

## IF NOT NOW.....WHEN?

*by Linda Fiveson*

I recently heard someone refer to the expression, “If not now...when?” and my reaction was to use it for an article. It’s provoked a lot of thought about how meaningful these words really are. It’s a universal expression; it applies to everything. It’s about taking action and not procrastinating. Cleaning out the *clutter* in your life. Doing something you have always wanted to do, but have not done. Trying to end the constant conflict of interest within us. We seem to cling to thoughts that are diametric opposites. We love huge portions and “all you can eat” buffets but at the same time we spend so much time and money on endless quests for that thinner body. We are consumed with thoughts about how we are going to lose weight *this* time. This time? What is so difficult? We know what to do; why don’t we just do it?

Making decisions! Making changes! It is so hard for us to make them that we keep putting it off. Usually, we’re not even aware that we are procrastinating. This behavior has become so ingrained in us that we just do it instead of doing something positive, like starting to lose weight. We waste so much time trying to figure out a “good time” to get started that we don’t even consider “NOW” as a viable option.

Nutrition has an effect on everyone’s mental, emotional, and physical health. Refined carbohydrates elevate the production of insulin which allows the blood sugars into the cells, giving the body more energy. The more insulin that is produced the more tryptophan that enters the brain. Tryptophan increases the production of serotonin and higher levels of serotonin have a sedating effect which can cause sleepiness and “apathy.”

Apathy is the lack of enthusiasm; it’s lethargy, indifference, boredom, and not caring about very much. Perhaps it’s the “not caring” feeling we have when we are eating refined sugars and carbohydrates that allows us to eat! Why do we get this total disregard for ourselves? The paradox is that we are consumed with caring about why, how, and what we eat, yet when we are eating the food we are feeling apathetic...feeling nothing!

But WE DO CARE! We care every time we look in the mirror, try something on, or have to socialize and be seen. We care when we’re feeling unhealthy and lazy and if or when we get on the scale. We come up with so many reasons we can’t start NOW. We want to finish all the food in the fridge or we’ll have to throw it away. We want to have our favorite meal one last time. We want to be able to eat at the wedding we’re going to next week...or even, next month. We don’t want to miss out on the gravy and pumpkin pie on Thanksgiving or all the candies and sweets at holiday time. We want to be able to eat so many things before we’ll be ready to begin that we don’t realize we’ll have even more pounds to lose than we have now. Get rid of the “feast or famine”

mentality. It isn't like you are going to be starving. There are plenty of delicious, healthy foods you can eat to fill you up and some, in unlimited amounts!

Don't say "I have to." Just DO it! This change you are going to make has to be the last one. To be successful you have to realize it's not about the pounds, it's about the behavior. Don't wait until you have time or energy or no stress; that will not happen. NOW is the time to take the responsibility that will be most important to YOU! Like I said, "If not now...when?"

My experience has led me to think people who don't have weight problems eat at regular mealtimes. The heaviest people often eat all day or save it up for one large meal (that probably lasts all night.) It's better to be thin than "trying to lose weight." Forget about trying...the harder we "try to" do something the less we are able to do it or sustain doing it. When we try not to eat something we wind up eating more...

Give away the extra food in the fridge if you can't bear to throw it in the garbage. Learn to make healthy choices when you go to a restaurant. There are many that are delicious as well as filling. Ask if you can bring a side dish or two if you're afraid there will be nothing for you at a party. Change the way you think. Instead of focusing on all the food you will miss out on, focus on all the good things you will achieve. You will lower your risk for many diseases and be healthier and happier. You will not only look better but you will feel better too. Your clothes will fit more comfortably or become too big and who doesn't like going shopping to find out they are down a size or two? You'll be more physically active and have more stamina. You'll feel attractive and confident about your appearance. And, guess what? You will be happy you didn't wait a second longer!

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