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**The Dangers of Crash Dieting**

The ads are everywhere and range from silly to outrageous: a new miracle berry has been discovered; just one pill a day and eat all you want and still lose weight, detox yourself, eat only certain fat-burning foods and watch your waist shrink. Americans are fascinated by miracle diets & instant solutions for weight loss and spend billions of dollars on products touting false claims yearly.

Unfortunately many of us fall prey to these claims wanting to believe that we really can lose 10 pounds in two weeks and be magically transformed into the body type of our fantasies. (Conversely, it may be the opposite for some, taking some kind of supplement resulting in a dramatic increase of muscle mass). These products claims’ lure us to ignore two major realities: 1. Even if you could pull that kind of dramatic change, it would be detrimental to your health and 2. The idea that you won’t magically gain self-esteem and confidence as a result of a changed body. Think about it, even if you do gain a little confidence, it would be lost as you would have to question if people like you for you or for your body.

Part of the treachery of crash diets is that usually during the first week or two you can lose a significant amount of weight. This is often due to the loss of “water weight.” When your body has fewer calories it forces itself to burn glycogen, the carbohydrate fuel stored in your cells for “emergencies” like running away from a saber tooth tiger or to class. All of those glycogen molecules are bonded to many water molecules. If you lose the glycogen, you lose the water. Your body will also respond by lowering your metabolism, meaning that your body will adapt to functioning with fewer calories. As a result, it makes it easier for you to gain weight since your body now knows how to get by with fewer calories. Returning to normal eating patterns will result in an excess of calories and this lowered metabolism could last for months or even years. The term “yo yo dieting” is used to describe this cycle of restrictive eating resulting in weight loss followed by weight gain.

The effects of crash dieting include unhealthy preoccupation with food and extreme cravings. This can also cause mental health issues like feeling more irritable or depressed. Experience with crash dieting can also lead to other eating disorders, such as bulimia or anorexia. Restricting calories also often results in a restriction of vital nutrients. Just because a diet drink may say it has all the vitamins you need doesn’t mean that they are in the form that are best used by your body.

While it may not seem as enticing to lose weight through healthier eating patterns and physical exercise, it is the option that offers the best long-term results. Aiming to drop just one to two pounds a week only means cutting a few hundred calories a day—that’s like trading in one soda for a water or one dessert for a piece of fruit. Don’t think of your weight loss goals as a “diet.” Aim instead to live a healthier lifestyle.

**Nature Deficit Disorder**

Nature Deficit Disorder is a term coined by Richard Louv in his best-selling book “Last Child in the Woods.” Louv’s book explores the trend that children are spending less time outdoors in unstructured play (e.g., playing with mud and rocks versus playing organized sports). While this “disorder” is not recognized by any major psychological or medical groups, it has garnered a lot of attention from the media.

Louv theorizes that our brains are still hard-wired for a nature-oriented existence, and we are still not ready for the over-stimulating, multi-electronic device lifestyle that we’ve created. He believes that while some children adapt to this environment, others don’t, and this results in attention problems, obesity, anxiety and depression.

Louv is a journalist with no medical or psychological training, but his theory has stimulated other researchers to begin investigating. Certainly the increase in sedentary activities is not good for humans. A study at the University of Illinois found that children with ADD & ADHD showed significantly reduced symptoms following after-school activities or weekend activities in green outdoor settings. Many of you know firsthand the restorative effects on your mental health that a walk in the woods or gazing at a beautiful starry sky can provide.

Need some ideas for counteracting your own Nature Deficit Disorder?
1. Learn about the plants native to this area. Can you identify a maple? An oak? Differentiate between a white pine & a red pine?
2. Take a walk (maybe even up to college camp) for the sole purpose of just enjoying nature.
3. Explore the wildlife that resides at the Hunt Union pond, there’s a lot more than just coy. (Although a nice afternoon can be spent just watching them, too).
4. Learn the names of clouds and what they mean. You get to add great words to your vocabulary like “cumulonimbus” and “lenticularis.”
5. Encourage the young people in your life to explore nature; take younger siblings, nieces & nephews outside. You might just find their enthusiasm infectious.
Fast Facts: Organ Donation

Organ donation allows healthy organs and tissues from one person to be transplanted into another person. Organs from one donor can save or help as many as 50 other people.

Success rates for organ transplants average 80-90%.

Every day in the United States, an average of 18 people die while awaiting organ donation due to a shortage of donors.

The buying and selling of organs and tissues is illegal, as part of the National Organ Transplant Act (Public Law 98-507).

Organs are distributed based upon medical information like blood type, body size, and tissue type matching through a national computer network operated by the United Network for Organ Sharing (UNOS). It is illegal to distribute organs based on non-medical information such as wealth, citizenship, or celebrity status. Tissue is distributed based upon patient need, availability, and medical criteria.

While most donations occur after the donor has died, some organs can be donated while the donor is alive.

The organs you can donate include: kidneys, heart, liver, pancreas, intestines, lungs, skin, bone & bone marrow, cornea.

People of all ages and backgrounds can be organ donors. If you are under 18 your parent or guardian must give permission for you to become a donor.

Donation can only occur after the death of a patient has been declared by physicians who are not affiliated with the transplant team.

Most religions support organ & tissue donation as a charitable act of love and giving.

Organ donation does not interfere with funeral arrangements. Open casket services are possible.

You can sign up to donate your organs by going to www.donatelifeny.org and going to the link for the registry.

Positive Party Tips

1. Be safe, have a plan that includes how to get home.
2. Alternate alcoholic & non-alcoholic drinks.
3. Don't drink on an empty stomach.
4. Drink water before, during and after consuming alcohol.
5. Set a limit (no more than 1 drink per hour) and count your drinks (mixed drinks may be equal to 2 or more drinks).
6. Remember, most people overestimate how much other people are drinking.
7. Keep an eye on your drink.
8. Avoid drinking games—the rapid intake of alcohol is dangerous.
9. Don't drink to cope. Alcohol makes your body more stressed and less able to deal with what is already stressing you.
10. Remember, it's always OK not to drink.

Potty Press Word Search How many words from this issue of The Potty Press can you find below? There are 18.

Q Y I Y J U C E B B L A D D C C O V E W T X F O Y M O T E A T F K C V
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