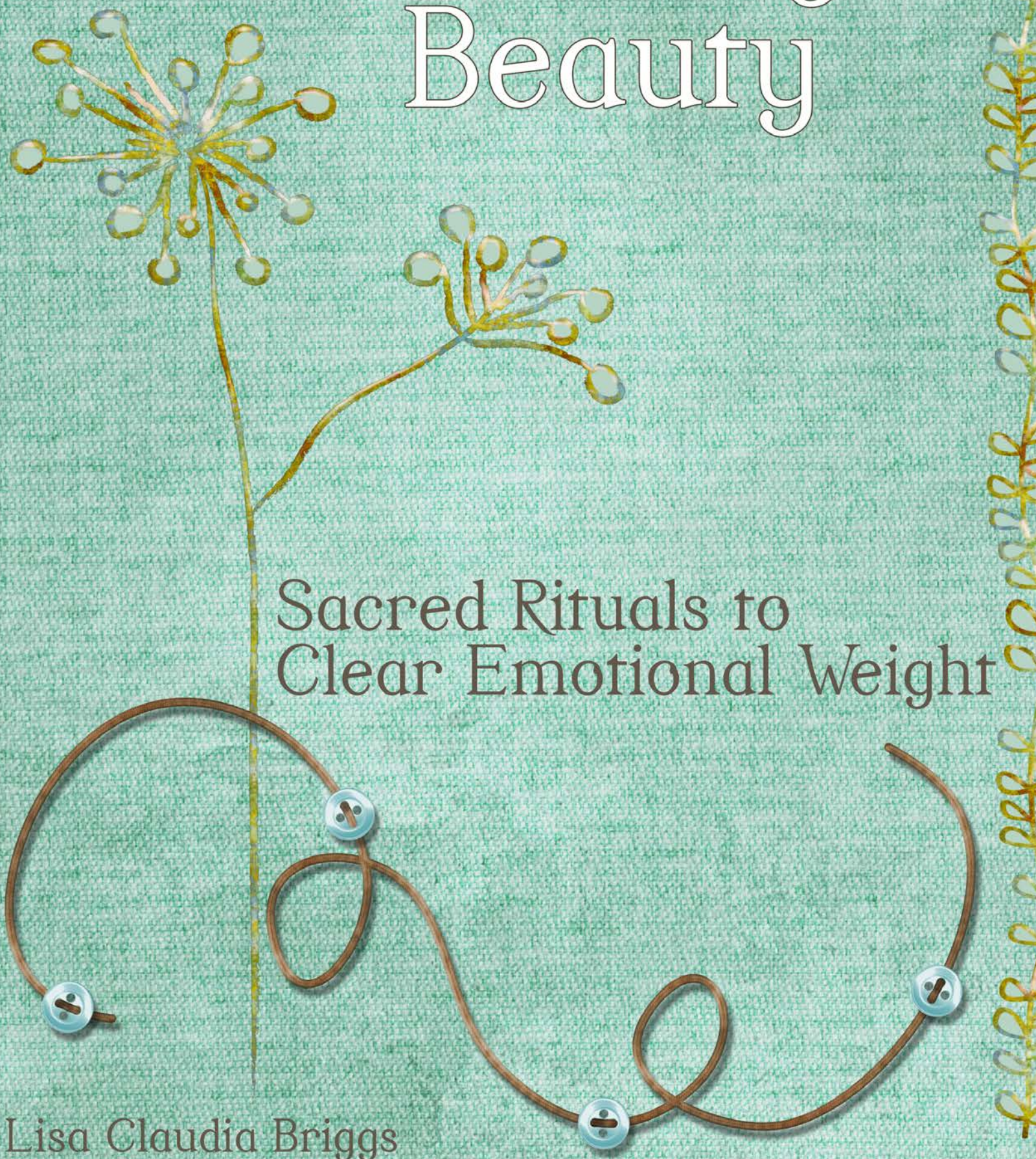


Recovering Beauty

Sacred Rituals to
Clear Emotional Weight

Lisa Claudia Briggs



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About the Author

Lisa Claudia Briggs specializes in the treatment of overeating with women from a holistic, and integrative perspective. Since 1985 she has helped thousands of women and teens "Break The Spell Of Overeating" to create full and satisfying lives.

She is also the creator of IntuitiveBody.com a website devoted to women struggling with forms of overeating through inspiration, information, and intuition. The Intuitive Body Method is a unique mix of positive psychology, psycho-spiritual support, metaphysics, and energy-healing.

Lisa believes that helping clients bring the energy of the sacred into essential daily self-care rituals can change relationships with their bodies to better feel consistently nourished, uplifted and beautiful.

Clients rave about their results-not limited to weight or eating behaviors, but an improvement in their relationships and their confidence that ripples into more success in every aspect of their lives. Clients particularly love Lisa's nurturing style mixed with her clear perspective, plus her creative ability to find what works for each individual.

Lisa has been in private practice since 1990, and continues to study in ways that allow her fresh and cutting-edge approach. She is in recovery from her own binge-eating, and shares this experience with clients.

Lisa lives with her husband and two sons, plus 4 small terriers in the beautiful, apple-orchard filled town of Harvard, Massachusetts. You can usually find her outdoors, playing with the dogs, walking, gardening (especially containers of herbs!), writing, reading, and swimming. Now in her fifties, Lisa loves and appreciates the simple and sensual pleasures in her life.

[Learn more about programs, products, and services on our IntuitiveBody.com website.](http://IntuitiveBody.com) You'll find loads of informational articles to support you plus Lisa's regular blog posts for even more news and information.

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Forward

I believe that some books have a soul. You can feel that soul surge through you simply by holding it in your hands. It's as if the spirit of the author reaches out to you and invites you to step in and stay awhile. This book is one of those books. You can almost hear Lisa Claudia Briggs softly whispering, "I understand. I've been there. Here's what has helped me and so many others, I know that it can help you too." You feel safe in her capable hands.

When I was approached about writing a foreword to this book, I immediately thought that I wasn't a good candidate to do this because I'm not a thin woman and I carry much more weight than my body needs. I thought that I would take credibility away from Lisa Claudia's wonderful book. I wrote to Lisa with my concerns and she graciously wrote back and told me that she saw the journey to healthy eating habits as an ongoing process and it was a process that she understood very well because of her own challenges with weight. She said that the fact that I wasn't thin make me a perfect person to write about her book because it meant that we were all in the same "Tribe." Her words touched my heart.

Anyone who has struggled with issues around weight and over-eating will relate to this book. It is gentle, yet contains excellent information that can make a difference in your life. You can jump in and immerse yourself in the process, or you can put in a toe in and test the waters and still gain value.

Sometimes the simplest things are the most profound and I love the simplicity of this book. It speaks of hard-earned truths in ways that you can easily understand. It feels like Lisa is speaking to you directly . . . simply and from the heart saying, "Here's how to recover beauty in your life."

Enjoy the journey!

Denise Linn Bestselling author of "Sacred Space" and "Unlocking the Secret Messages of Your Body"
July 29, 2010

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Preface

This book is offered as a means for exploring and understanding patterns around overeating for women and teens. It is also written for parents, and partners and other healthcare providers. Breaking free from longstanding patterns around overeating is not for the faint of heart and my hope is that readers will find more compassion and understanding for themselves and the journey.

This is a personal book for me, but it was written for my clients. Specializing in the treatment of eating disorders has been my personal passion as a psychotherapist in practice for over 22 years. Having struggled for decades with my own disordered eating, I feel incredibly blessed to work with clients facing similar challenges.

Inspired by my own search for peace within myself, I had many gifted teachers and guides along the way who helped me find the combination of perspective, technique, and faith to develop a holistic formula to offer to my clients and their families.

This was written from my work with clients over 20 plus years and my own experiences. This is not a scientific or clinical work and does not aim to provide that information. What I have tried to offer is way of finding connection to the core self, the true self, that I believe speaks to us through our intuitive knowing and the wisdom and feedback from our bodies. The Intuitive Body, in my experience can become a trusted and wise authority guiding women back into loving connection with their self and protecting them from having to look outside of themselves for the answers.

As our culture becomes ever more driven by external standards, unrealistic and dangerous to our feminine selves, getting to know the Intuitive Body is essential.

This book should not be simply read, but experienced through the various exercises and writing suggestions. These materials are best integrated when experienced beyond the intellectual. Finding connection with the body and learning to trust it does not come quickly or easily and patience and compassion for yourself are essential.

My clients have heard me say that finding your way clear of an eating disorder is like your personal "soul-call" or fire-walk. I do believe that it is what we have to walk through in order to fulfill our "mission" during our lifetime. Sometimes it seems that all of the challenges and struggles inherent in recovery are the means through which we arrive, when we truly come home to ourselves.

If you are beginning this walk for yourself, I wish you courage and love and compassion for yourself. Be patient, take your time, only do what is manageable moment by moment. And although at times it will feel arduous, remember that you have a loving Spirit inside of you always available to guide and inspire you forward.

I truly wish that for you. If you can "stay the course", as one of my mentors used to tell me often, you will find more meaning, more love, more joy in your life than you bargained for. These things will unfold in perfect timing if you do your part.

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Wishing you much love and every blessing as you go,

Lisa Claudia Briggs



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Chapter #1 – Who Is This Book For?

This book was created from all of the pieces that I have needed to learn and bring into my own life to find freedom from food addiction. It is said that we often teach that which we need to learn, and that has certainly been true in my experience.

One of the most longstanding ways in which I have defined myself has been around the hunger that has driven me my entire life. I now understand that it is a hunger that is unrelated to food, and that lives in a deep place often hidden from my understanding. I remember feeling this hunger or longing in the earliest parts of my awareness.

This book is going to tell you about my way of finding out about these longings, and how this has helped me create a way of helping my clients. I am now 51 years old and feel grateful to be living a life that is so full and so rich. And I believe that is true because the hunger in me was so powerful that I was willing to look far and wide for ways to find genuine satisfaction.

This book is written for me, and of course for you. I believe that if you have picked up this particular book, that you were drawn, on some unseen level, to the materials that I am giving to you. I believe that we are sisters, part of the same Tribe.

We are not what I sometimes refer to as "Main Stream Girls", you and I. We have felt different from those other girls and women our whole lives. And we probably thought it had to do with our weight or our relationship to food, or our bodies and our struggles with them.

Actually, that feeling of being different is only partly expressed through food and weight. I will tell you about this piece throughout these pages in the hopes that you will understand yourself and find a new way of being at peace in your body and your life.

I have been writing this book for some time now. Initially it was impossible for me to believe that I would actually write anything that would be read by somebody other than me. I began writing as a way to document my own efforts to become more conscious and connected to myself, and to my inner guidance.

It has been a gift to myself, to find the way out of a longstanding eating disorder by coming back into connection through writing.

I tried all of the different pieces that many of you have tried-lured by the 50 billion dollar diet industry over and over in spite of knowing that diets and other people's plans did not work for us.

In these repeated and painful failures, I was left to trusting myself to figure it out for myself. And, I believed what would work for me, a pretty hardcore food addict, would support my clients as well. That has proven true over the years of working with thousands of women and teens.

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My intuitive voice, what I now call my Intuitive Body, kept urging me to throw out all of the information that I had been consuming for so long, and to try to simplify the process by listening for guidance moment by moment-to actually FEEL my way.

Because as a rule, most addicts are disconnected from their uncomfortable thoughts and feelings, it took some time to trust this new way of uncovering information.

Still, it was the lens through which I found my way in the world. Searching for away out of my eating disorder led me to more teachers, more books, more interesting workshops, more self-inquiry and varied attempts at healing than any other aspect of my life. The desire to stop struggling with overeating has been the vehicle for all self-discovery and in a strange way, a gift.

I truly believe that we are each meant to walk through some essential challenge in our lifetime, something that forces us to leave what is known to us and reach beyond our usual way of living into something "higher". It is a **soul-call of sorts, or a fire-walk.**

I have always understood my issues with eating and living in a larger body than I wanted to be as a call to go "higher". I knew it was the piece I was meant to master, in order to be able to claim the gifts of the life I longed for.

Because you and I are part of the same "tribe", I believe that what I have learned and tried throughout my years of looking for answers may also serve you well.

This is not a theoretical or academic book. This is not science. These writings are personal, but they are also professional as I saw such similarities between my own journey and that of my many clients over 20-plus years.

I am writing from my perspective as an Intuitive, and I am writing from the place of my experience, and my truth. I have tried and used absolutely every piece that you find in these writings.

If you follow this path, even partially, I believe you will find great relief and freedom, not just from your struggles with food, but in knowing fully your gifts and strengths and learning how to shine those out into the world, for the greatest good of yourself and everyone you meet.

There is a lot to absorb in this book. I have been thinking in these ways for so many years, that the beliefs and ideas contained here are second nature to me. They may not feel that way to you-so just be easy with this.

The most important journeys unfold in their own time. Do not force, or try to use these pieces before you feel inspired or ready. That is not what we are about here.

I also believe that you, the readers of this book, and I have a "contract", one that goes beyond you buying this book or my writing it. I feel that this contract has occurred at a soul-level between us, to learn together a new way of addressing issues around our bodies and appearance, our weight

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and the way we nourish ourselves.

It is not easy to go against the cultural dictates of appearance for women-many struggle and get caught in the web of superficial and externally imposed ideals that don't respect what is good for us as women.

I am grateful to those of you who are willing to join me in turning inward for the answers in finding happiness and balance as women. Finding freedom from overeating can be a rocky road. It becomes easier when there are loving friends along the way.

I am grateful for you, and for the women in my life that heard my voice and lovingly encouraged me to trust it. I have been lucky enough to sit at the feet of many wise-women over the years as they shared their love and beliefs with me.

I have been a student in some form or another most of my life, and now I feel more ready to be the teacher. At midlife I feel more ready to share what I know, trusting that I may offer what I have learned to others and that it will in some way be enough.

May we all be blessed in this journey together-to find the courage to learn what we need to feel more complete, and the love and support that lets us grow towards our most glorious and divine potential.



Wishing you love and every blessing

xox

Lisa Claudia Briggs

Chapter #2 – How Did You Get Here?

I started to write a long detailed explanation of how people turn to food for comfort, as a way of self-soothing, as a way to numb out thoughts and feelings, but reading it was pretty depressing

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so I decided to spare you.

This is definitely not a book written from my clinical perspective. I don't really work that way anymore and haven't for many years. I didn't see it really helping my clients with their eating behaviors, any more than it had helped me.

Let's just make a really general statement about "how you got here" with the food, and the binges or the weight.

I believe that somewhere in the past, either in your childhood or your teens or both, you became disconnected from your true nature.

Someone your family, or somebody in your peer group, or somebody else made you believe that you were not good enough the way you were. That something about you needed to be different.

Or maybe nobody actually said a thing to you. It could also be that you never felt that you "fit in". Maybe you came from a family that never talked about things like feelings, but you really wanted to talk about those things.

So maybe at some point, in order to get your needs at least partly met in your family, or with your peers, you began to adapt to how they wanted you to be.

Maybe you stopped telling the truth about the way you felt. Maybe you pretended to feel things you didn't. Maybe you went along to get along. You get the idea. It was a way of trying to please the others around you, instead of being true to yourself. It's about emotional survival. We are social creatures and being loved and accepted by important others is essential to our being.

When we are young and naturally dependent, that is what we do. We figure out how best to get our needs met. That is where we begin to first experience disconnection from our own knowing and guidance.

As you learned to listen to others' for your cues, you became more disconnected from your own. You stopped trusting yourself to know what was good for you, and instead gave that power away to others.

As you read these concepts can you see how they might apply to you?

You might want to think about conditions and personalities in your own family growing up. Can you identify any specific dynamics in your family that may have caused you to try to be different than who you were?

Can you identify specific pressures you might have felt to conform, or please one of your parents? Maybe you believed it was your "job" to distract the family from a troubling family matter? Usually when you have an eating problem, you learned to "sacrifice" yourself or your feelings in some way. You may not figure this out just now, but it might be interesting to think about

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a bit when you feel ready.

As with everything else in these materials, go easily and comfortably in whatever way best suits you.

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Chapter #3 – Overview

When thinking about the way I approach freedom from addictive eating, I see two essential streams of healing.

The first is all about creating structure, safety and stability. While you are moving out of the way that you have protected yourself all these years, you need to create a structure that can hold both you, and the healing. Once you have established a daily way of being in your life that both grounds and anchors you in predictable rituals and ways of caring for yourself, the healing work can occur.

We need to clarify something here-to feel better you will ultimately need to take action. If you simply choose to think about, analyze, or ruminate about some of the issues to do with your problems with eating and weight, you will go nowhere.

Most of the typical therapy around eating issues fails terribly because there is too much talking, and very little action being taken.

Understanding the issues will not help you much-it's good to have some overall understanding, but the analyzing can really get in the way.

Talking therapy is wonderful in many contexts, but I have scores of clients who will attest to how that form of treatment did nothing for their food-related issues.

Compassion for yourself is recommended, but it is in the small changes that you can make around daily routines that will lead you to the freedom you are seeking.

Don't forget-I have already tried all the ways that don't work-so you don't have to!

Too much thinking is paralyzing-think of the typical Woody Allen character in his movies-always talking, explaining, overanalyzing-and neurotic beyond belief! I think this is part of where the therapy process and therapists have gotten a really bad reputation. Being able to talk and be heard by a supported

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and skilled professional is very valuable. But if there are not specific action steps suggested and followed, you will be left unsatisfied and only intellectually changed. I am pretty confident that you want much more than that, and you should have it.

Once you have structure, safety and stability in place with the daily rituals we will discuss in a bit, then you can move to the next phase.

The actual work of healing is the second stream. The first part is about learning to identify and release the patterns that are keeping you in pain.

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The other part of this is to refill those spaces with something new-whenever we take something away we want to then add something of value to fill you up.

If you do not have some form of spiritual practice, I will give you some ideas on how to connect to your own Divinity, and to the Divine that is all around us. No religion, I promise.

Ok, so that gives you a sense of some of what we are doing and what we will do later.

CREATING DAILY SUPPORTS AND STRUCTURES:

In this part of the course, we look at creating daily structures and routines to hold and support you so that you can let go of the destructive patterns of eating that are holding you hostage and keeping you from living in freedom.

In my experience as a recovering food addict, and in working with thousands of teenagers and women addicted to food, I have learned that **there are certain steps that if practiced daily will free you from out of control eating.**

Your willingness to practice these steps, daily and over time will relieve you of all of the pain that your eating disorder and weight issues have brought to you.

Before I tell you what you need to do specifically, please understand that the most important aspect of all of this will be dealing with your resistance -the fear and ambivalence about making changes and moving forward. Patterns are familiar, even when they cause pain and discomfort.

For most of us, even though we swear up and down that we would do "anything" to change our weight or our eating habits we haven't really committed to the necessity of making changes.

It's easy to understand why-after all, you imagine that you will only feel worse-more afraid, more helpless, more frustrated, and so you continue to do what you have always done.

Experts in addictions say that we become developmentally "stuck" at whatever age and stage we begin to depend on our addictive habits to buffer us from life's ups and downs. This is because we use our "drug of choice" (that would be food or sugar for most of you) instead of learning essential coping strategies.

If we numb out with food, instead of learning how to deal with life, we fall behind on those developmental skills that lead to healthy emotional coping strategies.

No matter what substance somebody uses to deal with painful emotion, they are left with limited inner resources.

You'll have to rearrange your relationship to food, to live and grow in the ways you want to. I say this with true compassion for all of us suffering from addiction. The truth is your dependence on

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food is keeping you from finding more satisfying ways of living your life.

For example, think of the teenager who feels socially awkward and insecure, that drinks at parties to feel more comfortable. Over time the drinking becomes the way to numb out the pain and discomfort of those feelings. In addition to alcohol's harmful effects on growing bodies and overall health, emotional development takes a major hit as well.

If the teen is drinking to ease social anxiety, she will not explore or learn other ways of coping in these situations. She will not get the experience of soothing herself, or learning other social skills that will help her feel more comfortable. She will lack a sense of confidence overall from knowing she has not mastered some of these situations and challenges. She will be dependent on alcohol as her only way of managing the anxiety.

As she gets older, she will suffer because she skipped some of the opportunities for emotional growth from her adolescence. She'll be stuck with the "emotional intelligence" of a teenager. She relied on drinking to help her through difficult situations, and so missed out on learning important social skills and finding ways to regulate her feelings. This puts her at a huge disadvantage-the longer alcohol remains her only coping strategy, the more she misses the chance to develop better skills.

Imagine that you are that teenager, except that instead of alcohol, you used food to protect yourself from feeling awkward or sad or inadequate growing up. As an adult, you continue to depend on food to help you navigate all of life's challenges. This is painful and demoralizing for you.

I know this is hard to read-but my hope is that it will also give you some perspective on why you feel some of the fears and insecurities that you do, and why you turn to food and eating or thoughts of dieting and weight loss to divert you.

Back then, it was your best option for coping. But now you return to these patterns because nothing else has really felt better yet, or you didn't get the support needed to make these important shifts.

Comfort and familiarity tend to win out, unfortunately.

It's a tough cycle to break-eating protects us from negative thoughts and feelings, but then we feel ashamed and upset at using food which just leaves us feeling worse.

It's easy to see why you have so much fear and resistance to learning a new coping style. But this is what must happen if you want to heal. And if you are scared to change, in spite of all of the good reasons you have for wanting to be free of food, weight, and out of control eating, well who could blame you? This is an enormous challenge.

But there are things that help, right away if you are willing to take that big leap of faith from "wanting" to "doing what it takes".

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We want to first build a platform of self-care and self-nurturing which will give you a daily dose of comfort and grounding to support you-then you don't have to feel so vulnerable.

Your "Must Have's": Your Daily Essential Nutrients

We all feel our best under certain conditions. And I want you to begin to trust that your Intuitive Body knows what those are.

So if you think about how you might be at your very best, you probably have an idea of what you "must have" (get it? must-haves?) to function optimally.

Here's an example of what you might put down as the essentials for you to feel your best.

-8 hours of sleep every night-3 meals and 2 snacks daily-Protein at every meal-Time outside every day-Private time with your spouse-A specific amount of time in the morning to get ready-Time to walk your dog without rushing

The general idea is to think about how you would take care of yourself if you were really paying attention to what your body and spirit most needed to feel happy and balanced.

Spend the next few minutes thinking about what you know you need, what you know you really can't skip on. In your mind, walk yourself through your day from the moment you wake up-even wake up time is something to really consider.

Try this: Create your own list of must-have basics, things that if you skipped would really cause you to you feel "off".

You may be too rushed in the morning, or you may hit the snooze button so many times that you end up having no time to do other things that matter to you-like have breakfast or pack lunch or watch the Today Show. Let's really consider the basic workings of your day. If you deprive yourself or skimp on the essential pieces that support you, it's a sure bet you will "make up for it" with food later. I want you to create new ways of giving to yourself, everything that you need and deserve. When you begin to do this, you give yourself an important loving message of worth, and you really are worth it!

My morning time sets the tone for the whole day-that routine is really precious to me, it's when I get the good stuff in like meditation, writing in my journal, lingering over 2 cups of weak coffee. I also know that my body needs to be fed about every 4 hours, and that I am hungrier at lunchtime than at dinnertime. Having this information allows me to nourish myself accordingly-around meals and everything else.

This is about learning to listen to your own needs. As you learn to listen and respond to your own basic needs, I promise you will not be bingeing or using food as something it is not.

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Once you have your list, you also need to consider how you will make space to give to yourself in these ways regularly. I suspect you will have mixed feelings about this, so be aware. Part of you will probably respond favorably, and feel inspired. Another part of you may push against having to change. Don't worry-change brings up all sorts of feelings.

Just notice the feelings, and see if you can listen for what the fear is about-what's coming up that doesn't want to have to make a change? Are you worried that you will feel too regimented? Do you think it will be too much work?

Let those feelings "have their say"-nothing terrible will happen, the feelings will express and you can respond with understanding and curiosity, making room for whatever comes up. Otherwise, you may find yourself in a power-struggle, and will find yourself stuck and unable to move on this. These are often places where we need support from others to take steps in new directions -

Asking for help is usually not something overeaters are good at. We tend to turn to the food instead. We are afraid to have a need. We are afraid to be needy. We are afraid to not be able to do something "perfectly"-yup, all sorts of stuff may want to come up here, just let it.

I only want you to do what you can for now. Your list gives you things to consider, but you do not have to try to get everything in this red-hot minute, ok?

Still, you **do** want to have some sort of template to refer to, something to aim for in your way of caring for yourself. Your daily essentials gives you a guide to refer to.

Well, I know you have been reading for a long time now and I appreciate your hanging in. We are going to address the other pieces that create structure and security further on.

Be easy with all of this, it will all feel good if you can let yourself do what you can, and make that be "just right" for now. No perfectionism, no judgment. Sound good?

Chapter #4 – Anatomy of a Binge

I know you know what a binge feels like. Many people believe that the urge to binge appears out of nowhere, like a storm cloud in a sunny sky. But I am going to disagree.

You may not always know where the seed of a binge was planted, but it occurred before you felt that overwhelming urge to disappear into losing yourself in food.

It will be helpful for you to begin to look for that little seed or kernel where your energies shift and set the binge in motion.

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It starts way before you put anything in your mouth. Here's how some women describe a binge:

Jane said it was like:

"feeling starved and trying to fill up the "hole"..... feels awful afterwards..... like I'm out of control and I don't know why..... needing comfort and the food is comforting(until afterwards).....I hate to think of myself as somebody who binges..... feels like a weakness..... feels hopeless in terms of taking care of myself properly..... at the time I don't know why I am doing it..... just that I "need" to..... It's a raft to grab onto in the moment....."

Melissa described it this way:

"I know I always feel kind of distracted when I am about to binge -like the food is literally calling to me. It is hard for me to concentrate on anything else until I eat. Of course, I have also felt a lot of shame and guilt because I hide it from my husband and then have to go to such great lengths to conceal what I ate so he won't know. It's almost like living a double life sometimes."

Emily said it's like:

"DESPERATELY SEARCHING. It's almost like when you lose your keys while running late for an appointment and you think that running around like crazy and covering the most ground is the thing that will help you find them -you are rushed and frantic and completely illogical until you exhaust yourself, calm down, and realize they were exactly where you left them. That is a binge in a nutshell. And you always drive away like nothing happened while promising yourself that next time you will just think first."

Claire described it this way:

"I feel this anxiety as if my nervous system has blown a circuit. As I grab for food to squelch it, my inner guidance may even TRY to remind me that food will not make it better. At this point, I'm standing outside myself, watching myself make destructive choices. I tell my guidance to shut up that I'm going to eat --no matter what.

After the binge, I feel as if I fell off the horse again --all bruised, sore, and not sure if I can get back on the horse again."

So.....

Did you relate to any of these? It's easy to hear the pain and despair around these incidents. If you binge on food, you know what that's like.

Nobody would choose to feel this way. Binges feel like a form of insanity because you know well the cost of these behaviors to you on every level-emotional, mental, physical and definitely spiritual.

There is always regret and shame afterwards, and the despair of not knowing the way out.

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I've always believed that women who use food to manage their thoughts and feelings are what I call "**Sensitives**" or "**Empaths**" and usually very intuitive. What this means is we are particularly attuned to other people's thoughts and feelings, and feel bombarded by picking up so much information.

Because we can often sense what others are feeling, we tend to feel overly responsible for them. And this ties in closely to trying to modulate our own emotional state with food.

And for women like us, feeling bad feels really really bad. We know it's not supposed to be like this, we know that somehow we are not living the way we are meant to or the way we so easily envision.

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And it's true. Your intuitive knowing and every aspect of your being cries out at the outrage of feeling so disconnected from your "true self".

This way of eating that makes you feel so trapped is truly not the way things are meant to be.

It's an indication that you are way off course.

Things become especially painful because of your deeply held beliefs that this is "forever".

You secretly fear that this is the way it's going to be for you, trapped in compulsive behaviors that keep you feeling so unbalanced.

You can see your "real life" the one you know is meant to be yours, as if from a distance. And yet you have no idea how to get from here to there.

The pain and fears around not being able to get there are real. But your belief that this is your "lot", your permanent life-sentence, is part of what is holding you prisoner. And the more hopeless and helpless you feel, the more bags and boxes and cartons it's going to take to numb out and distract yourself from the pain. Ugh-it's a miserable place to be.

A binge usually begins in your mind.

Maybe something happens, maybe somebody says something to you that upsets you and feels bad. Often times, nothing actually happens, but your thinking starts to take you down a path of fear and doubt, which gets bigger and more horrifying the longer you think about it, until it's simply whatever drama is playing in your mind that makes you reach for the food.

It's true isn't it? I know it is for my clients, and it was for me when I was chronically "in the food". Just replaying an incident from the past, or imagining something in the future can be enough that you are quickly swirling in all of the toxic emotions we all try so hard to avoid.

At these moments it's like you have no filter. All of the feelings feel current and right now, and you lose all ability to reality check what's happening. It's almost a kind of paralysis-as if you lose all access to your adult coping skills.

I have always believed that the most intense, bad-feeling emotions were the parts of our unhealed childhood wounds getting reactivated.

Our worst fears and fantasies, or most painful beliefs of not feeling good enough, or lovable, or safe all come from parts of our child-selves that haven't healed yet. They lie dormant inside of us, until something in the present calls it forward again. And then, we are in trouble.

These old feelings and vulnerable parts of ourselves get tripped by something in the present, and what happens is that you get caught in moments of being whatever age you were when you were

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truly helpless and without inner resources to bail you out.

I call these moments "child-time". You are no longer in your adult experience.

What happens is that you experience the moment the way you did at some point in childhood. You feel afraid the way you did, or helpless or unsafe the way you did.

When we are children we truly are at the mercy of adults-we have no power, and not lots of choice. It's easy for children to feel very vulnerable, and for them to feel that their needs are not being met. And if there is any trauma in your past you are even more vulnerable as an adult, if this was never worked through.

Most times when you feel compelled to binge it's because some vulnerable child-part has been activated. This child-self has no way to self-soothe, no way to remember that the bad feeling isn't forever, no way to know that as adults they have choices and power beyond what they had as children.

When you are cut off from that knowing in child-time moments your experience may be overwhelming. You might feel fear, or shame, some form of feeling inadequate and not up to something being asked of you.

Or the trigger might be your perfectionism striking, telling you that you have to figure it all out perfectly or else.

It may be that you feel that you need more help or support but cannot trust yourself or others around you to make that happen in a way you can tolerate. Or you may just feel a kind of anxiety or bad feeling about yourself that you can't even name.

Any of these sorts of feelings may lead you to eat. You don't know what else to do.

Nobody ever taught you how to comfort yourself in these moments. You just want relief and you want it now.

So you do what you have always done, you do what works. You begin to fantasize about eating, or you begin eating, or you go out to buy food that you plan to eat.

Thoughts of food and bingeing are how you know to divert yourself from what is too painful or overwhelming to sit with.

Thinking about a binge, planning a binge, shopping for a binge, even feeling guilty after the binge are powerful diversionary tactics. This is not necessarily conscious-you just want the pain and the relentless inner-chatter to go away.

Many of my clients tell me that they are driven to eat by the longing for peace-to be able to have a way of being where the negative insistent demanding chatter in their minds gets quiet for a bit.

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In addition to all of the thoughts and emotions that drive binge eating, I believe there may also be a physical component.

Because I very much believe that we create much of our experience through our thoughts, I am still not sure whether binge-eaters are physically addicted to some kinds of foods, or if they simply expect they cannot eat them without losing control or without gaining weight. Since the Law of Attraction says that we get what we believe and think about, the real question about addiction maybe irrelevant.

Whichever it is, everyone who feels "addicted" to certain binge-foods, knows the feeling. Most people binge on processed foods with sugar and flour, and fat.

I have not met many women who binge on eggs or salad or other whole food sit's usually the stuff we consider "junk food", or food that is "bad for us", or things that have at some point been off limits or forbidden.

Anyone who has ever dieted, or gone on a restrictive eating plan can recall the good/bad view of food that pervades those programs.

And of course what you can't have becomes incredibly alluring. It's human nature-somebody tells you no, or that you can't have something, or that you should learn to not eat certain things, knows well the rebound effect.

Binges are also about deprivation.

Dieting and anything else that imposes a sense of deprivation will likely set you up to binge.

It's a natural response to a sense of "not enough". There was a study illustrating this with men who served in WWII, whom after living on rations over time, were vulnerable to binges once food was available.

Most women first binge as a response to overly restrictive diets. If you think back, does this fit your experience too?

You try and try to "be good"-Until you can't.

And then all of the deprivation and fantasies of the "bad food" gather mightily until you absolutely must eat those things. And then you feel lousy, like a failure, and so you try again, and "fail" again. Ugh-it's the worst, the absolute worst. Most people who diet over time gain the most weight. It really is like a form of hell.

Meanwhile, there are many who wonder if certain foods really are addictive. I have read so much of what is out there, and I know that the research is starting to back the possibility of certain substances being addictive to certain people.

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Just like some people cannot drink alcohol without developing cravings and an inability to control their intake, so it is with processed substances like sugar and flour, it seems.

From what I understand, our bodies have still not evolved to the point where they know what to do with processed foods. (**Note:** This is discussed further in the "food" chapter!)

We evolved on whole foods-mostly plant foods and protein, some fruit. Wholefoods are foods in their original state-without manufacturing. Our bodies still do best when eating foods in a more natural or unprocessed state.

Mark Hyman, M.D., the author of "Ultra-metabolism", one book I recommend to all of my clients, talks about the new science of "Nutri-genomics". This is the study of how our genes deal with food and nutrition. His basic position is that if foods have a label, or come in a box, we are better off without it.

My own experience as somebody who struggled with food and weight, and as a professional having treated hundreds of women and teens, is that processed carbohydrates, can be very addictive, and are what somebody who binges, binges on.

It's clear that something strange **does** occur with these foods. Many people do report losing control, developing cravings, being unable to stop eating certain things or thinking about them. I don't have the hard science or answers to really address this.

I can tell you for sure, that for my clients that have switched to a wholefoods diet life often gets much easier. I will talk about this in the Food chapter!

Many health professionals talk now about what they refer to as "the white menace"-processed foods made with lots of sugar and flour. Research has begun to link them with disease and poor health. I don't want to go too much into that right now-you can get that information easily if you want to from better sources than I.

Does binge eating feel as badly as if it were a drug for you?

The loss of control, the cravings, the eating in ways we swore we wouldn't, the promises to ourselves and others broken, the shame and regret-it sounds an awful lot like other addictions, doesn't it?

Plus, if this way of eating continues, various forms of disease begin to occur. Heart disease, diabetes, joint inflammation and arthritis, and others have all been linked to poor diet.

This information is not intended to make you feel worse. Remember, the Law of Attraction clearly reminds us that feeling bad about anything cannot create the positive results we want.

The information I am sharing with you is just to let you know that you are not alone, you are in very

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good company with some very wonderful women whose main obstacle to feeling happy is feeling unable to change their relationship to eating.

But again, it ain't about the food. It's about feeling badly about something, and then using food to try to self-soothe or even self-medicate. It's about the way we feel and the way we interpret the events and relationships in our lives that are where the changes can begin to occur.

Binges are also about imbalance.

I encourage you to keep an eye out for things that throw off your balance. Too much work, not enough sleep, putting other people's needs ahead of your own. As you become good at living in balance emotionally and physically, food will become less powerful.

Many of you use a binge as a "default" option. When you start to feel overwhelmed, and your perfectionism is nipping at your heels driving you deeper into imbalance, you may use a binge just to opt-out of the whole mess.

This is pretty common-does it stir any recognition in your experience? Hmmm??

So by now you may be feeling worse, but take heart!

This chapter is simply about naming what most of you already know, maybe in different ways.

I'm going to show you ways to feel better and take your body and your life back-sound good?

It's my job to be the "messenger", don't shoot! You have to know a bit of what you are up against to clear this nasty habit out. Ok, so stay with me, it gets better.

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Chapter #5 - Your Intuitive Body

Did you know that your spirit holds all of the essential information that you need for this lifetime? When you're connected to your inner-guidance, life is much easier and enjoyable.

Your spirit speaks to you in many ways. I believe that we are connected to our intuition and the Divine, through our bodies. That means that we "receive" guidance via our emotions, our senses, and our guts!

If you want to live in connection with your truth, and your spirit, you need to find a way to be open to the information that your Intuitive Body brings in.

For example, when you walk into somebody's home, you know immediately by the way that you feel, whether that space feels good to you or not. It's instant-that "information" registers on a very reliable intuitive level. You just know. Reading energy is as simple as that-no hocus-pocus, no magic. We all pick up and interpret energy all the time.

To heal your binge eating and way of dealing with feelings, you'll learn to listen and attune to your Intuitive Body. Your Intuitive Body lets you be the expert what is best for you. It's a way of claiming your power, and creating the life that is exactly right for you.

Nobody outside of yourself can know that. Your best guidance always comes intuitively from within. Learning to listen for it, and learning to trust it are the only parts you may need to practice.

Our culture relies so much on receiving information come from outside of ourselves. Women and girls are so influenced by the culture, in ways that are not always positive.

My belief is the best guidance for you can only come from the inside-that's the place where you are connected to the Divine, God, the Universe, All That Is.

Your template for healing overeating will be created from your Intuitive Body-with help and

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support from me! You will learn to listen to your own body.

You will no longer be at the mercy of the media, the "experts" or authors, the gimmicks and everyone who is trying to sell you their latest quick-fix. Don't forget, the diet and weight loss industry comes in at over \$50 billion a year.

Wouldn't it be better to learn to be your own expert, and trust on the deepest level that you could find your own best answers? Of course it would. That is absolutely what this work is about, and what my clients most love about our work together.

Your Intuitive Body expresses itself via emotions, and also feelings in your body.

There are a couple of easy ways to explain this. For example - let's say you meet somebody and you find them really creepy. That's your intuitive knowing coming in through your body: You may feel butterflies, or hair standing up on the back of your neck.

You can also receive guidance through your emotions. The Abraham-Hicks materials say that our emotions serve as our own built-in GPS system. I love this analogy. It means that you can tell by your emotions at any given moment which direction you are going in.

The work of Abraham-Hicks teaches Law of Attraction in very simple fashion. They say for example that "good feels good", and "bad feels bad". In other words, when something or somebody feels good to you, you are being guided towards them and it's in your best interest, or in alignment with your higher good.

When you experience a more negative emotion from something, it essentially means you have strayed "off course". Your emotional GPS is telling you to turn back!

Many people want to argue with this idea, but in my experience it's incredibly useful. Let's use food for a nice little example, shall we?

One of my clients said to me "Well Lisa, if I followed what felt good, I would eat chocolate chip cookies day and night and nothing else".

Ummm, not true. If you are truly listening and tuned in to how you feel, eating cookies in an out of control way, actually feels not-good. Feeling out of control never feels good-it feels unsafe and frightening, if you pay attention.

Binge eating does not feel good either. It feels guilty and shameful and distressing to do things that we know hurt us or go against what we value.

Something you should know about listening to your Intuitive Body -it will probably be very hard to hear the messages clearly if you are drugging yourself with food. If you are bingeing, or purging, or overeating, or over exercising-if you are disconnected in any way, it's hard to receive clear guidance.

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That is part of the reason why things go downhill when you are binge eating. You feel lost, and you sort of are. And it feels bad to be lost.

But there is good news-The more you can incorporate the practices I recommend like meditation, journal writing, sitting in Sacred Space, cleaning out your energy and such, the more your connection to your beloved Intuitive Body will be restored and strengthened. It never leaves you-the opportunity for loving guidance and knowing are always there. It's just that sometimes you can't access them.

When you're in connection with your Intuitive Body, you have permanent access a solution to almost any problem. You will rarely need to turn outward again for the "answers"-you will have practiced finding them inside of yourself.

What would that be worth to you?!

Chapter #6 – Weight of the World

You are very likely aware of any excess physical weight that is on your body, but are you also aware of the other kind of weight you may be "carrying" around? That kind of weight is less visible or tangible, but it's effects on you are just as taxing.

This other kind of weight, is more about the things in your life that are causing you to feel drained, worn out, the pieces that make life seem fairly unmanageable.

The relationships that seem to suck the life out of you, the excessive commitments that you made just to be "nice", the things that you tolerate day in and day out, begin to feel like a kind of physical weight in themselves.

Extra weight of any kind feels terrible.

But what can you do? You want to be a good friend or a good employee, good neighbor, or wife or mother or.....AHHHHH, (remember that commercial where the overwrought mother yells "Calgon, take me away!")?

Make a list of those things that you are simply "tolerating". These would be things that tend to cost you too much in terms of draining your energy and your spirit.

Do any of these feel familiar? The friend who never stops complaining. The umpteenth volunteer position you agreed to. Clothing that makes you feel really unattractive. Spending time with people you don't enjoy. These are all examples of "tolerations" that are making you feel terrible, and that are bringing down your quality of life.

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Take a good hard look and be as honest as you can, even if you feel uncomfortable or guilty. This is not a place to be sentimental or make excuses.

If you are trying to release binge eating, and your health and happiness are suffering, you need to be honest, open, and willing to clean out your life around other kinds of baggage.

Pick something relatively easy to begin.

Maybe just for today, don't pick up the phone when the chronic-complainer calls. Let the energy-vampires find somebody else today.

Don't settle for a terrible breakfast eaten in rush hour in the car. Make time to have something delicious before you head out, it's worth getting up 20 minutes earlier.

Or decide to say "no", to anybody asking you for anything today. Most things are not urgent, and it would be a good thing to practice saying no.

If you need a way to do this say "Thanks for thinking of me, I wish I could say yes but I really can't today". Say it nicely and with a smile, and nobody will think badly of you.

Getting rid of the weight of the world is a way of setting limits and boundaries around yourself, that protect you from feeling overwhelmed and then turning to food. It's an essential practice.

Keep looking for ways to limit the people and situations that add "weight" to your life, and learn to stop people pleasing.

This is one of the very BEST ways to find freedom from food addiction. As you learn to put your needs first you will find yourself balanced in every way, not needing to binge any longer because the big triggers will be gone.

Ahh - relief.

You can do this. It's time to lighten up!

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Chapter #7 - Writing Will Save You!

One of the most powerful tools I know for moving out overeating is the tool of writing or journaling. I would say without exception, that every single client I have seen over the years has struggled with expressing herself emotionally.

We get all sorts of messages in our families growing up about what is permissible to talk about.

People that struggle with addictions typically were not allowed to express themselves in ways that allowed them to be themselves.

When feelings are chronically stifled, not spoken or expressed, all of the energy of those emotions begins to rumble. Feelings don't just go away, or dissolve. If you didn't express yourself the way you needed to, you turned to something else.

For you, that "something else" was using food to self-soothe in those times. It became a pattern.

If you add up all of those moments of not expressing painful thoughts and feelings, year in and year out, that adds up to a powerful and well-worn pattern of disconnecting from negative emotions through eating.

If you are now an adult, that pattern is extremely hard to break, it's been woven through your way of living and interacting forever.

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Learning to write your way to safety is a piece that you CAN do on your own. It's a way of safely practicing expressing and venting any and all feelings without having to risk expressing them to others.

Feelings have to move through somehow, they will ultimately "have their say". If you don't want them to express via eating you must find another way.

Better you get them onto the paper, than have them making "mischief" from not getting expressed. If you binge, and overeat, you are most likely struggling with self-expression and tolerating your own discomfort. So go get yourself a journal.

Start with a couple of pages daily. My clients with the greatest successes are always the "compulsive" journal-ers! They use writing to express and move out the stuck energies, and find great relief.

Writing is a fantastic way to end overeating. Releasing compulsive eating behaviors becomes easier if you have another "compulsion" you can substitute!

Writing can serve this purpose and benefit you in countless ways. This habit will serve you immeasurably in all areas of your life, in both knowing yourself, and finding ways to balance any negative aspects you find there. Have I convinced you yet? Can you tell I think that writing will be super helpful??

Getting Started With Writing:

I have learned some powerful techniques over the years for beginning journaling practice, and ways of writing to clear energy. I would like to share with you some ways that you can use writing to achieve virtually all of your goals.

1. Daily Gratitude Lists-

This is a practice recommended by many-I think Oprah brought it into the mainstream. The "energy" of gratitude is worth cultivating. It is an instant cure for feeling deprived, or "victim-consciousness".

When you get stuck in any form of negative emotion, one quick fix is to immediately scan your environment for something to appreciate or be grateful for. The Abraham-Hicks books refer to this as going on a "rampage of appreciation". Isn't that the best phrase?

Any time you need a burst of positive energy, or a shift in emotion, simply look around you, or think about the specifics of your life. I usually look outside and to nature to help me with this.

When negative emotion has me in its grasp, I look outside or actually move myself outdoors (a literal change in perspective). Once there it's easy to find something to appreciate-the blue sky, green leaves, and sounds of birdsong, seek and ye shall find beauty and abundance around you.

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On days when it's hard to find something to be grateful for, look to your body-

Can you see? Hear? Taste? Does your body allow you to take long walks or smell lovely fragrances? How about being grateful for the hot water from your morning shower? If you look, you will always find something to appreciate and give thanks for.

Writing in this way will shift your energy quickly, every single time. Open your awareness to how blessed you truly are, and the emotions that were weighing heavily in your body will shift into something lighter and better-feeling.

2. Journal Writing As "Purging"

This is one of my favorite things to teach clients as it moves huge amounts of negative energy and emotion, leaving you feeling great relief without all that uncomfortable residue.

For anyone shy about writing or beginning a journal practice, this is a quick-and-dirty method with tons of bang for your buck!

If you have issues with bingeing and purging, it's an especially powerful substitute! This really works to get rid of feelings the same way any form of binge does, without any painful remorse or other consequences-this purge is only positive.

So-this is how you start, like many of the things I suggest, it will benefit you to do this on a regular basis, daily if possible. Many of my clients use this type of writing whenever they feel lots of negative feeling.

This is NOT the kind of journal writing that is meant to be poetic, or pretty. Just the opposite.

Start by noticing whatever you are feeling. You might want to close your eyes for a few moments to tune in to your body-your Intuitive Body can help you connect with whatever is out of balance that needs to be softened or released.

See where any tension or tightness or distress or "charge" is living in your body at this moment. Take another moment to connect to the feel of it, what is the emotion or belief or fear that goes with the physical sensation that you pick upon.

Write about it. Just describe what's in there - keep it really simple and descriptive. For example you might write something like:

"I feel a sick feeling in my stomach-it feels like it's about the phone call with my mother today when I felt like she was criticizing me. I can feel my anger at her, and I can also feel how much I wish she understood me.

The sick feeling makes me want to curl up and hide. It makes me feel like a badperson-like I am

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never good enough and nobody will ever love me. I am afraid and maybe that is the sick feeling".

Keep writing-you want to write out, or purge out the negative feelings both physical and emotional until you feel complete, until the feelings have moved and you notice a shift.

3. "I Hate You" Letters

Don't be too put-off by the name. This is a potent tool that we have all probably used at some point in our life. It's a letter we wrote to somebody that we probably didn't send, even if we wanted to. Or maybe you did send it!

This is the kind that will not be sent, to give you all of the relief with none of the repercussions.

My teacher Sharon used to make us write these all the time, and although we resisted because we did not always want to tap into those reservoirs of intense angry emotions, these letters always helped us move out old stored stuff and let us move forward more easily.

Sharon used to suggest that we use these letters particularly to "clear your parents". She said if we did not move out old anger or resentments towards our mother or father, that the rest of our relationships with men and women would carry the energy of the anger and resentment, and cause us a lot of pain.

I would have to agree with all of this. Some people use therapy trying to "clear" their parents, but this is at least if not more powerful because it's private. Writing an "I hate you" letter lets you truly express all that you have been holding inside of you, all of those painful and toxic feelings, and lets you dumped' off-no harm done.

What my clients usually find is as they release old painful toxic feelings that they were always afraid would "leak out" into other relationships, all of their other relationships got much better.

And they felt much better. And lighter. And like the weight of the world had been cleared. This is worth trying.

Write directly to the person-start with one of your parents if possible. You could also write to an ex, or somebody that hurt you in the past or present, especially if you are still carrying that hurt in some way now.

The object of all of this is to clear out anything that is hanging around you as energy or emotion that is negative or uncomfortable. You cannot be free to move forward til you clear it.

So much of eating disorders and bingeing are about trying to deal with energy. The goal is always to clear what doesn't support you. Ok?

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So-your letter is written with as much potency as you can muster. You tell the person how they have hurt you, and how their words or behaviors have harmed you or left a mark. You tell them that you didn't deserve it and you get to use phrases like "How Dare You" and "What Right Did You Have"-without fear of retaliation. I really encourage you to let-er-rip with this. The whole point is to clean out your system with the writing.

Letters to a parent may need to be done again at whatever intervals feel right for you. If there was trauma or abuse, proceed gently and maybe get some extra support around the writing if you can.

These letters will NOT HARM ANYONE, and they may save you! Truly-these letters and learning to allow yourself to express the hurt, outrage, pain, fury, shame-when you can express this stuff, maybe even for the first time, you will be on the path to healing.

As always write until you feel "complete". You may not be able to cover everything in a single letter-and with parents especially I don't advise trying. You can write another one when you feel ready.

Only do what feels do-able, don't push yourself, that's not the point. Just write until you feel a shift, a bit of relief, a bit of calm, ok?

One other thing-you might want to burn these letters. This will spare you any worry about them being read by others, and also releases the energy through the fire which adds power. (note-more about Writing And Burning in Chapter "Moving Energy").

In summary, I just want to say that writing is an incredibly powerful tool to help you stop overeating, or binge eating, or restricting, or purging-whatever. All of those behaviors are about not being able to express emotions. Writing lets you do this safely and privately and is incredibly healing. Feel free to use my techniques or absolutely any other that are good fit for you. You will feel relief, maybe not all at once, but over time, watch the relief and well-being in your life increase.

I want that for you.

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Chapter #8 – Journal Idea: Saying Goodbye

Your way of eating has been a sort of faithful companion for a long time. Who did you turn to for comfort and soothing? Who was there when others disappointed you, or upset you or weren't there for you?

This is the part where you get to write about all of your mixed feelings. If you don't name them and let yourself wallow in them for a bit, they will rain on your parade as you try new things. So give them their due, and it will help create and clear a better path for you.

Write to your old pattern of being with food, as if you are saying goodbye to your oldest and dearest friend (you are!). You love her, and you know that you will miss her, but you also know that you have outgrown this relationship and need to move on.

Tell this friend what you will miss about hanging out with them. But don't forget to write about

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why this relationship just isn't working for you anymore.

Feel free to write about your fears of leaving her, and what that might feel like later. How you might want to run back to the relationship in a rough moment.

Explain where you are going, and why this relationship needs to end. As in any kind of therapeutic writing, just let yourself write whatever wants to come up.

Write whatever is in your heart. One of my favorite books about addiction is "**Drinking: A Love Story**". It's a beautifully written account of a woman's relationship with alcohol. The author Caroline Knapp tragically also became anorexic and died.

This is your chance to write your own, about your relationship with food. Your writing will begin to make room for something new in your life. New beginnings come from endings that are given their due. See what wants to express through you around this-you may be surprised and moved by what emerges as you write.

Always let the feelings "have their say"-one of the most important new practices of eating in alignment with your loving spirit. Let the energy move through and you will not have to suppress it with bags and boxes of junk! This really is part of the "magic formula".

It's just for you, so write from your own truth and perspective. And please, write without judgment, or it will not be as powerful. If you choose to read what you have written, please make sure you do so from a place of love and compassion for yourself.

Bless where you've been with all of this. It's a huge part of who you are and blessing it lets you move into something new without getting pulled down into self-hate.

Go gently and be open to what you might discover. It's all part of your journey, and it all has value.

Find a quiet place-your Sacred Sanctuary is just right for this kind of writing. Get settled, maybe light a candle, ask for loving guidance and healing, and start writing.

Write until you feel complete. You might want to notice how you feel after doing this, any shifts you notice?

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Chapter #9 – Moving Out the Energy

As we have discussed, most of us are very sensitive to everything around us, we absorb it and take it on, like sponges.

One of the most powerful techniques for finding freedom from eating is to learn how to move out the energy, any energies that aren't supporting you.

I find these practices so essential to my overall being every single day, that fitting them in is the first priority in scheduling my time.

1. Move it out physically:

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You know what it feels like when you have taken on energies that make you feel badly. And you know how it feels just to be overloaded or overwhelmed.

Either of these means you need to clear your energy and emotional "bodies".

The most powerful way is to move your body. I am not secretly trying to get you to "burn calories" or get exercise for the traditional reasons, I swear.

But moving releases energy and brings us back to center, in alignment with our higher selves. You can do this any way you choose.

Think of moving out energy as a way of dumping it off or taking out the energetic "trash". Physical movement allows you to release what is stuck and stagnant.

I take a daily long and beautiful walk to clear my energies. On days when I feel particularly filled up with negative emotions or energy, I will purposely walk for longer. I can feel when the energy shifts as I feel less worried or angry or irritable or whatever. As I walk, I allow whatever emotions are inside to "move up" into my awareness and then I set my intention to release them with each step, right down into the Earth.

You might enjoy dancing to loud music, shaking your body around until you feel the release come. Or you might start with something quieter like yoga or stretching.

Any form of weight-lifting or strength training is a really good release. I think the reasons are because it requires a fair amount of concentration to lift and lower the weights properly. But I believe the other reason has to do that when you are lifting something heavy, you tend to use your breathing more-you must have enough oxygen coming in to lift and naturally blow it out to lower. It's a way of getting into really healthy breathing and it works!

The more intense negative emotions tend to need more intense movement. If you are stuck in anger, depression, rage, anxiety, try to let yourself literally "move" it out! You will know easily when you have made the shift. You will feel relief.

Challenging our physical bodies quiets our obsessive minds. It's hard to be in two places at once. If you are focused on what your body is doing, or better yet on the sensations you feel, you will find wonderful release and then relaxation.

It's why people get so addicted to their workouts-when you are challenging your body to push itself, the chemicals called endorphins get released, and they do actually produce a "high". Not a bad way to get that feeling-so many benefits, as you may have heard...

2. Daily Routines For Moving Energy

I like to recommend combining the intention to move out stuck energy with daily

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chores or habits.

For example, if you take the trash out daily, imagine that you are also taking out the emotional and energetic trash for that day.

When you use the bathroom, imagine releasing any negative energy along with other physical matter! (sorry, don't mean to offend you).

Washing your hands, taking a shower, or washing the dishes gives you another way to release and move out energy. Just imagine the water cleansing and clearing whatever it is that you wish to move out.

Since you take a shower every day, this is a perfect time to make use of an existing ritual. As you stand under the shower, imagine that each drop of water holds sparkling healing energy that can cleanse you of anything emotional that you choose.

As you enjoy your shower, you can powerfully set the intention to clear anything negative out by saying for example, "I now clear off resentment, I now wash off all irritability, and I am washing off all of my fears and insecurities and worries". As you wash your body, which you do every day anyways, add the words and intentions to use it as a potent tool to move and release uncomfortable or stuck energy.

3. Writing To Release Energy

I find writing to be one of the most powerful ways to move out energy. You can read more about this in the chapter on writing, but I do want to mention it here also.

Something about writing really focuses the energies. It's different than speaking and really different from thinking about the same things. Choosing to write instead, allows you to **literally move out** whatever is stuck inside of you.

When you actually put the feelings onto the paper, you are creating a "container" for them, so that you do not have to carry them around in your body. Studies by Penne baker have shown the positive value of this kind of writing as an aid for depression and anxiety.

I am completely positive that my clients who regularly use writing to move out energy proceed far more dramatically and with greater ease, than those who don't.

Writing to release negative energy could be the key to huge healing and success for you. See the writing chapter for specific ideas.

Mostly you just want to write whatever is hanging around you emotionally. Write it out, don't edit it, don't write for anyone else and don't put yourself under any kind of pressure by rereading what you write.

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This kind of writing is simply to move out all of the negative emotions that are keeping you from being who you truly are.

4. Draining Energy-

I sometimes refer to this tool as "Name it and Drain it". Whenever we work with energy, it's really about creating an intention for something to happen, and focusing on what we want to happen by naming it.

Metaphysical laws say "energy follows thought". This is helpful to understand.

This is a little technique you can use absolutely anytime, anywhere.

When you notice yourself in any kind of negative emotion take a moment to notice and define what you are feeling.

For example, let's say that I am feeling a bit jealous and resentful because my friend just told me of the incredible vacation she is planning. I am feeling sorry for myself because I am craving that kind of vacation for myself but for whatever reason I can't go right now.

So first I catch myself feeling the resentment. Then I probably will also notice that I am feeling guilty for not being happier for my friend. I want to be a good friend, and feel badly about my reactions.

In this example, I would simply say to myself (you don't have to say this out loud for it to work) "I now drain all resentment, all self-pity, all powerlessness, and all feelings of 'not-enough' or limitation".

That's the naming part-you have identified the energy. For the draining part just imagine those feelings as if they were dark, murky, yucky sort of shadowy energy (they are!).

You don't have to make this complicated or even feel like you know what you are doing. Just set your intention that you now wish to drain those energies and emotions. If you want you can use your imagination and visualize those dark swirls of yuck draining off of your body, into the Earth.

It's always amazing to me how just setting an intention for something to occur activates it and sets it in motion.

Try this, with an open mind, and see what you notice. I am willing to bet that you feel a shift. If this feels a little too "out there" for you, you might want to do it as a prayer instead.

Call on whatever divine beings or power that you pray to, and ask to have these

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feelings and energies removed from your body and your being. Asking, in the form of prayer or just simply asking also moves lots of energy.

5. Writing and Burning-

I have found this particular technique to be almost magical. When I want to clear something that feels really powerful, like an existing pattern, I love to write and burn. I also use this to break relationship patterns, and clear the energy between other people and me. It works.

What you do is write about the change you wish to occur on paper. For example, let's say that you want to clear the energy around your pattern of binge eating.

You could write "I now wish to release all patterns related to my binge eating. I release all behaviors, all cravings, all thoughts, all feelings that contribute to wanting to binge right here right now."

Next, you write about what you want instead. You might write "I now replace all past actions related to binge eating, with choices that feel balanced and uplifting. I ask to be drawn to eat whatever is in my best interest physically, emotionally, and spiritually. I ask to be filled with love for I, others and that I be led to my highest good".

Once you have written what you want to clear, and what you want to create, go outside and burn these papers. I like to put mine in some sort of container like terracotta planter or metal container when burning. After they burn and are only ashes, I mix them into the dirt. Fire has been seen as a powerful transformer of energy. Ancient traditions and practices believe that 'putting something through the fire' transmutes energy. I have had some amazing results with this technique. Try it if it calls to you.

6. Make Up Your Own-

As you have read these suggestions for moving and releasing negative energies, have you thought of any of your own?

My youngest son Nicky moves major energy on his drum set and he is now an amazing drummer!

My older son Luke plays "World of War craft", an online video game that lets him take out any emotion on cool graphically-amazing characters!

A friend of mine sings out the energy-loudly to the radio when in her car.

My husband moves out his frustrations or negative stuff in the garden, ripping weeds, cutting branches, chopping wood, and digging holes for new plants.

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My youngest brother is a comedy writer in Hollywood-he writes jokes to feel better. His humor and ways of expressing it have always been his way of moving things out. And he's really funny.

My mom, a talented interior designer, moves energy onto canvas, she recently returned to painting and it's incredible what she has created. She also loves to move furniture around.

My mother's daughter, I am also of the furniture-moving tribe. I often rearrange my office, or other rooms to shake up the energy and make room for positive energy to flow in. I am no Fang Shui master, but I know how to get things clear and moving again.

I also love to make salad to move out stuck and stagnant stuff. A little chopping, some rinsing and spinning, some snipping of herbs, by the time I have made something beautiful and wholesome, I also feel really clean and clear.

Do whatever you think will help. Tune into your Intuitive Body for suggestions and guidance.

This is all about trying new things, and getting out of your own way, and getting unstuck. I would love to hear what you use to move out energy so make sure to email me and let me know!

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Chapter #10 – Victim Consciousness

One of the most helpful things I learned from one of my teachers was about "victim consciousness". She used to say, "If you are in emotional pain, it's likely that you are in 'victim'".

Although I did not always appreciate her reminding us at the time, I have come to agree with her perspective. Although she was not talking about overeaters, or those with food or weight problems, it is something that you really need to be aware of.

Understanding what victim-consciousness sounds like, and finding ways to shift your energy when you are goes a long way towards keeping you moving forward-with everything.

You may bristle initially at the possibility that you, like others, get stuck in the victim mentality. That's common, but do yourself a favor and make an effort to understand what this is about- because more than any other aspect of your personality, Victim (as I will refer to this aspect of the Self) will really botch up your efforts to heal.

Victim will keep you stuck and making excuses, while living in shame and self-loathing, if you let it.

Victim tells us "this is all you get, and all you deserve". It tells us that instead of having what we want or living in the ways that we long for, we have to "settle "for less, because we just don't have what it takes.

Victim is the source of all of your self-hate and painful beliefs about who you are, and what you can or can't have. It keeps you on the sidelines, envying or resenting others who are able to have their needs met in the world.

How often have you looked at somebody thinner, or richer or more successful, or more happily married, ETC and felt an awful mix of envy/resentment/anger/self-pity?

That's your Victim-self come to call. It feels incredibly lousy. It's bad enough that you don't have what you need, but combined with the belief that you are incapable of getting it, or don't deserve it, and are doomed to be on the sidelines green with envy, is no bargain.

Victim is all about suffering. Everybody, other than truly enlightened Masters, has a Victim-self. You are in very good company. But depending on how you react to your Victim, will determine how much you will suffer.

The good news.....it's up to you. Again, this may not seem like good news to you right now but consider this. Which would feel worse? To believe that you can't find ways to feel better, that you had to depend on the kindnesses of others, luck, or good fortune to get what you want?

I suspect you would prefer to believe that you have the power to shift your beliefs and actions to

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choose your life, your work, your relationships, and your body.

Victim tells you that you are at the mercy of the world, with no power and no choice. Did you know that Victim is a huge liar??

Because all of us were once helpless as babies and children, we have aspects of Victim.

As a baby or dependent child, we really are at the mercy of those who raise us. We truly are powerless in our family environments. Adults run the show and exert their power over us and even the most well-meaning and loving parent can't do it perfectly 100% of the time-that's a fact. This is **not** about parent-bashing, by any means.

But at some point during our young lives, our needs weren't met well enough emotionally or physically. We felt helpless.

That is part of the pain of being young-you are completely dependent on others to take care of you-to feed you, clothe you, comfort or reassure you, teach you about relationships and the world.

Every one of us has been hurt, disappointed, treated unkindly, and some of us have been truly traumatized by our families and others in our lives. On some level, all of us have been victims-we have all had the experience of somebody either intentionally or otherwise causing us pain. No arguments there, right?

Although you have probably not been conscious of this piece, when you continue to live, believing that you are helpless and powerless and that others will hurt you, it's going to go badly, and you will suffer. When you suffer, or feel the painful thoughts or feelings approach, you will use food in ways that hurt you.

Here is why this won't work-your survival skills are based on the premise that you are still helpless, dependent, and at risk. But the reality has changed.

Because you are no longer a child, the truth is you have lots of options, even if you can't see them, even if you don't like them, even if they make you feel anxious or afraid or overwhelmed.

The reality is as an adult, you have choices, and your survival is NOT determined by others and their whims-you only believe that it is.

This is a huge paradigm shift, and it might be very uncomfortable to take this in and accept it. Your Victim is going to protest here, it is going to want to argue and debate all of this!

Victim says "You have to do what your husband or boyfriend or daughter or teacher or boss says or they will be mad at you and you will be unsafe".

Victim says "You can't really have what you want; you better just make the best of it-it's better to

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play it safe and pretend to go along".

Victim says "Look at _____; she has it so easy, her husband/boss/kids/dogs don't do this or that, she can just do what she wants".

Victim says "I am always the one who has to _____, even though I hate it and resent it, nobody else will do it, and nobody listens to me when I ask them to help".

Victim says "I will never be able to lose this weight unless my daughter, boss, boyfriend, best friend, neighbor, or client changes." **Victim also says** "What's the point? I will never be able to do this. I may as well just eat this cookie anyways, since I will never be able to get what I really want. So f--- it. I will try to lose weight tomorrow, this is just too hard".

That's what Victim sounds like.

Does any of it sound familiar? I bet that you can identify lots of ways in which the Victim in you shows up and makes you believe that you lack the power, resources, money, confidence etc to get what you really want.

Victim tries to convince you to give up, to blame things on others, to believe that the world is a big bad place and that you can never have what you want, for umpteen reasons.

No wonder you turn to food!

Victim is your voice of powerlessness. It's your voice of Not-Good-Enough. It holds all the energies of when you were hurt, abandoned, or disappointed in your life.

But here's the thing-it's not your truth.

It's true that you've been hurt or disappointed. Things have happened that have taught you not to trust yourself, not to believe in yourself, not to trust the world to meet your needs. Victim is actually a voice of your child-self.

Finding Your Way Out Of Victim:

So how you deal with Victim, and how do you shift into your powerful, unique beautiful Self?

Let's address the first part first. When Victim is present, and you notice that you are in pain, fear, doubt or insecurity, understand that this is a very young part of you needing some support and comfort.

If you never got that as a child, it can be somewhat daunting to figure out how to give this to yourself now, but that's what you need to learn and work on.

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As you may have gathered by now, the solutions are usually to find more compassion for your feelings and less judgment!

Imagine that these feelings are coming from a very young child-do you know any 3 or 4 year olds? Can you picture how small they are? Imagine that this little one comes to you with the same fears about the world that you are having.

What would you say to that child to reassure and comfort them? You would probably know exactly what to say. You would reassure them, remind them of how wonderful and capable they are, you would find a way to help them feel better so that the child could move back into their world feeling all put-back together again, right?

Well, that's what you would do for yourself when you are in Victim too. A little kindness and reassurance, without judgment goes a long way. That's the first step-finding the compassionate voice from your adult self, and lending it to the child-self.

Once you have comforted and soothed that child-part, there are aspects of your adult self that can really be helpful to you. Reminding yourself that even though you may feel powerless, you are not can be very helpful. You can review possible options for dealing with feelings or challenges.

Another way that I believe you can shift instantly out of Victim, and get your footing back in your own power and perspective is to actually shift your perspective.

So many spiritual teachers recommend going into a place of gratitude, that it's worth your while to try it. When you are stuck in Victim beliefs, grab some paper and make a gratitude list. At the very least, you will remember how much good stuff is in your life, or see some bright spots that will move Victim out.

Perspective is everything, my friend. It comes down to what you believe. Your beliefs create the lens through which you see your life and count for a lot. If you believe that you deserve to have good things come to you, they often do. If you believe that nothing good ever comes to you, it probably won't. More Law of Attraction...

Your beliefs create much, if not all, of your experience. People that feel the happiest tend to focus on the parts of their lives that are working. They amplify the good, they talk about it, they think about it, they create more of it. Totally Law of Attraction...

Victim consciousness does this with the bad stuff. Victim plays up all of the negatives, tells and retells others of each disappointment and way that they were slighted or deprived. Victim amplifies the pain and makes it hard to climb out of the hole. Uh... Law of Attraction again, you get what you notice!

Victim is the one that feeds you binge-foods instead of letting you take positive action to really feel better. Victim makes you feel sorry for yourself and will convince you that it's ok to do things that make you feel bad because you "deserve" them (the food, the outfit you can't afford right now, ETC).

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Victim convinces you that you are not smart enough or talented enough or strong enough to go after what you want. That is such a terrible painful place to live and as we know all too well, the overeating is a huge part of this.

Once you learn to recognize the energy of Victim in yourself, you can then learn to address its fears. You are then free to move on. The longer you stay submerged in Victim consciousness, the longer you will suffer and be unable to reach your goals.

You will believe that Victim was right all along, and the whole cycle then continues, leaving you miserable and out of control.

You can turn this around. You only need awareness and the willingness to embrace other aspects of your divine beautiful Self.

It's there-when you can move Victim off of center stage! I don't believe we are on this planet to suffer. I believe we are meant to evolve and grow and shine our brightest possible unique and beautiful lights for the benefit of all. I want that for you.

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Chapter #11 – Playsheet: Victim Consciousness

1. Read the paragraphs about "survival skills" that you developed growing up in your family.

Name some of the ways that you adapted to get your needs met.

What are some of the ways that you might have changed the way you acted or behaved, or ways that you "hid" your true self in order to get along better in the family?

What kinds of emotional sacrifices do you think you made to make your life safer, more secure, or easier?

What did you learn to do to get your needs met better?

What were some of the unspoken "rules" in your family? Examples might be, "don't show anger", "always be nice", "put other's needs before your own", "don't talk about feelings". Write about how these might have changed you.

How are these "survival skills" getting in your way now? How are they impacting your efforts to heal your eating-related issues or the way you use food?

2. What does your Victim sound like? What kinds of things does it typically say to you? How might you respond to Victim in the future, after reading this material?

Write about how you can soothe the angry, hurt, needy, fearful child in you(your Victim). What words does it need to hear? Come up with at least one thing you can say to your Victim self next time.

Remember-the more you write in your journal about these questions, the more you can move out of

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Victim Consciousness and create the life you want and deserve. If your Victim tells you this is "too much work" or "this won't help anyways, so what's the point of doing it", how can you respond to that??!!!

Chapter #12 - Over-nurturing Leads to Overeating

I was having a long telephone chat from my sunny porch with a relatively new friend yesterday. We were talking about husbands, kids, families and such. As each of us aired our minor complaints for the day, she said something that really got my attention, and that I have been thinking about since.

She said, "I am convinced that all addictive behavior has to do with codependence".

Codependence, defined fairly loosely here, is about our focusing more on others' behavior than on our own. It's driven by a belief that if we can just change the other person, we will feel better and life will go more smoothly.

Most women I know that overeat, have this tendency. Over-nurturing others and the tendency to care-take, trying to impose our wills on others, goes hand in hand with overeating. However this pattern began, it helps just to acknowledge it to yourself.

Women who overeat often give too much to other people. Plain and simple-they give and give and give. Maybe it's to their boyfriend or husband, or to their kids. Maybe it's taking care of aging parents. Maybe they are the one who can never say "no" to requests for volunteer work, or helping out whomever anytime they are asked.

Trust me, if you give too much you will eat too much. Women who give to others, without asking for much back, or without making room in their schedules for their own needs for self-care will pay for the imbalances in overeating.

Codependence is really about not feeling safe around other people unless you are able to control them.

Maybe you focus on the ways you need somebody else to change, so that you can feel better. Tempting, but it's a trap and it doesn't work.

When you depend on somebody else's behavior for your happiness, you are going to end up

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feeling powerless, dependent, and probably resentful.

Resentment is one of THE top reasons my clients binge or overeat.

Really think about this for a second. When you feel resentful, it means that you are holding somebody else responsible for making you happy in some way. It doesn't work.

Does any of this light up for you? If it does, don't worry, we are all in this together. As with anything, just naming this for yourself is helpful. When you make these patterns more conscious, they can come into the light and be seen. This will leave you with more choices.

Choice is always a good thing!

The most important piece to understand here, is that codependence stems from fear or issues around emotional safety and security.

Shifting from codependent relationships to healthy ones requires that you notice when you are focusing on somebody else's behaviors or choices, and pull back your energy to focus on yourself. That's it-simple, but not easy.

Most of this goes on in our heads-we think about other people's behaviors and choices, ruminate how this will all impact us, figure out what we can do to change it, and find ourselves overeating as we realize we have absolutely no power to change others.

That's the bottom line, and the quicker you can accept it, the happier you will become. And the easier it will be to stop turning to food when you feel frustrated, resentful, or fearful.

Learn to focus on making your own life as happy as possible each day. If you can give up trying to maneuver others into making you happy through their behavior, you will be truly free to live your highest and best life.

I wish that for you.

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Chapter #13 - Stop Comparing

Healing your eating takes a new vision and a new perspective. You already have (I hope) a clear vision through the Create Your Vision exercise, which is essential to your journey as a map is to other journeys.

The perspective part is just as important. For a long time you've been at odds with your body, blaming it for the parts you don't like, or for not providing you with the shape you desire.

The thing is, your body has taken its orders from you. What you have felt and thought about it is what you created. As you focused on the size and shape of parts you did not like, you continued to ensure their presence. Yes, more Law of Attraction!

You will not be able to bully your body into changing. Trying to go head to head with your eating or your body will keep you firmly stuck in what you don't want. Even if you have trouble believing this, the evidence of it is clear.

Change comes most readily through love and cooperation. All those old sayings like "you catch more flies with honey"... they're true!

To create what you want in any area of your life, you have to love and appreciate where you are, while keeping yourself pointed towards your clear vision and desired destination.

This is Law of Attraction at its most basic, and you need to understand that you will get what you focus on, what you believe, what you think about, and so on.

What you want is to love your body. You want to feel good when you look at it and you want to love it as you inhabit it. You want it to support you in various physical pursuits, and you want to be able to take it with you wherever you go with pride and enjoyment.

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You get this one body for now, in this lifetime, right? Which feels better, to hate it and disconnect from it, or make peace with it and treat it with loving attention and kindness.

You know the answer-and yet that is not what you have been practicing,hmmm? So that must change, right here and now. Nothing good can come from the battle of hatred and disappointment, and disowning.

Oh, and here is something else you must understand very clearly. That thing you do, comparing your body to other people's bodies? You have to stop doing that! It doesn't work and it never will make you happy or get you to your desired destination. It's a nasty little game and it will never feel good, even when in a moment of feeling "superior".

Comparing at its heart is really about "Am I good enough". Just the question itself comes from deprivation and lack...Victim Consciousness strikes again.

Trust me on this, it's a good thing to become aware of right now so that you can stop it.

Other people's bodies have nothing to do with you.

I love using Nature for teaching. Would you compare a rose to a tulip? Probably not, you expect them to be different, right? Each has its own special beauty, fragrance, and color, right?

Just because the media and the advertising industry want you to believe you are lacking so it can sell you endless "beauty" products, you don't have to fall prey to their schemes.

Listen, I am all for a little mascara, enhancing my hair color, and feeling beautiful. But make it your own beauty. Whether you are a tulip or a rose, reveling the beauty that is uniquely yours.

Your body is yours. Love and honor it and make it as much yours as you can. If you have beautiful dark hair, stop envying blondes or redheads. That's a form of craziness that will never bring you joy.

Enough-It's time to claim your own beauty. Be the rose or whatever flower you are and hold your head high.

Another place where we torture ourselves with comparisons and keep in crazy-time, is around our eating. Keep your eyes on your own plate, for goodness sakes!

This is a big one. I have been guilty of this for most of my life I am a bit embarrassed to admit. I have become obsessed with "how to eat" for ages. And draw crazy conclusions that really spin me out of my comfort zone.

For example, if I see a woman happily eating an ice cream cone on the street Imagine she can eat whatever she wants, and therefore believe that "should "work for me. Uh... it doesn't work for me.

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And the reality is I have no clue what that woman eats-and it's irrelevant.

Some of what I most want to impress upon you right now is that what other people eat, or what they weigh, or what size jeans they wear is truly none of your business.

Focusing your attention on other bodies or ways of eating simply detracts energy from focusing on **your** body, and what's right for you.

Right now, see if you can reflect on the ways in which you may be engaging in these sorts of practices. Do they make you feel better or worse? In what ways?

I remember many years ago I subscribed to certain fashion magazines. And my husband at the time observed that reading them, seeing the various models and such, always made me feel badly about myself.

And he was right. I ended my subscriptions. I am not suggesting that you need to take the same action-simply that it's a good idea to notice where you compare yourself to others, and the effects it most surely is having on you.

We can only change what is ours.

And so it may be a very loving practice to begin to shift your attention to what is yours. Anything else is a kind of "**energy leak**" and will take away from what you can have for yourself.

Comparing is an activity that doesn't really suit you-it's a drain on your energy and on your self-esteem and well-being. You are better off looking at what inspires you, and finding ways of bringing more inspiration and connection into your daily life.

Journal Writing Suggestion:

What sorts of comparisons do you engage in regularly? Are there certain people you compare yourself to, like a sister or your best friend?

Consider what it is that you are trying to figure out-when you compare yourself to another, what is the question you are asking, or what answer are you searching for?

Reflecting on what this practice is about will reveal some important pieces, let yourself explore and see what comes up. I dare you!

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Chapter #14 – Are you Addicted to Perfectionism?

As they say, we teach what we need to learn, and perfectionism is something I struggle with and work daily to try to soften and quiet. Perfectionism is what can make any day go bad, and make you and everyone around you miserable!

Perfectionism will drive you to eat. There is no doubt about it, this is one of the biggest triggers for my clients. You may not recognize it as perfectionism because it is usually disguised in a sort of code.

Perfectionism may sound like this:

"Well I blew it, might as well eat it all"

"I need to be a size ____ to feel good about myself"

"I'm afraid to try something new because I'll look stupid"

"I can't wear a bathing suit until I lose weight"

You get the idea, right?

Perfectionism is the queen of the "Not Enough" demons. You know, not-good-enough, not-thin-enough, not-smart-enough, don't-have-enough, and all their miserable sisters. They hang out with compulsive eaters and food addicts lot. Their opinions have more sway over you than most.

They are not fun to be with-they hurt your feelings and make it impossible for you to feel good about anything.

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If you have perfectionist tendencies, you fear that if you soften them, you will never find a way to change and will be forever doomed with the parts of yourself that you find so distressing. Like your body...

Like many other solutions, the way out of perfectionism is somewhat paradoxical. But here is what you must understand, if you want any kind of lasting change about anything in your life.

You must love or accept what is, to have any hope of changing it. As many wise teachers have said, to change something you must bless it. Stay with me here...

If you make yourself feel worse-with thoughts of unworthiness, criticism, shame, how inspired to change will you feel? Have you ever trained a puppy? Raised a child? Did you do it that way? Did it work? No, of course not.

You need kindness. Tons of forgiveness and acceptance. Some humility to soften the perfectionism and allow yourself to admit that you don't know it all and that that is perfectly ok. Have you ever met any know-it-alls? Did you even like them? Huh? So, can we let go of that as a goal, please?!

Part of the problem is in the identifying certain parts of yourself or your emotions, as good or bad. What if you could view all of your emotions, beliefs, thoughts and such simply as "information"? The good girl/bad girl duality is a painful place to live-and that kind of pain leads us to take desperate measures around diets, and other punitive actions.

Desperation rarely creates positive or lasting change-you are going to have to trust me on this.

Where does this leave you? Free to do what helps. Find things to appreciate in yourself, others, the world. Practice gratitude lists to remind you of how much good there is in your life. Practice being instead of doing. Savor more, fix less.

This is a tall order for us. But begin-it feels better right away, even when the fears of our perfectionistic friends the Not-Enoughers show up with their nasty, hateful little comments, designed to make us feel like hell. When you hear them whispering their venomous words, tune out. Look out a window and find something pretty, close your eyes and focus on your breathing, call a friend who loves you. Go sit on your back porch and look at the miracles in your yard(Nature!!).

As you begin to recognize perfectionism for what it is, you can lovingly release it.

As you know, I like to name things. Naming things makes them conscious, and from there you can make better choices.

When you hear that nasty perfectionist voice doing its best to shame you or run you ragged-just name it to yourself. As in "that's just my perfectionism talking". Just like you wouldn't take advice from certain people, you don't have to take any advice whatsoever from Perfectionism.

Recovering Beauty

Becoming more aware of this aspect of yourself lets you choose to lean towards the kinder and more compassionate aspects, like your Intuitive Body, that truly have good information and guidance you can trust.

I want that for you.

Chapter #15 – Connect with Your Higher Self–Healing Disconnection

I believe that we each embody the spark of the Divine. Your body is truly "holy ground". You have heard the human body referred to as a Temple-and I believe it is. It is the temple that holds your divine spirit, your connection to divine creation.

When you are disconnected from this truth, you will suffer. Healing your eating is a way of coming more fully into connection with your beautiful divine inner being. The discomfort you feel around out-of-control eating signals your spirit's calling you to go higher!

Our Spirit, the part in each of us that is sacred and attuned to divine guidance, wants us to be happy, healthy, and free to claim our spiritual gifts.

When you are trapped in overeating, you are disconnected from your true nature and Higher Self. When this occurs, you will also feel alone and separate from the Divine. Many spiritual teachers believe that we can only be in pain when we feel ourselves disconnected from our divine nature-when we feel the illusion that we are alone here, the core issue is the sense of being separate from the Divine.

I don't know what your spiritual beliefs are, but these are mine. I don't ask that you adopt them, but you might consider them with an open heart to see if they help you repair the sense of disconnection you may recognize in your own experience.

If you eat to fill what feels like a void, it may be that you are trying to fill that place that is for the Divine. And you will never be able to replace that connection with food-it's just not possible.

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It is my belief that the Divine, the Creator of all things, wants us to claim all that is ours by divine right. I like to believe we each have a "Divine Inheritance You have a unique and divine purpose to contribute. Anything that detracts from your feeling your best, or living your best and most joyful expanded life goes against the divine -plan for you.

I have found that any form of self-medicating with food or drugs or alcohol can mask your connection to the guidance that is yours.

Numbing yourself with binges and overeating can get in the way of knowing your Higher Self, which may leave you to feel lost and adrift.

We are all unique. And we are all here to fulfill something that only we can do-to share our gifts during our lifetime, and shine our brightest light for the highest good of all.

Can you see how the preoccupation with your eating and your weight just might get in the way of all of this?

There is so little energy to create your higher good when you are spinning in the food-wars. You are truly meant to go further, do more and have more and step into whatever you might envision for yourself.

The food, weight, and preoccupation with eating all keep you "small". You lose your vision, and your ability to picture all of the ways that you might create all this is yours.

You already have some sense of this, I know, but the preoccupation with food seriously diminishes your ability to hear your inner guidance, the whisperings and urgings of your Higher Self, that come in through your intuition and your Intuitive Body.

So much of the pain that you feel has to do with this disconnection. When you are cut off from your higher self, and the wisdom and inspiration that flow from that, you are in a much less wonderful place! It's a dull and dreary and arduous existence when you are disconnected from divine guidance, which is colorful, alive, filled with possibilities. When you are stranded without access to all of this, you suffer.

This is so much bigger than eating or weight issues, as you may now understand. Your spirit is calling you forward, to create what you are here too. To claim your place and your birthright, your Divine Inheritance. And you can't do it through the haze and lethargy, or the shame and self-loathing that come when you are stuck in the food.

The voice that urges you not to pick up that binge-food may be your spirit urging you to reconnect.

We always have a choice-do you want to fill up on processed junk or with the richness of your sweet beautiful spirit that will guide you towards true fulfillment?

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Your Intuitive Body will always whisper quietly to you, and it really never sounds like fear or judgment. It will simply call to you "come this way, this way!".

Remember, when you take action it's always best to come from a place of inspiration. Let yourself regularly make contact with your spirit, which always connects you to the Divine.

Reach for that place in yourself-through pleasure, through loving relationships, out in Nature, when you are in the energy of creating things. There are many many ways to go higher and connect with your sacred self.

May you find them easily.

Chapter #16 – Begin Your Day with Rituals

I believe that the way you begin your day sets the energy for everything that follows. When you are willing to create your day from this place of intention and powerful focus, the positive energies will infuse everything you do. You will begin from a clear and grounded place, and whatever else you do will be beautifully impacted by this.

If I had my way, I would do all of my morning rituals leisurely and in completion every single day. It has taken me several years to come up with what is the perfect start to the day.

Like you, I can't predict the specifics of how my day will unfold. Living with husband, 2 sons and 5 dogs it's impossible to predict. The first hours of the day I can control more easily. I first understood the value of creating morning rituals after spending a few days at Canyon Ranch, a beautiful, holistic and luxurious retreat in the Berkshires of Massachusetts.

I so enjoyed the daily practices that I had a strong desire to bring those I found soothing and enriching home into my daily life. I came home with practices around daily meditation time and journal writing. Many years later these support me well and enhance whatever else follows that day.

I find it very nurturing to allow for a relaxed interval between waking up and walking out the door. I love the morning, and have a deep and longstanding need to spend the first part of it alone. Making time for a relaxed cup of coffee first, after getting the dogs settled is, while in the peaceful quiet with nobody else up feels sacred and wonderful.

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I began rising at 5 a.m. years ago as a single mother. When very little, my kids were not "allowed" to emerge downstairs until 7. This gave me the daily gift of two pure, predictable and uninterrupted hours to practice writing , meditating and just sitting with coffee thinking about whatever before I had to take on my other daily routines.

My clients are women who give a lot to others. Having a protected time that is peaceful and quiet and make space for you is something that will serve you well-I encourage you to do whatever it takes to start your day in a way that is relaxing for you. This is part of how we "fill you up" so that food does not need to serve that function.

I cannot tell you how much this way of starting the day serves me. It is my favorite time of the day, and it is also when I really see my creativity come in. There's something about that combination of quiet , relaxation, and routine that makes a lot of room for inspiration.

Another piece I recommend, is getting a dose of the natural world. Living in the country, as I do, I get to look outside and see many things that make me feel alive and connected. Today there were such bright stars that I kept looking at them to see if that is really what they were. Some days I get to see deer or interesting things with birds.

You can also connect with nature's beauty just by looking through picture books, magazines, even the internet has visuals to inspire and transport you. When I look at something visually pleasing, I often begin daydreaming about things that I want to do, or make, or find. See if this works to shift you into that place of inspiration as well.

Try this-See if you can identify things that uplift your spirit, that inspire you and make you feel good. The more you fill-up with these the better you will feel, not just around eating.

How can you make a connection with the things you have identified? Can you think of any ways to add more of these elements to your surroundings?

We are all drawn to and inspired by beauty. I love to encourage clients to bring beauty into their surroundings with plants, or any objects that you find beautiful-even a shell from the beach or a stone from your garden. Don't be afraid to make space for whatever inspires you.

Taking time to do this is one of the ways to connect with your Intuitive Body.

Hey, I want that for you!

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Chapter #17 – Creating “Sacred Space”

When making a significant shift in your life, it helps to create a "container" for it, a new space that can hold the new energies for you.

If you think about the rooms in your house that exist now, you can easily see how each one has a particular activity associated with it. The dining room is for.... dining, and so forth.

I want you to have a place to practice new healing rituals so you will want to create what I call "Sacred Space". This allows you to make room for transformation, in your body, your beliefs, all of you.

This is always the first step of my process with private clients. It's foundational and essential to making changes. Everyone who follows this plan benefits in deep and permanent ways. I want this for you too!

Haven't you always craved a private sanctuary? I think we all do, having a "room of one's own" even if it's not an entire room helps us feel soothed and calm in our busy lives.

Yours will be a dedicated space where you go regularly to do your healing work, to find inspiration, to connect with your deep knowing and inner guidance.

It will be your retreat, a place to connect with the Divine in ways that become regular and

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foundational. Finding that connection will allow you to move out of your longstanding pain and emptiness into relief, every day.

I believe you must have this kind of space to hold your new intentions and make the changes needed to shift an addiction.

It's a place to go within, to connect with that quiet inner voice that gets drowned out in your daily life. This voice needs a quiet place to speak to you of new visions, and to guide you into the Divine Design of your life.

This space is one of the most important things you will ever create, as it is the birthing place for your new way of being in the world-of being in alignment with your true self. The sacred part of you that longs to emerge, but has never had the space or tender tending to do so.

So now is the time to begin. Creating a sanctuary deserves some thought, right? You want it to be a place that draws you in, and feels really good while you are there.

Let me tell you the basics of what you will want to consider. The most important part is to find a place in your home where you can regularly go and be undisturbed. When I lived in a smaller house, I had a specific comfy chair in my bedroom that I went to daily. Now I use my home-office.

You may have a little room someplace that you can devote solely to your Sacred Space, and if so all the better. I had a client years ago-she used the floor of her closet where she set herself up, and it worked beautifully.

You don't need much, a comfortable chair however is key-the floor is not ideal because for many meditations I like you to be able to plant the soles of your feet against the floor for grounding, but do the best you can for now. If the floor is all you have, with a good pillow to lean against, start with that. This isn't about perfection, just about beginning.

The rest of the furnishings allow you to nurture your creative side while creating a space that welcomes you in, inviting you to keep your promises to yourself.

The primary gift of your new sanctuary is that it provides a retreat for you to escape to daily. We want it to be a place that feels welcoming and appealing to inspire you to enjoy time here. Make it your own and make it pretty!

There are a few things that I recommend you bring to your sanctuary. The first is a soft blanket. When I first began to meditate years ago, I liked to wrap myself up in a large cotton blanket-my own adult version of a "blankie".

Wrapping this soft tactile piece of comfort around me was the signal to my brain, body, and spirit, that I was ready to enter a different realm. It felt very soothing, and nurturing-it called me in to the rest of the ritual. Always a good thing...

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Find your own blankie-something you can create a pleasant sense of physical well-being with-a simple blanket, shawl, or pashmina will do. It can live on the back of your chair when you are not there and save your place.

Next, it's nice to have a small table by your chair. On mine I like to create an altar of sorts. I place vanilla scented candles in glass jars, something from nature, like a pot of Ivy, my journal and pen, or a jar of colored pencils is really nice for when your journaling wants to be less about words and more about pictures and expression.

I also keep my favorite metaphysical books in a basket under the table, some beautiful chunks of crystal that I love to look at and hold, a photograph of the word "hope" written in the sand in a pretty frame, and a few other personal things that change and get moved around according to what brings me pleasure. If you have any small statues or icons of spiritual beings, they might fit in here as well.

I would also recommend that you find a small CD player to listen to meditation tapes, or peaceful music. I love to have a place that caters to all of my senses it's such a nice way to deal with whatever feelings have been driving your relationship with food, and all of the related obsessions.

Adding something to shift your energy through sound completes our necessary supplies. Things to touch, see, listen to, a connection to nature-all of these elements will provide a restorative energy for you to renew and nurture yourself as you move through your process of knowing and healing yourself.

Now that you have a place to truly retreat and take time away from the pressures of daily life, I want you to begin spending small but regular amounts of time here. If you can, the same time each day will help you establish a ritual.

Women who binge and overeat have tons of rituals-but they are not necessarily ones that serve us so this is the beginning of a new kind of self-care ritual.

Getting Started:

Decide on a specific place to create your own Sacred Space. Gather whatever you need to make it feel welcoming and cozy and appealing. Make it yours-you can use any of the suggestions I mentioned that you want.

It may also change over time, as you spend time there and find out what kinds of things you like to have nearby.

I believe that once you have a retreat you can, uh... retreat to, you will be willing to explore and practice many of the daily rituals and healing techniques I have for you in the next chapters.

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Sacred space in combination with new ways to self-soothe and find peace and comfort goes a long way towards helping you out of overeating. Your willingness to do this for yourself will come from self-love and your intuitive knowing that this is what it takes.

Remember taking small actions in a ways that feel organic to you is the foundation of the Intuitive Body approach. And it really works.

You can reach your goals by getting out of the diet-wars, and into daily self-care.

I want that for you.

Chapter #18 – Creating Your Vision: The Future Template

Now that you have taken the time to lovingly create your Sacred Space, your sanctuary to do your healing energy-work, you get to do what I think the most exciting and fun part of this journey. It's called Creating Your Vision. We are going to harness all of your hopes and dreams, and images of success to manifest into your reality. That sounds really good, doesn't it?

We are essentially going to create a very specific vision for you, with as many details as possible, which will become the Future Template for what you hope to manifest.

Typically, you spend an inordinate amount of time focused not on what you want, but on what you don't want. For some reason, our attention is naturally drawn to the problem versus the solution-this is a well-documented phenomenon, but it doesn't serve anyone.

This brings us around again to the principles of metaphysics and the Law of Attraction.

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What you focus on and think about is what you will create, time and again. So make it be about what you really want, so you can feel really good!

Your thoughts and beliefs about absolutely anything will create your reality.

So when you obsess about your body or the weight that you are unhappy wither feeling out-of-control with food or the inability to lose weight...This becomes amplified by your attention to it. That's not good news, but once you understand this simple idea you can work on shifting it.

Imagine if all day, every day, you think about your body and you're eating and how impossible it feels to get a handle on it all and find peace.

In order to manifest your vision of a better outcome, you need to work on changing those thoughts, noticing other things, and withdrawing your attention from distressing images and fears.

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Creating a new positive vision is going to make a huge difference-not just in what you will manifest later, but even in how you feel in each moment. The truth is that focusing on things that make you feel badly, feels..... bad. Any time you deliberately shift your thoughts you will find relief. It's amazing to see how much what we think impacts how we feel.

How To Get There:

For a few minutes, I want you to put this material down and go into a relaxed meditative daydream.

Relax in your chair (the one you have in your Sacred Space, of course!) and take the next few minutes to conjure up the most vivid image of yourself, looking and feeling exactly how you most want to look and feel.

You might draw on memories of a time that you loved your physical being in the world, when you were at home in your body, and felt connected and empowered just the way you were. You might remember the clothes that you loved wearing, how you looked in them and the feelings which those moments engendered.

You might bring back memories of times that you felt wonderful in your body-and really let yourself spend time in those images.

I always feel good when I remember myself during my years when taking dance-classes was my passion. It was more than the way I looked-it was the way I felt. I felt so strong and graceful, like my body could do absolutely anything that I asked of it.

The ease and comfort and joy that dancing held for me were even more satisfying to recall than the actual weight or body size that went with them.

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These are the kinds of experiences you want to let yourself float back to in your memory right now.

If you are unable to find past experiences like this, no worries. Start where you are now.

Ask yourself how would you most like to feel in your body. Is there a particular size or weight that you intuitively sense would be a comfortable fit for you?

My own wishes for my body have had more to do with strength, grace, and vitality than with being thin or skinny. I don't find that especially attractive, I value the differences between female and male bodies, and do not believe were meant to pare down to androgynous forms, but that's my own bias.

Still, letting your vision begin with how you want to FEEL may help you find the ease and flow of this.

Something I have noticed consistently when taking my female clients through this exercise as a guided meditation is that their favorite memory is an image of themselves engaged in something physical.

One client remembered the joy of being at the beach, the bathing suit she wore, and the sensual pleasures of all of the aspects of a summer's day by the water. Another client recalled in great detail the glory she felt on a romantic bicycling trip in Europe with her husband, her body able to pedal along happily to the various towns and visits, the freedom of her ability to do all of this easily.

I find it fascinating, but not surprising that our happiest times are spent IN our bodies, that we get great pleasure from being embodied. We spend so much time in the cerebral and intellectual realms, and yet I think that it is only when we are in the physical, or more accurately the sensual, that we feel true joy.

When I do this exercise with clients in my office, almost without exception, they talk about wanting to feel at ease in their bodies; they dream of being able to move comfortably, without the pain of self-consciousness or self-criticism.

They want to be free, lighter in every way, mental/physical/emotional. They have felt so burdened by their weight and their compulsions that of course they long for something that feels better.

Does this surprise you?

Most women do not talk about their ideal weight or size jeans. Yes, those things matter to them, but **what they want is about relief and freedom.**

I think the issues of freedom and peace are at the heart of most eating disorders, but that's a story for another chapter.

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While you are considering what matters most around how you wish to feeling connection with your precious body, it can sometimes help to get clearly knowing what you don't want-if you now feel heavy and stuck, then you know that you want to feel lighter and fluid.

Just let your intuitive knowing, (your Intuitive Body) paint the picture and the details that will resonate for just you. Let yourself dream and indulge in the fantasy until it becomes very clear and compelling.

You will know when you get there, because you will feel the images light up with the recognition of your Spirit. It will just FEEL so good, that you may not want to come back to present time. That's good-that is exactly what we are looking for, another potential reality that you can spend time with, every day, for amazing results.

So, let's create your future template. This will provide you with your own vision for living in your body fully and with true satisfaction.

****NOTE: This can be done during meditation time, or you could do it through writing in your journal.**

Start with images that are already familiar to you-in my experience, women and teens usually have a strong sense of where they want to be related to their bodies. You may already have a long-held vision of yourself that brings you pleasure. Or there may be certain clothing styles that you long to adorn yourself with.

Start by finding a clear visual image of yourself, at your real age. As much as we may wish to return to younger versions of our selves, it makes more sense to make this vision as realistic and accessible as possible.

When I ask my clients to tell me about an outfit that lets them feel happy about being in their body, most are able to do this easily. For some reason we know what clothes we want to wear, and how we want to look in them. We have sense of the image we want to bring into the world, our clothing is a way we define individual style and express this to the world.

This is a great place to start; it's clear and specific. I only caution you to pick things that will make you feel the best at this stage of your life, and that consider the milestones you have experienced.

For example, if you have had 3 children and breastfed all of them, it is not realistic to imagine your hips or breasts exactly the way they were when you were 18. We want your future template to be something you can step into naturally and comfortably.

Now that you have picked your outer-packaging, see if you can embellish it a bit. I notice that my clients find joy in dressing their vision of themselves-they happily add details they might not if they were actually dressing themselves in the given

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moment.

In your mind's eye, try to see yourself as clearly as possible. How are you wearing your hair? Notice the expression on your face—we want to move you into an energetic vibration that is happy, that trusts its transformative power, that feels able to choose what is the best fit for their body and spirit, that feels grounded, yet free.

Look for those emotions in this mental image of yourself—balanced, confident, reflecting your highest and best self.

Now, fill in some more details. Make any visual adjustments to your hair, jewelry, shoes, the more detailed you can make this the more powerfully it will inspire you when you call it forth during your daily meditations. This is snapshot of the "you" that we wish to bring forth—it's not just about your physical body as you can tell by now. It's more of an integrated sense of yourself, as carrying all of the qualities of well-being.

For about 20 seconds or longer, I would like you to imprint this picture of yourself, and especially the way it feels, in your sensual memory. Capture the visual details plus the way that your body responds to this image.

Feel where it resonates in your body. Can you feel it around your mouth and jaw? What about around your eyes? How does it feel when you check in with your throat, and your solar plexus area? Take a few moments to see what happens in your heart center when you let yourself absorb the experience. Breathe in the essence of possibility, of freedom, peace, and love that might be possible for you as you allow yourself to begin the transformation of your body, mind, and spirit.

We emphasize the vision of the body because it is concrete and specific, and we know how to work with it. But the true purpose of this exercise is to create a feeling-state of something that feels so good, that you will be pulled towards it in thoughts and small acts day by day.

It is your beacon, the light of inspiration that calls to you and moves you forward on your path. To do this, you must know what it is that you are moving towards, and you need a sensation of it, so that you can choose To go towards it comfortably, over and over again.

This brings us to the particular practice that will inspire you to choose new thoughts, and behaviors.

Let's call this "Saturating Your Self With Success". Every time that you call forth this new image, you will add power to it. Each time that you choose to focus on this version of yourself, instead of an image that upsets you and makes you berate yourself, it gets stronger. Ideally, you will spend so much time choosing to think about this image, instead of where you actually are, that it will become more real to you than what is currently real.

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Years ago, the first time that I used this technique it was wintertime. When I thought of how I wanted to be in my body I chose a specific outfit that made me really happy and that I always associated with early summer.

It was an old pair of shorts that I had-they were a faded very pale salmon pink color. I adored them. I also had this sleeveless knit lightweight sweater, with a little white camisole that I wore underneath it. For whatever reason, this was the outfit that I chose to focus on. It represented the way I loved color, it was very feminine but casual and comfortable, and for me it held all of the delicious sensuality of summer. It was the outfit that every winter I was excited to put onto celebrate the return of warm weather.

That outfit, and an image of myself happy and feeling beautiful in it became my touchstone, countless times every day. Instead of looking in the mirror and finding myself not looking or feeling that way that I longed to, I simply turned inward to the image that brought me peace and wellbeing in my body.

The image was so powerful it easily and consistently pulled me towards its manifestation. There was no way for it not to happen!!

My brain had locked-on to its creation, and my body created it. This is true story of actual manifestation. When you can see something so clearly, and you can connect with it regularly and most importantly, expect it to show up, it has to!

The Law of Attraction reminds us "like attracts like". The more specifically you can create that in your mind, the better. The emotion of positive, eager anticipation and expectation are what bring it into form.

This is one of the most powerful techniques I can teach you. Practice "Saturating Yourself With Success", as frequently as possible, and if you can use it to replace old images of dissatisfaction with your body, you will easily move towards the new. When we practice connecting to what we don't want, over and over, that's what we create.

When you realize that you have creative control, and that your thoughts and emotions are the mechanism you are creating and manifesting with, you may choose to be more conscious around what you think about.

Focus on what you want, not on what you don't want. It takes a lot of practice, and the willingness to shift your awareness moment by moment.

If you find yourself in a moment of noticing something negative, something that you don't want, there is no need to berate yourself or add additional negative thoughts or energy.

Simply shift to the image that you created in your Future Template. By now you will have practiced this vision of your future so often that you can go there quickly and easily. You will feel so uplifted when you do this, that you get double benefit. You get to feel good in the moment that you picture it,

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and you get to feel good later, once it has manifested.

You can also amplify the benefits even further by talking about how you are going to feel when the changes manifest.

Think about all of the ways that you will enjoy being in that new place, and the possibilities that can be yours once you are there. You can journal about all of the things that you will do in this new place of freedom and well-being.

Again, you want to really understand the central idea here. You create and get what you focus on. If you continue to think about, talk about, and notice all of the parts that cause you distress and discomfort, they are going to get bigger and bigger. By the same token if you train yourself to think about, daydream about, talk to friends and journal about all of the wonderful things you would like to have in your life, and can find a way to not bring fear or doubt into the fantasy, then you will be on your way to manifesting these too. It's an easy choice-it's really about learning some of these principles and then catching yourself when you are spending time focusing on the negative, unwanted parts. At that moment, see if you can shift and choose a thought or an image or possibility that feels better.

The ideas around creating your future template and vision, and saturating yourself with success are in and of themselves fairly simple.

We are used to doing things the old way-laying down the new patterns takes practice. I believe this is completely do-able, and the more you can practice what's been discussed in this chapter, the more you will find yourself changing in all of the ways you have imagined and dreamed of.

Try not to worry about any of this-you are in the midst of an important and exciting journey-and it will unfold just as it is meant to in ways that are just-right for you.

The truth is these techniques are super powerful when practiced regularly. Have fun with them. This is like a grown up version of "let's pretend" but better!

I have given you a LOT to think about and work with in this chapter, and as always, do what you can, when you can as gently and comfortably as you can!!!

Let yourself reap all of the possible rewards that these new techniques can help you create.

I want that for you.

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Chapter #19 – Create Your Vision – Extra Credit Playsheet – Your Glorious Success

Give your Future Template some extra manifestation "oomph" with this writing exercise.

My clients have had fun with this, so do it in the spirit of fun and pleasure- which is the best energy for creation and manifestation anyways... How convenient!

Imagine that you are writing a success-story testimonial for my website, or that you are emailing a very close friend you haven't seen for a while.

Describe to them the amazing success you've had around your eating and your weight. Tell them how good you are feeling-how powerful, free, centered, and healthy. Talk about your appearance, your skin, the fun you are having-let it roll, baby!

As you write, you will find your energy shifting and uplifting! It will feel good, and you will have added even more manifestation details and power, making the whole thing more real in your mind's eye. As the positive emotions accompany this vision-poof, it must come, says the Law of Attraction.

This works! Keep what you have written someplace handy. You are going to use this as a daily connection to what you want to create for yourself. Reading it, and saturating yourself with the successful images and emotions will pull you powerfully towards the actual creation of it.

You will want to spend a few minutes every day reading what you have written, and then sit quietly with the images, the good feelings, and breathe that into your whole being, every cell, so that it is more fully imprinted there.

Whenever you remember, "pull up" the images and feelings, you will find your behaviors shifting to match these outcomes faster!

Just as importantly, you will really enjoy this. And when you create a sense of optimism it's so much easier to keep your promises to yourself.

So start writing my friend and watch what happens-and remember to share your experiences and the manifestations with me!! I love to hear about your successes.

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Chapter #20 – Affirmations: The Power of Your Spoken Word

Our words have great power. Metaphysics and its more recent interpretation, The Law of Attraction, emphasize the creative power of our words, our thoughts, and our beliefs. As I have mentioned elsewhere, we will usually manifest the sum of our overall beliefs about anything.

Regarding the issue binge eating and overeating, part of your problem is that you have been struggling and unable to make much progress in the ways you desire. This of course, powerfully reinforces your beliefs about whether you feel you can succeed. You carry the "vibration" of all of your past experiences with you. Because you have not felt good regarding past efforts to eat in new ways, your negatives thoughts and beliefs and self-judgments continue to manifest as struggling with food.

We can try to change your behavior patterns until the proverbial cows come home, but until you put some energy (literally) into shifting the negative beliefs, not much will happen, or it just won't stick.

Affirmations can act as a bridge to what you want to occur. They can remind you of your intentions to feel better, and to believe in yourself, and they can help you shift your overall energy so that it is back in sync with your desires.

One way to begin is by making a statement about what you want. For now, you can make yours fairly simple and broad. Your intention is really about wanting to feel good. Whatever you have done, whatever choices you have made before this moment, you can let them go.

The most important thing is that you get very clear about wanting to feel better. That's a good enough intention for now-you don't need anything more elaborate than that. There are many wonderful books to help you find affirmations that resonate for you-My favorites are from **The Wisdom Of Florence Shovel Shinn**, but they may be a bit dated for you. Go hang out at bookstore and see what you find.

Here are some of my personal favorite affirmations:

"My endless good now comes in endless ways!"

"What God has done for others, He now does for me, and more!"

"Everything I seek is seeking me, I look with wonder at that which is before me".

During the day when thoughts of wanting to eat or fears around making changes appear, just gently remind yourself of the intention by speaking it, "I want to feel good". This is an easy way to begin to reorient your thinking, beliefs, and actions.

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So that is part of how you begin, knowing that you want to feel good. I suggest you spend regular times in your Sacred Space to do this kind of work, but you can also do it when the spirit (!) moves you.

The next chapters will guide you in specific techniques to create your own blend of daily rituals. Make these the foundation for your recovery-they work, and they really feel good once you get in the groove!

I want that for you.

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Chapter #21 - How Being Grounded Can Make You Lighter

I have noticed that one of the biggest keys for keeping my food intake balanced is to keep myself as grounded as possible, moment by moment.

What does being "grounded" actually mean?

Most of us have heard the term before, but may not know really what it means to ground ourselves, or how to do it.

Being grounded lets us to bring consciousness or awareness into the body. This is essential because it provides an anchor. Anchoring makes us stronger, less vulnerable, able to tolerate the forces of life. It also connects us to the earth, rooting us to the energies of nature and the planet.

We are so bombarded by cultural media images that are UN-natural, that finding ways to stay connected to our bodies and the rhythms of nature are essential. When we are alienated or in disconnection from our body, trouble follows. Examples of this could be feeling "spacey", anxious, unstable, or having difficulty with good boundaries-literally unable to "stand on our own two feet".

Grounding occurs in the lower body, in keeping our feet and legs in contact with the earth. We receive energy from the earth. That connection helps stabilize us and allows us to feel more solid.

Those who study energy, including myself, have noticed that many people with eating or weight problems are actually using them in service of staying grounded.

I realized this in my own experience, several years ago. I noticed that I almost always overate when around lots of people. I found that my energy system was easily over-stimulated, by noise, others' energies, visual distractions, whatever. I would typically disconnect from my body, eating more food, in these circumstances.

I think the eating was a way to deal with the over-stimulation. It balanced the feeling of so much energy buzzing around me.

There do not need to be lots of people around to feel the need for grounding. An **overactive mind** can be just as over-stimulating.

Anything that causes our energy to feel out of balance, that pulls our attention and energy outwards, leaves us vulnerable to feeling disconnected, and ungrounded.

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It is in these moments of disconnection, some would even call it a form of dissociation, when we are going to find ourselves eating in ways we often regret.

How can you make good choices, if you are not "present"?

Answering this question will help greatly in your quest to find peace in your body around food and everything else!

Part of the reason the disconnection is so tricky is because we like it! There is temporary relief in the disconnection. It serves as a break from painful thoughts and feelings, self-talk, all of it. I can't count the number of women that said they operate as a way to quiet their minds.

So how can you stay present?

It really is about learning to stay in your body, grounded and in the present moment. Being able to stay in your body sounds strange, but it just means to stay aware of things in the present moment. Daydreaming, remembering something that happened, wondering about something in the future are always that we escape staying in present-time. It may seem simple, but it's a big challenge for those of us who use food to balance our emotions.

TRY THIS:

The first step is to notice when you are beginning to disconnect. Start to observe yourself in various situations where you find yourself eating in ways that don't feel good.

What is happening for you at these times? Are you alone? Is it after difficult encounters with certain people?

Who or what is triggering you in ways that make you want to disconnect with food?

Notice and begin to get a sense of the patterns of disconnection, of losing your balance, and when you are using food to try to "right" yourself.

You may notice many of these moments and that's good. It's not about judging as you know by now, it's just about letting things come into awareness instead of eating to block your awareness.

Being aware in the past has at times come with self-criticism, and that's not what we're after here. Learning just to gather information, as a way of getting to know yourself is the goal. For now, just notice ok?

As I've said, it's my strong belief that most overeaters are "Sensitive's" or Empaths, meaning we feel things very powerfully. We may be overly sensitive to other people's emotions and moods, energies in crowds, sometimes other's physical pain. It may also include sensitivity to food, medication, or

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smells.

We often feel everything more intensely than others, and I believe that that often results in our using food to block out feeling bombarded by external stimuli.

Learning how to stay grounded, and stay in present time in spite of what's going on will really help you to stop using food to ground you.

Chapter #22 - Speaking Your Truth: Finding Your True Voice

I was reading the latest issue of Oprah's magazine, and one theme seemed to appear in every column and article, over and over. Basically, it was about how much women struggle with voicing their needs, or asking for what they want.

Many women have never been taught how to express themselves when having negative feelings or experiences. Feeling tend to get lost beneath the "code" of the battles around food and weight. Women with eating issues tend to express voice, their feelings via the symptoms and narrative of their eating and weight experiences.

Women place a high premium both on being liked by others, and not wanting to hurt others' feelings. This hurts us.

We are socialized to be nice, to be polite, maybe not to disagree or express anger.

There is nothing wrong with those values, except that if you consistently put aside your own needs and mute self-expression, you will be more vulnerable to depression, poor self-esteem, and using food or other substances to stuff down anger, resentment, and other forms of emotional distress.

Most overeaters I work with have never learned to set healthy, flexible boundaries in relationships so that everyone's needs are considered and respected.

Boundaries are like fences-and as the poem teaches "good fences make good neighbors". Boundaries define you and your rights, from somebody else and their rights. Boundaries are the limits that determine and regulate how close you get to others and they to you.

Boundaries allow us to let others know what we are and are not comfortable with.

What behaviors are tolerated, what kind of "code" there will be in any given relationship, what may be expected in certain social or workplace or family roles, and so forth. We may not think about them, but they define all aspects of relationships, and whether we are comfortable, where the expectations are, and who is in charge.

Boundaries have to be actively clarified and defined-this is part of speaking

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your truth.

If you are unable to do this, people may take advantage. It feels terrible when you have no idea how to communicate what you want or need.

In my experience, people who turn to food to self-soothe have had their boundaries violated in some way.

You may have had a very intrusive parent, who tried to control everything you did or felt. Maybe you had a parent who didn't allow you any privacy. The most serious boundary violation is around abuse-of any kind.

A parent crossing the line physically, sexually, or emotionally has violated the rights of the child to be safe and protected.

At the other end of the spectrum, are very loose boundaries. In this kind of family, parents may have been uninvolved, or emotionally distant.

It could be there was total chaos in the house, most of the time. Parents who are unable to set reliable, safe limits on children's behavior also have problems with boundaries, impacting the children in different negative ways.

In many families, there is a combination of intrusive, boundaries and loose unpredictable boundaries.

This makes children feel unsafe-they can never feel comfortable in their own homes and will have trouble trusting other people.

Without secure, safe and predictable boundaries in our family, we lack ways to create them in other relationships. One of the ways this shows up is in not knowing how to stand up for your needs and speak your truth in the world.

Knowing how to negotiate our needs with others is a priceless skill that many of us lack.

When you can't express your feelings or let others know what you need, you may get stuck in patterns that keep you from expressing yourself honestly.

Often we become very good at people-pleasing, over-nurturing others, and caretaking- all of these are ways of connecting with others without having to necessarily stand up for what you need.

People-pleasing is not good for your health or your weight, or your spirit.

It's a pattern that is deeply entrenched in women who overeat. The relationships out of balance and sometimes leads to longstanding seething resentments that fuel compensatory overeating.

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When you give and give, but don't get much back, you have to fill the emptiness somehow. If you are drained from giving to others, you are likely to fill up with food.

Most women do not work so hard at caretaking or nurturing others because they like it-most of the time these behaviors are learned when you are very young, and had to keep everyone happy in order to get your needs adequately met.

Women struggling with eating and weight tend to be unusually preoccupied and concerned with what others think of them. They hold many fears around rejection, abandonment, and being judged by others.

These fears tend to get the upper hand in all of their relationships, leaving them unable to interact from a position of self-worth and integrity. And of course it totally backfires-when your actions and relationships are motivated by trying to please others, you give away all of your power, all of your beliefs, and your personal place in the world to others.

Over time, this pattern will erode your connection to your unique identity or worth. You may find that you only define yourself in terms of how others respond to you. On days when people treat you well, you feel good. On days when nobody notices or appreciates you, your spirit sinks. When people don't treat you as well as you hope, resentment and self-loathing get triggered, followed by destructive eating behavior that dulls the pain.

This is clearly a cycle that needs to be cleaned up. You can't expect to change your eating in any permanent way until you clean up the situations that drive it. Learning to speak up for yourself, in positive and balanced ways will help immeasurably in your efforts to be free from crazy eating.

How do you do this? You have never learned these skills, and you're afraid.

Maybe you have always responded to conflicts or personal hurts with passivity, ignoring them but beating yourself up with food afterwards.

Or, you may be on the other end of the spectrum, reacting with anger, verbal aggression or assaults any time somebody ruffles your feathers. Neither of these positions is comfortable or healthy.

Learn to speak your "truth" in ways that honor you and others, and you will find life, plus managing your eating, become much easier.

This takes some practice-there is a lot of fear around honest self-expression for many of you, and so you want to give yourself the space to find a way that is comfortable for you.

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Chapter #23 – Speaking Your Truth Playsheet

1. First, can you remember any situations that you were able to express your feelings in a way you felt good about later?

I remember once talking to a good friend, about a problem I was having in relationship. She gave me a really simple directive, from the Hippocratic Oath taken by physicians, "First, do no harm". Using this principle brought a completely different energy to the encounter-more connection, more compassion, and helped smooth things out immeasurably.

2. Are there any specific experiences that you have handled well when you have had to express something difficult?

For example, maybe you are really diplomatic in work situations, and able to speak clearly without losing your cool. Or maybe you have certain friendships where you have always been able to say what you needed to, without risking the relationship. Perhaps you and your siblings, in spite of lots of challenges over the years, are still able to sort things out without drawing blood.

3. If you can find an area where your true voice expresses with more ease, make note of that.

Just knowing that you have this capacity in at least one area will help boost your confidence in others.

Jot down a few impressions around what specifically has allowed you to speak up safely and productively. Think about exactly what it is that allows you to be more skilled in those situations.

4. Next, I want you to reflect on the situations where you have more fear in expressing your needs and perspectives.

What do the situations have in common? Is there a certain kind of fear that these situations trigger

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in you? Who are the people that you historically are unable to be fully yourself around? See if you can list any ideas about what gets in the way.

5. Maybe you can remember the most recent scenario in which you didn't speak up, and later felt resentful, angry, or hurt.

Think about what exactly went on-try to stay away from feelings of blame or judgment of the other person. That will cloud your ability to deconstruct the incident, and get in the way of your finding the clarity you need to progress. For now, focus on what got stirred up in you.

6. One way to identify the kernel of distress is to ask yourself:

"What was the most upsetting part of this incident?" "What did this encounter make me believe about myself (i.e.-I felt not good enough, my needs felt trivial, I was afraid that I would look selfish, etc.)?"

Now you have more tangible information. Think a bit more about what kinds of people, situations, or negative self-beliefs either prevent you from expressing yourself, or reacting with anger and personal attacks.

Remember-this is not an exercise in self-judgment.

We are simply gathering important information so that you can better teach yourself a way of communicating that serves you.

As you find your way out of patterns of disordered eating, you need to learn to use your voice.

To speak the truth of what you are feeling and be able to share those truths with others. You will need to ask for what you need, or talk about what isn't feeling good to you. You will need to learn to speak with them about how they might be able to support you, and ask what they need from you. This will begin to take you out of isolation and give you a safe way to build the relationships that nourish you.

It's also important to learn to take risks in telling others when you are feeling a little insecure or lost. Learning to live sanely with food means being able to really speak to the underlying needs and feelings, not putting them in the "code" of your feelings about your weight or eating. Everyone benefits from more honest and open ways of communicating, relationships become stronger and richer, and you feel better about being true to yourself while making connections with others.

As you know, I strongly believe that writing in a journal is a wonderful way to safely express feelings and thoughts, as a way of finding your voice.

When you are upset, and afraid to express it to another person, you can let some of the heat out in your journal. This will give you some comfortable and safe ways to practice identifying and

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expressing distressing feelings. Joining anon line support forum is another way to begin to connect with others as you find your real voice (hint, hint..).

This is a new and important way of being with yourself.

As you begin to honor your true needs and feelings, let yourself become aware of them and risk expressing them to others, you allow yourself to live authentically and in integrity with your true self.

You no longer have to live in the drama of the eating and the weight as a way of expressing pain or negative emotions, you can cut right to the truth. It may be hard at first, but you will see that speaking up, showing up, with all of your feelings and all of your needs, really does beat eating over them, every time.

Chapter #24 - Creating Your Divine Identity

What if you began to treat yourself as the divine being that you truly are? Created from a spark of the Divine, someone that embodies all of the beauty and knowing, goodness and power that we associate with divinity? How might that change the way you live?

You are in fact a Divine Holy Woman, you are Sacred Ground. Your body truly Isa Temple that houses your own beautiful spirit. What would it be like to live from this connection and knowing?

What if you could unplug your energies from all of the ways that our culture does not acknowledge this truth?

The names women are called in pop culture, songs and media are so outrageously hateful and belittling they make my skin crawl. If either of my teenage sons utters any of the terms defaming women, they are reprimanded more harshly than for any four-letter word. It's gone too far.

The truth is you **are** divine, sacred and holy. My teacher Sharon, in one of our first classes, had us sit and write what she called our "Divine Identity".

It's about owning and naming your truth. It's about transcending your daily limiting beliefs to define and own your Higher Self.

Naming things is incredibly powerful. When you know who you truly are, you can also know just as importantly who you are truly NOT!!!

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If the Divine, or the God of your understanding or any Higher Power you believe in were looking at you, what would they see? Would they define you by what size jeans you wear? By the number on a scale? By how much money you earn? Uh..... no.

You are seen by the Divine as your true essence-what are your unique gifts that you bring with you? Is it compassion for animals? Is it the great love of beauty or Nature? Is it your ability to soothe your children or create a gorgeous bouquet from a backyard garden? Yes, this is what we are wanting to name.

TRY THIS AT HOME:

Sit quietly in your Sacred Space. Let yourself disconnect from all of your daily worries and fears, judgments, and distractions. Focus your attention on your breathing, and in particular on the energy of your heart.

Attune to the unique beauty of your own spirit. What are you truly made of? In this moment of quiet meditation, ask silently to be shown and reminded of all of your "higher" qualities.

Asking brings knowing and illumination! Open your heart and mind to give yourself "permission" to receive the answers. When you feel that you have received this information, take another few minutes to write down what came to you.

This is how you will define your "Divine Identity".

Your Divine Identity is one of the most precious pieces of information you can possess. It allows you to move out of negative and false beliefs of lack and limitation, of not-good-enough and all of the pain of that mentality.

When you define your true nature, you can more easily cast off the judgments of yourself and others, because you know who you truly are. That is such precious gift to give yourself.

Here is an example of what you might write for your Divine Identity:

"I am a beautiful woman created by a loving God. I own my own beauty and power and my loving heart. I create beauty and comfort all around me for myself and my family. I am connected in love to my family and friends and my heart is open to give and receive love. I own my unique gifts of humor, creativity, and understanding and bring them to all of my dealings. I trust my intuitive knowing in all situations and am guided easily and steadily. I am able to find the blessing in each moment, and live in gratitude for all I have received. I am able to manifest my dreams in this lifetime under grace, in perfect ways."

Having this can serve as your own personal empowering "declaration "something that immediately connects you with your unique gifts.

When you have written your own version, copy it onto a nice card, and read it to

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yourself as often as you can, and you will notice that this new vision of yourself begins to permeate your life in wonderful ways, letting you release your other "false" identities.

Chapter #25 - Learning to Pivot!

I learned this simple technique many years ago from the Abraham-Hicks materials and recordings. They have been my favorite source for Law of Attraction principles and techniques. This one's easy! Easy is good!

One of the ways we can make the changes we desire is to notice when we're not feeling good. When we know what we don't want, it's much easier to formulate what we do want.

I remember just before my 50th birthday having some fears about aging and what that might be like. Using the technique, I noticed the fear, and let it turn me towards knowing that I want to feel vibrant, healthy, energetic and strong as get older. Instead of focusing on what I didn't want, I created a different vision of what I did want. I'll be the older wise-woman with the long hair and big turquoise earrings, by the way.

This is called "Pivoting"-taking a negative situation and using it to become more specific about what you want for yourself. This helps you move forward with your eye on the prize no matter what's going on, or how bumpy the journey.

Life will provide us with plenty of experiences that let us know exactly what we do not want. Clarity and wisdom deepen as you learn to use these experiences to help you shape and refine the details of what you want as you go along.

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Our emotions are the way attune to our intuition and what we need. Negative emotion or uncomfortable feelings bring with them desires for very specific things. Instead of shutting down, or distracting yourself, let those emotions nudge you to create a more delicious and satisfying vision for yourself.

That's the way to remain connected to your Intuitive Body and the call of your Spirit. That's pretty cool, don't you think?

Chapter #26 – Pleasure is Delicious!

If you were given a choice, between pleasure and deprivation, which would you choose? It seems like kind of a stupid question, you might be thinking. But as we think about what really works when you want to break free from addictive eating, this is a very smart question to ask yourself.

When introduced to new concepts or materials, have you approached them with excitement and curiosity? Or have you focused on all of the ways in which you might feel uncomfortable or deprived?

You want relief, and you want answers. And yet, your thinking and your individual perspective may be more stuck than the weight on your body.

What is she talking about you may be starting to wonder. Here's the thing-nobody likes suffering, nobody likes feeling deprived or different or feeling that they are missing something wonderful. Of course not-what's to like? And even if you could strong-arm yourself into compliance with deprivation-tactics, how long could you really last?

The trick to getting what you want around your weight and your relationship with food, and overall health and vitality is to find the pleasure.

This is not easy for us our drive-thru, disposable, beat-the-clock society. When read the wonderful

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memoir Eat, Pray, Love by Elizabeth Gilbert last year, I remember she talked about how Americans don't know how to find pleasure. I have been thinking about this ever since. We are so driven by our mentality of "doing", of getting things done, of "more", and of endless wanting. And so we miss out. Which leaves us feeling deprived. And then we turn to food...which doesn't fill the void.

As women who overeat, I have found that we suffer from the wanting and the need for more of everything, more than the average bear. It's the nature of our addictive side-you may not initially like hearing this view, but if you let yourself think about it without making it be a judgment of yourself, you may find that it applies.

Searching for More..

You don't necessarily go for the quality, but for the quantity. All of this longing and craving-maybe you wish you could just stop it. Maybe you try to block out the ongoing buzz for "more", but it doesn't work well for most of us. And it's not just about more food, but more stuff, more attention-"**more!**" is the addictive eater's battle cry.

So how well does deprivation work when faced with all of the wanting? Like trying to put out a fire with gasoline. You get the picture, right? You know that feeling of trying to extinguish those cravings and urges and the emptiness with less oiy, stand back as the flames roar higher and hotter!!

What if pleasure was the answer? What if all of this hungering and longing was for something that was essential to our Spirit? The need for pleasure and a way to truly connect, experience, and enjoy it?

It IS the answer. Real pleasure and taking pleasure in the pleasure!

I know that my clients and I have learned to stop binges and overeating in their tracks simply by turning towards pleasure.

True pleasure is usually a simple thing, and it usually involves coming into connection with our physical senses.

Here are some examples of pleasure-Where might you bring them into your day?

- Pausing in the midst of your day to step outside and get some sun on your face
- Looking out a window to watch the weather
- Lighting a scented candle and having it next to you while you read or write or simply sit in repose
- Digging in the dirt to plant something, or even to pull weeds-smelling the fresh earth, leaving mental-chatter behind as the feel and smell of the garden occupy you
- Leafing through a magazine and looking at the beautiful photographs

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- Picking just the right greeting card for a friend or family member and smiling when you find it
- Crawling into your bed when the sheets have been freshly washed
- Going to your favorite bookstore, pulling out piles of picture books and finding a comfy chair there to read them (for free!!)
- Putting your cold hands around a warm mug of something, smelling the aroma as you take a sip
- Walking through a garden nursery and enjoying all of the plants and possibilities for your own garden
- Connecting with the daily luxury of having a hot shower, just by turning a knob, whenever you want to
- Hugging somebody you love, a person or pet, and lingering just a bit longer
- Daydreaming about favorite memories, or places you would love to visit, and letting the images become so vivid that you lose track of time and space
- Going to the market or greengrocer and buying the most beautiful ingredients you can-letting yourself take in the beauty of all of the different things that Nature provides, the bounty and the colors and textures of it.
- Returning to a favorite restaurant, ordering what you truly want, and enjoying every mouthful, in all of your senses.
- Taking an extra moment to embellish a glass of water with some ice or a slice of lemon or cucumber to create "spa-water".
- Spending a bit of time before bed to create a routine of self-love. Some moisturizing, or hair brushing, or a mini massage for your hands, feet or scalp done with pure love and zero judgment.

There are so many ways to bring more pleasure into your daily life. We forget that this is even a worthy pursuit, we are always out of present-time, thinking about the next thing, or worrying about something in the past that has already occurred, or the future which has yet to happen.

Even creating this list gave me great pleasure as I imagined each of the possible ways of bringing in more of it.

Your body is the gateway for pleasure, because it comes in through your senses most often. Your mind often intercepts pleasure, introducing judgment, worry, or analysis.

What I know for sure is that women who overeat and binge tend to over think things to death- which usually robs you of moments when you might be better off experiencing what is available in your senses.

We are enacting dramas and potential scenarios in our minds all the time.

Instead decide right now to find something in the present moment to enjoy!

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Your perspective will shape how much you even think of looking for any sort of pleasure. If you believe this is a terrible, scary world, or that life is a "veil of tears" you will likely overlook sources of pleasure right in front of you-because you will be looking for something else, you will be looking for what you fear.

This perspective will deprive anyone of pleasure and the well-being and sense of fullness that comes with it.

As somebody with issues around addiction and food, you truly cannot afford to continue the beliefs that separate you from finding ways to experience the deliciousness of everyday life.

Food will then become your only joy. And you will cling to it, and fear making changes to it, in spite of the problems and pain it causes you.

Because we absolutely require pleasure, it is a kind of birthright. And maybe that is the part of you that feels so reluctant to give up your favorite foods, or your way of eating. I understand. If you do not believe that you can find pleasure and enjoyment elsewhere, that makes sense.

Looking for new sources of pleasure, allowing yourself to partake of these and filling your senses with beauty and delight, isn't complicated. Looking beyond the familiar way of using food to get there takes a shift in consciousness and intention, but it's not super hard, it's just different.

Can you think of any simple or creative means for bringing more pleasure and sensual savoring into your existence?

Maybe you could find some ways to clarify your intention to enjoy what is already there? What if the next time you took a shower you focused on those moments of really appreciating the feel of the hot water, the fresh clean smell of the soap or bath gel? What if you gave yourself a mini-massage during this time? And noticed the feeling of a fluffy towel enveloping you when you stepped out? That might bring considerably more satisfaction to an ordinary daily event, yes?

Every so often as you move through your daily routine, see if you can invite yourself to amp-up the pleasure-factor a bit. Even washing dishes, can be very Zen-like, as you focus again on the sound of the water, the smell of the dishwashing liquid, the rhythm of the washing and drying and placing.

There are many things we have to do in a given day, are you willing to explore some ways of connecting with your senses?

Doesn't feeling better feel better?

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Chapter #27 – Pleasure is Delicious – Playsheet

Ok so you read the previous chapter, and are maybe starting to appreciate how very essential pleasure is for you. But reading without doing some of the pieces below won't change anything... so have fun with this!!

Enjoy-make it as yummy as you can!

***List as many ways as you would like, that you could easily introduce more pleasure into your world.**

***Of your 5 senses (sight, smell, taste, hearing, touch), which ones give you the most pleasure? We can assume "taste" for most of us, but what else? Do you flip for color? Swoon over beautiful music? Crave the feel of luxurious fabric on your body?**

Focus on some of your favorite senses and think of ways to amplify them in everyday life. **NOTE-This is not about having to go out and buy a bunch of stuff. It's about shifting

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perspective so that you can begin to seek and intend to have more pleasure, more of the time.

*** Journal about anything that would give you pleasure just to think about it. It can be a fantasy, it can be something you want to create in the future. Maybe an ideal vacation? Don't worry if you can't "afford" it, or whatever, the point is to just let your mind go towards things that feel good as you think about them.**

An additional bonus to doing this is the Law Of Attraction that states that you get more of what you think about.

Think more about pleasure and enjoyment and being filled in all of your senses in positive ways more often and see what happens.

You will like the outcomes much better than if you were to focus on deprivation-what can you give yourself today, to get a little taste of pleasure?

Pleasure is better. And pleasure is simple, sensual, and available to everyone. Fill your cup to overflowing and see what else you draw to you.

Chapter #28 – The Next Right Thing

Many of us have trouble transitioning from one thing to the next-it rattles us When we feel rattled we use food to ground and soothe ourselves. You know this already. Becoming overwhelmed by my lists of things to catch up on is a distinct possibility.

What is the next right thing?

That's really all you have to figure out at any given moment. Really-yes, I know we all have our daily lists of trillions of things that we absolutely MUST get done, but still, peace of mind can be yours when you focus on just doing the next "right" thing.

So for example-as I sit and write this, and some anxiety rears its' nasty little head about what else I absolutely positively need to get done today, I come back to my center by choosing what my next step is.

I will finish writing this chapter, and then the next right thing is to go upstairs and get my walking

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clothes on. Having already had my pre-walk fruit, coffee, etc it is time to head out and get my walk in. That's it. All I have to think about is the next step. Once I am engaged in that particular step, I let myself just BE there.

So when I am actually walking up the steepest hills in the world (alright that's just a little bit exaggerated, but they are really steep) I will be enjoying the views, focus on my breathing and my pace-NOT running the details of my list obsessively through my mind! That just creates ugly overwhelm and takes all the joy out of the moment.

When I finish the walk, the next right thing will be..... a shower. While taking that delicious cool shower, smelling my favorite bar of pale green linden soap, I will keep all of my thoughts and attention in my senses to really enjoy this time. And when done..... yes-you are getting the hang of this, it's time to choose the next right thing.

This is a really simple way to get things done while keeping yourself in balance. Staying balanced is the single most important thing you can do when struggling with any kind of addiction-in this case using food and eating to try to create soothing and balance.

Today, just try it-

Try taking the next step, letting all of your attention be right there in that time with you-finding things to enjoy and appreciate. And then when it is time to do something else, pick that one next step-enjoy, and repeat.

Life is so much easier and so much more pleasurable this way-trust me.

As always, be easy on yourself, don't make things more complicated than they need to be. Drama is not good for you and so unnecessary!

Chapter #29 – Nighttime Rituals – Playsheet

There are two simple nighttime rituals that I like to use to end each day peacefully and on a positive note. Each of them only takes a few minutes but they help to shift your awareness out of self-criticism and regret into something that allows you to begin to feel something better.

A DAILY GRATITUDE LIST:

You can use your regular journal for this, or buy a gratitude journal to keep by your bedside just for this. For each day, make a list of at least 5-10 things that you are grateful for.

Simple things "count". You could be grateful for having enough hot water for your bath, or for the birds returning to your yard bringing their birdsong to your morning.

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You could be grateful for your health or that of your children, or for the moment of peace you had patting your dog on the couch. You could be grateful for a phone call with a friend, or for the smell of clean laundry downstairs.

Taking time to look for the small details and find ways to appreciate all of them are a wonderful way to get out of perfectionism and the self-judgment you struggle with.

Every spiritual teacher I have ever known has said that the energy of Gratitude, more than anything else, will powerfully shift your perspective and your wellbeing.

This is a good thing to practice. It will make your life feel very beautiful and make you feel very blessed when you put your head down each night. I want that for you.

A DAILY EXTRA-CREDIT LIST:

For this list, I want you to write at least 5 things that you accomplished that day. Keep it simple-again we are just using simple routines and rituals to keep you in connection to yourself and allow you to shift your perspective so that you can find ways of feeling "good enough" regularly.

Your list of things can be basic, like unloading the dishwasher, going to the market and buying something healthy, calling your mother, sitting in your Sacred Space. I just want you to make a list of anything positive you can give yourself credit for that day ok? Make the list as long as you like-it's fun.

You can see that both of these exercises are simple and relatively easy-but thematic is in doing them and doing them every night before bed.

If you want to try one more thing, you could also try getting on your knees and saying thank you to whomever you pray to, or whomever you believe in. I love doing this-it makes me feel safe and protected and loved. A sweet ending to the day. And as the saying goes, you're worth it.

Chapter #30 – Emergency Escape Plan

A binge will often come on like wildfire-it may feel fast and furious, spinning you out of control.

When you feel the beginnings of a binge, you don't want to have to "think "or strategize your way out-you want an escape-plan! You probably have one for your home already in place.

Same idea-It's helpful to have a plan in advance so that you are not left trying to figure it out in the heat (sorry!) of the moment.

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Staying with the fire analogy for a moment, I was thinking about the way Firefighters teach kids what to do in the case of a fire, they give them an easy sequence to remember, "Stop, drop, and roll". Everyone remembers it because it's simple, right?

Same idea for escaping a binge-I've borrowed from the other model to help you remember it. When you feel a binge coming on, it's not a good time to try to think your way out. It doesn't work, as you know from experience.

Here's what will: "Stop, Drop, And Clear".

This sounds simplistic but it will truly get you to safety quickly and painlessly. Binges are such a complex and intense occurrence, that you want something in your back pocket that's ready when you need it.

You want to be able to take a quick and simple action without thinking or getting caught in analyzing the situation or in the resistance that may come up as you try to thwart the binge itself.

Having a clear plan in advance, greatly improves your odds of success.

Plus, anything that you repeat under certain conditions becomes a pattern or habit much sooner, so use this to your best advantage to avoid all of the pain and regret of overeating or a full-scale binge.

3 Steps That Will Deliver You To Safety:

I often think of binges as a sort of "trance". You are not fully connected or conscious when standing in front of a cupboard or freezer, eating. You want to break the trance by leaving the room, most importantly when you feel the beginnings of a binge whispering to you. The steps here are of a physical nature, because a binge doesn't respond to rational thoughts, it's a very physical force.

Stop...

You may be roaming around the kitchen in that familiar search for "something". The anxiety and tension set off by whatever has triggered the urge to eat can feel very intense. Run for your life. Sorry, a little humor helps. But seriously, it is important to go to a more neutral place at home. I would suggest going into your bedroom, or another quiet place for now.

Drop...

Again, this is physical. We want to break the pattern and the trance in the moment. Just shifting into a different position lets the energy begin to shift. What I suggest is that you get down on all fours, and lower your forehead so that it is touching the floor. In some traditions, this is also a prayer position. If it works for you, think of it as surrendering to divine love and protection. You can get into another position that is more comfortable for you, if you wish. The position doesn't necessarily matter, the routine does!

And, Clear...

This is a powerful but simple energy-healing technique to "drain" and move out the energy of the binge. And it works.

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I want you to gently notice all of the uncomfortable tensions and emotions for a moment.

They are probably gathered someplace around your chest, stomach, or throat. Now imagine that all of the thoughts and feelings and anxiety currently swirling inside of you, are literally being poured from your body, and out through your forehead or the crown of our head, whichever is touching the floor.

Setting a clear intention to drain the negative emotions or energies from your body, take a few moments to imagine this happening. You might even form picture in your mind's eye, of the negative energy pouring into the ground. Alike to envision negative energy as "shadow" energy-sort of murky and cloudy and dark. Just see it leaving.

It is my personal belief that Mother Earth will accept any of these energies and transmute them into something higher for the good of all, so don't worry about sending your negative energy there.

Once you notice a sense of completion, or a shift in how you feel, you can switch into whatever position suits you. You should now be feeling more comfortable and more grounded. You may notice less tension, and less of that "I have to eat no matter what" feeling.

You might wish to complete your escape plan with a few moments of sitting quietly, just focusing on your breathing for a mini-meditation. If you keep a journal, that's another really nice way to finish clearing out any old energies. Once you feel that the danger of a binge has passed, you can return to your day.

Having a good escape plan is invaluable.

So much around your overeating has a ritual attached to it-things like popcorn at the movies, comfort foods that you eat at certain times, even what you binge on.

Creating a healing ritual to move out unwanted energy is essential to moving beyond bingeing.

And there is great power in repetition-if you practice this ritual a couple of times when you need it, you will find that it replaces the ritual of eating when upset. We will look at more techniques for clearing and draining energy in other chapters, but it's important to have one that you can turn to in those moments when you really need it. **I want that for you.**

Chapter #31 – Keep Your Sanity, Stay “In the Day”

There is a fairly simple way to get out of the cycle of dieting and bingeing. It has worked for all of my clients, and it's a really comfortable transition.

Because I have been doing this for so long, I began to notice that there was a very

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specific pattern, with separate phases for finding a peaceful way of eating.

That's the ultimate destination, right? You certainly don't want to live in the deprivation and insanity of a diet, or lots of diets one after the next. And you want to leave binges behind permanently.

So, follow me. Honestly, this can be so much simpler and less painful than what you have been doing on your own. The all-or-nothing mentality will keep you in the "nothing" unless we soften up the process with a side of sanity.

Before I say anything about the food, I am going to suggest something that will truly save you from the over-thinking and over-analyzing that leads you into overwhelm, and overeating!.

Do like the 12-step people do, and the mindfulness teachers and the power-of-now gurus, and what somebody with decades of experience teaching all this stuff does (that last one is me!). Take this one day at a time. **Stay in the day, regarding any goals any plans, any changes. The minute you start making changes beyond the day in front of you, you invite in anxiety, possible overwhelm, and fear of making change.**

Do yourself a huge favor, and stay in the "now" with all of this. Things become truly manageable and change becomes both possible and comfortable when you simply focus on the day that you are in.

It's a bit counter-intuitive, I know.

You get excited and pumped up when you think ahead, you feel inspired and motivated as you consider the possibilities.

But when it comes to making actual changes in behaviors and routine, it can be tricky and backfire. So, save yourself the fear and possible backtracking by setting your goals just for today. That's what I do, and what I have my clients do, one day at a time.

Seriously wise advise from all of the 12-Step programs, that we can all benefit from, when making changes of any kind.

As with everything else, this takes a bit of attention from you. When you notice yourself projecting into the future around possible weight loss, or what size you want to be, or how your life will be different-enjoy that, but quickly bring yourself back to the day that you are in. What is it that you need to do, just for this day, to protect yourself from old patterns of abusing food?.

It's the only way that's manageable-when you are off in the future, that is not here yet, you divert your energy and focus away from what is in your power to-do today.

Just as importantly, when you move into future-time, you may get very anxious around whether

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you can sustain the changes that you are now working on, which may land you headfirst in a binge.

Experience will tell you I am right about this-spare yourself! You don't have to go there-just do what you need to do today and give yourself a little hug at bedtime for keeping your promises to yourself. When you wake up the next day, you only have to focus on that day.

And so on, simple and very manageable.

Chapter #32 – Plan of Nourishment

As you read this chapter, I hope you will find this truly to be a plan of nourishment.

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We have been talking so far about how essential it is to nourish yourself in ongoing ways through daily rituals and self-care. We will look at feeding yourself from the same perspective, and the same intention of loving and nurturing your being.

I love food. I mean, I really love food and I love eating it. And I especially love eating in ways that bring me pleasure not guilt. I have experimented with ways of eating over the years, and now feel that I can share with you my plan. This plan will bring you pleasure, good health, and freedom from binge eating. That's a pretty good plan, right?

If you have been stuck in patterns of bingeing and overeating, there has probably not been a lot of pleasure around your relationship with food. We want to restore that connection here.

You don't ever want to be eating guilt or shame or regret or anger at the same time as you are having a meal.

Really-the energy of those emotions is not a good mix, and if at all possible(and it usually IS!) do not eat when you are swirling in distress of any kind.

This is not a diet. It's not about deprivation, or even losing weight. The focus continues to be about living well. Making room for who you are and expressing this in the world, while being gentle and loving towards yourself.

I have often wondered if we are more sensual than others. As "Sensitives" I believe we are able to derive the most pleasure in simple things, although we tend not to realize that. The more you can connect with your senses, overall and when eating, the better you will feel. We tend to overcomplicate things, and I want to encourage you to begin to move towards simpler and easier!

I believe simplicity and looking for pleasure via our physical senses is the best way for us to make peace with food and our bodies.

And as I've said, we don't ever want to trigger the deprivation common in diets.

Just to reiterate what I said earlier, this isn't a diet. It's an essential paradigm shift. In other words, eating for pleasure, listening to your Intuitive Body by following the guidance of your own unique physical and emotional needs, and feeling as well as you can overall.

When you learn to eat in these ways, your body will find it's right size and shape. Leave any perfectionism behind, and be open to learning to feed yourself in ways that will truly nourish you and leave you feeling energized and balanced-right down to your cells.

So let's talk about nourishing yourself with food. As with everything else we have discussed, your way of eating needs to feel good. Food is pleasure and a way of connecting with your senses that is universal and beautiful when seen in this

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context.

Few things bring me as much pleasure as going to my greengrocer where I buy all of the fresh produce and foods for my family for the week. I tend not to shops much in the big national supermarkets as so much of what is there does not qualify as "food" to me. I look around at the bags and boxes of things and it looks like fake or pretend food! Yes, of course there are things that I buy there-mostly for my children and certain items like ketchup and tomato sauce and pasta and cereal.

YOUR ESSENTIAL TRANSITION

What's now clear to me is that when people try to go from bingeing and general overeating, into strict diet-mode, things fall apart fast. It's not pretty and it's really uncomfortable. This approach will fail, leaving you to feel like a failure. Spare yourself another round of this in any way you can.

What works much better and way more comfortably is to think of this in the context of a **transitional period of eating**. This is akin to laying a good foundation when building a new house.

You really need this foundation-you need something solid and reliable to build on. We have been building other foundational aspects in other chapters, and the your way of eating deserves a specific foundation also.

When you are coming off out-of-control eating, here are my tried-and-true best practices guidelines:

If you follow them, you will feel good and be able to move forward. Most importantly you will be able to do this for the long--haul! If you can't stick with something over time, it's not going to be that useful.

#1. Eat every 3 or 4 hours.

This keeps your blood sugar level and prevents hunger and sharp spikes that lead to cravings or overeating. Plus from a psychological standpoint, you can feel less anxious knowing that another time to eat is always within reach. You won't feel panicky about having to go long periods without eating.

**** Note-Please follow this eating schedule whether or not you feel hungry.**

This is important at first because your sense of hunger has been "damaged" or you have been disconnected from detecting hunger because of the bingeing patterns.

Hunger is especially difficult to recognize at the beginning-some people will feel constantly hungry while others will not be able to register hunger at all. Right now hunger is **not** a good way to gauge when to eat. Follow the clock for now while your body is healing. This is really important!

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#2. Eat something for breakfast

I would aim to eat something by 9 a.m. at the very latest. You may be protesting, but there is much research proving how much eating breakfast sets the tone physically and psychologically for eating in balance during the day.

People who binge at night will not be hungry in the morning. But when you don't eat in the morning, you are in a calorie "deficit" at night and you will often be programmed to binge later to make up for whatever calories you didn't get. We are simply trying to reset your hunger rhythm, and it will support you as you move through all of this.

You do not have to eat a big breakfast. I suggest some form of protein with fruit or cereal or whatever you like. Will go into more specifics further on. For now, plan to eat something before 9, ok?

#3. Eating small frequent meals will smooth you out emotionally

Overall, it's good to think about breakfast, lunch, and dinner with a couple offing-meals between. This also helps with ease of digestion, and is really good for your metabolism, which has definitely suffered from your history of overeating. Much of what I recommend in this chapter is about healing your chemistry and your body. (** **Note:** I am not a nutritionist or a medical professional, and these recommendations are based on my experience with hundreds of clients over 20 years.)

Eating in a more regular or predictable way also signals your brain and your body that the binge and starve cycle is ending.

Your body will be very happy about this, and so will you. Your metabolism will stop holding onto every morsel in fear of the famine following the feast. You will be using calories more efficiently. You will not be storing fat. Insulin levels will improve which means you will start losing weight again. It's all good...

Note: My very favorite book on nutrition and eating for healthy weight loss and overall health is "**Ultra metabolism**" by Mark Hyman M.D. Dr. Hyman explains things in very useful ways. He challenges all of the crazy diet-myths that keep you stuck and addicted, with good research and science. Having the information and explanations is very clarifying and may serve to inspire you. This may keep you doing good things that move you forward.

#4. Keep an eye out for your diet-mentality Your diet-mentality is really not a friend to you-it could also be known as "the voice of your disordered eating". This is a biggie.

When you have been living in the binge and starve, feast or famine mode for so long, you are going to find yourself trying to make this into a diet.

****Please hear me on this, DON'T DO IT!**

Trying to diet again will absolutely trigger a big bad binge-you know the kind I mean, right? It's really important to reassure yourself on every level that the diet-days are over. We are trying to break old patterns with the "transitional" approach right now-

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make sense? Just say "Yes, Lisa".. ok? Put your little rebel-self in the closet for now, so you can feel better!

The goal is not try to eat less, or less often. Do not cut out all carbohydrates, or go crazy with workouts or exercise. Definitely no calorie counting, or anything that is diet-like, ok?

If you can just try to follow this transitional plan for a bit, you will find yourself not bingeing. This I know for sure.

Be the Tortoise-

Believe me, I know you. You will want to go faster, cut corners, make up your own rules.

It's in your nature (it's in mine too!). But again, that part of you that tries to do more, do it faster, do it more "perfectly" while blowing off these suggestions, will be setting you up for a binge. It does not work.

Aim for becoming the tortoise-slow and steady wins the race. The hare that speeds it all up ends up ashamed and wiped out from a sugar-binge. Please trust me on this-you will win in the end.

#5-Protein is your friend

Getting protein into your body at regular intervals will probably feel good to you. Protein takes a long time to digest so you feel satisfied longer. It's also something that we tend not to overeat. And, for all of us who are empaths and sensitive-types, protein tends to be energetically very grounding.

I find it easier to stay embodied and connected to my inner-knowing and true guidance when I am grounded. Eating regular amounts of protein like meat, poultry, fish, yogurt, beans and legumes, or nuts will really support your balance right now.

I strongly recommend including some form of protein every time you eat.

For one thing, protein doesn't cause insulin spikes the way that carbohydrates can. When you keep your chemistry balanced nicely, the chemical pieces that lead to binges will be taken care of.

I suggest you find a few kinds of protein that you really like, and include them every time you eat. So maybe it's eggs or yogurt with breakfast, almond butter on celery mid-afternoon, whatever suits you.

Lots of my clients find that cooking up protein over the weekend makes for greater ease during the week. You could roast a turkey breast, or throw some chicken or steaks on the grill and have them in the fridge to add to meals during the week.

Having already-cooked protein is a big safety-net for me-if it's there, I know I am secure and can

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eat well. It's just one of the things I do for myself to ensure being able to eat in the ways that make me feel my best.

It's also a very good idea to keep something in your bag or car so that you are not caught hungry or tempted with only drive-thru's to turn to. I keep a bag of almonds in my glove compartment so I can grab a handful to tide me over when necessary. You could also mix some nuts and cereal and maybe a bit of dried fruit for portable trail-mix.

#6-Eat whole foods to feel good

Generally most of you do not binge on real food. You tend to binge on things in bags and boxes-things with long lists of ingredients, most of which are not "real" food. These are the processed foods that your body just doesn't know what to do with.

One of the best things I learned from reading Mark Hyman's books has to do with what he calls "Nutrigenomics". This is the study of how our bodies and genetic makeup process what we eat. He says that one of the reasons people gain so much weight eating "junk" food, is that our bodies did not evolve on all of that stuff. Processed foods are foreign to our systems.

Our genetic makeup apparently has not evolved much since we were primitive beings, and has no idea how to digest or metabolize manufactured or processed food. This makes so much sense to me, and really had a huge impact on the way I eat.

Because your body does not "recognize" processed food, it doesn't metabolize it well and tends to store it. There is lots of research too about how eating processed food can contribute greatly to disease.

Again-your body is designed for real food. Food that has not been fooled with or rearranged is what your body knows what to do with. Your body knows what to do with fresh whole foods. It knows how to digest them, how to use the energy from them, how to nourish your cells with these materials, and so on.

This may be my strongest suggestion for your healing your body and spirit that I can give to you. Come back to your senses, honor your body as it was divinely created, and feed it whole food. This alone will make you feel better almost instantly. You will feel nourished, balanced, satisfied, with no unpleasant effects.

You will know that you are giving your body the best that it deserves. You will be aligned with your divine makeup, and the divine energy with which you were created. When you consider all of that, doesn't it make the choice easier?

The other thing that may amaze you-when your palate is not tainted by all the processed stuff with so much added sugar and salt, and heaven knows what else-real food quickly tastes incredible. I can still remember vividly when I began eating this way. Every bite I ate was incredibly delicious-I sounded a little crazy as I regularly exclaimed things like "Oh my God, this cauliflower is so sweet!"

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Believe me, vegetables never tasted sweet to me before-when I was in the sugar, all I wanted was more sugar. It was just like a drug. And I was an addict. What about you?

#7. No deprivation-you want to feel good

Do yourself a huge favor here, and do everything you can to shift out of the old diet-mentality of deprivation. You may find yourself saying familiar things like "I can't have this" or "I can't eat that anymore", and we know where this leads. For you it will lead to the last-hurrah-binge-which-never-ends!

You've been there before.. You think "I can never have _____ again, so I may as well eat tons of it now before I start".

That is going to slow things down and cause you much pain. It could detour your original intentions to be well for a long time-so don't go there.

Remind yourself that you will always have choices. This is YOUR plan you get to choose what feels organic for you at any given moment. Nobody gets to choose for you but you.

When you remind yourself that nobody is trying to control you, and that **you** want relief from the pain of binge eating, you can greatly soften fears that may arise.

You can eat whatever you want. You always have that choice, and it is not my position here to try to stop you, only to offer you a way of feeling better.

You are afraid, and that is understandable given all of the deprivation, shame, and sense of failure that your patterns of eating have caused you.

When you are afraid or in emotional distress, it's important not to take any action until you address and shift the discomfort.

I repeat this saying all the time because it still is my favorite thing that I have been taught, and this is another good place to repeat it

"Never take action from fear, only from inspiration". This is also very Law of Attraction-you can't create what you want from palace of feeling bad.

If you are in a negative vibe or emotion, you can't create something positive. You literally cannot get there from here.

In order to create and manifest a new way of feeling good around your body and your way of eating, you want to connect to something that makes you feel good, uplifts you and inspires you.

This is why the "Create Your Future Template" chapter earlier in the book is so

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essential. It allows you to create an inspired connection that is personal to you that you can use to call yourself forward. You might want to go back and re-read that chapter! It will serve you extraordinarily well if you use the energy-based daily rituals to connect with your vision before you try to change your eating.

Otherwise, you risk turning this into a diet. Let me repeat this because it's incredibly important. If you don't use the energy-healing rituals and writing exercise to "prime the pump", you will make this into a diet, feel deprived and ultimately fall flat.

NOTE: I beg you not to take on the changes regarding food until you have devoted some time to move into the new vision for yourself-that is the juice, the part that will inspire you to make changes, and it makes it soooo much easier. I'm not kidding...

#8. Keep it simple and delicious

I do not believe in eating anything you don't like. That would throw you back into diet & deprivation, which I am trying to spare you from! It's also very NOT Intuitive Body-friendly. Your intuitive guidance, would never tell you to eat things you hate.

I only want you to eat what you like. Find the combinations and ways of making meals that you love. I LOVE what I eat.

Many of my clients are self-confessed "foodies". They watch the food channel ("porn" for food addicts!), subscribe to gourmet magazines, love throwing dinner parties. They even love having an excuse to go to the grocery store to buy food. I definitely am from this Tribe.

Although my feelings for all things food have not completely changed, I now prefer and thrive in simplicity, and I believe you will too-at least try it for now.

What this means is that we want to make eating just a little less complicated, and a little less perfection-oriented, and maybe even a tad more ordinary for a while.

Here's why-freedom from bingeing takes some energy and effort. It takes new way of being with yourself and your feelings, and your relationships. It involves some pretty big changes.

If all of your energy gets taken with the recipes and the meal planning and the entertaining, you will not be able to do what I am lovingly and strongly (!)suggesting to you in these chapters.

Is it still ok for you to love food? Yes, absolutely, I want you to. Can you agree to make things a bit simpler and therefore more manageable for now? This would be another good time to say "Yes, Lisa."

One of my favorite ways to simplify the whole food thing especially in the early weeks is to go for repetition, or "automating" some of your meals.

Sometimes too much choice will spin us in the over-thinking and overwhelm that we all know

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too well.

My clients get caught in perfectionism around even the smallest things-like what is the "perfect" breakfast? Is it better to have eggs or have I had too many eggs this week? Maybe I should have..." It goes on and on. Our brains do that quirky thing of getting caught in overanalyzing and before you know it you are overwhelmed before you have had breakfast.

Right now the less you have to think about all of this, the more comfortable you will feel. Comfortable is good!

I have to admit I eat mostly the same things most of the time-and I love it. I used to live in complicated multiple-choices for all things food related, but looking back I see it really didn't work.

Too much choice tends to be over-stimulating which can flip on anxiety and perfectionism before you know what happened. Things will usually go downhill from there. So, keep it simple.

Knowing what you are going to eat in advance, even for a week or two will greatly improve your chances of calming down the binge eating. Less thinking and fewer choices allow you to feel calmer and more confident about all of the changes. All of this is important at this stage of the game, while it's all new and a little bit scary.

I suggest that you "automate" at least two of your daily meals. For example, decide on what feels like a good breakfast and lunch, and have that for the next week or two. Not having to think about it really will go a long way towards helping you stay grounded and secure as you make the changes. I believe in this very strongly, because it works.

For the three main meals, I recommend you have protein, starch, vegetables and/or salad, plus some form of fat. If you like fruit, definitely have it with all your meals right now as the sugar will help keep you from craving the kinds of sugar you are vulnerable to.

I am reluctant to writing out what to eat, because I don't want you to feel that I am prescribing any kind of "diet". This is simply a way of eating to nourish your body and your senses.

The goal is to support you as holistically as possible, including your chemistry, with food every few hours, and with protein so that you don't get hungry or have big spikes and drops from too many carbohydrates or processed foods.

I will tell you what I like to eat, just to give you a sense of what I mean by all of this. Then you will be able to explore what your own guidance looks like for lovingly feeding yourself intuitively.

What is essential is that you tune in to what is right for you-when you are centered and quiet, maybe sitting in your Sacred Space, you will be able to get the information easily.

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What I eat: **Breakfast**-right now my very favorite breakfast that I am eating every single day (it's summer) is blueberries with plain yogurt or kefir, some Uncle Sam's cereal, and some toasted coconut flakes. I also snip in some fresh mint leaves.

Midmorning snack-Often I will simply split my breakfast and eat half before I work out and the rest afterwards. Easy. Yesterday, I ate some baby carrots with the pesto I made from our garden the day before. For me, crunching is a great way to release tension.

Lunch-My kids love to make fun of me for this-I eat what amounts to about a pound of salad and raw vegetables. I usually cut up red peppers, and some baby carrots. I eat pretty much the same salad daily for lunch and dinner-romaine, arugula, baby spinach, shredded carrots, radicchio, shredded cabbage and fresh basil/mint/flat leaf parsley snipped in and mixed together.

I cook either ground turkey or hamburger, or add leftover chicken or steak or cooked salmon. I sometimes add a bit of avocado. I add dressing and a splash of lemon juice, and I usually have a few ounces of sweet potato for my starch or brown rice.

Mid-afternoon -I usually have more yogurt with fruit; Sometimes peanut butter and an apple. Or cheese and fruit. Or a handful of almonds if I am out and about.

Dinner-same as lunch! Will sometimes have fruit also. One of my favorite other meals my husband makes-he grills thick slices of eggplant on the grill, brushed with olive oil and a bit of my homemade pesto. He adds chopped tomatoes, and some mozzarella. Like delicious little pizzas!

Told you it was simple. It's a lot of food. I never ate this many vegetables or so much salad before. I found when I started to add more that I felt really well. And I love to chew-sometimes feel like a cow chewing chewing-but it suits me. I think I hold a fair amount of tension in my jaw and this helps move it out.

My meals are very good sized, very satisfying and for me, really delicious. I believe in delicious, in feeding yourself "enough". It's important that you are not distracted by hunger or deprivation. Real food is incredibly satisfying. I like having a meal plan that does not require much thought, or much complicated shopping (although I do go to a few different markets to get what I like each week, but I enjoy that).

#9. Get to know your hunger rhythms, and learn to honor them.

Over the years I have seen that I am the hungriest between late morning and early afternoon. Always. This may have to do with the fact that I usually get my physical workout in midmorning, but I am not sure.

This helps me know that I need a really good breakfast and lunch. After that, I tend to not need as much food. You want to always attune to what is right for you-without judgment or comparisons. If you are hungriest midday, treat yourself with love and care and feed yourself a good meal. Don't compare your lunch to somebody else's and draw conclusions-the only place you want to look for feedback is inside yourself.

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Eating in alignment with your intuitive nature is about respecting who you are and what you need. If you try to fit yourself into somebody else's mold, you will find yourself in unnecessary emotional pain and struggle.

#10. Do Not Rush This Transition

In my years of experience, I have seen women try to hurry themselves into losing weight. The problem is it always triggers bingeing. For whatever reason, the minute you try to back yourself into a corner to lose weight, the fears and anxieties around deprivation, control, loss of comfort or autonomy get activated and lead to intense urges to binge

Your Intuitive Body will guide you through this transition if you allow it. I know that if you have been overeating or bingeing, you probably also wish to lose some weight. But the focus on weight-loss is usually risky and almost always backfires.

Take a moment to tune in to your body. Close your eyes and present the possibility of weight loss, and just notice any responses from your body that come up. Do you notice any tension or anxiety? Do you notice any discomfort maybe in the areas of your chest/stomach or throat? This is guidance. The feelings that your Intuitive Body brings in let you know when something you are thinking of is a good match for you or not.

The most important part of any of this material, in my mind, is to help you stop bouncing between binge eating and dieting. It really doesn't work. I hope that by now you have begun to appreciate this as true.

Taking your time in transition from the binges is healing and will make all the difference in the world for you. Try your best to tolerate your wish to jump back into "weight loss mode". The moment you put that pressure on yourself, it is very likely you will find yourself out of control with food.

In my experience with so many women and teens, I know that you are better off spending MORE time in this transition than less. It is the foundation of comfortable and balanced eating, and once you start to feel at ease with the guidelines, they will serve you forever. So longer is better, safe and secure. You don't want to trigger the deprivation demons that will binge.

When you have got the hang of this way of healthy balanced eating, without the highs and lows of the old patterns, you can consider the next phase.

THE NEXT PHASE

I really want to emphasize that the eating part of my approach needs to be intuitive. It is between you and your body and your spirit. Anything handed down from somebody outside of yourself will probably result in rebellious eating-that equals binge eating usually. Hopefully by now you are seeing some of the wisdom in this.

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If you have some weight you would like to lose, I suggest you continue to follow the basics of the Intuitive Body Plan of Nourishment.

I like to treat the part of you that wants to weigh less, like a skittish animal. This means no sudden movements, nothing aggressive or intrusive. As all other suggestions I have offered, you want to be gentle and loving, and connected to your intuitive nature when planning the next phase of action.

Again, I want to remind you that if you try to do the food-related pieces without the daily nurturing pieces like taking time in Sacred Space, or journal-writing, or connecting to your Creative Vision, you will probably not do as well.

Renew your commitment to practice good self-care and to stay connected to your inner guidance through your Intuitive Body. If you need to spend a bit of time re-establishing these practices, do so before attempting to make more changes with the food. I promise you it will make all the difference.

Once you have addressed all of the foundational pieces of the program you can begin to make small changes to your eating plan.

Again, I am about simplicity and ease. When you are ready to create the body that is the right size for you, you will only need to adjust portion sizes. Whereas before I advised you to avoid any limits on the foods you ate, to change your body size will mean eating less.

If you were expecting some dramatic new diet-y tricks or strange recommendations, you will not find them coming from me. I only believe in feeding yourself as well as you can, at intervals that support your physical chemistry and your emotional needs.

This is about creating a way of eating that is sane and delicious, and most importantly respectful.

An important aspect of a plan that is respectful towards you includes taking your individual preferences and needs into account.

For example, you will want to notice how different foods or combinations impact you. Make note of what foods always feel right to you, and which seem not to be such a good match.

I would encourage you to start observing which foods or meals make you feel really well, and don't trigger overeating. There are so many variables, that it's really vital that you be the creator of your way of eating.

It's true that your former patterns of overeating have left you fearful, worried that maybe you can't trust yourself. That is another reason to slow things down and proceed gently and with compassion for your experiences.

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Also, there may always be certain trigger-foods that just cause you too much anxiety. I don't know whether or not you will ultimately be able to eat these things while feeling safe from binges. That will be for you to explore.

When in doubt, proceed slowly and respect your feelings.

If when considering certain foods, you notice a feeling of anxiety or discomfort coming up, that may be an intuitive signal to you that it's not the right choice at the moment.

I know for some of my clients, circumstances make a big difference in how they feel about what they eat. For instance, eating a sweet dessert with friends or on vacation, may feel very different than eating or bingeing on the same food when home alone.

Again, check in with your Intuitive Body for what feels best for you moment by moment. This is definitely a form of mindfulness-a way of staying in connection to yourself and allowing yourself to be guided by how you feel. Diets don't work because they completely ignore the person, and the moment by moment changes and needs that we all experience.

To really move beyond binge eating, you need to be willing to become your own expert, and to stop seeking information outside of yourself.

This requires you to come into connection, to be literally embodied moment by moment. As I have said earlier, binge eating happens in disconnection from the self. It's whole reason for being is to create the numbing and distancing from thoughts and feelings that equal disconnection. I want that for you.

Chapter #33 - Allowing Feelings To Emerge

Are you afraid of your feelings? If you have struggled with overeating or food addiction you probably are

There is something about feeling things as they come that you are not comfortable with. Using food to self-soothe is a way of avoiding painful feelings, or feelings that you fear will somehow overwhelm you. This puts you in a difficult position..

Maybe you have to avoid all situations that make you anxious. Maybe you get very lonely and isolated because you avoid relationships. The dependence on food for comfort becomes greater. None of this leaves you feeling happy or empowered in the world. You want to feel better, but you know that you have to learn to tolerate all of those negative emotions that you have tried to escape for so long.

We have touched on the idea of "survival skills" that we each develop in response to early experiences as children-ways that you respond to your own needs and to your relationships with

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others that initially helped you get along and survive in your family and social environment.

Survival skills allow you to get your basic needs met by following the “rules” within your original family.

Maybe it was about "trying to be good" and trying to please others. Maybe you learned not to express your true feelings or beliefs. You may have learned not to speak up when you were being hurt, to keep painful secrets.

Those survival skill patterns are adaptive when we are young and dependent on others to provide and care for us. But as I have said before, the same survival-patterns that are used in childhood become barriers to our wellbeing in adulthood.

For example, the pattern of pleasing others as a way of getting our emotional and physical needs met-works okay in childhood but tends to backfire into resentment and unsatisfying relationships in adulthood. Make sense?

Most women with issues around food come from families where they had to sacrifice their self-expression for security. Never having learned to trust that others would be able to see or hear you for who you were, value you for your uniqueness, and care for you without conditions, relationships have felt like risky business for you. And so you have turned to food as a way of meeting all sorts of needs that food cannot realistically meet.

You turn to eating for comfort when you feel lonely, to modulate anger or resentment, to numb out frustration or a sense of powerlessness, to mask longings for satisfying connections with other people, the list goes on and on...And yet food is not meant to do any of these things.

At some point you turned to food to fulfill all sorts of unmet emotional needs. And you may have found some partial short-term relief. But you sacrificed having what you really wanted and needed because of the fears and memories around all of the ways in which relationships with others left you feeling disappointed, ashamed, inadequate, and even traumatized.

As relationships proved unsafe, food became your best friend, your safest companion. Food or eating became a sort of one-stop solution to any kind of emotional or physical or spiritual pain.

You can see how this would begin to create some real problems as you moved through life. When you feel unable to trust others because of past experiences, you are alone and lonely in the world.

I have noticed many of my clients struggling with intimacy and isolation as a result of past relationships. It's easy to understand why you might choose food over friendship or love-it's available, you don't have to negotiate for your needs. Sometimes it just feels easier to be alone.

There are many problems with trying to avoid relationships as a way of avoiding

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pain. One of them is that your heart can never heal. The overall experience of your heart feeling broken must be addressed if you want to change your relationship with your body and food. It is the heart that feels empty, alone, betrayed. Feeding it bags of cookies or bowls of ice cream doesn't feel like a very nurturing response, when you think of it that way. Does it?

The hurts you've experienced are real.

Sadly, food will never ever heal those early core wounds that we all have. And eating in ways that leave you feeling worse is kind of like adding insult to injury.

To move out of food addiction, you need to bring healing to your heart.

And to feel where the pain in your heart and body are being held, the food has to be out of the way. That's where things get tricky.

Compulsive eating helps block out thoughts and feelings. This makes trying to locate and identify the pain is like asking a doctor to perform surgery with their eyes closed. You don't want to be stabbing around blindly, in the dark!

As you begin to put food in its proper place, you may begin to notice new feelings emerge. Some of them may be uncomfortable. Try not to be afraid of them—they are part of the roadmap to where old hurts and pain live, getting your attention so that you can let the healing in.

Attention and awareness are what allow for healing to occur. **Listen and allow the feelings to tell you their story.**

Try to do this without shutting down, without trying to "fix" them with food or other diversions, and without judgment is what will help.

Focus on your breath as it comes in and out. Breathing gives you something to-do when you feel anxious. Breathing slowly and steadily, with calm awareness lets you move the energy out gently.

This way of breathing also sends important signals to your nervous system, telling it that all is well.

Years of suppressing and repressing negative emotion have taken their toll on you. You've had to work awfully hard to keep those feelings repressed.

Letting Feelings Emerge Safely: Some Suggestions That Really Help

Do you feel ready to let them come up? When you notice emotions surfacing, just focus on your breathing. This will help to ground you, safely and securely, in your body and in present time.

Staying in present time will keep you connected to what you are feeling. You won't need to retreat from thoughts or emotions.

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(**Note**-Staying in present time is the way I teach you how to avoid disconnecting. It means that you only focus on what is happening right now, in this exact moment. The moment that you think about things that are in the past, or in the future, you have disconnected from your experience. This cuts you off from your inner-knowing and Intuitive Body. As the mindfulness gurus teach, all of your power is in the present moment.)

The big challenge is to let yourself feel these things, without judging yourself for feeling them. Keep your heart open and bring compassion to yourself as you let things come up.

Keeping an open heart is always the challenge, in any situation involving other people. When you have been hurt it's natural to want to wall-off our hearts for protection.

See if you can focus your attention and intention, to breathe into your heart.

Try to remain present and open. Learning to be with yourself under all conditions is a powerful gift. By staying connected in these moments something new can take place. You learn that you can bear things. You develop a new capacity to tolerate whatever comes.

Use Energy Healing For Relief:

As you continue to breathe through these moments when difficult emotions are breaking the surface, you may also wish to place the palms of your hands over any places in your body that you notice are "holding" the emotion.

You may feel this in your heart-center, around your "gut", or your throat. See if you can notice where you are holding any tension or tightness in your body, or where you feel the "charge" of the negative energy.

Simply place your hands wherever you feel might need some healing energy-our hands help us connect with love and healing.

We touch others when they need love. They touch us when we need comfort and support. Let your hands bring the healing energy of your heart wherever you feel you need it in your body.

Imagine a current of light and energy flowing from the center of your heart flowing down into your arms and into your hands.

To add another dimension of healing energy, imagine calling in the Universal Life Force energy in to your hands.

Just sit with your palms open for a moment, and focus your intention on allowing divine God-force healing light into your palms.

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You will probably feel something, possibly a tingling or a warmth come into your hands. Even if you don't, your intention brings it in.

Now try laying your palms on your body where you want to experience the healing. Sit and breathe. As you focus on your hands and the rhythm of your breath, it will be easier to tolerate whatever emotions or energies are moving through.

This may feel very peaceful and calming.

Being able to stay present with yourself no matter what you are feeling changes everything. When you learn to let the feelings be what they are you become truly free.

You no longer have to "abandon" yourself during those difficult moments.

You no longer have to avoid people or situations in an effort to protect yourself and your emotional equilibrium.

All of these pieces will give you increased confidence and self-esteem, and freedom!! Life and other people can simply be what they are and you will have ways of coping that bring you comfort without shame or guilt.

Being able to surf your emotions, one wave at a time really allows major changes to occur. You can honor all of your feelings, even the really uncomfortable ones without hurting yourself.

You can open and participate in new experiences and relationships. You can trust yourself to be a really good friend to yourself in good times and bad. A little breathing, a bit of awareness, a smattering of patience, and you are ready to meet life with your head held high.

You can do this. As you allow the food to occupy the role of nourishing your body, and relieve it of the responsibility of shielding you and numbing you from your feelings, all sorts of new things can happen. They will happen. Not all at once, but over time and as you feel ready.

Chapter 34 – Allowing Feelings To Emerge: Some Ideas To Journal About

*Consider how coming into connection with all of your emotions might benefit you. How might

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allowing yourself to feel more actually make you "lighter"?

*Do you have any ideas that might help you get more comfortable with your emotions? How might you put the self-judgments aside?

*What about the idea of expressing emotion? What are some ways in which you might begin to do this more comfortably?

*Can you think of any good role-models for this?(It could even be a character in a movie or a book who seems to handle their feelings in a way that you admire).

*Name your biggest fear regarding the whole idea of feeling and expressing negative emotions? What did you learn as a kid about this? Can you see any connections that might still be influencing you?

Any awareness of these pieces you can name will be really helpful, so just notice what comes up for you. There are no right or wrong answers (of course... duh!)

Chapter 35 – All You Need is Love

I am up early as always, watching the morning activities of the birds and the light increasing in the sky and in our yard. I am thinking a lot about what I want to offer in these last chapters to you, to help you pull all of the information together in a way that gives you something cohesive-practical yet inspiring.

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Part of what you are up against as you seek your freedom from the weight and the eating, are your own thoughts and beliefs. It's easy to lose your way, to lose the thread of inspiration that allows you to keep choosing to move forward instead of backwards.

We need to keep your emotional energies aligned with your higher goals so that you don't stagnate around your fears or limiting self-beliefs.

So much of the problem with weight has to do with feeling powerless, helpless and defeated. Finding freedom from weight and eating really have to do with managing your emotions, moment by moment.

As you've been given new materials, ideas or information, how much have you **actually** explored?

There have been lots of opportunities to shift your daily life, and choices around self-care in this course so far.

What are you choosing? What gets in the way of making use of them? I believe it is the old beliefs that whisper to you continually.

Those beliefs tell you that you can't do it, that you will never succeed, that trying new things is too hard, and that you "need" the food to cope with life. It's easy to see how hearing these beliefs cycle round over and over might keep you feeling a bit stuck and defeated.

This is another form of an unconscious "trance" that you may be caught in. One of the keys to living free from binges has to do with staying conscious as much as you can. Staying connected to your thoughts, feelings, and beliefs so that they don't control you in ways that bring you down.

Part of the way we don't move forward has to do with "the trance" as I sometimes think of it. It's a way of being disconnected from what you want, blocked awareness of sorts. I see this over and over in my clients who struggle with weight.

They quickly and easily lose the thread of connection to their dreams, and instead become mired in the negative beliefs holding them prisoner.

You need to begin to cultivate a way to stay connected to your dreams and goals through inspiration, and then a way to break the trance when it begins to creep back in to imprison you.

I have found that the best way to stay connected is to seek inspiration and moments that uplift you so that there isn't an entry point for the Trance. Your best defenses are less defenses, maybe.

So much of your eating is driven by fear, as we have talked about. "Fear, doubt, and Insecurity" as they say in 12-Step programs, are the places we seek to numb out.

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I have noticed how fear can truly become hypnotic. What do I mean by fear? Fear could be a response to anything that you think you are not a match for-the fears of not being good enough, the fears of rejection or not being accepted, fears of abandonment and loss. Fears of having basic needs gourmet, or of other needs going unmet.

When fear steps in, it can really start to spiral things. We can't find our way because the fear-thoughts are getting in the way. I think fear and its offshoots are our biggest eating triggers.

So what will help? What is powerful enough to go up against the fear, without adding to it? What might the opposite of fear be? Got any ideas???

It's LOVE! Love is the answer. Love for yourself, love for those around you, love for the situation even when you don't feel lovable. Love for your body, love for your "bad" qualities that bring up shame or self-loathing. Maybe the Beatles had it right when they sung about "all you need is love".

You cannot change anything from fear. I want to remind you again of one of my favorite rule-of-thumb lessons ever, that one of my teachers wisely passed on to me years ago. She said "Never act from fear, only inspiration". I think we could also add love to this concept. This really is brilliant and elegantly simple.

Nothing good comes from fear-it keeps you from living your truth, and your destiny. It keeps you from sharing your unique gifts with the world-and the world needs your gifts. Even when you don't believe this, you are here for reason.

Instead, find ways of soothing yourself back into connection with your heart and spirit. Nothing good comes from the energy of negative emotion or the self-judgment that tags along. Overeating may come with it. Fights with your partner or others may come with it. Shame and depression or self-hate may come with it. Good stuff-uh, no.

Even though we think we may find relief from "telling somebody off", or gossiping about others as a way to feel better, we won't. Inside we will feel even worse-feeling badly and then acting on it just amplifies more bad feelings-spare yourself when you can, ok?

Back to love. My spiritual teacher Sharon used to say, if you are doing something that you wish you weren't, you still have to bless it.

If you are going to overeat, bless yourself and the overeating. No sense in adding fuel to the fire, so to speak.

Bring some love and kindness in and see what happens. Remind yourself you are doing the best you can in this given moment. Find compassion forth part of you that is in pain, and be a good friend to that part. Be as understanding of your own imperfections as you would be if a friend were telling you about theirs.

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Sometimes it's easier just to skip all of the thinking and reasoning around painful emotions and thoughts altogether when you find yourself there.

Try this instead:

Sparkling Light Meditation:

Find a quiet place (your Sacred Space was created just for these kinds of moments). Sit down, and get grounded in your body. Remember how? Uncross your hands or feet, and really plant the soles of your feet against the floor, while imagining those cords of energy from your feet going down into Mother Earth. I like to picture these grounding cords as fresh green shoots, pulsing with light and energy.

Make the connection in your mind and body with the comforting and rooted feeling of the Earth Mother energies-solid, safe and secure.

Now, just focus on your breath. Place the palms of your hands around your belly or ribcage, bringing warmth and comfort there.

As you breathe in, imagine that you are filling your heart and that whole area with sparkling pale pink life force energy. Imagine that whole area filling with this sparkly healing light.

On the exhale, imagine you are breathing out all of the negative painful emotions and energies-you can picture this as a kind of murky shadowy energy-like little black clouds!

Stay with this-with each inhale breathe in light and love and healing pink sparkling energies, with each exhale you are releasing the dark, heavy bad-feeling junk from your system.

Let your heart and your mind and your body fill up with all of this healing energy-

This is a powerful but simple and versatile technique that you can use absolutely anytime, anywhere. You could do this in a business meeting, and nobody would even know-other than they might pick up on your well-being and grounded presence.

Bringing light and love to your heart, even when you want to beat yourself up for your latest "crime" or failing, is very powerful medicine.

You have already tried the perfectionism and trying to strong-arm yourself into making changes. As Dr. Phil likes to say to his poor guests, "how's that workin' for Ya ?". We already know it's not working for ya! Try love instead.

Break the trance of disconnection and all of the related painful behaviors of

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overeating, self-judgment, and this vicious cycle with love. If you practice the ideas and routine I have given you, you just might be surprised at the ease with which you begin to see some changes.

I want that for you.

Check out the play-sheet (not a worksheet!) below for some ideas to help you move from fear to inspiration.

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PLAYSHEET

1. Name places, people or activities where you might stumble upon some inspiration. When I need a creative boost, or just a break from the daily routine, there are places I go that I know will reset my energies and feed my creative side and inspire me into a more aligned energy.

There are three garden/nursery stores that I really love to visit-they never fail to excite me visually and get me to imagine ways to add more beauty and uplifting little projects to daydream about.

I also love bookstores-I love to grab a pile of design books, or anything with gorgeous photos, find a comfy chair and feast on the beauty on the pages.

I love a good flea market-it's fun for me to just look at stuff-(you are probably beginning to see that my visual sense is a major source of inspiration).

There are certain music CD's that always make me feel happier-I make sure they are in my car for a quick energy shift.

Snipping herbs from my garden and containers to sprinkle into salads and marinades is a major inspiration-the smell of the herbs on my hands is really heavenly.

Ok? Got some ideas of your own? Write them down now. Keep a running list so that you can remind yourself when you need a quick "hit" of feeling-good.

2. Julia Cameron, in her many fabulous books, like The Artist's Way, suggests we make weekly dates with ourselves to renew and revive our connection to our spirit.

Once you have your list from the first exercise, I want you to commit to taking yourself on a special date this week-it does not have to be elaborate or even cost money. But choose a place or friend or something from your list, and set a time to indulge. You deserve it.

Remember-the key is to fill up with pleasure and inspiration so that foodies not the main source. We need pleasure, and we deserve it. Chances are you have become used to food serving all of those needs-as you know, this leaves you in a dangerous bind. Finding new ways of filling up and feeling indulged and inspired will go a long way to helping you put food in its proper place.

I really want that for you!

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Chapter 36 – My Wish For You

These writings have been a true labor of love from me to you. As I told you at the beginning, we are like sisters, part of the same Tribe.

I understand so much about who you are and what you dream of. And I understand so much of what gets in the way.

I know that you are wise and beautiful, gifted and sensitive. I know that you are also a magnificent creator, and an intuitive capable of incredible inner-knowing.

Trust yourself. Let yourself be guided in each moment by your Intuitive Body. When you learn to recognize what this built-in guidance sounds like, and how it always has your best interest in mind, life will flow for you in ways you have always imagined. You will be free from binge eating, or any other patterns that keep you in the trance of "not good enough".

You are a bright light, and have a bright future. My wish for you is that you learn to recognize and claim that for yourself.

Do it gently and with ease. Don't take things so hard. Trust that everything will unfold as it is meant to, and always in Divine Order.

I want that for you. Wishing you love, peace, and every blessing always

xox Lisa Claudia Briggs