

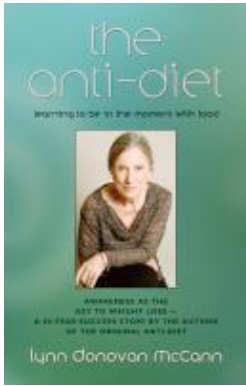
the anti-diet

learning to be in the moment with food



**AWARENESS AS THE
KEY TO WEIGHT LOSS —
A 40-YEAR SUCCESS STORY BY THE AUTHOR
OF THE ORIGINAL ANTI-DIET**

lynn donovan McCann



The original Anti-Diet (1971) proposed that eating with awareness succeeds where diets fail. Now the original author offers long-term proof her approach works. The all-new Anti-Diet (2012) is a self-directed process to make pleasure a priority and lose weight for keeps. Instead of rules and steps, follow McCann's gentle suggestions and discover your inner expert. This is the natural, effective way to end food compulsion and love the shape you're in - at any age!

The Anti-Diet

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Introduction to the All New Anti-Diet

Way – way – back in the late 1960s, I wrote a book called *The Anti-Diet: the new “pleasure power” way to lose weight*. The good friend who provided a sounding board for my project called it a manual for living disguised as an innocent little diet book. When *The Anti-Diet* was published in 1971, it didn’t change the world, but I began to get thank-you letters from all over the U.S., England and Canada. People said my idea worked for them where other weight loss solutions had failed.

The Anti-Diet proposed that the wonderful apparatus we all have to nourish ourselves and maintain appropriate weight might work better than any diet. It said:

** A fundamental reason why we overeat is lack of awareness about when we are hungry, when we are satisfied, what we really want to eat, when, and how much.*

** Rules, restrictions and other interventions put us further out of touch with our needs and desires. They tend to make the problem worse.*

** You can lose weight and keep it off through self-awareness rather than self-control. Pleasure is your greatest ally in this process.*

The Anti-Diet also introduced an unconventional how-to format for its time: no rules, no measurements, no menus or recipes. No impressive degrees or credentials appeared on the cover. The author, then in her late twenties, offered only the

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personal experience of a chronic overeater and dieter who learned, literally, to trust her gut.

I am now a slender, vibrant septuagenarian – *did I really say that?* This fully revised edition of my book draws on nearly half a century of following and developing its principles. It retains much of the original text with its youthful perspective, but speaks to a far wider audience than originally envisioned. I promised no miracles then and promise none now; however, I'm living proof that *The Anti-Diet* works. I'm not the most willing, consistent, determined, or sane person in the world. But, I have what it takes. We all do.

We are born with fantastic equipment to deal with the elemental need for food. This complex biological, neurological and psychological system is sturdy, adaptable, and has withstood the test of survival since we rose up on two feet. The hardware is built in and the software innate. I discovered, with a little experimentation and thinking outside the box, that the whole thing runs elegantly, given half a chance.

Fired with enthusiasm, I wrote the original manuscript on a manual portable typewriter in a very different world. In the 1960s, the term “fast food” had not been coined and emaciation wasn't the fashion standard. Women slenderized to wear mini-skirts; men wouldn't admit to counting calories. Dieting, in those *Mad Men* days, was all about looking young and attractive. My little book could never have anticipated the national diet, nutrition and fitness craze of the 21st century.

Health concerns drive it. Medical experts threaten us with statistics of weight-related illnesses that affect toddlers to dodderers. A virtual tsunami of self-help literature addresses every conceivable dietary, nutritional and behavioral means to avoid them. Beauty still counts, of course. We are urged to try crash diets, sensible programs, months of packaged meals, and a pharmacopoeia of natural and chemical substances. Surgery to

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tuck tummies and contour thighs is widely promoted; even drastic surgery is a real option. The relentless flow of advice and tedious fear-mongering threatens to create its own kind of dependency, but the permanent, one-stop fix never materializes.

There are campaigns to improve the nutritional quality of school lunches, to post calories on restaurant menus, to educate the grocery shopper, even to legislate what people should or should not eat. But the track record for every well-meaning effort to change America's eating habits has been dismal. The reason, I am convinced, is the same reason that prompted me to write *The Anti-Diet* in the first place.

We will eat what pleases us. We will be in charge of what we consume. It's a human right, a desire that is hard-wired in us. No commonsense individual expects a fad to produce permanent results. No one really believes a trendy pill will knock off 30 pounds in 10 days without dreadful side effects. We're wary of any clinically proven product or method that is over-marketed. We're not stupid.

Deep down, we suspect the answer lies in us. *The Anti-Diet* encourages readers to find their own inner expert. This book suggests you can trust yourself to rediscover pleasure and balance in a way of eating that is natural and healthful for you.

Awareness, rather than control, is the key to reorganizing eating habits if the effort is to succeed in the long term. I believe that controlling what you eat through dieting is counterproductive to learning awareness. *The Anti-Diet* is an invitation to let go. Years ago, my book was greeted with curiosity and disbelief on the radio and TV talk show circuit here and in England. In those days, the notion of giving up control was associated with wild hedonism. Now, learning to let go is seen as a necessary part of every human journey.

There is also greater understanding today of the pathology of eating disorders. I bow respectfully to medical or mental

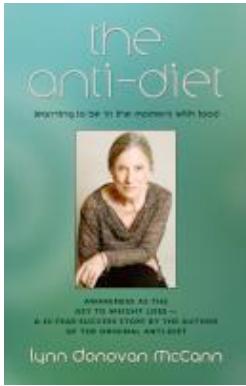
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health professionals and 12-step groups qualified to deal with obesity and addictive behaviors that lie beyond the scope of this book. But everyone who overeats and carries a few extra pounds is not an addict. Indulgence, eating compulsively, and eating without awareness are not necessarily clinical issues.

Just as we all have natural abilities to nourish ourselves satisfactorily, we all become desensitized, distracted and thoughtless – even compulsive – from time to time. To remedy this, it takes self-directed and sustained effort to get back in touch. I lost weight by learning to be in the moment with food. I keep it off by continuing to pay close attention and recalibrating as my needs change. Awareness is a solution for the long haul; fads, regimens and gurus achieve short-term results at best.

I don't disparage expertise. New medical discoveries and the latest nutritional wisdom may earn a place in your *Anti-Diet*. But no one else's one-size-fits-all solution can replace the intensely personal and individual process I recommend. Friends and cohorts are vital to its success, but it starts with you. To those who must restrict intake of any food or substance for medical reasons, I suggest that that learning to give priority to awareness and pleasure in eating will contribute to their health and to the success of any prescribed treatment within its limitations. Awareness makes all life's challenges easier. Pleasure insures that we continue to show up for them.

The Anti-Diet is based in a profound respect for the intelligence of the reader and certain God-given attributes we all share. It is not a program. There is no structure except what the reader may design for him or herself, and then revise on a daily, monthly or yearly basis over the course of a lifetime. I say: *do not follow my drummer, but learn to listen to your own.*



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