



Overweight? Blame it on Mom.

It is important sometimes to ask why you eat the way you do. The most surprising answer to that is "**Mom made me do it.**"

Mom may have made you do it. But, your Mom is not a villain, of course. Nor was she on a warpath to destroy your happiness. Or make you overweight. Quite the contrary. She would be mortified by the mere suggestion.

Your Mom saw her job as passing on the dietary wisdom of her mother, and her grandmother, while improving on them by starting some new family eating habits of her own. And surely she based those "new traditions" on the "new science" she knew that her mother didn't.



Moms do that. That is their job. But that is not to say Mom was always right. You also know that. But what you may be only dimly aware of is that **Mom's most indelible food lessons were not "taught" to you. They were "caught."**

It's just like Mom passing on her cold to you, although she didn't realize you were catching it from her. Nor did she intend it. Nevertheless, you caught a cold from her. She sneezed. Later, you sneezed.

HOW you eat. WHAT you eat. What you DON'T eat. WHEN you eat. These are all "CAUGHT" things.

Mom could preach all she wanted about healthy eating habits, but most likely you now eat like her, healthy or not. **You followed what she did, not what she said.**

Now, I'm not saying you like and eat the same foods as Mom. Perhaps you do, perhaps you don't. No, the real mirror image of your Mom is in your attitude to food. I'll give you some examples:

- Do you feel compelled to eat just about everything that's put on you plate, even today?
- Do you pick at your food?
- Or push it around with your fork while you're thinking of something else?
- Or eat absent-mindedly, especially when watching TV (or reading your phone)?
- Do you tend to skip meals to lose weight?
- Do diet drinks and diet food find a regular place on your family table?
- Or eat when you are tired, or depressed, or upset, or discouraged?
- Or reward yourself with a sweet or fattening treat? (Especially late at night?)



Photo: Courtesy Getty Images

In each of these cases you are either now following her pattern. Or, as likely in some cases, you were rebelling against “her way,” so you developed your own way.

She didn't tell you to do any of these things. But if you remember carefully, you'll pick up the clues to how you “caught” the food habits you have now (likely a lot of them) early on in your young life.

And they are persistent habits, long after Mom has stopped being a major influence in your daily life.

If you are a woman, you get most of your eating habits from your Mom...and the rest of them in reaction to her's. The sooner you can see that, the sooner you will be on the road to healthy eating... and less weight.

Mom Made Me Do It.

The other night I was at a self-serve restaurant with family friends. It was a bit late and the regular restaurants were all closed. We had just gotten out of a movie, and we were famished. So we loaded our plates (only the healthiest of options, of course) and began to eat.

I wasn't half way through the plate when I began feeling full. A few bites later, I was stuffed. Still I kept forking it in. I was seeing more and more plate, and less and less food covering it.

How stupid was I? I wasn't hungry. Still I ate. And ate some more. Then I realized, “Mom made me do it.”

We didn't always have the most abundant or elegant food on the table when I was young. But my Mom's rule was, “If you put it on your plate, eat it all. Or don't put it on your plate in the first place.”

I definitely joined the clean-plate-club at an early age. I'm still a card-carrying member. Our family mantra: “Remember all the starving children in China!” (Do you have a similar story?)

Knowing I don't have to eat everything on my plate TODAY – knowing I SHOULDN'T – hasn't stopped me from eating more than I should. **I eat just because there is food on my plate.** I'm not stupid, so how can this be?

Have you ever felt that way about eating – feel compelled by a mysterious force to eat in ways, or certain foods, that you know are not best for you?

Perhaps Mom is at fault. But, that doesn't solve anything does it?

The key understanding about food is freeing yourself from these hidden, powerful compulsions.

You free yourself of those compulsions by first understanding they are there (whether or not you “caught” them from Mom). Next, by choosing and consistently using replacement, more healthful habits.

To develop healthier eating habits, you **MUST** first be mindful.

You have to make yourself aware of WHY you are eating, HOW you are eating, and WHEN you are eating... even the SPEED at which you are forking it in.

Once you start that process, you will uncover layers of strangely self-defeating eating behaviors, lurking just below the surface of the most obvious ones.

The difficulty is that “NOTICING YOUR EATING PROCESS” is not an easy task. It is not a fully rational task. **You can't just talk yourself out of a silent, compelling behavior of**



which you are dimly aware. But you can flag it, so that when it happens, you can give yourself a pause, and take the quick action needed to change your behaviors.

You Need a Robust Diet of Ideas.

It's sort of like a diet. **But this is not a diet about food. It is a diet of ideas and "caught things."** You need to eliminate the "caught things" – behaviors, ideas – that push your hunger and your cravings outside of your conscious control.

What I have learned to do is to be aware – of what I eat, when I eat it, how I eat, and what I don't eat. **These "caught things" could destroy my best of intentions if I didn't bring them out of the darkness of unquestioned habits.**

Does any of this resonate with you? Have you ever felt food compulsions in any way?

You see, it is easy to blame your lack of healthy eating on Mom, especially when she's not around to defend herself. And it's easy to extend that blame onto your excess weight.

But, if you are looking for a solution, look in the mirror. **You really do know most of what you need to know to curb your appetite and lose weight.** One of your first key tasks is for you to discover the hidden "caught" things that constantly defeat you. Then implement a way of consistently doing right things that are more healthy.

And you need to do them NOW.

Why now? Because it is the Mom in YOU that is passing on YOUR "caught things" to your kids and grandkids.

Is that what you want?



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HEART PLAN – WEIGHT LOSS SUCCESS Begins in Your Heart

– Boyd Jentsch

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