

Love of Food

by Chris Dixon, M.Ed.

“America is one of the only countries in the world where people go hunting on a full stomach.”

-Chris Rock (comedian)

Recently, I posted a report from the American College of Sports Medicine titled [“Body Weight and Waist Circumference Trending Upward in Americans.”](#) I started thinking about possible causes of this phenomenon. Research suggests most individuals don’t get enough physical activity to maintain health or lose weight. The lack of exercise is a problem but the bigger problem is food culture in America.

“Foodie” culture is taking over society and we are simultaneously getting larger and fatter along with it. I define foodie culture as a constant preoccupation, deliberation and consciousness surrounding food and eating. A while back a woman tried to explain to me what being a foodie was about. She used words like cuisine, palette, cultures, variety, experience, taste, etc. At the end of her explanation I came to one conclusion, she liked to eat. Not to

say that enjoying eating is a problem, but there is clearly a difference in people who identify as foodies.

I remember a pivotal conversation I had once with a client who gave me insight into the mind of a foodie. This particular individual began to explain what he loved about food. As I listened to him speak it was clear he had excitement in his voice, his posture was more upright, and his eyes widened. This was a man who was discussing his passion. At that moment he said something I have never forgotten, *“You eat to live, I live to eat.”* Think about living to eat. Think of the intense enjoyment one must get from eating when you live to eat. This again isn’t necessary wrong but one has to consider if living to eat is a help or hinderance to health, specifically weight management.

One of the biggest challenges is the lack of control one has when a majority of meals are prepared by someone else. Most restaurants are good about providing information on their ingredients but you may not

always know how the food was prepared. For example, what's the difference between cooking a hamburger in a pan versus it being flame-broiled? When someone prepares your meals, you give up control. Typically, people become successful in the attainment of health/fitness goals as they take more control of their nutrition. These folks go from eating out a majority of meals to cooking at home more often.

I must say I do enjoy eating at a nice restaurant from time to time. It's

great to eat something (someone else prepared) and enjoy a cool ambiance, the convenience and taste of a great meal. It's important as we enjoy food we continue to focus on our health. Eating to live is a lifestyle. For long-term health & fitness success make sure your lifestyle gives you the best chance to be healthy.

