to someone's idea of a plan wasn't well suited to me.

The classic 3 meals a day, two snacks a day program just where out of sync to my body clock. I was eating at times when I wasn't hungry to putting together meals that made me full, sometimes lethargic and most often tasteless. But I persevered and stayed true to the diet.

Once I began to heal my relationship with food and became in tune with my body, realizing that food is fuel, it all became easier.

Food choices are everywhere . . . some good, some very bad. Recognizing that the highly processed, sugar laden choices slowed my body down, I began to replace them with whole foods, natural ingredients and organic choices whenever I could. I immediately saw the difference in my energy and surprising to me - my mood.

Thus began a journey of discovery for me and a realization that I am not alone in this struggle with food. The more I healed myself, the more I wanted to help others who believe that another diet will be the solution to their weight issues.

As a Health & Wellness coach, I focus on an integrative approach to nutrition. We are all unique with our own biological individuality. What works for one person may not be the best approach for another. I create a supportive environment that will enable a person to achieve their health goals. Together we discover a program that works for that individual, is sustainable for life and creates a happy, healthy lifestyle.

For some of us, it is a lifelong approach to healthy eating. It takes time, effort and a lot of self reflection but with the proper attitude, support and coaching, dieting does not have to be a way of life. One can be happy, healthy and love their body with the right support.

What I do know for sure is that diets sell magazines, books and talk shows. Drs. Atkins, Oz and Scarsdale have made millions on the public's appetite for quick fixes, fast results and miracle cures.

It is tempting to be seduced by the next diet fix that hits the airways. With over 76,000 diet books available on Amazon and 82 new diet books scheduled for release in 2014, if you were like me, you will grab your charge card thinking this time will be different. But it won't be.

We are all so impatient for results when we actually have the solution within ourselves. It takes time, it takes honesty and the ability to trust that our body knows what is good for it and the realization that it isn't just about food.

This year why not invest in yourself and listen to your body.