

# Noisy Foods vs. Quiet Foods!

*by Linda Fiverson*

How often do you hear the words, “Why did I just eat that” resonating in your head? You knew before eating it that the very first bite would lead to a myriad of self-incriminations and voices telling you how bad you are. You knew you would start questioning yourself and the program you’re following and that you would continue to be swallowed up by an obsessive thinking pattern... There’d be thought after thought and question after question and yet, you’d still be asking, “Why did I just eat that?” “Why do I overeat to the point of bingeing as soon as I give in to that first impulsive urge?”

Before taking that very first bite you probably heard the voice in your head asking another question; “Are you going to eat that?” And perhaps, while eating it, you heard another voice asking this one, “Why am I eating this?” Or, perhaps not. That one would give you a chance to think about it and change your mind and now you’re in a quandary, being pulled in different directions by the different thoughts and questions.

The fact is when we feel fat, we act fat. That, in itself, can ruin any fun plans we might have made. Here come more voices.... “Nothing Fits.” “My pants are too tight.” “I have nothing to wear.” “I HATE MYSELF!” We start feeling emotionally paralyzed now and anything we do will be covered by a cloud of guilt, anger or frustration. Sometimes these feelings escalate to the point that they ruin your entire day....

Perhaps some of you still have a special night of the week set aside for “Date-Night.” Now, you’re probably worrying that your significant other will notice if you gained weight or look fat. You do know that when you feel like your body looks “fluffy” it causes endless stress. It can actually trigger you to eat more while mumbling to yourself, “What’s the difference? I’m gaining weight anyway?” Be careful -- you don’t want to get overly consumed with feeling depressed and discouraged.

Another series of thoughts and questions center around what you can do to make up for your mistake. Voices tell you to do things like exercise for four hours, take two more Zumba classes, starve yourself, drink shakes or eat protein bars... The list is endless; I’m sure you can add to it too!

From the beginning to the end of the day, when we are in the “out of control mode,” the talking, questioning, thoughts, plans, and countless lists of what are we going to try next to help us lose weight is endless. The voices go on and on. What’s sad is that wonderful things can be going on in our lives at the same time, but nothing seems to matter as much because we are so unhappy with ourselves. Everything revolves around food – what we are eating, what we aren’t eating, what we want to eat, how regretful we are because we can’t stop eating,

So, once again the question is “WHY?” “Why did you just eat that?” “Why are you thinking about eating it?” Are you hungry? Do you need to eat or is it just that you have nothing to do, and eating is what you want to do? How can we identify which hunger is real? Here are some we mistake for being real and we use them as excuses to eat: Television/ commercial hunger; boredom hunger; guilt from the day before hunger; I’m full, but not satisfied hunger.

Sometimes we think we’re getting away with something. We want to, anyway. If no one’s around and they don’t see you eat, we tell ourselves it doesn’t count. (Only in that moment, perhaps; it sure counts the next day!)

We sometimes think we can erase our mistakes so we do something to counteract them. Not even exercising can make the food we ate disappear nor can it earn you extra food or treats. Calories are not just calories! Burning 400 calories doesn’t justify eating 400 calories. Remember, carbohydrate calories must be used as fuel...too much will get stored. It might end up being a punishment instead!

We eat for many reasons. It's a great "end of day" stress reliever that helps us transition from a busy day to a relaxing evening "chilling out" before we have to go to sleep and face the tension again in the morning. It's a comfort when lonely/ alone eating leaves us vulnerable. Without the comfort of close friends, relatives, or even a dinner buddy, coping with loneliness can lead us to look for comfort in high-fat, sugary foods. These will end up making us feel more depressed after eating them than we were before.

The voices are always there. What are they saying NOW? Are they in agreement or dispute? You hear them but are you listening to them? They want to tell you what to do, AGAIN.

Think about what would happen if these decisions were taken away from us? They can be, you know, by making a different decision – the commitment to healthy eating. How about that? You can get rid of all the resounding questions by giving up the noisy foods". You will be able to enjoy life's pleasures because your mind will be free from the demon who can and does possess you as if you had a multiple-personality disorder. It does sometimes feel like that, doesn't it? We can feel so composed and relaxed with no inner turmoil about what to eat and all of a sudden from nowhere "the demon strikes!" Now, there's a way to end it."

When we are eating healthy, we never have conversations about what we are going to eat. There's no need for them. Peace and security come from the "quiet foods." The only thing that can take away this reassurance is going back to the fattening, sugary, starchy foods; they consistently put us in this emotional turmoil" every time we diverge!" We DO have choices.

Try putting a pause in the response time from when you see and smell something tempting. Train your inner voice to say, "Eat something better first." You will come to realize that if you still want to eat the fattening food, it will be there just where you left it. The "pause button" technique helps stop the compulsive side of our personalities, the one that tells us, "Eat, and then start to think..." It eliminates the impervious question, "Why did I just eat that?" Instead, your inner voice will tell you to think first and then eat from a plate so there's no temptation or need to grab. This gives you the chance to think about what you are eating and also, to really taste the food. When we grab and gorge we almost inhale it, sometimes unaware of what we're eating or how it tastes. Next, you'll start thinking, "I'm so pleased that I was prepared and did not eat the foods that would have ruined my control!"

The voices in our heads are an inner dialogue we have with ourselves and they help us decide whether we will choose the noisy foods or the quiet ones. While they can be beneficial and enlightening they can also be restricting and prohibitive. By becoming more self-aware and proactive we can eliminate the negotiations, or at the very least, diminish them. We can take control and change the dialogue. Give up the foods that make you feel bad about yourself. When we don't like how we look and feel it affects our moods and attitudes. Noisy foods create negative thoughts and make you feel guilty and unacceptable.

If you agree that it's time to give up being on automatic pilot, press that pause button. Feeding yourself healthy thoughts will help you feed your body healthy foods and keep it healthy too! Now there are answers to the questions. It's up to you to pick the one that works. Remember, the success of having control is not eating the food that takes it away!

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