EMOTIONAL EATING: The Opioid of the Masses

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EMOTIONAL EATING AS MISGUIDED SELF-CARE

1. SELF-SOOTHING: “eat” emotions, quiet chatter, “food trance”

2. HUNGRY FOR LIFE: healthy relationships, joy, spirituality, purpose and meaning

3. CONTROL SELF OR ENVIRONMENT: individuation, intimacy and relationships, vulnerability, punishment self or others

Culligan, 2010
12 TYPES OF EMOTIONAL HUNGER

1. Food: My Adult Pacifier
2. I Stick Up For Myself by Stuffing Myself Up
3. Food: My One Faithful Friend
4. When I'm Chewing I Can't Hear My Inner Critic
5. I Don't Have Love but I Have Food
6. Food Can't Fill Up the Missing Parts in My Past
7. Don't Tell Me What to Eat
8. I'm Too Busy Eating to Take a Risk
9. Fall in Love? I'd Rather Fall in Chocolate
10. I Use My Body as a Battleground
11. I Won't Grow Up
12. I'm Secretly Afraid of Being Thin

POWERLESSNESS & 5 “PROTECTIVE LAYERS”

Conclusion #1 - Self-Doubt Layer
Conclusion #2 - Reward/Frustration Layer
Conclusion #3 - The Safety Layer
Conclusion #4 - The Rebellion Layer
Conclusion #5 - The Emptiness Layer

Attribution error - feeling powerless does not indicate they are powerless.

And feeling powerless leaves you feeling emotionally hungry

Realize the ways in which you've felt powerless and recover your power by exploring each of the five powerless conclusions

Your goal is to think and act instead of overeat.

Culligan, 2010
RELATIONSHIP WITH FOOD & SELF

- CULTURAL VALUES
- BIAS
- SELF-SOOTHING SKILLS
- SOCIAL SKILLS
- ASSERTIVENESS
- MANAGEMENT OF INTIMACY & RELATIONSHIPS
- EXPERIENCE & TOLERANCE OF EMOTIONS
- LEISURE
- EXPERIENCE & TOLERANCE OF EMOTIONS
- EXISTENTIAL MEANING & PURPOSE
- BODY IMAGE
- PHYSIOLOGY
- OPERANT & CLASSICAL CONDITIONING
- MODELING
- LOVE? Food, work, people?
- FAMILY OF ORIGIN
- PROCESSED FOOD ON STEROIDS
- EXPERIENCE WITH DIETS
- WORK
- Ψ & COGN FLEXIBILITY

Culligan, 2010
HUNGER FOR LIFE “SUPERSIZE”

MINDLESSNESS

DISCONNECTION: SELF & OTHERS

POOR SELF-CARE

EMOTIONAL OVER-EATING

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CONFLICTING CULTURAL MESSAGES
CONFLICTED INTERNALIZED "CHATTER"

IT’LL KILL YOU...IT’LL COMFORT YOU

CULTURAL IDEAL VS. REALITY

Culligan, 2010
PLAYING OUT THE CONFLICT: RESTRICTING – CRAVING - BINGING

RESTRICT DIET → FAT RESTRICTION → PHYSICAL DEPRIVATION

EMOTIONAL DEPRIVATION

CRAVINGS

WEIGHT GAIN

Decreased Metabolic Rate

Slower Subsequent Weight Loss

Increase % Body Fat

Insulin, Cortisol, Leptin Imbalances

Increase Stress & Emotions

Culligan, 2010

“NEW” CORTEX
sensory perception,
generation of motor commands,
spatial reasoning,
conscious thought and language.

Reptilian “DONKEY BRAIN”
fat, sugar, calories for survival
CRAVINGS: comfort food

Limbic feelings

Culligan, 2010
50,000 THOUGHTS EACH DAY...
WHICH BRAIN ARE YOU GOING TO “FEED?”

EACH TIME THE NEOCORTEX “WINS” (AND YOU IGNORE THE DONKEY), THE NEURAL PATHWAY BECOMES STRONGER AND FASTER.

Culligan, 2010
The Three Causes of Binge Eating (Gould, 2008)
1. Binge to cope with feelings.
2. Binge to create the illusion of “feeling good.”
3. Binge to feel "safe" or to shut out the world.
VICIOUS CYCLE of EMOTIONAL EATING

EMOTIONS

- INCREASE BELLY FAT
- DECREASE COGNITIVE FLEXIBILITY
- INCREASE INSULIN CORTISOL
- CARB CRAVING
- SELF-MEDICATE WITH FOOD

STRESS

- LESS SLEEP
- INCREASE CORTISOL
- LEPTIN & INSULIN RESISTENCE

WEIGHT GAIN

METABOLIC SYNDROME

Culligan, 2010

DON’T FIX ISSUE
PARALLEL WORK OF FOOD AND SELF: RELATIONSHIP INDIVIDUATION, BOUNDARIES, EMOTIONAL CONNECTEDNESS, RECIPROCAL true mind–body connection

RELATIONSHIP WITH FOOD

RELATIONSHIP WITH SELF

BODY IMAGE

SELF IMAGE

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FOOD IS MEANT TO BE EATEN.
FEELINGS ARE MEANT TO BE FELT.
YOU MAY NOT BE HUNGRY FOR FOOD.

GUIDE TO MY EMOTIONS

IRRITATED

SLEEPY

FRISKY

EXCITED

HUNGRY

RAZED

SAD

CONTENT

ALIVE

Culligan, 2010
# REFRAMING BELIEFS ABOUT FOOD

Koenig (2005)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IRATIONAL</th>
<th>RATIONAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>There are good foods (low calorie, low fat) and bad foods (high calorie, high fat).</td>
<td>Food does not possess qualities such as good and bad, but it can be healthy or unhealthy for you.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food takes care of me.</td>
<td>Food takes care of my hunger; people take care of me. I take care of me.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food is love and comfort.</td>
<td>Food is fuel and, often, pleasure.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food should never, ever, under penalty of death be wasted.</td>
<td>If I’ve had enough to eat, more food inside me is a waste.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food is my life.</td>
<td>There is much more to my life than food.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Culligan, 2010
REFRAMING BELIEFS ABOUT EATING

Koenig (2005)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IRRATIONAL BELIEF</th>
<th>RATIONAL BELIEF</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I have to eat fast before someone else gets more than I do.</td>
<td>Eating is not competitive, and there’s plenty of food for me.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If I start eating something I like, I’ll never stop.</td>
<td>I can stop eating when I’m full or satisfied</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eating fills the emptiness inside of me.</td>
<td>The emptiness inside me is emotional and can’t be filled by food. I can fill it up in other ways.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If I don’t think about what I’m eating, food can hurt me or put pounds on me.</td>
<td>Food can only hurt me if I eat past being full or satisfied.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I can’t let myself feel hunger.</td>
<td>My hunger just comes and goes on its own without permission</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Reframing Beliefs About Weight

Koenig (2005)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Irrational Beliefs</th>
<th>Rational Beliefs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Thin equals a happy, successful, perfect life.</td>
<td>People can be happy and successful at any size, but no one has a perfect life.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If I didn’t weight myself, I wouldn’t know what to eat.</td>
<td>I know what to eat no matter what I weigh.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I’m too fat.</td>
<td>I refuse to judge my body.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being fat gets in the way of all the good things I want in life.</td>
<td>I can enjoy life at any weight or size.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large people should only eat low-calorie, low-fat foods.</td>
<td>Large people need to eat a variety of foods, just like everyone else.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Culligan, 2010
**REFRAMING BELIEFS ABOUT MY BODY**
Koenig (2005)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IRRATIONAL BELIEFS</th>
<th>RATIONAL BELIEFS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>My body should be perfect.</td>
<td>I accept my body as it is because there is no such thing as a perfect body.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I can only love myself while I’m thin.</td>
<td>I can love myself whether I’m fat or thin or in-between.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I’m not in control of my body.</td>
<td>My goal is to be comfortable in my body.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My body will never learn when to say yes and no to food at the right times and in the right amounts.</td>
<td>I can teach my body how to say yes and no to food at the right times and the right amounts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The only thing about myself that I’m proud of is my body.</td>
<td>I am proud of many things about myself.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Culligan, 2010
## CONNECTING CORE BELIEFS TO THINKING ABOUT FOOD, EATING, WEIGHT AND BODY?

Koenig (2005)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Example A</th>
<th>Example B</th>
<th>Example C</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>ID the eating/body behavior to change.</td>
<td>Finishing all the food on my plate.</td>
<td>Denying myself food when I am hungry.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Weighing myself every day.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. ID the irrational eating/body belief underlying the behavior.</td>
<td>I am being wasteful if I don’t finish all the food on my plate.</td>
<td>If I start eating I won’t be able to stop.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>I need to weigh myself to know what I should or shouldn’t eat.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. ID the irrational core body belief underlying the behavior.</td>
<td>Being wasteful is an unforgivable sin.</td>
<td>I need to maintain strict control over my body.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>I can’t trust my body to know what it needs.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Culligan, 2010
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STAY THE SAME</th>
<th>PRO</th>
<th>CON</th>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>“Lazy” Own clothes Known Social Comfort emotionally Protective sexually – no one looks at me, and I don’t look at anyone No pressure to “look good” Husband “leaves me alone” Express love to self &amp; others LOVE food!</td>
<td></td>
<td>Health fears Low energy Family history of CA and CAD Look “unprofessional” Continue to ‘beat self up’ Embarrassed by appearance Emotional roller-coaster Can’t put on my own socks &amp; shoes Knee pain Avoid MD, fear of being “lectured” People stare</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHANGE</td>
<td>More energy Healthy body Would swim, hike, do things I’ve put off “until I’m thin” Dress nicer, more “professional” More attractive Get “more respect” Decrease in joint pain</td>
<td>Have to deal with marriage Men may “cat call” me Spend $ on new clothes Time to shop &amp; prepare food Expense of healthy food Just sounds exhausting What will I do with my emotions? Explode? What if life still isn’t better? How express love? Feel deprived</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
PRIMARY VS. SECONDARY FOODS
IntegrativeNutrition.com

PRIMARY:
- Relationships
- Love
- Work
- Movement
- Breathe
- Laughter
- Creativity
- Spirituality
- Purpose
- Adventure

SECONDARY:

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MINDFULNESS EXERCISE

“Mindless eating changes us for the worse: to the extent to which mindless overeating leads to weight gain, body expands; mind shrinks (metaphorically speaking) because we miss out on the experience; and the total of our wellbeing suffers/declines.” (Paul Somov, 2010)

“We don’t understand in an intellectual way how sugar tastes. If we have never had the experience of sugar, we don’t know what ‘sweet’ is. We can read many books introducing us to the meaning of ‘sweet,’ and we can learn and construct many ideas, but we can never have a concrete experience of ‘sweet’ in this way.” But: “If we get a small piece of chocolate and place it on our tongue, we can have a concrete experience.” (Dzogchen Teachings, 2006, p. 113, in Somov, 2010).

<table>
<thead>
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<th>HEALTHY VS. “NORMAL” EATING</th>
<th>THE EATING GUIDELINES</th>
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</thead>
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**“HEALTHY”** eating – goal is to make sure food intake is nutritious and physically nourishing – “what”

**“NORMAL”** eating – choosing and consuming foods according to conscious and intuitive rules of appetite – “how”

1. *Eat when you’re (moderately) hungry*
2. *Choose foods that will satisfy you*
3. *Eat with awareness and enjoyment*
4. *Stop eating when you’re full or satisfied*

**THE EATING GUIDELINES**

1. *Eat when you are hungry*
2. *Eat sitting down in a calm environment. This does not include the car.*
3. *Eat without distractions. Distractions include radio, television, newspapers, books, intense or anxiety-producing conversations, and music.*
4. *Eat only what you want*
5. *Eat until you are satisfied*
6. *Eat (with the intention of “being”) in full view of others.*
7. *Eat with enjoyment, pleasure and gusto!*

*Culligan, 2010*