

5 Important Things to Know About Emotional Eating

1. Having trouble losing weight **is not a moral failing**, and **shame does not belong** in the equation. This is the first time in human history that we've needed to lose weight. We are genetically very similar to people from thousands of years ago, who mostly lived with food scarcity. Our bodies are genetically adapted to hold onto what we put in. Thus, losing weight is hard. It's doable, but it isn't easy and generally requires knowledge, focus, desire, and support.
2. The food industry is not our friend. There is misleading nutritional information everywhere. Often what's "good for you" really isn't! No wonder we are confused. Did you know that many companies hire people in labs to conduct experiments to find a "bliss point?" This is the exact, precise level of sweetness to get us coming back for the most portions. Yep, the food industry is **designed to get us addicted**. It's not just our own internal struggle. See #1.
3. Recovery from emotional eating has much to do with managing strong unpleasant **emotions** (although sometimes the emotion is positive, as we also eat for celebration, right?). If we stop at, "I'm sad," we're missing a great opportunity to truly understand what we're feeling (sad can be angry, hurt, disappointed, lonely, anxious, etc.). Being able to name emotions with great clarity and specificity is a super power!
4. **Values** are the things we hold as part of our core, which make us show up the way we do. They help with, "Why am I doing this hard thing?" **Strengths** can be things we've honed and practiced and gotten good at. Strengths are also the things we do naturally, where people look at us and say, "I don't know how you do that!" and we reply, "Really? I just do." Strengths and values are not part of our everyday conversations in the "real world," but they are *integral* to recovery from emotional eating, and in coaching we leverage them all the time. Even if you think you don't have any strengths, you definitely do.
5. Two of the biggest antidotes to food addiction and emotional eating are **connection and joy**. Do you have deep and satisfying connections with others? Do you regularly experience joy? These are not the most common things we think of in terms of changing habits, but they're some of the most significant around emotional eating.