

Overhaul Your Hidden Food Habits **By Lisa Schilling RN**

This is another confession of sorts. I have become a closet foodie. I used to be in control of my junk food and convenience food addiction, but since the holidays I have fallen off of the wagon. I have let common bad eating habits multiply and get out of control.

You see, I have always loved sweets and processed foods. I do suffer with the dreaded-carbohydrate sensitivity. This affliction predisposes me to crave more carbs with any consumption of sugar or carbohydrates. I have known this for a while and have researched the topic extensively.

I have managed it pretty well in the past by balancing carbs with protein. In essence, I planned sweets into my eating plan and consumed them with a protein source. This does work. However you must plan ahead. Planning is important to ensure that I am meeting my nutritional needs as well as keeping my calories under 2000 per day.

Then came the holidays and the snow days, let's just say it is a slippery slope. One off-plan decision led to another until I officially had to call it a "break" from any real plan at all. Monday became my first day of the New Year. It was an actual routine day and a good time to "clean house" so to speak.

I went through the cabinets, my office, my bag, my car and anywhere else there might be snacks stashed. Gone! I am not saying I will not eat them anymore. No, that would not be realistic. I am just not going to keep it under my nose. Why, because I will eat it if it is there. Sound like anyone you know?

In talking to several people this week, I found that I am not alone. Now that the stuff is gone, I must replace it with healthier options. If not, I will be headed out to eat or grabbing junk on the run again. Make it easy, portable and accessible. Try packing your lunch too!

The key to eating smarter is having a plan and planning ahead. This is at the heart of many failed weight loss plans. Failing to plan and prepare will sabotage your efforts. And just "planning to do better" does not count. What exactly is better? That is a pretty loose goal. I can still gain a lot of weight with that goal.

Find out what your goal is and create a realistic time frame. Plan for a one to two

pound a week weight loss. This will give you a safe and realistic reference point. Then start evaluating what you eat, when you eat and how much. Make a concrete plan to define better.

In my research of successful weight loss, and in my personal experience, keeping a food log is the number one way to lose weight. Did you just roll your eyes when I said food log? You know who you are, "But I don't want to write down everything I eat." My question is, do you want to get a handle on your weight and start to change how you look and feel every day? Do you want to get off so many medications and increase your life expectancy by reducing your preventable risk factors?

If you are ready for that, then keeping a food log is the place to start. The visual accountability is powerful and it creates awareness to match your intentions. People who will commit to do this also show the commitment it takes to lose the weight and keep it off.

If you can't even commit to writing down what you eat, the chances that you will commit to a lifetime routine of exercise and healthy nutrition is slim. Keep it simple and make small consistent changes in your routine. These habits consistently practiced over time will bring a revolution in your circumstances!

If you need more help, check out www.sparkpeople.com. This site will help you track your food and activity online, using drop downs and easy to use trackers. It also provides numerous other resources and tools to help you reach your goals.

To create changes in your body, you must make changes in what you do with your time. There are numerous other resources available to help you on this journey. If you prefer personal assistance, you can see me at the Ketcham Community Center, contact the local health department or get information from the University Extension office.

If you enjoy using the computer, you can check out the Green Hills Weight Loss Challenge facebook page. I post daily recommendations along with links to reputable websites.

These tools can become lifelines on your journey, just like in the Millionaire game show. Don't go out of the game without using all that are provided to you. Best wishes to you, as you make choices, on your personal journey.