



11 Things to Give Up to **STOP BINGE EATING**

The ultimate guide to end the cycle for good!

CINA HOEY, LCSW



Hi! I'm Cina. A holistic psychotherapist, meditation teacher, energy healer, and former binge eater! It is my hope that the programs I've created will help others challenged by their relationship with food to finally experience the freedom and peace they crave and deserve.

This eBook is a what *not* to do guide to overcome this habit once and for all. It is my belief that taking these 11 steps will drastically improve your relationship with food and put binge eating patterns behind you forever.

If you are reading this, I see you, I love you, I believe in you, and may your healing journey serve your highest good and reconnect you with your highest self.

All My Love,
Cina

CONTENTS

01

Dieting

02

Making Up for Your Binges

03

Body Checking

04

Labeling Foods

05

Making Food Choices Based
on the Past or Future

CONTENTS

06

Counting Calories

07

Weight Loss as Your #1 Goal

08

Worrying

09

Shame & Doubt

10

Body Bashing

11

Comparison

DIETING

The 1st thing to give up to stop binge eating...

Restrictive dieting is the first thing you must stop doing in order to stop binge eating. Even if you do not believe that you are dieting, read this whole chapter to be sure. And if you are truly not dieting and still bingeing, continue on to the rest of the chapters.

What if I told you that dieting is the #1 cause of weight gain?

Yes, the solution we have been promised to end all of our weight problems is actually the biggest problem of all. Statistics show that although you may initially see some weight loss as you begin a diet, between 95%-99% of diets eventually fail and lead the individual to be heavier than when they started the diet. **So not only do diets not work for weight loss, they actually cause weight gain.**

First, let me clarify what I consider “dieting.” Dieting is any form of restricting your caloric intake, or the types of foods you eat, in order to lose weight. Here are some examples: Atkins, Weight Watchers, Jenny Craig, Optavia, South Beach, Zone, Cabbage Soup Diet (ew – literally WTF?).

And yes also those considered to be “lifestyle” changes like Whole 30, Paleo, Vegan, Keto, or raw food can also be quite restrictive and I would consider them to be a hindrance to your healing process for right now. Do they work for many people? Absolutely. Can you one day adopt these guidelines? Maybe. Are they right for you in the beginning of your recovery from binge and emotional eating? Probably not.

Also, most definitely under the category of dieting are: Counting points, counting calories, counting macronutrients, intermittent fasting (more on this later!), and juice cleanses.

The main problem is that these diets, food rules, guidelines, and rigid styles of eating are what distort our relationship with food to begin with and ultimately lead to overeating.

We are taught by the diet industry that 1.) we should be thin and 2.) we can't trust ourselves to make our own food choices to be thin, so we are given a prescription to follow (a diet), which inevitably fails (99% of diets do) and then we are left with shame, frustration, excess weight and less trust in ourselves.

Once we are filled with shame at our “failure” and weight gain, we go back to the source – a new diet! – thinking this diet will be the one. “This will work. I'll keep it off this time. Sure I can cut out pizza, bread, and chocolate for 3 months, no problem.”

Broken down, the cycle looks like this: You stick to the diet for a while -> you see initial "results" and try really hard to continue -> you mentally or physically can't sustain this type of restriction -> you overeat everything you've been restricting -> you gain weight -> you seek another diet.

Does this cycle sound familiar?! What are we doing to ourselves? Wake up, friend!

THIS. DOES. NOT. WORK.

I would know - I did this for a number of years myself. I put my faith in the "experts" to tell me what to eat, how much, at what times, in what ratios, etc. **I suffered in these "on the wagon/off the wagon" shenanigans for years before I realized that I wasn't actually the problem.** That's right! It turns out I'm not an insatiable beast that can't be trusted around food. I finally understood that I am only human. **And when ANY of us restrict ourselves from eating foods that are satisfying and enjoyable, try too hard to "stay inside the lines" of a diet for too long, or eat less than what we need, our body and mind rebel against that by bingeing and overeating.**

Your body is so brilliant that it comes equipped with the ability to detect when you are not eating enough to ensure your own survival. If you are on a diet, you are at risk for consuming less than what your body requires, mimicking starvation, and your body will let you know that by sending you very powerful urges to eat. Biology always wins. The survival response is too powerful. If you're dieting, those urges to binge are actually trying to save your life. This is one of the many reasons your body is pretty damn cool and should be honored instead of judged for not having a thigh gap.

This is a massive topic I could write a lot more about, and I expand on it deeply in my [Binge to Balance Program](#), but for now just know that the bottom line is this: If you are under-eating, fighting off this life-saving mechanism will likely feel impossible on a very physical level.

Emotionally, restriction feels very uncomfortable and causes stress, which can lead to emotional eating. Any time we are told we can't have or do something, it's all we want to have or do! We are rebellious creatures with anxiety about getting our basic needs met - another survival technique. If chocolate is off limits, you just made it 10x sexier in your brain. Kind of like that guy that didn't like you back and you couldn't stop thinking about him, even though he lived with his mother and had body odor. He was unavailable, which made you anxious and preoccupied with obtaining him.

You may be asking yourself, well if I'm not supposed to diet, Cina, then what the hell am I supposed to eat? I've got you covered, friend. Keep reading and your new relationship with food will begin to unfold.

I know this is scary. When I stopped dieting I was terrified. I thought I'd gain weight just thinking about it. And my clients usually freak out about this initially too (and later are completely in love with it). I promise I am not leading you down a weight gain free-for-all. Because not dieting doesn't mean you "eat anything and everything you want." Keep reading to understand more of what NOT to do so you can finally feel balanced with food.

COMPENSATING

The 2nd thing to give up to stop binge eating...

I'm going to talk about the three most common ways we try to compensate, undo, or make up for binges, why these are not effective methods for weight management, and how they perpetuate the cycle of bingeing.

#1 - Skipping Meals

This is definitely the most common! How many times have you tried to skip breakfast because you overate the night before? Attempted to survive on iced coffee until 4pm? Swore off carbs, or decided that you might just cut out eating completely for today? Maybe you told yourself you were "fasting."

If any of this sounds familiar, know this absolutely has to stop and only guarantees you will binge again. I know it's tempting because you are terrified of weight gain, but if you read lesson 1 you'll know that restriction of any kind sends you right into a binge.

And yes, for those of you wondering, this absolutely includes anything that resembles intermittent fasting. **The longer you push off your hunger, the more powerful it becomes.**

If you want to stop bingeing for good, do not skip meals, cut out fat, carbs, or calories. Instead, work on addressing and managing fear and anxiety about your body and just eat a regular meal when your natural hunger surfaces again.

#2 - Overexercising

After a binge you may try to "make up for it" with exercise. My personal brand of undoing a binge included hours on the StairMaster, extra runs, and often working out 7 days a week.

This will distort your relationship with exercise because working out is a privilege, not a punishment, AND this approach will leave you exhausted and extra hungry (kind of like having PMS all the time – yikes 🤢). What do you do when you're tired, cranky, and extra hungry? You'll be hitting the drive-thru again in no time.

Instead of overexercising post-binge, give your body rest so it can repair and regain balance as soon as possible. In the same way you wait to eat again when you're naturally hungry, wait until your body is ready for movement and be gentle with it and do something you enjoy. This will help you break the binge cycle for good.

#3 - Purging

Many people believe that purging (vomiting), after a meal will basically just get rid of it and it'll be like it never happened. The physical and emotional consequences of purging can be severe – destroying your dental health, vocal cords, and digestive tract, cause dehydration, low blood pressure, uncontrollable mood swings, anxiety, depression, and more – this also perpetuates the binge cycle because you are not getting enough calories or nutrients.

Purging is tempting after eating a whole carton of ice cream, I know, but the consequences are simply not worth it. Instead of skipping meals, overexercising, or purging, try practicing mindfulness, working with a skilled therapist, or other stress reduction techniques to deal with the fear and emotional discomfort that surfaces after a binge.

If you've learned anything in this post, I hope it is that your goal now is not to undo that last particular binge, it's to start changing your behaviors to break the entire cycle for good.

I know that fear that surfaces after a binge, I know it with every cell of my body and the urge to undo it is just as strong as the urge to eat in the first place. But if you truly want to break up with binge eating forever, drop the post-binge restriction, over exercising, or purging. Your body and mind will thank you and you will be on your way to a healthy, balanced relationship with food. Be patient, this habit takes time to unravel.

BODY CHECKING

The 3rd thing to give up to stop binge eating...

Body checking means constantly taking your measurements, looking at your body in the mirror, feeling areas of your body, and weighing yourself.

Let's start with weighing yourself. You might feel that your scale is a form of measurement that is absolutely necessary to make sure you are staying within your desired range, but stop and think about what actually happens when you weigh yourself.

First let's think about what happens when you see the number you want. Your anxiety might be eased in the moment, but this only sets up an attachment to that particular weight. I expand on this further in my course on mindfulness and binge eating, but for now, know that when we try to hold onto something too tightly – a particular weight or size – we suffer, because nothing lasts forever and our bodies change and fluctuate ALL the time in a very natural way. Additionally, getting attached to a certain number means now you have to protect it and stay at that weight, causing anxiety about doing or eating anything that could threaten your current weight. When I was at my lowest weight was actually when I became the most neurotic. I couldn't just enjoy my weight loss because I panicked at the thought of being unable to maintain it.

And what happens when we don't see the number we want? Most likely a couple of things. 1.) It sends us into an emotional spiral or 2.) It leads us to believe we must become more restrictive about what we eat. If this restriction method sounds like you, be sure to re-read chapters 1 and 2 to remind yourself that restriction is a slippery slope laced with recurring episodes of binge eating. If the emotional meltdown sounds familiar, it is most definitely time to break up with your scale. That number is just a number. It does not define you and you are the only one that can stop it from ruining your day. The bottom line is...

This type of attachment to our weight sets us up for an emotional rollercoaster.

If you feel like you can't stop weighing yourself, at least try to significantly decrease the frequency. Your scale has become your prison and I am setting you free. It is also such an inadequate measure for health and is so unreliable and inconsistent that I often tell my clients to throw it out. Your body fluctuates and that's okay. Staying attuned to your body, how you feel, your energy levels, and how your clothes feel is enough of a feedback loop for you to know if your weight is going up.

Now, body checking. Body checking is when we look in the mirror at our bellies, thighs, arms, and other parts of our bodies to see how they look, make sure they appear the way we want them to, or to find things to criticize about ourselves. The same attachments, anxieties, and behaviors show up as when you are weighing yourself. When you judge it as "good" it's a temporary peace, but a long-term anxiety. When you judge it as "bad," you spiral emotionally and/or behave self-destructively. Both weighing and body checking perpetuate a critical and unhealthy relationship with your body.

You might be thinking that you don't really care about your relationship with your body, you just want to stop binge eating, but make no mistake, these two are tightly linked and your relationship with your body must be prioritized if you are ready to stop binge and emotional eating.

Once again, I know I'm asking a lot. You want to maintain control and it feels like all hell will break loose if you are not consistently checking in on your weight and size. However, you are not doing yourself any favors. Instead of keeping yourself in check you are creating and perpetuating a ton of anxiety and destructive food behaviors, both of which fuel binge eating.

You've already learned that you have to ditch the diet, now I'm telling you to ditch the scale too. Scary? More like liberating. You're welcome!

LABELING FOODS

The 4th thing to give up to stop binge eating...

Labeling food as “healthy” or “unhealthy” and only eating the “healthy” foods when you are “trying to be good” is what most of us have learned to do, but do you hear all of the judgments I just made in one sentence?

Those of us that have struggled in our relationship with food for years have all sorts of judgments and rules about eating that keep us stuck in cycles of anxiety and overeating. When we first become conscious of our weight we are taught to diet. And as I’ve mentioned before, diets fail 99% of the time, leaving you defeated, ashamed, with the same amount of excess weight and many times even more. Usually, this leads us to seek more information on what else we could possibly do differently in order to lose weight.

Most of us spend several years in this cycle so just stop for a second and think about the amount of nutrition information that can accumulate over time. It is absolutely absurd how many “food rules,” and restrictions we learn as new diets, fads, and foods become popular. In fact, this is so prevalent that the term “orthorexia,” the obsession with healthy eating, has been named. Many people begin overeating because they just want to listen to the experts and eat healthier, only to find themselves in anything but a healthy lifestyle.

The problem is that nobody can get on the same page. The Ketos disagree with the Weight Watchers. And the Weight Watchers disagree with the Vegans and the Vegans disagree with the Paleos and the Paleos disagree with someone else, and the intermittent fasters think they are hold the answers, and some groups think sugar is the devil, others say its dairy, others say its gluten, and while you chase every one of these possibilities you completely lose touch with your body and your relationship with food spirals into confusion and despair.

Trying to figure out what to eat has become exhausting.

If you read the first chapter you already know that dieting is not the solution, which might be frustrating for you because there is actually something comforting about just being told what to do. Us dieters get high on rules and control. Something about a new diet gives us a buzz in our system. We love it – until we rebel against it with a binge.

But what I’m inviting you to do here is let go of all judgments about food so that you can actually learn from your own body.

That's right, **you** are the new authority on what to eat, when to eat, and how much. **You** say which foods are right for your body and which ones aren't.

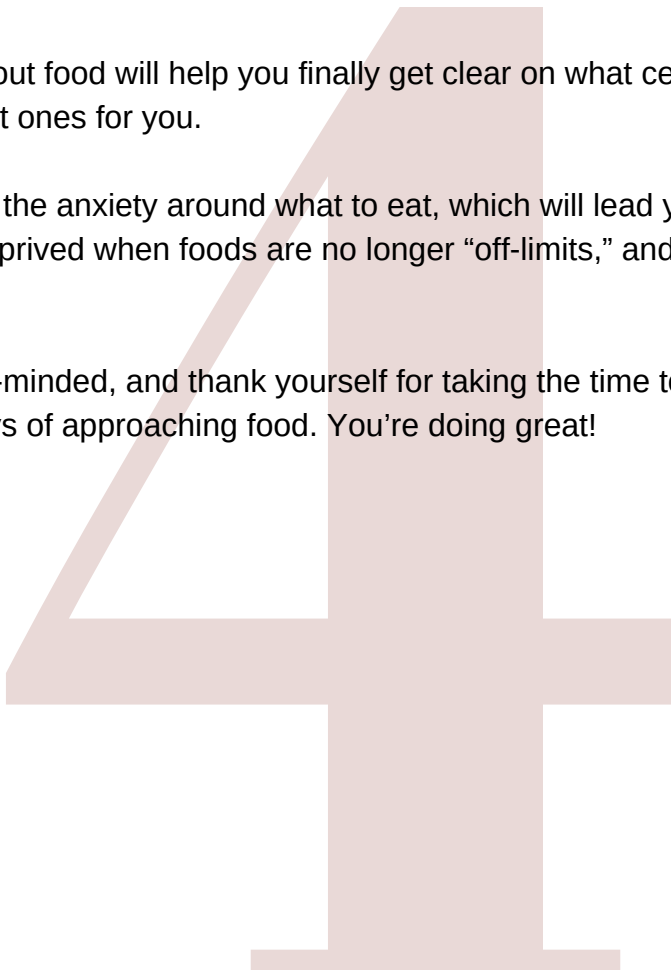
See, that intelligent body of yours not only will tell you when it's hungry and when it's full, but it will also happily give you feedback about which foods it's not crazy about. I'm sure this is different advice than you've heard before because up until now you've just been trying to find the "right" diet. What I teach my clients in my Binge to Balance program is how to do exactly this – use their body as their guide. And just like anything else, these are new skills to learn.

When you begin putting effort towards learning these new skills, you'd be surprised at how quickly you catch on, at all of the signals you missed before, at how in tune you can be with your body, and ultimately, that you are the best resource to know what to eat.

Dropping the judgments about food will help you finally get clear on what certain foods feel like in your body and which ones are the right ones for you.

This will also help eliminate the anxiety around what to eat, which will lead you to feel more relaxed about food in general, feel less deprived when foods are no longer "off-limits," and ultimately decrease episodes of binge and emotional eating.

Thank you for staying open-minded, and thank yourself for taking the time to read this and open your mind to new possibilities and ways of approaching food. You're doing great!



MAKING FOOD CHOICES BASED ON THE PAST OR FUTURE

The 5th thing to give up to stop binge eating...

This chapter will focus exclusively on **present moment food choices**.

This is part of the non-diet approach that I teach my clients every day. Those of us that have struggled with balance with food have a hard time understanding this because typically deciding what to eat has been based on anything but the present moment. Usually we choose what to eat based on calorie count, the diet we're following, or what we think we "should" eat.

This also means that **deciding what to eat should not be made based on what you ate earlier today or the night before, even if you binged**. Here are some examples:

- You went out for breakfast and ate pancakes so you will only allow yourself to drink a protein shake for the rest of the day, even though hunger surfaces again in the afternoon
- You binged the night before so today you're only allowed 500 calories, even though your body is asking for more than that
- You went out to lunch and ate a full meal so dinner is only a small salad with no dressing, even though you're hungry again
- You have an event to go to later that you want to "save" your calories for

When you make choices based on an earlier meal you feel may have been too dense, high in calories, carbs, or fat, etc., you inevitably end up not eating enough at this meal and before you know it you're setting yourself up for another binge. Is that what you want? If you are still reading this book I'm guessing the answer to that question is no!

While you shouldn't make choices about what to eat now based on what you ate before, I also suggest you do not make choices about what to eat now based on what you might eat later.

Often when we know we are going out to dinner later, or will be eating a meal that might be calorie dense (restaurants, holidays, birthdays, dinner parties, social events), we will try to "save" our calories for later in the day. This is also a pretty big no-no, because have you noticed what happens when you do this? You are so ravenous by the time that meal comes that you end up overdoing it, and in many instances, it turns into a binge.

Adequately supplying ourselves with food throughout the day is crucial to avoid a snack attack at night. Because not binge eating is not just about that moment you actually overeat. It's about what you're doing and thinking the rest of the day also.

Trust me, when this becomes a regular practice for you, you will begin to see that you will enjoy those heavier and more “special” meals even more if you are not absolutely starving. You’ll feel at ease all day, even excited, that you are going to that new restaurant with your friends later, and when you get there you will order exactly what you want off the menu, and you will savor it, be present with your food, and more importantly, be present with your friends. You’re less likely to overeat (although it’s okay if you do!) and you might even pack some up to eat later or the next day.

This is what “normal eaters” do. They eat when they are hungry, they eat what they are hungry for, and they do not overanalyze every food choice. They stay present, eat what they want based on what’s available and move on with their lives.

Constantly thinking about food, planning all meals out, and worrying over caloric intake is a thing of the past. Present moment choices, ease around all foods, and tuning into your body is your new approach. If you are following these guidelines and the ones to follow, binge eating doesn’t stand a chance. Sending you ALL of the love in this expansive universe as you make these changes. Don’t give up, you’ve got this.



COUNTING CALORIES

The 6th thing to give up to stop binge eating...

I've included this because I get asked this question by almost every client. So here's my take on tracking your calories, points, or macronutrients...

It's another way we grasp too tightly to control that ultimately leads to being out of control.

Take my client I'll call Sandra, for example. Sandra is conservative with her calories all day because she doesn't want to use "too many." By dinner time, she's famished, but she's saved many calories so she has a big dinner. But for some reason, she can't get full enough. So when her family goes to sleep a few hours later she is binge eating her kids' school snacks at 11pm and hiding the wrappers. She mentally puts "grocery store" on her list for tomorrow to restock so no one notices her slip up.

I could also talk about my client I'll call Cameron. Cameron went over her calories for the day and is feeling so ashamed about herself she decides "screw it – I already went over I might as well go get that ice cream I've been craving." An epic binge ensues.

Or Kiera, who was saving her calories ALL WEEK because she desperately wanted to look good in her crop top over the weekend when she went to a party. She binged for two days straight.

Or Linda, whose fitness trainer told her she should eat less calories on the days she didn't work out, and while she accomplished this and ate less Monday on her "off-day," she was bingeing hard by Tuesday night.

Or Amanda, who used up her allotted calories by 4pm on Friday and figured she'd just have to wait until Saturday to eat again. Friday 10:30pm she was at the drive-thru getting ALL the treats.

The fact is that calorie counting is not sustainable and it ignores the fact that your body is already equipped with a built in system to tell you when to eat and when to stop eating.

When tracking, we are provided a finite number of calories or points for the day and this immediately creates scarcity and anxiety. We're so careful not to go over, so cautious about every single morsel of food we put into our mouths, that we are once again not consulting our body about what it needs in that moment. We are thinking of past meals (how many carbs did I eat at breakfast?) and future meals (how many calories should I save for dinner later?) leading us further away from the peace with food we desire.

Another issue I have with tracking calories and macronutrients is the possible inaccuracy. Do you have any idea how many food labels are inaccurate? And who even comes up with these numbers about how many calories you “should” eat? An app? A calorie calculator you find online? Stop and think about that for a second and I’m sure you’ll see how absurd it is. No one knows how much you should eat except you.

Many people find “success” in tracking calories and macronutrients. I was one of them. I was the thinnest I had ever been in my life. I was also anxious and fearful of ever stepping outside the lines of those parameters my coach had set. And oh my the STRESS about how to track my meals when I went out to eat was so high that I ended up avoiding it all together, which damaged my social relationships in a major way. My perfectionism took over as I needed to hit every macronutrient on the dot. One day I simply broke. I couldn’t handle the constant control anymore. I rebelled. This was the period of time that my binge eating was at its absolute worst.

Again, this is not a long-term solution. The ONLY time I suggest clients track calories is very short-term (a week max) to make sure that they are eating *enough*. As I’ve mentioned several times by now, if you’re not eating enough, your body will create powerful urges to eat and this often leads to a binge.

Do not be afraid to eat. **Eating adequate meals and calories does not cause weight gain – we gain weight from binge eating, emotional eating, and not listening to our bodies.**

Emotional eating often leads to bingeing or overeating and tracking calories can keep you on an emotional rollercoaster. If you hit your calories you feel good, if you don’t, you feel fear. It’s a vicious cycle and one that does not honor your body and the fact that some days you will naturally eat more or less than others, or that your body will automatically regulate this for you. Have you ever watched a child eat? They know when to stop. They graze sometimes, eat full meals at other times. This is a skill we are all born with, we’ve just lost our way from too many diets, food rules, and restrictions.

So go ahead and delete MyFitnessPal from your phone and celebrate! Food freedom is one step closer. Don’t stop now, I’ll catch you in the next chapter for your 7th challenge!

WEIGHT LOSS AS #1 GOAL

The 7th thing to give up to stop binge eating...

By now, you know that the ways we manipulate our food intake only cause problems.

What's difficult about this is that most of my clients are afraid to let go of their rigidity around food because they are terrified that this will only lead them further down the weight-gain rabbit hole.

I am here to tell you that is not the case and that if you have gained weight, it is from binge eating, overeating, stress, eating emotionally, not listening to your body, or some other physical imbalance, not because you haven't tried hard enough.

The more you try to dismiss your hunger the louder it gets. The more controlled you become with food the more out of control you eventually become. The more anxiety and stress about your weight and what to eat to lose weight, the more you will overeat.

Weight loss must take a backseat as you heal your relationship with food and your body once and for all. Does that mean that you will never be able to lose weight again? No. It means that you take a radically different approach this time because if the things you've tried in the past actually worked for you, you wouldn't be reading this and you wouldn't be binge and emotional eating.

These are some of the main problems with prioritizing weight loss:

- You try to eat less than you need, leading to overeating when your control snaps
- You weigh yourself too frequently, which creates anxiety, which leads to emotional eating
- You ignore signals from your body to eat, stop eating, or rest because you are more concerned with weight loss than self-care
- You judge and shame your body, which leads to depression, social anxiety, and ultimately, overeating (more on this in chapter 11!)
- You seek out other unhealthy measures of weight loss – pills, supplements, surgeries, procedures, and other gimmicks that can have negative consequences
- You're not present. You can't enjoy anything you do at the weight you're at right now because you're always thinking about I'll be happy when I lose ___ lbs.

Do you think you will be exhilarated when you hit your goal weight? This is delusional thinking. You'll be happy for a very short amount of time. Then you will become anxious about "keeping it off," afraid to eat anything, and still not enjoying your body. Goal weights are moving targets that create desperation and dysfunctional behavior, so let's throw those out the window while we're at it.

I know that many of you reading this right now actually have gained a lot of weight from binge and emotional eating and would feel better physically and emotionally if you lost some, but for now, this cannot be your main concern for all of the above reasons. And no, you can't diet or take extreme measures to lose weight and promise yourself you'll stop dieting once you reach a weight you're more comfortable with - "I'll just lose ____ lbs. then I'll do everything you're suggesting, Cina." Almost every client I've ever worked with has said this, as if I'm going to say, "Great idea! keep doing dysfunctional things to drop another 15 lbs and that will really jumpstart your healing process!" Weight loss - back burner. No exceptions. Insert hug face emoji here so you know I'm saying this with oceans of love and compassion. Weight gain is emotionally taxing and challenges our ability to love and accept ourselves in a major way.

But, what we are working towards is a long-term, healthy, sustainable relationship with food and your body. This does not happen in a few weeks. More importantly, this does not happen after you lose weight. It happens in the present moment. It happens *now*.

So, if you're really ready to let go of binge and emotional eating, weight loss is not your #1 priority. Your #1 priority is unlearning all of the harmful thoughts and behaviors that led you here in the first place.

Eating in the way I am describing in this book will help you to balance your weight naturally without forcing it in the ways you have before – that hasn't worked for you because it doesn't work for anyone.

If you struggle with patience and being present with what's happening now, I urge you to check out my course on mindfulness and binge eating.

If you haven't already, now is probably a good time to toss your scale in the garbage as I suggested in chapter 3. Accept where you're at right now and be patient with yourself as you make massive shifts in your mind and body.

Let me also gently remind you that your weight is far from the most interesting thing about you. Your weight is not you. It's not your energy, your passion, your love, your care, your generosity, your kindness, or the special you-ness that you bring to the world. It's just a number. And you are extraordinary regardless of that number.

WORRYING

The 8th thing to give up to stop binge eating...

I could write one thousand pages about this, but I will keep it short and tailor it to why you need to stop worrying to heal your relationship with food and your body, specifically.

Here are the things we stress and worry about the most that impact our behavior with food:

- How to get thin or stay thin
- How many calories are in the food you're eating
- How "healthy" a particular food is
- What others are thinking of you
- What you are going to eat today, tomorrow, and for the rest of the week
- How you will look at an upcoming social event
- Whether or not people will post photos on social media
- How to lose 10 lbs in the next 3 weeks
- If your partner will find you less attractive if you gain more weight
- If your partner will leave you when they find out you're a binge eater
- If you won't be able to find a partner if you're not thin and fit

Sound familiar? Check in with yourself the next time you are having these thoughts. Are these thoughts ones that drive you to take better care of yourself? Unlikely. They are more likely to be the thoughts that drive you right to your favorite binge foods.

As a psychotherapist, I am often talking to clients about their worries and it seems worry is a natural part of life. But if you are a binge and emotional eater, I am asking that you begin to pay very close attention to your worries. In my Binge to Balance Program I teach my clients to explore their triggers and worries throughout the day.

The reason for this is that it will guide you to understand the impact of your thoughts on your behaviors as well as choose adaptive response to triggers rather than react automatically and self-destructively.

I would bet that if you tracked your worries (not your calories!) for a few days or a week you would start to notice some common themes on the days you binge.

I have a client that binged every single time she had an interaction with her abusive father. After working together, she now understands how to ride out those urges and do something different. To manage her stress, her anger, and her worry without food.

As I often tell my mindfulness students, each moment conditions the next moment. If you are present for your worries in this moment, you are better equipped to overcome the urge to eat in a dysfunctional way in the next moment.

We have so many things that we can worry about, both related to our weight and not related to our weight. The world is full of frightening realities. But, guess what? It's also full of wonder, magic, kindness, joy, excitement, opportunities, love, and passion.

Here are 11 things to do instead of worry:

- Imagine everything working out fine
- Ask yourself "What doesn't suck right now?"
- Visualize a place that is peaceful or fun
- Remember a time you laughed SO hard
- Gratitude, gratitude, gratitude – list everything you're grateful for – big and small
- Distract yourself with a task – clean out a closet or organize your books
- Read, watch tv, draw, color, paint, sew, knit
- Go for a walk or a drive
- Do something that you enjoy so much that it makes time fly by
- Make a worry jar – dump your worries in there
- Talk to your therapist or a good friend

If this is the article that stands out the most to you, and especially if the other chapters didn't resonate with you because you are not restricting and dieting, please consider working with a skilled psychotherapist, further exploring your mindfulness skills, or group coaching to really learn how to deal with worry, fear, anxiety, stress, and other powerful emotions that can take over and cause you to go into the auto-pilot mode where we eat just to not feel what we are feeling in that moment. I feel VERY strongly that we all need emotion regulation skills, but especially as emotional eaters, which is why I dedicated an entire module to this in my [Binge to Balance](#) course.

Easy? Not exactly. Doable? Definitely.

SHAME & DOUBT

The 9th thing to give up to stop binge eating...

I know you've been on a million diets and you feel like you've "failed," but the important thing to remember, as I mentioned in chapter 1, is that *diets* fail.

They don't work, however, when you are losing weight you will say, "oh I'm on the ____ diet!" And give it all the credit, *but when that weight comes back on you blame yourself*. You don't see the link between the diet and the weight gain. You think YOU'RE the link, when it's actually the diet.

This toxic relationship with food that you've been in for a number of years, alongside the horrific social conditioning about how you should look and eat, has led you to forget about the wonderful, worthy being you actually are.

You shame yourself because ...

- You've lost and gained weight multiple times
- You can't just eat "healthy" foods
- You love sugary, cheesy, carby foods that aren't "good" for you
- You binge eat in secret
- You "fell off the wagon" ... again
- You binge again after saying "this is the last time"
- You don't fit into the clothes you used to
- You can't seem to find a balance with exercise
- You're the heaviest you've ever been

You doubt ...

- Your ability to actually follow a program like mine that helps you make peace with food FOREVER
- That peace with food forever even exists for you (or anyone)
- That you won't become a ravenous beast if unleashed near your favorite foods
- That you can maintain a healthy weight without dieting
- Your ability to show up, learn from, and support yourself
- That anyone would ever accept and love you if they knew how you really acted around food
- That anyone would ever accept and love you. Period.

Why would you treat yourself well, eat balanced, practice self-care, or exercise regularly if you hated yourself and felt like you were an awful, damaged person?

Please know that self-criticism leads to self-destruction.

When you are self-critical in one moment, you end up behaving self-destructively in the next. In other words, your binge eating is driven by your critical thoughts about yourself.

When you stop shaming and doubting yourself, and start offering yourself compassion instead, a whole new set of behaviors show up that are in line with your new thoughts about yourself...

...because if self-criticism leads to self-destruction, self-compassion leads to self-care.

Shame leads you to seek perfection, which doesn't exist, so when you inevitably fail at being perfect (we all do), you have more reasons to attack yourself.

Wake up!

Perfection is not reality.

Overeating doesn't define you.

Your weight doesn't reflect who you truly are.

You are worthy of love and respect even if you are a binge eater.

You are human.

We mess up. In fact, we are spectacular at messing up. Are you going to learn from this or just continue to shame spiral?

Take the lesson, leave the shame. Own your path. Own your imperfections. Own the fact that you are working on it even if you haven't quite figured it out yet.

You're amazing even for reading this book and CONSIDERING change, because it's scary.

If you can't find compassion for yourself right now, borrow mine...I love you. I see you. I forgive you. I understand you. I honor you.

BODY BASHING

The 10th thing to give up to stop binge eating...

You had to know this was coming. The last post was about shaming and criticizing yourself for your actions, and this one is about the way you judge and criticize your body. Here are some examples I've heard inside my own head and from my clients...

- "I'm so disgusting"
- "I hate my stomach"
- "My arms are so flabby"
- "I'm a fat cow"
- "My thighs are humongous"
- "I just wish I could lose ____ lbs."
- "My body is so gross"
- "I've really let myself go"
- "My body is deformed"

You learned from the last chapter that shame and doubt lead to self-destructive behaviors like binge eating and the same is true for judgment and criticism. Why would you take care of a body you hated?

When you attack yourself, you are less likely to follow that up with mindful and supportive food choices.

When you attack yourself, you are less likely to practice self-care.

When you attack yourself, you give others permission to do the same.

When you attack yourself, you eat to deal with the stress of hating your body.

When you attack yourself, you dissociate from your body ...

...And this is the biggest threat to your relationship with your body of all. **Body shaming only fuels the cycle of eating foods that don't actually support or feel good in your body because hating it breaks your connection to it.**

If we're dissociated from our body, we can't hear the body calling for our attention, whether that is to eat or to stop eating, so then we either restrict or over eat, keeping us in the very cycles we are looking to break free from.

Body shaming has to go if you want to stop binge and emotional eating. **Be on the lookout for the critical voice in your head and do something absolutely outrageous ... don't listen to it.**

COMPARISON

The 11th thing to give up to stop binge eating...

We made it! This is the last chapter and if you've stuck with me through all 11, go you!

If you are 100% ready to stop the destructive and exhausting battle with food, you absolutely must stop comparing yourself to others.

There is a quote I love that says "comparison is the thief of joy." I'd like to add to that and say that comparison is also completely delusional.

When I was the thinnest I had ever been in my life, I would bet that some other women would have envied the body that I had. Here's what those women didn't know.

I was miserable and extremely lonely.

My anxiety was the highest it had ever been.

I was terrified to eat anything.

I still felt like my body wasn't good enough!

You have no idea what kind of relationship that woman has to her body. You have no idea if she's starving, critical, and anxious or if she's truly at peace in her skin. To be clear, I'll take peace in a bigger body over misery in a smaller body every. single. time. And I know what you're thinking, how about peace in a smaller body?

When you hit your goal weight you are not automatically provided a unicorn that whisks you off into a magical land where you have no problems. You're still you. With the same thoughts, the same fears, and the same insecurities. In fact, I'm pretty sure the neurosis only gets worse because now you have to protect that weight. Now you have to guard it, maintain it, and figure out how to feed yourself without gaining a pound. True peace is only achieved in your mind, regardless of your size.

I'm very familiar with the "I'll be happy when..." syndrome. You know, "I'll be happy when I lose 30 lbs." "I'll be happy when I can fit into a size 6." "I'll be happy when I meet my husband."

As a psychotherapist that has studied the mind body connection quite thoroughly, I can tell you that the "I'll be happy when..." game is a losing one. Here's why:

Your body becomes addicted to emotional states the same way it gets addicted to substances. So if you spend years hating your body, comparing it to others, and feeling inadequate and shameful about it, do you think weight loss is going to magically make all of those feelings go away?

Nope. Your mind has created some very well-worn neural pathways about criticizing your body and because the mind is efficient and a little lazy, it reproduces the same thoughts repeatedly because it conserves energy to do so. This is why just losing weight will not actually make you feel confident, empowered, sexy, beautiful, or happy.

So basically this means that YOU MUST CHANGE AT THE LEVEL OF CONSCIOUSNESS before anything in your life really changes. This is true about weight, money, relationships, career, spirituality, happiness, anxiety, depression, and more. This is one of my most favorite things to teach my clients - the deep, subconscious change that must happen if we want our behaviors to shift. Rewiring the subconscious is something I go deeper into in my online course as well.

I've helped enough people through enough problems to know this to be true.

So here is your opportunity to shift your mind and trust me babe, the rest will follow.

Stop comparing yourself to others. Stop robbing yourself of the joy you could have in the present moment, even if you aren't at your ideal size right now. What a revolutionary thought! I could actually enjoy myself even if I haven't lost weight yet!

Another reason to stop comparing yourself to others is that the tall thin body type that most of us envy is genetically natural to about 1% of the population. This research also supports the notion that body type and weight is mostly based on genetics, which means even if you and I eat exactly the same things and workout in the same way, our bodies will look completely different.

Comparing yourself to others sets up the shame spiral, which sets up the binge cycle.

You are good enough as you are.
You are good enough as you are.
You are good enough as you are.

As I mentioned in the last post, your thoughts are the ancestors to your behaviors, so more compassionate and kind thoughts about yourself will lead to more compassionate and kind behaviors.

You are powerful beyond measure. You are the key to unlocking this.

Stop comparing yourself to women with completely different DNA, eating habits, and lifestyles than you. Stop comparing yourself to your sisters, friends, co-workers, and random strangers on tiktok.

This is your journey. Own it.

Thank You!

Let's keep in touch!

This sums up my 11 Things to Give Up to Stop Binge & Emotional Eating series. THANK YOU for reading, I hope you enjoyed it, and please reach out with questions and comments because I love your feedback! And if you know a babe that needs these messages, please share!

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[@cinahoey](#)



cinahoey@yahoo.com



[Cina Hoey](#)



www.cinahoey.com