

# WHAT REALLY HAPPENS WHEN WE DIET?

## How we diet

Skipping meals or decreasing calories

Cut out starchy foods (i.e., Atkins Diet)

Go on preplanned meal replacement diet or liquid diet

Fasting

## What really happens

- Lowers metabolism so we store fat more easily from fewer calories
- The brain's and muscle's demand for fuel causes rebound "munchies", usually for high fat and high sugar items
- Poor attention span, irritability, fatigue
- Muscle tissue may be lost

- Your body loses its best source of stable energy, and you'll be more likely to feel moody and tired
- You'll end up eating higher fat and sugary foods to satisfy munchies

- You have a 95% chance of regaining any weight you lose in 1-2 years
- You give away control to the plan, which lowers your self-esteem
- You often lose muscle mass along with fat which lowers your metabolism, making it easier to store fat on fewer calories
- Habits are replaced temporarily, not changed permanently
- It's expensive!

- Most of weight lost is water
- Muscle mass decreases which lowers metabolism- leads to weight gain
- Can be medically dangerous for some

## Why we diet

To be slim

To be healthier

To be more attractive

## What really happens

- Slimness is temporary. Over the long run, 95% of dieters regain the weight. Many women get fatter, so they diet again, with similar poor results. This is called *diet cycling* and can lead to obesity

- Diet cycling increases health risks more than being overweight
- There is no evidence that being fat is unhealthy. There is evidence to show that being too thin is unhealthy
- Most dieting decreases our muscle mass. Muscles are needed for good health.
- Many diets are unhealthy. Your body and mind don't run well when you restrict calories. Dieting makes you cranky and obsessed with food. This feels like a failure, but is just a physiological response and has nothing at all to do with willpower

- What attracts you to someone else? Do you want your friends to like you for your body or who you are? What are long-term relationships based upon? If you are dieting, are you any fun to be around?

Adapted from "Together We Care" prepared by the Boundary Health Unit Nutritionists in Delta, B.C.

### FREE WORKSHOPS ON DISORDERED EATING

Join Esther Kane, MSW, Registered Clinical Counsellor at her office for free one-hour workshops each month (6 in total), from 7:30 to 8:30 p.m., at 2311 Rosewall Crescent at the Rosewall Wellness Centre. No pre-registration required – just show up!

#### Summer Workshops:

- Monday, July 4:  
"Normalizing Eating" (Part 2)
- Monday, August 8:  
"Food and Mood"

# TOP 10 REASONS TO GIVE UP DIETING

**#10: Diets don't work.** Even if you lose weight, you will probably gain it all back, and you might gain back more than you lost.

**#9: Diets are expensive.** If you didn't buy special diet products, you could save enough to get new clothes, which would improve your outlook right now.

**#8: Diets are boring.** People on diets talk and think about food and practically nothing else. There's a lot more to life than food.

**#7: Diets don't necessarily improve your health.** Like the weight loss, health improvement is temporary. Dieting can actually cause health problems.

**#6: Diets don't make you beautiful.** Very few people will ever look like models. Glamour is a look, not a size. You don't have to be thin to be attractive.

**#5: Diets are not sexy.** If you want to be more attractive, take care of your body and your appearance. Feeling healthy makes you look your best.

**#4: Diets can turn into life-threatening eating disorders.** The obsession to be thin can lead to anorexia, bulimia, bingeing, and compulsive exercising.

**#3: Diets can make you afraid of food.** Food nourishes and comforts us, and gives us pleasure. Dieting can make food seem like your enemy, and can deprive you of all the positives about food.

**#2: Diets can rob you of energy.** If you want to lead a full and active life, you need good nutrition, and enough food to meet your body's needs.

And the number one reason to give up dieting...

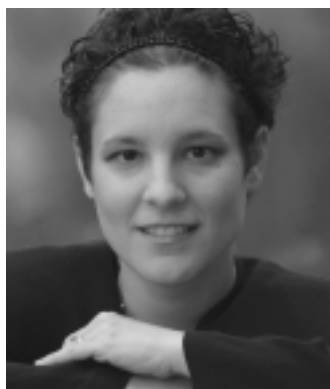
**#1: Learning to love and accept yourself just as you are** will give you self-confidence, better health, and a sense of well-being that will last a lifetime.

*Adapted from the 1994 Council on Size and Weight Discrimination, Inc.*

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## Esther's "Top Ten" favourite books on this topic:

1. **"When Girls Feel Fat"** by Sandra Friedman
2. **"Body Thieves"** by Sandra Friedman
3. **"The Beauty Myth"** by Naomi Wolf
4. **"Fat is a Feminist Issue"** (1 and 2) by Susie Orbach
5. **"The Hungry Self"** by Kim Chernin
6. **"Fat and Furious: Women and Food Obsession"** by Judi Hollis
7. **"In Her Image: The Unhealed Daughter's Search for Her Mother"** by Kathie Carlson
8. **"When Food is Love"** by Geneen Roth
9. **"Breaking Free from Compulsive Eating"** by Geneen Roth
10. **"Why Weight? A Guide to Ending Compulsive Eating"** by Geneen Roth



Esther Kane, MSW, RCC, relocated to the Comox Valley a year and a half ago from Vancouver and worked as an Eating Disorders Therapist in the North Island Regional Eating Disorders Program in Campbell River and Courtenay. She left that position to devote all of her energy to her private practise. Esther has over a decade of experience counselling people with disordered eating (and their families) and is considered an expert in the field. She also survived a life-threatening eating disorder in her teens and early 20's and has over 13 years of solid recovery and lives a life free of food and body image preoccupation. She has assisted countless people of all ages in their recovery from food and weight issues and is extremely passionate and dedicated to her work. She is also trained as a family therapist and works with individual women, couples and families with various presenting problems.

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