

Don't Blame Your Lack of Discipline on Your Family

My family won't eat healthy. This is an excuse that I understand, and yet I think it is one of the poorest excuses.

When we are blaming our bad eating habits on our families, we place all the responsibility for what we've done to ourselves on them. That is not fair to them.

Blaming our weight gain on our family's eating habits is just crazy. If we are the cooks, we have the control over what we serve. We can change how we feed our families. If our families won't eat healthy, it is our fault. Not theirs.

The same thing is true if our husbands are the cooks in our families. Many times, though, I find the husbands are cooking what they know their wives want. So that's actually the wife's fault. Communication is really the key here.

The Way to A Man's Heart

Grandma told me that the way to a man's heart is through his stomach. So, when I got married I felt I had to cook the kinds of foods I knew my husband loved, which was pretty much the way my grandma had taught me. My husband grew up on a farm, so the way his step-mother cooked was very similar to the way grandma had taught me.

Growing up, the most fun I ever had was being at grandma's when the entire extended family was there and grandma had cooked all her signature foods and desserts. It was a major way she showed us that she loved us. She would cook our favorite foods.

These days, I've totally changed the way I eat. Catering to my taste buds is just not worth gaining back all the weight I

have lost. I don't ever want to go there again. Thank God, I don't even want that kind of food anymore.

Programming My Family to Eat Unhealthy

Like grandma, I felt the way to show love to my family was to cook all the things they loved. However, I had trained them to love foods that contained high carbohydrate content because that's the way grandma fed papaw and the hired hands that worked on the farm in the summer. Her business was feeding the hungry men. She taught me how to do the same.

The problem was that even though my husband worked hard, he did not do the kind of manual labor that my papaw had. He was not working sun-up to sun-down plowing fields and tossing bales of hay into the barn. My husband had grown up that way, so he liked that kind of food but he understood he didn't need to eat that way.

He maintained his weight by not overeating. I was the main problem, not my husband. I loved the kinds of food grandma had taught me to cook. My family was fine with eating whatever I cooked.

Change Had to Come

I knew a change had to come for me and it was also going to affect what my family ate, as well. I was eating too much of the wrong types of foods. Part of me felt if I didn't slave over the stove every night, I wasn't being a good wife and mother.

During this time, we were also taking care of mentally challenged foster teens and young adults. And they ate ... a lot! I had programmed them along with my family, to eat the way I did.

Three of the young women we had at the time had case managers who wanted them to lose weight. This was going to be difficult

if I was cooking one meal for me, the girls and then another for my family. We all lived in the same house. It was going to be impossible because we all really needed to eat the same thing.

Slow Change Is Easier

Change is much easier to take if it is done slowly. So, the first thing I did was to take all the sugar out of the house. I got rid of the cake and brownie mixes, and I bought fresh fruit. I kept the house stocked with fresh fruit so that we had enough apples and oranges for everyone to eat. It became a new way for me to show love to both my family and those entrusted to our care.

Then I started changing how I cooked. I served more grilled chicken, turkey and beef roast rather than fish sticks, chicken nuggets and hot dogs. I developed a love for chicken deli meat and special protein bars without sugar and gluten.

This was a major departure from the way I had always eaten and what I had always done, but I recognized my weight issue was far more extreme than anyone else in my family.

Allowing Change to Happen

Change must happen, but we aren't butterflies. It won't happen on it's own. We have to want it to happen, allow it to happen, nurture it as it happens and celebrate each step along the way.

Second Corinthians 5:17 TPT tells us, "Now, if anyone is enfolded into Christ, he has become an entirely new person. All that is related to the old order has vanished. Behold, everything is fresh and new."

When we align ourselves with Christ, He expects us to change. He expects us to become new. That will mean many different things to different people but one thing it does mean is we

cannot stay the same. We have to surrender to God. {eoa}

Teresa Shields Parker is the author of six books and two study guides, including her No. 1 bestseller, *Sweet Grace: How I Lost 250 Pounds*. Her sixth book, *Sweet Surrender: Breaking Strongholds*, is live on Amazon. She blogs at . She is also a Christian weight loss coach (check out her coaching group at Overcomers Academy) and speaker. Don't miss her podcast, *Sweet Grace for Your Journey*, available on CPN. This article first appeared on . For more information on this topic, check out episode 150 of *Sweet Grace for Your Journey* podcast, "My Family Won't Eat Healthy."