

Toastmasters International Speechcraft Programme Winner 2011

Indulgence

by Roxanne Watson

It all starts with one cookie; one double Decker, triple chocolate, ooie gooie melt in your mouth – cookie. What’s the harm I will just have one...mmm... A sugary sweet explosion! Decadent chocolate coats your palate with pure delight. It is better than you imagined it to be! And ... and... it’s gone in flash. I will just have one more. I’m sure that one disappeared even faster! You find yourself looking over your shoulder to see if the coast is clear to take another even when you know you are the only one at home. And before you know it, you have eaten the entire jar of cookies. That’s it I am never eating again!

Ladies and gentlemen we have all been there. Caught ourselves red handed indulging in the infamous pleasures of the food industries. Then, we have that awful guilty feeling for eating the entire jar. And what is our solution to indulging? Extreme dieting of course and that all time favourite; the diet pill. It’s quick and easy so what’s the fuss.

I have an aunt that lives in America and bless her Texan heart but she is the perfect example as to how far indulgence can be taken. She is, a well fed lady that loves cakes and sweets more than any other food. On top of this she has a voice that sends shivers down my spine and has been known to make small children cry. “Roxanne!” Roxanne: “Yes Aunt Gillian” Aunty: “you study food, right?” Roxanne: “yes I do” Aunty: “wont you be a darling and come look at my calculations for my new diet” Roxanne: “of course” “ see here if I don’t eat for three days and 6 hours and can have me my chocolate cake” Roxanne: “Aunty Gillian you don’t have to starve yourself. You can eat a balanced meal and still have a slice of cake one a week” Aunt: “girl, have you lost your mind! I am going to be starving and you only want me to have one slice of cake! NO! I want the whole dam cake”

What do you say to that? This very educated woman with degrees coming out her ears would rather starve to eat an entire cake than eat a nutritious meal that only comes with a slice of cake. Shocked really doesn’t describe it. You think the

Americans have an indulgence problem; you obviously have not seen the South African statistics lately.

Did you know that 56% of South African woman are either overweight or obese. That is more than half the population! We are the third largest country in the entire world. This leads to more woman taking drastic measures to lose the indulgence weight. A survey recently done shows that 15 out of 20 woman would rather starve to see quick weight loss results than eat a balanced meal that would obviously take longer to show some results. Where is the sense in that?

Women, understandable, are particularly vulnerable to images that the media deems socially acceptable. The anorexics that dominate the run ways and movie screens make us want to do one of two things. Either eat ourselves into a food induced coma fueled by self pity knowing that we would never look like that or never eat again, to look like that. Media then preys on these emotionally unstable women by promoting diet pills. You can eat whatever you like and be skinny with this miracle tablet.

My personal favourite is the bio slim adverts. You know; the one with that girl and her eight pack abs, Caribbean spray tan and fish lips. She gets into a gigantic pair of jeans and proclaims to have lost 170kg just by using bio slim. That girl was never fat. Nobody has fabulously tight skin like that after being obese. These adverts are insulting our intelligence but we do not notice because we are too busy jumping in the car to go get some.

Modern society has resorted to a life of such extremes. We indulge ourselves then starve to get rid of what indulgence has done to your body. We have lost our sense of balance and with it; our piece of mind. We have become lazy and gullible, always trying to find an easier way out of a hard situation. Well you know what, life is hard! And it becomes even harder when you find yourself in the situation of being overweight or obese. Losing weight may take many years of hard work and determination but once you find balance in body and mind, you will realise it was all worthwhile. You will become free to dedicate your time and effort on much greater things in life than the size of your waist line.

Always remember that shortcuts get you nowhere and if it sounds too good to be true, it is because it probably is.

And that ladies and gentleman is how the cookie crumbles.