

# Why You Need to Stop That Diet Right Now

After losing 250 pounds, I started having people constantly ask me, “What diet did you go on?”

I know what they are asking. It’s more, “Which of the major diet franchises out there did you do?” The truth is, none of them. Diets as we think of them are not the answer to losing weight and keeping it off.

## What’s a Diet?

I say that because the word “diet” has lost its original meaning in our current society. If you look it up, you’ll see two definitions. The first is the original way the word was used, and the second is what we have come to think of as a “diet.”

“Diet, noun, 1. the kinds of food that a person, animal or community habitually eats, 2. a special course of food to which one restricts oneself, either to lose weight or for medical reasons.”

Right now, you have a diet even if you aren’t on a diet. There is a way you habitually eat every day. Some of us have good eating habits, and some of us don’t. When we are on a diet, to use the second meaning of the word, we restrict what we habitually eat.

## Habitual Eating

Let’s say you are 50 years old. You have a well-established way of eating. It has taken you 50 years to ingrain the eating habits you currently have. If that way of eating has contributed to you gaining 50, 100, 200 or more pounds, you are probably thinking the way to lose the weight is to greatly

restrict the amount and types of food you eat.

This is a habitual response we've learned from the \$60 billion diet industry. Their goal is to cause you to need their products in order to lose weight. We've learned from them that the only way to lose weight is to go on a diet, the second meaning of the word.

What I've learned on my weight-loss journey is that the more important form of the word "diet" is buried in the first meaning. In short, it says a diet is the kinds of food we *habitually* eat.

Before I lost weight, the kinds of foods I ate consisted of starchy casseroles, spaghetti, macaroni, sweet breads, hot rolls, sub sandwiches, cinnamon crunch bagels, donuts, double or triple cheeseburgers, fries, mashed potatoes and gravy, desserts and fried meats. Yes, the good old American diet. I was easily eating over 3,500 calories a day. That was my diet.

### **Do Diets Work to Change Us?**

When I would go on a diet to lose weight, I'd eat lean meat, fruits and vegetables and greatly reduce my calorie intake to 1,000 calories a day. I'd cut out sugar, bread, fast food, fried food and diet sodas. I could lose 100 pounds pretty quickly. Many times, it would only take me six months. When we weigh more, we can lose faster.

Sounds good, right? Wrong! Within a matter of months, I would gain back what I had lost because I went back to the way I had always eaten. It was a well-ingrained diet that I had learned for however many years I had lived up to that point.

Six months was not enough time to change my habits. Actually, changing my habits was never on my mind. I guess I can blame the weight-loss industry. They were banking on me coming back to buy their program.

After all, I had lost weight on that “diet,” so it must just be that I didn’t do it right. So I’d do it again, lose weight and gain it back plus more. Then, I’d need their program ... again.

## **Establishing Good Habits**

The part I hadn’t factored in was that it took me years to establish my bad habits, and it would take me more than six months to establish good ones. With traditional diets, one day we are eating however much we want of whatever we want. The next day we go on a diet and try to change everything at once.

That is not habit change. A diet is too restricting. It will only work until our bodies rebel and lead us right back to where we began. To incorporate good habits, we have to work gradually on changing them.

Many are only interested in quick results. It took me at least five years to lose 250 pounds because I did it by replacing a bad habit with a good habit and continuing that process. Though it took me awhile, I have now kept that weight off for six years. My bad habits have been replaced by good ones. Sugar and flour are gone from my life, and I don’t even miss them.

## **No Quick Fixes**

What we are looking for when we go on a weight-loss diet is a quick fix. Losing weight quickly does not “fix” us. Quick weight loss will on result in quickly gaining the weight back plus more.

Yo-yo dieting wreaks havoc on our bodies. It makes them expect that we will gain the weight back again because that’s what we always have done. That makes it even more difficult the next time we try to lose weight. I know because I’ve lost 100 pounds at least five times in my life only to gain it back again plus more.

There is no magic fix except when we finally determine we will follow God no matter what. He is the only one who can help us. "if anyone is enfolded into Christ, he has become an entirely new creation. All that is related to the old order has vanished. Behold, everything is fresh and new" (2 Cor. 5:17, TPT).

## **Go With God!**

With God's help, we can stop the old habits and start new ones in their place. We can't do this by ourselves. We really need God's help. We just have to admit that we are weak and we need His help.

God said, "'My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness.' Therefore most gladly I will boast in my weaknesses, that the power of Christ may rest upon me" (2 Cor. 12:9, MEV).

"When I am weak [in human strength], then I am strong [truly able, truly powerful, truly drawing from God's strength] (2 Cor. 12:10, AMP).

We need His power because this takes more commitment than just going on a diet and going about our merry way. Embarking on a lifestyle-change journey requires that we get closer to God than we ever have before. It means discovering our root issues and allowing God to help us with them. It means being all in with whatever God shows us to do. It means being willing to allow God to change everything within us.

When we do this, we will be successful, because His power is working through our weakness. The weaker we are, the more we know we need God. The more we know we need God, the more His strength will go to work for us. {eoa}

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Losing Weight and Keeping It Off with God's Help *and* Sweet Change: True Stories of Transformation. *Get a free chapter of all her books plus many other free resources on her blog at Teresa Shields . Connect with her there or on her Facebook page, Twitter, Pinterest or Instagram.*

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