

Kindergarteners don't have weight problems

I was thinking about my 6-year-old daughter Elle the other day. She, and her cousin Rian, who just turned 7, love junk food and treats as much as any weight-loss client I've ever worked with. My daughter regularly comes and says "I'm hungry" minutes before her bedtime or even after crawling in bed! (*We do only give her choices of healthy foods like apples or carrots at this time.*) Amazingly, most all Kindergarteners and 1st graders I know don't have weight problems! I think it takes a few more years for whatever these little human beings have to "wear off" so you don't see overweight kids typically until 4th or 5th grade.



What the heck is this "stuff" that Kindergarteners have that causes them to love junk food, eat before bed, skip breakfast, beg for malts after dinner, but still stay thin? A speedy growing metabolism? No, because metabolism takes off more during puberty. An undeveloped digestive system? Undeveloped brains? I don't think so.

The reason kindergarteners don't have weight problems, is because they are too busy getting their happiness from life! My daughter loves to watch cartoons, play, act, dance, be goofy,

swing, draw, talk to herself, cut stuff with a scissors and the list goes on and on.

Let me ask you this? When's the last time you enjoyed using a scissors and just sat at a table and were amazed at the designs you could cut and the pile of clippings you made? When's the last time you decided to skip into the house from the garage? When's the last time you danced while preparing dinner for your 3 bears, 2 dolls and one imaginary friend? I'll bet you've never come home from work and felt compelled to go swing and slide on the jungle gym.

If you're smiling right now, your soul is feeling EXACTLY what I did after I wrote that.... "*darn, I miss that...that is really what living IS!*" Living isn't about worrying about work, the bills or what your sister-in-law did. Living isn't about titles, having the nicest lawn, or how much approval you are getting from people in your life. Living isn't about most ANY of the stuff you spend every day worrying about, stressing about and then finding relief in good food (high calorie) and a nice glass of wine or two or....well you get the point.

Kindergarteners can teach us adults a VERY important lesson in eating. That lesson is this:

You can enjoy treats when your priority is Living!

Kindergartener's brains are occupied with living, discovering, playing so they listen to their body and **eat when they are biologically hungry**. Kids don't have emotional hunger signals. Kids this age don't eat because they are stressed, bored or angry. They are taught that later by their adult role models. Kids this age only eat when their body needs calories—or more specifically the signal of hunger is greater than their thoughts about enjoying their lives. The communication of their body is pure and uninterrupted at this point in their lives.

How can we get back to this? Simple, start to focus on LIVING! What is living? Living is finding pleasure from life; Discovering new things; Doing things that are fun; Being yourself; Not caring about what others think.

If your life is pretty much the same routine week after week and all you look forward to is the weekends and your summer vacation, then you are NOT living! If your life is pretty much what the boss wants, the kids want, the spouse wants, the parents want, the "friends" want, then you are NOT living. If you spend more time worrying about things than discovering things, then you are NOT living! If you can't go to the store without doing your hair or putting on clean clothes, then you are NOT living!

"But we adults have to 'make a living'...we can't be goofing off all the time." True, life is a balance. But if what you're doing isn't fun, you owe it to yourself and your family, to do something you enjoy. But it's probably your perspective and not what you're doing that is no fun. We adults would consider digging ditches for a living a horrible career. Kids would find digging ditches a blast! My point being, nearly anything can be made to be fun or different if you take some action to make it that way.

Your assignment:

Observe a 6 or 7 year old kid. Watch how they approach eating and life. Observe how they deal with disappointment, fear and stress in their lives?

Observe how they eat food because of how it tastes rather than from the pleasure of feeling full.

Notice how kids this age often get distracted by life when we adults want them to concentrate on eating.

Notice how kids this age often don't finish their plates because they are "too full". Do you think they are really full, or is their brain thinking about something they'd rather go do?

Write your thoughts in an essay called: **"What I can learn from [name of child]"** Make this as detailed as possible. Be a scientist. Ask the child questions to discover their thinking. Have fun...this is a cool assignment.