

When Larry Goldberg graduated from J-School in 1957, the Tastee-Freeze across the street named a sundae in his honor — a gigantic goblet of chocolate milk shake topped with a hot fudge sundae with sliced bananas and nuts. "It was," he says, "the only academic kudo I ever received, but I treasure it."

Then, he was known by his fraternity brothers of Zeta Beta Tau as Fats Goldberg, and he crushed the scales at 300 pounds. Now, he's a slim, fit 160 pounds, owner of three Goldberg Pizzerias in New York City and the author of a new, fun-to-read, probably helpful book for would-be dieters, Goldberg's Diet Catalog.

Goldberg dedicated his work "to all that made this book both possible and necessary," including the University of Missouri-Columbia: Zeta Beta Tau Fraternity kitchen; Zana Mae Smith and Mitchell Eaton, cooks; Tastee Freeze (gone); Clark's Soda Luncheonette; Central Dairy chocolate milk;

Broadway Donut Shop; M-Bar, Italian Village; Ernie's (banana cream pie); Crown Drug Store (grilled cheese sandwiches); refreshment stands at the Hall, Tiger, Missouri, and Varsity movie theaters; donuts at the AE Phi Sorority House after football games; The Pizza House; Campus Grocery Store; composing room of the *Columbia Missourian*; Minute Inn; The Shack's hamburgers; The Bengal Shop; The Stables (greasy burgers).



My friend Larry Goldberg, the pizza baron, is slim, writes his friend, Calvin Trillin, in the book's preface, but I still think of him as Fats Goldberg. So does he. Although he has "been down," as he puts it, for 18 years, after 25 years of exceptional fatness, he sees himself not as a man who weighs 160 but as a man who is constantly in danger of weighing 320. "Inside, I'm still a fat man," he sometimes says. When Fats and I were boys in Kansas City, he was

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LARRY GOLDBERG

fact that he never stopped eating. When he talks about those days, a lot of his sentences begin with phrases like "Then on the way to lunch I'd stop off at the Tastee-Freeze. . . ."

I had a discussion about eating habits with Fats one day at the Gaiety Delicatessen on Lexington Avenue, where he goes every day for a kind of lunchtime breakfast. I ordered the tunafish-salad plate with double coleslaw, hold the potato salad, and a low-caloric cream soda. Fats ate two scrambled eggs, sausages, a bagel with cream cheese, and four cups of coffee with a total of eight packets of sugar. "A fat man's got to have something to look forward to," Fats said. "When I'm reading in bed late at night, I think about being able to have this bagel and cream cheese the next day." Underlying the Fats Goldberg system of weight control is more or less the same philosophy that led to the great Russian purge trials of the 30s — deviation is treason. His Gaiety meals vary

already renowned for his corpulence — though I can't say I was ever approached about posing for Refugee Relief ads in those days myself. During college, at the University of Missouri, he reached 300 pounds and became known as both Fats Goldberg and Three Cases Goldberg — Columbia, Missouri, having been, through a derivation process that must still puzzle students of the language, the only place in the country where anybody recognized a 100-pound unit of measurement called the case. I occasionally saw him when I visited Columbia, where he was one of a number of storied eaters. According to one tale, when a restaurant near the campus instituted a policy of giving customers all they wanted to eat on Sunday nights for \$1.35, a fraternity brother of Fats's called Hog Silverman, who weighed less than 2½ cases, went over one Sunday and put it out of business. Fats was known not only for that kind of single-sitting tour de force but for the

daily only in how the eggs are done. In the evening, he has either a steak or half a chicken, baked in the pizza oven. (He is always careful to cut the chicken in half before baking and to put the unneeded half back in the refrigerator. "You have to pre-plan," he says. "A fat man always cleans his plate.") On Sunday night he permits himself a quarter of a small sausage pizza in place of the steak or chicken, but then he works at the ovens trying to sweat it off. On Monday he cheats to the extent of some bread or maybe a piece of pie. The schedule is maintained only in New York, of course. Kansas City remains a free zone for Fats. He says that in the earlier years of his thinness a week's trip to Kansas City to visit his family would mean gaining 17 pounds. Lately, restraint has begun to creep into his Kansas City binges. He sometimes manages to visit Kansas City without gaining more than 10 pounds.

"Just what *did* you eat on a big day in

Kansas City the week you gained 17 pounds?" I asked. I prepared to make a list.

"Well, for breakfast I'd have two eggs, six biscuits with butter and jelly, half a quart of milk, six link sausages, six strips of bacon, and a couple of homemade cinnamon rolls," Fats said. "Then I'd hit Mac-Lean's Bakery. They have a kind of fried cinnamon roll I love. Maybe I'd have two or three of them. Then, on the way downtown to have lunch with somebody, I might stop at Kresge's and have two chili dogs and a couple of root beers. Ever had their chili dogs?"

I shook my head.

"Greasiest chili dogs in the world," Fats said. "I love 'em. Then I'd go to lunch. What I really like for lunch is something like a hot beef sandwich or a hot turkey sandwich. Openfaced, loaded with that flour gravy. With mashed potatoes. Then Dutch apple pie. Kansas City is big on Dutch apple pie. Here they call it apple crumb or something. Then, sometimes in the afternoon, I'd pick up a pie — just an ordinary nine-inch pie — and go to my friend Matt Flynn's house, and we'd cut the pie down the middle and put half in a bowl for each of us and then take a quart of ice cream and cut that down the middle and put it on top of the pie. We'd wash it down with Pepsi-Cola. Sometimes Matt couldn't finish his and I'd have to finish it for him. Then that would be it until I stopped at my sister's house. She's very big on crunchy peanut butter. She even has peanut butter and jelly already mixed. They didn't have that when I was a kid. Then for dinner we'd maybe go to Charlie Bryant's or one of the barbecues out on the highway. At the movies I'd always have a bag of corn and a big Coke and knock off a Payday candy bar. Payday is still my favorite candy bar. They're hard to get here, but they have a very big distribution in Kansas City. Then we'd always end up at Winstead's, of course. Two double cheeseburgers with everything but onions, a fresh-lime Coke and a Frosty Malt. If it was before 11, I'd stop at the Zarda Dairy for one of their 49¢ banana splits. Then when I'd get home maybe some cherry pie and a 16-ounce Pepsi."



I am a foodaholic, explains Goldberg in the *Introduction* to Goldberg's Diet Catalog. I mainline Mallomars. I'm a Chunky junkie. Even the word "food" conjures up mouth-watering dreams of hot drippy pepperoni pizza, huge Cokes with crushed ice,

crisp crinkly French fries, so greasy my fingers are slick, and thick chocolate shakes with little lumps of vanilla ice cream still floating around.

Nothing used to get between me and food. When I was 22 and had just graduated from college, I had a complete physical, the first one of my life. After putting me through some horrible tests, the doctor took me into his office, shut the door, and announced that I had diabetes (of the latent variety — but quite real enough for me). My three double chins started to tremble; I was terrified. But, he said, I could control my diabetes through diet. I regained my composure, walked out the door, got in my car and drove to NuWay Drive In, and ate three hotdogs, potato salad, and a chocolate shake. When I was fat and got hungry, the angel of death could be sitting on my shoulder and I wouldn't miss a bite. . . .

How did I get into this? By sixth grade I weighed 200.

How did I get into this bind? When I was born, 43 years ago, to Sara and Art Goldberg of Kansas City, Missouri, I weighed 7 pounds 14 ounces. Sara, who weighs 140 pounds, is the Jelly Bean Queen of K.C. She still hangs around Woolworth's candy counter eating orange slices. Art weighed 150 pounds, never got hungry, and owned a food emporium called, not surprisingly, Goldberg's Market — "Fancy Groceries and Meats," with free delivery. (I was the free delivery.) Jocelyn, my sister, is five years older than me . . . and skinny. Lucky Joc.

Ma says I was a "chunky" baby and that I was eating everything in sight while I was still gurgling in her arms. By sixth grade, I weighed a cool 200 pounds. When Ma would cook she'd make six pork chops; one for each of them and three for me. I was so "chunky" I couldn't sit in a normal desk. Mrs. Burns, my teacher, had me sit in a straight chair on the side of the room. . . .

My parents couldn't stop me from eating — no parents could. They'd have had to keep an eye on me 24 hours a day. If I couldn't eat at home or in the grocery store stockroom, I'd eat at neighbors', friends', strangers', or any place where I found a spare cashew. . . .

When I moved on to the University of

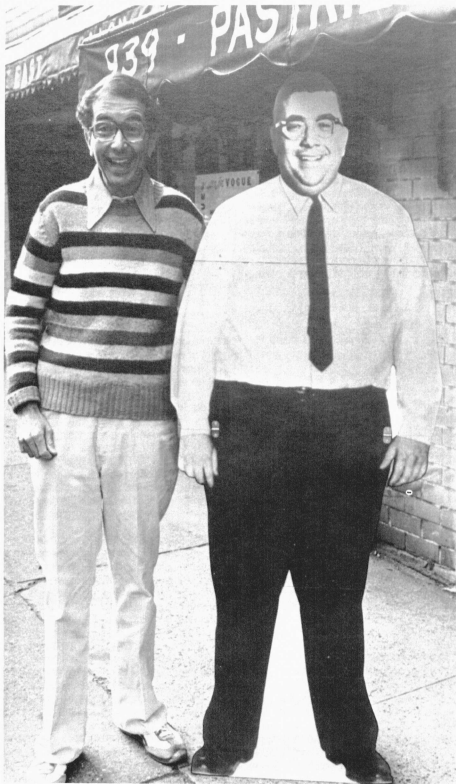
At Mizzou, I wore 48-inch-waist khakis.

Missouri to study journalism, I pledged Zeta Beta Tau fraternity. There I went formal and switched to 48-inch-waist khakis instead of the overalls. I now weighed 305 pounds, and had managed to kiss one girl, once.

I always tried to take a shower alone in the fraternity house because I was embarrassed by my size. One day I happened to glance at my naked body after taking a shower. I noticed a string of little red scratches circling my tummy. Although I tried never to look at myself completely undressed, now that I had done so, panic set in. I ran to the doctor, who told me those red lines were stretch marks. That is, the skin couldn't hold the fat. He reassured me that they were harmless and that pregnant women get them all the time. But, I whimpered, I wasn't a pregnant woman. I was thoroughly depressed until I could get to a pint of butterscotch swirl ice cream.

Once during my first year, after I had eaten three complete lunches in one hour, I thought I had finally done it: I was going to die from overeating. Struggling over to the infirmary, I bared my soul to the doctor. I begged him for a diet. Being more accustomed to mononucleosis than to cases such as mine, he pushed his finger in my stomach, shook his head, told me to cool it on the groceries, gave me a can of foot powder, and sent me home. He didn't realize he was dealing with an addict — and what an addict!

The worst night I ever spent during my fat years was in the fraternity house, two months before graduation. As usual, after my customary 3½-portion dinner, I started to watch TV or thumb through a book. And — again as usual — I started salivating around 8:30, waiting for the sandwich man who came around at 10 o'clock. But that night he didn't show. By 11:30 I was in a state of panic. Everything was closed except for the highway cafes and the doughnut shop in downtown Columbia, and to top it all off, it was snowing. I ran from room to room, sweating and screaming for someone to take me to eat. At last, Dave Goodman, God bless him, took pity on my crazed condition and drove me to the Broadway Donut Shop; after a dozen hot glazed doughnuts and a quart of chocolate milk, I finally stopped twitching.



Larry Goldberg mugs with a life-size poster of Fats Goldberg 160 pounds and 18 years ago.

After I graduated from college in journalism, I had four jobs that first year. I counted Japanese thong sandals in bins, sold radio time for a rock station in K.C., went back to Columbia, Missouri, as a radio announcer (calling myself Fats Goldberg, the Sheik of Columbia), and was a television announcer, off camera, of course. Finally I wound up in Chicago working for the *Chicago Tribune*, and it was there that I made a decision. I was tired of being fat. It was ugly and uncomfortable, the morning heartburn really hurt, and being fat was rapidly becoming a lot less funny than it had once seemed.

So on Monday, May 1, 1959, I awoke and rubbed my food-swollen eyes and said to myself, "Today's the day I'm going to start my diet." I'd said those words to myself almost every morning since the day I was born. But this was it.

The last time I'd weighed myself was three or four months before when I'd found a freight and cattle scale. (Household scales, at least the ones I've seen, go only to 300 pounds.) I hopped on the freight scale, and when the needle started careening over 300 and wasn't slowing down, I leaped off. It had hit 320. . . .

I totally committed to a new lifestyle.

When I made that decision to diet, I had to make a total commitment to a new lifestyle. If I was going to lose weight, I had to stop eating. So when the hunger pains were making my stomach do the Charleston, I would think about Caterpillar tractors, joint sessions of Congress, Marilyn Monroe — anything except food.

Somewhere along the line, I read the proper way to eat was to breakfast like a king, lunch like a prince, and dine like a pauper. I've used that system for years and it works, though I've now developed Goldberg's variations on it, about which you will hear more later. At that time, I would get up in the morning, drink a glass of skim milk to get me rolling, then follow it with two eggs, toast, and coffee. Sometimes I'd throw in a little bacon or sausage. Lunch was a sandwich and a glass of skim milk. I always took the top piece of bread off and folded the two halves together. That way I saved the calories in a slice of bread. Dinner was meat of some kind . . . with cottage cheese or tomato. . . .

Pain was still my constant companion —

I did it. In one year I lost 130 pounds.

the physical pain of being hungry and the psychological pain of deprivation. I had to change my lifestyle to one that wasn't centered around food.

And I did it. In one year I lost 130 pounds.

It was at that point, when I weighed 190 pounds, that I went into the pizza business. I figured that if I couldn't eat it, I could become a pizza voyeur and sell and smell it. Suddenly, at the age of 34, I was standing in front of two 650-degree ovens schlepping pizzas. It was like working in front of a Gary, Indiana, open hearth. The old scale started going down again. Terrific. Now, nine years later, I'm 160 pounds and lean like a cougar.

In the last few years, I've developed the Goldberg Oasis Method of Maintenance. I eat everything I want on Monday night, storing up food like a camel. Then I diet Tuesday and Wednesday. Thursday I have another eating orgy, to carry me through the diet days of Friday, Saturday, and Sunday. On a Monday or Thursday it's nothing for me to put on five pounds. But I take those pounds right off on my diet days. I have to have those two binge days to look forward to — each is an oasis in the middle of the diet desert.

Find out what works for you. If it works, it's good.

Except for Monday and Thursday, my life is cemented into a routine. I eat two meals a day. Since my work at the pizza stands is primarily at night, I get up late and have a glass of skim milk. Then I work the lunch shift at one of the pizzerias. About 2:00 p.m., at the Gaiety Delicatessen, I have a large brunch of soft scrambled eggs with sausage, bacon, or pastrami, a toasted buttered bagel with a little cream cheese, and coffee. This is my food thrill of the day.

For dinner I have yogurt with bran, half a chicken, or four ounces of roast beef, plus a little salad and fruit. By 11 o'clock I'm against the wall with hunger. Sometimes it gets so bad that I can't wait to brush



In 1957 the guys of Zeta Beta Tau Fraternity horse around with the help of brother Fats.

my teeth, so I can at least get the taste of Crest toothpaste. . . .

During my first year of dieting, I developed "Dr." Goldberg's Diet Dicta:

1. Find what works for you. The reducing Golden Rule is: Anything that works, is good. When you find it, fit it into your lifestyle.
2. Be flexible. Add variety.
3. Don't eat fattening foods.
4. Eat a balanced diet.
5. Eat slowly. Put the fork down after every bite. Before I lost weight, I ate like a windmill—just one whirling, continuous circular motion from the plate to my mouth and back again.
6. See your doctor before going on any diet.

I contemplated, mused, and daydreamed for 25 years, but in the end I learned there's only one way to lose weight. I had to change the way I lived. I determined to try not to eat fattening foods and to eat a balanced diet. And I succeeded. . . .

We are all individuals, with different tastes, appetites, and lifestyles. Therefore any diet will help you lose weight and keep it off must fit into your personal life-plan. With this book, you can pick and choose from a lot of diet information and

develop your own system, as I did. Or you can go to a diet group meeting, read a book, go to a fat farm, or attend any number of diet courses, and find that a particular diet or system works for you in its entirety. What this book is really like (sorry to mention it in a diet book) is a smorgasbord: you can eat one food (or stick with one diet plan) until your ears fall off, or you can fill your plate with 50 things.

Of course, I'm still looking for that one magic elixir that will automatically make me thin forever without my having to give up one French fry; but with one large salty tear trickling down my rosy cheek, I'm sorry to report that, after all this research, I haven't found it. □

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