

LONG ISLAND WEIGHT COUNSELING, INC.



Linda Fiveson



Choosing Comfort Foods with Confidence

by Linda Fiveson

For as long as studies have been done on overeating it has been documented that that “comfort eating” is a real phenomenon. The dictionary defines *comfort* as “a state of ease and satisfaction of bodily wants, with freedom from pain and anxiety”. Those of us with food issues seek to bring ourselves comfort by eating. Even though we know it is self-destructive and nonproductive, we often perpetuate this compulsive behavior and continue to live with all the degrading feelings it causes us to have about ourselves. This is because we find comfort in the physical task of eating, from chewing and swallowing to savoring the taste afterwards. Eating is an activity that we find familiar, comforting, pleasurable and mindless. If you think about it, our eating is never about being hungry...

The truth is that we are “foodies” – people who love and are often obsessed with food. We find psychological comfort in eating. Instead of looking at what is bothering us, we often overlook it. It doesn’t matter if this is done consciously or unconsciously; it is the behavior that defines the term.

Food helps us forget that we have struggles – at least for the moment and so, it is known that we take comfort or find comfort in eating particular foods.

Research says that men and women both seek food for comfort. It is interesting to note that men are more apt to look for comfort food in times of celebration and happiness while women look for it in times of distress and malcontent. Another difference between the sexes is that men usually desire comfort foods which are hot and hearty such as pizza or soup while women look for quick-grabs such as ice cream, chips or cookies. I think it is ironic how men crave the comfort of “momma’s cooking” while women satisfy their own

cravings with “grab and go” foods because they don’t want to be in the kitchen! They look for instant “gratification” in foods that come in cellophane bags and boxes.

The result of comfort eating, no matter what the difference in food choices may be, is that we are all eating to assuage a mood or feeling and not because we are hungry or in need of food!

Winter is a good time to think about the ways we look for comfort in food. That is because we are indoors more and the cold weather tends to make warm food more appealing than usual. We look for things that are soothing and embracing. The scents of food cooking can be a further seduction.

My personal experience has taught me that overeaters do not have to be overweight. It is a matter of learning to make the “right” choices. Regardless of when you eat or why, ‘what’ you choose to eat makes a difference! Did you ever gain weight from a piece of chicken or fruits and vegetables? Did you ever wonder if you would before you ate it or feel guilty afterwards? Probably not! Any food that causes you to have a conversation with yourself is not worth the dialogue...or remorse. END the one-man debate before it begins!

There are numerous satisfying food options we don’t often think about. When is the last time you opted for a cup of low sodium bulion? You can add a little salsa, some sliced chicken and all kinds of diced or shredded vegetables to the broth. This makes it more filling and “chewy” (you know how we always need to feel like our mouths are busy!) Sugar-free hot chocolate is another delectable treat. It is so sweet and pleasurable that it’s hard to believe you aren’t cheating! You don’t even *need* to chew – it tastes like “real, genuine, Hershey’s”!! There’s always the reliable sugar-free fudge pop for ice cream lovers too!

We always have options in life and the food we choose is something we can have control over. It is true that sometimes we have to stop and think, make a u-turn or take a detour. That doesn’t matter. We need to consider where we want to go and give thought to how we are going to get there. I am known to say that “obstacles occur when you look AWAY from your goal.” In other words, “Stay focused!!”

Don’t worry as much about the concept of finding comfort in food as which foods you will choose when you know you are looking for comfort.

JANUARY 2008

CRAB, SHRIMP, SALMON, TUNA CROQUETTES



Lump crab meat (shrimp, salmon, tuna)
Chopped carrots
½ cup chopped onions
½ cup onion flakes
Chopped radishes (optional)
Chopped orange, yellow, green peppers
1 Tablespoon Light Mayo
1 Squirt Japanese Chili Sauce
2 Tablespoons Worcester Sauce
Chopped celery, chopped scallions to taste
Season: black pepper, old bay spice, paprika, anything to taste
*Optional – dry or Dijon mustard

ORIGINAL RECIPES
by
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Mix above ingredients together and taste.

Beat 1 egg and 1 egg white. Add to mixture and make patties.
Sprinkle onion flakes and Worcester sauce on top...
Light oil on baking sheet.
Broil 20 minutes till brown. Bake for an additional 10 minutes.

Linda Says...

“IF you eat it...



You own it!”

Tired of the Same Old Veggies? Try Jicama!



JICAMA is a root vegetable that has gained in popularity in recent times. It is a relative of the potato family. It is a popular dietary staple in Latin America and widely grown in Mexico and Central America. There are many names for Jicama including: the Mexican potato, Mexican yam bean, ahipa, saa got, Chinese turnip, lo bok, and the Chinese potato.

Jicama looks similar to a turnip or a large radish, and it can be used as an alternative to the water chestnut. Its skin is thin and can be gray, tan, or brown in color. Additionally, it has a short root and contains white flesh. The skin is typically peeled before eating it raw. Raw jicama tastes similar to a pear or apple. It also does not discolor when exposed to the open air for awhile. Because of this, raw jicama is often used as an accompaniment to raw vegetable platters. When jicama is used in cooking it tends to take on the flavors of the ingredients that it is being combined with. Therefore, jicama is a nice complement to various stir-fry dishes because it blends well with many vegetables and seasonings.

Jicama is a very versatile vegetable that contains a high amount of vitamin C, is low in sodium, and has no fat. One adult serving of jicama, which is equal to approximately 1 cup of cubed jicama or 120 grams, also contains only 45 calories.

Jicama is available year-round. When purchasing jicama, select tubers that are firm and have dry roots. Make sure that the jicama has an unblemished skin and that is not bruised. Once purchased, store jicama for up to two weeks in a plastic bag in your refrigerator.

Trivia Corner

Do you know as much as you think you know? Check answers below!

- What is roughly 200 times sweeter than sugar?
a) Honey b) Fructose c) Aspartame
 - Who first proclaimed, "you can't be too rich or too thin?"
a) Gloria Vanderbilt b) The Duchess of Windsor c) Woody Allen
 - When you lose weight, what happens to your fat cells?
a) They disappear b) They hang around, but just get smaller c) They turn into muscle
 - Which is the best source of Vitamin C?
a) Fruits and vegetables b) Whole grains c) Meat and dairy products
- Daily salt intake should not exceed 2,400 milligrams, which is about how much?
a) 1 tablespoon b) 1/2 teaspoon c) 1 teaspoon
- Where do you find cholesterol?
a) Only in red meat and eggs b) In foods which come from animals c) In all foods
 - All foods can be classified into what 3 basic categories?
a) Proteins, fats and carbohydrates b) Vitamins, minerals and fiber c) Sugars, salts and starches

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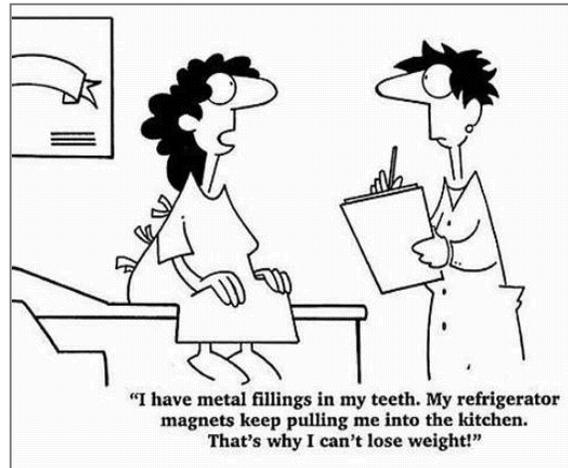
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CONSULTATIONS



ANSWERS TO TRIVIA
1) c 2) b 3) b 4) a 5) c 6) b 7) a

Do you have a question or suggestion?
A personal strategy that you use?
Please let us know—we'll consider it for a future edition!
You may send an email to:

lindafiveson@yahoo.com