

Your Brain, Your Tummy and Weight Control

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Introduction

In 2017 I was eating a lot of processed food. That included bagels, rolls, French fries, home fries, cold cuts sandwiches, spaghetti, fried rice, ice cream and most of all, potato chips – lots of potato chips. Not surprisingly I gained weight, about 15 pounds. Clothing that fit loosely on me became tight. I was beginning to develop a pot belly. Also, my blood pressure was beginning to increase and my blood sugar level became "borderline." All signs of danger.

Then in January 2018 I went to Rome, Italy. During my first two days in Rome I ate spaghetti dinners and pizza. all heavy in starch and saturated in cooking oil. After my second spaghetti dinner my alimentary system rebelled. I lost my desire for food, went on a 24-hour fast, stopped eating in restaurants, and for the remainder of my stay in Rome just ate fruit, which I purchased in local food markets. In about one week I lost 10 pounds. Since then, I have eliminated the aforementioned processed foods (except turkey on a sporadic basis), and most of all potato chips. Result: no more weight-gain and my blood pressure is back to normal.

Then, in April 2018, a friend of mine, a 62-year-old retired NYPD police officer, expressed concern about his weight gain. His remarks coupled with my own personal experience inspired me to share my thoughts on weight control with others. Hence, this pamphlet.

Part 1 – The Role of the Tummy and Brain in Losing Weight

Exercising to lose weight is commendable, but it's not enough. Exercise alone will not produce weight loss. Why? Because the calories you burn will not exceed your caloric intake. Weight loss is dependent on regulating caloric intake.

So, in the morning, when your tummy is demanding a fried egg sandwich on a roll with bacon, cheese and hot sauce, with a side order of home fries ...

In the afternoon, when your tummy is demanding a cheeseburger deluxe with a tall glass of soda ...

In the evening, when your tummy is demanding a pastrami sandwich on club bread with a side order of French fries ...

At night, when your tummy is demanding pretzels and potato chips ...

In the early morning, when your tummy is demanding chocolate chip cookies ...

JUST STOP AND THINK!

Your tummy is like an impetuous child who demands constant satisfaction. It is neither good nor bad. You have to reign in your tummy and assert control. The more you give in to your tummy, the more it will demand. Its appetite is insatiable. Appeasement does not work.

By nature your tummy is demanding. When its demands are not met, it sends out alarms. These alarms come in the form of hunger pangs that grow more intense until they overwhelm the body.

There is only one way to check the power of your tummy: cognition. The source of cognition is your brain. Your brain understands that your tummy is acting out, that the hunger pangs, although real, are merely an alarm sent by your tummy to make you cram it with food.

Your body does not need the fried egg sandwich, the cheeseburger deluxe, the pastrami sandwich on club. Only your tummy wants it. Your brain knows that, but does not want to rally the resources to stop and reverse your tummy's onslaught. Why? Because your brain doesn't want to fight. I call this the Neville Chamberlain Syndrome. It wants to take the path of least resistance in order to maintain peace and serenity, even if it means repeatedly giving in to the destructive demands of its querulous adversary.

So your brain agrees to your tummy's every demand in return for your tummy's promise that no further demands will be made, a promise that is always broken, and then it's back to the negotiating table, and the cycle repeats itself, again and again and again and again, ad infinitum.

In the meantime your body is gaining weight, accumulating fat, your heart is working harder and your blood pressure is rising. Your tummy does not care about that. All your tummy wants is to be full. But your brain does care. Your tummy knows this and brazenly warns your brain in advance that the hunger pangs will become worse if your brain decides to act. It is a form of extortion driven by an obsessive fear that the brain will cut off the supply of food and thus place the survival of your entire body at risk.

The mere thought of being denied food drives your tummy into a tizzy and causes it to escalate its demand for food to the point that it produces hysteria. This hysteria in turn causes you to eat and eat and eat some more. You do this to ease the discomfort, and it works. Eventually, after having ingested globs of processed junk, you feel sedated.

But your brain knows better. It knows that your tummy is out of control and so it must act decisively to take charge and impose limits. The ensuing war may not be pleasant and initially it may produce much distress, as your tummy does everything it can to convince you that you cannot stop eating. But the rest of your body, especially your heart, pancreas, liver, colon and esophagus, will thank your brain for taking charge and will reward you with loyal and efficient service that will help keep you alive, provided you act.

**LISTEN TO YOUR BRAIN,
NOT YOUR TUMMY.**

Part 2 – Facts about Your Tummy

1. Your tummy is a dictator.
2. Your tummy is emotional.
3. Your tummy is a liar.
4. Your tummy is self-centered.
5. Your tummy is bossy.
6. Your tummy is demanding.
7. Your tummy is arrogant.
8. Your tummy is a deceiver.
9. Your tummy is amoral
10. Your tummy is a troublemaker.
11. Your tummy screams but never cries.
12. Your tummy has no guilt.
13. Your tummy has no conscience.
14. Your tummy has no pride.
15. Your tummy has no honor.
16. Your tummy is a taskmaster.
17. Your tummy demands attention.
18. Your tummy deplores reason.
19. Your tummy defies rationality.
20. Your tummy is a bully.
21. Your tummy is an extortionist.
22. Your tummy is oppositional.

Never underestimate the power of your tummy.

There is no negotiating with your tummy.

When you resist your tummy, your tummy produces hunger pangs.

DO NOT RESPOND TO THE HUNGER PANGS!

TELL YOUR TUMMY: "NO! I WILL EAT WHEN I WANT TO, NOT WHEN YOU WANT ME TO."

ALL YOUR TUMMY WANTS IS TO FEEL GOOD. THAT'S ALL YOUR TUMMY CARES ABOUT.

TO MAKE IT FEEL GOOD, YOUR TUMMY WANTS YOU TO STOP EVERYTHING YOU'RE DOING AND CRAM IT WITH POTATO CHIPS, PRETZELS, COLD CUTS, PROCESSED BREAD, CANDY, CAKES, BAGELS, CHEESE, CANDY BARS, ICE CREAM, HOT DOGS, HOME FRIES, FRENCH FRIES AND WHATEVER OTHER PROCESSED JUNK IS AVAILABLE.

JUST SAY NO!¹

¹ Slogan attributed to Nancy Reagan, FLOTUS, 1981-1989.

Part 3 – Your Brain and Weight Reduction

When you resist the urges of your tummy, your tummy produces hunger pangs.

Do not respond to the hunger pangs. Understand them for what they are: false alarms. When a hunger pang strikes, remember the following:

YOU DO NOT NEED MORE FOOD.

YOUR BIOLOGICAL GAS TANK IS NOT EMPTY.

YOU ARE NOT STARVING.

It is only your tummy panicking. When your tummy panics, it terrorizes your brain into believing that you are physically ill and that you are at the brink of disaster. Your brain responds by sending out an alarm to the rest of your body and within a matter of seconds, you feel that awful queasy feeling as every cell in your body cries out for nourishment, nourishment that it does not need. You respond by frantically searching for sustenance to quell that awful sensation. You toss aside all the promises you made to yourself – to control your food intake, to lose weight, to reduce the belly fat, to lower your cholesterol, to exercise more, to eat responsibly – as you reach for that candy bar, order a pizza, or consume a pastrami sandwich, anything that will bring immediate relief. Afterwards, you feel guilty and rationalize your actions, making empty excuses for your self-deception, all meant to avoid the truth, which is that you again lost control, losing yet another battle with your tummy.

There is only one way to prevent this from happening again.

YOU MUST TRAIN YOUR BRAIN TO TAKE CHARGE.

If you fail to do so, you will continue to eat and eat and eat without stopping, with no limits, with no checks, until such time that your entire body breaks down.

Remember: your tummy cares only about itself. Indeed, your tummy believes that a voracious appetite is a good thing. Your tummy does not know any better. Therefore, you must place limits on the demands made by your tummy. That is the job of your brain.

To place limits on your tummy, your brain must follow Phil's Five Steps, also known as the RUDAM plan:

- 1. Recognize that your tummy is out of control.**
- 2. Understand that an out-of-control tummy poses a threat to your entire body.**
- 3. Develop a rational program of food intake based on the needs of your entire body.**
- 4. Assert its intellectual supremacy over your tummy.**
- 5. Monitor the activities of your tummy to ensure continual compliance with all directives.**

Start now! The longer you wait the worse the problem will get.

TRAIN YOUR BRAIN!

Part 4 – More Facts about Your Brain and Your Tummy

Ten differences between your brain and your tummy.

- 1. Your brain is a computer while your tummy is a gland.**
- 2. Your brain is reasonable while your tummy is unreasonable.**
- 3. Your brain is intelligent while your tummy is obtuse.**
- 4. Your brain is a guardian while your tummy is a provoker.**
- 5. Your brain is serious while your tummy is frivolous.**
- 6. Your brain is resourceful while your tummy is lazy.**
- 7. Your brain is thoughtful while your tummy is impulsive.**
- 8. Your brain is altruistic while your tummy is selfish.**
- 9. Your brain is creative while your tummy is boring.**
- 10. Your brain is truthful while your tummy is a deceiver.**

Your brain has the ability to dominate your tummy, but chooses not to because of the very nature of your brain, which wants to act with discretion. It does not want to cause problems. It does not want to make trouble. Why? Because it wants you to have peace of mind. Your tummy harbors no such concerns. In fact, your tummy harbors no concerns about anything. It is a gland and as a gland, it lacks the capacity to think. All it wants is to be full. Your brain knows that and wants to help your tummy to stay full. The last thing your brain wants to do is upset your tummy because your brain knows that when your tummy gets upset, it acts out and when it acts out the entire body, including the brain, suffers. For your brain to restore calm requires an immense expenditure of energy that your brain wants to conserve. Thus, your brain will placate your tummy, even if it means placing the health of your entire body at risk. Your brain is not happy with this arrangement, but your brain believes that to assert its control simply is not worth the effort. As a result, your brain acquiesces to your tummy. In turn, your tummy ingests more and more food. This has dire consequences for your body. Your weight increases, your cholesterol levels rise, the girth of your waist expands, your sugar levels become dangerously high, your cardiovascular system has to work harder, all of which places your life at risk.

THIS MUST STOP NOW!

YOUR BRAIN MUST TAKE CHARGE.

It is a question of

**MIND OVER MOUTH or
M. O. M.**

To achieve MOM, do the following:

1. Heed these commandments:

“Thou shalt not ingest more food than thou needs.”

“Thou shalt not place the needs of thy tummy before the needs of thy body.”

“Thou shalt not cater to thy tummy.”

2. Then take the pledge:

“I hereby promise that I will listen to my brain and not be influenced by my tummy when deciding when and what to eat.”

I call this technique Heed And Pledge or HAP.

Repeat HAP as often as needed, especially when your tummy is pressuring you to eat. The pathway to happiness:

HAP -> MOM -> Control -> Freedom

Part 5 – Your Mouth

What is your mouth?

Your mouth is an orifice. It is a passageway, a funnel.

Your mouth prepares food for passage into your tummy.

The process of placing food into your mouth is called ingestion.

The ingestion of food is a function associated exclusively with the mouth. You cannot ingest a hamburger through your nose. You cannot devour a pastrami sandwich through your ears. You cannot consume a slice of pizza through your skin. To ingest food, your mouth produces saliva. Saliva makes the food soft and pliable. The more your tummy demands food, the more your mouth produces saliva. You become most acutely aware of this connection during periods when your tummy is not the center of your attention, such as when you are preoccupied with work, attending a class, or participating in sports. At those moments your tummy, feeling ignored, begins to emit hunger pangs. Your mouth responds by salivating. Your brain responds by taking cover. Your brain knows that to oppose your tummy would make matters worse. It would set off other alarms that would intensify the hunger pangs and escalate the feeling of distress. Such paroxysms your brain wants to avoid. So, your brain concedes the battle to your tummy. The result? You stuff that fried egg sandwich with bacon and cheese or that cheeseburger deluxe dripping with fat or that chocolate sundae covered with whip cream into your waiting mouth, flowing with saliva. Your tummy gets filled, the stress levels decrease, your mouth stops salivating, and calm is restored. Once again your tummy is the winner, and all seems well until the next hunger attack. Then the cycle repeats itself, again, and again, and again.

Later your brain reprimands itself for failing to act. You feel emotionally unsettled. You know something isn't right. Then you go to the bathroom where you look at the scale. You think about weighing yourself to assess the damage but are afraid to do so because the scale won't lie and you don't want to confront the truth, which is that your brain has lost control over your tummy and that you are gaining weight. Now you feel guilty, worthless and powerless. In an act of self-flagellation driven by an overwhelming feeling of self-worthlessness, you eat a sandwich, consume a bag of potato chips, drink a 40-ounce bottle of beer, or consume a large bag of pretzels. Then you sigh, shrug your shoulders, and go back to bed, emotionally deflated, demoralized, dejected.

DON'T GIVE UP!

NOW IS THE TIME TO ACT!

NO MORE GUILT!

NO MORE RECRIMINATIONS!

NO MORE DESPAIR!

BRAIN POWER!

PURGE THE PANGS!

TAKE CHARGE!

HAP -> MOM -> Control -> Freedom

YOU CAN DO IT!