

Weight-Loss Coach: Top 10 Reasons Women Eat Too Much

Having once eaten my way up to 240 pounds and a size 22, I ate for many reasons that had nothing to do with body hunger.

Overeating is becoming even more common in an age of food abundance, advertising and the addictive properties of man-altered foods.

Although both sexes can struggle with eating too much, I'm gearing this article toward women simply because I've heard our stories most often through emails.

Here are the top 10 reasons women eat too much, gleaned from my emails over the 12 years that has been online.

These reasons are in no particular order:

1. Permissible Self Care

You may feel guilty or that it is selfish to take time for yourself and have become so busy taking care of everyone that you put yourself on the shelf.

So food becomes a way to “rest” and make yourself feel special without feeling guilty—at least temporarily.

2. Emotional Novocaine

Food becomes a way to numb yourself to uncomfortable feelings, such as anger, anxiety, stress, boredom, depression or frustration.

3. The Food Is There

Leftovers are calling you from the kitchen or you are over-enthusiastic in “tasting” the food you are preparing.

Before you know it, you've grabbed a little bit of this and that until you have consumed the equivalent calories in a meal.

4. Last Supper Eating

If you are a diet veteran, then you are probably very familiar with "Last Supper" eating (also known as "Get while the getting is good").

You are so accustomed to going on diets that you tell yourself that you had better eat up your favorite "goodie" because you won't be allowed to have it ever again.

5. Relationship Building

Food becomes a way you show love to others. After I got married, I found myself gaining weight. I discovered a simple reason for it.

I had started fixing my portion sizes larger subconsciously. I was cooking for my husband and preparing his plate as well, matching my portion sizes to his.

He is a big guy, and I'm a petite woman, so no wonder I was getting bigger eating as much as he was.

To deal with the issue, I asked him to prepare his own plate or when I prepared his plate, I was careful to fix the portion size appropriate for my size.

6. Something to Do

Eating becomes a habit that you do when you are bored, or you use it as a form of procrastination.

You use it as a delaying tactic to avoid an activity that you view as painful, either consciously or unconsciously.

7. Food Insecurity

You may have experienced hunger as a child if your parent had difficulty putting food on the table. The official name for this one is “food insecurity.”

Deep down, you are afraid of experiencing insecurity from lack of food again, so you overeat as an insurance policy.

8. It's New and Improved

Food becomes a form of excitement. I experienced this one on vacation last year.

When you travel, do you anticipate eating food you've never eaten before (new food) or eating familiar food prepared a new way (improved food)?

This can also happen when you attend a new restaurant or want to try a new food item advertised on television. The fear of scarcity is behind this one: “If I don't eat it now, I may never get the opportunity to eat it again.”

9. It's Free

You can be vulnerable to eating too much at church dinners, banquets, family holiday dinners or eating out on an employer expense account.

Since you are not paying for it, you want to eat as much as you can to take full advantage of the freebie.

10. Bottomless Food Pits

Have you ever had the experience of sitting down to watch T.V. with a bag of buttered popcorn or potato chips in hand, and then found yourself reaching into an empty bag a short while later? If so, then you fell into a bottomless food pit.

It's keeping a large serving in front of you, eating mindlessly until it is gone.

I wrote this article to make you aware of the many

environmental cues that can tempt you to eat when you aren't hungry. In that way, you can seek God's wisdom as to effective ways to handle them. He promises: "If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all men liberally and without criticism, and it will be given to him" (James 1:5).

Which of the top 10 reasons do you struggle with most often? Take a moment to write them all of them down.

Then submit these areas to the Lord in prayer, asking Him to renew your mind. Humble yourself and set your mind on obedience to the Lord so food will regain its proper place in your life.

Here's a personal example.

Back when I was a nurse, No. 1 was a big struggle for me. But I had to realize that I was running on empty. It is like a well of water that keeps pouring out. If there is not a continual source of water to replenish it, then that well will run dry sooner or later.

So whenever I was tired, mentally, physically or emotionally, I learned it was necessary for me to take quiet time for myself.

Otherwise, I'd start to resent the very people I was trying to help and serve, taking on the attitude of a martyr or victim.

I quieted my soul with the familiar words of the 23rd Psalm, verses 1-3:

The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He makes me to lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside the still waters. He restores my soul; He leads me in the paths of righteousness For His name's sake.

Do you need a Word from the Lord to meditate upon so that you can renew your mind in your areas of struggle? Post the

Scriptures that you are using to renew your mind in that area.

Your change may not happen overnight, but keep meditating on God's word and keep practicing whatever the Lord teaches you to turn that situation around.

It may not be easy—they don't call it a "Faith of fight" for nothing.

But if you hang in there and refuse to give up, you are destined to win. {eo}

*Once 240 pounds and a size 22, **Kimberly Taylor** can testify to God's healing power to end binge-eating. She is an author and the creator of the Christian weight-loss website . Visit today for inspirational health and weight-loss tips.*

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