

Natural

Weight Loss

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SUCCESS, AT LAST! NO LONGER A VICTIM

interview with Debbie Claas



As a chunky five-year-old, I hid in the cupboard, stuffing in candy. At 13, a doctor gave me little pills. It became a game: "Let's See How Much I Can Get Away With and Still Please the Doctor and Mom." Only 15 pounds overweight in high school, I was obsessed, writing down every calorie I consumed.

In college, I slimmed down on Dr. Atkins', eating baco-bits, meat, eggs, and salty-oily garbage until I was sick. This plummeted me into studying toxemia and natural diets. I juice fasted, got very thin)—118—and felt wonderful.

Then . . . an eight-year binge of self-destruction . . . a brief romantic involvement left me devastated. Gorging nonstop on garbage for 2 months, I put on 50 pounds. I was a 5'6" yo-yo, always going up or down: 166—the lowest, 225—the highest. Friends never knew—if they hadn't seen me for weeks—what I would look like. When asked "how are you?" on the phone, an answer of "fine" meant I had lost a little, and "terrible" meant I had gained. Alienated and isolated, I dropped from sight until forced out. In continual embarrassment, I hid from the world. It was a Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde existence: if doing well, I was friendly, could face the world; if doing poorly, I was crazy, bitter, despairing. Indulging in self-pity and slow suicide, I believed I was getting what I deserved and had no choice.

A binge began with large quantities of good food and then days or weeks later progressed into a pound of M&M

peanuts for breakfast. One compulsive bite—even of good food—broke my word to myself and led me . . . somewhere down the line . . . to chocolate gluttony. Once out of control, my morning ritual was shopping for a grocery bag of salty, sweet food: nachos, bean dip, sour cream, cheese, candy, cookies. I would buy whole bagfuls and eat it all. It was such a grand release to just eat, to stop the hurting, to just give in, relax, and let go. My "morning fix" delivered needed punishment. Sick, hungover, and hating myself, I spent the early afternoon vowing to make tomorrow the start of my new diet. By evening, I fantasized and hoped for tomorrow's self-control. Exhausted and drained, I was fat, a flop, and disgusting.

Occasionally, something would click: I could forego my morning ritual. That would set me on a whole weight-loss trip. On more healthful foods, I'd yo-yo down.

After eight years of this, I was ready for a change when my mom presented the Religious School of Natural Hygiene, Hollister, California, advertised in *Healthful Living*. Bitter, but willing, I waddled in. I was up to 225 and down to 2 dresses, both sacks and one of them a maternity dress. For the last couple of years, I had felt spiritual stirrings, feelings of brighter days ahead; and I had begun softly praying. While fasting, the prayers answered with emotional, spiritual healing. After 20 days, rage and anger surfaced up; for now there was no food to keep the negative emotions down. I fasted to 185 and stayed on as a staff person for five months. In just two months' time, eating the NATURAL WEIGHT-LOSS DIET, I lost 40 more pounds . . . and . . . I lost my compulsive drive to eat. I learned to love vegetables and wanted them for every meal. Fruits were too sweet, nuts and nut butters too rich. Avocado, cabbage, cauliflower, and tomatoes were pure ambrosia, better than any full bag of chocolate chip cookies. After getting the garbage out of your system, after cleaning out your perverted taste buds, your body wants what's good for you. It's not torture to eat healthfully. I ate three meals a day, and not in great quantities, never allowing for seconds. I decided what to have, blessed the food, ate with reverence and the "Slow Down Behaviors," and never went back for more. I also

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added ½ hour of biking, weight lifting, and stretching to my day. I left at 139, feeling good.

Within five months, I started yo-yoing from 140 to 160, by going on and off the raw diet. I returned to the same old morning binges, but it was all different. I was mechanically going through the morning rituals, but it just wasn't giving me the same old "fix." I can see now that the choice of binging—of self-punishment—is always going to be there, waiting for my "Negative Self." But I've gotten to a place where I want other things in life now. After another 25-day fast, I have a new perspective and a new commitment on weight maintenance. I now understand what the NATURAL WEIGHT-LOSS SYSTEM is teaching about food addiction: when I was eating a high-salt, high-sugar, high-fat diet, the thought of being satisfied by raw foods was a joke. Being happy—satisfied—with the raw foods was unimaginable! I needed salty corn chips and sweet, sweet cookies. Furthermore, only the bad foods—preferably, chocolate—can punish adequately. The point is: the body finds raw foods incredibly satisfying and incredibly delicious . . . but it takes being ready to give up the punishment, of having suffered enough. This is where the spiritual side comes in.

Today I weigh 135—but changing that weight was so much more than changing the diet. Treating your body well by following the NATURAL WEIGHT-LOSS SYSTEM is going to help, but you must get desperate for goodness to come into your life . . . whether it's a book, a person, or a diet. For me, it took screaming out for help, instead of surrendering to my sweet-suffering sickness. Maybe, you will relinquish the payoff/pleasure of being a victim. Where you are really is your choice. This obsession with food is not



The new Debbie Claas!

something to be resisted. It is something to be loved and accepted as a part of my past needs and then to be released. Just because I'm thin doesn't mean I'm going to be happy. It's like—once you're thin, what are you going to use as an excuse to be unhappy? What am I? Well . . . now . . . **I don't want to be unhappy anymore.** So I'm giving it to God and will live on raw foods, one day at a time.

FACTS AND FINDINGS

BOOK REVIEW: SET POINT THEORY

The Dieter's Dilemma by William Bennett, M.D., and Joel Gurin is not a book about diet or low-calorie recipes. It presents, instead, a wealth of research on obesity and exercise to support an idea—"The Setpoint Theory." Briefly, it holds that each individual has a longstanding "set point" for body fat which it strives to maintain, regardless of increased or decreased caloric intake. It is the weight you tend to stay when paying little attention to what you eat. If the body "wants" to keep at its set-point comfort zone, as the theory claims, then it will "rebel" at any attempt to reduce. This also explains why dieters reach immovable plateaus: the body is "determined" not to go below a certain weight.

The authors examine factors which lower the setpoint and therefore lower weight, such as use of amphetamines, cigarettes, or surgery. Only one treatment stands as a healthful alternative: *regular, vigorous exercise*. Research indicates that although we burn only a few calories during a workout, the activity "sets" the body at a higher rate of metabolism 24 hours a day . . . so that a person actually eats

more and weighs less, a little reminiscent of having your cake and eating it too.

Bennet and Gurin have anticipated their sedentary readers' response to *The Setpoint Theory* by presenting an organized, convincing argument, loaded with experiments and studies. This excellent book supports the NATURAL WEIGHT-LOSS SYSTEM'S emphasis on exercise. Only we go further: "Exercise and a raw food diet—*both*—build great health. Try it!"

DON'T BE A FAT HEAD!

Candy Cummings, in writing for the *Los Angeles Times* in January of 1984, elaborates on the uncomplimentary term "Fat Head": she emphasizes the idea expressed repeatedly in the NATURAL WEIGHT-LOSS SYSTEM—to speed-up and ease-up the process, we need to abandon the "fat mentality." To do this, we need to offer to ourselves the kindness and forgiveness we so often extend to others. That is, when we fall off the fresh, raw food program, we need to pick ourselves up and carry on . . . and not engage in self-recrimination or "what's-the-use" binging. Another

habit to discard is the mindless eating and somehow believing that the calories don't count if our thoughts are focused elsewhere. Lesson Two of the NATURAL WEIGHT-LOSS COURSE underlines the need to keep mealtime "a pure activity" in order to cultivate awareness of quality and quantity of food eaten. Finally, the "Fat Head" needs to extricate himself from the maddening maze of calories, percentages, and pounds: it is a self-defeating cycle of obsession with weight and guilt for not being perfect.

Although the NATURAL WEIGHT-LOSS SYSTEM offers the ideal diet of our biological adaptation, the fact remains that following the program begins with a mental commitment. We need to give up the "Fat Head" mentality if our goal is to be reached. Hold fast to the mental image of yourself—slim and healthy. Follow the NATURAL WEIGHT-LOSS SYSTEM to the best of your ability. Congratulate yourself when there's progress. And forgive yourself when you aren't perfect. You are needed to help set others free from their "Fat Head" fallacies.

DRACULA'S DREAM

European medical doctors have introduced to America a new procedure known as "fat suction," "lipocurettage," "suction lipectomy," or "suction curettage." For a cost of \$500 to \$1,500 surgeons make a small incision to expose fatty tissue, then break up the fat with a special, looplike instrument, and draw off the deposit with regular suction and drainage equipment. The process is not a cure for obesity; rather, it is employed locally, to diet-and-exercise-resistant spots such as buttocks, thighs, knees, and abdomen. The technique is in its infancy at this point, with hardly more than 100 persons having undergone the surgery. Chief of plastic surgery at Scarborough General Hospital in Toronto, Dr. Lloyd Carlsen, says: "So far, I'm impressed . . . and my patients are happy."

COMMENTARY: The potential for "fat-sucking abuse" is frightening. For the wishful thinker, the process promises shapely thighs and flat stomachs: and the only price to pay is money. The NATURAL WEIGHT-LOSS SYSTEM maintains every bodily spot of morbid fat can be eliminated through the discipline of proper diet, regular exercise, behavior modification, and fasting. Certainly the process of slicing open the skin and stabbing the delicate tissue, sucking up some and leaving the rest assaulted and bloody, could only be inspired by Dracula himself. The fact that this violence, euphemistically called "lipocurettage," can be marketed as a status symbol bespeaks the sad state in which affluence and spiritual bankruptcy have left our collective consciousness.

Wait until you see fat-suction demonstrated in color on TV! Instinctively, horror and sadness will sweep through you. Besides our instincts cautioning us, however, doctors such as Dr. Rollin Daniel, chief plastic surgeon at the Royal Victoria Hospital in Montreal, warns us with known drawbacks:

1. Complications such as hypovolemic shock or necrosis (death) of overlying skin and loss of skin sensitivity
2. Possible perforation of nearby tissues (such as the abdominal wall)

3. Pooling of blood requiring drainage
 4. Hanging leftover skin, requiring further tucking and tapering surgery
 5. Depression where fat has been removed
- Let us seek our refuge in strong discipline and sensible diet . . . and not in Draculan dreams.



SALT WARNINGS!

Arthur Andrews, director of the California Health Sanctuary and a Natural Hygienic practitioner, issues the following "Salt Warnings" to students who leave the Religious School of Natural Hygiene after fasting and staying on the NATURAL WEIGHT-LOSS DIET. (These warnings are well-heeded by anyone who has been on the unsalted, raw food diet for any length of time—whether he has done any fasting or not.)

"The person who leaves here is not the same person who came. Once your fast is over, your body—bodily processes and body chemistry—are changed . . . improved. Your body will no longer tolerate poisons! Certain things that you used to eat and handle without noticeable trouble will now bring you uncomfortable, undesirable signs and symptoms if you make the mistake of eating them.

"Avoid at all costs the intake of salt or anything that has salt in it! YOU HAVE BEEN WARNED! Salt and all those other salted condiments actually are not foods. They really are poisons and irritants and harmful to your health. Your body and its systems, now that you have fasted and have been eating your ideal food, are cleaned out, healed and rejuvenated. Putting these substances into your body can be compared to rubbing poison ivy all over your face and skin.

"Salt, for a certainty, will cause your body to demand and then hold water. You will SWELL. Usually the feet and ankles swell first. Depending on how sensitive you have become to salt and how much you have eaten, the swelling will proceed. Some people swell until their eyes are closed slits in their heads. Their entire bodies look like puff balls. They cannot bend their fingers. They truly have poisoned themselves. It takes a long time for this swelling to leave, even if you fast. Other things can happen: blurred vision, dizziness, cramps, diarrhea, headaches, spasms, vomiting, to name a few."

"Remember, through the fast and on the Hygienic diet, you have given your body a chance to clean itself out; and it wants to remain clean, efficient and healthy no matter what you foolishly do. The swelling and symptoms are the body's way of notifying you of the wrongness of your actions. Remember, you have been on an ideal diet. At the cellular level, your body is at least as vital and energetic as it has been in years. Do your best to perpetuate this state and to accelerate the weight loss. This is one of the reasons you came in the first place—to regain the optimal health available to you."

FROM THE KITCHEN...

Stuffed Fruits

If you experimented with stuffing vegetables, as suggested in the last NEWSLETTER, just imagine what you can do with fruits! The cut-up, blended-up varieties of fruit salad and fruit sauce fillings is endless. Of course, fruits are so satisfying just as Nature prepares them, there really is no call to alter them. Nevertheless, the "fruit gourmet" may find delight in the following recipes:

MELON BOWLS: Take a melon such as cantaloupe, honeydew, or even a whole watermelon. Scoop out the meat, remove seeds, and cut meat into bite-sized pieces. Add other small chunks of fruit, mix with a dressing—if desired—and return the fruit salad to the "melon bowls."

PINEAPPLE BOATS: Cut pineapple in half, either vertically or horizontally. Scoop out meat, leaving a $\frac{1}{8}$ " "boat." Make pineapple cubes and add to a bowl of grated celery;

mix with an avocado/lemon juice dressing. Fill boats with the salad.

AVOCADO SHELLS: Cut avocado in half and remove the seed; scoop out the center. Mash avocado meat and gently mix with halved, seedless grapes. Refill the shells with this mixture.

PEAR BASKETS: Select ripe pears, halve them, and scoop out the center. Dice pearmeat and add to favorite diced fruit and/or fruit dressing. Return salad to the "baskets."

APRICOT DROPS: Halve apricots and remove the seeds. Drop on a dollop of a favorite nut butter. (This is not a very good combination for ease of digestion.)

FIG TARTS: Select large, thick-skinned figs. Snip off tops; and with a "babyspoon," scoop out the figmeat. Fill with a favorite nut butter that has been made creamy by mixing with orange juice. These make an hors-d'oeuvre delicacy (although a poor combination from a digestive point of view).

FROM THE MAILBOX...

Dear Miss Bidwell,

My wife and I run group homes for retarded and/or emotionally-disturbed adults. We have put an autistic resident on the NATURAL WEIGHT-LOSS SYSTEM. We used to call her "The Bad Girl," as she would always get into trouble through her hyperactivity and blood-curdling screams. Well, we quit giving her all the refined foods and sugar and started filling her with apples, celery, and the like. She has lost 15 pounds! Where did it go so fast? The doctor is delighted. And her behavior is so calm, we now call her "The Good Girl." Thank you for your marvelous course.

Jose Luis Castillo
Fremont, CA

Dear Jose,

Thank you for sharing your discovery! Our diet, our weight, our emotions, and our behavior are intimately connected . . . change any one—and all the others are affected. The book review *Food, Teens and Behavior* in the last issue's "Facts and Findings" underlines this idea and will most likely be of particular interest to you. Perhaps the unprocessed, natural diet will work more wonders in your homes. Keep us posted. Bless you for the difficult, loving work you are doing.

Victoria Bidwell

Dear Editor,

I tried the no-breakfast plan and the NATURAL WEIGHT-LOSS DIET as a way of improving my health and of dropping a few pounds. I got a headache so terrible on the first morning I had to take aspirin. A few days on the fruit and my mouth started to taste so bad I couldn't stand it. The next few mornings, the headaches continued; my tongue coated; and I had no appetite at all. I lost a few pounds—but felt awful. After taking some aspirin, I forced down a steak-and-eggs breakfast; and aside from a little heartburn, I feel

great! I can see your program isn't for me. Life is bad enough as it is. I don't want to feel like death warmed over!

Anonymous

Dear Anonymous,

I can only guess that you have not been reading the Lessons to the NATURAL WEIGHT-LOSS COURSE. Perhaps someone has described the diet to you, without giving you the theory. The NATURAL WEIGHT-LOSS SYSTEM is based on scientific laws, which you have been clearly experiencing, headache by headache, coated tongue by coated tongue. Please read all the Lessons and Number Two in particular, which describes your toxemic condition. The more toxic the body, the more prompt and dramatic the detoxification symptoms when the body skips a meal and/or follows a cleansing dietary. Missing a meal will not cause a headache or coat the tongue; but it will cause an increase in toxic blood levels as the body moves accumulated waste out of the cells and into the bloodstream for elimination. The morning fast and fruit meals provide "housecleaning" conditions on the cellular level; and as the "garbage" leaves the system, you feel sick. Of course, reversion to steak and eggs first thing in the morning will halt this cleansing! Please study, also, Lessons 5 and 6 on the objections to the Standard American Diet and finally, Lessons 12 and 13 on Detoxification and Fasting. You will find that the NATURAL WEIGHT-LOSS SYSTEM is much more than a way to lose a few pounds . . . it is a program to detoxify the body and to feel better than you ever have! For you to receive these benefits, it appears you must be willing to live through a few headaches and taste the coated tongue for a few days. On the other side of this hill however, awaits a valley—free from the shadows of death indeed, it is a valley of green pastures and feeling good.

Don't Stop Yet!
Victoria Bidwell