
Nancy Adler

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at large * Dora Dunn

Shrinking

THANK YOU (FROM ED ALSO,) NANCY ADLER, FOR A NEW APPROACH TO WEIGHT LOSS

I'm working on my Christmas list. This year it is a huge challenge, and not because my nearest and dearest have been naughty. This year I have included myself on the list. I decided to give myself the gift of good health and lose the weight that is holding me back. I tried it on my own, and finally realized that not only was it not working, I was actually losing ground. It would be easy to blame the drama in my life; heaven knows there has been enough to make a couple of Lifetime miniseries. So, how did this happen?

This year, my relationship collapsed under the weight of his untreated alcohol addiction. A spectacular job opportunity that was within my grasp was snatched away. I learned that the only thing worse than working for someone you think is dim-witted is being fired by said dim-wit. I spent the summer moving every couple of days, walking around with vital documentation like my birth certificate in my purse. Through all this, my bond with food became more and more toxic.

Many of you would empathize and understand if I said that I was an emotional eater. Well my problem is really strange. I am an emotional cook. All my life, when things got stressful, I turned to my pots and pans for succor. For a time, I thought that friends and family deliberately did things to throw me into a swivet because they knew the result would be coq au vin or blueberry pancakes or chocolate mousse.

The downside, of course, was a weekly food budget that suggested I might be responsible for a hockey team, not single me. The serious problem came when I started eating what I cooked. All of this food was served up with really juicy rationalizations. I said things like, "I'm a restaurant reviewer; I have to know what things taste like. Every bite of it". Or I thought that since I cooked at the Ritz Carlton it was unfair for me to go home and have a salad and some grilled chicken. Why shouldn't I eat like the people at the hotel?

I decided to ignore what was happening to my body. I was really good at not looking in the mirror. I even averted my eyes when I was in the shower. Since I spent the majority of my life in chef drag, which is not that flattering anyway, I could fool myself. But when I started getting short of breath, couldn't ignore my aching joints, and started wondering why my civilian clothes were shrinking in the closet, I knew I had to do something.

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All this year I have watched the Incredible Shrinking Eddie Show. He looks great, but most important, he feels good. Each time I asked him about his program, he told me about Nancy Adler, his nutritionist. When I finally quit making excuses, made an appointment to see her and actually kept the appointment. It was the single happiest day I have had all year. She is a no-nonsense professional who is encouraging, intimidating, knowledgeable, fit, curious, beautiful and impossible to fool (damn); with a high energy verve that makes each session with her joyous.

Instead of taking on the role of Diet Dominatrix, as I had feared, Nancy is the soulful sherpa on my journey to a healthy lifestyle. It's as if together we are in search of my inner babe, locked away so long in adipose flesh. I meet with her weekly, and we visit and dish like girls together as much as we review my weekly diary. And let me tell you, being required to write down what I eat acts as a powerful disincentive to my baser impulses. There's just no way to justify a big bowl of pasta carbonara at midnight simply because I think it's fun to make.

I would love to tell you that I have reached my goal weight and am ready for my close-up. But the fact of the matter is that I am still far from my goal. I am ticked that I am no longer 30" and can't drop 15 pounds in a trice simply by skipping lunch for a month. I am further irritated by the fact that men lose weight differently than women. Men say they are going on a diet and 7 or 8 pounds vanish. But working with Nancy, she doesn't allow me to dwell on these irritating facts. She has me focused on my health and long range goals in a way I have never been.

Now I recognize the triggers that send me into the kitchen hell bent for leather to cream, butter and sugar. I am leaning how to channel that energy into projects that promote my improving health and the health of my family and friends. I don't want to scare anyone, your gift baskets of candies and cookies will still be coming. It's just that this year I won't have candy and cookies on my breath when I drop them at your house. Thanks Nancy

(Dora Dunn is the sales coordinator for Ed Hitzel Enterprises. Nancy Adlers column appears on page 33.)