

Don't You Ever Get Into A Rut With Food?

I had an (overweight) acquaintance who worked with me and apparently was watching me quite closely as I was losing weight over the winter and spring of 1999, as I brought and ate my “boring” lunches to work, day after day. She once came to me privately and asked, “Don't you ever get into a rut with food?” No one had ever put it to me in quite that way, and it intrigued me.

I don't get in a rut with food because eating is no longer a “rut-provoking” activity for me. It's just food, and food is a piece of my life that is now on about the same emotional plane as the laundry. Making sure I have enough of the right food bought and prepared daily is actually no different emotionally than making sure I have clean underwear ready each day. And I know of no one who has ever wondered or worried about getting into a rut—or getting to a better emotional place—with the laundry.

Some people, maybe most, insist this would be a wretched way to live and feel. But I believe this aspect of our thinking and behaving has been driven almost exclusively by the commercially and thus artificially-induced messages embedded into our psyches that we could/should have more *passion*, more interest, more intense feelings about what we eat. The Martha Stewarts (et al.) of this world incessantly prod us to celebrate—to somehow enhance, exaggerate—every single moment possible, then stand ever at-the-ready to profit grandly from selling us all the accoutrements for doing so. It's quite a profitable racket, if they can get us to literally buy into it.

The cultural dichotomy: On the one hand as overweight individuals we yearn to be normal, ordinary, to fit in. On the other hand, our culture keeps suggesting that ordinary is bad, lackluster, not nearly good enough, ordinary people DON'T exactly fit in. Is it any wonder we're confused?

To me, this “rut” feels like I finally have food in its proper place in my life. The thrill is gone, and while that was a bit of a surprise, it also turned out to be a positive and peaceful thing. Rejecting the ever growing part of this culture that incessantly attempts to convince me I have to be, I have to feel, or I have to buy **any** particular way has been by far the most thrilling and empowering aspect of this entire journey.

It seems that, for me at least, the way to having “it all” was, essentially, to have none of it.

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