



Eating with Grace™

making peace with food, weight & body image issues

OCTOBER 2010 NEWSLETTER

Kid with poison ivy: IT ITCHES!!!!

*Mom to Kid: **DON'T SCRATCH.***

If you leave it alone, it will stop itching.

Eating with Grace FALL 2010 SCHEDULE

BURLINGTON BASIC
GROUP STARTS:
OCTOBER 2010

AVAILABLE NOW:
WEB-BASED SERVICES:

- consultations
- email support
- telephone/Skype support
- coaching
- referrals
- *clinical hypnosis*



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MAY YOU BE HAPPY
MAY YOU BE PEACEFUL
MAY YOU HAVE SAFETY
MAY YOU HAVE EASE

It comes up CONSTANTLY when I talk to people about making peace with food and with their bodies' hungers: **Cravings**. Craving sugar, craving sweets, craving carbs, craving crunch, craving comfort, craving taste, *craaaaaaving!* Cravings undermine peacefulness, cravings come around and MAKE you take that first bite of some red light food, and then, you know, as long as you've had a little and "blown it", you might as well eat the WHOLE thing (great example of our all-or-nothing thinking! Not helpful!). And then, to top it off, you feel bad about yourself as a person: because you had the cravings in the first place, and because you acted on them.

So what exactly ARE cravings and how can we help ourselves not go crazy with them? Cravings are body-mind events: body sensations/thoughts/feelings/actions, happening, often, in a quick cascade. First step is to notice -- and then, how do take care of what's happening in a way that is kind and wise? (This newsletter will talk about physical cravings; next time: emotional cravings.)

PHYSICAL CRAVINGS can be the body saying I need iron, I need salt. In mindful eating, in beginning to be able to listen to our bodies and our hungers, we discover healthy, helpful physical cravings. Yay!

PHYSICAL CRAVINGS can also be manifestations of imbalances in our body -- eg, hormonal imbalances, brain chemical imbalances. These imbalances can be caused and worsened by poor nutrition and by DIETING (part of what contributes to bingeing after dieting: real cravings for better nutrition). If you think this might be you, see a doctor or naturopath. Helpful websites:

<http://www.womentowomen.com/understandyourbody/symptoms/cravings.aspx>

<http://www.fatisnotyourfault.com/>

And finally, PHYSICAL CRAVINGS can be signs of allergy/addiction to certain foods. Just like when we have poison ivy, we think we JUST HAVE TO scratch, so certain foods make an itch inside of us (sugar, salt, fat, and any food you are allergic to, common ones being wheat and dairy) and it feels like we JUST HAVE TO have them. And when we eat those foods, we just want more and more. Again, if you think this might be you, see a doctor or naturopath. For more understanding of this, read Dr. David Kessler on *How the Food Makers Captured Our Brains*:

http://topics.nytimes.com/top/reference/timestopics/people/k/david_a_kessler/index.html?inline=nyt-per

So, slowing it down. Listening: what ARE these physical cravings right now? Helping the body by listening to its hungers and letting go of foods that 98 out of 100 times trigger fierce cravings. Taking the body to a trusted healthcare practitioner to learn more about what causes YOUR cravings. And practicing tolerance. To quote Pema Chodron: "*Shenpa* is the urge, the hook, that triggers our habitual tendency.... We get hooked in that moment of tightening when we reach for relief. To get unhooked we begin by recognizing that moment of unease and learning to relax in that moment.

So the good news is the solution always involves slowing down and breathing, slowing down the reactivity, learning to TOLERATE the sensations of the craving, keep our seat, ground, breathe, ride it out. The good news is we can do this, it just takes willingness and practice. AND gentleness with ourselves as people who are practicing and learning a very hard thing: *Just don't scratch.*