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Don’t Blame the Eater

 When I was a little kid growing up, my mom, who was a bodybuilder would always tell me to eat healthy. She luckily got it through my head that I need to exercise and be physically active. I’m thankful for that. She did this because she saw what eating fast food all the time could do to you when her dad got diagnosed with diabetes when she was younger. After seeing what eating out all the time could do to you she put an emphasis in the household that we need to get at least an hour of exercise each day. There was a point of time when income was tight and we had to eat out or we would starve to death. But, other than that she would always cook healthy meals like, beans and rice, salad, cooked mixed vegetables, pasta with vegetables in it, and much more. There was another point of time when I thought about rebelling against everything she taught me and just eat a whole bunch of fast food, but luckily I didn’t. Eating a whole bunch of unhealthy processed food will cause problems to your body inside and out so eating healthy is good. “Before 1994, diabetes in children was generally caused by a genetic disorder” (Zinczenko). Thinking about that is just crazy. From 22 years ago and two years before I was born diabetes for children was only genetic and now it’s from unhealthy lifestyle as well. I agree with David Zinczenko’s argument in his article “Don’t Blame the Eater.” Obesity rates have risen dramatically from the early 1950s to now. The blame shouldn’t be entirely focused on the eater but on the income of people, the lack of variety, and timing of food.

The shortfall of income that people may have, gives them no other choice then to buy fast food since it’s inexpensive. The main reason that people eat out so much is because the cost of fast food is so cheap. America’s economy isn’t so strong and everyone knows that. During the downfall of the economy when they were laying many people off is a perfect example of this. When people got laid off and didn’t have money to go out and buy healthy food or organic food the only option was fast food. During this time when people were getting laid off we went through a time of fast food all the time. My mom got her hours cut and for her being a single mother providing for two kids, she would feed us pizza, wings, or other junk food. This went on for about a couple of weeks then we just ate salad until my mom got her hours back. Many people went through financial struggles and the only option was to eat out because of the food being so affordable.

The lack of variety that there is for healthy and organic food compared to fast food makes it hard for people to find heathy affordable food. If there were more choices of healthy restaurants then I feel the amount of fast food eaten would go down. Even having some healthy options at fast food restaurants would be good to incorporate healthy eating. When I go on vacation and stay at a hotel for a couple of days. Mainly I don’t really know what’s good, what’s bad, or what’s there to eat in the area where I’m staying. The amount of fast food restaurants compared to a healthier option is 9:1. There are nine fast food places compared to one healthy place like Togo’s or Whole Foods or Trader Joes. Most of the time there isn’t even a healthier option near the hotel. If more variety was offered by healthier restaurants then not all people would have to be limited to one option when there on vacation or away on a business trip.

Americans have a mentality of getting things done fast and when getting home from a long day at work, getting fast food and not having to cook is better than taking an hour to cook a homemade meal. In America people don’t like to be behind on things. This means that when something is popular or fad many people join the hype and like to get in on what is happening. Another reason why the timing of fast food is perfect for us Americans is because, were lazy. When working an eight hour shift, getting stuck in traffic for an hour or two, then finally getting home, many people are way too tired after that to cook. So the easiest and the cheapest solution is to order pizza or eat out. The reason for that is working does get us tired but some amounts of laziness kicks in. My mom is a single mother and always had to work to provide for me and my sister. She did an amazing job at it, but besides that fact she would always come home from work around 7 or 8 pm and be too tired to cook. So the only option was to order a pizza and eat out. The mentality of food being cooked fast for us to eat and not having to cook breakfast, lunch, or even dinner is the best thing since white bread.

Generally speaking the blame for obesity rates shouldn’t be focused entirely on the eater but more so on the income of people. I believe that we shouldn’t blame the eater but look a bit deeper into why they are eating out. Is it because of the really cheap dollar menu, or is it because they love fast food. Judging people and putting the ultimate blame on them for choosing why they eat isn’t what we should do as a whole. We should take a moment to recognize that many people in the United States are living pay check to pay check and sometimes they barely get by with a few extra dollars to spare. So, before we make a generalization of all Americans love fast food we should take a moment and realize that many people eat fast food because healthy food is more expensive than fast food.