

# Tell yourself your food story.

When you consult a nutritionist, often the first thing they want you to do is write down a food journal with lots of numbers and measurements, like this:

*Monday, 8 am: 1 cup bran flakes with 17 raisins, 1/2 cup 1% fat milk, 1.5 cups apple juice, 8 oz. coffee with 1 tbsp cream.*

Fuck it. Who the hell thinks about food like that? Nutritionists, that's who. This is what happens when you let thinky brain drive the bus.

Can you even imagine what "1 cup bran flakes with 17 raisins and 1/2 cup milk" looks like? Of course you can't. Most normal people make stories out of food, or pictures. (Or, occasionally, songs, such as the classic Raffi track *Peanut Butter Sandwich Made With Jam* ["One for me, and one for David M..."], hopefully followed by Raffi's other hit *Brush Your Teeth*.)

When you eat food you eat stories. You're telling yourself a food story right now. It goes something like this.

*Bran flakes. I love this blue cereal bowl. [singing] "2 scoops of raisins in a packet of Kellogg's Raisin Bran!" How much is 2 scoops? I wonder. Ugh, 1% milk tastes so watery. But it's good for me. Right? I'm afraid if I don't cut down on fat I'll get fat. Krista says eat slowly. Wow, when I do that, the bran flakes taste like little chips of papier-mâché in my mouth. They make piñatas out of that. I am eating a piñata. With no candy in it.*

And so forth.

It's good to keep a record of your eating, especially when you're trying to change or improve it. A record keeps you honest. Humans are top-notch self-bullshitters. It's just how we're wired.

But **you never need to measure like this**. Ever. Fuck calories. Seriously – fuck 'em.

Let's try this a different (and more fun) way. Get a camera or your cellphone, and a stack of post-it notes. For each meal, take two pictures.

The first picture is the meal itself. On a post-it note, write down what you're feeling and thinking before you eat. Stick the note next to the plate, bowl, platter, or washed-out hubcap and snap a photo.

The second picture is the meal when you're done. Same deal with the post-it note. Write down what you're feeling *now*. Snap it.

At the end of every day, look through your pictures. What is your food story? What does it tell you?

## Then, rewrite that food story.

**If you want to change your food, tell yourself a new food story.** You're the author of your life, after all.

Find a picture of the food you'd like to eat. The food that would make your body, mind and spirit feel good – lean, light, energized, full of exuberant mojo and the sweetness of self-care.

Think about the story that food tells. What kind of person eats that? How does s/he feel when she eats it? Who does s/he become? What life does s/he live?

Is that the life you truly, deeply want? Is that the person you truly, deeply want to be?

If so, start chasing that life, and that identity. Start writing that story.

Put that picture next to your own food pictures. How could you get to that “destination” from where you are?

Would you need to think differently? (Probably.)

Would you need to act differently? (Very likely.)

Would you need to plan a bit? (Usually.)

Well, that's a fun game! (Certainly more fun than measuring cups of bran flakes.)

Don't get freaked out if that destination feels too far away. All you have to do is take one teeny tiny step towards it.

You have the rest of your life to finish the journey. And you get to have some food adventures along the way! Whee!

Ask yourself: **What's *ONE* very small thing I could do to get closer to that new food story?**

**Then do that one very small thing. Today. Now.**

Tomorrow, do another very small thing.

Keep snapping those photos and writing those notes. You never know... one day it could be a movie.

FUCK  
CALORIES

*and Other  
Dietary Heresies*



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