

THE



CAROLINE
DOONER

F*CK




IT







EATING
SHOULD BE
EASY


DIET



THE  **CAROLINE DOONER**

F*CK  

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DIET 


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Dedication

I DEDICATE THIS BOOK TO CHEESE—
I WILL NEVER FORSAKE YOU AGAIN.

Contents

Cover

Title Page

Dedication

Introduction: This Is Not a Diet Book

Who This Book Is For

One: Why Are We So Addicted to Food?

Let's Go on a Famine

The Minnesota Starvation Experiment

What Is Normal Eating?

The Big Weight Myth

Guess Which Industry Makes \$60 Billion a Year?

The F-Word

Your Diet Might Be a Cult

Diets Unraveling

What If You've Already Tried?

You're in Charge (Finally)

Two: How the Hell Do I Actually Do This?

The Physical Part

Tool #1: Allow Food

The Noble Role of Weight

You Are Not a Car

Our Fear of Hunger

The Diet Pendulum Swing

Eat When You're Hungry

The Trap of Mindful Eating
Why Are We Eating the Smallest Amount Possible!?
There Is No Perfect Stopping Point
The Trap of Seeking Balance
Our Goal Is to Neutralize Food
Will I Be Eating This Much Forever?
No Food Is Off Limits
Your Cravings Are Your Friend
In Defense of Carbs and Sugar
In Defense of Delicious and Decadent Food
In Defense of Salt
In Defense of “Shitty” Food
Shitty Diet Food
Purity Doesn’t Exist
You Don’t Need to Go on a Green Juice Cleanse
So Many, Many Diet Rules
But What About My Health?
“But I’m a Binger!?”
What to *Actually* Do During a Binge
Doesn’t The Fuck It Diet Cause Obesity???
“But Really, What If I Have Health Problems?”
Tool #2: Lie Down
The Noble Art of Rest
What About Exercise?
How Will You Know This Is Working?
Your Body Is Freaking *SMART*

The Emotional Part

Emotional Eating Versus Bingeing
The Emotions We Avoid
We Have Sooooo Many Emotions About Our Weight
Humans Use *LOTS* of Things to Numb
Fear of Pain
You Can’t Avoid Being Human (Sorry)
We’re All Stuck in Fight-or-Flight Mode
Tool #3: Breathe and Feel
The Myth of Stress and Breathing
Think You Can Hate Yourself into Improvement?

Who Can We Blame????
Surrender to the Messiness

The Mental Part

Untangling the Knot
Tool #4: The Brain Dump
The Power of Our Beliefs
Your Beliefs Become Confirmation Bias
Mental Restriction and Bingeing
We All Have Our Reasons
What We Think Being Skinny Will Give Us
Losing Your Identity
Why We Panic
The Avoidable Kind of Pain
Stop Shoulding All Over the Place
You Can Release Your Limiting Beliefs
Tool #5: The Belief Release
Nothing Is a Cure-All
It Was Never Your Fault
Diet Culture Trauma
The Luck of the Thin
Fat Phobia
You Are Making the Stakes Too Damn High
How to Trust When You Don't Trust
Let It Feel Crazy
Waiting to Not Be Hungry
It's Allowed to Be Messy

The Thriving Part

What Do You Stand For?
Practical Boundaries with Food and Weight
Frivolous Downtime
Emotional and Existential Rest
Become Your Own Damn Guru
That's It!

Acknowledgments

Notes

About the Author
Copyright
About the Publisher

This book is meant for chronic dieters. I am not a medical professional, and if you are engaging in any extreme restrictive eating or self-harm, you must seek professional medical help. This book cannot stand in for eating disorder treatment and is not meant to treat any physical or mental conditions.

I will share the work of many doctors, nutritionists, and weight and metabolism scientists to help assure you that I am not a lone, crazy brownie eater, out to ruin your health and happiness . . . but, again, I'm not a doctor. This book isn't medical advice. Okay. You get it. Moving on.

Introduction: This Is Not a Diet Book

If you've read as many diet books as I have, maybe you've noticed how similar the introductions are. It's normally a sensationalized promise that *this is the diet you've been waiting for*. And it goes a little something like this:

INTRODUCTION TO THE DIET YOU'VE BEEN WAITING FOR

*You've been going from diet to diet, and nothing has worked, you're still ~~worthless and ugly~~ fat and unhealthy. But now with this groundbreaking **and** ancient way of eating, you finally have a proven, scientific, and simple plan to unlock all of your dreams of being ~~beautiful and loved~~ fit and healthy.*

*The best part is this: if you follow the plan exactly the way we have laid it out in this book, you will never crave food ever again! **Ever! No more food cravings.***

Take it from me, craving food should not have to be a part of your life.

*All of those other diets you've tried in the past didn't work because you weren't eating the **right** kinds of foods in the **right** amounts. **Of course** they didn't work.*

*Well, with our program, your body will begin to work **so well** that you'll never think about food again.*

*This isn't a diet, it's a **way of life**. It's a **lifestyle change**. I know that those **other** diets you went on said the same thing, but they were lying. Those were **totally** diets. This isn't. **This diet is totally NOT a diet**, it is a way of life.*

Are you ready? Let's turn the page to the first chapter, where I'll tell you why everything you are currently eating is bad for you.

You read this and think, *THIS IS IT! Finally, a way to get rid of my cravings. I'm so sick of being hungry.* You get rid of everything in your kitchen, you stock up on the allowed foods, and you start devotedly eating exactly what they prescribe, getting a little adrenaline high every day that

you successfully stick to the rules. You're so excited to have finally found this scientific *and* ancient diet that will take away your weak, human desire for food. You have been so frustrated with your hungry humanity that you are willing to do *anything* to be less of a burden to society with the space you take up.

You devote three *extremely* committed months to this scientifically proven way of eliminating your body fat and your cravings and . . . *voilà!* It goes so well! You are toned, energetic, and as happy as ever, eating your perfectly portioned, perfect food. You start forgetting to eat and consider becoming a robot who only needs to take pellets occasionally.

The best part is that all your relationships flourish because, now that you don't need food, you are *so* personable. Everyone loves you even more than they did before, and they all want you in their lives. You go out to lunch with friends and just smile at them while they eat and you think about how great your life is. Everyone thinks you are funny and beautiful and perfect and they wish they could be more like you.

You also become rich and you're never, ever bored.

* * *

Don't you worry. This book will be nothing like that. Because The Fuck It Diet is not really a diet.

* * *

I used to be an extremely devoted dieter (when I wasn't bingeing), and those diet book introductions were always sooo exciting to me. *I will DO this. I will do this right. And I will finally make my life AMAZING.*

And I *would* do it. Until I eventually failed and started the binge/repent yo-yo, or until I went on a bender, or replaced it all with another, better diet.

My dieting started at fourteen, when I realized my shorts were really tight and my face was becoming oilier and puffier by the day, and I had to go to Nordstrom's to buy bras in a size E in the brand that Oprah recommended because Victoria's Secret bras were too small.

I have to fix this. . . . I guess my days of eating are behind me. So for the next ten years I was either "on a diet"—obsessed with following the rules perfectly—or "off a diet," because I was bingeing and feeling out of control and horrible about myself.

I tried the Atkins diet, the South Beach diet, the insulin resistance diet, the pH diet, the blood type diet, the Rosedale diet, the raw vegan diet, many versions of the Pray to God to Be Skinny diet, The Secret™ (not a diet but you can make anything into a diet, especially new age self-help), the “I’m Going to Listen to My Body SOOOO WELLLL” diet (also known as the obsessive version of intuitive or mindful eating), the *French Women Don’t Get Fat* diet (which is a hybrid of the intuitive eating diet and the coffee and wine diet), the paleo diet, the GAPS diet, andddddddd . . .

Boom. Epiphany. It hit me, on my twenty-fourth birthday, after I ate nine squash “pancakes” and twelve sugarless almond flour “cupcakes” that I made for myself and that nobody else would eat. I had a legit spiritual epiphany, with my stomach distended and my heart palpitating. I stared at myself in the mirror of my crumbly little bathroom on the Upper West Side of Manhattan, and as if I was in some sort of not-that-funny romantic comedy, I spoke to myself out loud. “What are you *doing*? Are you going to do this for the rest of your life?”

I’d spent the past ten years truly hating my body, constantly disgusted with myself, and wanting to be skinny more than anything else. I spent years obsessing over diet rules, planning what and when I could eat next, and counting up calories and carbs. I spent all of my energy trying to control my weight and salvage my health, but still, no matter how hard I tried, or how important dieting was to me, I was bingeing. I felt completely out of control for years on end.

I was petrified of carbs and sugar, and being full, and absolutely everything I did was for the purpose of trying to weigh less. Every day was good or bad based on the number on my scale and what I had eaten. And I truly believed I was doing it all in the name of health, because in my understanding, health and weight were synonymous.

Also, every fantasy I had was basically just me being skinny and pretty and *maybe dating Prince Harry, I don’t know*. But definitely skinny and pretty, as if *those* were my actual dreams and as if *that* was my actual purpose. As if being skinny and pretty was the thing that would make me happy.

As for my *actual* distant buried dreams? *Well, if I can be skinnier, then they’ll finally work out. Once I am skinny for good, I can finally take myself seriously.*

But even the times when dieting “worked” and I was actually skinny, it was never, ever enough. I didn’t *feel* skinny, or worthy, or confident. And the moments that I *did* feel skinny? I was mostly panicked that the skinniness wouldn’t last, and that made me even more obsessed with dieting.

I’d spent ten years thinking that skinniness would make me like myself. I thought that skinniness would make me happy. And that is a method for happiness that *doesn’t last*.

Skinny doesn’t create happiness—just ask any model or any “successful” dieter. Sure, once you reach your goal weight, you think you’re happy for a moment. If you’re reading this book, you already know that it doesn’t last. Changing this search for happiness-through-skininess-and-beauty to something more real, attainable, and life-affirming is a big part of this book.

But the part we are going to focus on first is the fact that *diets don’t even work*. The way we try to exert control over our bodies is biologically flawed and set up to fail from the start. When we try to override our survival response, our survival response *wins*. *Every time*.

We will get into it all. But first let me tell you what I did after my bathroom mirror epiphany. I decided to learn to eat normally—and I finally understood what that meant: I had to eat a lot more than I ever thought was okay before. I decided to give in to all of the foods I was afraid of, and *all* the hunger I had been trying to repress for the past ten years. And I mean all of it. *There was a lot of hunger*.

I also decided to research all of the reasons dieting doesn’t work. I armed myself with every bit of scientific information I needed to keep myself trusting that *not* dieting was the right path. I found a whole movement dedicated to educating the world on why the way we approach health and weight loss is deeply flawed. I learned about all the ways I was actually screwing myself over with diets—on a biological, chemical, and hormonal level.

But most importantly, I decided I was going to learn to like and accept myself at whatever weight I ended up. I really wasn’t sure what that weight was going to be because I’d been yo-yoing up and down *many* times every year for the past ten years. I thought my weight might end up at the top of my yo-yos, my highest weight, where I’d always felt like a serious failure. There was *nothing* more panic-inducing to me than seeing my weight up

there, but I was choosing to change my priorities, big-time. I decided, *Fuck it*. Seriously, *fuck it*. I was too miserable not to do this.

I was going to learn to like myself wherever my weight fell, because I could not spend one more day fighting myself, waiting for that magical, elusive day when I would finally become permanently skinny and content. I knew that this was the only way out of the trap I was in—and *The F*ck It Diet* was born.

Who This Book Is For

This book is for chronic dieters. This book is for people who are ready to learn why their diets haven't worked, and *why* what we've been taught about food and health hasn't worked. It's for the people who have been on every diet, who have spent hours worrying about and micromanaging the minutiae of the calories or toxins in the food they are eating—and don't want to do it anymore.

It's for people who have spent years seeing their worth through the lens of what they ate that day and what they weighed that morning, who have gone from diet to diet hoping that the next one would be the answer. It's for people who didn't even realize how miserable they were, because they were too busy praying that *just maybe* this time they'd lose enough weight to like themselves, and then all this misery would be worth it.

If you feel perfectly fine with the way you eat, exercise, and relate to your body and weight, you probably don't need this book. But for those of you who are sick of being stuck in an abusive relationship with diets, who want a different relationship with food and with your body, this book is here to tell you that there is a way out.

I am now completely easy-breezy with food, which I genuinely didn't think was possible before. Since going on The Fuck It Diet, I barely even think about food anymore if I'm not hungry, which was also something I thought was a myth. For so long, I believed that the cure for binge eating and food obsession was *better willpower*. I thought that if I could just diet successfully, like I did those first few times, and then keep doing it forever, I would finally be healed, happy, and—most importantly—thin and beautiful.

The irony is that restriction and dieting cause a very real food addiction that cannot be cured with more dieting and more restriction. We are physiologically and psychologically wired to be food addicts when our bodies sense there isn't ample food. It's chemical and hormonal and completely inescapable.

No matter what you weigh, dieting is ruining your metabolism and your ability to listen to your body. We are going to talk a lot more about weight science, and the reasons your health and weight aren't as connected as you've been taught, and how diet culture has basically put you at war with yourself.

This book can benefit any person, of any gender, at any weight, who struggles with food and body image. But because I am a woman who had to figure out why I was so scared of being too big in this world I live in, this book is inherently a feminist response to diet culture. The insidious societal causes of our dysfunction with food and weight can't be ignored. So, to the women who believe they must be tiny and toned in order to matter and be respected, I say "*Fuck that.*" You are allowed to eat the whole sandwich, and you are allowed to take up as much space as your body needs.

I have worked with well over a thousand women (and some men) through The Fuck It Diet in my group programs, as well as one-on-one. And over and over again—to everyone's surprise—I've seen that allowing all foods is the *only* thing that heals food obsession and bingeing. The most common fear is that once they start eating, they will never stop. And every single time, people are in awe of how their appetites completely change once they are actually fed—once you give yourself permission to eat, bingeing disappears. No superhuman willpower required.

The reason The Fuck It Diet works when no diet, self-help guru, or mindful eating does is because it tackles two things at once: the biological reasons that keep people obsessed and bingeing, and at the exact same time, the mental, emotional, and *cultural* reasons that we become obsessed with food and weight in the first place.

In this book I'm going to share my experience, their experiences, and the science that *backs up* our experiences and explains why not-dieting actually works. These lessons were hard to learn, but once I learned them, they became so obvious and logical. Now I wonder how I ever believed that restriction was the answer.