

The Done Bingeing

PODCAST

EPISODE 46: SPECIAL SERIES—12 KEYS TO END BINGE EATING, KEY #7: UNLEARN THE DESIRE TO OVEREAT (IV)

What does a buzzing UFO have to do with you and conditioned eating? 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 46 of *The Done Bingeing Podcast* and to part 12 of this special series, *12 Keys to End Binge Eating*. Before we begin, I want to apologize for being AWOL for a couple of weeks. I'm pretty sure my teacher Brooke Castillo wouldn't be impressed—even if I told her a long story about the ice storms we had and how it led to closures and shutdowns and outages and blah, blah, blah. She would have gotten her podcast done regardless and I wish I had too. I learned that when I didn't get my weekly episode out, it felt wrong. There's something so tangible in our connection and that means something.

You write to me from all over the world and share how these episodes help you to look at your eating in new ways, how you're clawing back your power over what and how much you eat, how bit by bit you're dropping the shame, how more and more you're willing to step into discomfort and explore what you've been afraid to feel. You are doing amazing work. I missed being a part of that and I plan to double down to make sure that the next ice storm doesn't take me out.

Okay, so let's get back to our discussion about the seventh key to end binge eating: Reduce the Desire to Overeat.

The desire to overeat tends to have four main sources: 1. we use food to anaesthetize painful emotions; 2. we're conditioned to overeat by society; 3. our dopamine system gets hijacked by high-sugar foods; and 4. our hormones are out-of-whack and scrambling our hunger and fullness signals.

We've spent the last couple of episodes talking about the first source: emotional eating. In this episode, we're diving into the second one: conditioned eating.

I find it helpful to ask two questions: When do you eat? And when do you not eat? My guess is that you wouldn't be listening to this podcast if you answered those questions like this: "I eat when I'm hungry and I don't eat when I'm not hungry."

So . . . let me ask you a few more questions:

Do you eat when you're not hungry because it's been two hours since your last meal and your program says you should eat a small meal every couple of hours *no matter what*?

Do you *not* eat when you *are* hungry because it's *not* yet been two hours since your last meal?
(Sometimes even those two hours can seem to drag out forever, can't they? How do I know? I was on those programs, too.)

Do you eat when you're not hungry because someone took the time to make something nice for you?

Do you *not* eat when you *are* hungry because it might keep someone waiting while you nibble a handful of almonds?

Do you eat when you're not hungry because someone said you can't eat *less* than a certain number of daily calories?

Do you *not* eat when you *are* hungry because someone said you can't eat *more* than a certain number of daily calories?

Do you eat when you're not hungry because everyone else is eating and someone might notice you're *not*?

Do you *not* eat when you *are* hungry because no one else is eating and someone might notice that you *are*?

Do you eat candy every day even though you don't want to because someone said that you can't label foods "good" or "bad"?

Do you *not* eat candy on *any* day even though you'd love to because someone said that you *have* to label foods "good" or "bad"?

Do you eat twice as fast as you'd like because everyone else is done and they're lookin' at you?

Do you eat twice as slow as you'd like because some guru said you should meditate on every morsel?

Oh. my. goodness. How can you win?

You can't win.

Not when every measure, every parameter, every signal, every expert is outside of you. Not when what you eat or what you don't eat has nothing to do with you. With every meal, you get further and further away from you and more and more dependent on outside rules and outside experts. How much do you trust yourself now?

Nada?

I'm not surprised.

So, let's take a closer look at what's happening with one of these examples.

How many times do we eat because we're scared that others might think we have a problem if we don't—even if we're not hungry? The others might not be hungry either, but they're bloody well going to eat regardless. It's *very* socially sanctioned to point out when someone *isn't* eating, but far less socially sanctioned to point out when someone *is*. Why is it that one person has to justify their decision *not* to eat when they're not hungry, but another person doesn't have to justify their decision *to* eat when they're not hungry?

Here's why:

Because we're culturally conditioned to believe that we need to eat to be polite, that we need to eat to celebrate, that we need to eat to be social.

But, what if, to be polite, you slid away from the sliders with a gracious, "Thank you so much! They smell divine, but I'm just not hungry right now"?

What if, to celebrate, you *shouted* "Whoopie!" instead *eating* whoopie? Sure, the whoopie pies look amazing, but if you're not hungry, who cares?

What if, to be social, you said, "So, how's it going?" instead of eating soda bread just because it's there? Just because everyone else is eating it and you assume that they must be normal?

What if it's *not* normal to eat soda bread just because someone baked it, cut it, and laid it out on the table for the office coffee break?

What if it's *not* normal to eat by the bell and not by your belly?

What if it's *not* normal to eat just because everyone else is?

What if what's become the norm in our society doesn't work for you?

What if what's become the norm in our society is completely out of accord with your own hunger and fullness signals?

If you've been having out-of-body experiences when it comes to your eating, is it any wonder? Maybe it's because you're out of your body with almost every single meal you eat.

Do you hear that buzzing?

No, that's not a UFO.

No, the Martians aren't here.

That's just the noise from a bunch of people and programs and products that have a lot to say about when and what and how much you should eat.

But what if you began from the premise that your body is your own?

What if you began with the promise to learn to trust your own body over time?

What if you don't need anything alien to find your way back to you?

That's it for Episode 46. Thank you for listening! For a limited time, my e-book, *12 Surprising Steps to End Binge Eating, Starting with Your Very Next Urge*, will continue to be available for free. There's a link in the show notes to download your copy!

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. And stay tuned for next week's episode on freeing yourself from binge eating and creating the life you want.