

You are what you eat essay



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

You are what you eat is a phrase a lot of people use. I'm not sure who came up with that phrase but it is very true. Food is a big part of what brings people together here in Yap. Most gatherings on island during celebrations look colorful because of all the variety of local food, including fruits and vegetables. The people of Yap are friendly and they have the habit of offering food and drinks to visitors that come to their place. It is very offending if the visitors do not accept the food that was offered to them.

Nowadays people would still offer food to visitors but what they have is not healthy food. Most are ashamed of eating to eat healthy food; a can of tuna is better than crabs. This attitude also transfers to all a lot of children, most would rather have luncheon meat, hotdogs, corn beef, or even turkey tail instead of their food rather than fish, crab or clam. So, in addition, most of the foods eaten here in Yap are store-bought food because it is that is fast and easy to eat. It may taste good and it is easy to make, but is modern food good for us? When asked an individual they would tell you that it is not. When an individual is asked, he or she would say it is not good, but what is said and what is done are two totally different stories. What they say and what they do is two totally different stories. How we eat and what we eat shows people how we were raised and what kind of person we would turn out to be. A person who watches what they eat and does exercise is more likely to be healthy. A person eating junk food who sleeps a lot and does no exercise would probably be obese and more likely to be diabetic.

In the real world, it is not easy for children to stick with a healthy diet because what they see they copy. Parents who mix sugar in their drinks have children that also do the same thing. It is also the same with alcoholic parents.

their children are more likely to be alcoholic. It is up to the parents or the person taking care of the child to play a big role in not only making healthy choices for children and teaching children to make healthy choices for themselves. Before children likes to swim, play tag with other children or even jump rope but nowadays you hardly see children doing that. Most children spend their time playing games or watching television and eating junk food. The advertisements on television does not help children to eat better. What the children sees on TV to them looks delicious and appetizing, so they would pester their parents to get it for them. If parents or the person taking care of the child is a lenient one, the child would get what they he or she wants. The hospital can also help with the support and information the parents and caregivers needs to make healthy choices while instilling healthy eating habits in children that will last a lifetime. Health providers should help the communities to understand the consequence of eating imported food.

Long before the foreigner came, people teach by showing examples and explaining things. The old teaches the young what is good to eat and how to go about fixing it. No one worries about gaining weight having cardiac problem or even having high blood pressure. People only eat local food and they live long and stay healthy. Today our way of leaving is declining because of all this easy to get food from the store. We have doctors, nurses and scientists telling us how to manage our lives. They also tell us to go back to the way we used to eat, which is good but hard because most of us grow up with modern food or imported food. When people attend a celebration or even a small gathering, food is one of the things people like to share but

instead of eating local food, they would eat imported food (“ Needs Assessment for Micronesian Health Care in Hawai’i” 13). Today with people coming back from school with all this idea in their head on how to better help the people of Yap States. They go around saying people should not do this or do that because of too much sugar, instead of showing and saying that they can eat this kind of food, but not all the time. Even in the hospital, nurses sometimes give wrong information to inpatients, especially to diabetic once. Some nurses would tell the patient not to eat certain local food because it contains sugar. In reality the patient can eat the food because it is local, but not all the time.

One of the things that help people in Yap long time ago to stay healthy is exercise. Everything Yapese people do is a certain kind of exercise. Even going from places to places people either walk or go by canoe. Getting firewood is also not an easy task but the women also do this kind of work. They cut and gather two to three baskets of firewood for their own house. The women go to taro patches clean and harvest the taro which is not an easy job. Sometimes harvesting taro for the family a women would do that two to three times a week with one to two basket of taro. Sometimes they would climb up or look under the coconut tree for leaves to cut and weave it into basket for the taro. They also do gardening and most of the time the males do not help. They cut small trees, vines pull up grass or weeds and they even burn down big trees so that they can plant seeds underneath. They would carry the taro home and also cook it. They take care of cooking for the whole family, cleaning the house, and taking care of the children with the help of the young girls if the family has any. The ladies do not have that

much free time to hang out with their neighbors because almost everything around the house they are responsible for. Girls have the responsibilities to help their mother's with the chores around the house. This paragraph needs to be written in the past tense as it is a discussion of the past

As for the men fishing is one of the things they do for their families and relatives. They would either go spear fishing, netting, using lines or trolling by boat. Trolling and line fishing is more relaxing than netting and spear fishing. Netting and spear fishing is one kind of fishing that deals with swimming or diving around in the water. For the women only few of them goes fishing for their families but the rest do not. The men also have the responsibility to build houses for his family or help his extended families with their houses. Sometimes, the men would help with preparing the garden. If the men are not fishing they are building canoe or teaching young boys how to build things. Most of the time, the men are the once who climb coconut tree to get coconut for the family and they also climb and harvest betel nut to chew. The boys help with the climbing and sometimes the girls if the family does not have boys. Past experience also

The pacific island countries are in a state of transition. Pacific island people are changing very fast from a lifestyle which is very healthy, with farming, fishing, walking and gardening, to a less healthy lifestyle where food and goods are purchased and not produced locally, people use cars, and generally there is less physical exercise. The increased migration from villages' areas to towns and cities has also meant a big change to the pacific way of life. Today people do not have enough exercise they spend most of their time watching television and when they want to go somewhere they go

by car. Climbing coconut is another way of exercising which few people are still doing it. The taro patches is over grown with weeds because people are too lazy or do not care to clean them. People have the tendency eat and lay down to rest or sleep claiming that the food they just eat need to digest. Other people would jag around the lagoon and comes back and eat whatever they want. The only exercise most people do is to walk from the house to their car.

Parents have the tendency to over feed their children and by doing this they create a problem. First they start introducing food to the baby when they are a few months old because to them the baby is not having enough food with breastfeeding. Second is when the baby is a toddler, the parents would spoon feed the toddler to the point that the toddler with start to refuse the food and the parents would force the child to eat all the food in the plate. Right at that minute the parents create a problem, forcing the child to eat more than the child's body needs. Too Yapese a fat child is considered healthy and a slime or skinny child is considering sickly and needs to fatten up. Health worker should encourage and explain to the parents that babies should only stick to breastfeeding for the next six months. After the six months, when feeding the baby they should not over feed them. When the baby is full the parents should stop feeding. By doing this the parents help the child to eat only what their body needs not what they think their body needs. It is also good to start giving local food to your child and not store bought baby food. Also, the parents or caretaker should stay away from giving coconut milk to new born it is full of fats. The doctors, nurses, and health worker should advice this people to stay away from coconut milk.

Even though Yapese people believe that giving coconut milk to babies is very healthy and also feeding them that young is good for the mother and babies.

Healthy people long ago only drink plain water and coconuts. Those are the two kinds of drink that they drink and it is good for them. Plain water or coconut without ice and it is not cold. Today people bought soft drink from the store and other things to mix with their water including sugar. They even bought alcohol like beer and other beverages to also drink. People do not have time to look for coconut and if they do they harvest them to sell not to drink at the house. Coconuts are turning into copra because only few people would drink them. For those that they want to drink they spend money looking for them and buying them. Coconuts are getting very expensive to buy nowadays. So, parents mix their children's drink or by them juice from the store and send them to school. Some even buy soft drink for their kids because to them it is cheaper than buying coconut. According to Maria Laaken, one of my colleagues at the hospital “ children nowadays won't drink plain water because it does not taste good and they don't want to be different from the other kids. At the same time the parents don't want to deal with all complains early in the morning before going to school.”

Yap is well known for having many good healthy local foods. It is the people who made bad choices when it comes to food. All over the island you will see variety of local food including vegetables and at the same time some of the stores also sell local food and vegetables. It is easy and possible to grow them because Yapese people also own land. It should be foreign people or people from other places who should have problem with their diet not Yapese. Instead foreign people go around looking for all the local food and

the Yapese goes look for all the imported food. Most taro patches here in Yap are overgrown with grass or weeds because people like to eat white rice.

Inside most ice-box of people here in Yap is full of turkey tails and chicken, it is hard to find fish. Overweight in the Pacific Professor Susan Cassels claim that all of the foods that the people in the Federal States of Micronesia like to eat are foods that are easy to get or easy to make and it is affordable or a lot cheaper. One of those foods is turkey tails and turkey tail to the people in the United States is not food because to them it is fertilizer. To the Yapese it is one of the cheapest and tasty foods because of all the grease and fats.

Increase availability of money and people is expose to imported foods have result in people not eating the right kind of food, and increase consumption, with diets high in sugar and fats and often low in fiber, vitamins and minerals. A reduction in physical activity, fishing, walking, gardening has led to an increase in obesity in both adults and children. The exercise researcher at the Pennington Biomedical Research Center in Baton Rouge, La. Dr.

Timothy S. Church, the reason the population is getting obese and overweight is because of lack of physical activities at work, and those jobs that makes people to do physical labor are all gone. A high rate of smoking and increasing consumption of alcohol makes the situation worse. The eating habit of people here in Yap contributes to most of the diseases that the people of Yap encounter. Because of foreign influence and people wanting to be Americanize or modernize they would go to a lot of trouble to eat imported food. Before people hardly get sick and when they do it is not life threatening. People do not have problem with their sugar level or have high blood pressure. Consumption of imported food contributes to a lot of people

dying in Yap. All the non-communicable disease in Yap can be stop or prevented by going back to the way we leave. We eat only local food either from these or from the land and this sickness will leave our people and also our island (Jackson 88).

There are many non-communicable diseases here in Yap. One of them is diabetic, also known as having problem with your sugar level. Diabetes develops when the body does not make enough insulin or is not able to use insulin effectively, or both. There are two types of diabetic, I and II. Diabetic type I it is believe that a person is born with that type of non-communicable diseases or it is passed from mother to child. As for the other type, type II diabetic a person gets it latter in life. In 2006 to 2007 there was a survey done on Yap Proper and it shows that in general 23% of the people are diabetic and 35% are hypertension (Ichiho, Yurow, and Lifang 16). People with diabetes can lead a normal healthy life. Diabetes is manageable by eating the right food, exercise and sometimes medication. Medication that the patient is taking does not cure the patient but only help to prolong the patient's life. All people with diabetes and hypertension that need advice about diabetes and hypertension management can ask help from a doctor or nurse.

The population of Yap Island has significant burdens of obesity and overweight, hypertension, and diabetes. Obesity and overweight appear in children as young as two years of age and skyrocket between ages 15 and 25 years in both males and females. Following the development of obesity, both males and females begin to experience hypertension and diabetes within 10 years. (Durand 163)

It is suspected that this non-communicable disease happens because of all the imported food the people eat and drink. To prevent people from having diabetic people needs to go back to the way they live. Go back to eating local food from the sea and food from the land. Compare to the United States the Federal States of Micronesia has 20% more diabetic people (“ Needs Assessment for Micronesian Health Care in Hawai’i” 28).

The other non-communicable disease is hypertension. There are two types of hypertension. One is Primary Hypertension and that is the most common form, accounting for majority of cases in Yap. Second is Secondary Hypertension and it occurs as a result of many factors one example is kidney disease. No one knows the cause of hypertension the only thing they know is the contributing factor and they are ageing, smoking, eating food with too much salt in it, being overweight or obese, drinking a lot of alcohol, not enough exercise, stress to name a few. To prevent people from having hypertension they should maintain a healthy weight because being overweight contributes to have high blood pressure. The other thing is people should get regular exercise because being physically active makes the person less likely to have high blood pressure. It those not mean you have to ran around the track or being in a marathon. It just means that people needs to move a bit like wash dishes, cooking local food, gardening...etc.

Many people in Yap are dying because of what they put in their mouth. Most dead is because of the amount of food people eat and also what kind of food they eat. The lifestyle of the people in Yap contributes to a lot of problem that people are facing getting fat and obese are two other health problem that the people of Yap encounter. Some end up with amputate limb because

of uncontrolled eating ways others noncompliant once are dying each day. According to Jackson, " the bad news about these diseases is that they are now killing Micronesians fast... at least one person dies every second day from cardiovascular diseases - in other words one person every other day eats themselves to death!" Diabetes and hypertension has increase in proportion in our islands. In 2010 alone there are 847 diabetes and hypertension patients total that comes in for visits (" Yap State Statistical Yearbook" 148). This means that people in our island can and has suffer from complications from diabetes and hypertension such as blindness, amputations and kidney failure. After having one of these conditions the individual will pass away eventually.

There are a lot of things the hospital can do to help the people of Yap States to eat healthy and live long but that is up to the people to be willing to except the advice given to them. The doctors, nurses and health workers can only do so much but it is all depend on each individual. The doctors, nurses, and health worker can show people what would happen if they will not listen to their advice but if the individual is close minded than this really nothing the hospital can do. One solution is to keep to the traditional ways of living, eating and exercising including dancing. The people must also keep in mind that not only eating healthy food would save them but also exercises help. They also need to teach and encourage the public that eating healthy starts when people are young. They should not wait until it is too late. Because having a heart attack is not a laughing matter once a person gets it there gone. Unlike strokes and heart failure they will still see tomorrow but still they can also go anytime. Even kidney failure, having that is a drain on the

families of the patient. The people should go back and start planting their garden again that is if they want to live long. They should also start cleaning their taro patches and planting taro. Be aware of diabetes and hypertension and what is going on about these diseases. People have to have protective measures to prevent the incidence of having hypertension and diabetes.

Every year in Yap women and men's week are held to help doctors to detect any diseases and sickness that the people of Yap might have. It is held every year but it is really up to the people of Yap State to want to do it.

Announcement goes out by radio, television and even flyer to encourage people to join. One should change one's lifestyle, so that one is more active and is able to either prevent hypertension and diabetes or, if suffering, learn to cope up with it. Having these kind of diseases is hard because there is no turning back once a person has it they have it for life. So, it is really up to the individual to decide what is better for them and their kids. Too either gets sick and dies young or lives long and have a healthy life.