

What Healthcare Professionals are Saying About *Why We Overeat and How to Stop*

Elizabeth Babcock has written the most helpful and comprehensive book on overeating I have ever seen. She comes at the issue from multiple perspectives:

- personal experience
- historical perspective, detailing changing eating habits over time
- cultural perspective, including the way eating is at the center of our social lives
- medical, including ways that overeating impacts health
- scientific, including the rise in processed foods and their consequences
- brain science, where the role of the emotional brain is especially compelling

The book is extremely well written and thoroughly referenced. Babcock breaks things down to make them understandable and memorable, using metaphors and diagrams. She creates lists that sometimes amaze—like the advantages of healthy, non-food strategies in calming the emotional brain. Illustrations add to the readability of the book, such as the wonderful section where habitual and more helpful self-talk appear as slightly different colored clouds.

This book takes the reader by the hand to design a new life without overeating, from the ways to think about such a life (long term well-being, a satisfying life) to the step-by-step practical strategies that lead there. While not at all simplistic, it is highly encouraging. Risk zones are clearly named. And also ways to navigate the difficulties. It is a worthy read for anyone, and a godsend for those who seek to enjoy a satisfying life without overeating.

Sharon Eakes, MA, BCC, Executive Coach, Author, Huffington Post Blogger, Clinical Director of Gateway Rehabilitation Center (1972-1996), Aliquippa, PA

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Elizabeth Babcock has offered us a true gem in her book, *Why We Overeat and How to Stop*. Her work combines compassion, science-supported information, and a practical guide to light the way toward a sustainable and joyful relationship with food. In doing so, she also points the way for us to create deeply meaningful lives revolving around what matters most. By sharing her wise insight and understanding around overeating, Babcock invites us to let ourselves off the hook, and make a life-change for the better.

Very rarely do self-help books offer tangible, accessible steps with such clarity and depth of heart.

**Dr. Lori Gray, PhD, Licensed Psychologist, Assistant Professor
Integrative Holistic Health and Wellness, Western Michigan
University**

I have followed wellness-related media for decades now, but was pleasantly surprised to find something totally new here.

The author of this book took a deep and thorough look at one of the most important health issues of our time. This material is a complete, near-encyclopediaic work aimed at weight regulating mechanisms of the human body. I've never seen a similar approach in the multiple volumes I've reviewed in the past.

Some chapters are very unique and familiar only to highly specialized health professionals like endocrinologists, behavioral psychologists, and neurologists, yet reading them is easy and entertaining.

This book is a game changer. I highly recommend it to the general public as well as to health care providers at all levels.

**Evgeniy A. Shchelchkov, MD, Chairman, Department of Neurology
The Washington Health System, Washington, PA**

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I am a practicing clinical cardiologist, as a subspecialist in the field of cardiac electrophysiology, and treat patients with heart rhythm disturbances. I constantly see patients with abnormal heart rhythms that are undoubtedly exacerbated by obesity and sedentary lifestyle.

I am often times asked by patients about how to lose weight. There certainly is no easy answer, and I find myself telling patients that “If it were easy, everybody would do it.” Indeed, weight loss and self-help books are among the most popular books sold to eagerly accepting consumers looking for ways to lose weight.

In Ms. Babcock’s book, *Why We Overeat and How to Stop*, she provides compelling insight into the fundamental reasons why all of us are prone to overeating. The all-encompassing comprehensive approach to this book truly makes it stand out. The subject has proven to be of great personal interest to Ms. Babcock, as she details her own personal struggle with overeating and how she successfully dealt with her struggle.

The book is thoroughly researched, well written, and wide reaching. It touches upon the importance of our emotional behaviors (you may think twice about giving your crying baby a snack to calm him down after reading this book), the challenge of the American diet as it currently stands, and the utmost importance in which exercise minimizes overeating.

It has proven to be a very enjoyable read, with practical advice that just makes sense, and I intend to wholeheartedly recommend this book to my patients going forward.

**Jeffrey Liu, MD, Clinical Cardiac Electrophysiologist
South Hills Cardiology Associates, Bethel Park, PA**

Many of us have struggled with the vicious cycle of overeating, followed by the pledge to dieting and exercising, only to find ourselves back to overeating. Although there are numerous books available on obesity and healthy living in the form of nutritional advice and exercise to combat the obesity epidemic, *Why We Overeat and How to Stop* offers a unique viewpoint on overeating through a cognitive behavioral lens.

Ms. Babcock applies nearly thirty years of clinical experience to assist us in challenging our thinking and changing our behavior in relation to overeating. She provides insights into the obesity epidemic and offers an easily understood overview of how our brains function in relation to compulsive behaviors such as overeating, explaining how the emotional brain often sabotages our ability to maintain control as it seeks immediate gratification through eating. Incorporation of gratitude, life balance, mindfulness, and altruism in addition to practical, actionable strategies to contain the urge to overeat are provided.

Why We Overeat and How to Stop moves beyond thinking of diets, pounds, numbers, and scales and challenges readers to critically appraise overeating, set meaningful, individualized goals, and move beyond all-or-nothing thinking in an effort to promote our healthiest selves.

As a practicing Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner with nearly twenty years clinical experience diagnosing and treating individuals with a variety of mental health disorders, I found that *Why We Overeat and How to Stop* provided a wealth of information on compulsive eating and offers readers useful clinical pearls to incorporate into their lives. I certainly plan to recommend this book to clients who struggle with eating issues and also feel that this book can benefit anyone struggling with compulsive behaviors.

Kirstyn M. Kameg, DNP, PMHNP-BC
Professor of Nursing, AIME Project Director, PMHNP Program
Coordinator, Robert Morris University, School of Nursing & Health
Sciences

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Elizabeth Babcock has written one of the most easily "digested" self-help books I have ever read. *Why We Overeat and How to Stop* provides a wealth of information about how evolution, neuroscience, culture, and society influence the way we eat, and, more importantly, many well-thought-out and tested strategies for making profound life changes. She manages to convey all of this in a conversational style without jargon or undue complexity. It is as though she is sitting across the room from and talking directly to the reader. Her insight, compassion, and support emanate throughout. *Why We Overeat and How to Stop* is an invaluable resource for people struggling with overeating and the professionals who are trying to help them.

Robert Mason, LCSW CEAP, Director of Employee Assistance Services
21st Century Employee Assistance Partners, Inc., Pittsburgh, PA

I have had the privilege of previewing *Why We Overeat and How to Stop*. As someone who has battled food addiction all of my life, I find Ms. Babcock's words and concepts so simple that I wonder why no one else has ever been able to fine-tune the art of normalizing food consumption and taking the fight out of the process.

Reading her words is as easy as listening to her talk and she *just makes sense!* Her approach to why we eat, how we eat, how we choose our food, how we shop and most certainly what we define as food should be the foundation for the way we honor our bodies and thus feed not only our physical self but our soul. And for so many of us, this balance would create bliss! Thanks to this author for taking on the book writing challenge to set many of us on a new course and a much more fulfilling life!

**Debra Bates, RN, Director of Health Ministries
Christ United Methodist Church, Bethel Park, PA**

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I have just finished reading *Why We Overeat and How to Stop*, by Elizabeth Babcock. This book is nothing short of remarkable in its ability to address the dynamics of overeating in a clear and understandable manner as well as those processes needed to make change.

Ms. Babcock initially uses self-disclosure as a means of relating to those readers who have had struggles with eating. Importantly she also validates her passion around the subject matter and the extensive work she has done with those that have had similar toil.

I highly recommend this book for individuals who have fought with overeating and for anyone wishing to treat clients who have had any issues around eating. It is easily understood and written in language that can be followed by clients, and novice as well as seasoned clinicians. I plan on keeping a number of copies to lend counselors in training and clients who wish to explore "how they be" in the world and how to get to how they "wish to be" in the world.

**Dr. John D Massella, LPC, NCC, CCS, CCDP
Assistant Professor and Clinician, California University of
Pennsylvania**

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If you are looking for a quick fix—a lose-10-pounds-in-10-days-type diet book—keep looking. If, however, you are ready to get off the weight-loss roller coaster—lose a few, gain even more, work even harder to lose even less—then this book is for you.

Diets don't work. Clinical and empirical research supports that, but if you've ever been on a diet, you don't need research to tell you that—you are living, breathing proof! In this practical, readable, intellectually digestible resource, Ms.

Babcock explains in simple terms the complex neurobiology of eating and overeating, of cravings, and of one's preference for being a couch potato rather than an Energizer Bunny®.

More importantly, Ms. Babcock explains how to work with rather than against nature to improve one's physical well-being, while simultaneously improving one's mental well-being. What "diet" does that permanently?

This book should be read chronologically, at least upon the first read. Engage your intelligent brain, the cerebral cortex, by highlighting key phrases or dog-earring pages that resonate with your spirit, your emotional brain, the limbic system.

After the first read, *Why We Overeat and How to Stop* could be referenced asynchronously. In other words, you could (and as much as I dislike this word when speaking about nutrition, especially as it pertains to the word "diet") *should* read, reread, and reference this information on your journey to health, wholeness, and vitality. In other words, immerse your mind and indulge your senses in this book. Devour it repeatedly!

While this book is intended for individuals struggling with emotional food and eating issues, health professionals would certainly benefit from reading it as well. I recommend it for counselors/psychotherapists, Registered Dietitian Nutritionists, personal trainers, health coaches, Registered Nurses, and primary care providers (MDs/DOs/CRNPs/PAs).

It's a much more flavorful read than the current buzzwords and hot topics—Stages of Change, Motivational Interviewing, and Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs—of chronic disease management (which includes obesity) and yet, *Why We Overeat and How to Stop* indirectly encompasses all those areas.

As a Registered Dietitian Nutritionist and Certified Diabetes Educator specializing in disordered eating/eating disorders and lifestyle coaching for chronic disease, this material wasn't inherently new or unfamiliar to me. However, it was presented in a way—with word pictures, examples, real-life stories, and simple terminology—that provided a framework and patient-centric language for explaining complex neurobiological processes.

I was invited to read and review the book during its (excuse the pun) baking process, and am looking forward to its publication so that I may recommend it to clients who struggle with emotional (over)eating and/or yo-yo dieters looking for a new, radically positive approach to eating and weight management.

Happy reading, moving, living, loving, and eating! Bon Appétit!

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