

World Food Day - Food as a Donor of Love

Ivana Lavanda*

Professor, São Camilo University Center, Brazil

***Corresponding Author:** Ivana Lavanda, Professor, São Camilo University Center, Brazil.

Received: October 20, 2019; **Published:** October 29, 2019

On October 16, World Food Day proclaimed by FAO (Food and Agriculture Organization of the Nations Organization) is celebrated. Every year this day is remembered to promote actions and awareness of people about those who suffer from hunger and the need to guarantee food security and nutritious diets for all.

This year the motto is to reach a healthy diet for a world of zero hunger. In this context, child malnutrition should be understood as part of an environment in which very rapid changes occur, such as the growth of urban populations and the globalization of food systems, leading to an increase in the availability of calorie-rich foods, but poor in nutrients.

We are currently in a period of nutritional transition, with the increase in the three aspects of the triple burden of malnutrition; malnutrition, hidden hunger and overweight and, in its most serious form, obesity, mainly affecting children and young people in a situation of greater social and economic vulnerability, thus perpetuating the cycle of poverty throughout the generations.

The lack of availability and access to food of optimum nutritional quality undermines the increase in food insecurity. The higher cost of nutritious foods, the stress of living with food insecurity and the physiological adaptations to food restriction contextualize the association between food insecurity and the increased risk of overweight and obesity.

According to the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization report on the state of the world, the experience of not having access to certain foods often generates feelings of anxiety, stress and depression, which in turn can lead to behaviors that increase the risk of being overweight and obese. These may include patterns of compulsive intake (binge eating) or overfeeding and/or prioritizing the choice of low-cost, high-calorie and high-fat "pleasurable foods", sugars and salt.

Another fundamental aspect to consider is stability, with nutrition being extremely susceptible to climate change, a factor responsible for the recent increase in world hunger. According to FAO (2019), today only nine plant species account for 66 percent of total crop production. Currently we have only three crops (wheat, corn and rice) to provide almost 50 percent of the world's food supply. It is essential to have a variety of foods to provide a healthy diet and, in turn, safeguard the environment. Failure to do so, malnutrition, will continue to bear a heavy burden, due to the deterioration of food quality and the lack of diversity of food produced and consumed, also leading to repercussions on water use.

In this context it is essential to discover how to be more aware in relation to what we eat. In times where Mindfulness and Conscious Eating, through the emphasis on Behavioral Nutrition for moving habits, excess weight continues to be the most prevalent nutritional disease in the world.

Food monotony

There are 30,000 species of edible plants worldwide and only 200 are grown on a significant scale. In turn, only 8 (including potatoes and wheat) contribute 50% of our daily calories. This situation needs urgent actions to reduce the monotony in our diet.

To combat the increase in NCD (chronic noncommunicable diseases such as obesity, diabetes, coronary diseases, among others), our way of producing, supplying and consuming food has to change. From the farm to the plate, the effect on our diets, intensified food production combined with climate change, is causing a rapid loss of biodiversity.

A recent study in 3400 adults identified some variables to improve the diversity of fruit and vegetable consumption:

- Food culture knowledge,
- Increase of the monthly availability of fruits in the houses,
- Greater variety of fruits and quality of vegetables in commercial establishments.

These results demonstrate the need to improve educational actions in health services and programs, in addition to acting on the consumer environment, to promote and maintain adequate and diversified consumption. Working in food environments is crucial. When healthy foods are affordable, convenient and desirable, children and families make better food choices. We must empower families, children and youth to demand nutritious food. As children grow, knowledge and information can turn them into powerful agents in favor of change. Fostering the demand for nutritious foods means not only educating consumers about the benefits of a healthy diet, but also enhancing cultural and social aspirations.

Obesogenic environment!

We continue through a nutritional transition, with an intake of low-calorie diets high in refined starches, sugar, fat, salt, and more and more industrialized foods are chosen or, as called in recent years, processed.

People spend less time preparing meals at home and consumers, especially in urban areas, are increasingly dependent on supermarkets, fast food establishments, street food vendors and takeaway restaurants.

When we attend patients in the office, we explain the need to change habits. Many nutritionists put together an Ebook with personalized recipes for their pathology or suitable with characteristics of the developed food plan.

It seems perfect, but no. Many times we observe faces of despair. Why aren't we helping them by providing healthy and practical recipes? Maybe yes, the problem is that this family does not have time to cook or does not know where to start an „easy” and „practical” preparation.

What is the problem? They do not have the habit of spending time in the kitchen, they have no interest (for many it is even a waste of time) and they do not see it as an act of self-care, much less as an act of love. Or perhaps a deeper aspect do not have the financial resources to organize a nutritious diet. So how do we improve our role as health professionals?

Then I would like everyone to start thinking.....And at home, what do we do?

In accordance with „being more aware of what we eat”, we propose some tips, and remember you, your parents, your colleagues, your teachers, your friends, we can ALL do something to help us, together, eat a healthy diet and A more conscious life.

Follow some steps to achieve change:

- Increase our intake of fruits, vegetables, legumes, dried fruits and whole grains/cereals. Remember our slogan “Unpack less and fight more”
- Fill at least one third of your plate with vegetables during meals or try to make a vegetarian meal once a week. The more colors the better! we go for the crusade... „Monday without meat!”
- „Change white to brown.” Change ‘white’ cereals (white rice, pasta, white flour, white bread, etc.) for whole grains (brown rice, whole wheat flour and bread, etc.)

- Limit the consumption of foods that require excessive use of natural resources, such as water, to be produced.
- „If it rots, it’s good.” Reduce or eliminate the consumption of industrialized and precooked foods to favor more diverse and traditional foods, in an effort to support local biodiversity.
- Learn or review the teachings on local and seasonal foods, their nutritional values, and how to cook and preserve them.

And finally, „cooking for someone is delivering love”, that’s why..

- Help in the kitchen: Watch and learn while your parents, friends or partner cook and offer to help when you see they are tired. There are many easy, fast and healthy recipes to inspire you.

Volume 14 Issue 11 November 2019

©All rights reserved by Ivana Lavanda.