



## Being at Choice

From the moment we wake up each day, we are hit with a barrage of decisions. There is an abundance of options that is both enlivening and overwhelming. At its extreme we can feel frozen in indecision. How do we know what to choose?

**Prioritize.** Some decisions just aren't that important (what movie to see), while others truly are. Don't get stuck in the small stuff while the big ones slip away.

**Pay attention.** So often we think things are connected (if I eat a piece of chocolate, I won't be able to stop) – but is it true? Each time is a new choice. Even when you respond automatically, while your choice may be stuck on the default setting, it's still a choice.

**Develop routines.** What *can* be put on automatic? The time you get up, what you eat for breakfast, how you take your coffee are typical of the things that don't require thought each time. Just remember to reevaluate periodically to make sure you have automated with the choices you want.

**Take your time.** Some of the choices we are presented with are forks in the road of life. This is not the place to rush a decision. See how each option feels in your body. Sometimes we have a sensation of opening and spaciousness. Other times we will notice a tightening or constriction. This is useful information. When possible, keep your options open until an inner sense of knowing arises. Clients tell me that they *know* when they've made the right choice because it just *feels right*.

**Talk it out.** At its core, coaching is about bringing consciousness and clarity to the choices we make. It is about being at choice in a responsible and alert way. Sometimes it requires sorting through the confusion and loose threads to get to the heart of the question. When you feel baffled or overwhelmed, find someone to talk to: a friend or family member, a coach or counselor. When you bring focus to your questions, and make thoughtful choices, you are more likely to be satisfied with the outcomes.

## Structure vs Discipline

People often tell me they want to have more discipline. They think that discipline is the way to make themselves do the *right* things and thereby gain control over their lives and their food choices.

Many of us have a love-hate relationship with discipline. We think that if we had more of it, our lives would be better; and yet it feels like a constant struggle.



By definition, discipline means following rules or refers to punishment (as in being disciplined). No wonder it can trigger rebellion and resistance.

Try a different angle; try thinking structure. I picture structure as an open framework to build from. I remember the jungle gym of my childhood: brightly colored metal that turned into a stagecoach or tent with a little imagination.

With structure, you don't need to constantly start from the beginning. You can create habits and routines that work for you. A framework of meals and snacks is a good example. When you have a general plan, you can be prepared. The food is there and you eat that. It becomes more simple.

Discipline, and even will power, implies force. However, you can only *push* yourself to exercise or avoid certain foods for so long. It is like being at war against yourself. When you create structures that work for you, it just becomes part of what you do. It's easier. And when you create structures that truly fit you, they are satisfying.

## Eating More But Enjoying it Less

When I saw the headline, *Eating More, Enjoying it Less*, in the local paper it struck me as so true! Many of the people I talk to are eating too much (by their own assessment). But when I query them, they often don't enjoy what they are eating. How sad! Why is this?

It is partly guilt over eating the wrong things. It could be frustration about not knowing *what* to eat in these confusing times. Some people tell me they wish they didn't have to eat at all. Where has the pleasure gone?

If you're frustrated about deciding what's good for you to eat, try reading the very accessible and revealing What to Eat by Marion Nestle, a respected nutritionist.

Even more important, reclaim the enjoyment of food. Once you have chosen to eat something - just allow yourself to enjoy it! *Especially* if you think it's sinful. Eat it slowly and luxuriate in every bite. Savor it. The irony is that you just might find you are satisfied sooner and eat less of it.

Do you enjoy your food? If not, what would it take? What would allow you to get full pleasure from everything you eat?

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Health and Wellness Coaching and Nutrition Consulting.  
Transform the challenges of stress eating.  
Create a healthy lifestyle tailored just to you.  
*Discover Wellness from the Inside Out!*



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