



Creating a love affair with food

Hi Girls! How are you doing? Do you have your napkin...your place setting? In the last lesson we dipped our toes in the water – testing out the beginning of our love affair with food. Today we are going to wade in further. We are going to honor your need to develop better eating habits by moving toward them gradually, naturally, in your own way. We will not be doing a cannonball into the pool. Slow and steady means natural and permanent.

So here's the problem with love affairs- they start off steamy, exciting and exotic, but over time the initial high of the romance begins to wear off. The relationship becomes more 'normal' with its day-to-day rituals setting in. It is no different with our relationship with food. And after all that salad you may find your mind being tempted by something with a little more pizzazz....like pizza or cheesecake. It is NATURAL to feel that way. If you didn't, you wouldn't be human.

But here is the thing, this lesson is going to be about more than just the dramatic high we get from eating. We have been dealing with so much drama surrounding our obsessive relationship with food for so long, we are craving 'normalcy' and balance. Our daily drama of eating obsessively has nothing to do with a high drama, but more to do with low, cheap, pain-filled drama. Come to think of it, our unhealthy eating is not a high at all. It is a chemically-triggered behavior leading to our own self-sabotage.

In this course I am not asking you to be free of compulsion, but rather to be more honest with yourself. This is the beginning of a new way of living, thinking, loving, eating. Get real and get honest with yourself to see that although some good food may seem boring right now, eating to excess or unhealthy food is not your friend.

Even more importantly, this is *not* something you want to FORCE on yourself. Because guess what? If you find you are *making* yourself stop, you will only start again later. On the other hand, if you open yourself and are honest with yourself, you will see what is really happening and the day will come (very soon) where you will no longer want to hurt yourself.

It may not happen in three weeks. DO NOT be angry with yourself. You didn't arrive here in three weeks, so it is doubtful you will make all your shifts in three weeks. BUT, you are shifting now. Love yourself where you are! It is a fabulous place to be and you will continue to live in this new mindset. I've been going to my coach for over three years now and each time I go, I walk away with new 'aha' moments. Coaching is a non-negotiable for me. It keeps me learning and growing. My point - this mini-coaching course is an exciting beginning for you. Keep learning. Keep shifting.

Back to forcing; here's an example of what I mean by NOT *forcing* it.

In the beginning of my new relationship with food - my new love affair - I knew I should cut out refined sugar. Intellectually I knew about the bloating, health problems and gut issues all related to sugar. But it didn't matter. I felt like a little kid who was being told, "NO." I wanted to fight back, push back (at my own thoughts), but I knew that would only lead to more resentment and send me into the same cycle of failure and self-loathing I had been caught in all my life. Isn't that what I was trying to break? How would it ever work? I would never be able to make the shift without feeling angry. Would I? Yes I would, I did. And I'll tell you how.

While I was still eating refined sugar, I began a love affair with blueberries. You heard me, blueberries. Yes, I know they have sugar - but there is a HUGE difference between how my body reacted to the natural sugar in blueberries and how it responded to the refined sugar in my unhealthy food choices.

Following the idea presented to me in a course I took on emotional eating, I started pairing blueberries ALONG with the refined sugar foods I was still eating. If I had a piece of cheesecake, I would also have a couple of blueberries with it. If I had a piece of pizza, I would also put a couple of blueberries on the plate. I needed the time to naturally accept my changes. I didn't want to hear, "You can't. You shouldn't." Instead I set myself up with the opportunity to see I always had the choice. I was not bullying myself. I was loving myself. Now, this may not be your way, but it is how I found the natural transition I so longed for.

And over time I started to accept and enjoy the natural buzz of sugar I felt from the blueberries (green grapes have a higher level of sugar - if you know you need a little more kick ;). Obviously, the blueberries weren't equal to that of the cheesecake or chocolate cake, but I became increasingly aware of NOT having the brain fog and the manic state of wanting and compulsively needing more sugar to *try* to satisfy my needs. Slowly I began to not want to *go there* and my body started to regulate itself and return to its natural state of being.

By not taking an authoritarian role towards our bodies, we work *with them*, instead of against them. As you move along in your journey, just like me, you will start to want to give yourself the *gift* of introducing it to new, healthier foods.

Our bodies don't want to be overweight. Our bodies have a natural regulatory system for letting us know how much we need to eat. When to stop and what we need to fuel ourselves with energy.

Think about an infant. It cries when it needs to eat. It stops eating when it has received what it needs and is satiated. We are simply returning to our natural state.

We just took a little detour and tampered with our system a bit, but now we are on the course for self-healing. We have been eating artificial foods to try to fill our artificial appetites. But as we reintroduce natural substances, our natural appetite will then return. Just like our lungs calibrate how much air to breathe, so can our body regulate how much food we need to function at our best capacity for learning and growing.

Your Assignment:

*Buy a piece of fruit.

Yes you heard me, buy a piece of fruit – but there is a catch.

You can buy any piece you want, but you need to make this a new sacred ritual like I introduced on Monday. The BEST scenario would be to make the trip for the fruit alone...meaning you don't go to buy it when you go shopping for other items. AND you can't ask someone else to pick it up for you.

Ok, Ok, I hear you..."Jen, you want me to make the trip to the store for one piece of fruit? Do you know how many things I have to do tomorrow?" Yes I do. And Yes I do. Here's why; you have been rushing through your life and putting everyone else before you. You have solidified to your body the idea that it comes last. It isn't as important as everyone else.

This piece of fruit is for you. This is a ritual to honor your body and the new relationship you are forming with it. It is for you to foster your love affair with food. Think about how you go out of our way to put your family and friends first. Now is the time for you 'walk the walk. ' To show your body in good faith that you will take the time for her. That she is as important to you as everyone else in your life. You are proving to yourself that you are willing to showing up for your new relationship.

Once you get home, the first thing you need to do is wash your piece of fruit. The second thing you will do is look at it. No, I have not lost my mind. Yes, I said look at it ;). Note the color, size, shape. Truly look at it as a wonder of God's creation. He knows how to feed you – better than you know right now. You will return to the knowledge

He has given you. This is one action of many that is bringing you back to enlightenment.

I remember when I was engaged and getting ready to be married, Matt and I had to attend couples workshops through the church before we could be married. One of the activities we needed to do was to sit and look at one another. We couldn't talk. We couldn't touch. We just needed to look....and to truly see. It may not seem like a comparable scenario...a person and a piece of fruit, but it is. It doesn't matter what you are seeing. What matters is that you *see*.

One of the reasons that wholesome, healthy food seems boring to you is because you are not *seeing* it. When it comes to food, people have come to this ridiculous notion that we can create something that is superior to what God has created. That we have improved on his creations. That our chemically produced foods are superior to what God has made for us. Crazy when you think about it...isn't it?

Have you ever taken a walk through the woods or along the beach? A walk through nature calms us, just as natural food calms and restores us.

Again, it is IMPORTANT not to force yourself to stop eating processed foods if you are not ready. This is a natural movement towards your shift. You are taking the steps to remind yourself that years ago, and in some places today, people eat food they grow. Food was part of their natural cycle of life - not just something they added to a hectic, harried lifestyle. Your cells have not forgotten any of this. Only you have. It's time to remind them.

Take your fruit and place it upon your plate, upon your altar. See it for what it is: a way to integrate your eating back into the natural harmonies of the Universe. This is the food that will sustain you. Feed you. Make you whole. It's time to *see* it and surrender.

This is all you need do. God will do the rest.