

Food Freedom 4: End the Restrict-Binge Cycle – Insatiable Season 10, Episode 5

[INTRO]

Welcome to Insatiable Season 10: Research-Based Weight Loss: Rebuild Your Biology + Psychology Feedback Loop

Have you ever read about the past and thought, I can't believe people actually believed that? In the 19th century, doctors thought that "bloodletting" could cure illnesses and Dr. Joseph Lister was shunned for his thesis and early research proving that bacteria caused disease. While Dr. Lister was being denigrated, Charles Darwin was being celebrated, falsely claiming that women were less intelligent than men. In Darwin's time women rarely went to advanced schooling, they needed to preserve their limited energy for baby-making. The 20th century wasn't immune from junk science and outrageous claims, Domino's sugar advertised a sugar diet as a way to lose weight touting that it had less calories per gram than fat. Cigarettes were also marketed as healthy.

It sounds laughable to most of us now. But only because brave, curious thinkers were willing to question, test, and disprove the status quo and limited thinking.

In Season 10 of Insatiable, Research-Based Weight Loss: Rebuild Your Biology and Psychology Feedback Loop, we'll explore emerging research and viewpoints, now on the periphery, that will make the current mainstream thinking of weight loss as willpower and calorie-cutting look just as misguided as soothing babies and colds with morphine syrup (which was a medically endorsed thing in the Victorian era).



We will explore how taking the steps towards weight loss individually and societally can be a form of resistance against the toxicity and industrialization of our food supply. We'll question the convenience of telling women that weight loss is giving into the patriarchy and male gaze—and how this silences deeper questioning about why we all have gained so much weight and what other consequences come with this physically and mentally.

We will do this by taking an integrated and holistic look at the biological and psychological feedback loop that goes into maintaining a natural weight and how our industrialized society has disrupted it.

We'll discuss how what you eat informs how you feel and your habits which in turn influence what you eat as a constantly self-reinforcing infinity loop.

We'll examine how our culture and thus education and medical systems are not holistic, and results in a siloed view of human biology and health which allows the public and experts to continue to frame weight loss as about willpower and only about food.... and how very convenient this is for those who set and profit from our industrialized agriculture policy.

We laugh about Domino's sugar diet, but the same reasoning still informs our modern dietary guidelines. Even the mainstream is noting that "The Sugar Research Foundation" with the help of three handsomely compensated Harvard scientists in 1967 handpicked studies placing the blame on fat rather than sugar for heart disease. In 1977 one of these researchers would become the Head of Nutrition for the USDA and outline nutrition guidelines, enabling the low-fat weight-loss craze to become a thing, and we'd all get fatter, sicker, and more depressed in the years to come.

If in your gut, you feel there are more important (and potentially revolutionary) root causes to your weight battle or if you want to learn the viewpoint that people will likely have 50 years



now— that willpower and a simple view of calorie counting as the key to weight loss makes about as much sense as giving morphine to babies—this season is for you.

[EPISODE]

Welcome or welcome back. Love all the insights I'm hearing you're having from this season. I love a good ah-ha. A lot of you have said you are listening to the episodes twice or three times. First know there are transcripts at alishapiro.com/podcast.

Second realize that is so natural. As you get more out of the matrix, you realize everything has to be redefined and to use a coaching term, "unpacked". In other words, you're in the upside down and this work is as completely new reorientation to not just food but ourselves and life. This is why a client said instead of abbreviating Truce with Food TWF it should be WTF?

Today, we are going to discuss how to end the binge-restrict cycle. We have to address the three root causes of bingeing: deregulated blood sugar, restriction and our story that makes us be all-or-nothing, with food just being one area we approach life like this.

Today, we'll discuss:

- How to stop restricting after a binge using the "3-5" rule.
- How to get out of the all-or-nothing cycle that is the root cause of the bingeing in the first place. This is the psychological equivalent of living in the gray: trying to get pregnant or dating even though you aren't at an ideal weight are two of millions of examples.
- And discuss the three stress responses that lock us into all-or-nothing BEING so we can't see any other choices and how to start seeing new choices.



From a food perspective, the best thing to do after a binge is to no longer restrict yourself after you overeat or binge. Part of the root cause of bingeing is restriction. What you resist, persists and comes back with a vengeance.

From a weight perspective, your body keeps on weight when you are bingeing and restricting. We discussed in Episode 2 why this happens in detail but in a nutshell, both extremes tell the body famine is on the way, please keep on weight.

By not restricting, you will gradually decrease the amount and frequency of your binges and you won't be starving your body. Now, what does "not restricting" look like? After binges or overeating, your blood sugar is going to be wonky. And that's OK—learning how to work with it while you are in your process will be the best thing you can do in the long term to decrease and ultimately end bingeing. Working with your blood sugar after a binge will go a long way in preventing the drastic mood, energy and cravings that happen physically post-binge and set you up for the next one

I find one of the biggest challenges in having a Truce with Food is most of us don't know what normal blood sugar feels like. Part of getting out of the restrict-binge cycle is the ability to recognize how much harder it is emotionally after you binge...and not because you are mad at yourself for all you ate and probably gained but because your wonky blood sugar makes your mood tank and makes you exhausted.

I always tell my clients to think of Charlie Brown's friend Pig Pen...he had all that dirt surrounding him...that's what it feels like with "carb flu" as the Paleo people call it. And recognizing that life isn't as chaotic or bad as it feels can often help us separate reality from our internal experience based on our blood sugar being out of whack.



Many of my clients start to recognize this once they know what foods work for them and as they start to make different choices in their story, they become more consistent with their food and feel much more grounded. They increasingly feel an inner calm and power. And they will still binge or overeat —their bingeing decreases in terms of frequency and amounts, not all at once.

Yet at that time, post-binge, they can see to a much greater degree the blood sugar affect of bingeing and how it makes life harder for themselves not from a weight loss perspective but their ability to function during the day and their sleep. Their new increasingly normal of focus, calm and freedom is lost to feeling really down, tired and stuck post-binge.

This incentivizes them to understand the root cause of why their bingeing aka “own their story” we’ll briefly cover working this and I’ll recommend other episodes and tools to help. Owning your story is another crucial element to ending the restrict-binge cycle.

After knowing what foods work best for you, you will be increasingly grounded and able to apply the 3-5 rule, which I made up as an easy way to think of how you need to eat from 3-5 pm and the next 3-5 days post-binge.

And please note, even if you aren’t hungry at breakfast the next day, you need to get back to what foods work for you even at breakfast. Now is not the time to stress your blood sugar more. If you think of your blood sugar as a roller-coaster - which it is when we aren’t eating the right foods for our body - we are concerned with the degree to which you are evening out the peaks and valleys.

Think of “coming down from a binge” like a taper process. You can’t go cold turkey which is what restricting food does. Cutting out carbs or waiting too long to eat compared to what normally works for you will keep you on dramatic hills. And in fact, often you will find between



that 3-5 pm time frame, you will have more cravings until your blood sugar evens out from the binge. Support your body as it is working to recover.

So from 3-5 pm if you have a carb craving which many people will, I recommend having a natural sugar like fruit with a healthy fat. An apple with peanut butter or banana with your favorite nut butter are great, easy choices. Or, I'm sure there are great Paleo snacks out there that all of us, even if we aren't paleo, can use.

I personally love my friend Sharif's Power Bites...you can actually buy them in Philly at Sip 'N Glo and in Pittsburgh, at MyGoodness and the Co-op and he sells them online at eatpowerbites.com.

They are AMAZING...and have all natural sugars but mostly healthy fats. They're organic, non-gmo...all the things. I loved them and told Carlos I wanted to eat them during labor...he went and bought like 10 packs when I was 39 weeks pregnant! I ate a few of them at the start of my labor and I didn't want to eat during labor yet those first couple powered me through unmedicated childbirth. I also ate them in my recovery because I found the hospital portions weren't enough for me after basically not eating for 24 hours and doing the most epic work-out of my life. And I just got a couple packages for my Mom for her birthday and she is in love with them too. I like the almond butter and chocolate ones but the peanut butter and chocolate are my favorite. I'll include the link in the show notes.

Ok, back to snack plus also if you can take a nap, that will also help you stabilize your blood sugar as you'll often feel tired or almost like an oncoming exhaustion as your blood sugar is restabilizing.

But most of my clients can't take a nap during that time but if you are self-employed or work from home, you might be able to. And if you can't take a nap, I definitely recommend getting to



bed early as that helps stabilize blood sugar and makes us less sensitive to sweets. Or try to cat nap when you get home.

Many of us will have a bad night's sleep from bingeing. As if bingeing weren't a vicious cycle of its own, research shows that sleep deprivation affects the brain's motivation and reward circuits and can [spark a desire for tasty foods](#) and make us [feel less full after eating and metabolize the fat in food differently](#). So please know sleep is so important here. I would tell my bingeing, tired self - don't try to get to the gym to burn off those calories - you'll have more results either doing some yoga to help you sleep or going to bed early.

Now, also on days 3-5 post-binge, you will probably feel again what Paleo folks call "carb flu" the most. Just because processed sugar is legal doesn't mean it doesn't affect us like other drugs or alcohol. It might not be as dramatic a tapering process yet it still happens to a degree that warrants attention. So you will have more withdraw symptoms around days 3-5. You might feel particularly emotional, exhausted or have intense cravings. Don't push through them. Recognize the irritation and sadness. And support your blood sugar again with an extra stabilizing snack if you need it, gentle movement like yoga or a walk which can also stabilize blood sugar and sleep.

Or for many of my clients, they discover they need a complex carbohydrate like quinoa or sweet potato at lunch. This is the time to keep that in your diet! Don't cut back on those carbs as that will set you up for more cravings later.

So from a food perspective, ending the restrict binge cycle starts with knowing what foods work best for you and how to eat at your meals so you can create a larger discrepancy in how good you can feel and how bingeing tanks your blood sugar and how much harder life and sleep are, not from a "now I'm behind in my weight loss" perspective.



Then, you will have to taper off the refined carbs so follow the 3-5 rule, adding in a healthy snack of a complex carb like a fruit + nut butter or snack like PowerBites that uses gluten-free rolled oats and maple syrup with nut butter between 3-5 if you have a carb craving and expect some dramatic carb flu 3-5 days after the bingeing ended and plan for some gentle snacks, movement and rest to restore your blood sugar balance effectively.

Now, this is where I think addressing our story work is critical and more important than the food. Because many people will be so afraid to not restrict because of the fear of continual weight gain because of how long it can take to stop bingeing just from not restricting alone. And, for some people, bingeing won't stop without addressing the other root cause of bingeing that isn't deregulated blood sugar or restriction but which is our story.

Our story, which activates our fight-or-flight nervous system branch, creates all or nothing thinking. When we feel under threat or are in an unconscious defensive position (and Episode 4 of this season: Redefine Self-Acceptance explains this more), there is no time for discernment. We must react. Or we react automatically without knowing we even have another choice. Yet the catch is we are often not under threat or wrong and so have time to live in the gray and choose to respond in a way that is nourishing, the opposite of emotional restriction, for us.

We can often easily see the all-or-nothing thinking in our eating. We have rigid ideas of good and bad foods so we are either all good or being totally bad. If we eat more than we thought we should, Chuck it F@#\$ it, diet starts tomorrow. Or, I'm traveling for work and will get back to being healthy once I'm not traveling. Or it's the holidays. What we are doing here is being all-or-nothing by being all in when life is magically perfect or nothing when real life or chaos hits.

And we do this because we are all-or-nothing with areas of our lives that are intense and we feel vulnerable or inexperienced in...this is what real life is.



And it's important to recognize that this isn't just all or nothing thinking. It is literally a way of being where it's yes, how you frame it for my cognitive behavior or CBT folks...but it's also how that controls our behavior and then how we evaluate the choice.

So this is much more than reframing our thinking and feelings.

This is looking at how we frame, behave and then judge our choices.

We aren't just compartmentalizing our food as good or bad...we see and view our choices as good and bad. We might not think that way but we do think about "this will get me ahead" or "Don't rock the boat" or "I feel guilty saying no"...there's two choices, good or bad, all or nothing or black and white is also how my clients refer to it as.

And it can be challenging to see this binary way of being because it's been normalized for so long. And the only thing you can recognize is you're at the fridge in the evening and don't want to be.

I have many clients who tell me they are all or nothing in everything and so can see the parallel yet can't see how to get out of this cycle.

I also have some clients tell me they don't binge in reaction to feeling bad. Yet when I asked them when their life long sweet tooth turned into bingeing, there was a loss of identity brought on by trauma. Maybe they were no longer able to be an athlete or work-out from an injury. Or they went through a really bad breakup or had an abusive boss (or they were an abusive boss to themselves). Or their family always had a lot of chaos and looks where emphasized so it feels like our body is what's wrong when really, that was what we were conscious of at the time that appeared to be what we could control.



This shows up today as the phenomenon of “I know I’m a catch yet I only date when I’m thin.” OR, “I know I’m good at what I do so why am I not going after my dream clients or dream opportunity.”

In all these scenarios, there’s a story and we are wrong. And so we have three psychological stress responses that try and make us “right”.

What happens when we are in a story, our SENS and/or F-F nervous system gets activated (Episode 2 for more details on this) and we default to we are physically wrong because of our weight and/or psychologically wrong in that we are “too much” or “not enough”. In our heads or unconsciously, we hear an inner protector that doesn’t want to look “too high-maintenance” or “lazy” or selfish or whatever we were told was bad in our families, churches, high-school, etc.

And so three different stress responses are activated, depending on what worked for us in the past. The three stress responses are compete, avoid or accommodate.

High level overview:

The compete response: the all-nothing frame is “am I ahead or behind” or “winning or losing”?. And we often evaluate this by comparing ourselves to other women’s bodies or our former selves. As one of my clients pointed out in our session, beauty was the only area the Patriarchy lets women compete in. It benefited the patriarchy. And now that women are in the workforce, our systems encourage competition there because it ultimately benefits the ownership class of Capitalism.

When we perceive we are winning with our weight, it’s ALL good, right? If skinny is winning, we date, we take more creative risks, we keep up with exercise because we feel so good. Often in part the “feeling good” is from the idea that we are winning, even if the way we are eating leaves us hungry and will set us back in the long-run. And when we are losing or behind with



our calories or weight loss goals, we can spiral and our confidence in areas we are less “successful” in, seems to disappear.

Or we end up bingeing in reaction to the tension from our career. Because we believed from a young age we weren't going to be the thin one, we will compete to be the smartest, most successful one. Yet the way we are competing is detrimental— . we're throwing our bodies under the bus even though taking care of our bodies can support our career or life success. We think “either I'm successful with my career or my health.” Or what we are competing to win at - like the next job title or “Best Mom” isn't very fulfilling.

To use a very competitor frame, we think our body is a liability instead of how our health can be an asset and improve our careers and relationships as it makes us more capable in leadership and creativity. Healing this pattern means identifying our own unique metrics of success and impact, including what healing steps we have to take along the way with our bodies.

The avoid stress response creates the all-nothing frame of fantasy-failure. Our behaviors here include procrastinating, not speaking up or plain avoiding! When we avoid or Chuck it, F@#\$ it as we refer to it in my work, we do a plan “perfectly” because it's the silver bullet until we realize it isn't or we think, “what's the point” ...and then do nothing and nothing changes.

We avoid in our lives when we don't want to rock the boat or think something is harder than it is - metaphorically “Super Sizing” whatever we are avoiding because we build up what we have to do as either going to be a wild success or a devastating failure or instant approval or rejection.

Some of my clients find themselves bingeing after a big presentation as a way to release how much pressure they brought to HOW they executed the presentation...often avoiding it until the last minute and cramming and eating to power through the stress because they built it up



so much in their minds. They “super sized” the effort because they avoided getting the clarity they needed to “right size” the importance and effort required.

I remember when I was in the early days of my business how often I “super sized” so much of the business aspect because I thought helping people was a business plan (and the Universe laughed!). In a nutshell, I didn’t understand how entrepreneurship worked.

In one example, I was focusing on PR because it was free in terms of money. I had come from a PR background but when you are marketing yourself versus someone else, it is so different. In my mind, I had to have my site perfect and the pitches perfect so I avoided really understanding how PR works from a consumer standpoint (all my PR experience had been B2B). I eventually got an opportunity through a writer a friend had connected me to (note: not from my site or pitch). The night before the feature was going to run, I was eating to power me through going over my entire site again and making sure the cart would work (this was the very early days of e-commerce)...I didn’t ask for help because I assumed it was a big ask of a tech friend (because in my mind tech is always overly complicated!). The piece ran - I ended up being one small part of it AND I didn’t get one sale.

I remember stress eating in the run up to it and then, concluding “what a failure that was” and all the time and energy spent felt like a double loss because I was in grad school and felt already maxed out on time and energy (when we are in these stress responses, there’s a real sense of scarcity, which we will discuss in Episode 6).

I remember thinking “what did I do wrong?” and feeling it was about me rather than realizing in business, to be successful, you can’t look at anything as a wild success or failure... or about you!. It’s about learning each time. But the success-failure frame made me avoid all over the place. That lens was fractured all over the situation!



It would take me years until I was with other women business owners to learn they had the same experience and that PR is often about building credibility, not a sales driver. But at the time, I had taken the fantasy success-devastating failure frame to “super size” my effort and then evaluated the outcome through that same all-nothing thinking, which in this case was failure, rather than being able to see this was not about me but rather learning how PR and business worked. This middle place we call the muddle in Truce with Food, where we are learning and can feel really messy. It’s so important to have someone who can help you see what you can learn so you can ultimately be successful in your goals.

The last stress response is accommodate. The all-or-nothing frame we bring here is an “either/or” view of things. Our behaviors here are yes when we mean no or not even checking in with ourselves about what we need!

This can be with food “either I eat like everyone else OR I’ll be the odd person out.” And this is also why many people end up last on their list: it’s a protective behavior because people pleasing protected us in lots of ways. Not only does people pleasing leave little time for grocery shopping and cooking, it also leads to eating when we feel guilty when we didn’t please enough or we potentially disappointed people with our choices.

A client told me I could share this example that happened to her over the holidays. They were traveling...we are talking car, plane and train. She said in the past, she would go into full martyr mode and eat crappy food, which would then lead to irritation, in part caused by the food she ate!

In our work, she realized that she didn’t need to do so much to plan for her kids (she was accommodating their perceived needs, which we all do - which is usually a lot more work for us, some of which can go unappreciated by others because they don’t value it because they don’t need it!) and she shared that she was cleaning out the fridge before they left and with what was left, she knew how to balance her blood sugar so she wouldn’t be hungry. She brought a



left-over chicken breast in her bag. When they were traveling, her whole family ate hotdogs and she actually ate the chicken breast. I think we've all had that where we might actually pack something healthy and then feel this urge not to eat it. She was able to identify that for her as she said, "Normally I would have ordered a hotdog because the feeling of being different or weird or whatever was too uncomfortable. But it was FINE and then the remaining 2 hours in the car, I didn't crave junk food like I usually do."

Her belonging to her family didn't rest on eating hot dogs. She was accommodating in the past because of all-or-nothing or in this case; either I eat with them and am part of the group or I eat differently and am different thinking. This time, she realized there are lots of belonging opportunities on the trip that don't have to do with food.

I use this example because a lot of my clients with kids feel like they have to accommodate the general "they" when out with their kids and that stress alone can drive them to eat when things don't go as planned, which is often. When we realize we are often accommodating an assumed need of others or that everyone's needs can be met, we can get out of either-or accommodating.

And I want to put an asterisk here since we are talking about seeing in shades of gray. Sometimes food, especially at holiday time, can really be a source of belonging, of connecting us to tradition. And that's FINE! The important thing is you are eating what you are eating because you want to and it's truly connecting you, versus you feeling disconnected from yourself because you didn't really want that particular food and felt obligated.

Whatever worked early on in our lives - compete, avoid or accommodate - to either belong or protect us from how others defined or "called us out" is how it felt like at the time.

But if we are bingeing or overeating, these responses are being overused and blocking us from what we most want in life: to feel successful and good on our own terms.



When we have clearly defined our values and live our life from there - instead of reacting to others real or perceived needs - we feel free (not burned out), our real lives have an element of magic and fun and we find meaning in our pursuits, not just pleasing others.

And I have adapted these from the Thomas-Killman conflict model. This is a model that is used in work places to help teams function better. The model identifies two dimensions when choosing a course of action in a conflict situation, these are assertiveness and cooperativeness. Assertiveness is the degree to which you try to satisfy your own needs. Cooperativeness is the degree to which you try to satisfy the other person's concerns.

Most of the time, when we are eating out of alignment with our goals, we are too heavy on the cooperativeness and not enough of assertiveness. Because even in the assertiveness, we are often “gunning” for success metrics we inherited from our families or society, not necessarily what will make us happy.

And remember conflict assumes something is wrong. Yet when we are in our stories, we assume we are wrong, which creates shame and these seemingly contradictory sides of ourselves where we can be really confident and also, not in different ways.

These three stress responses put us in all or nothing, black and white thinking in different ways and different behaviors (or lack of behaviors). For more details on this I have a few resources I'm including in the show notes, they include:

- A quiz at Alishapiro.com/comfort-eating-style-quiz.
- A secret podcast episode that gets into the nitty gritty so you can better identify and choose new behaviors (you can access that secret episode once you take the quiz).
- And Season 2, Episode 2: Freedom from the Downward Spiral



So how do we break free from all-nothing BEING?

First, it's really important to realize you aren't all-or-nothing with all-or-nothing, right? Most of us have areas in our lives where we can be moderate. Most of us at the very least can be moderate with vegetables, right? Or in areas where we have a lot of experience in where we can be discerning. These areas we feel safe in and the safety comes from the lack of all-or-nothing or ability to be moderate because we feel confident in our learning curve.

It's important to recognize that we can get great results when we sink into the learning process or growth mindset as Dr. Carol Dweck calls it - where we grow to appreciate our effort as much as the outcome. Or as I like to think of it as I have a high competitor streak in me, as pacing ourselves!

Many of my clients realize they have a growth mindset in areas again they feel confident in - their work, their ideas, or their relationships. It's shocking for them to see how they don't have it in areas that have been historically vulnerable like dating or their bodies. And this is natural because there is no standard formula for "success" when it comes to wonderful relationships or our bodies. We need a growth mindset the most here!

Second realize these patterns aren't bad or good...that's all or nothing thinking! All-or-nothing thinking is really like a hall of mirrors. These stress responses still have a place today. I often accommodate where other people want to eat! At this point in my life, food is not that important to me beyond maintaining my health. So I don't care what we eat or where because food isn't a big deal to me and I know how to order off a menu to keep my blood sugar balanced at a minimum.

And avoiding can save you the energy.



And if we are truly competing with ourselves and our own metrics of success, that can be fine as long as you aren't throwing your body under the bus consistently. In other words, sometimes you have to place your to-do list ahead of getting to the gym or skip a few extra hours of sleep. The point is this is the exception, not the rule.

Third, start with one place where you have all or nothing or rigid thinking and can't see anything aside from two extreme choices and outcomes. Do you have rigid ideas of what exercise counts and doesn't count? Or can you only recognize being really productive at the beginning of the day and exhausted and at the fridge at the end of the day?

All-or-nothing BEING shows up in many ways. And again being isn't only how we are thinking and feeling - it's also how we evaluate the outcome of our choices.

If you have trouble recognizing where you are all-or-nothing and are bingeing or overeating, look to the area of your life that consumes most of your energy outside of food. That's a good place to look.

Fourth, identify the stress response: are you competing, avoiding or accommodating? We all use all the different responses. These are patterns, not fixed personality traits. Having language to identify what is happening is half the healing.

Focus on one area and one stress response at a time. Don't be all or nothing with this! Clients will work on one pattern and get a ton of success. And then when they have enough distance, they will see another response now that they have more distance and discernment. It's like a body of water gets cleaner and clearer, it's easier to see the jelly fish!

With these four keys, you can have new awareness and then the fifth "step" if we were to pretend this is linear, will be to choose differently or Option C as we call it in Truce with Food. And it will be different based on the response:



When we are competing, the long-term opportunity is the work is to figure out what metrics will actually bring the success you want so you can enjoy the journey, not just the end destination. This includes both feeling great in our body and in our lives.

On a daily level, you can experiment with how to enjoy exercise instead of just accomplishing work-outs because they help you get ahead with your calories. Or with career goals - can you give yourself more time and space so you can enjoy the creative process? Competitors usually under-estimate how long things take and then perceive they are behind and then burn out, creating a self-fulfilling prophecy of actually falling behind! One client worked on giving herself more travel time and it seriously changed her life, along with her eating.

Or, what values make you happy versus what you thought would make you happy and how can you start to test what success feels like in your body instead of just your head?

One bottom line question when competing: what choice enables me to be replenished instead of getting ahead or not falling behind? This will create daily and long-term impact in your own unique way.

When we are avoiding, the long-term opportunity is to realize there is no perfect solution and life can be much richer and magical outside of our ideas of perfection. That what we think of as imperfection or setbacks actually contain the seeds of creativity and learning for a road less traveled that offers an adventure you didn't know you were missing.

I think of my infertility journey. I avoided looking at my fertility for over a dozen years in part because of my naivety and partly because I knew it was going to be a pain in the ass. And it was! And, I'm so glad I broke down my infertility diagnosis into steps to not only get pregnant on my own but the learning and healing I gained have profoundly altered how I view health and healing, mainly the importance of less intervention. It determined how I picked my providers



like Midwives over an OB, how I approached my pregnancy, labor, birth and Eca's health choices (i.e. less intervention, not more) and I have a thyroid in great working order and a deeper understanding of healing beyond functional medicine and better understand it's limitations. Check out Season 9, Episode 3 for more information on the limits of functional medicine.

As Frou said in Let Go, we can surprise ourselves with how much beauty we can create in the breakdown. It's not a given if we continue to avoid.

And when we stop avoiding, we realize we can handle discomfort 8-) The important thing when avoiding is to get started! This is why many techniques for "procrastination hacking" include setting a timer for and committing to just 5 minutes to do a dreaded task, in most cases, you'll go beyond the 5 minutes but this limited commitment makes the hardest part —getting started —manageable.

One bottom line question when avoiding: how am I "super-sizing" my effort and outcome (i.e. this won't be wild success or failure, acceptance or rejection) and what are smaller steps that can give me momentum?

Accommodate: when we are in an accommodating pattern, the long-term opportunity is to see the win-win in meeting your needs with that of your body, others and your dreams and realizing that you don't have to sacrifice yourself to achieve your health or life goals or to make other people happy.

On a daily basis, this starts with checking in on what you need. And if also means checking in with what others really want or need versus assuming what they need and want what we want.



One bottom line question when accommodating: where's the win-win?

So in summary, the stress responses we put up to protect ourselves in our stories create all or nothing being in different ways. By identifying these patterns, we reduce emotional tension and a sense of restriction, which makes bingeing go down gradually too.

We get better at living in the gray and become more rested, creative and fulfilled. It's a beautiful way to get out of restricting and bingeing on whatever it is we are doing this with: from food to shopping to ideas of success and failure, approval or rejection!

Conclusion

It's important not to restrict your food after you binge.

When coming off a binge, eating what foods work for you will help you to better identify the physical effects of bingeing, beyond the weight loss setback, like exhaustion and irritation. As you feel better and recognize what it takes to feel better the incentive not to binge becomes about not making life harder for yourself, not a calorie or weight loss evaluation.

Noting the 3-5 rule is also key: you'll probably need some complex carbs + fat snack between 3-5 pm if cravings hit and on days 3-5 (the day and number of days will be different for everyone) to properly taper from a binge. Be gentle as your body is going through a physical withdrawal process from all the processed carbs leaving your body and your blood sugar leveling out.

Bingeing isn't only caused by restriction. It's also a symptom of our stories being very active. When in our stories, we have stress responses that create all-or-nothing BEING.

When we are all or nothing, we binge to release the tension from competing, avoiding or accommodating. This won't necessarily feel bad, but we will feel restricted in our lives. Which is



why we can feel like we are intuitively eating but still feel a sense of restriction...we project it onto our food but it goes much deeper in how we are showing up in the world.

By identifying these patterns, we can learn how to be in the gray and get even better results there, as we define success and fulfillment on our own terms and discover our own unique path to emotional fulfillment and success.

[END]

