My Healthy Eating Plan

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SCI241

 According to my recent findings in the Healthy Eating Plan, there have been no major changes in my diet. At the beginning of this course, I started reading the book “Women, Food and God” and I started to make real changes to my diet. I for one, no longer call what I’m doing a diet but a complete lifestyle change. The changes I have made have helped me to lost weight, slowly but surely.

 I have learned not to use the word diet, because diet is something that is temporary. When I have tried diets in the past, I would say that they worked, but I would eventually gain the weight back. For example, I have done weight watchers multiple times. While it worked for a while, I would always stop because I got tired of counting points and constantly thinking about food all day long. So, for me, weight watchers just did not work.

 When I started reading my new book, I learned to start loving myself and loving my body. I have learned to differentiate what my body actually wants to eat, versus what my mind tells me I want to eat. I don’t exclude any certain food from my daily eating rituals; however I stop before I eat and think to myself, is this really what I want. In the past I would have fixed food and consumed it before I really even thought about what I was putting in my mouth. Sometimes I would feel guilty afterwards; sometimes I would feel good about what I ate.

 Eventually it was like something in me just clicked. I don’t want to feel guilty or be in actual physical pain after I get done eating a meal. I want to feel good about what I ate, and I want to feel energetic and not sluggish. Since I have started actually listening to my body, I really feel clean and not worn out all of the time.

 Most of the changes that I have made mean adding more vegetables to my main meals. I noticed that before I made changes I ate an awful lot of starchy foods like macaroni and cheese, or potatoes. I can tell the difference in how I feel now that I have added vegetables to my meals. The main thing is that I have not cut out the foods that I love. I continue to eat macaroni and cheese and potatoes and starchy foods, but when I do; I separate them and pair them up with a vegetable. This has made a huge difference because I am not overloading my body on just one type of food group and depriving it of others.

 Since I have learned about the different types of nutrients that my body needs, I have learned that when I am having really strong cravings for certain foods,that I may in fact, be lacking or be deficient in a certain nutrient. For instance, when I really want to have some something sweet, I have found that a really cold drink of water, not soda, quenches my craving. I think it may be due to the fact that I am dehydrated.

 Since the beginning of this class I have definitely added more exercise to my daily regimen. I have joined the gym with my husband and since I have to pay for that monthly, I am more inclined to go work out that I am to jog on the treadmill at home. This has also helped me to realize that it is okay and not the end of the world when I do have a slice of pie or an extra roll. I know that what I eat in calories and what I workout in calories will equal out. So if I want to eat the extra then I am prepared to work out extra.

 When I am making my food choices now, I am definitely more aware of what emotions I am feeling at the time. I have learned that in the past, depending on what emotion I was feeling at the time, would depend on what type of food I would go for. If I was happy and celebrating an event with my family, I would go for comfort, home cooked foods. If I was bored, I wanted more salty snacks like crackers and cheese or nuts. If I was feeling sad or depressed, that was when I wanted a slice of cheesecake, which would very easily turn into the whole cheesecake!

 Now, before I eat I ask myself internally (and sometimes just out in the open) if I am really hungry. Do I actually feel a change in my stomach that I wasn’t feeling an hour ago. If I am not really hungry, then I try to actually let myself “feel” whatever emotion my body is trying to let me feel. If I am bored, and I go ahead and eat that whole box of laughing cow cheese, I know that I am still going to be bored afterwards. So, I have picked up reading incidentally and that definitely takes away my boredom. I have a new love for reading that I didn’t even know I had because before when I was bored I would not quench my boredom, I would just eat, now I can get into a really good book and before I know it, time has gone by and I find that I have actually gotten hungry.

 Another emotion that I have learned to really let myself feel and not eat is anger. For some reason in the past, when I would get angry, I would go straight to the refrigerator. As if the food I was shoveling in my mouth was really hurting the person that I was mad at. It is really hard for me to let myself feel anger and no suppress it. When I was younger and I was angry I would throw things and slam doors. Since I am an adult now with my own children, I have to watch my reactions to anger so it is much easier to just eat. Since I have changed my habits, I have found that journaling really helps me when I am angry. I can write down words that I would not have normally said out loud.

 Learning about better food choices has also helped me to determine what I want to do as a career. I have decided that I want to become a Registered Dietitian and help others receive the same help that I have received on my own. I really appreciate what learning about better food choices have done for me in my life and I hope that I can stay on this path and continue losing weight and making better, healthier choices for myself and my family.