



Linda Fiveson

L.I. Weight Counseling, Inc. 633 Jericho Turnpike Syosset, N.Y. 11791
Phone: (516) 496-2300 Fax: (516) 496-2359 www.lindafiveson.com

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Recipe of the Month

Vegetable Chili

Ingredients

2 cups green beans, cooked and chopped into small pieces
1 cup mushrooms caps, chopped
1 Portobello mushroom cap, chopped
1 medium red onion, chopped
3 cloves garlic, chopped
2 T chili powder
2 t ground cumin
1 poblano chile pepper, seeded and diced
1 14-15 oz. can diced tomatoes
1 1/2 cups of water
3 T vegetable oil
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/2 teaspoon pepper
Fat free Yogurt or Sour Cream for topping if desired

Directions:

Put vegetable oil in a large pot and heat. Add red onion, garlic, chili powder and cumin and let onion cook and begin to soften. Add the poblano chile pepper and mushrooms and cook until they are tender. Add tomatoes, water, salt and pepper/Bring mixture to a boil. Stir and reduce the heat. Simmer until all the vegetables are tender and the chili is thick. Serve hot with a dollop of yogurt or sour cream if desired or some extra diced red onion, raw.

More recipes on the website.

Snow-vereating

What is it about the winter, especially the snow that makes us hungry for the comfort of comfort foods? Being snowed in gives us that "day off" feeling. Day off from what? Work, school, getting dressed or perhaps something you wanted to not do anyway. NOT DO... could that translate to not eat right too? It sure can and it usually does.

Cozying up with those warm soothing foods and the T.V. makes you want to do nothing; except eat. I think we all have associations formed in our minds. For many of us snow days may have meant mom baking cookies and making us hot chocolate (after getting off our wet snow clothes, drying off and putting on warm pajamas) and the next activity is to begin planning what we're going to eat. Part of the memory is the "anticipation".... Looking forward to eating can be equally as pleasurable as the actual eating and maybe even more pleasurable because planning the food takes a lot longer than it will take to eat it.

Memories trigger our senses to want to recreate those pleasant "no restriction" feelings. We are motivated by our memories of the way things were -- things we internalized a long time ago. The cold, dark, short days of winter affect our appetites and the way we feed them. Studies show that our caloric intake increases as the weather turns colder. In fact, one such study found that subjects ate about 200 calories more per day beginning in the fall when days are darker and start to grow shorter and colder.

Some scientists have suggested that our winter eating behaviors are a sign of primitive instincts causing us to stock up our food for the cold weather. They relate it to the

days when food was scarce and we needed an extra layer of fat to help us survive until spring came around. When there is less light we tend to look for food and eat it more quickly as well. There's no doubt that the "winter munchies" make us feel good but these feelings only last for the moment. We already know that don't we? Sure we do -- but we seek the temporary comfort anyway. We are stuck inside and feeling bored and it gives us a small break from the snow and cold, unpleasant weather.

We want to warm up so we fix ourselves the soups, casseroles and hot chocolates we remember warming up with so many years ago. The thing is we are making a mistake. It's the comfort of the warm feelings and enjoyable times we are really seeking but somehow we "forget" that and instead, we focus on the foods we remember eating.

It has been said that "cravings are sometimes just memories repeated" and if you think about it, there's a lot of truth to it. The foods we choose to eat when we are snowed in and house-bound are often the same ones we remember eating during snowstorms of our youth. That "day off" feeling can really get us in trouble so it's very important to be prepared. Think about it now and plan ahead. Have the ingredients you need at home to make healthy versions of the more fattening foods you are craving. It's not as hard as you might think and you will be pleasantly surprised. If you are going to "snow-vereat" you might as well do it with foods that are good for you and make it worth your while.

Science has proven that light impacts how we feel, so it makes sense that our moods and behaviors are influenced by the weather and seasonal

changes. Our bodies produce less Serotonin (the happiness neurotransmitter) when there are shorter days and less sunlight. So, less serotonin makes us feel the need to want something else to make us feel satisfied. Want to guess what we crave?

Mindless, comfort eating is not dining, it's shoveling (yes, as in snow shoveling), it's just pushing the food down your throat. There are no utensils, just hands... It's mindless because eating that way gives us a reprieve from reality; often it's not about taste or hunger. Overeaters eat for many reasons, but being hungry isn't usually one of them. Most of us don't go without food long enough to experience a hunger pang. Winter eating actually begins with traditional holidays such as Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year's, not to mention Super Bowl Sunday and Valentine's Day. We associate these holidays with the foods and treats we indulge in as we celebrate and it carries on into the whole winter season. What can sound better than a steaming mug of hot chocolate on a cold dark day? Maybe some fresh baked goods? It becomes an extended food coma.

Winter is packed with increased calories and decreased exercise. We tend to be "couch potatoes" in the cold weather, striving to keep ourselves warm. The result of this equation is weight gain and now we're not comfortable with ourselves at all. Do we need to get to this point to realize that there's no real comfort in eating comfort foods? Or, is it something we knew all along anyway? Either way, there's no benefit for us in "snow-vereating."

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Puzzle

See how many of the words (below puzzle) you can find. They go in all directions and letters may overlap. Answers at bottom of page.



“If snow is made from water and water has no calories, how come snowmen are fat?”

S K M S T C N I T S N I H Y G
 K O I N G R E D I E N T S L Y
 C H O R W U H W V T F A L M A
 X S A T I S F I E D D E I E R
 S S I M H D T R K O T R V S E
 W G S H N I N O T O R E S C T
 M M N E M A N U X L I V K Z N
 R H L I L H P G O R G W D T I
 F M R I V D Z K P B G O F R W
 K P Z D R A N E X U E N O O A
 U E M E M O R I E S R S C F R
 D M I O F U Z C M H W H U M M
 M L O Z J Z U Q U Y J R S O T
 P D W C I D C C M K G W S C H

Find these words

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|--------------|-----------|------------|
| COMFORT | MEMORIES | SNOW |
| CRAVINGS | MINDLESS | SNOWVEREAT |
| FOCUS | MOODS | SOOTHING |
| HOUSEBOUND | PRIMITIVE | TRIGGER |
| INGREDIENTS | REPRIEVE | WARMTH |
| INSTINCTS | SATISFIED | WINTER |
| INTERNALIZED | SEROTONIN | |

Do you have a question or suggestion? A personal strategy you'd like to share? Send it to us ad we'll consider it for a future edition!

lindafiveson@yahoo.com

Linda Says...

There really is NO comfort in comfort foods.

If anything, they leave us more uncomfortable than ever!

Fiveson's Food

Over 100 menu choices! New items added often! Formulated from Linda's "own" personal recipes since 1989.

NO sugar, NO flour, NO gluten, NO refined carbohydrates

Answers to Puzzle
 goals
 control
 exercise
 motivation
 focus
 routine