

# The Right Way to Eat an Ice-Cream Cone

## *I. Rust Hills*

*Rust Hills was fiction editor of Esquire and The Saturday Evening Post, and is now a freelance writer. In this paragraph, taken from his book How to Do Things Right, he explains his technique, which was perfected through years of taking his children to ice cream cone stands. Having given us the preliminary pitfalls—melted ice cream on car upholstery, choosing a flavor, holding more than one cone at once—he delivers the ultimate instructions on eating the cone.*

### **Words to Know**

**forgoing** deciding against

**jostling** bumping together

**molecules** very small particles

**stance** way of standing

Grasp the cone with the right hand firmly but gently between thumb and at least one but not more than three fingers, two-thirds of the way up the cone. Then dart swiftly away to an open area, away from the jostling crowd at the stand. Now take up the classic ice-cream-cone-eating stance: feet from one to two feet apart, body bent forward from the waist at a twenty-five-degree angle, right elbow well up, right forearm horizontal, at a level with your collarbone and about twelve inches from it. But don't start eating yet! Check first to see what emergency repairs may be necessary. Sometimes a sugar cone will be so crushed or broken or cracked that all one can do is gulp at the thing like a savage, getting what he can of it and letting the rest drop to the ground, and then evacuating the area of catastrophe as quickly as possible. Checking the cone for possible trouble can be done in a second or two, if one knows where to look and does it systematically. A trouble spot some people overlook is the bottom tip of the cone. This may have been broken off. Or the flap of the cone material at the bottom, usually wrapped over itself in that funny spiral construction, may be folded in a way that is imperfect and leaves an opening. No need to say that through this opening—in a matter of perhaps thirty or, at most, ninety seconds—will begin to pour hundreds of thousands of sticky molecules of melted ice cream. You know in this case that you must instantly get the paper napkin in your left hand under and around the bottom of the cone to stem the forthcoming flow, or else be doomed to eat the cone far too rapidly. It is a grim moment. No one wants to eat a cone under that kind of pressure, but neither

does anyone want to end up with the bottom of the cone stuck to a messy napkin. There's one other alternative—one that takes both skill and courage: Forgoing any cradling action, grasp the cone more firmly between thumb and forefinger and extend the other fingers so that they are out of the way of the dripping from the bottom, then increase the waist-bend angle from twenty-five to **thirty-five** degrees, and then eat the cone, *allowing* it to drip out of the bottom onto the ground in \* front of you! Experienced and thoughtful cone-eaters enjoy facing up to this kind of sudden challenge.

### **Questions About the Reading**

1. How many ways are there to eat an ice-cream cone?
2. With all the problems with ice-cream cones, does the writer like to eat them?
3. Why is it necessary to be so careful and systematic when eating an ice-cream cone?

### **Questions About the Writer's Strategies**

1. Which words or phrases in this paragraph have a "scientific" precision that makes this process clear to the reader?
2. Why does the writer take such a serious tone in writing the paragraph? Isn't eating an ice-cream cone supposed to be fun? What will happen to someone who eats an ice-cream cone incorrectly?
3. This writer describes a number of problems associated with ice-cream cones. Which words or phrases does he use to help the reader know when he is about to identify those problems?
4. Which words or phrases does the writer use to make eating an icecream cone seem more important than it really is?

### **Writing Assignments .**

1. Imagine that you are sitting down to a heaping plate of spaghetti and meatballs while wearing a brand-new white suit or dress. In a process paragraph, describe how you would eat the meal.
2. Choose some simple, everyday activity such as making a bed or brushing your teeth and write a paragraph describing the process. Use a serious, authoritative tone.

*Cook/Barbara Lewis (Student)*

## **The Cook**

*garbara Lewis (Student)*

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*Barbara Lewis takes us through the process of preparing dinner at a busy restaurant. She uses quality meat, potatoes, and a seemingly endless stream of sauces and other delectables; a two-hour race with the dinner bell. And she does all this after a day of classes at Cuyahoga Community College in Cleveland, Ohio.*

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*Words to Know*

**au jus** natural unthickened juices or gravy

escargots snails

**requisition** a formal written order

**saute** to fry food quickly in a little fat

scampi shrimp

Preparing food for the saute line at the restaurant where I work is a hectic two-hour job. I come to work at 3:00 P.M. knowing that everything must be done by 5:00 P.M. The first thing I do is to check the requisition for the day and order my food. Then I have to clean and season five or six prime rib roasts and place them in the slow-cooking oven. After this, I clean and season five trays of white potatoes for baking and put them in the fast oven. Now I have two things cooking, prime ribs and potatoes, at different times and temperatures, and they both have to be watched very closely. In the meantime, I must put three trays of bacon in the oven. The bacon needs very close watching, too, because it burns very easily. Now I have prime ribs, potatoes, and bacon all cooking at the same time—and all needing constant watching. Next, I make popovers, which are unseasoned rolls. These also go into an oven for baking. Now I have prime ribs, baking potatoes, bacon, and popovers cooking at the same time and all of them needing to be closely watched. With my work area set up, I must make clarified butter and garlic butter. The clarified butter is for cooking liver, veal, and fish. The garlic butter is for stuffing escargots. I have to make ground meat stuffing also. Half of the ground meat will be mixed with wild rice and will be used to stuff breast of chicken. The other half of the ground meat mixture will be used to stuff mushrooms. I have to prepare veal, cut and season scampi, and clean and saute mushrooms and onions. In the meantime, I check the prime ribs and potatoes, take the bacon and the popovers out of the oven, and put the veal and chicken

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into the oven. Now I make au jus, which is served over the prime ribs make the soup for the day, and cook the vegetables and rice. Then I heat the bordelaise sauce, make the special for the day, and last of a]] cook food for the employees. This and sometimes more has to be done by five o'clock. Is it any wonder that I say preparing food for the saute line at the restaurant where I work is a very hectic two-hour job!

### Questions About the Reading

1. Run through the cook's list again. About how many people do you think she is preparing food for?
2. Classify the food the cook is responsible for.
3. Do you think the cook likes her job? Explain your answer.

### Questions About the Writer's Strategies

1. Where is the topic sentence of the paragraph? Does the writer restate the topic sentence anywhere in the paragraph? If so, where? Does the sentence then serve a second purpose? What is that purpose?
2. Do you think *hectic* is an effective word for describing this job?
3. The cook states at the beginning that she has two things to watch carefully. The list of things she watches continues to grow during the paragraph. Identify the sentences where **she** re-emphasizes this point. Does this help support her statement that the job is hectic?
4. What order does the writer use to organize her information in the paragraph?

### Writing Assignments

1. We all have moments when we feel under pressure. Write a process paragraph illustrating one of your busy days.
2. Imagine that the restaurant has decided to hire a helper for the cook and that you **are** to be that helper. Write a process paragraph explaining the steps you would take to assist the cook and how you would blend your activities with hers.

*Get Thin* / Junius Adams

## Think Thin and Get Thin

*junius Adams*

*junius Adams wants to tell you how to lose weight effectively. It's a topic many experts have written countless books on. Few are as simple as Adams's instructions here.*

*Words to Know*

aversion an intense dislike

immune not susceptible to a certain condition

perpetuity eternity

sedentary remaining seated most of the time

solace something that eases or relieves

subside stop

unanimous agreeing completely

At times, it seems that almost everybody I know is desperately trying, without success, to lose weight. But there are a lucky few who *have* found a way to slim down and stay thin. What's their secret?

To find out, I interviewed dieters, doctors, psychologists and other weight-control authorities. I quizzed "naturally thin" people to see why they're immune from weight problems. Though not all the answers were unanimous, a number of points were clear: Yes, it *is* possible to become thin. Yes, you *can* choose a diet and stay on it. Yes, you can *remain* slender after losing weight.

Reducing, however, is not just a matter of clipping a diet out of a magazine. It isn't even a matter of following the diet to the technical letter. The diet takes place more in your head than at the table. You have to learn how to "think thin." Here are seven ways:

**1. You Must Want to Be Thin.** Jean Mayer, one of the world's foremost authorities on overweight, says that a major factor in reducing is tough motivation." This became obvious to me as I talked with unsuccessful dieters. Typically, they had tried this or that diet and found that "it didn't work" or "it made me uncomfortable." They seemed to put too much responsibility on the diet, relying on *it* to make them slim rather than on *themselves* to become slim through the diet.

The lucky dieters are, of course, the ones who have a built-in motivation. But what about the rest of us? A frequent complaint of dieters

is: *I don't have the will power*^ Rather than saying that, it's better to say: My desire for food seems to be stronger than my desire to lose weight. This puts the problem in a more useful perspective^

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**2. Be Less Food-Centered** Much of an infant's life is centered on nourishment, and babies feed with great intensity. That's their job: to eat and grow. For an adult to be similarly food-centered, however, is inappropriate. Yet many of us are like infants, usually because frustration

has caused us to revert to infantile patterns.! We eat when we are unhappy, worried, frightened; when we're feeling lonely, unloved or depressed, food is our solace.

How can you become less food-centered? For one thing you can find alternatives to eating. Draw up a list of at least five, and preferably a~30zen or more, activities that please you going for a walk in the country, sailing, talking to your best friend, reading the latest mystery novel, whatever. Make sure that the list contains several things that are as easy to do as eating. Now, every time you have a desire to eat, do something from your list firsts

Another way you can become less food-centered is to separate eating from other behavior. When you eat, devote yourself entirely and exclusively to the food/Don't combine eating with any other activity such as watching television, listening to music, reading or working. This strategy, says Israel Goldiamond, a behavior-modification specialist, "brings eating behavior under the control of food alone." If you firmly refuse to combine eating with any other activity, then other activities will lose their power to make you want to eat.

3. Tolerate Hunger, Many overweight people fear hunger as if it were a disease./One young woman I know is terrified at just the thought of missing a meal. "I even have nightmares about not being fed," she told me. If you are afraid of hunger, here's an experiment to help you tolerate it:

- Step one—postpone a meal. Choose any meal and delay it for a while beyond the usual time] You are doing this not to diet, but to study hunger. Notice how you feel.

Step two—skip a meal. What you're doing now is trying to test your reactions to hunger. Does it keep increasing as the hours go by or does it rise to a peak and then subside? What about your emotions—does not eating make you feel unhappy, deprived or scared, or do you remain cheerful?

Step threes—fast all day. Eat nothing until dinner time, not even diet sodas or sugarless gum. If you're thirsty, drink water. In this step, you'll see how you get through a full day's activities without nourishment. Again, ^study all your reactions, both physical and emotional^-

- Step four—experiment with not forever never feeding yourself. Start eating less. all the time so that you feel a slight hunger around the clock.

The idea is to stop eating while you still experience a faint edge of hunger. This exercise should be continued for a week or so, but if you start feeling really deprived, have an occasional full meal. You're experimenting with hunger, not condemning yourself to be hungry in perpetuity.

4. Work on Your Body Image. Which is the "real" you—the slender one or the overweight one? answer to that question is extremely important/No one can become thin who doesn't believe that he can be thin. Your body image is the "you" that you identify with, either consciously or unconsciously, the one that feels natural and proper.

If you're trying to reduce, you should have a definite idea of just how thin you want to be, how you want to look, how you want to feel. \_ Picture your new body image often, vividly and graphically, until it becomes clear and strong. This is not mere daydreaming. You are clarifying your desires and ambitions, creating an emotional reality that can serve as a blueprint for change.

5. Set Achievable Goals;. Unsuccessful dieters often fail because 16 they set overly ambitious goals for themselves. {"I'm going to lose 30 pounds in two months.") Don't be in a hurry and invite discouragement—  
rnejiL Set yourself a manageable sub-goal—losing 2 pounds or 5 instead of 15 or 30. Once you've achieved one sub-goal, you'll find it easier to go on to the next Success breeds success.

6. Increase Your Physical Activity. The standard unit for measuring food energy is the calorie. One pound of body fat equals approximately 3,500 calories. The more energy you expend, the more calories you burn up. Thus, exercising is extremely important if you're trying to reduce A sedentary person eating the same amount of food as a physically active individual will take much longer to burn off one pound of fat.

Squirm, stretch, tap your feet, move around in your chair. When you walk, walk quickly. Welcome every opportunity to move, exert yourself, expend energy. Increasing your total daily physical activity, minute by minute, will do more to help you lose weight than jogging three times around the park every morning

7. Make Up "Head Tricks:" successful dieters develop their own ploys for "thinking thin". For example, a friend of mine began a reducing campaign by gorging himself on chocolate sundaes and telling himself with every bite that the stuff was making him ill, flooding

his body with sugar, giving him an ugly gut. He can now scarcely bear the sight of chocolate. And a very slender woman I know always recites to herself the names of a dozen unattractively fat people before sitting down to dinner.

You can even invent your own "aversion therapy". Choose a food you are addicted to, but it would like to phase out of your life—let's say it's chocolate-chip cookies. Now pick *some* experience you would find especially horrifying or repulsive—for instance, witnessing a dreadful highway accident. Think about 'the two together once or twice a day until the food you selected has become firmly identified with unpleasantness and no longer appeals to you. (Twenty to thirty repetitions of this exercise, according to behavior-modification psychologists, are enough to cure even the most stubborn food addiction.)

Now, where *do* you go from here? Perhaps you've learned and been 21 able to apply the secrets of successful reducing to the point that you don't even need a formal diet. But if you do still need one, make sure not to fall into the "right person, wrong diet" trap. Suppose you're not terribly keen for meat. Don't choose a high-protein regimen that will give you too much of what you don't care for and not enough of what you desire.

Of course, some people *like* diets that are hard to follow. They want 22 to be heroic, perform feats of sacrifice and self-denial. If that's what you want, fine; but remember that a crash diet cannot be followed in definitely without injury to your health. To stay thin, you should have a permanent diet in mind, for use after the initial weight reduction.

No matter what kind of diet you choose, remember that losing weight begins with a state of mind. We could call it simply mind over fat. "1

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### Questions About the Reading

1. Does the writer feel that all people can be thin?
2. Why must a person "want to be thin" to succeed at reducing? What methods could a person use to increase his or her motivation to be thin?
3. The writer gives four steps to tolerating hunger. What are they? Do they sound reasonable? Do you think it is reasonable and safe for everyone to try these steps? Why or why not?
4. Explain "aversion therapy" in your own words.

### Questions About the Writer's Strategies



1. What methods does the writer use to make himself seem authoritative on his subject? Cite examples from the essay.
2. Could the writer have used another **order** in listing his points? Does he list his points in order of importance?
3. Does the writer restate the **thesis** in the concluding paragraph? If so, identify the sentence(s) in which it is stated.

### Writing Assignments

1. Some people suffer from being underweight. Write a how-to essay titled "Think Fat."
2. Along with losing weight, most experts recommend an exercise program to keep fit. Write a process essay describing three ways of becoming more physically fit through exercise.
3. Write a process essay on how someone might increase his or her will power.