

The  
*Freedom*  
to **EAT**



**10 Secrets for Lasting  
Weight Loss and Inner Peace**

**JACKIE TROTTMANN**

## Testimonials

*Having personally lost more than 100 pounds, I can tell you that Jackie understands what it takes to make a lasting physical transformation. With practical advice built upon strong spiritual underpinnings, she unravels the perplexing question of how to reach and maintain a healthy body.*

—**Will Bowen, International Bestselling Author of *Happy This Year and A Complaint Free World***

*The reason I enjoyed your book is to put it simply -- it's a freedom to live an all-around balanced life! I think it was brilliant of you to have the sections so short. It made it really easy to just keep reading. This is a book that once you start, you just want to finish it and start doing what it says. I am now living Secret 7. I am loving life. There's no stopping me! — **God bless you!***

—**Renee**

*The power of this story lies in its simplicity and its humanness. Ms. Trottmann has done a great job of communicating that there can be personal will and courage without fanfare. Her story telling is a refreshing and needed contribution to the literature on women's struggles: She experienced the emotional trials and pains of an eating disorder and she conquered them. A valuable and motivating read.*

—**Terry Varney Freerks, Ph.D.**

*I have struggled with my weight all of my life and for the first time I feel as if you have pointed me in the direction of The Truth and it is setting me free. I am following a Low Carb High Fat diet and was losing weight but was still a bit preoccupied with food. Not sure if I was eating from hunger or one of my many other reasons for eating. Then I read your inspirational book, The Freedom to Eat and listened to the meditation CD's. I have experienced a new level of freedom from all those unnecessary food thoughts. I eat so much less but feel so satisfied and am getting on with my life which is opening up again and I am one grateful woman. **So much of the battle was in my mind. Thank you so much!***

**—Kathleen**

*I travel all over the world speaking to women about their passion and calling and unfortunately, I often find that many of them are suffering in secret. They are held captive and limited by pain from their past, struggles with weight loss, an attack on their confidence and identity. The message shared in this book is refreshing and provides real hope for women who desire to take back their freedom to eat and live life abundantly. Jackie's approach to this age-old struggle helps women go from suffering in secret to leveraging ten secrets to lasting weight loss and inner peace.*

**—Lethia Owens, International Speaker and Founder of  
Audacious Faith – A Christ-Centered Community for Business  
Women**

*I never gave thought to the idea of eating just for the sake of food—letting food be food—until, through this book; I saw the simplicity of letting a meal be just a meal, not a substitute for the things I didn't want to face about my life. Now, I eat less, eat better, and enjoy my food in a different way. You are God's instrument for helping others find freedom by telling them about the path you are taking to find yours. It gives other people confidence in the guide and courage to read on.—**God bless!***

**—Louie**

*Faith is a lifelong journey of growth and reflection. Through her words, Jackie has shared the journey of her life from deep pain to joy as she deals with a difficult childhood, weight issues, divorce and lack of self-esteem. I know this, because as one of her pastors, I have had the privilege to walk with her and witness her growth. Trusting in the God of love and mercy, she has reclaimed her life and found joy, meaning and purpose. May her words provide you with the wisdom and encouragement to do the same.*

**—Rev. Dr. Karen Blanchard – Associate Pastor First  
Presbyterian Church of Kirkwood (St. Louis, Missouri)**

*I'm loving your words so much because they are refreshingly honest and uncomplicated. – **Thank you!***

**—Loretta**

*Since starting my personal training business over twenty years ago, I witnessed the struggle that women have with their weight and body image. After reading Jackie's book, I am somewhat in awe of how she has expressed that struggle so honestly and simply. I am proud of Jackie's fitness and professional achievements in the last ten years that I have known her. The Freedom to Eat is a great resource. I have already directed clients to this book to help them overcome their weight related issues.*

**—Rik Wilson, former NHL defenseman, personal trainer and fitness expert to clients from age 9-90.**

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# Prologue



## The Secrets We Keep

**L**ike the Epilogue, this Prologue was written after the entire manuscript was finished. That's because everywhere I go, I meet new people and gain new insights (that is, after all, what Secret 1 is all about). It always amazes me what people share. Judging on outward appearances, I would never guess what is going on with people on the inside (Secret 3).

As a writer, I love words. The word *secrets*, used in the subtitle of this book, was chosen intentionally. That's because the definition of secret means: something that is meant to be unknown or unseen by others, concealed in such a way as to be accessible only to the person or persons concerned, something that is kept a secret.

What secrets do you have? If you struggle with your weight, your relationship with food, body image, self-criticism, doubt, fear, shame, self-loathing, and any number of other issues, I would venture to guess that you struggle in *secret*. The secrets to lasting weight loss and inner peace are hidden from you. You are too wrapped up in your present pre-occupation to see them.



This secret word came to life when talking with Patty. I was on a meditation retreat ending the old year and entering the new. Part of the retreat was silent. Ten years ago I would have called you crazy to ask me to participate in such an event! Now it's life-giving. Our favorite place to go is Timber Creek Retreat House, a non-profit organization run by founders and directors Beth and Tom Jacobs, not far from Kansas City. Robert and I try to go at least once a year. This was our fourth year. After walking on the trails, I stopped off at the kitchen and visited with Beth and Patty.

Patty is Tom's sister and is the chef. I had shared with Beth about *The Freedom to Eat* book. She mentioned the title to Patty and out came our stories... *secrets*.

Patty is beautiful inside and out. She has a twinkle in her eye and joy in her heart. The meals that she makes are amazing. They are a feast for the eyes, healthy, tasty and real food, nothing processed or out of a box. The house is always full of wonderful aromas from her latest creations. Guests will comment on Patty's joy, headphones plugged in, dancing as she chops and moves about the kitchen—her sanctuary.

During our visit, I learned that Patty had struggled with anorexia (her secret). She became chubby at around the age of eight or nine. Out of concern, her mother took her to their pediatrician. There were incidents of obesity in other family members, and they intervened before her weight got out of control. While it was humiliating enough to go to the doctor, she had to sit on the examination table in only her underwear. The male doctor looked at her almost-naked body assessing it for signs of puberty. Her mother was in the room, thankfully, but expressed no concern for the doctor's actions. This was in the early 1960's when doctors were looked upon as gods.

Patty couldn't help but feel humiliated and violated. She was put on a strict diet. And so began Patty's adversarial relationship with food and criticism of her body. Food became the enemy. Adding insult to injury, thanks to our model-thin, focused culture, Patty received lots of positive attention the thinner she became.

I was on the opposite spectrum, turning to bulimia as my final diet solution (my secret). My weight gain started around the age of thirteen. Food was the enemy for me, too. In Part I, I share my entire story of struggle and what finally set me free.

Our conversation lasted for quite a while and continued after the retreat as we shared our experiences. While different, there was a thread of obsession of trying to conform to an image that society presented to us as beauty. We were so blind that we couldn't see the beauty that was within us. All was outward, superficial, fleeting.

Patty loved to cook as a little girl. Her mother always encouraged her, but not as a career. Her parents were still afraid that the food would lead to obesity. Patty loves her parents and knows that her parents love her. Their intentions were meant to help not harm. It wasn't until just the last few years that Patty turned this passion into her livelihood. And what was shocking to me was that she had only stopped the extremely restrictive diets within the last eight months.

Paraphrasing from *Amazing Grace*, *we once were blind, but now we see*. We see the beauty of love, compassion, self-care, and creativity. We see that food is no longer the enemy. Food provides nourishment, pleasure, and represents community and fellowship when we share meals together. Food is not something that satisfies our need for control or that controls us.

We have set ourselves free and are at peace. It doesn't mean that we never have moments of self-criticism, but those are few and

far between. We embrace our unique gifts and talents that we were given. For Patty it's cooking. For me it's writing.

I wanted to share this encounter because what we see and perceive will influence what we believe. On my travels talking about *The Freedom to Eat*, I encounter a lot of people who share the same struggle. It's not good to hold onto secrets.

If you are carrying a lot of emotional and spiritual weight, this weight can be much heavier than physical pounds reflected on a scale. Within these pages you will find relief. More importantly, you'll find the invitation to true freedom. By putting *these secrets* into practice, you will experience a lighter body, mind, and spirit.



## Goodbye Diets—Hello Freedom

**I**f you are looking for the latest diet du jour, sorry, this book is not for you. If you are sick of diets, sick of obsessing about your body and every calorie, carb, and morsel you put in your mouth, read on.

Each year new diet books debut and become instant best sellers as people hunger for the magic cure to lose weight. Pun intended, hunger is what they continue to do. Eating is pleasurable, and dieting is painful! Of course, over-eating leaves its painful aftermath: self-loathing and never maintaining the weight lost for very long.

The Ecclesiastes author says, “There is nothing new under the sun.” In the end, it is the quality and quantity of food consumption along with exercise that will achieve the goal of weight loss. Sure, some combination of foods or carbohydrates may work better for some than others, but to attain the ultimate goal, the Holy Grail of lasting weight loss, requires different thinking. In fact, it requires less thinking.

Dieting and obsessing about your body and appearance causes stress and anxiety. Overeating equally causes pain.

Thinking about what you are going to eat, counting calories or fats or carbs or protein clutters the mind. Added to the mind clutter are the self-criticisms: *I can't believe you ate that. You're a big, fat pig. You're pathetic.*

Then there are the false hopes that weight loss will bring like: *I'll be happy when I lose weight. I'll find the man of my dreams when I lose weight. I'll have more friends when I lose weight.* Fill in the blank.

When people are not happy and lose weight, especially when they reach their goal, there may be the short feeling of euphoria, but eventually, they will continue to be an unhappy person! Statistics show that the majority of dieters will gain their weight back and more. The problem lies in our attention focusing on the physical and listening to the wrong voices.

We listen to the latest diet gimmick, what the media, culture, teachers, religion, society, and even friends and family tell us to be, to have and how to look. Beauty is defined all around us and the examples are rarely anyone over the age of 30 (which makes matters worse if you're over 30). We stopped listening to the still, small voice within us. It's the voice that knows the truth. We've lost our connection to Spirit and sought answers outside of ourselves. We don't know that the Holy Grail we seek in lasting weight loss comes through a *holy connection*.

When we connect to our Creator and clear the clutter of obsessive thoughts that do not serve us, we are able to break free. If you have manufactured an image of God as an authoritative and judgmental male figure who is out there or up there and is as displeased and critical of you as you are (that's the God I used to know), you will be surprised to learn the truth. God wants to have a loving relationship with you and for you to live and thrive.

When we embrace an intimate relationship with a loving God, miracles happen. The miracles come in the form of lasting weight loss, overcoming obsessive, addictive and destructive behaviors, losing the “weight” of worry, doubt and fear, healing old wounds, experiencing many forms of forgiveness, and finding love and peace.

Freedom comes in living life in a spiritual flow. The hunger is gone, the physical hunger, the emotional hunger, and the spiritual hunger. We are able to eat (without starving or binging), to maintain a healthy weight, and return to the essence of our True Selves. It's tapping into and celebrating our glorious uniqueness. We look beyond the physical to discover and harness our talents to contribute to the world. That's *the freedom to eat*.

## *What secrets do you have?*

If you struggle with your weight, your relationship with food, body image, self-criticism, doubt, fear, shame, self-loathing, and any number of other issues, I would venture to guess that you struggle in secret. The secrets to lasting weight loss and inner peace are hidden from you. You are too wrapped up in your present preoccupation to see them.

If you are carrying a lot of emotional and spiritual weight, this weight can be much heavier than physical pounds reflected on a scale. Within these pages you will find relief. More importantly, you'll find the invitation to true freedom. Break the bonds of self-imposed limitations. Discover what is holding you back from becoming the unique and powerful person you were created to be. Give yourself permission to play again and to pursue the dreams you may have buried deep inside of you. By putting these secrets into practice, you will experience a lighter body, mind, and spirit. You will find lasting weight loss and inner peace.

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*After reading your inspirational book, The Freedom to EAT and listening to the meditation CD's, I have experienced a new level of freedom from all those unnecessary food thoughts. I eat so much less but feel so satisfied and am getting on with my life which is opening up again. I am one grateful woman. So much of the battle was in my mind. Thank you so much!*

– Kathleen

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