



Dr. Boz presents:

THE INFORMATION STATION!

A monthly Q&A session with **YOU** the reader, where Dr. Boz uses his years of training (and additional years of Googling) to provide witty, entertaining, and occasionally useful and accurate responses to questions regarding health and wellness.

Episode 1.1 – Picky Eaters, Mental Cheaters, Movie Theaters, and something else that doesn't rhyme with Eaters.

Welcome one and all to The Information Station! I'm your host, the world renowned Dr. Boz (I went to school with someone from Japan). The Information Station is a brand new feature of your monthly Bootcamp/HappyFluffyFunTime Babble. Think of it as your own personal 'Dear Abby' of wellness, somewhere you can go to ask those embarrassing questions under the secrecy of a cleverly conceived signature such as "Chubby Hubby" or "Fast Food Fatty in the Fort." OK, maybe clever was too strong a word, but I think you get the gist.

The bottom line of The Information Station (also known as "TIS") is to provide useful tools for managing the ups and downs associated with trying to live a healthy lifestyle, all under the guise of alleged humor. TIS welcomes real questions from real people, and in fact encourages it! More than likely, a question you have is probably a question someone else has as well, so feel free to send your questions or comments to drboz75@yahoo.com. There is no such thing as a stupid question . . . only stupid people who ask questions, so please don't hesitate to ask away!

And now — on to the show.

Q: Hi Dr. Boz! Just wanted to say I love your column (even though this is the first one)! Anyhoo, I have been trying to lose weight my entire life. Every time I go to a doctor, they keep telling me to eat vegetables. Um . . . I HATE VEGETABLES! I try, really I do, but they make me gag! I can tolerate only a couple, but they are the bad ones like potatoes and corn (and usually drowning in butter sauce). I'm really committed to losing weight and making a positive lifestyle change, but I'm just not blessed to be a veggie eater. What can I do? *Tim O. in Decatur*

A: First off, thanks for the praise for my column (even though this is the first one). Also, I must say that you sound like an extremely handsome, intelligent, and probably eligible young bachelor. You are probably nice to your mother, and I expect that you will go places in this world.

But back to your question. I find there are plenty of folks out there just like you. I consulted with my colleague, Dr. Google, and he had some delightful suggestions for you. First, make a list of the vegetables you DO enjoy. Since you like corn and potatoes, this is a good place to start. Of course it's not great to have all the butter, but you can work on lowering that amount over time. Second, don't be afraid to eat fruits, too! While fruits have more calories (sugars in particular), they are still a fairly healthy option in their natural state. Try choosing lots of different colors to ensure you are getting the maximum vitamin benefit from the fruits and veggies you eat.

Unfortunately, there is no magic cure or pill to make you love veggies. There are options though. For example, try cooking them different ways. While you may not like raw carrots, perhaps you can tolerate them cooked. You might also experiment throwing in slivers of vegetables in the dishes you already eat (maybe whole wheat pastas or brown rice). Thin slices are probably easier to "choke down" than gigantic chunks of vegetables you don't like to eat. It all counts in the end. Even a few bits of a vegetable are better than nothing. And again, it is a good starting point upon which to build your vegetable repertoire.

If all else fails, I suggest maybe contacting Oprah to see if you can borrow her chef.

Q: Hey Dr. Boz. Long time reader, first time writer (even though this is your first advice column). I'm having a bit of an issue, and the only one to blame is me. For some reason, I insist on lying to myself about everything regarding my health. I exercise for 30 minutes (which is great!), but somehow it turns into 45 minutes in my head (well it took me eight minutes to get to the gym, so that counts as well!). I have a little bit extra to eat at supper,

but tell myself it doesn't count "since I didn't eat that much more." I don't work out for a week, but it was because my back "really hurts." I have a snack at night, but it's OK because I didn't eat much during the day. My life is full of 'Yeah Buts' or outright untruths! Why do I do this, and how do I make myself stop? *Fibby McFibsalot in Fort Wayne*

A: Ah, the dreaded 'Yeah Buts.' I think everyone goes through this at some point, although some of us are habitual 'Yeah Butters.' Consider this: Why do children lie? It's not because they are "bad" necessarily (although I imagine a world of parents and teachers may beg to differ). Children usually lie because they are afraid of what might happen if they tell the truth. Usually, lying occurs when we've done something that goes against what we believe. When this situation occurs, we are left with a negative feeling because our actions and our thoughts are in opposition. Since we've already engaged in the behavior, the only way to get rid of the negative feeling is to change what we think. Therefore, we "justify" our actions by trying to convince ourselves that we really believe they are OK.

The reality, though, is that we are usually not too successful in this process. We just end up feeling guilty (angry, frustrated, depressed, or whatever negative emotion you choose) because we know we are being dishonest with ourselves. I can't say that you will ever "stop" doing this, but you can certainly be more conscious of the fact that you are already doing it, which makes it more difficult to continue doing it. I'd suggest writing down your 'Yeah Buts' for a week or two to look for patterns in when they occur. Are they exclusive to your exercise and diet? Do they always occur with your spouse or partner? Is it usually the same time of day when you do it? Once you have some patterns identified, make a conscious effort to look out for the next 'Yeah But.' Picture a gigantic stop sign in your head the moment you start down the 'Yeah But' road. While it will be a bit painful at first (hurt can sometimes accompany honesty), in the long run you will be eliminating a whole host of other negative emotions by dealing with the consequences of your actions immediately.

Q: OMG I HEART YOU DR.BOZ!!! YOU ARE THE BEST COLUMNIST EVER (even though this is your first column)!!! OK, I have a silly question. I LOVE going to the movies. I would go every day if I could afford it. Unfortunately, I also LOVE to get snacks when I go. I mean, what's the point of going to the movies if you can't have a Sam's Club size of buttery popcorn, Raisinets, Snowcaps, and a large Diet Mountain Dew? My hips and thighs, however, are not happy with my movie going antics. Are there any snacks you'd suggest to keep me from becoming 900 pounds and having my own documentary on Discovery Health about extreme morbid obesity? KThxBi! *Christi Candy Consumer in Columbia City*

A: Well, aren't you just the most energetic gal ever? I'm sure those sugary snacks have nothing to do with your effervescent personality! Movie theaters are like the black hole of health and good intentions. We are so conditioned to gorge ourselves at the movies that it almost seems to be against the laws of human nature to go and - you know - just watch a movie. So first off, recognize that you CAN go to the movies without buying anything other than your ticket. The earth will likely continue to rotate.

Now, if you MUST have snacks, here are some helpful tips. First, try eating something prior to the movie. If you are satisfied going into the theater, you are less likely to buy as much once you get there. Second, there is no rule that you HAVE to get the largest size available. Yes, I know it is a great deal to buy the Ultra-Mega-Super-Large for \$0.59 more, but you will just end up eating more. The scary part is you probably will not even recognize it at the time. Eating at movie theaters is a passive experience, so we just do it without really thinking about it. And if we aren't thinking about it, we also aren't thinking about when to stop.

Aside from size issues (this goes with your drinks as well!), look into getting your popcorn without butter. No, really — I'm serious. You can stop laughing now! Oh, OK, if you NEED butter, just try asking for less. Make sure to get the smallest popcorn possible as well, if you just HAVE to have butter. And finally, try picking lesser evils when it comes to candy and drinks. If you want soda, get a diet (and a small one at that). If you can tolerate a bottle of water, that is your best option. Shoot for lower fat candy options such as Tootsie Rolls or Junior Mints. Bring a sandwich bag or something so you can portion out the candy. Half a box is better than the whole thing. Plus, you can bring the rest back for the next movie (unless the mean movie theater people confiscate it).

Similar to the rest of the day, portion control is key. If you have to get something, pick the one item you want most that day. Your hips and thighs will thank me later!

Q: Yeah, I have no idea who you are. Do you have a show on Discovery Health or something? Anyway, someone just told me to ask you a question (since this is your first column), so here it goes. I want to quit smoking 'cuz my wife says "Kissing a smoker is like kissing a dirty ash tray!" While I'm a bit perplexed as to why she kissed a dirty ashtray before, I do kind of agree with her that quitting smoking is a good idea I guess. So, uh . . . yeah, how do I quit and stuff? *Arnie Ashtray in Angola*

A: Your enthusiasm is overwhelming! And no, I don't have a show on Discovery Health. That is Dr. Oz, not Dr. Boz. Perhaps someday they will recognize my talents, but that is a discussion for another column.

So you kinda-sorta want to quit smoking, eh? Good for you! Thinking about change is a step in the right direction, although it also sounds like you are not totally committed to making the change just yet. But that's OK; we all start at this point when we want to make a change. The first step for you is to continue looking at the reasons you might want to quit smoking. Is it just because of your wife's mean (but highly amusing) comment? Do you notice any physical problems that might relate to your smoking (such as breathing issues, increased illness, or higher blood pressure)? Is it just getting to be too darn expensive? Take inventory of some of the negative consequences of smoking, and see if that starts to nudge you towards making the effort to quit.

I don't know how much you smoke, but there are plenty of options out there to aid you in the process. Patches and gums can be effective supplements in curbing the craving for nicotine. It is important, however, to use them properly. There are also medications that can be prescribed by your family doctor to help as well. But don't forget the psychological or emotional parts of the addiction to smoking! Cutting cravings is one thing, but cutting the cues in your environment that trigger your smoking is something else entirely. Do you smoke in certain places or at certain times? Do you smoke when anxious, depressed, angry, or happy? Are there certain people whom you smoke around more than others? Getting a handle on both the physical and psychological parts of your smoking habit is key to success in the long run.

I'd recommend contacting the Indiana Tobacco Quitline at 1-800-QUIT-NOW to get more information. The call is free, and they can help you further with the process of quitting smoking. Good luck!

That's all the time and space I have this month folks. Again, if you have a question for the good Dr. Boz, feel free to email him at drboz75@yahoo.com. Dr. Boz reserves the right to edit the content of your question so as to make it more amusing, unless of course you are amusing in your own right, in which case it shall remain the same. Dr. Boz also reserves the right to talk in third person so as to sound super important and literary. Until next time, keep fighting the good fight!