

## BUY YOUR WAY THIN

*Marsha Henry Goff*

Ask any expert how to lose weight and they will tell you to “eat right and exercise.” Well, if I *wanted* to do that, I wouldn’t *need* to lose weight, would I? Personally, I’m holding out for a weight-loss regimen that advocates sitting on the couch watching TV while eating Fiddle-Faddle and ice cream and drinking cocoa topped with marshmallow cream.

I’ve considered drastic solutions to achieving a svelter me—everything from ingesting diet pills (too scared to take pills) to joining a health club (too expensive and frequented by too many beautiful people). But I have never considered liposuction (too painful) or having my jaws wired shut (how could I talk?). I finally concluded that the easiest solution to achieving a svelte look is to hang out with fatter friends.

My friend Suzy, who weighs in at a whopping 37 pounds sopping wet, is given to saying things like, “I’d better eat a rib of celery. I think I forgot to eat breakfast and lunch.” Did I mention that I hate her? My friend Roberta says her mom is a plump daughter’s nightmare! “The last time Mom visited me, we went into my kitchen for a midnight snack,” said Roberta. “I ate coconut cream pie and she ate a cherry tomato!”

Ray and I have an exercise room in the basement . . . well, to be absolutely candid, we have a room where we store all the exercise equipment we have purchased but do not use. There’s the rowing machine which we bought for \$300 and have used about ten minutes, the stationary bicycle (\$249, used 3 hours), the mini-trampoline (jumped on while listening to as many consecutive seconds of M-TV as I could stand). There are dumbbells (now what possessed me to buy those?) and a funny looking wheel with handles that is supposed to help you roll away a bulging tummy (used once by my grandmother on her 80th birthday to show me she could do it after the rest of us tried and failed). Our newest exercise acquisition is a manual treadmill, a great bargain at only \$199.

The problem is that—in order to lose weight with this equipment—we actually have to *use* it. But I have a better idea. I think these exercise devices should come with a guaranteed weight loss based on the purchase price. Purchasers should be warranted to lose a tenth in pounds of what they pay in cash. For example, Ray and I should have been guaranteed a 30 pound weight loss for the \$300 we spent on the rowing machine (that’s 30 pounds for one person or a 15 pound loss each for the two of us).

While I’m fantasizing, I would like for every other Thursday to be a calorie-reverse day. On those special Thursdays, hot fudge sundaes and cheesecake will have the calories of a single stalk of celery or one cherry tomato. And can you guess how many calories the celery and tomato will have? If you can, I think you can also figure out that we won’t be telling Roberta’s mother and Suzy. It will just be our little secret.