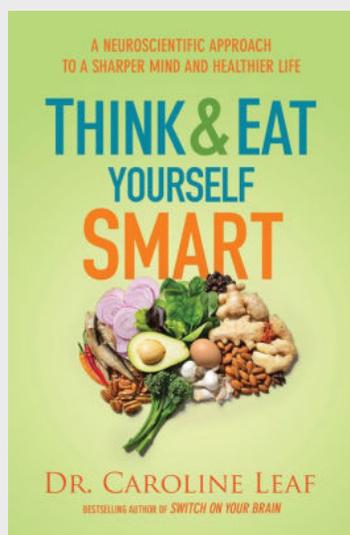


Think & Eat Yourself Smart

360° Perspective on A Neuroscientific Approach to a Sharper Mind and Healthier Life



Why read this book?

Read this book if you are looking for how neuroscience meets food science in a way that gives you practical direction on having a sharper mind and healthier life.

The first half of the book talks about our food supply today and confusion about fad diets.

The second half of the book, aptly named *Quit it!* addresses practical changes you can make in your life to take responsibility for your own health, happier relationships and the mental strength and resiliency you want in life.



Dr. Caroline Leaf

...appears 17,500 times on YouTube on the search of her name. She has appeared on multiple television shows, TED talks, in churches and on podcasts on the topic of brain science.

A Glimpse

"Eating and thinking are so intertwined that what you are thinking about before, during and after eating will impact every one of the 75-100 trillion cells in your body." Rather than go into prescriptive detail of how we should eat for optimum health, Dr. Leaf depicts what happens in our brain and throughout our body when we eat certain foods. She goes into detail on the misconceptions we have on fad dieting and explains the misunderstanding many of us have concerning fats, sugars, gluten, meat and plant-based diets. She links this explanation to the theme of wholeness, from a faith-based lens that seeks to "reimagine what we eat within an integrated spirit, mind, and body framework (14)."



Facts on Brain Health

75-98 % of current mental, physical, emotional and behavioral illnesses and issues come from our thought life

Although your brain is only 2% of your body weight, it consumes 20% of your total energy

Our GI tracts responds to our emotions and impacts the hypothalamus, which controls feelings of satiety and hunger

Happiness, joy, and pleasure as well as anger, anxiety, sadness and bitterness trigger physical reactions in our digestive systems

95% of the serotonin and 50% of the dopamine in the body are produced in the gut, therefore a health guts produce happy minds

Your brain thrives on quality protein sources without which you are apathetic, unable to relax, lacking motivation, focus and the ability to build memory (156)

Fat is good for your mind (167)

MAD foods affect our amygdala, which is responsible for our emotions, making us impulsive and reactive, lacking in emotional and perceptual clarity (190)

Real Food and the Modern American Diet

Dr. Leaf starts out with a consistent theme across dietary research, that “there is no one way of eating that works perfectly for everyone. God created fats, carbohydrates, proteins, and all the other important nutritional building blocks that make up the food we eat – all perfectly and intricately balanced within real, whole foods” (22). She defines *real* food as the way it was intended in nature as opposed to the Modern American Diet (MAD).

She addresses how *progress* has impacted our meat supply, our wheat supply and everything in between. They truly are interdependent and an extension of our stewardship over the earth. The people at happy happycow.com would debate as myth that happy cows make healthy products for humans. You will have to decide what’s right for you, but if you do choose to eat meat, it’s important to know where your meat comes from and what it eats!

The book provides a balanced view of how organic and gluten free foods can still be refined, preserved and highly processed. In fact her whole premise on food labels is that education about food is meaningless if we don’t change the way we think about food. If we are eating for emotional medication, we will rationalize against the healthy choice in favor of our emotions every time. The whole premise of the book is about how our thinking can rewire the way our brain responds to food and other impulses.

She provides some unpopular truths, like the brain’s response to the 17 teaspoons of sugar in the average soda, and the relative reduction in our IQ, inviting brain fog and throwing our bodies into toxic stress (89). I’ve written an entire paper that correlates with Dr. Leaf’s point that, “Church functions are hotbeds of fast, convenient, and highly processed foods” (89). This doesn’t have to drive our behavior. She shows how the Quantum Zeno Effect helps us redirect our attention from food impulses. It happens to us unconsciously and we can rewire our subconscious.

Let’s Beat It and Eat Ourselves Smart

Dr. Leaf posits that no amount of education about food labels will encourage people to eat for their health. The culprit in this



Facts on Our Food

Nearly 1 billion people are hungry today and almost 2 billion people are overweight or obese, proving that people are dying of preventable lifestyle diseases (16)

200 million school-aged children are overweight or obese

The U.S. uses 516 million pounds of pesticides on crops / year (25)

Broccoli (27) loses many of its nutrients 2-3 days after its picked

77% of American food industry products come from corn, soy and wheat at a rate of 6,000 calories per person per day

The average American consumes around 130 pounds of sugar/year

10% of grocery purchases are fresh fruits and vegetables, 90% is spend on highly refined *foods*

In the past 35 years the world's obesity rate has doubled to 2.1b

The 17 tsps of sugar in a 20 oz. Coke is the same amount of sugar in 3 pounds of carrots, 7 1/2 oranges, 230 stalks of asparagus or 531 cups of spinach

HFCS increases cravings for more

craziness is in the brain - "when people tend to ruminate on negative things from the past, they are less inclined to purchase food products that promote longevity" (123). I can vouch for the veracity of this statement by the number pints I've consumed of Ben and Jerry's New York Super Fudge Chunk.

If on the other hand we think and act according to design, we will choose with our minds and listen with our spirits. This doesn't mean we remove the joy from our eating – food was made for our enjoyment! We just need to recognize what is food and increase our ability to discern when we're truly hungry versus bored or depressed. She talked about how one day doctors will "prescribe produce, not Prozac" (195) to regulate our emotions.

Sugar, salt and fat can hijack brain function and food is engineered to lure us to "bliss points" (137) at which we find consumption to be irresistible. If we want to take back control of our minds we must:

1. Develop a *real food* mindset, or *eat real food*
2. Realize you are what you think - *take a 360° perspective*
3. Your mind controls your brain, you're not a victim of biology
4. Acknowledge habits take 63 days to change (not 21)
5. Admit there is no one diet ...that fits all people
6. Vote your conscience with your food budget - buy local
7. Respect the Environment...we are stewards of the earth
8. Know the best way to cook so we get the most from our food
9. Eat slowly, peacefully, together with friends and family
10. Monitor how our emotions impact our eating choices
11. Get enough sleep
12. Move. Not to Wisconsin. Get out of your chair and get active.

You were made to live an abundant life, in the fullness of a very deliberate design. Don't sell yourself short because of the choices of your ancestors, your best friend or your spouse. Choose life!

Your Think and Eat Smart Game Plan

One Week Sample Plan	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
What I ate for breakfast							
My energy 360° - how energized did I feel?							
My brain 360° - how well was I able to focus?							
My body 360° - any redness? Bloating? Gas?							
What I ate for lunch							
My energy 360° - how energized did I feel?							
My brain 360° - how well was I able to focus?							
My body 360° - any redness? Bloating? Gas?							
What I ate for dinner							
My energy 360° - how energized did I feel?							
My brain 360° - how well was I able to focus?							
My body 360° - any redness? Bloating? Gas?							

My Week 360°

What observations did you make about the foods that give you energy? Make you sleepy?

Did you notice a change in your ability to focus on a task or pay attention at work/school?

What body reactions - like redness in the face, ears or neck, gas, bloating - indicate you might need to investigate further what that food is made of and how it reacts in your body?