

Giselle's Story – Unconditional Support

Even if I ate three donuts for breakfast, I would still have the courage to come to Suppers. I could still walk through the door, knowing I would be welcomed with a loving hug, maybe more than one. No one will ask me what I ate today. No one will put me on a scale. No one will judge me.

When I started coming to Suppers, I thought my number one priority was to immediately stop eating the foods that have pitted me against my own body. I've been wrestling with foods I know aren't good for me for thirty years, since I was a teenager. What is this! Their grip on me is a greater force than I can cope with by myself.

But I was wrong. My number one priority quickly switched. What I needed immediately was acceptance from a community of people who would embrace me even when I misstepped, like with three donuts. I have every intention of devoting myself to the Suppers process, but if I slip I need to know that I won't be brutalized by someone else's rolling eyes of judgment of my failure.

There are times when the only healthy meal I get all week is the one I eat at Suppers. But that's one more healthy, self-loving meal than I would have had before I came to the program.

In my Suppers meetings there are people -- really intelligent and well educated -- whose relationship with food trumps all their strengths. Good sense doesn't stand a chance in the face of a force so powerful that we would eat our way into overweight, obesity, diabetes and other things I'm too embarrassed to write about. I had to come to this table to learn that the standard American food supply truly is our most expensive national addiction. I have certainly paid a heavy price for being enslaved to it.

Through all the sharing, book reviews and general nutrition education I benefit from at Suppers meetings, I have learned that there are physiological reasons why my body craves sweets, basically carbohydrates mixed with fat and salt. I have learned about insulin spikes and subsequent blood sugar crashes that trigger my cravings for more carbs. I have learned that many of these cravings stem from the release of powerful neurotransmitters and hormones that have huge influences on my brain and subsequent eating behavior. I am comforted to learn that it is NOT a mere matter of willpower.

So today I will keep my focus on my new priority since my original priority is still out of reach. Thank you, Suppers, for creating a space where it's safe for me to experiment with new, healthier ways of eating. Thank you for landing me at a table full of people who know I can't just "snap out" of a lifestyle that's destroying my body. Thank you for introducing me to a supportive group of people who create this meeting every week for me so I can eat what they're eating; so I can learn to cook what they're cooking. Thank you for the love, support and active practice of non-judgment that gives me a safe place to sort out my preferred first priority: to eat in a way that honors my body and fully satisfies me using fresh, whole foods.