

Excerpted from *Master Your Diet Habits: Metabolism, Your Brain, and Solving Your Food Issues*.

Chapter 2. You, the Dieter: A Questionnaire

The following questionnaire is written in mostly a yes or no answer format.

Tick off your answers to these questions, but get out a notebook and make commentary to yourself about any points that particularly apply to you or make you think or want to expand on your thinking.

Do so!

Write out your thoughts in a notebook or journal, regarding any of these questions, or your answers to these questions, that rouse you to do so.

Remember, much of this book is about **connecting the dieter to the diet and back again**.

This is your opportunity to reveal yourself to... yourself.

Awareness is the first step to overcoming any food diet or weight issues. Self-understanding is part of that. So while I ask these questions in a quantitative yes or no form, and you check them off accordingly, **expand on your thoughts in your own notebook**.

Since I first released this questionnaire, I've had a lot of feedback. People who've filled it out have emailed me telling me that when they saw their answers it caused them to cry. It can be eye-opening, and even hard to face some of these. But it's important. Go into it with an open mind, and be true and honest.

Some points will feel extremely personal to you, and some will not. Everyone experiences food issues differently and for different reasons. Only you have the answers to your own dilemma. I will also add key comments at the end of this section.

Tick off each answer with the yes or a no, add any personal comments you feel relevant. For "yes" answers, you can also rate them on a 1-10 "intensity" scale.

Questionnaire

Questions	Yes/No	Personal Notes
1) Are your waking thoughts consumed or dominated by issues that deal with how you eat, why you eat, resisting the urge to eat, or equating any of the above to how you feel about yourself?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Intensity: 1-2-3-4-5-6-7-8-9-10
2) Is food or diet never far from your conscious mind?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Intensity: 1-2-3-4-5-6-7-8-9-10
3) When you think about yourself and food, do you think in absolute terms of being either "on" or "off" a diet or eating regimen?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Intensity: 1-2-3-4-5-6-7-8-9-10
4) Are you easily distracted or even upset by having indulgent food (goodies) in your presence?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Intensity: 1-2-3-4-5-6-7-8-9-10
5) Do you have an emotional conception of right and wrong foods? Do you eat the 'wrong' foods only when alone, and/or do you hide your eating of indulgent foods?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Intensity: 1-2-3-4-5-6-7-8-9-10
6) Do you always know more or less exactly what you weigh?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Intensity: 1-2-3-4-5-6-7-8-9-10
7) Do you ever find yourself eating indulgent foods even when you know at the time you really don't want to?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Intensity: 1-2-3-4-5-6-7-8-9-10
8) Do you ever participate in post-indulgent guilt practices like 'guilt-cardio' the day after an indulgence, or cutting carbs and restricting food the day after an indulgence?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Intensity: 1-2-3-4-5-6-7-8-9-10
9) When it comes to indulgent eating do you find yourself arguing internally with yourself, before or after?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Intensity: 1-2-3-4-5-6-7-8-9-10
10) Do you feel powerless around indulgent foods, especially specific kinds of indulgent foods?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Intensity: 1-2-3-4-5-6-7-8-9-10

11) When indulgent food is present at (for example) a staff meeting or somewhere you do not expect it to be, and not around meal times, do you spend time or focus on that food in a sensory way? In other words do you focus or get distracted by how good it looks, or how good it smells, that kind of thing?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Intensity: 1-2-3-4-5-6-7-8-9-10
12) Does this kind of scenario in question 11 make you react emotionally, trying to resist the temptation of eating or noticing the food? (Or do you merely see it as there for others, but do not 'feel' it at all?)	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Intensity: 1-2-3-4-5-6-7-8-9-10
13) Address honestly how you respond to a food cue. If your favourite food is put in front of you, do you find it hard to resist no matter if you are not even hungry? Does such a scenario create an inner struggle with you?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Intensity: 1-2-3-4-5-6-7-8-9-10
14) Do you wake up each day and start a battle of 'food is my enemy'?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Intensity: 1-2-3-4-5-6-7-8-9-10
15) Do you find yourself more than once per day engaging in self-talk or emotional reaction dealing with food or diet contemplation?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Intensity: 1-2-3-4-5-6-7-8-9-10
16) Do you stick to a diet for a few days then always blow it?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Intensity: 1-2-3-4-5-6-7-8-9-10
17) Do you have a difficult time knowing when you are full or satiated?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Intensity: 1-2-3-4-5-6-7-8-9-10
18) Do you feel remorse, shame or guilt after a diet sabotage? If so, rate that emotional state on a scale of 1-10, 10 being the highest?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Intensity: 1-2-3-4-5-6-7-8-9-10
19) Do you rationalize unwise eating choices or food denial choices in very strange ways? If so, do you engage in psychological negotiation with yourself about it?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Intensity: 1-2-3-4-5-6-7-8-9-10
20) If you consider yourself over-weight, skip this question. If you are thin do you stay that way only because you wage a constant mental and emotional battle within yourself about food, each and every day?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Intensity: 1-2-3-4-5-6-7-8-9-10

21) Do you consider yourself 'not thin' or 'not lean' and therefore do you hate or despise your body or certain parts of it because of this?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Intensity: 1-2-3-4-5-6-7-8-9-10
22) Are you preoccupied about what you are going to eat or how much exercise you need to do to burn it off? For instance, are you emotionally plugged into the "buzz words" of fat-burning workouts and the like?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Intensity: 1-2-3-4-5-6-7-8-9-10
23) Do you find you get angry at yourself over how much time you spend thinking about food or diet?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Intensity: 1-2-3-4-5-6-7-8-9-10
24) If someone says something hurtful to you, do you often react by thinking about or taking part in a food indulgence?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Intensity: 1-2-3-4-5-6-7-8-9-10
25) Similarly, if you have a bad day do you find yourself reacting to this by thinking about or taking part in a food indulgence?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Intensity: 1-2-3-4-5-6-7-8-9-10
26) Do you find yourself tired or even exhausted over your inner emotional reactions to your thoughts and feelings about food/diet/weight? In other words do the related feelings of fear, guilt, anger, shame, exhaust you?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Intensity: 1-2-3-4-5-6-7-8-9-10
27) Do you ever dream about food?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Intensity: 1-2-3-4-5-6-7-8-9-10
28) Do your preoccupations with food have a focus more toward foods you like and want, or toward foods you try to avoid? And are these foods the same?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Intensity: 1-2-3-4-5-6-7-8-9-10
29) Do you equate being alone with being lonely?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Intensity: 1-2-3-4-5-6-7-8-9-10
30) When you are alone do you look to find something to do to occupy yourself?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Intensity: 1-2-3-4-5-6-7-8-9-10
31) Is alone time a danger time for you to over-indulge in food or over-contemplate resisting food?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Intensity: 1-2-3-4-5-6-7-8-9-10

32) Will you go out of your way to pursue a food reward? In other words would you act on impulse and drive to a store and get an indulgent food you crave, as in pre-meditate or respond to an indulgence impulse?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Intensity: 1-2-3-4-5-6-7-8-9-10
<hr/>		
33) Do you always know what you weigh?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Intensity: 1-2-3-4-5-6-7-8-9-10
<hr/>		
34) Does the weight scale itself induce an emotional reaction in you? In other words is it a source of fear or dread or reward? Do you give the weight scale the power to dictate your mood?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Intensity: 1-2-3-4-5-6-7-8-9-10

I hope you have taken the time to not only answer these questions, but think about them as well in the most personal and intimate sense. Using these questions as a jumping off point can not only teach you about yourself but also narrow down and pinpoint where your problems lie in the triangle of awareness with food and diet?

I have deliberately spread these questions out and not grouped them in sections. But all of these questions, taken together, address the physical, mental and emotional elements of food, diet, weight, and your own *experience* of food, diet and weight.

What have you learned from this questionnaire?

If you think it hasn't told you anything you don't already know, then look again. Address this questionnaire as a scale of intensity. In terms of answers, the more questions to which you answered yes, the deeper and more extensive are your issues with food/diet/eating and/or weight.

Step 1:

Count the number of "yes" answers.

If you answered 'yes' to 4 or more questions here you have some sort of food/eating/diet/bodyweight issue that is negatively impacting your life. What you need to address is to what degree and intensity this is true for you.

The more 'yes' answers you list, the deeper and more intense are your issues to solve and remedy.

Step 2:

After answering 'yes' to any of these questions, then rate them in terms of intensity on a scale of 1-10 as well.

As you address yourself by answering these questions, look again at the fallacy of the diet/fitness/supplement industry by comparison. If you have any of these issues, emotional,

mental, physical, and behavioural, **has a diet or nutritional knowledge ever done anything for you to solve or cure these issues?**

It's time to get real.

The diet industry has no stake in anyone actually solving these issues.

To solve any of these issues is to have food disassociated with the conscious process of thought and emotion. No matter how externally successful you think a diet is performing for you, if you are still emotionally and mentally over-concerned with diet and food; then you are not holistically healthy. Only when food and diet become non-issues; only when you have grander and more important self-empowering things to think about and emotions to feel; only then are you free from diet-prison. The diet/fitness/supplement industry is simply the man behind the curtain.

In addressing this questionnaire fully, there are three constants at work either separately or in various combinations:

- people feel a loss of control in regards to indulgent foods to varying degrees
- people feel unsatisfied by food they expect should satisfy them to varying degrees
- there is some kind of over-riding mental preoccupation with food and diets

How these variations play out is entirely an individual thing. That is why the questionnaire is there to help you address your own specific responses.

The truth is your relationship with food is a reflection of your relationship with yourself and with life.

A "diet" does not explain this to you in definable terms. This is why diets feel so difficult. They are not part of you, but rather something you are 'doing to yourself.' For instance if you refer to yourself as fat, ugly, weak, and so on, then your actions, behaviours and emotions connected to food will simply play that out as a self-fulfilling prophecy.