

# Confessions of a Big, Beautiful Woman

## Real Talk About How to Get Control and Still be Yourself

By Judi Burton



I'm a heavy girl with a pretty face, as I've always been. A lot of you reading this can relate. I have never had the opportunity to know what it feels like to be a "healthy weight" for my size. As a child it was called "baby fat." When I was a teenager it was called "filling out." Now, I'm 32 and there are no more excuses for my size. I am overweight.

Many people have this impression that if you are overweight you are lazy. You must have bad willpower or something. You are weak. You are a second-class citizen. We are even separated from the other normal-sized people in the clothing stores with a huge, embarrassing sign looming over our heads titled, "plus size."

The thing is, most of us heavy girls are stronger and have twice the willpower of many of the other "skinny girls," but we have been through more diets and have



sweated way more to lose pounds than the naturally high metabolism Queens who haven't even lifted a finger. We

carry twice, sometimes three times their body weight, every day; and we do it with our heads held high. Yet every day, we still look longingly at a lithe, small-waisted woman, or slyly compare ourselves to a larger version of us, and we forget how awesome we really are. We fiercely negotiate with ourselves over the smallest piece of chocolate or a second helping of holiday food and then moan over our own indulgences later. We try hard all of the time. We are human.

Easy-to-Understand Tips: These tricks are things I've learned from nutritionists and weight-loss professionals while gathering information for other articles. They have served me well when I have actually paid attention to them. I am by no means a success story. I am a work in progress, and still working at it every day. These tricks have helped me out a lot in my battles with myself.

### Exercise in the Morning.

Not only is it nice to get your exercise done early, according to Cedric X. Bryant, PhD, chief exercise physiologist of



the American Council on Exercise, it positively affects your sleep which can help balance the hormones that control your appetite. The trick is doing it every day. "Think of your morning exercise like a business appointment—one you can't easily cancel," says Gary Foster, PhD, clinical director of the weight and eating disorders program at the University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine.

### Don't Buy Your Breakfast.

If there is one big rule, it is make your own food. Diners, bakeries, gas stations and for heaven's sake, drive-through fast-food places, are selling to your taste buds, not your health. If you make your own breakfast, you are far less likely to end up with something looking like a Denny's Grand Slam.



## Cut Your Portions in Half.

Chances are your portions are just too big. American portions have been steadily rising for the past 25 years. The trick is to shrink your stomach by eating smaller amounts. It's very hard to measure what is the right portion size, but Dr. Erol Lale, of Myrtle Beach, suggests you should stop eating before you are full. This is not fun at first, but after a few days, your stomach gives up and starts retreating. The upside is you get to eat more often. Visually it's easier if you always eat from a small dish.

## Eat More Raw Snacks.

Denying yourself when you are hungry? That's crazy. You will just get more hungry and irritable and binge later. Huge meals slow down your metabolism and make you work harder at burning calories. Wild animals don't have obesity problems. This is because they graze on raw food all day. Have you ever seen a fat zebra? Raw food is nutrient dense and will keep you energized longer.



## Drink Water.

If you drink two cups of water 30 minutes before a meal you will eat about 75 fewer calories—or 13 percent less than you would have—according to the *Journal of the American Dietetic Association*. Get a water bottle with a filter on the cap that is eco friendly and will help you be sure you have pure water with you. Body Glove has one that removes 99.99 percent of all harmful contaminants. At the gas station, bypass the expensive sodas and head straight to a sink to get free tap water



**Emma Ware** is a nutritionist and has seminars and healthy cooking classes all over the Grand Strand. **For more info, call 843-997-7037 and visit [ItsNotaDiet.net](http://ItsNotaDiet.net).**

**Mike Oglesbee** is a hypnotherapist who will work with your subconscious and help you overcome cravings and other weight-related issues. **For more info, call 843-957-6926.**

**Dr. Sattelle's Rapid Weight Loss** is a physician-directed weight-loss program that allows you to safely lose 10-30 pounds a month eating real food. **For more info, call 843-491-4050 and visit [RapidWeightLossCenters.com](http://RapidWeightLossCenters.com).**

**Zen Jen Acupuncture** helps balance the body to reduce stress and control cravings. **For more info, call 720-203-2933 and visit [ZenJenAcupuncture.com](http://ZenJenAcupuncture.com).**

**Dr. Erol Lale** is a cardiologist in Myrtle Beach who works with people who are overweight with concerns about heart condition. **For more info, call 843-293-2700.**

**Linda Sacchetti** is a personal wellness coach and offers a free metabolism test to gauge what you need to work on. **For more info, call 843-651-9350.**

**Long Bay Rehab** helps individuals who have joint and muscular problems and cannot exercise easily. **For more info, call 843-293-5610 or visit [longBayRehab.com](http://longBayRehab.com).**

**Heidi McGovern** helps people who have weak and brittle bones get moving again through gentle techniques. **For more info, call 843-361-8436 or visit [HeidiMcGovern.com](http://HeidiMcGovern.com).**

**Dr. Melody Iles** is a naturapathic practitioner who can look at your nails, tongue and eyes to distinguish the health of your organs. Then she prescribes you herbs, food and supplements to help place your body into a state of healing. **For more info, call 843-446-0293 and visit [SCWellness.net](http://SCWellness.net).**

**Alternative Health Clinic** is an alternative health and wellness group where Dr Dong and her associates can arrange a program for proper weight and ideal health. **Call 843-692-9243 and visit [AlternativeHealthClinicMB.com](http://AlternativeHealthClinicMB.com).**

**B Balanced** is a wellness studio that offers an array of different weight-loss techniques such as personal training, nutrition, Zumba and boot camp. **For more info, call 843-833-1998 and visit [BBalancedLLC.com](http://BBalancedLLC.com).**

## Cleansing and Detoxing Professionals

The following establishments offer cleansing alternatives such as ionic detox foot baths, nutritional supplements, slimming body wraps, colonic hydrotherapy, fat-burning tea and coffee, Electro-Lymphatic therapy, etc. (Not all offer every service listed above.)

**Modern Cleansing, in Socastee at 843-828-4665, [ModernCleansing.com](http://ModernCleansing.com).**

**Cleansing Power at the Beach, in NMB, 843-427-7263, [CleansingPowerAtTheBeach.com](http://CleansingPowerAtTheBeach.com).**

**Colonic and Wellness Care, in MB (at Alternative Health Clinic), 843-907-9355.**

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for your filter bottle. Fill it up and you have pure water instead of sugary-drink temptations, and it's cheaper. Check out the Body Glove water bottle ad on page 31.

### There's an App for That.

The best way to truly know what you are eating is by logging your food. Some of us are way too busy to figure out how many calories we just ate. If you have an iPhone, get the Lose It App. Other smart phones have the same or similar program. It's free, and it calculates your calories and tells you how many you have left for the day. It even factors in the calories you've burned during the day, and saves the food you eat on a list so you can easily select it again. You can set goals for yourself, and if you go over your calorie budget you can figure how much you should exercise to balance it out. It's not perfect, but it's really helpful.



### Read the Labels.

If you can't pronounce the ingredients, put it back on the shelf and walk away. A preservative's job is to preserve. But

what happens when the preservative reaches your fat cells? It does its job there, too. It preserves your fat. Emma Ware, a nutritionist in Myrtle Beach, concurs, "Preservatives harden your fat and make it harder to break down." Diet foods are loaded with them. Sodium is also a preservative. Compare salad dressings some day to see how much sodium is in the "Lite" version compared to the regular version. There is usually twice as much salt in the "Lite" version. If you reduce the salt and preservatives you give yourself a better opportunity to break down that fat when you exercise.

### The Cravings.

Yes, we have them, and they are our greatest enemy. Maybe it's marshmallows or gummy bears or Cheetos or Milky Ways. For me, it's Ben and Jerry's ice cream. It calls to me like a whisper, taunting and begging me to the frozen food section. It's a response to a hormonal imbalance. It is not because you have no willpower. Somewhere along the line your nutrition went downhill and your brain is sending signals for you to balance it out through sugar, which releases serotonin, the "feel good" hormone. Talk to a nutritionist about your cravings, and he or she may be able to help you with nutritional supplements. There are a lot of diet pills out there that do the same thing, but these are pumped full of



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chemicals and can be harmful to your body in the end.

*Don't Lose Weight for Vanity.*



My entire life I have been a heavy girl. Don't you think that if vanity was that big of a deal to me I would have lost all of this weight by now? The poster girls we stick on the refrigerator are just another way of putting ourselves down.

It is not a way to live your life. Those models in the magazines have been airbrushed and starved and plucked and prodded, primped and ridiculed like the rest of us, and that's worse, actually. Lose weight to be happy or healthy or because life demands it of you, not because you want to look like Heidi Klum.

*Keep Trying.*

The only way people succeed is by failing multiple times. It's part of the process. But you can't tell me, even after you've quit one particular diet, that you didn't come out of it with at least

a few new good habits. At least you're being proactive about it.

*Don't Let Other People Control Your Emotions.*

This one is, bar-none, the hardest one for me. It's so easy to allow a person to make you feel bad about yourself. The tears I have spilled because someone called me a name or shot a glance at my gut, is incalculable. I am still just now trying to grasp this new idea. I'm sure Deepak Chopra can say it better, but you can be in control of how you feel at all times. Once you give up that control to others you become a slave to what other people think of you. We've been programmed our entire lives to worry about the opinions of others. It's great to listen to what other people say, especially if they are being supportive, but we women often twist these words in our minds to cause ourselves unnecessary anxiety. Stress creates cortisol, which increases fat and weakens the immune system. The more I've come to love myself, the more weight I've lost and the healthier I've become. When I allow people to control my emotions, I get depressed, eat more unhealthy foods and the weight comes back. If you can be the master of your heart, you can then create your own life that you want for yourself, not what your boyfriend or husband or kids or parents want for you.

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