



McCoy Fitness & Health  
Healthy Living Program

## Why Does My Healthy Lifestyle Offend You?

**One of the biggest obstacles people face** when trying to transition from an unhealthy lifestyle to a healthy one is the social pressure of friends, extended family, co-workers, events and gatherings, and even the people in their own homes. It seems that our choices make them uncomfortable with their own. Maybe they assume that we are judging them when all we are doing is trying to better ourselves, or that we're going to try to force change on them as well. Whatever the reason, it can easily be the toughest aspect of change. No one likes being judged or singled out.

## I'm Not Worried About You, Why Are You Worried About Me?

**When I was in the process of adopting a healthy** lifestyle and in turn, lowering my body fat and building a strong, healthy physique, I had an unbelievable amount of people tell me to "eat more", "stop getting so skinny", and that it was "time to stop". I was floored by how many people felt entitled to vocalize their judgments of me and my choices. I certainly would never tell someone "eat less", "stop getting so fat" or that it was "time to lose weight". I wasn't on some crash diet, I wasn't unhealthy, I had muscles and endurance and energy and yes, I chose salad and chicken more than I chose pizza. My choices had nothing to do with anyone around me and everything to do with my own health and my own body.

**Certainly no one ever voiced their concerns at my former lifestyle**, when I was drinking nothing but diet pop and living on processed foods, 30 pounds overweight. Or when I was living the party lifestyle in Banff for almost 20 years! Has our society become so unhealthy and uninformed that HEALTHY is actually met with negativity and suspicion?

I've actually been lucky to be surrounded by mostly supportive people (these days), but clients tell me all the time about their ill-received refusals to participate in eating junk food with their peers.

- "Oh, one piece won't hurt you."
- "What, are you on one of those fad diets or something?"
- "You're going to make me look bad."
- "You're no fun."
- "Have you been brainwashed?"
- "What's wrong with this?"
- "You're not going to eat my cooking??"

**I could go on and on.** When my husband and I go out to eat, we even get comments from the people who work there about our food choices, like we're weirdos for wanting to eat something that won't make us feel like crap, like when we share appies or share a meal for dinner, or we eat earlier than most, or we don't want bread and butter with our dinner!. (Thankfully I have a husband who shares my healthy lifestyle, but I chose him, I chose this type of person...I could never see myself with a smoker or partier because it just wouldn't be something I'd want to live with day in and day out. Life is all about choices.)

## It's YOUR Life

**Chances are, if you're in the same shoes** and trying to make changes, you're being met with the same attitude. Whatever the reasons, the negativity is there and it is really difficult to deal with. For some, especially those who face the negativity in their homes, it can be so overwhelming that it takes them off the path to good health. It's easy to get sucked in, especially if the former lifestyle is the one where you're still comfortable.



**Just remember...** YOU are the only one who has to live in your body, for the rest of your life. You're the only one who knows exactly why you make the choices that you make. Don't give their words power. Remember that they have their own reasons for speaking up that have absolutely nothing to do with YOU and everything to do with their own insecurities, fears, and lack of correct information. You have become a mirror of sorts, and as you become clean and clear, you are reflecting them back onto themselves. That's their deal, not yours. But also remember that sometimes we conveniently use their dissuasion as a sort of deflection, a means to not take responsibility for our own health and our own life. If that's the case, stop right now. Responsible adults take responsibility for their own lives. That's what responsible adults do!

**It might be helpful to remind your loved ones** that you're not judging their lifestyle by changing yours, but that you just want to feel better. Remind them that you're too busy thinking about your own health to worry about theirs. If you in fact are worried about their health, don't push your lifestyle on them either...lead by example. If and when they want the help, you will likely be the first person they come to and ask for it.

**Most of the people in my life** who made the hurtful comments sometimes thought they were paying me compliments. Chances are, those people in your life have good intentions as well. Keep this in mind, smile and know that you are doing the best that you can for your body and your health. But then there are still others who apparently have our best interests in mind (or so they say) but are

actually jealous or resentful of the changes we are making. Know that they are capable of making the same changes. You're doing it, so too can they.

**Make sure that you are surrounding yourself with people** who have a similar lifestyle to yours, and are supportive of your goals. You don't have to replace any of your old crowd, but having the positive influence will help to balance out any negativity you may be facing.

**Like I always say, *live by example*.** Don't preach, don't try to change others. We have enough work working on changing ourselves, don't you think? Don't defend your new lifestyle (why does an attempt to get healthy have to be defended?) If you find yourself defending your new healthy choices, you have to work on getting those barbs out of you, barbs that often make up a dysfunctional relationship and tells us that our sense of self and self worth is dictated by others, and we need and crave their permission in order to be ok. You simply don't. YOU are enough.

**Practice quiet conviction,** walk the walk, stay open to learning every day, know that you will falter but that you will pick yourself up again and continue on. You're on a mission, a mission to better yourself, and in turn, you better everyone around you. *Live by example* and others will naturally gravitate toward you wondering what you're doing and how you're doing it.

**And finally, remember this:** *never, ever keep yourself small for others.* This is your life! Take back your power. Take full responsibility for it! And dare to live your greatest, grandest version and vision of yourself. That's the best gift we can offer ourselves, others, and the world!

