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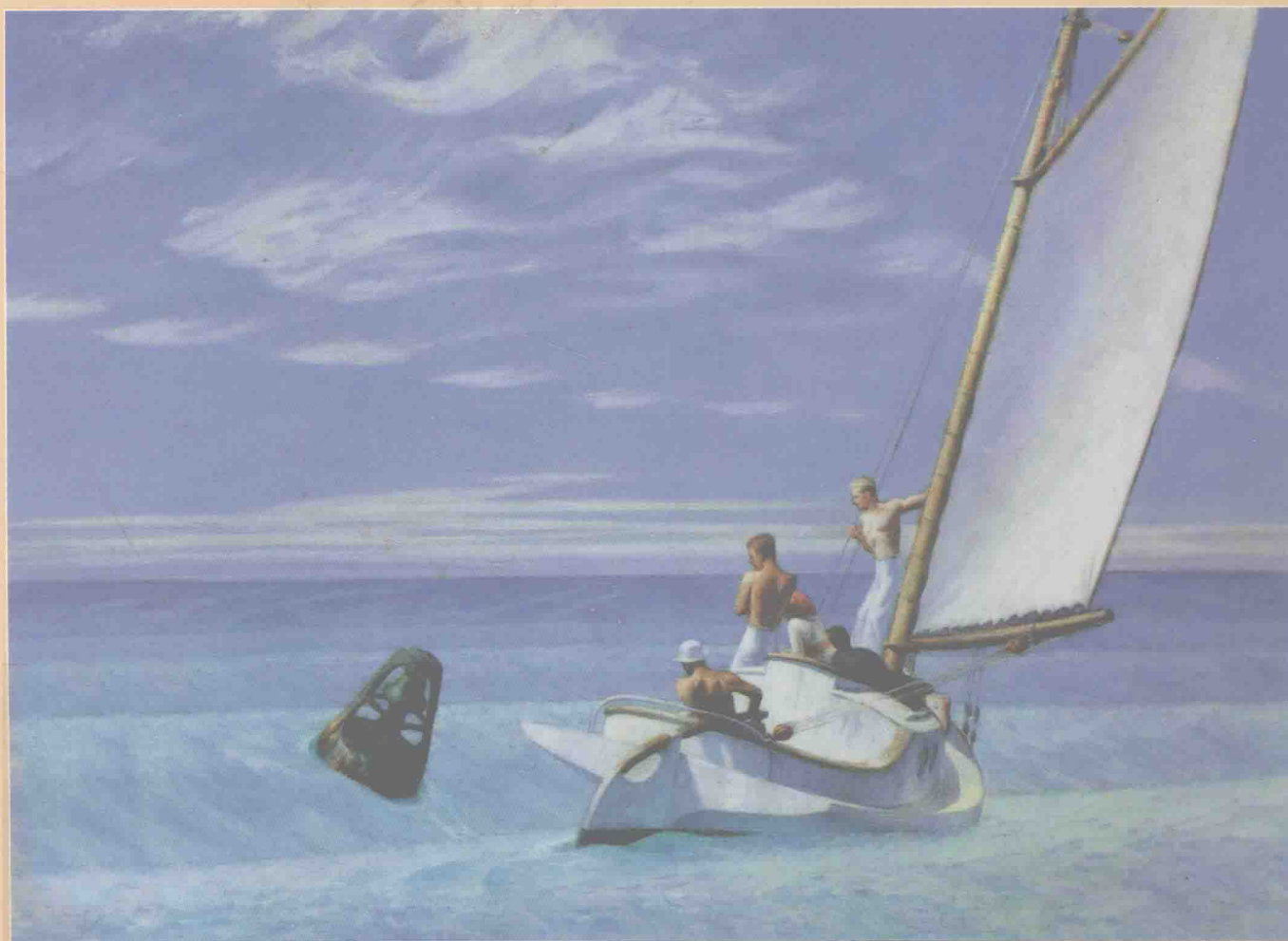
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# Essential Life Choices

HEALTH CONCEPTS AND STRATEGIES

Eleanor Noss Whitney

Frances Sienkiewicz Sizer



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HEALTH CONCEPTS AND STRATEGIES

**Eleanor Noss Whitney and Frances Sienkiewicz Sizer**  
with  
**Lori Waite Turner**

**West Publishing Company**  
St. Paul New York Los Angeles San Francisco

*Copyediting:* Elaine Levin  
*Illustrations:* Cyndie Clark-Huegel, Wayne Clark, John Waller, Judy Waller, Darwen Hennings, Vally Hennings, Carlisle Graphics, Rolin Graphics  
*Cartoons:* Gary Carroll, Robert Celander, William Celander  
*Composition:* Carlise Graphics  
*Cover Art:* Edward Hopper. *Grand Swell*, 1939. Oil, 36½" × 50¼". The Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.

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50 W. Kellogg Boulevard  
P.O. Box 64526  
St. Paul, MN 55164-1003

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Printed in the United States of America

96 95 94 93 92 91 90 89      8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 0

**Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data**

Whitney, Eleanor Noss.  
Essential life choices/Eleanor Noss Whitney, Frances Sienkiewicz Sizer.  
p. cm.  
Includes index.  
ISBN 0-314-47686-5  
1. Health. I. Sizer, Frances Sienkiewicz. II. Title.  
RA776.W563 1989  
613—dc19

88-33327  
CIP

Acknowledgements and Photo Credit appear following the index.





# Essential Life Choices

HEALTH CONCEPTS AND STRATEGIES

Look to this day!  
For it is life,  
the very life of life.  
In its brief course  
lie all the verities  
and realities of your existence . . .  
For yesterday is already a dream,  
and tomorrow is only a vision;  
But today, well lived,  
makes every yesterday  
a dream of happiness,  
and every tomorrow  
a vision of hope.

From the Sanskrit

# About the Authors

**Eleanor Noss Whitney, PhD, RD** received her BA in biology from Radcliffe College in 1960 and her PhD in biology with an emphasis on genetics from Washington University, St. Louis, in 1970. She has taught community classes and workshops in health, weight control, and addiction recovery and has served as a paraprofessional counselor in the treatment of people with alcoholism. Formerly an associate professor of nutrition at the Florida State University, she now devotes full time to research, writing, and consulting in nutrition and health. Her publications include articles in *Science*, the *Journal of Nutrition*, *Genetics*, and other journals, and the textbooks *Nutrition: Concepts and Controversies* and *Understanding Nutrition* among others. She is president of Nutrition and Health Associates and cofounder of the Coastal Plains Institute, a foundation that conducts environmental education projects in North Florida.

**Frances Sienkiewicz Sizer, MS, RD** attended Florida State University where, in 1980, she received her BS, and in 1982, her MS in nutrition. She has counseled clients in the University's stress-reduction clinic and served as nutrition consultant to schools and alcoholism programs in Florida. She coauthors the textbooks *Nutrition: Concepts and Controversies*, now in its fourth edition, and *Life Choices: Health Concepts and Strategies*, on which this book is based. She has published in *Shape* magazine, in the health newsletter *Healthline*, and in the *Journal of Chemical Senses*. She is a founding member of Nutrition and Health Associates, an information resource center in Tallahassee, Florida, and writes monographs for professionals on current topics in nutrition and health. She is a member of the American Public Health Association, the American Alliance for Health, Physical Education, Recreation, and Dance, and the Association for the Advancement of Health Education, and she is active in environmental groups in the Coastal Plains area.

**Lori Waite Turner, MS, RD** attended Florida State University where, in 1980, she received her BS in Food and Nutrition with a minor in physical education. In 1983 she completed her MS in Dietetics and Nutrition at Florida International University. She worked for Capitol Foods of Atlanta, Georgia where she marketed a computerized menu system to health care institutions. She served as a Therapeutic Dietitian at Kennestone Hospital in Marietta, Georgia, as Chief Clinical Dietitian for Doctors' Hospital in Coral Gables, Florida, and as a Nutrition Consultant for a Cardiac Rehabilitation program, also in Coral Gables. She has coauthored the *Instructor's Manual*, *Test Bank*, and *Student Activity Manual* that accompany this text, and she is a member of the American Dietetic Association. She is an active member of the Florida State University Synchronized Swim Club.

serves as an alphabetical list of all glossary terms: page numbers where definitions appear are in the index in boldface type.

The book addresses the reader as a consumer, not only of health products and services, but also of health information. Strategies for evaluating health claims are offered in Chapter 1, and in **Consumer Cautions** throughout the rest of the book. Further, it is vital to distinguish between needs created by advertisers or quacks and real needs—and the **magic bullet** logo appears throughout the book to identify suspect claims. The book cites its references, modeling the characteristics of a reliable health information source. (To keep the pages uncluttered, though, the references are gathered together in Appendix D).

A theme of the book is that a person's state of health is, to a great extent, that person's own responsibility. At the same time, it is important to acknowledge that not all of life's outcomes are chosen. Each chapter makes clear what people can control (their lifestyle habits) and what they cannot (their heredity, some of the circumstances of their lives, and chance events, including some accidents). Guidelines are offered, wherever relevant, to suggest when to get help with states of mind and body that are the subjects of the chapters that follow.

Another thing we emphasize is that someone else's choices are not a person's responsibility. From teaching, we know that students often ask what they can do to persuade friends and relatives to change their behavior. No matter how much a person may want to persuade Aunt Sally to give up smoking, or a sister to quit using pills, or a spouse to go jogging, one person cannot make the choice for another. The best bet is often to keep quiet about the choices others are making. We offer suggestions in the chapters about facilitating versus enabling behavior.

The book is positive. Its emphasis is on what *to* do, not on what *not* to do, to enhance the quality of life. Therefore, the chapters on diseases make it clear how different (and how preferable) *prevention* is in comparison with *cure*. The chapters on nutrition encourage the reader, not to diet, but to eat well. The book does not suggest that people just give up destructive habits, but that they find adaptive habits to substitute for them.

The abundant thought we have put into the topics of this book has brought about changes in our own awareness and behavior. If reading the book has one-tenth of the impact on its users that writing it has had on us, it should be a successful book as we define success.

We hope it will be successful. As we define it, success is bringing about behavior change that will enhance the quality of our readers' lives.

Eleanor N. Whitney

Frances S. Sizer

January, 1989

# Acknowledgments

We are grateful to our associates Linda DeBruyne and Sharon Rolfes for their support throughout the preparation of this book. We also thank Betty and Bob Geltz for the data from which Appendix E was generated. We thank our editors Kristen Weber and Peter Marshall for their many efforts in behalf of the book.

We also appreciate the efforts of our reviewers:

Judy Baker  
East Carolina University

Sharon Garcia  
Diablo Valley College

Mark Kittleson  
Youngstown State University

Barbara Wilks  
University of Georgia

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