

LET'S BLAME EVERYONE ELSE

AMERICANS, LIKE PEOPLE ALL OVER THE WORLD, TRY TO AVOID PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY. PSYCHOLOGISTS HAVE MANY COLORFUL TERMS FOR THIS PHENOMENON: DENIAL, RATIONALIZATION, DISPLACEMENT. I ALSO LIKE TO CALL THIS ONE "THE DIMMSDALE SYNDROME", NAMED AFTER THE HYPOCRITICAL MINISTER IN NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE'S *THE SCARLET LETTER* WHO PREACHED AGAINST ADULTERY DESPITE HAVING FATHERED AN ILLEGITIMATE CHILD. A GOOD MODERN EXAMPLE WOULD BE A NUTRITIONIST WHO BERATES HIS PATIENTS FOR THE SLIGHTEST ERROR YET NEGLECTS HIS OWN HEALTH.

WHEN YOU READ *THE PARK AVENUE PLAN* YOU ARE GOING TO BE THE SOLE FOCUS OF ATTENTION. YOUR LOOKS, SELF-CONCEPT AND ATTIRE ARE GOING TO BE DECONSTRUCTED AND THEN RE-ASSEMBLED INTO AN EXCITINGLY UPGRADED MODEL. MEANWHILE LET'S TAKE A FEW MINUTES TO LOOK AT THE WORLD AROUND YOU AND IN TRUE ALL-AMERICAN FASHION BLAME EVERYONE ELSE IN SIGHT.

WHOM SHOULD WE BLAME FIRST FOR YOUR OVERWEIGHT BODY, BAD BLOOD TESTS AND COUCH-POTATO EXERCISE REGIMEN? THE FAST-FOOD INDUSTRY HAS BEEN THE CENTER OF MUCH NEGATIVE PUBLICITY LATELY, SO LET'S START WITH THESE BLOATED CORPORATIONS AND JUMP IN WITH FISTS FLYING. AT LEAST 25% OF AMERICANS HAVE ONE MEAL PER DAY AT A FAST-FOOD "RESTAURANT". DON'T TRY TO FOOL ME. YOU KNOW ALL OF

THEIR ADVERTISING SLOGANS BETTER THAN YOU KNOW THE NAMES AND FUNCTIONS OF THE VITAL ORGANS INSIDE YOUR OWN BODY!

THESE MALEVOLENT FRANCHISES HAVE LURED YOU TO THE MALL OR THE SIDE OF THE TURNPIKE WITH THEIR MEMORABLE JINGLES, CUTSY-POO CARTOON CHARACTERS AND BARGAIN PRICES. IT'S NOT YOUR FAULT THAT THE FOOD TASTES GOOD; IF YOU HAD ACCESS TO THEIR SYNTHETIC FLAVORS, ARTIFICIAL DYES AND THICKENING AGENTS AND HAD NO QUALMS ABOUT DUMPING IN UNNECESSARY SALT AND SWEETENERS, YOU COULD RUN A FAST-FOOD OUTLET FROM YOUR OWN KITCHEN. BUT THE POWER OF CORPORATE MARKETING, THE NEED TO EAT AND RUN, AND THE EXCELLENT "TASTE" OF THOSE CHEESEBURGERS, FRIES AND SODAS HAVE BLINDED YOU TO THEIR NUTRITIONALLY POISONOUS NATURE.

HOW ABOUT THE SCHOOL LUNCHROOM? WHAT'S ON THE MENU TODAY, PERHAPS ALFALFA SPROUTS AND WHEAT GRASS JUICE? YOUR TEACHERS AND PRINCIPAL WOULDN'T WANT TO SERVE FOOD THAT YOU WOULDN'T EAT, THE INCONSIDERATE FOOLS THAT THEY ARE! HOW ABOUT A GIANT SERVING OF MACARONI AND CHEESE, OR, AS WE SAY IN THE HEALTH-CARE WORLD, SATURATED FAT, RANCID OILS AND REFINED FLOUR? PERHAPS A LUKEWARM PIZZA? NO MESSY VITAMINS, MINERALS OR AMINO ACIDS THERE! LOOK AT THE NUMBER OF OVERWEIGHT KIDS IN THE HALLWAY OR IN YOUR CLASSROOM. IT'S CLEARLY THE SCHOOL'S FAULT!

HOW MUCH TIME DID YOUR GREAT-GRANDPARENTS SPEND

CHATTING ON THE INTERNET, PLAYING COMPUTER GAMES OR WATCHING TELEVISION? LIFE ON THE FARMS OF EUROPE, SOUTH AMERICA AND ASIA USUALLY BEGAN AT DAWN AND LASTED UNTIL SUNSET. HOW COULD THE WORKERS SQUEEZE IN FOUR HOURS OF SEDENTARY, MINDLESS PURPOSELESS FUN? IN FACT, WHICH 18TH OR 19TH CENTURY JOBS WERE SEDENTARY? BLAME THE INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION AND MODERN TECHNOLOGY FOR YOUR OVERWEIGHT PHYSIQUE!

ABE LINCOLN WALKED SEVERAL MILES TO AND FROM THE SCHOOLHOUSE EVERY DAY. HOW COME HIS PARENTS DIDN'T BELONG TO A CAR POOL IN SPRINGFIELD, ILLINOIS, AND DON'T GIVE ME THE EXCUSE THAT AUTOMOBILES HADN'T YET BEEN INVENTED! IT'S NOT YOUR FAULT THAT YOU DON'T WALK OFF THOSE EXCESSIVE CALORIES. BLAME GENERAL MOTORS, HENRY FORD AND MERCEDES-BENZ, AND LET'S ALSO BLAME BICYCLES, SCOOTERS, MOVING SIDEWALKS AND EVEN GOLF CARTS. DON'T BLAME YOURSELF; YOU'RE ONLY THE PASSENGER.

DO YOU KNOW WHAT "PEER PRESSURE" IS? IF NOT, TRY ANSWERING THESE QUESTIONS? "WANT TO GO WITH US FOR A PIZZA AND SOME BEERS?"; "HOW ABOUT A SLICE OF MY CHOCOLATE CAKE?"; "SHOULD WE STOP IN HERE FOR A BURGER AND FRIES?"; "HOW ABOUT ANOTHER HELPING OF LASAGNA?" DO YOU AUTOMATICALLY SAY "YES" IF YOUR FRIENDS OR FAMILY MAKE THOSE OFFERS? IF SO, BLAME THEM FOR COERCING YOU INTO SOCIALLY ACCEPTABLE FORMS OF OVEREATING. IT'S RUDE AND NASTY TO REFUSE AN INVITATION TO GAIN WEIGHT IF IT COMES

FROM PEOPLE YOU KNOW, AND IT'S NOT YOUR FAULT WHEN THOSE EXTRA POUNDS POP A FEW SHIRT BUTTONS.

HOW ABOUT ESCAPING FROM THE TRAVAILS OF SCHOOL OR WORK AND HEADING TO THE BEACH, BALLPARK OR MOVIES? AND BETWEEN SWIMMING, SUNBATHING AND WORKING ON THAT SEXY TAN, LET'S HAVE A NICE SALAD! OR WHILE YOU ARE CHEERING YOUR FAVORITE SPORTS TEAM, COOL OFF WITH SOYMILK. WHO NEEDS A GARBAGE-PAIL SIZED SERVING OF POPCORN AT THE CINEPLEX? I'M SURE THAT YOU'D PREFER A HALF GRAPEFRUIT! THESE ARE ALL NUTRITIONALLY BETTER RECOMMENDATIONS, SO WHY AREN'T THEY READILY AVAILABLE? TIME TO ASSIGN SHAME AND BLAME TO CONEY ISLAND, YANKEE STADIUM AND 100'S OF MOVIE THEATERS, AND THIS IS IN NEW YORK CITY ALONE. DON'T BLAME YOURSELF: YOU'RE PART OF A "CAPTIVE AUDIENCE".

WHERE DO YOU SHOP? I HOPE THAT IT'S NOT AT AN AIRPLANE-HANGER SIZED WAREHOUSE WHERE HOUSEHOLD GOODS ARE SOLD BY THE PALETTE AND FOOD ITEMS LOOK LIKE OVERSIZED PROPS FROM "GULLIVER'S TRAVELS". WANT A CREAM DOUGHNUT? IT'S "BETTER" TO BUY 20. WANT A BOX OF BREAKFAST CEREAL? WHEN YOU ARE FINISHED EATING THE CONTENTS, YOU CAN SIT INSIDE THE BOX TO AVOID SUNBURN. NEED BUTTER OR CREAM CHEESE FOR YOUR TOAST? NOW YOU CAN HOST AN ENTIRE SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA AT TEATIME.

BLAME THESE STORES FOR REWARDING YOUR MEMBERSHIP WITH "ECONOMICAL" OPTIONS THAT SHOULD BE SENT TO IMPOVERISHED THIRD WORLD NATIONS. IT'S NOT YOUR FAULT

THAT YOU CAN'T BUY A "NORMAL" QUANTITY OF FOOD IN THESE WAREHOUSES. JUST MAKE SURE THAT YOU DON'T DEVELOP A HERNIA WHEN YOU LIFT UP ALL YOUR PURCHASES AFTER PAYING THE CHECK-OUT PERSON.

THERE ARE OVER 6 BILLION PEOPLE IN THE WORLD, AND ALL OF THEM IN SOME WAY ARE TO BLAME FOR YOUR OVERWEIGHT BODY, LAZY LIFESTYLE AND POOR SELF-IMAGE. BUT THERE'S ONLY ONE PERSON WHO CAN HELP YOU. STAND UP, GO TO THE MIRROR, SMILE AND MEET THE HERO OR HEROINE THAT CAN RESCUE YOU. LOOK CAREFULLY, BECAUSE YOU ARE SEEING AN ALTERED IMAGE OF THAT KNIGHT OR MAIDEN; THE REAL ONE LIES UNDERNEATH, INSIDE OF YOURSELF.

YOU ARE GOING TO LEARN HOW TO "TURN OFF" THE TEMPTATIONS OF OUR CARELESS, BLOATED AND UNHEALTHY SURROUNDINGS AND TO DEVELOP A VERY PRODUCTIVE SELFISHNESS. I WANT YOU TO CARE ONLY ABOUT YOURSELF WHEN CONFRONTED WITH FOODS THAT WILL ULTIMATELY CAUSE MORE HARM THAN PLEASURE. EVERYONE ELSE ON EARTH CAN BE BLAMED FOR YOUR PRESENT STATE OF AFFAIRS, BUT NO ONE ELSE IS GOING TO LIVE YOUR LIFE. THE BATTLE WILL PIT YOU AGAINST THE GIANT CORPORATIONS, MODERN TECHNOLOGY, OVERSIZED MEALS, PEER PRESSURE AND PHYSICAL INERTIA, YET THIS IS ONE BATTLE THAT YOU CAN WIN! *THE PARK AVENUE PLAN* WILL SHOW YOU HOW.