



STOP DIETING &  
**START LIVING!**  
The Fundamental First Step

By Jo Mason



Freedom with food is possible when you give up what you think you "*should*" be doing and start doing something totally different.

# Stop Dieting & Start Living!

## THE FUNDAMENTAL FIRST STEP

By Jo Mason

BA(Hons), S.A.C. Dip. (Weight Management & Consulting)

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# Introduction

Does your day revolve around thinking about what you eat, what you just ate, want to eat next, where it's coming from and how you're going to work around having it? Has your life been all consumed with rules, restrictions and regimes, counting, weighing, measuring, manipulating, compensating and researching the latest food theory, diet or superfood combination? Do you swing wildly from gripping to a deep sense of willpower, control and discipline to being so out of control you're scared you'll never stop eating? Do you pride yourself in your knowledge about food and exercise, yet **still** can't seem to get it right? Do you find spending this much time and energy thinking about food exhausting and fills you with utter despair?

If you've answered "yes" to the above, then I think I'm safe to hazard a guess that food, and trying to control it, rules your life. When this happens it can be debilitating, exhausting and all consuming. Creating cycles of destructive behaviours, guilt, self loathing and isolation. Feeling like you're carrying around a shameful secret you have to hide because you're too embarrassed to admit to anyone the full extent of what you do or how it makes you feel.

**Please hear me: this DOES NOT have to be your life.**

In this book I am going to explain to you what common methods of control, you are probably caught up in, that really don't work, and are, more than likely making everything a whole lot worse. Then I'll explain what DOES work, how it's not your fault and the answer has absolutely nothing to do with food at all. Finally you'll be given an option about what to do next, if this feels like the right thing for you.

You can break free from a lifetime of control, misery and frustration by realising freedom with food is possible when you give up what you think you *should* be doing. I want to share this with anyone and everyone who is all consumed and struggling, yet open to something different. There IS a way out and it is NEVER too late. It can be a lot to take in when you feel you have tried everything out there, which is why I wrote this book. It's the first step to understanding how to stop dieting and start living. If you're willing to take that first step, then keep reading. It might just change your life.

# First Thing's First

Before we get into the rest of the book, there's three things that must come first. Mainly to make sure you don't invest any of your time in something that's not for you. You see, I understand your time and energy are very precious. You have probably sought out many solutions prior to this one, solutions that haven't worked for you, or have worked for a limited period, so it's important you discover whether you are in the right place to save any disappointment later. That way, you don't have to read this whole book, or go any further, if it's not for you.

**No.1:** Let's get straight to the first thing on this list. This is so say "THANK YOU!" Thank you for stopping at the Defeating Diets website, Facebook advert or wherever you saw or heard about it in the first instance, and then thank you for being interested or intrigued enough to download this book. Finally, thank you for taking the time to even open the book and read the first two paragraphs!

The reason I am so grateful and want to offer my sincere thanks? Well, it's because I understand what may have brought you to this point. As I just said in the paragraph above, you have probably sought out many solutions to your food battles before this one. Believed all kinds of promises and offers to solve them, and been let down. I understand how overwhelming, lost and helpless it can feel to still be struggling after so many attempts to find an end to the battle. Where it feels like you have exhausted every option, nothing seems to work and you're destined to be like this forever.

I get it. So that is why I want to say a very deep and sincere thank you. I know what it takes to reach out....yet again, in just that little bit of hope that this might, just might be different, but not quite believing that it is. If you can relate, stay with me and keep reading as here's the second point on the list.

**No.2:** Secondly, we must establish if this is for you. If you can decide that by the end of the first or second page, then minimal time and energy has been invested. You can make an informed decision to leave here, or continue on. So with all that said, you should absolutely leave it here if:

- You're looking for a quick fix to lose 10lbs in 10 days, or similar (drop a dress size in a month etc.)
- You are looking for someone to hand you all the answers.
- You want a food plan to follow and be told what to eat.
- You want to get back to the weight you were when you were 20.
- You don't want to talk about how you feel.

On the flip side you should stay with me and read on, if:

- You absolutely know what you should be doing with your food and exercise, but have no consistency, no matter what you try.

- Food has ruled your life for, what feels like a lifetime.
- You spend far too much time than you'd like thinking and agonising about food.
- You lie/hide about what/how much you eat and eat in secret.
- You desperately try to "be good" by avoiding "bad" food, then treat yourself with the "bad" food for being so good!
- You have uncontrollable eating urges, then restrict/repent afterwards.
- You sometimes feel like your brain goes to sleep or you leave your body when you eat.
- You're willing to be deeply, unwaveringly honest.
- You feel like food has an unshakeable power over you.
- You have a love/hate relationship with your destructive food behaviours.
- You desperately don't want to be this way anymore but the fear of being any different is paralysing.
- You want to feel like you're not alone and there is a way out.
- You're ready to trust and figure out what's *really* going on.

**No.3:** Still here?? Fantastic! This leads me on to the third and final point, which absolutely **MUST** come before anything else. If you're resonating so far, and are still reading, then I want to **REASSURE** you. You **ARE** in the right place, there **ABSOLUTELY** is hope, it's **NOT** too late and you are **100% WORTH IT**. If you are willing to commit, to be honest, open and trusting of change, there **IS** a way out. Plus let me tell you this right now, I promise you, whatever it is, this struggle has **NOTHING** to do with food, so a diet or set of restrictive food rules is never, ever, **EVER** going to fix it. You will not eat yourself to death if you let go of the rules, there is nothing to fear and if you are willing to invest a little bit more time and energy right here, you will understand that quite a large proportion of your struggles are not even your fault. I'm going to explain a bit more about that later.

I have built my business on listening to the desperate and drastic stories of hundreds of women and then doing the opposite of what they have experienced. I have seen and heard what absolutely doesn't work and have made it my passion (some may say obsession) to find what does. If you are willing to take my hand and take some baby steps with me, I will begin to share this with you, and your trust is my main concern. How **YOU** feel is my number one priority, so this will be done gently does it. Bit by bit. No big commitments, no sales tactics, no false promises. Just honest, accurate information. You are free to walk away, or invest further at any time. The choice is yours.

I believe you are a very capable and intelligent person. Very capable of making intelligent, calm and relaxed decisions with your food. You just haven't been shown how to do that yet. Doesn't mean you can't do it. All you need is some intelligent information, increased awareness, compassion and understanding and unwavering support and guidance. If you fancy some that, I am so glad you're here as that is my speciality!

# What Doesn't Work

If a doctor gave you a pill and told you it would, without a doubt, make you worse, would you take it? If a doctor said, "Here try this. It will make you feel like a solution to your illness is impossible, like you must live a life of constant rules, regulations and deprivation. It will make you feel like you're out of control, yet gripped by control, not good enough, lazy and have no motivation or willpower, that you're useless, weak and unable to stick to anything. It will even give you a mountain of evidence to prove all of this by giving you a trail of failed attempts behind you. In fact, it will make you hate yourself and fill your life with frustration, misery and desperation." Would you take it?

I would guess not, but due to society, culture, beliefs, media, consumerism and a whole host of other factors, that's pretty much what happens.

I'm assuming (forgive me if I am wrong) that your issues with food developed over time, but started with feeling conscious of your weight at some point in your life. Whether or not there was a weight issue is irrelevant. (I say this because I have had many clients that say when they look back at pictures of themselves they weren't overweight at all.) Whether there was a perceived weight issue or not, is not important. What's important is that you *felt* there was one. For whatever reason, you felt conscious of your size and/or your body.

This then usually leads onto some kind of attempt to control, restrict or curb your food in some way and you're introduced to the world of dieting or "cutting back". Some weight may be lost in the initial first round, but it didn't last and here began a cycle of never ending struggle which has gradually progressed to an all consuming, out of control problem as the years have passed by. On and off a regime, in and out of control, counting points, calories, fat grams and carbs. Working out portion sizes, calculating calorie content, skipping meals, manipulating the rules, compensating what you're about to eat for what you ate before or want to eat later, restricting, treating and rewarding, exercising to work it off, caught in a never ending merry go round of fear, control, self berating, euphoric delights when the numbers go down and soul crushing lows when they go back up again.

Does this sound familiar?

I have worked with women for whom this has been their existence for 30-40 years! Where thinking about choosing what to eat can bring them to tears and food is on their mind almost every waking moment. Exhausting, exasperating, soul destroying, all consuming obsession taking over their every thought and their whole life. Swinging between over-eating and under-eating, desperately lost in a sea of control. Did you know the average woman spends thirty one years of their life on a diet??!

Thirty one years!! It's statistics like this that blow my mind! Really blow my mind completely, because this is where it stops being about weight and food and starts being about someone's life and I mean their whole life!! What they do with their one existence here on the planet. How they spend their time and energy, what they think about and more importantly how they *feel* in that life. It should NOT be battling everyday with something you have to do every day. NOT feeling like the most worthless human being because you think you're addicted to chocolate. NOT obsessed, consumed, feeling guilty and anxious about something you have to do to keep you alive.

I am incredibly passionate about helping people understand it does not have to be their life story. No one is going to get to the end of their life, look back and say "oh I wish I'd obsessed more about food and counted more calories, it would've made my life so much more fulfilled."

So much of what you do to control this issue actually causes your problems, so, let me tell you what DOES NOT work and what you don't need in order to find a solution to the situation you have found yourself in.

## **You don't need to be told what to eat by rules and regimes.**

This doesn't work.

Don't you know what you *should* or *shouldn't* be eating already? Don't we all know what foods are better than others? I am sure you've done enough diets to know that. I'm sure you're an expert on food and how many calories you're consuming. By now I am sure you can tell me in-depth calorie content inside out, including detailed information on how many burpees or minutes of running it will take to burn it off. However, it's *still* not working, or only works for a short period of time. If that's the case, if you know all this, have you ever considered that maybe, just maybe it's NOT the food that needs the attention?

That's not what's wrong, so trying to implement yet another set of rules is not the right solution?

In my experience, all the diet myths and legends like "you mustn't eat carbs after 3pm", "you shouldn't eat late at night", "you must only eat three meals a day with no snacks in between", "carbs are bad", "little and often is the key", "be good all week and then do what you like at the weekend", "cut this out, cut that out" etc., all the rules, regulations and restrictions cause way more harm than good.

You get tied in knots and overwhelm trying to do the right thing while feeling deprived, hard done by and punished. Not a great combination for creating positive and long lasting change in your life. Also, they don't even work! They don't enable you to take responsibility for your own choices but actually enhance the obsession, control, bingeing and restricting, then the self-berating and exhaustion.

There is a very big reason why this doesn't work. It's because the fight isn't really with your body (or the food). It's with your mind, how you think and feel and how you choose to respond to that. A one size fits all approach, set of rules, or dieting regime, is NEVER, ever going to work.

## **You don't need more willpower.**

This doesn't work.

If there's one thing I have learned over the extensive work I've done, it's that the concept of having more willpower, as the answer to long term success, is an absolute myth. Total and utter BS! I do not believe that more willpower is the answer. I do not believe that you don't possess enough and need more of it.

The feeling of lack of willpower is created by a misalignment between what you consciously want for yourself on a daily basis i.e. "to be good", make "good" choices and avoid anything "bad", and what you subconsciously feel, believe and perceive about what that involves. The cravings and binges, breaking the diet, falling off the wagon, giving in to temptation are not caused because you have no willpower, but by deep rooted, beliefs and feelings that are triggered in your life which you cope with by reaching for food.

At some point in your life, your mind adopted food as a strategy for survival, for feeling good, for coping with other feelings which don't make you feel good. You will also have been trained to see food in a particular way, to treat yourself, to perceive and believe in a mythical sense of specialness certain foods possess. There's no amount of willpower, no diet, no set of rules, no thirty day meal planner that can combat this. What will, is discussed in the next chapter.

## **You don't need to grip to control.**

This doesn't work.

Combining the first two things in this chapter - being told what to eat by rules and regimes, with trying to muster up more willpower to stick to them, is what I mean by gripping to control. You know what I mean, don't you? That forceful feeling of ending each day or waking up every morning determined that tomorrow, or today, is going to be better. The genuine intention to resist, to avoid temptation, to "be good", to follow the rules, to use your willpower to stay away from "treats". To count and control every mouthful, or, when you can't or don't do that, execute strict restrictions and/or intense exercise as a response.

How long does this last before you break and give in? A day, a week, a month, a few hours? Gripping to anything takes a lot of effort and a lot of energy. At some point that effort and energy is going to run out. You are going to get

exhausted of the gripping and controlling and let go. This is when you binge because you feel like you've blown it.

If you are going to achieve peace and balance with food, making choices with a calm sense of ease, then the gripping has to stop. No matter how much you fear letting go and feel you have to grip to control to stop you from being uncontrollable, this does not work. In reality, the gripping is actually creating the binges. Peace, calm and balance cannot co-exist with gripping and fear. To win the war you must surrender. Trust, let go and understand there is nowhere to fall.

### **You don't need to label foods good, bad, allowed or not allowed.**

This doesn't work.

This method absolutely makes the situation you are in one hundred times worse. You think by labelling food "*good*" and "*bad*" it will keep you on the straight and narrow. Does it work? Well, you tell me? In reality, labelling foods in this way works directly against how you need to be thinking to make calm and relaxed decisions around food without the feelings of deprivation. Good and bad labels hugely influences how you view and think about food.

Remember that mythical specialness I mentioned earlier? This sense of specialness, which creates a feeling and perception of deprivation and punishment, is encouraged by these labels. Again NOTHING to do with the actual food but everything to do with the problems you experience with it.

Food is food. Labels, specialness and power are created in the mind and, as you will find out if you carry on taking baby steps with Defeating Diets, what goes on in your mind is absolutely key. How you think is so important as it's the thoughts you have about food, that determine your choice to eat or not to eat it, not the actual food. Your thoughts create perceptions. Perceptions create feelings. Feelings create actions. However, perceptions are just that *perceptions*. Not truths. Just ideas. The way in which something is interpreted based on the information given. So it relies hugely on the information you have been given about food. Labels are a BIG part of this. Are they truths? No, just labels.

It's looking at where your information comes from and what it consists of, NOT labelling food good or bad, or having more willpower that is the missing ingredient to success, but more on that later!

### **You don't need to count every calorie.**

This doesn't work.

I cannot stress this enough! If you want to get obsessed, start counting calories. If you want to become all consumed with guilt, fear and anxiety over food, start counting calories. If you want to be disappointed repeatedly with unrealistic expectations, frustrations and feelings of failure start counting calories. If you want to start treating your body like a calculator and create a lifetime of food issues, start counting calories!

As with most of the other methods listed here, counting calories exaggerates and exacerbates the problems because of the way it makes you think and feel. Deprived, hungry, resentful and punished. Gripping to control, desperately trying to stick to it, only to break and over-eat.

Your body functions very well on its own. It is a very sophisticated, efficient piece of ingenuity that managed its 'energy in and energy out' before calories, diet books or slimming club points were ever invented. You were born with the natural ability to know when and how much to eat. It's how babies feed. They cry when they're hungry and stop when they've had enough. It is proof that your body is perfectly capable of telling you how much to eat on its own, without the need for counting, weighing or measuring anything. You just have to learn how to listen and, as I have said already, you simply haven't been shown how to do that yet.

Doesn't mean you can't do it.

All you need is some intelligent information, increased awareness, compassion and understanding and unwavering support and guidance. So, if you're still with me and are increasingly interested in having some of that, you may well be finding out that you just might be in the right place.

So, pretty much everything you've ever been led to believe about trying to control your food, does not work. When I say does not work, I mean in the long term and does not work towards enabling you to live a life free of food issues and anxieties.

Every widely adopted, but never questioned, method of "cutting back" does not allow you to feel calm, relaxed and balanced around food. I'm sure, by now, you know this. However, did you know that every tactic and strategy you've tried to keep you on the straight and narrow makes things worse?

In fact, 99.9% of them are actually completely useless and are making **you** feel like it's all your fault, when, if you look at where the problems *really* lie, you'll realise you might not be to blame after all.

How do you think that would feel? After all these years of self berating, blaming and shaming yourself, to realise it may not actually be you that's the problem. Again, if that sounds appealing you might just want to take some more baby steps with me, so keep reading.

**Do you want to read on and find out what does work?**

**If so, then please**

**[CLICK HERE](#)**

Let me explain.

This is NOT so I can send you loads of sales rubbish. I don't do that.

This is so I can remain in contact with those of you who are resonating with what I am saying and who feel they may benefit from my help.

I do not want to waste your time or mine. I only want to contact people who are genuinely interested in a new way to approach their food and weight. Plus, when I say contact, I mean send useful information that can help you get out of the situation you are in with your food. I don't send junk and I don't sell your details to anyone.

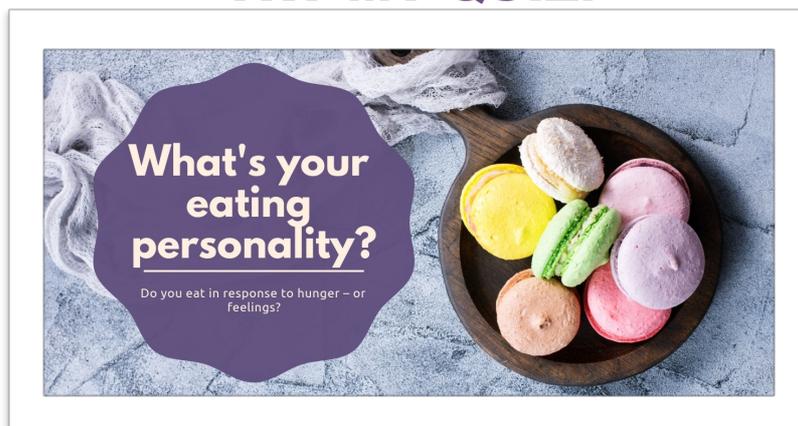
The option to contact *me*, if you require help, is always there and always yours to choose.

So, if you want to read on, click on the link. If not, thanks for your time and I wish you all the very best of luck.

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**to download the rest of the book.**

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