



# Diet with a difference

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## Introduction

Obesity within the Australian population is an increasing concern. In 2005 Australia spent approximately \$830 million on the direct health care costs related to obesity issues (Thorburn, 2005). Since 1983 the prevalence of obesity in Australia has more than doubled (Cameron, et al., 2003).

Research has shown the Body Mass Index (BMI) of the Australian population is increasing (Cameron, et al., 2003). The need for weight loss is an issue within many Australians' thoughts. Diets which regulate food quantities are cumbersome. Measuring food by volume or weight, before or after cooking, collides with an ever increasing frenetic lifestyle.

Diets and dietary advice are in the popular media consistently (Main, 2010; Quist, 2009; Stefanovic & Wilkinson, 2011). Each has its own ideas and methodology. Some programs (Jenny Craig, 2011; SureSlim, 2011; Weight Watchers, 2011) are more complex, some are simpler and others provide the food. Others do medical tests for evaluation and some programs include a number of these procedures. An alternative diet which involves no special foods and an uncomplicated food measurement system is required. The mainstay of this methodology is commonsense. Commonsense towards exercise and quality of food is required for the effectiveness of this regime.

This brief article seeks to propose an innovative concept for assisting in the regulation of food consumption quantities either as an outcome within itself or while you investigate the psychological underpinnings for the overeating. Many diets require the weighing of food or using measurements as a guide towards the quantity of food allowed to be consumed e.g. a cup of beans. The process of measuring food (by whatever means) puts an extra requirement on the individual undertaking the eating program. If that requirement is made simple the client's compliance to the regime may increase.

The proposal is to have the measurement of one mouthful. The number of mouthfuls would be determined by the therapist in conjunction with the client and if required a nutritionist or dietician. Some fundamentals are required before the activation of this form of diet. It is important that:

1. The client has sufficient knowledge of healthy dietary requirement
2. The client has the ability to apply the principles of a healthy diet.

The process is very simple and for a client who is within the normal height range the following would apply:

The client has at any meal time 7 mouthfuls of food. Mouthfuls cannot be carried forward to another meal and drinks (unless it would be classified as part of a meal such as soup) is not considered in the 7 mouthfuls.

The concept is very simple. If a sandwich made from 2 normal pieces of square bread (or equivalent) with filling is cut into four pieces as shown:

(Ellie (Almost Bourdain), 2008)

each quarter could be considered a mouthful. You can ask your client, "How many sandwiches would you eat for lunch?" Most people would eat one or two. Depending on the filling it could be a very big mouthful for some people. Seven mouthfuls would constitute almost two sandwiches. If two sandwiches would be sufficient for a meal such as lunch it can serve as a guide for other meals. Henceforth seven mouthfuls would be sufficient for a meal at other times.



This concept is a way of illustrating to your client that the amount of food they eat is excessive backed up by the fact they are overweight. If they reduce the quantity they eat (unless some over riding medical condition exists) they will lose weight. They have a perfect portion control measurement which can be used whether they are at home having a meal or at a restaurant.

The therapeutic pathway is now clear for the technique being the therapy (which I don't usually advocate) or as a prelude whilst further therapy is undertaken. Once the client accepts the concept it can be implanted within the hypnotic state by direct suggestion or any of the PRAID techniques. E.g. using Ideomotor Questioning you can use the part of the client who can implement the portion control. That part can negotiate with all other parts to get acceptance of the 7 mouthfuls and then implement the technique. After a few days the client will feel seven mouthfuls is enough to satisfy their hunger.

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