

THE SUN-HERALD MAGAZINE

Life


SUNDAY

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Women on top

HOW BEYONCÉ,
PINK AND ALL
THE LADIES TOOK
OVER THE CHARTS

IT TAKES GUTS ...
SAYING GOODBYE
TO GLUTTONY

PLUS 



DOUBLE OR GLUTTON

WHAT'S YOUR DEADLY SIN?
Sarina Lewis MEETS SEVEN
"SINFUL" FOLK TRYING TO
MEND THEIR WAYS. THIS
WEEK: GLUTTONY.

As most people were rising to tea and toast, Robert Tesoriero had already devoured his second high-fat, high-salt, high-cholesterol meal of the day. "I work shift work so ... I'd have an egg-and-bacon roll and a cup of coffee at about half-past four in the morning. Then, at 7am, I'd have some [hot] chips," Tesoriero says, admitting that was hardly the worst of it.

As the day progressed, so did the level of consumption. Countless slabs of buttery white bread stacked with cheese and preserved meats were washed down with sugar-filled drinks, guzzled throughout the day. Then there was the service-station booty: chocolate bars, ice-creams and pies – always bought in duplicate. Sundays were the worst. With no work or social life, a miserable Tesoriero did nothing but eat. "I used to be sick at night when I went to bed, I was so full," he says. "My stomach was stretched about as far as it could go."

Gluttony is the vice that compels people to consume far more than they require. The old "sin" of eating and drinking to excess saw Tesoriero's scales peak at 152 kilograms, a hefty weight for his 175-centimetre frame to carry.

"Obesity is an epidemic," says Janella Purcell, a nutritionist, naturopath, author and "food angel" on cooking show *Good Chef/Bad Chef* (she will also feature on *The Biggest Loser* this season). "Loneliness, depression and anxiety are big contributors, but it's the foods that are available – the refined carbohydrates and refined sugars, your evil, white nasties – that are making it much worse."

Empty heart, empty kilojoules. It's an equation that resonates with Tesoriero. Overweight since childhood, the 46-year-old Sydney salesman confesses to a lifetime of yo-yo dieting due to poor self-esteem and radical (and unsustainable)

Illustration by
AMANDA UPTON

"I used to be sick at night when I went to bed, I was so full. My stomach was stretched about as far as it could go."

The five signs you may be an emotional eater:

- Feeling out of control when you're eating.
- Eating more than what you think would be a healthy portion size.
- Feeling embarrassed and hiding how much you eat.
- Binging on "forbidden" foods.
- Eating to cope with stress or negative feelings.

Melanie McGrice, dietician and spokesperson for the Dietitians Association of Australia

weight-loss regimens. It wasn't until he hit rock-bottom last November that, he believes, he finally committed to turning his life around. "One day you just get out of bed and you look at yourself and you say, 'I don't want to be here any more.'"

Robert Tesoriero is now 11 kilograms lighter thanks to the help of WeightWatchers and a re-jigged, positive attitude towards food and nutrition. Deep-fried and processed foods have been replaced with three healthy meals based on fresh produce. Breakfast is now an egg-and-salad roll, while big, leafy salads, filled with vegetables and redolent with fresh herbs, form the mainstay of lunch and dinner, accompanied by a serving of protein.

The keen golfer has once again taken up playing competition games, and hopes to reach his goal weight of 100 kilograms by mid-year.

Resolving to lose weight is one thing, says Purcell, but knowing how to achieve healthy, permanent weight loss is another. "Everyone wants to lose weight," she says. "[But] unless they address their issues, and unless they know how to eat and cook and shop ... most people will put it back on again."

Learning the importance of self-nurturing is where Purcell suggests all weight-loss wannabes begin. Excess weight, she says, stems largely from emotional eating – attachments to food that have everything to do with romance, punishment or suppression of feelings and little to do with real hunger. Learn self-love and half the weight-loss battle will have been won before your first weigh-in.

"You're not allowed to look at yourself in the mirror and say, 'F... it, I hate myself. I'm so fat,'" she says. "[Weight loss] seems to happen much more easily with the power of positive thought."

Food-wise, Purcell rattles off a definitive list of dos and don'ts. Say goodbye to anything white (mainly bread, pasta, sugar, biscuits and cakes), and forget alcohol, late-night eating, fried foods and anything cooked in processed oils. Eat whole foods three times daily: big breakfast, smaller lunch and even smaller dinner. "You don't need energy at night, unless you're going to play basketball to work it off."

Eat slowly and without distraction (i.e. not while plugged in to the television or internet). And chew. A lot. Finally comes the importance of learning. Take cooking and nutrition classes, read books or tune in to cooking shows with a healthy bent. Anything, in other words, to increase your knowledge of healthy eating practices.

The last word goes to Tesoriero. "People don't notice you when you're overweight," he reflects. "I was 100 kilos. I want to be there again. And I will do it quietly and simply – just one or two kilos a week. Because I want to. It's really as simple as that." ●