

insight

The Food Issue

Food for thought about all you can eat in Brighton



The Go! Team
Brighton's off-the-wall band returns

Steven Berkoff
The maverick actor lets off steam



Most of my friends think I'm lucky. They think that I can eat what I want and I don't put on weight. They've met my Dad who's as thin as a rake and they think I must have inherited his magic stay slim genes. They are right to some degree but what they don't know is that ever since I started my nutrition training, now over 10 years ago, I've been religiously following a few basic dietary ground rules that have proved to be timelessly effective at helping me maintain my figure.

Over the last year, however, I have for the first time found that my weight-loss protocol was severely challenged as I struggled to shift a very stubborn final stone of post-pregnancy blubber. During this time I flirted with the emotional ups and downs that accompany long haul dieting. Since most of my clients come to me for weight loss all I had to do was swallow my own medicine and hey presto I'm back to my pre-pregnancy and very comfortable healthy BMI.

My secret to successful dieting is to make it personal. We become overweight for many different reasons. Dietary, lifestyle, emotional and psychological aspects all have an equal part to play. Sure, getting your diet and exercise routine right is a fantastic foundation but if you hit a plateau then it's time to investigate other factors. Feelings of fear, holding, boredom, punishment, protection, abuse, addiction, control and inadequacy can all trigger dysfunctional eating. To unlock your weight you need to acknowledge your emotional

patterns and understand how these interplay with your eating habits.

Yes, my nutrition knowledge and clinical experience made it easy for me to get the dietary and lifestyle factors right for my body type and metabolism. But what I discovered about myself was that the most difficult part of getting rid of that extra stone was breaking an emotional pattern.

Since having a baby I had developed this belief that because I was now a mother I had to concentrate on making good food for my son before concentrating on myself. I was devastated to discover that I'd developed 'you come first' syndrome, something that I'd been accusing my own mother of for years! I would suddenly find that it was way past lunchtime before I had eaten anything. I would be starving and consume anything close by, regardless of its nutritional value. The long periods of no food were lowering my metabolism and then I was often eating high calorie foods, a double disaster for weight loss.

By constantly and consistently reminding myself that my needs were as equally as important as my sons, I started to break down my belief and crack the pattern that I was getting into. Slowly, steadily and surely my weight dropped and by following my basic ground rules for healthy eating I'm confident it's going to stay off.

Words | Susie Perry

Details | Susie Perry specialises in weight loss and female health. For advice or to book an appointment, call 01273 239431 or email susie@smartrnutrition.co.uk

Nutritional therapy

It takes three years to train as a nutritional therapist, with a diploma from a registered private college or a degree from the University of Westminster. Both routes have the same professional outcome.

A good nutritional therapist will get you to complete a health questionnaire and food diary. Your first session should be about 60 minutes with questions about your health history and eating habits, an explanation as to why you experience certain symptoms or health conditions and finally an action plan that gives you dietary and lifestyle suggestions to help alleviate your symptoms.

Nutritional therapists are trained to do numerous clinical tests like food allergy, hormone analysis and stool tests plus give advice on beneficial nutritional supplements. You can expect to pay €45-125 in the Brighton area.

The result should be that you understand how you can use different foods to achieve a better state of health and longevity. To find one, contact the British Association of Nutritional Therapists at www.bant.org.uk