

Is obesity really an illness or just lack of discipline

Why does everything have to be an illness? That's the question that badly needs answering. The latest "illness," the experts will have us believe, is obesity. That's the condition that makes us look like we don't want to look. But you know what, we look like we look because that's how we choose to look. Plain and simple. (Granted, there are exceptions.) Why is it that each of us is not anymore held accountable for what we stuff into our mouths for the simple reason we love to eat — be it junk food or foods less junky than junk food? It's called *discipline*. There are healthy ways to satisfy the cringe. But unfortunately it just seems like in this day and age of the fast food crowd *discipline* has been tossed overboard at the expense of health. This newspaper publisher used to be fat. Chunky. Overweight. Troubled with attempts at exercising. Even walking used to be a chore. That was then, this is now. *Discipline* can be tough, but it's worth every pound of the effort. Maybe it's none of our business how each of us looks at life and all it has to offer. Maybe. But when the experts continue to drive home the point that obesity, for most part, is an illness (instead of a chosen path), and advocate for Medicare and other insurance carriers to pick up the bill, the balony becomes more ridiculous. Willpower at the table. Try it. Those who love you most will thank you most. Merry Christmas!

— Tom (TD) Drilling

Hated chart helps with weight

As we head from one holiday to another, it's time to review my diet. I've finished 15 weeks of the "eat-just-half-of-it" diet and it's working pretty well. My plan was to lose a pound a week.

I started at 172 pounds, with a goal of getting down to 150. Then Steve, my ever lovin' (I'll get him for this) husband, said that if I kept it up for a year at a pound a week, I could get back down to 120 pounds, just what I weighed when I got my driver's license at 16.

Ah, the lure of youth. I would love to be 120 pounds again. I haven't been 120 pounds since my freshman year in college.

There was another lure. Since I'm trying to lose weight, I tend to read anything about that subject. Pick up any woman's magazine, and there will always be an article about losing weight.

The first one I found gave me a body mass index chart. The chart gives pounds on the top and height on the side. On the grid are numbers starting with 16, for those folks who are 6-foot, 6-inches tall and weigh 120 pounds, and go up to 60, for those who are 4-6 and weigh 250.

At 5-1.5 and 172 pounds, I was a 31. According to the chart, that's obese.

I hate that chart.

After 15 weeks of dieting, I'm down to 153. That means I've lost 19 pounds, about 1.25 pounds a week. I would have been down more, but while I didn't gain any weight over Thanksgiving, I didn't

Open Season

Cynthia Haynes



lose any either. According to the chart, I am now a 28 and am merely overweight. I hate that chart.

According to the chart if and when I get down to 120 pounds, I'll be a 23, and that is a healthy weight. Whoopee, only 33 pounds and five numbers to go.

Actually, the diet has been pretty easy. I now eat half a bagel with half a glass of orange juice in the morning. At lunch and supper, I eat all my vegetables but only half the main course. I try to avoid potato chips, french fries, candy, snack crackers and desserts. This doesn't mean that I don't have an occasional bite of dessert, but I'm really firm on the potato chips. I love chips, and if I start, I won't stop.

I've always asked for a doggie bag at restaurants and eat the second half of my meal for lunch later in the week.

The biggest dangers to this diet are the buffet and the potluck. You always take too much at a buffet, and it's not considered good form to ask for a doggie bag. At a potluck, there is soooooo much food and it all looks sooooo good that you want to taste a little of everything, which loads

your plate and expands your waist. Thanksgiving wasn't too bad, but then I ate leftover potatoes, gravy and dressing for three more meals. Not good, according to 'the chart.' I hate that chart — which is probably why I have it on my refrigerator door. After I'm a 23, it goes on the dart board.

A mother's strength, dignity live on

Editor's note: This column was written the day before Mrs. Woodyard's mother, Alice Foley, died. It seemed a fitting tribute to print it.

Mother has always said, "Don't mourn me if I die quickly, mourn me if I linger."

I'm not sure where quickly and linger divide, but I think we are mourning.

Last Thursday in her usual determined manner she proclaimed, "I'm okay, just a little tired" and "No, I don't need to go

to the hospital."

But alas, in the evening she agreed with my brother, it was time to go.

But even in the agony of watching this gracious lady deteriorate there is good. I give thanks that I am not an only child. Duane and JoAnne and I are able to share our grief and concerns with one another because after all we have only one mother and no one else knows her as mother except my siblings and me.

I am grateful that she has made her wishes and desires clear. We haven't had to make many medical choices for her

because she has a living will and medical power of attorney on file at the hospital. Also she has made it clear to her doctor just what she wants and she told us what she wanted before anything happened.

And so, when we sat down together the choices had been made. Her doctor went on to prepare us as best she could on what to expect and then we ended with a prayer.

I am grateful for a local hospital where many have known my mother all their lives.

I am grateful for Georgia's loving dialog with "Miss Alice" as she prepares her pain medicine. Her own mother was one of my mother's first students.

But most of all I am grateful for my mother.

She truly has been the matriarch of this family, a role she has taken very seriously. Even in her dying she evokes great dignity and we draw strength from her.

May God grant her peace and us courage. Amen

Phase II Mary Kay Woodyard



Cheaper rooms have better wireless

There must be a rule in the hotel business that the more you pay for a room, the more they stick you for extras, especially Internet service.

As you drive the Interstates today, the \$50, \$60 and \$70 hotels are draped with "free wireless Internet" signs. If you have occasion to stay at more expensive hotels, chances are they'll charge you for Internet, and it won't be cheap.

Part of the problem may be that "better" hotels got into the high-speed connections earlier, when they were expensive to install.

Also, these are the same hotels which are used to soaking people 50 cents to \$1 for a phone call.

We've stayed at convention hotels where they had wired the whole place for DSL (digital subscriber line) service, then charged \$10 through a third-party service to get on the Web.

That's a common price for "broadband," \$9.95 for a day. It may not sound bad until you figure you can buy a cable or DSL connection at home for as little as \$29.95 per month.

It doesn't take much figuring to see that someone is raking it in. Most of these ho-

On the Prairie Dog Steve Haynes



tels now are stuck with contracts with their providers, though. Many are installing free wireless "hot spots" in the lobby to deflect criticism, but customers can't be to happy about it.

In two trips to Kansas City and beyond last week, staying in four hotels — and boy am I tired of that — we found free wireless in most. One, admittedly, hadn't figured out how to make the system work yet. A clerk said she thought they were missing a card or something for their server.

The worst service, and the most expensive, was at the fancy Fairmount in Kansas City, where the fee was \$14.95 for a day. I used the hotspot in the lobby the next day.

That wasn't a bad idea, I guess, since I

met several women who stopped to admire my laptop.

"Oh, I've never seen one that small," one cooed.

I had no idea.

Wireless cards have revolutionized computing. Most new laptops come with a wireless card, or at least a spot to put one in. Open your computer, and generally, you'll connect to the Internet.

People are putting wireless networks in their homes and offices. Speeds can be as fast or faster than wired connections, and you can use a printer or server hooked up to the base station.

If you put your antenna up high enough, your neighbors might be able to hook on to your system. You hear about people parking at the curb and surfing the Web, or cruising neighborhoods in search of a "hotspot."

My brother, in fact, has a security net on his wireless system to keep freeloaders out. He had to authorize me to enter his network. I haven't gotten his bill yet, but he was eyeing my credit card.

I'm intrigued, especially if I can convince the neighbors to pay me \$9.95 a day to use my system. Hum.

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