



Healing Your Relationship With Food

Do you have a “complicated” relationship with food?

First thing to work on when you start your Food Freedom Journey is re-framing your mindset on food. You aren't alone! Most of us have some sort of difficulty as it relates to eating and body image. Including how we were raised and how it's portrayed in the media. As a kid food was used as a punishment or reward. You have probably perpetuated this into your adult life. We put labels on food. We look at food wrong and your relationship with food will improve.

Here are 3 ways to start shifting the way you think about food:

Step 1: Remove labels off food - Such as “good”, “bad”, “dirty”, “clean”. If you eat a food that you think is bad like pizza your brain automatically decides that you are a bad person because you ate a bad food. This process is subconscious and nothing you can do about it until you stop labeling food. When you eat the “good” food then your'e a good person. Instead start shifting your mindset and think there are no good or bad foods. This perpetuates such bad eating habits. Now I understand that foods have different nutritional value and I am not saying all foods are created equal. As part of your journey we do focus a lot on overall health and food is a huge part of that. It's probably not good to eat a whole box of cookies in one sitting. For now, lets put that aside and focus on removing labels and shifting your brain to think there are no “good” foods or “bad” foods. You are not good or bad based on what you eat.

Step 2: Don't ever use food as a punishment or reward: Growing up you were told eat everything on your plate or you won't get dessert. Or you were bad, you don't get candy or if you do this well we will go get ice cream. Don't reward and punish yourself with food. For example, I have to go to the gym because I ate fried at lunch. Don't use food as a punishment or reward, ever! You don't earn your calories. Your body needs calories (energy) to survive and function at its best.

Step 3: Shift your mindset to understand what food is: Food is fuel, nourishment, how you get to your goal, it's a means to an end. Yes, absolutely eat food you enjoy. I encourage that as its a huge part of being human and finding joy and fulfillment. Food is used for celebrations, traditions, represents culture, and much more! Day to day know that you have the permission to eat whatever you choose. Key word is choose, you have the control and choice, not diet culture! No more rules or restrictions. During our work together throughout this program we will start to shift how you feel and more importantly how you think about food.

Healing Your Relationship With Food

Here are practices you can start working through starting today:

Practice mindful eating: Sit down and engage your senses with every meal: Smell food, look at it, and taste it with appreciation. Try not to work on your computer or read as you're eating. Instead, devote all your attention to what's on your plate. This can help you eat slower and better digest your food.

Have Gratitude for your food: Stop and think about how this food got to your plate and how lucky you are to have access to it. It is a gift that is about to nourish your body.

Allow yourself to enjoy your food: If negative thoughts like, "I should not be eating this" or "I'm a failure that I couldn't control what I ate" arise as you're eating, allow them to pass without judgment. Then, come back to gratitude.

Pay attention to all-or-nothing cycles: Many people will eat a doughnut and then think, "Well, since I already ate junk I may as well just keep going for the whole [day, weekend, etc.]." Thinking like this can lead to a food binge that ends in guilt and shame. Remember that one food choice does not need to dictate the next.

Let go of the need to be perfect: No one eats "perfectly" since perfect does not exist. Try to release the need for perfection by remembering you are exactly where you need to be.

No more comparing your plate to other people's: You have different nutritional needs than your friends, family, and co-workers. Their relationship with food has nothing to do with you.

Don't let a healthy lifestyle get in the way of your social life: If you're out with family and friends, don't stress if the food options aren't the healthiest. Simply choose the most appealing thing available to you in that situation. Remember that rewarding social relationships are a building block of health, too, just as nutritious food is.

If you're reaching for food when you're not hungry, ask yourself how you're feeling emotionally: Why are you reaching for comfort in the form of food? Could you find it elsewhere? Consider going for a walk outside, taking a hot bath, or calling up a friend instead.

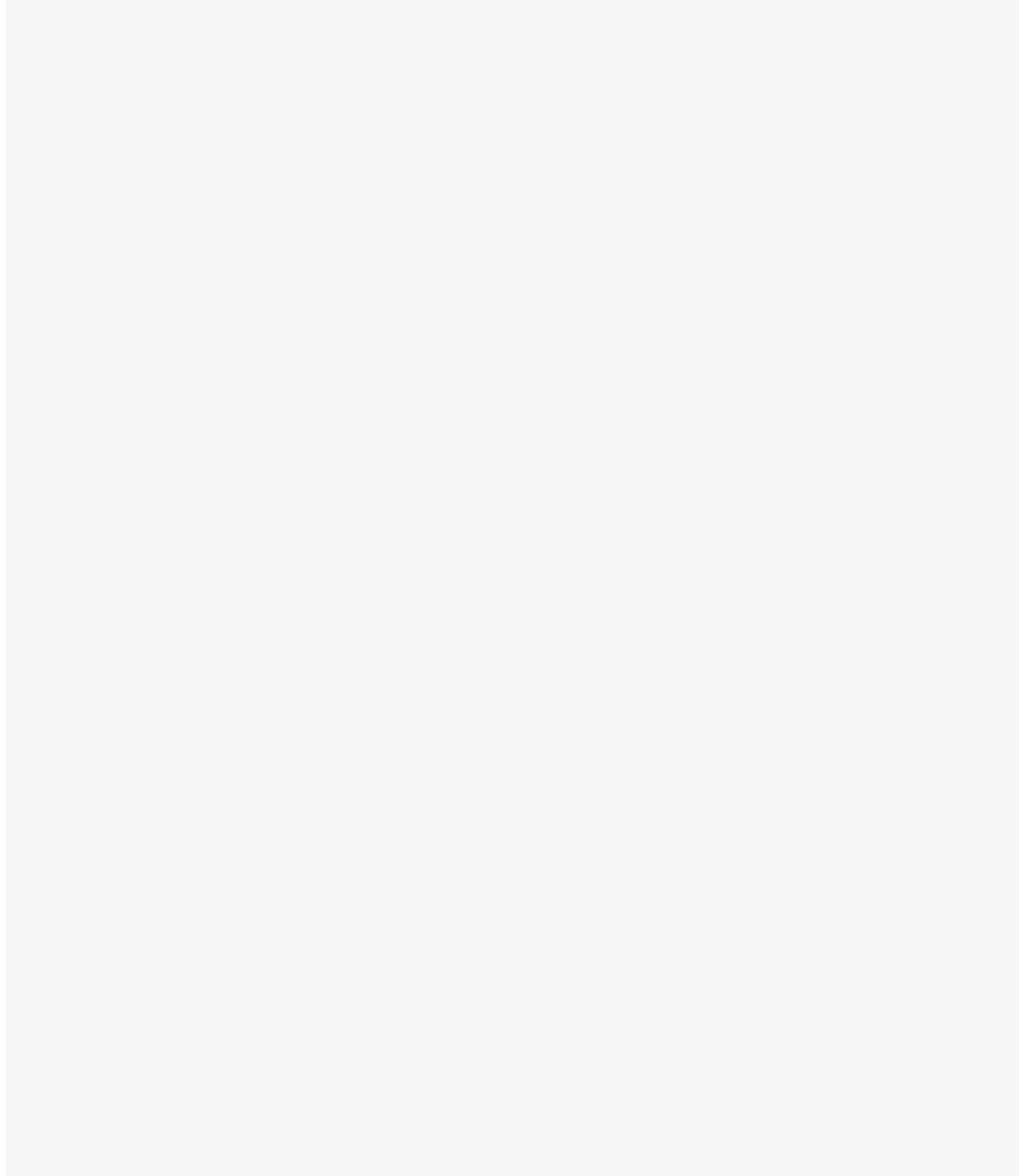
Remember that this is your one body: Treasure it. Look after it. Fill it with nutrients. Thank it for all that it does for you, every single day.

Practice Positive Affirmations: Positive affirmations are a powerful tool for reversing negative thoughts and acting in alignment with your values. Here are some that have helped me improve my relationship with food over the years:

1. I will eat slow, be present and enjoy my food.
2. This food doesn't make me a good or bad person. I am worthy.
3. My body and mind are about to be nourished with so much goodness.

Healing Your Relationship With Food

Reflect on the above practices and pick three that resonate with you the most. Write them in the space below and take a few minutes to journal about why and how you can relate.



Healing Your Relationship With Food

You can't tackle all of them at once. I want you to start small by now picking only one from your list of three. Practice this until it starts to feel easier for you and more like habit. There is no need to rush this! Be patient and kind to yourself. It's okay if it takes a week or if it takes this whole program. Take it one step at a time! This is your journey!

Use this space below to create a plan for yourself:

