

“THE OPPOSITE DIET”

from

THE ART OF OVEREATING

(a different kind of diet book...)

THE ART OF OVEREATING by Leslie Landis, MFT, is a humorous take on America’s calorie-obsessed culture. It is entertaining and funny.

From author Leslie Landis:

The Art Of Overeating takes overeating to an exaggerated and absurd level. That allows everyone – including those with weight concerns – to have a laugh. However, humor is nothing if not looking inward. With my book, I use humor to help us take an inward peek.

As a clinical psychologist who has worked with overeaters and as a person who lives with an overeater – my husband – I know that most people want to eat less and eat healthier, but it is a struggle for them. They need and want good advice and creative tips.

Really, THE ART OF OVEREATING is a diet book, but a different kind of diet book. It doesn’t browbeat people or make them feel guilty. I like to say that if you want to lose weight, do the opposite of everything in my book. With that in mind, my first advice is not to change what you eat, but rather to change how you eat.

My book says:

1. “Leave no leftovers in restaurant.”
OPPOSITE DIET Advice: Ask the waiter to divide whatever you have ordered in half and put one of those halves in a doggie bag before you are served. That way, there will be leftovers for the next day. Most people think they will take home whatever is left over, but then end up finishing everything. You don’t have to worry about not having enough to eat when they prepare the doggie bag *before* dinner, because most restaurants provide humongous portions.
2. “Never share.”
OPPOSITE DIET Advice: Always share. Whenever possible, split a meal with your dinner companion. It is worth the “split” charge and will save you money and your waist.
3. “Order from every category on a menu.”
OPPOSITE DIET Advice: Keep in mind that restaurants have all those categories—and have added even more—the bread, the starter, the appetizer, the first course, the second course, etc. This is to get you to order (and eat) more. Keep it to 3 dishes: an appetizer or salad, a main course (with no sides) and a dessert where you can ask to leave off the extra

scoop of ice cream or dollop of whipped cream. Another good tactic is order an appetizer for your main course. Again, most restaurants serve large appetizer portions.

4. "Save the environment and eat everything you order."
OPPOSITE DIET Advice: You will help save the environment if you order and eat just what you need. All the excess food has a carbon footprint.
5. "Always clean your plate."
OPPOSITE DIET Advice: In spite of what you were told when you were growing up, you don't have to clean your plate. That's where a dog comes in handy.
6. "Anytime is a good time to eat."
OPPOSITE DIET Advice: Have three set times to eat during the day. This will train your stomach to feel hunger at those times. Eating only when you are hungry—and eating just enough to feel satisfied—is the goal. It is okay to have small snacks in between.
7. "Food is love." "Emotional eating." "Reward yourself."
OPPOSITE DIET Advice: All these topics use the idea of food as a substitute for love, as a salve for unhappiness, and as a reward for difficulties. Instead, make a list of other things that give you joy and pleasure. Then do those things instead. The list is endless and personal—going to a movie, getting together with friends or family, helping others, playing with your children, petting your cat, throwing the ball for your dog.
8. "Avoid the produce department in the supermarket."
OPPOSITE DIET Advice: The first place you want to go in the supermarket is the produce area. That is where to spend a lot of time and a large share of your budget. Then, you will have less time and money for unhealthy and fattening foods. And, always make a list of what you need to buy so you don't end up going through every single aisle where temptation might get you.
9. "Hide food for future nibbles."
OPPOSITE DIET Advice: This idea applies more to women than to men. Men don't seem to mind eating gargantuan amounts of food in front of others, but women are more likely to overeat when no one is looking. So, it is best to eat with others as much as possible. When that is not possible, create an imaginary friend—even out of cardboard—to sit opposite you. Who would want George Clooney, even a cardboard one, to see them pig out!
10. "You can't be addicted to food."
OPPOSITE DIET Advice: Actually, you can. Don't be a victim of the food industry's air-brushed food ads and restaurants with huge portions. Keep in mind that we need to eat and it is great to enjoy eating—in the amounts your body needs.
11. "In case there is no tomorrow, eat everything you can today."
OPPOSITE DIET Advice: If you eat everything you can today, there may be no tomorrow for you!

Also, I'd like to let everyone know that I am actually a small person, 5'3" and 107 pounds. So, the first thing that people ask is "Why did I write this book?" My answer is that I was inspired by my husband, Martin, who is a world-class overeater. I have great stories to share about his overeating exploits:

- Once, we went on a cruise with my parents. Every night, Martin ordered and ate all five of the available entrees. Finally, my dad—who worried about how Martin's overeating would affect his health—asked him to please just have one dish. Martin agreed. Unbeknownst to us, he spoke to the waiter before dinner that evening. When we sat down to eat, the waiter brought Martin all five entrees—on one very large dish.
- Martin once asked me to help him lose weight by telling him when I thought he was eating too much. The next time we went out to eat, he ordered, as usual, two dinners. I pointed this out to him, but he argued that it was okay because he was not going to eat all the vegetables.
- Martin looks in the refrigerator every five minutes. I asked him why he does that since there is no more food in there than five minutes before. He said he just likes to look!
- The supermarket is Martin's favorite store. He loves to go grocery shopping. He piles his cart high with food. No paper towels or laundry detergent for him. When he is finished, he always tells me that he has enough food to last for the whole week. By the next day, he has eaten everything.
- I am forced to put my name on certain foods or they won't be there when I want to eat them. Living with Martin is like living with an office staff.
- I constantly give Martin articles about the right way to eat and how doing so will increase his life span. I'm always reading food labels to him. Sometimes, I throw out the unhealthy food he bought and tell him it went bad. Nothing I do deters him, though. One time, I put scary words—death, insanity, sugar shock—on candy bars he'd just gotten. I found a pile of candy wrappers, with the words still stuck on them, all around his TV chair.

So, therefore, OPPOSITE DIET Advice would be to do exactly what Martin does not—and follow the opposite of everything in THE ART OF OVEREATING—my different kind of diet book!

Enjoy AND stay healthy,

**Leslie Landis
MFT**