

Local author finds 'Freedom from Food'

BY STEVEN LIBOWITZ
DAILY SOUND ARTS EDITOR

Like many Americans, Patricia Bisch suffered from binge eating and weight problems from her childhood to early adult years.

"I was a junk food junkie," she says. "I'd stop at the (convenience) store and buy cakes and candies and chips all the time. I was really addicted to food. I was using it to heal my pain, and sedate myself. So I gained lots of weight."

But 30 years ago, she came across some concepts that changed her way of thinking, a process in the mind-body connection that, over time, she turned into a new weight-control program that has helped her maintain a trim figure for three decades.

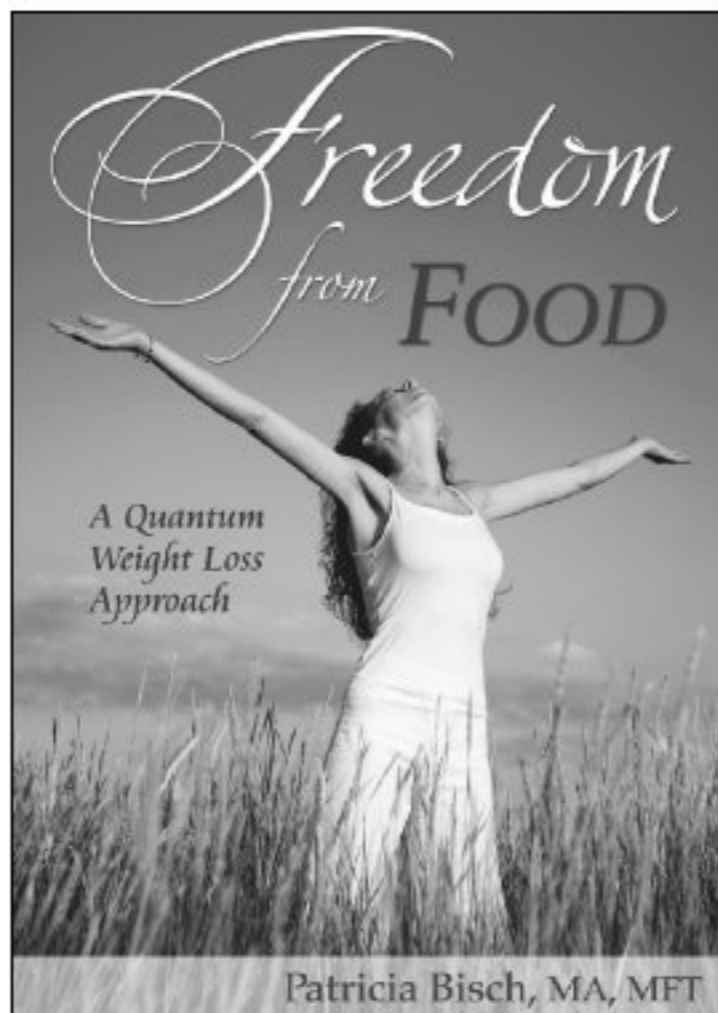
Now that information, which she says anyone can benefit from, and the exercises that make it work, have been compiled into a new book by Bisch, who holds a Masters degree and is a licensed Marriage and Family Therapist.

Bisch, who moved to Santa Barbara about 10 years ago and now lives in Summerland, discussed the process in a recent interview:

Q. What's the basic premise of "Freedom from Food"?

A. The message of the book is simply that your mind can change your body. A lot of people in Santa Barbara have heard of that, but they don't really apply it to eating and food. But FFF is about looking at food and your weight and how you eat from the mind/body connection. Your thoughts and emotions affect how your body processes food.

Q. How did you get started in this?



A. I was studying mind/body connection for eight years, but I was still having trouble with my weight. So I asked my teacher for help. he gave me a meditation to do, which is about making your mind strong enough to change your body, and how it handles food.

Then he told me to eat whatever I wanted for two weeks, and at the end of that time I stepped on a scale and I hadn't gained any weight at all. That was unbelievable for me. I'd heard of things like that before but not for me. But there it was. I'd lost weight by eating. So I had learned how to hold consciousness in

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my mind long enough to change my body. It was a profound effect for me, and it's been working for me ever since.

Q. How do you explain this? I mean, just simple chemistry says that if you eat more than you expend, you put on weight. It's just math.

A. That's a great question, and one obviously everybody would have. The answer, for me at least, is that the mind is the matrix of all matter. Einstein looked at everything as energy. When I saw that calories actually are a unit of energy, that was the key for me. Our body eliminates it, it's set up to do that. Think about our temperature. We're self-regulating. Our bodies work for us to maintain health. Being overweight is not healthy. Our body would actually take away that stuff if we didn't use our emotions to hold on to it because we think it will protect us somehow.

If you ask all people who are thin, they have one thought in common: that they can eat whatever they want whenever they want to and not gain weight. That knowing is stabilized in their bodies. They aren't trying, they don't even think about it, just like don't think about breathing. But if you are obsessed with food and dieting and looking good, that clogs up the energy flow.

Q. So all you have to do is think differently and that's it?

A. No, it's not a quick-fix or a fad diet. People have a tendency to think that if they have intellectual knowledge – the mind can heal the body – that's all they need. But they don't realize it's a step-by-step process to change your concepts. Then you demonstrate it to yourself – like I did, by getting on and off a scale. But it's not an overnight process. You can't say I can eat whatever I want on Monday and start a diet on Tuesday. It's like becoming a black belt in karate. You don't tell someone to punch you in the stomach as hard as they can on your first day of class. You have to do

the practices to make your consciousness strong enough to really affect your body.

Intellectual awareness just isn't enough. You really have to do the practices and train your mind to truly affect your body. The mental current has to be strong enough to have a coherency of thought so you can build a mental bridge to the other side.

I put a workbook in the book which I really want people to use.

Q. What about people who have trouble changing things from a book?

A. It's written for both individual and groups. I ran groups on this work for years and that's what I encourage people to do, find another person to work with who can support you. Some are already forming in town. Some people do learn best that way. But some want to do it on their own. Every practice session is written out for both ways.

Q. So it's a long process to get there.

A. Well, it's not for the wishy-washy. It's for people who are committed. To change your consciousness is a process. To build up the mind set, you have to do the practices. The proof is yourself. Take the test. Eat for 2 weeks and find out if your mind is strong enough. But the test isn't until 4 months into the program, because it takes a while to deprogram things you've believed all your life, like "One moment on your lips, forever on your hips." Those message don't just go away. Your internal and external voices are a strong habit.

You do have to have an open mind. It takes a certain audience, the kind who are willing to try and trust. But all I can tell you is that it's true. It worked for me. It's hard to hear but it works.

You have to work with it yourself before you say yea or nay. That's only fair. Not everything is for everyone. But if you stick with it, you have the opportunity to be permanently healed.

Patricia Bisch will discuss "Freedom from Food: A Quantum Weight Loss Approach" and sign books at Borders, 900 State St., next Thursday, January 11, at 7 p.m.