



BROOKLYN_BORN

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What exactly is a binge? Is it like obscenity or pornography, different for different people?

Monday, January 21, 2013

During a case regarding hard-core pornography Supreme Court Justice Potter Stewart once said that he couldn't specifically define it, but he knew it when he saw it.

How to define a binge:

By quantity of food eaten?

I've had some pretty big meals that didn't qualify

The length of time we keep at it?

On the cruise we had some 7 (yes seven) course meals that took a very long time.

Definitely not binge material.

How quickly we shove food in our mouths?

I've rushed plenty of times eating "on the run"

Is it the type of food we're eating?

Determined by total calories or maybe fat or sugar content?

I've eaten a lot of cheesecake and strudel that I never put in the binge category

Does it matter WHY we're doing it?

Does there have to be an emotional trigger?

Is it the same as mindless eating?

Last night while watching football with the grandchildren, I ate a bunch of snacks, some healthy, most not. It was more than I should have eaten - excited eating - but not binge-worthy.

Do we have to be alone? Doing it in secret?

I know when my daughter says, "do you really want to be eating that?" that I'm more likely to stop. (Note: DH never says that!)

Maybe it's the lack of control we feel as we're doing it?

The voice that says, "you shouldn't be doing this, it's bad for you; you'll feel terrible later" and we answer the voice by doing it anyway.

Maybe like Justice Stewart said, we know it when see it, or rather, when we're doing it. How we define it may be different for each of us. What we tend to agree on is that it's bad for us and something that we should strive to avoid. If you are susceptible to binges, it's a rare person who can cut them out completely for all time.

Maybe overcoming the temptation is just one more step in knowing ourselves and we are all worth knowing. If we slip up, just forgive ourselves and move on.

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GINIEMIE



Interesting! Since I've not felt well, I've been getting out of bed in the evening and finding "something to eat". Was I really hungry no! What was I doing? Binge eating! Or seeking some kind of solace.

Okay, I can remember a time when if I was low, I would take out a box of saltines and the milk and eat and eat and eat. Was I hungry-NO, I was out of control. Now when I have a desire for that "comfort food" I serve myself one bowl, counting my crackers-more than I need, but not the whole sleeve, adding my milk and sitting down to eat it. I refuse to go back for more, because I don't want to go back to those old habits, but occasionally I still revert to that consoling snack. Is it healthy? NO. I've recognized that I do it when I'm feeling low, but now I have some control over the quantity. So I would say, there is a definition to binge eating, and yet each of us has our own version of what it is. Most of us recognize that it is eating beyond our needs, and at some point control is lost and our emotional stability or lack there of has an impact. Usually this is followed by feelings self disgust.

I've come a long way and I've a long way to go, but I will not give up on myself. I will be an encouragement to others who are in the same battle for self control.



3061 days ago



RUDITUDI2000



For me...handfuls. of chocolate chips when I'm stressed. Unplanned. Always accompanied by a BAD attitude..



Thanks for this blog...Jen

3064 days ago



SLENDERMAMA1



For me a binge is eating despite myself without true enjoyment, regretting the eating even as I am shovelling it into my mouth....so why do I do it? I wish I knew..



3065 days ago



BOILHAM



By the definitions below, clearly a binge is how one defines it. To me, a binge has no shoveling or mindlessness. I even do my binges in moderation, I just keep going back for more treats, telling myself I need the carbs anyway, but knowing full well I am "on a rampage" DW and my term for a binge. I'm still unconvinced my rampages are a completely bad thing. I keep telling myself it's not appetite, but hunger, maybe my body is craving for a reason. Hell, I know what I'm doing is wrong, but I insist on justifying it somehow.

3065 days ago



ENVIROCHEMIST



For me, it is eating an indeterminate amount of food that I KNOW I don't particularly want, KNOWING that I'm not really hungry, but feeling helpless to NOT consume it. It's almost like an out of body experience. And it's almost always emotion-driven. Oof. Good blog.

3065 days ago



WATERMELLEN



What a great blog: so much to think about . . . and look at all the great comments it inspired!

There are certainly some unifying themes here: loss of control; self loathing. Avoiding those trigger foods is key for me!

3065 days ago



CD8467616



I used to call it "the Evil Robot" as in "The Evil Robot took over my brain and I ate a huge burger and fries without wanting it or enjoying it." That's my definition, I guess: not wanting it and not enjoying it. Ever since I put a label on that feeling, the Evil Robot has turned up less and less.

3066 days ago

CAKEMAKERMOM



For me it's when I give up control to the food and it keeps on coming into my system, I may not be overstuffing, but it's wrong choices that blow my calories for the day and may not always have had anything to do with a mood I'm in.

3066 days ago



LOLATURTLE



That's really interesting. I think it's probably personal, because everyone binges differently, and probably at least partly depends on how you feel during and after the binge.

I no longer binge the way I used to ~7-8 years ago; then it was filling myself with whatever food I could find, whatever sounded good, but I was never satisfied because I wasn't hungry, I was unhappy. It was the one thing I could control that could bring me some small amount of comfort or happiness in place of all the wrongness in my life that I couldn't fix.

Now it's more like... I'm too lazy to go buy or prepare what I know I need to feel satisfied and well, so I eat a bunch of different stuff that ends up being way too many calories, or a waste of calories because it isn't what I need. It's a more complex definition now, because I'm more aware of the complex interactions that can lead to bingeing. How am I feeling? What am I doing today? What food do I have in the house/around me? Sometimes it's not so much a binge as, a pre-binge. I ate something I know can lead to a binge if I'm not careful.
3066 days ago



LIVIN2LOVE1



For me, defining a binge involves my feelings. When I begin to feel shame and physical discomfort it is then that I realize that I have been on a binge.

I'm still learning how to handle myself. Learning strategies to avoid a binge and to stop a binge when I find myself in one.

It hasn't been easy for me but I accept the challenge because the alternative, giving in, is not an option.
3066 days ago



4A-HEALTHY-BMI



There are clinical definitions of binges, and there are also personal definitions of them.

Since the word is in common usage, you get to define it however you like.



3066 days ago



SUZYSMOBILE



I think it's your very last point: complete loss of control, along with Nell's self-loathing which may or may not happen at the same time you're bingeing. It's the food thing to which one can apply the 12 steps, the first being: We admitted we were powerless over our [bingeing] and that our lives had become unmanageable.
3066 days ago



NELLJONES



I haven't binged in years because I HATE the aftermath of self-loathing, the wondering "why??" I hate the feeling that I am my own willing victim. I plan for the inevitable longing to binge the same way I plan a safe walking route and for the same reasons: it's easier to avoid pitfalls than to get out of them. I am basically lazy; avoidance by any means is the only way to keep from abusing myself. And wondering Why.
3066 days ago



DAISYBELL6



This blog certainly presented some excellent "food for thought" and it came at the perfect time for me. I agree with Slenderella that letting go of the guilt of bingeing and accepting that it may happen now and then has been freeing for me. I am human and will make mistakes. What has kept me from bingeing like I used to 85 pounds ago is the thought that I can immediately go back to my healthy way of eating. I don't have to keep bingeing because I failed, I have to eat healthfully because I am succeeding. Beating my self up does not change what happened. Acceptance and self love helps. I used to believe that I was "doomed" to keep overeating, that I couldn't help it and that trying to change was useless. None of that is true. I love my new lifestyle and my new body and a one time binge is not going to cause me to return to my old patterns. I wish I didn't binge. Right now, I still binge occasionally but I stop when I recognize what I am doing, look at what triggered it, accept that I need to look at the trigger, then, most importantly, eat in a healthy mindful way. Getting right back to eating well and moving my body is moving me forward.
3066 days ago



TINAJANE76



For me a binge is an unplanned overindulgence on food that I'm not even enjoying. It's often something (or a series of things) that are silly like peanut butter or chips. But I think you're right: most of us would probably define our binges in different ways. Thanks for this thought-provoking blog.
3066 days ago

SLENDERELLA61



Great blog! For me, it is a combination of a lot of the factors you focus on - the mindlessness,



the doing it anyway, the bad choices, the amount, the speed of the shoveling, the loss of control, eating contradictory to my plan and intention, the remorse and even self-loathing.

When I learned I could live life at the weight I want to be and still occasionally slip into a binge, it was freeing. My binges became smaller and smaller, healthier and healthier, and less and less frequent. I found that the real key to it is forgiveness and doing the very best I can each day, each hour, each moment. Don't have to be perfect, just determined. Never, never, never give up!!!
3066 days ago



LESLIE871948



I wasn't done. I don't usually blog on the bottom of a blog.. :). What if yesterday was a binge for me. It was a teeny one if it was, but I FELT about it. Should I FEEL about food, other than hunger,- bliss,- satisfaction? I ate things that would formerly be a part of a food orgy. I am so grateful to have sort of grown out of the inclination to stuff my body until it hurts. Still, the guilt dynamic involved in that activity is what gives it the ability to cause me to go down the scary road of 1) binge 2) I am a bad person 3) I might as well give up I am Never going to be okay 4) food is bad 5) I am bad.....

I mentioned somewhere else that in order for me to get to a positive healthy place I have to run toward things that I really want, not back off in disgust from things I don't. For me, how I think about it when I eat something off my major plan in huge. If I just accept that I am human and go on, it's all good. Call it Binge and it turns the other way.
3066 days ago



LESLIE871948



Oh Kay here..... There are times when my looonggg history with weight struggles has me over-thinking some things, but this one? I could spend the entire day thinking about this excellent provocative blog. This year I am committed to eating more clean, organic, local foods. Saturday and Sunday past I was short of the mark. Both days I kind of went into a grazing mode, certainly not enough to cause weight gain in any meaningful way unless I continue for some time. Not a "binge", but also Not what I want for myself. I don't care to eat when my body is not physiologically hungry. Back in the days when I used to diet #crazy# as in 750 calories a day, or using things that Dr's in the 70's prescribed to help me stay on Nutso eating plans, I used to clearly BINGE. Can I be a little bit pregnant and binge a little bit? That is such a loaded ugly word, but is a tiny one a different thing than a huge one? Both one grape and a watermelon are both fruit.
3066 days ago

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