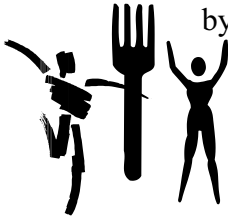


Quotations from Combined Areas

Quotations from life stories related to combined areas of physical activity, food and eating, and body image shared by adults in rural Idaho, Montana, and Wyoming
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Quotations collected from one-on-one interviews and focus groups conducted in Lewistown, Montana; Preston, Idaho; and Powell, Wyoming; March/April 2002

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Wellness IN the Rockies (WIN the Rockies) is a community-based research, intervention and outreach project that seeks to improve people's health in Idaho, Montana and Wyoming. The philosophy of the project is people have responsibility for their own health, but communities have responsibility for helping create environments that foster good health and provide healthy options.

The qualitative research phase of the project included the collection of narratives or life stories related to physical activity, food and eating, and body image from 103 adults in three rural communities. The interview team conducted 56 one-on-one interviews with 29 women and 27 men, and six focus groups with 28 women and 19 men. Interviewees ranged in age from 17 to nearly 90 years. The interviews and focus groups were recorded on cassette tapes, which were then transcribed. Over 55 hours of conversations were recorded, resulting in almost 2300 pages of transcripts. From the transcripts, the research team highlighted 1680 quotations that were then grouped and coded into 146 categories.

Our purpose in gathering the narratives was to elicit experiences that illustrate the challenges people have faced, the successes they have achieved, and the insights they have gained related to physical activity, food and eating, and body image. Our goal is for these stories to guide future educational efforts and help make these efforts more meaningful and relevant. We hope to help people make lasting changes to improve their health.

Interactions between physical activity/food & eating

“Whenever I had a job [where] I was physically active, . . . [food] was more enjoyable to eat because you were hungry.” *Male in his 30's*

“I am really a junky for sweets so I justify my exercising. If I go and ride my bike and I go for a walk, then I can eat that hot fudge sundae.” *Female in her 50's*

“I’m sure . . . everybody would enjoy a fit body and I’m one of them, but I realize that it’s going to take a lot of work to get me there and it’s taking me a long time to get where I am now. . . . I think that having a program that is livable is important. Both with the dieting and with the exercise, . . . if you’re not enjoying them, it’s pretty tough to stick with it.” *Male in his 40's*

“I know for a fact that if I limit what I eat and if I exercise more, it’s a definite decrease in weight, and it’s also an increase in energy.” *Male in his 50's*

“I suddenly became a father. I tried to complete school and work at the same time. And it’s like I was distracted [from healthy eating and physical activity]. . . . Now I want to get back on track.” *Male, early 30's*



Interactions between physical activity/body image

“Weight is a very personal thing. To me, it’s right up there with religion. And so when you’re unconsciously *measuring* yourself against others, . . . that voice isn’t quieted in your mind. So, I would just rather do the physical exercise on my own.” *Female, early 40's*

“I never liked working out in gyms. . . . The chickies . . . were all running around after these body builder guys and you’d just kind of go, ‘Well, what am I doing here? I think I’ll go have a beer.’ ” *Male in his 30's*

“When I went to the college gym, and I was around all the little hard-body girls who looked like little super models out of magazines, . . . I always was comparing myself to them, and I didn’t feel as good when I worked out because I didn’t see myself looking like them.” *Female, mid 20's*

“I’ve always been a very active person . . . even though I’m overweight. . . . All the other kids thought that because I was heavy that I couldn’t participate in these activities, but in PE, . . . I *creamed* all those skinny girls. And it made me feel really good about myself.” *Female, late 20's*

“[I tried] this Cindy Crawford workout and it’s like, ‘Yeah, *right!* You know, *in my dreams* I’ll ever be able to be athletic like that.’ ” *Female, early 40's*

“I’ve been fairly inactive all winter long and so it just seems like the calories kind of pack on and I tend to gain a little bit of extra weight.” *Female in her 40's*

“I never got involved in weightlifting . . . because of my size. I’m not very big, so it doesn’t take too many jokes [to make me quit].” *Male in his 30's*

Interactions between food & eating/body image

“I’m at peace with [my weight]. . . . I’m healthy, and . . . I’m *at peace* with that. It’s not a fight with food.” *Female, late 40’s*

“Show by example that you enjoy life. You enjoy food. You enjoy people of all shapes . . . Talk kindly about everybody. Our children are watching us all the time.” *Female, early 60’s*

“Pouring four or five teaspoons of sugar in . . . coffee when you’re overweight is, . . . well, it’s nonsense. . . . It’s *abuse* of your body. . . . It’s just like smoking. . . . [People] are told it can cause lung cancer and they still do it. So I don’t understand it.” *Male, early 60’s*

“One day [my daughter] said, ‘Mom, when you grew up, were there heavy girls in school?’ and I said no. I could think of one. And I do believe it is [because] we didn’t have the pop and the chips and all those kinds of things.” *Female in her 50’s*

“Once you get fat, it’s nearly impossible to get rid of it. . . . Once it’s there, it doesn’t go away. . . . And some [of my weight gain came from] bad eating habits, certainly.” *Male, late 30’s*

“The white, U.S. world has a real problem trying to accept their fatness because of all the media that you see. . . . And in fact, I think . . . [the media] makes us fatter because we get more nervous and eat more.” *Female, mid 40’s*



Interactions among physical activity/food & eating/body image

“I think a lot of people misunderstand that just because you may look healthy, doesn’t mean that you are healthy.” *Male in his 30’s*

“[One person I know] is in that situation where she sits down and eats because she worries about her health and her kids, and not doing enough exercise. And [she is] scared to go out in public. And it just kind of feeds on itself. It keeps going around in a circle. Her health goes down hill, her self-image goes down hill, and then it affects her mentally. . . . But it can go the other way too. If you eat well balanced meals, and . . . you exercise enough, your self-image is good, which in turn feeds your body image.” *Male, early 50’s*

“[People] just come home and sit in front of the T.V. . . . They’re *couch potatoes* and they’re very, very inactive. And not only that, the fast food business is doing a great business. . . . I think this is where it has changed, because you didn’t see as many heavy people, back in the thirties, forties and fifties.” *Female, in her 60’s*

“This is going to be your body and you want it to be healthy. So the eating and the physical activity should be to make you feel better. It shouldn’t be to make you fit into a size 8 or a size 6. If you feel good and you can do all the things that you want to do, then that’s what you’re supposed to be doing it for.” *Female, mid 30’s*

Education

“If you got your health, you can face life. . . . So, we really need to as a nation [put a priority on health] education, . . . so everybody has a good chance to have a good healthful life.” *Male, 70ish*

“The [foods] which are recommended for your body intake are real because your body has certain needs and demands for either building or maintaining We know about them, but quite often we don’t [follow good nutrition principles]. Well, today I’ll do this, and then tomorrow, I’ll start doing [something better].” *Male, early 40’s*

“Let’s get people educated. Because I think once you start to educate yourself . . . [about] feeling good about yourself, and feeling good about what you eat, and having good nutrition, and getting into a good physical activity program, . . . I think once people start learning about that, they’ll understand stuff so much more and they won’t have such negative attitudes.” *Female, mid 20’s*

Spiritual

“[Physical activity, food and eating, and body image] are kind of a good part of who I am. That’s the essence of our physical being and well being. What does that leave? You’ve got a spiritual well being on the other side, but you feed that a little different.” *Female, 50ish*

“What we are really talking about here is health in general, and there’s a spiritual aspect to health we haven’t covered.” *Male, almost 60*

“To me, food is a gift from God. He blessed us with all these different foods that we can eat, and it’s up to us to use judgment on how we eat it.” *Male in his 30’s*

Television

“Get rid of the television if you have kids. . . . Just keep your kids away from the TV because it’s really an insidious influence and I still watch too much TV. . . . [TV] became such an important part of my life. When you’re kind of a loner, it’s a bizarre form of human contact. You feel like you’re a part of something. You’re not of course, but you feel like you are. So, . . . it’s very easy to abuse TV. I still love sitting in front of the tube and having something to eat. . . . I love doing it. . . . I don’t even have a kitchen table in my house. [In front of the TV] is just kind of where I grew up.” *Male, late 30’s*

“My husband really enjoys TV. . . . So . . . that’s kind of where we are if we want to spend time with him. And I’m not going to tell him to turn off the TV, ’cause he’s an adult.” *Female, 40ish*

“I have no concept of being full. I eat until it’s gone. But that’s improved over the last couple of years. . . . I just liked eating. And it went along with watching TV. They go together you know.” *Male, late 30’s*

