

The Fat Effect

There's an advertisement put out by the anti-smoking campaigners which reads, "Smoking keeps on giving." It shows a man smoking and the smoke drifting past four other persons. The idea is to show how second-hand smoke affects those around us.

Imagine if weight loss centers used this scheme to convict the obese population to stop overeating and lose weight. But come on, how can an overweight person affect another's health? Besides your badonkadonk butt bumping a friend off the sidewalk and into on-coming traffic, or squashing someone to death by sitting on them, there doesn't seem to be any legitimate, empirical evidence proving obesity harms other people.

But it does harm others--especially our children. When our kids see us overeating or indulging in unhealthy eating habits and leading sedentary lifestyles, what do you think they will do? Kids copy their role models, and parents are a child's greatest role model.

They also suffer emotional pain from our obesity. What child hasn't been laughed at for being fat, or for having a relative who is fat? If parents are the pride of their children (Proverbs 17:6), what happens to those children when they have parents they can't be proud of? How can they hold their heads high when their hearts are low?

We parents love our children and we'll do anything to help them, to protect them. But are we willing to help ourselves in order to be better parents? To protect them from words, which hurt more than sticks and stones, by changing our lifestyles?

The person we should first lose weight for is ourselves, but our kids are a very close second. If we don't want them to suffer as we have, we owe it to them to be the role models they can really look up to, ones who accomplish the sometimes seemingly impossible and teach them, by word and by action, that they can accomplish anything, too.