

Emotional And Binge Eating

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Emotional Eating

What is it?

Eating out side of physical hunger.

You may think emotional eating is the problem you need to fix
Unfortunately, a lot of people out there who try to also help you with
emotional eating unknowingly make it worse.

Viewing emotional eating as a problem that needs to be changed and
corrected almost always ramps up the behavior. Trying the "don't eat
emotionally diet" or "just don't binge eat diet", is exactly the same as the
don't eat flour and sugar diet. It is a restriction.

You feel like if you could just get this emotional eating under control things
would be so much better, making emotional eating a problem. *A problem
that brings guilt, shame and judgement, the Bermuda Triangle of emotions.*

Indulging in any of those feelings around food will likely lead you to eat a
LOT more of whatever it is to soothe yourself from that feeling.

You may notice yourself going through the day often trying NOT to eat.
Fighting the thoughts. Pushing back. Attempting to control any of the
urges. When you do this, all it is doing is bringing food to the front of your
mind, so the SECOND things go off course, food is your go to. Why wouldn't
it be? You have been obsessing about it all day, of course that is what you
would run to.

It is like saying, "Don't think about the pink elephant" what do you do?
THINK ABOUT THE PINK ELEPHANT.

So your attempt to NOT eat is actually driving you TO food faster.

"Normal eating" isn't what or how you eat, but the feeling you have while eating.

Eating should feel good. You should enjoy it. But it is really hard to enjoy eating ANYTHING when all you are thinking about is, "will this making me fat?"

What if.....what if it just were OK?

Just stay with me here.

What if you felt the same way about emotional eating as you did scrolling through IG or watching Netflix or knitting for 3 hours?

The biggest problem with emotional eating is that we think it is a problem.

When we think we are doing something wrong with our food we subconsciously think "this has to stop" and thinking that leads us back to, "diet starts Monday." AKA-->Better get it all in now because I am not doing this again tomorrow.

Our relationship with food often mirrors our relationship to ourself. When we feel out of control around food it isn't uncommon for that to show up in other areas of our live. We feel stressed, anxious, we show up inconsistently or feel all over the place.

How is that true for you? What other areas of your life do you feel out of control or chaotic in?

This is ultimately a process of building trust with yourself.

We need more than just a logical reason to do or not something. This is why I started with intuitive eating. We want to build that trust with ourselves. Logically we know we what we should eat but mentally or emotionally we do something differently.

I actually ENCOURAGE you to do the not so logical choice :)

Every time I have taken that leap of faith and listened to my gut, it was the best decision ever.

TRUST YOUR GUT

Here is a non food related example of this:

I had a great future paved out for myself in my 20's. I was working at Providence Hospital. I was going to be applying for nursing school. I was making more money than ever. It all looked great!

Except for the fact that I was miserable.

I hoped I'd get in a car wreck every damn day on my way to work. I felt like I dying inside. I had everything going for me. And yet, I wanted to crawl in a hole and die.

I quit that job.

I quit and went to work at a grocery store.

I took a massive pay cut.

I took a massive hit to my ego.

And I had never been happier.

Logically, I should have stayed at the nursing job. Emotionally, I knew it wasn't right.

My body was saying one thing but my gut another.

What was listening to your gut helped you out in life? What examples did everything point to doing one thing but something inside of you pushed you to the other??

Your brain may say salad with chicken and your body may say cheeseburger and fries.

(most of the time mine says burger, salad AND fries :))

Some days you may go with the body other days you will go with your brain. It is all ok. What we are work on is building the idea that IT IS JUST FOOD! Whatever happens is FINE! If that still feels a million miles away at this point, that is ok.

It's not the cupcakes fault.

When you notice yourself eating emotionally, ask yourself, what am I getting from this?

We are so quick to make our food the problem. We blame it on sugar or bread or dairy. When really, it has nothing to do with the food, it is what we are using the food FOR that needs to be looked at.

I used to pride myself on always being busy. At any give time I had 2 jobs, working out like a crazy person, I was signing up for volunteer things, considering joining a tennis or soccer league, trying to socialize and date. I was tired.

All day.

Mentally, physically and emotionally.

And food got me through.

I ate for a little pick me up. I went to the cafe, then vending machines, then cafeteria. I had to switch is up so they wouldn't know I had a problem or anything.

You know what I needed?

Not another latte, not another protein paleo cookie, or another bag of red vines.

I needed a fucking nap.

I needed to chill. I needed to see that I didn't HAVE to do all the things all the time to be ok. To be accepted or to be loved.

Ask yourself:

Is it the food? Or is it the hard conversation I need to have?

Is it the late night trips to the fridge or the fact that I hate my job?

Is it the 4 candy bars eaten on the way home or the uncertainty I feel in my relationship?

Our preoccupation with our body and weight is directly correlated to the degree in which we use food for comfort.

Binge Eating

Why do we binge eat?

Restriction.

Types of restriction:

1. Physical Restriction: Not eating enough calories.
2. Mental Restriction: You might be eating enough calories but that won't matter if the whole time you are eating the food you are thinking you shouldn't be doing it, this is wrong, or you aren't going to do it again tomorrow.

Vegetarians are able to do this because they are not doing it from a point of wanting to change their body or from meat being tied to their self esteem.

They are doing it for ethical reasons (However, I will say, vegetarianism/veganism/gluten free can also just be a mask for disordered eating)

It comes back to what they VALUE.

Your body is gonna get what your body wants.

If you aren't eating enough food, your body WILL let you know eventually. Night time eating is by far the most common issue women come to me with.

"I do SO good all day and then I get home and it is like a flip is switched! I just can't stop."

Most women are not eating enough food. And when you don't eat enough food, you WILL feel out of control around food.

What often turns say 3 cookies after dinner to 3 cookies, a bag of chips, some gummy bears, a few string cheese, and a bowl or 3 of cereal is the belief that you are doing something wrong. That this is a problem. That the 3 cookies was a bad choice. So now- screw it!

This is a repeat:

When we believe we are doing something wrong with our food, when we feel guilt/shame/judgement about how, what or why we are eating, we are telling ourselves this needs to stop. But we can't. So we eat more to calm our nerves, quiet our mind, and tell ourselves tomorrow will be different.

It is really hard to enjoy your food or feel it in your body when you are freaking out about how many calories you are eating or thinking that what you are doing is wrong.

My podcast on "Intuitive Eating and Sex" goes into this as well.

We eat until we are satisfied.

How do you tell if you are satisfied when all you can think about is how much that food is going to make you gain weight?

You can't.

The reason we want to cram as much food as possible in our mouth is because you don't want to get caught or you tell yourself this is the last time....aka mental restriction.

(this should be familiar. I've mentioned it a few times already.)

Control, restraint, and planning won't work.

Maybe you *used* to be able to follow diets or certain ways of eating.

But with time, more restriction, more weight loss, more hunger, eventually you couldn't.

What used to be easy to do with your food now feels impossible.

This isn't anything wrong with you. This is actually food saving your life. I know several of you in here would probably have died of starvation had you have been able to restrict forever.

Binge eating is a NATURAL response to restriction.

Mental or physical.

So what do you do?

You catch yourself.

You start to see what is happening.

You read this packet, you attend coaching calls and you ask questions.

You allow.

You allow all foods and you notice the guilt that is coming up and ask yourself WHY?

No where in there did I add, " And then you scold and judge yourself for what just happened!!"

For years you've likely ran to someone or something to tell you what and how and when to eat. You've judged your food and your body. Viewed it as never enough.

Has it ever worked?

I will not give you a plan or a protocol because they don't work. If they did , you would be doing that. I'd give it to you!

I would absolutely wrap it up with a bow and send you the meal plan that would save your life and keep you thin forever. But there isn't one.

The work is starting to believe that WHATEVER you do with your food is ok. This work is emotional. This is all about your MIND.
(which we will be getting into more in future weeks)
Allowance around ALL food is critical in eliminating binge eating.

What's the difference between binge and emotional eating??

You may think it is amounts, right?

Yes and no.

I have some women tell me a binge is 2 cookies and a few handfuls of chips.

I personally was the binge eater plowing through a box of cereal, a few pieces of fruit, ice cream, some chocolate , a string cheese or two and gummy bears.

But what is it that pushes you from the satisfying 2 cookies to reach for the handful of chips? Or what was it that after 2 bowls of cereal I decided to throw in the towel and just go big?

The guilt.

The assumption that what I was doing was wrong.

Shame.

It was a feeling.

We eat and eat and eat most often because we are feeling guilt and shame. It is fueling our emotional eating often tipping us all the way over to a binge.

"If you are going to eat standing up in front of the fridge, pull up a chair." Geneen Roth

Own what you eat. Enjoy it.

There is NOTHING you can do with your food that is wrong. We eat until we are satisfied. And you can't feel satisfied when you are disconnected from your body and the food.

You may be thinking,

"This sounds great and all, but I really can't stop once I start eating. I constantly eat until I feel physically ill."

IF you are experiencing this:

1. What is the food you are bingeing on? Is it a food you think has an acceptable amount? Is it a food you try to limit? Is it a food you wouldn't eat freely in front of a room full of people?

If you answered YES to any of these, of course you can't stop eating. You are still living in restriction!!

And listen, it is OK. I would assume you would be at this point in the program. This is why just paying attention to your own thoughts is critical in this phase. You have been brain washed for YEARRRRSSSS !! You aren't going to change over night.

2. Are you eating meals? Full, satisfying meals? If you haven't had anything to eat for 3 to 4 hours and you sit down with a bag of chips you are VERY likely going to eat the entire bag. Is it about the chips? No. It is that you were just hungry!

3. What else is going on? What are you eating over? What is it that the food is offering you in that moment?

These are the biggest ways people get stuck.

WHAT YOU SAY TO YOURSELF MATTERS

I don't think we pay attention to how charged the words we use are or how over dramatic they can be. Just saying "binge" can be triggering to you. It at least stirs up some emotions or you have thoughts about it. Instead of saying "I binged last night", try switching that up to "I ate food." In its most simple form, that IS what happened. You ate food.

Food is MORE than just fuel. Food is emotional and pleasurable. Saying food is *just* fuel is like saying you only have sex to make babies.

Biggest Take Aways :

The more you think of emotional eating as a "problem" or demonize it the harder it will be to NOT emotionally eat.

Guilt/Shame/Judgement, the Bermuda Triangle of emotions for food.

You can't do anything wrong with your food.

What are you eating over? What is underneath the emotional eating? What is it that you are truly hungry for in that moment?

Binge eating is caused by restriction.

There are two types of restriction: Physical and Mental.

If you eat it, own it.

Enjoy it. Put it on a plate. Sit down. Taste it.

Control, restraint and planning will not work.

This is emotional and mental work. It isn't actually about what you eat or how. It is about the thoughts you have about the food and your body.

Fear of food is the *center* of our food issues.