

# The Done Bingeing

PODCAST

## EPISODE 23: CONDITIONED EATING

*What do Edison and the invention of the lightbulb have to do with when we eat? Keep listening!*

Welcome to *The Done Bingeing Podcast*. This is the place to hear about how you can pair the emerging brain science about why you binge with powerful life coaching to help you stop. If you want to explore a non-clinical approach to end binge eating, you're in the right place. It's time to free yourself. You have more power than you know. And now, your host, Life and Weight-Loss Coach Martha Ayim.

Welcome to Episode 23 of *The Done Bingeing Podcast*.

What time is it where you are right now? Is it mealtime? How do you know?

Because you just woke up and you've heard like about a hundred bazillion times that you're supposed to eat a hearty breakfast to "kick-start" your metabolism?

Because your partner just brought home Krispy Kreme?

Because one of your colleagues just delivered homemade shortbread cookies with multi-coloured sprinkles right onto your desk?

Because the clock just struck 12 and that means it's lunch time?

Because you're sitting in a restaurant and there's a bread basket on the table?

Because the server just dropped a gigantic plate of food in front of you?

Because mama said you better not ever waste food?

Because everyone around you is eating and they might think you've got a problem if you don't eat too?

Because you're driving down Main Street and just saw those golden arches shining bright on the right?

Because you walked into a bakery and the German chocolate cake jumped out and sat on your face?

Because a man just pushed a hot dog cart past you and the butter-glazed buns glinted in the sun?

Because your neighbor just fired up the grill and that smoky hickory aroma is wafting over the fence?

Because you're travelling and you're on vacation and they don't make fudge like this back home?

Because a half-time commercial suggested that you'd enjoy the game a whole lot better with a bag of Cheetos?

Because it's Halloween and you're staring at Costco-sized boxes of candy bars?

Because you're strolling down the snack aisle and the Ho-Hos said "Hello" and the Twinkies winked?

Because you went coo-coo for Cocoa Puffs in the cereal aisle?

Because you're at a party and there's cake?

Because it's Pizza Night or it's Wing Night?

Because you're at the movies, and that means popcorn?

Because you're at the ball game, and that means natchos?

Because Papa just pulled fresh-baked naan out of the oven?

Because Grandma made hand-cut pasta *just for you*? Um, did you not hear her? She said she made it *just for you*. Don't you appreciate her? I mean, really. What is happening with the younger generation anyway?

Because it's nearly bedtime and, my goodness, you haven't eaten in hours?

Because, surely somewhere, anywhere, in the world it's got to be mealtime?

Because, well, why not, after all? You're a grown man for goodness sakes. You can bloody well eat whenever you want to, right?

Because, well, you're a feminist, and you'll be damned if anyone's gonna tell you when or what to eat, right? Shoot! Who do they think they are? They're not the boss of you.

Virtually every one of the above examples justified binges for me in the past.

Now, I had a bit of fun with that list because I find that whenever I can get to a place where I can chuckle even a little, a space opens up between me and the messiness of it all, and I gain a vantage point I hadn't had before.

I know it's hard when you're in it, but if you're open to the idea, see if you can step back and just look at all of these examples.

What do they all have in common?

None of them come from you.

They are all external.

Now, does that mean that the moral of the story is to just, “Listen to your body.”

No, that’s not what that means.

Why not? I mean, if external cues and triggers to eat or overeat aren’t helpful, why wouldn’t an intuitive way of eating be the obvious and simple solution?

Well, partly because if you’re eating synthetic foods that have been chemically engineered to drop-kick your natural hunger and fullness signals, it’s pretty hard to follow your intuition. But we’ll get back to that part later. For right now, I just want you to notice that when you eat according to external cues, you give your power away to something outside of yourself.

Life coaching is about taking your power back. About empowering yourself to take the actions you truly want to take.

Do you remember in Episode 12, how we talked about how empowering it would be not to have the desire to overeat?

Here’s what a desire to overeat can look like:

You think, “I’m just going to grocery shop for what’s on the list,” but then a family-sized bag of chips makes it into the cart and it’s half-eaten on the way home.

You think, “I’m just going to drive home from work without stopping for fast food,” but then the car veers into the drive-thru lane and your order is on your lap before you know it.

You think, “I’m only going to eat what I’m hungry for at the in-laws,” but then it’s a delicious dinner that has you asking for thirds.

It’s like eating against your own will.

It’s like the desire to overeat just happens. It’s like it’s a given.

But our desire to overeat *isn’t* just a given. Our desire is learned. And it can be unlearned.

To unlearn it, we need to understand where it comes from in the first place. The desire to overeat tends to have four main sources:

1. We use food to anaesthetize painful emotions—we explored this starting in Episode 13.
2. We’re conditioned to eat by society—that’s the topic of this episode.
3. Our dopamine system gets hijacked by high-sugar foods.
4. Our hormones are out-of-whack and scrambling our hunger and fullness signals.

In future episodes, we’ll get to how the neurotransmitter dopamine and how key hormones work in our bodies.

Right now, we're going to continue to work on unlearning the desire to overeat by understanding how we're conditioned to overeat by society, by noticing when we eat because of habit—not because of hunger—without even realizing it.

You may wake up and eat breakfast even if you're not hungry. Why? Because you've been told it's healthy.

You may have a mid-morning snack even if you're not hungry. Why? Because you've heard it keeps your metabolism revving.

You may eat lunch even if you're not hungry. Why? Because that's what everyone else is doing and so it must be normal.

You may eat a mid-afternoon snack even if you're not hungry. Why? Because your lunch left you dragging and you need a pick-me-up.

You may eat dinner even if you're not hungry. Why? Because it's six o'clock and that means it's dinner time.

You may eat at a party even if you're not hungry. Why? Well, why not? It's a party after all. You're not on another one of your diets again, are you?

You may eat at a restaurant even if you're not hungry. Why? Because you're at a restaurant for goodness sake. Is nothing sacred?

All of these habits can become engrained as normal and can contribute to overeating that flies completely under the radar.

Repeated conditioned prompts to overeat—often taught to us and reinforced by the external world—can result in eating more food than your body truly needs for fuel.

I want you to start to notice all the times you eat—or even take a lick—when you're not hungry.

I also want you to notice why.

Then, I want you to ask yourself if you like your reason.

So much of what we do in our lives we do because it seemed like a good idea, even though it may not have originated as our own idea at all.

Whose lightbulbs do you want going off in your head?

Someone else's?

Or your own?

It's time to notice.

It's time to choose.

Why?

Well, how are other people's ideas working for you?

Maybe it's time to choose ideas that come from you.

Maybe it's time to choose ideas that work for you.

It's said that Edison failed 1000 times to invent the light bulb. Thank goodness, he didn't give up.

You may have heard a thousand messages from others about when to eat.

And perhaps not one of them was right for you.

Don't give up on finding something that works for you.

It's time for idea 1001.

Whose will you choose?

That's it for Episode 23. Thank you for listening. *The Done Bingeing Podcast* is helping people to reduce their bingeing and overeating, and to find out who they're truly meant to be when they live their lives fully. Ratings and reviews will help more people find this podcast and get the help they need. So, if you're getting something out of this podcast, I would be honored if you'd be willing to take the time to leave me a rating and review. Just go to [www.holdingthespace.co/itunes-review](http://www.holdingthespace.co/itunes-review) for easy-peasy instructions on how to get it done. Thank you so much!

Thanks for listening to *The Done Bingeing Podcast*. Martha is a certified life and weight loss coach who's available to help you stop bingeing. Book a free session with her at [www.holdingthespace.co/book](http://www.holdingthespace.co/book). And stay tuned for next week's episode on freeing yourself from binge eating and creating the life you want.