



It's Not About Food

by Sue Markovitch, Certified Fitness Coach, Advanced Personal Trainer

We talk a lot about food. I get a lot of questions about food. I ask a lot of questions about food. Too bad it's not about food.

Have you ever gone to the grocery store with renewed determination to buy fresh, healthy foods only to get home and order a pizza? Have you worked hard to prepare a very healthy dinner, ate it, and a half hour later wandered into the kitchen and ate something else just because you weren't satisfied?

The most common phrase I hear from every woman I know is this, "*I know what to do, I just don't do it*". What's going on here?

Here is the fact: If you eat more than your body uses, it stores that energy as fat. So logically, knowing exactly how many calories your body needs and then following that precisely would completely solve the problem. No one would be overweight. No one would feel crappy about themselves. So why doesn't it work?

For me, I knew I wanted to eat healthier. I knew I wanted to eat less. I knew I wanted to stop eating compulsively. I knew I wanted to be thinner. But it never would have worked to just rip that extra food from me. It would not have changed anything because the underlying problem still existed. My broken heart was still there.

If you are struggling, I want to challenge you to find what it is in you that has you eat when you aren't hungry. Where is your emptiness? What is your hunger? We all struggle to find ways to cope with our pain, our loneliness, our guilt, our shame, our stress, our anger, our disappointment, our fear. One way to cope is to eat.

I used eating to cope. I have used many things to cope. The problem with *using* is that our drugs of choice have consequences. Using cigarettes to cope leads to disease. Using shopping to cope leads to out of control debt. Using people-pleasing to cope leads to losing ourselves. Using food to cope leads to being overweight.

It was not easy to look at myself like this. I had to admit that because I ran away from my feelings, I ran to other things. And the outcome of that was a very unhealthy, unhappy, worthless-feeling woman. I had to get really honest and say that I had lost my way. I had given up on myself. I thought the best was behind me and I had missed my chance at happiness. What a lie!! Don't believe it for a second!!

Here's what happened. My dad died when I was 13, my mom died when I was 23. And because I was young and didn't know any better, I let these events define me. I was damaged. I was not good enough. I would never be whole. So what difference did it make if I smoked? What difference would it make what I ate and ate and ate? It made no difference to me. I was never going to truly like or accept myself anyway.

Then I found the truth. I was hurting. I was in pain. My heart was broken. I said these things out loud to other people over and over and my heart began to heal. "I am afraid, I am angry, I am lonely", I said. And the more I shared my story, the less power these feeling had over me. I figured out that although I am the daughter of two parents who died young, that it didn't have to define me. I could be a survivor! A fighter! An overcomer! I like that much better.

And as I healed, my extra weight came off. I know now that no matter how badly I wanted to, I could not have willed myself off food. I had to heal from the inside out. The way to that for me was to remember who I was, to realize that I was strong enough to feel what I was feeling instead of running away from it, and to always believe that the best was yet to come.

Now get moving! Re-printed article from Sue Markovitch, of [Clear Rock Fitness](#).