



Eating with Grace™

making peace with food, weight & body image issues

JANUARY 2011 NEWSLETTER

You are a child of the universe.

No less than the trees and the stars, you have a right to be here.

Desiderata

Eating with Grace

**WINTER/SPRING
2011 Schedule**

**BURLINGTON
Basic Group &
Ongoing Group**

START:

FEB/MAR 2011

**(You can get a head-start!
Call now for a free consult!)**

WEB-BASED SERVICES:

- consultations
- email support
- telephone/Skype support
- coaching
- referrals

*and now offering clinical
hypnotherapy in person & online*

Contact Anya:

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May you be happy

May you be peaceful

May you be free of suffering

May you have ease

Here we are deep in the season of New Year's Resolutions, and I'd like to propose a radical one: Resolve to love and accept yourself JUST AS YOU ARE. This is one of the radical premises of **Eating with Grace**: you are lovable and worthy of care, just because you exist. In a room with a dozen newborns, each so unique in every detail, some downright "ugly", each one is equally precious and lovable. Well, that's us. The room of newborns, with a few irksome habits, and some of us, belly fat, grey hair!

Oh, you exclaim, but I need to _____ (fill in the blank: lose weight, be nicer to my family, eat healthier, do a better job at work). I need to work on myself, I need to improve. Maybe you do. But how exactly does one improve in a lasting way, and not just adopt a resolution for a brief period of time and then sooner or later lose the drive, and end up feeling somewhat or even very bad about oneself (again)?

Eating with Grace proposes that real change comes inside of the real you. And that *everything is as it is because it is that way for good reasons*. So it is useful for you to study yourself, and learn about how and why things got to be the way they are, and get excited about learning, and try some new ONE thing (instead of the latest Change Everything All At Once Program). Then you can study how it's working, tweak it, and practice until the new thing is really a part of the real you.

The problem, though, is despair. You've tried to change your eating/weight/habits how many times? *What's the use? Who cares? Oh, f--- it!* are the classic despair expressions of people who are really hooked and feel like they can't win against the habit. This is where being with others who've struggled and are engaged in learning how to win, how to make it work, is really essential. We need the mirror of other's encouragement. We need to see that other people, who have tried and failed, are still good people. And we learn by witnessing other people's successes and challenges.

However, if you start this self-study with the premise that you are _____ (fill in the blank: a loser, a failure, a sick person, fat, unworthy, undeserving), you are throwing mad mud on yourself while you're trying on new clothes. Not helpful. No one really learns or retains things when defending against or succumbing to abuse. Real learning happens in an atmosphere of safety and respect. If you can't quite love yourself as a child of the universe, as a beautiful and capable newborn, at least make a promise to stop the self-abuse and be respectful. If you can't say you're special yet, at least say, *Not bad*.

I routinely hand out post it notes to clients, and encourage them to write something truly supportive on them and post them where the encouragement can be absorbed. On a mirror is a good place, or in the car, or on a computer monitor. The practice is to see it, pause, BREATHE, take it in, relax with it. Over time your brain, which loves to learn new, life-affirming things, will gain a new radio station with self-appreciation on the airwaves. But, you do have to practice!

Seven Days article on Eating with Grace: 1/19/11 issue:

<http://www.7dvt.com/2011eating-with-grace>

Website of the month: www.innerbonding.com

**Dr. Margaret Paul's site, which is all about learning to approach life
with an intention to love and to learn.**