

## Why Do We Eat

Why do we eat? Dumb question, right? Of course, we eat so we don't die of starvation. We eat to live. But if we're honest with ourselves, we eat for other reasons, reasons which contribute to our wide girths.

We eat because we're bored. We eat out of compulsion stemming from emotional distress. We also eat when we're not hungry. We eat because we're at a restaurant with friends and they pressure us to join them in a meal. We eat because Aunt Gertie gets offended if you don't try a piece of her chocolate cake. We eat and eat and eat and eat—and don't need to.

Some people use their weight as a weapon or defense mechanism. We say, "If I'm fat, no one will notice me." This is not uncommon for adults who have experienced sexual abuse in childhood (20% of obese people are survivors of sexual abuse, while only 6% of thin people are). Binge Eating Disorder is 3-4 times more common in obese people with a history of child sexual abuse. Comfort eating becomes a way to manage the emotional pain and depression of abuse.

No matter the source of our emotional excuse for over-eating, we must stop and take charge of our will. Weight loss is as much a battle of the heart and mind as it is a resolve of the will to deny our appetites of the wrong foods and amount of food and replace them with the right ones.

There are many companies and organizations and books and plans out there to help you shed those pounds, but it is you alone who will ultimately decide if you will lose weight or not.

Ask yourself, "Why do I eat?" and then tip the scales in your favor by replying, "Because I can—but I don't have to."