



Eating with Grace™

making peace with food, weight & body image issues

APRIL 2011 NEWSLETTER

Neither indulge nor repress your feelings.

Mindfulness teaching.

SPRING 2011 SCHEDULE

Daylong Retreat**:

SATURDAY

May 14

10 am to 4 pm

***open to anyone who has completed the Eating with Grace BASIC GROUP*

**COMING SOON:
Summer Webinar**

**AVAILABLE NOW:
WEB-BASED SERVICES**

- consultations
- email support
- phone/Skype sessions
- coaching



and now offering
*clinical hypnotherapy
in person and online*

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May you be happy May you be
peaceful May you be free

At a recent **Ongoing Group** meeting, I dared mention the word **INDULGENCE**. Tricky word, and hard to talk about without straying into scolding (the Inner Critic Channel, so familiar to compulsive overeaters). Really *indulgence* is an attempt to love and care for ourselves and our feelings that misses the mark -- and what helps is the wisdom and love of the Inner Coach and Inner Nurturer, and the help of grace.

Let's walk through it. Here is a not-uncommon sequence that Sally went through:

Thought/event	Behavior	After effect
Really sleepy after lunch	Handful of M&Ms	Wired, mad at self Loved the taste
Obsessing about wanting MORE What's the use/who cares Remembering good taste	Buy bag of M&Ms Eat whole bag on way home	Love the taste Feel sick afterwards
Not hungry for dinner Thinking diet thoughts	Eat salad for dinner	Sugar crash, fatigue, hunger at 9 pm
Hungry, physically/emotionally depressed	Big bowl of cereal & milk before bed	Sleep poorly, wake up with carb hangover

Sally was feeling bored and sleepy after lunch. When we explored this together, she felt unable initially to find any source of strength or compassion to deal with the feelings. (We treat ourselves as we were treated as children. Sally grew up in an alcoholic home. The adults mostly did not tune into her feelings.) But by slowing down, breathing, and listening inside to the sleepy place, Sally was able to realize that a Nurturer would acknowledge that yes, she was feeling sleepy -- such natural feelings after lunch at a desk job.

Now here comes the booby trap: Then the Nurturer says, "It's fine to have some delicious M&Ms as a dessert and pick-me-up after lunch. Don't be so hard on yourself. You deserve a treat now. You've worked hard this morning and..." Right?

This is the *indulgence* part. The M&Ms are an attempt to be loving and kind and supportive, but they don't really work -- they set up a chain of events that gets pretty out of control and has nasty side effects. The Inner Coach needs to be asked, "What does the sleepy feeling really need?"

When Sally checked inside about this, she realized that when she went for a walk on her break in the morning, or at lunchtime, she wasn't as sleepy after lunch. This strengthened her commitment to listen to the Coach encouraging her to go for that walk. And after lunch, if she just sat at her desk and did some breathing exercises she learned in Basic Group, the sleepiness passed. But she had to tolerate the discomfort for a bit. She had to dig a little for courage and strength.

How? For Sally, a prayer helped. For another person, it might be an affirmation, a phone call to a support person, 5 minutes of journaling. All of these are ways of reaching out for help, beyond the seeming unbearable of the moment. The Coach and Nurturer realize that "What's the use? Who cares?" are old cries of discouragement and disconnection. Sally *can* connect with herself, and reach inside for the courage to make self-caring choices. These choices, unlike indulgence, really feed and strengthen her.