

CLASS



# BUILDING HEALTHIER RELATIONSHIPS



[nevereatyoureemotionsagain.com](https://nevereatyoureemotionsagain.com)

**MARION HOLT**

 never eat your emotions again

# BUILDING HEALTHIER RELATIONSHIPS

This class is copyright 2023 Never Eat Your Emotions Again.

Do not distribute without written authorization

Corrections, complaints, compliments, criticisms?

Contact [marion@nevereatyouremotionsagain.com](mailto:marion@nevereatyouremotionsagain.com)

**MARION HOLT**



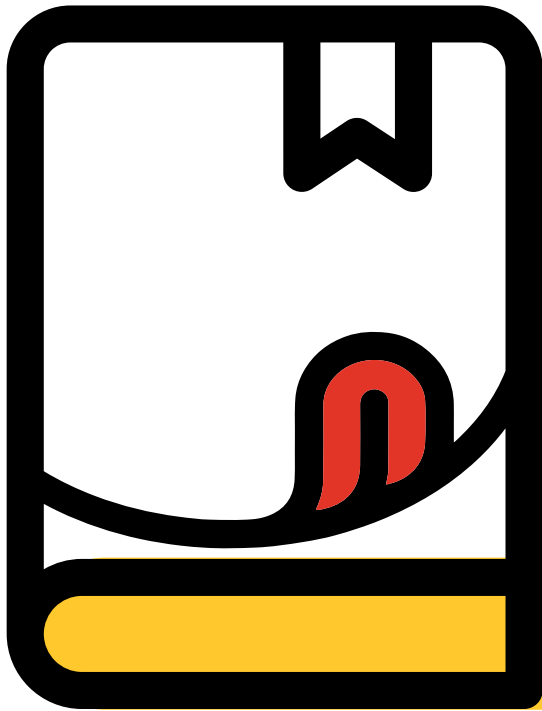
# Hey There!



## Welcome to the Never Eat Your Emotions Again<sup>®</sup> Program!

You are an Emotional Eater and your relationship with food doesn't feel good? It doesn't have to stay that way. There is not one pattern, not one feeling about food or about yourself that cannot be dispelled. Healed. Dissolved. After working with myself and many others, I witnessed astonishing breakthroughs and steady recoveries to a healthy relationship with food. You can do it too.

My name is Marion, and I am your Emotional Eating Expert. Certified professional coach, I have been an emotional eater since childhood. I was affected by severe obesity most of my adult life. No longer. In this playbook, I share my specific behavioral expertise about how emotional eating starts for most of us, and techniques for efficiently identifying the starting point for yourself.



## MISSION & VISION

I've struggled multiple times to lose weight focusing exclusively on eating habits, and exercise. I failed every attempt and ended up being affected by severe obesity. I sought professional help, unsuccessfully. For years, I believed my weight loss was a lost cause. I was able to change my relationship with food when I realized it was based on a **coping mechanism**. Using my behavioral expertise, I addressed the root causes of my way of eating, and finally lost weight.

Now I offer to others in the same situation as mine the appropriate help I sought but never found. I help my clients by **targeting the underlying reasons why they eat their emotions** and building a life where they don't need the comfort of food anymore.

Unlike other approaches, I never talk about food, eating habits, or exercise with my clients. If you struggled as I did, you already know everything there is to know about healthy lifestyles. With me, you will embark on a journey to discover who you are when you don't mute your emotions with food, and make the necessary changes to live a fulfilled life, where you don't need the comfort of food anymore.

Table of

# CONTENTS

5

**Introduction**

7

**Trust**

8

**Communication**

9

**Patience**

10

**Empathy**

11

**Affection & Interest**

12

**Flexibility**

13

**Appreciation**

14

**Room for Growth**

15

**Respect**

16

**Reciprocity**

17

**Thank You**





# INTRODUCTION

## THIS CLASS PURPOSES

Like me and many others, you probably have lived with emotional eating for a long time. For some of us, it has almost become a part of who we are, and we don't question why we eat without being hungry anymore. But none of us was born an emotional eater. **There is always a starting point.** Usually, it happens at a moment in our life when the circumstances do not allow us to express our emotions in an emotionally safe enough context.

In the beginning, there is a choice. Our choice. **The choice to not express what we feel.** Then we get stuck with those usually intense feelings, and we don't know what to do with them. Our inner tension increases as we lock our feelings in. They end up taking up so much of our inner space that sometimes we are barely able to make it through our daily routine. We start looking for ways to diffuse those unspoken feelings. For us, the way is food. And it works so well that we keep on using it over the years.

**Not expressing what we truly feel becomes a pattern,** and we get used to eating our stress, loneliness, and boredom away. We don't wonder why we get bored, stressed, or lonely in our daily routine. Neither do we try to bring change so we get less bored, stressed, or lonely anymore. We just eat and repeat the pattern we've been stuck into for a long time.



## INTRODUCTION

### HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS WITH OTHERS ARE ESSENTIAL

As Emotional Eaters, **eating our feelings is mostly how we handle relationships that have gone wrong:** partnerships, friendships or family relationships that are unloving, controlling, or toxic, or where trust has been broken.

A significant part of our emotional eating recovery journey consists in choosing healthy, balanced relationships for ourselves. So, **what does a healthy relationship look like?** That can be difficult to navigate.

Many of us don't know all the positive outcomes we deserve to have within a relationship. Some of us grew up watching their parents or other family members act out chronically toxic patterns, then have defined those patterns as "normal" and now have difficulty understanding the baseline of what a good relationship looks like.

Well, here is a place to start. Healthy, functional relationships have the characteristics explored in this lesson. None should be optional, in any relationship. First because you deserve to be in healthy relationships. And also because **your emotional eating is likely to be activated when any of these characteristics is missing from your relationships.**



Trust is among the most important relationship characteristics. Without trust, there is the lack of a solid foundation on which to build emotional intimacy, and your potential for hurt — and emotional eating — grows ever bigger.

# TRUST

Without trust, you will be left constantly unsure of whether you can count on your partner, family member, or friend to come through for you, and whether or not they really mean what they are saying. Without trust in your relationship, you are exposed to stress and uncertainty, both major emotional eating triggers.

*Example of a relationship where trust is broken or absent: While I am completely open and they know all about my life, my friends and my schedule, my partner is very protective of their privacy: their phone is locked or switched off, I know very few of their friends, and they would sometimes call me at the last minute to change our plans, without further explanation.*



*Trust is the fruit of a relationship in which you know you are loved.*

*William P. Young*





Communicating honestly and respectfully, especially about things that are difficult, is something that does not come automatically to everyone.

# COMMUNICATION

Using emotional eating as a coping mechanism, **many of us may have learned to keep uncomfortable things under the surface** for the sake of harmony or the appearance of perfection. We also may have never even learned how to acknowledge difficult feelings to ourselves.

*Example of a relationship where communication can be improved: When my best friend and I have a disagreement, I am so afraid they would reject me that I just shut up and agree with whatever they say, to avoid conflict and keep a light, joyful atmosphere between us.*



*Ultimately the bond of all companionship, whether in marriage or in friendship, is conversation.*

*Oscar Wilde*



No one can be perfectly patient all the time, and factors like lack of sleep, stress, or physical health problems will make any of us more easily agitated at various points in life — that's part of being human. But partners in a healthy, loving relationship extend each other a basic common denominator of **patience that allows for peace, flexibility, and support when one person is having a bad day or is not at their best.**

## PATIENCE

As Emotional Eaters, we tend to be flexible and adaptable. When our partner, friends, or family members are impatient with us, they often create a dynamic of insecurity in the relationship, and the feeling to not be loved, or conditionally loved for us. These feelings build up our anxiety and feed our emotional eating. It is important to **ask the people involved with you to adjust** to the ebbs and flows of their moods in day-to-day life — within reason — to allow you to feel unconditionally loved.

*Example of a relationship where patience is missing:  
As a child, my father expected me to bring home only A's. A single B would send my reports flying and him yelling at me. As an adult his expectations for perfection have stayed the same and I dread seeing disappointment in his eyes if I make choices he disapproves of.*



*With love and  
patience, nothing is  
impossible.*

*Daisaku Ikeda*



# EMPATHY

As emotional eaters, we tend to be more empathetic than average and easily understand a situation from someone else’s perspective. Sometimes too easily and so often, that we forget to consider our own perspective and emotions in those situations. As we withdraw ourselves from the equation and make it as easy as we can for everyone, we train our close people to display less empathy for us too, and to not consider how we feel. As we start feeling disregarded or misunderstood, we might turn to food to soothe ourselves, because we don’t know how to put ourselves back in the equation.

*Example of a relationship where empathy is missing: When I try to talk to my father about how I felt during certain difficult family times of my childhood, he calls me ungrateful. He told me he worked hard to put a roof over my head and food on my plate, and that I should thank him rather than complain about whatever “whim” he did not give into.*

Being willing to take another person’s perspective is helpful in so many cases — whether in parenting, being a good neighbor, or even just letting someone merge in front of you on the highway. And it is even more important in your close relationships.

Empathy is crucial for healthy relationships that will allow you to recover permanently from emotional eating. You are entitled to it, and if you cannot get it, you are legitimate to adjust how close you want to be with the person who cannot or won’t show you empathy.



*One doesn’t have to operate with great malice to do great harm. The absence of empathy and understanding are sufficient.*

*Charles M. Blow*



It goes without saying that love should be a part of any healthy relationship with your family and your romantic partner. But more subtle than love is the expression of that love, in the form of affection and a **genuine interest** — a **liking** of each other.

## AFFECTION & INTEREST

Small physical gestures of affection, like **hugs, kisses, comforting touch, and true interest in each other** can go a long way to keep feeling comforted and secure within your relationship. If you don't get enough of these to match your needs, you will likely turn to food to compensate for them.

*Example of a relationship with insufficient affection and interest: My partner is against any display of affection in public, as they think it's inappropriate. But I don't get much affection at home either, as they avoid physical touch and tend to have hobbies of their own. It seems I am unable to overlap some activities we both would enjoy. Sometimes I feel we are just roommates.*



*Affection is responsible for nine-tenths of whatever solid and durable happiness there is in our lives.*

*C. S. Lewis*



Relationships take compromise. The key component that makes for good compromise is flexibility. It's important that **both people involved in any kind of relationship show flexibility** in day-to-day life and decision-making.

## FLEXIBILITY

In healthy relationships with family, friends, or romantic partners, both people involved are willing to **adjust as needed to the changes and growth** — positive and negative — that may come about during a long-term relationship. They evaluate on a joint level, especially during conflicts, what matters most to each person within the relationship, and how that should be prioritized. **If you're the one always doing the bending**, that imbalance can leave you feeling undervalued or even disrespected over time. It might generate emotions you will feel you have no room to express in the relationship and numb with food.

*Example of a relationship lacking flexibility: I have a good job that pays well. When I had an opportunity to reach a better work-life balance for a less money, it was a deal breaker for them as we could no longer afford the same lifestyle. There was no room for discussion. My well-being was not factored-in at all.*



*Adaptability is about  
the powerful  
difference between  
adapting to cope and  
adapting to win.*

*Max McKeown*



Mutual appreciation makes us feel happier and more secure with in our relationships with family, friends, or romantic partners. Even small expressions of gratitude and appreciation help improve relationship satisfaction.

# APPRECIATION

So, the next time you think it doesn't matter whether your family member, partner, or friend says "thank you" for something you did, think again. If you get negative feelings when you notice a lack of appreciation from someone important to you, it is a normal reaction. As an Emotional Eater, turning to food in these situations probably is one of your first responses to that lack of appreciation.

*Example of a relationship lacking appreciation:  
I am always initiating calls and meetings with my best friend, except when they need something from me. I don't hear from them as long as I don't call them.*



*Too often we underestimate the power of a touch, a smile, a kind word, a listening ear, an honest compliment, or the smallest act of caring, all of which have the potential to turn a life around.*

*Leo Buscaglia*





Relationships with family, friends, or romantic partners sometimes grow stale because people feel stuck and unable to progress, either as individuals or as a part of that relationship.

It is unrealistic — and downright unhealthy — to expect that someone will remain the exact same across months, years, and decades of a relationship. Hopes, fears, goals, and interests constantly evolve, and that is a very good thing.

## ROOM FOR GROWTH

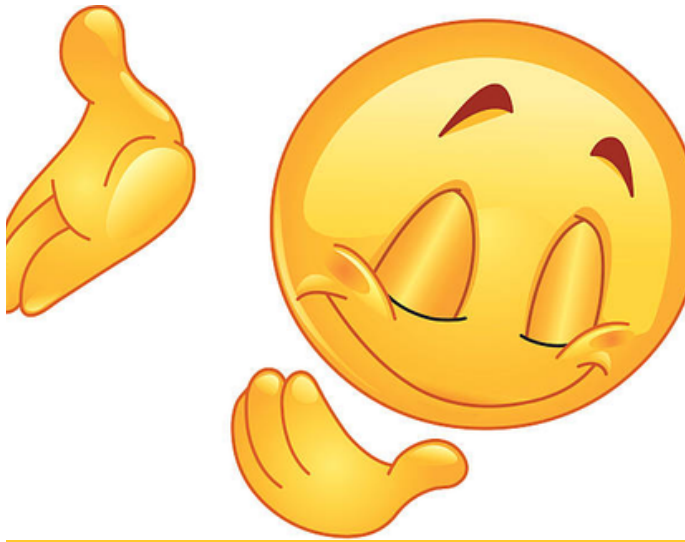
Both people need **space to grow in a relationship**. If you feel pigeonholed into your younger self, like the other person doesn't try to take an interest in learning what's important to you, or like the other person sets expectations that are inflexible, you lack space in that relationship to express who you really are today. As an Emotional Eater, you will likely turn to food to release the inner tension between who you are expected to be and who you are today.

*Example of a relationship with not enough room to grow: My parents have issues seeing me as a responsible, independent grown-up. I am now an adult, but they still expect me to behave with them like when I was a child, and they want a say in every aspect of my life. If I don't answer the phone when they call, they immediately think I had an accident. They want to know where I am at all times and validate – or invalidate – my romantic relationships.*



*Love does not consist  
in gazing at each  
other, but in looking  
outward together in  
the same direction.*

*Antoine de Saint-  
Exupery*



We often associate the idea of respect with people or concepts that are not intimate with each other: respecting one's elders, respecting symbols of religious faith, or respecting authority. But respect is every bit as important within a close relationship, if not more so.

# RESPECT

In healthy relationships, people **talk to each other in ways that don't debase, invalidate, or belittle**. They value each other's time and opinions like they value their own. They protect each other's privacy and don't use each other as the butt of jokes or as hired help to constantly clean up the apartment or make a thankless dinner. When respect begins to erode within a relationship, it leads to hurt feelings and sometimes serious emotional damage. As an Emotional Eater, you might numb those difficult feelings with food, if you experience a lack of respect in your relationships.

*Example of a relationship lacking respect: my partner tells me they will take me to a fancy restaurant for my birthday. On D-day, they get busy at work and don't show up, without letting me know beforehand. When I get mad, they snap back, telling me I should just have gone out with friends instead of waiting for them.*



*You can't force someone to respect you, but you can refuse to be disrespected.*

*Anonymous*





## RECIPROCITY

The most important is that both members of the relationship each find a way to give something to the relationship and the other person — especially in the form of emotional support — when they can. **If you don't feel supported as much as you need in your relationships, you might feel used and unseen.** This might lead to repeated emotional eating, in order to cope with the difficult situations you are faced with and would need support with. You might also turn to emotional eating with the realization your loved one doesn't support you the way you support them.

*Example of a relationship lacking reciprocity: My mother has needed financial support for years, that I have happily provided. But when I recently faced a difficult breakup and I needed to talk, she didn't want to hear anything about it.*

In healthy partnerships with family, friends, or romantic partners, the tallying that early relationships show ("He picked me up at the airport last week, so I owe him a favor") fades into the background as a new, trusting equilibrium takes its place — you both just generally do for each other when needed. In an ideal situation, **the give-and-take roughly works out to equal over time, and neither partner feels resentful.**

In romantic relationships especially, the give-and-take sometimes never becomes equal (e.g., one partner needs long-term medical care, is naturally a more happily nurturing person, or struggles with a psychological disorder). And that can be okay, as long as both partners feel comfortable overall with the level of give-and-take as it exists.



*Reciprocity is the key  
to a successful  
relationship.  
Chandan Negi*



## CONCLUSION

**THANK YOU!**

**You may recognize yourself in several of the above descriptions.** Please try to keep negative self-judgment at bay. I have personally practiced every type of emotional eating multiple times. **You are doing your best.** If you are here today, you have already committed yourself to a change and made the first step. The first one often is the hardest to make. You're on your way, just keep going!

Whether with your parents, siblings, spouse or partner, friends, and coworkers, **a relationship that does not trigger your emotional eating is a healthy and balanced relationship.** That's the type of relationship we need to aim for, to be able to consistently keep our emotional eating at bay.

Thank you for your trust throughout this lesson. I know some aspects might have felt uncomfortable. That's the thing about emotional eating: it is the emotionally most convenient choice on a short-term basis, as it allows us to numb ourselves and dissociate from any uncomfortable feeling we might feel. But we both know that in the long run, eating doesn't make us happier.

Today, you made the choice to face where you are in your relationship with food. It means you have now made the first step on your emotional eating recovery journey. The first step is always the hardest, and you already took it. Yes, it is already done. Already behind you. How does that feel?





# FEEDBACK

## DID YOU ENJOY THE LESSON?

I would love to hear your opinion about this lesson, and how to make it a more enjoyable experience. Please email me at [marion@nevereatyouremotionsagain.com](mailto:marion@nevereatyouremotionsagain.com) or directly on [my website contact page](#).

01

On a scale from 1 to 10, 1 for “I did not like it at all”, and 10 for “I enjoyed it very much”, how would you rate this lesson?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

02

What has this lesson brought to you? How did it help you?

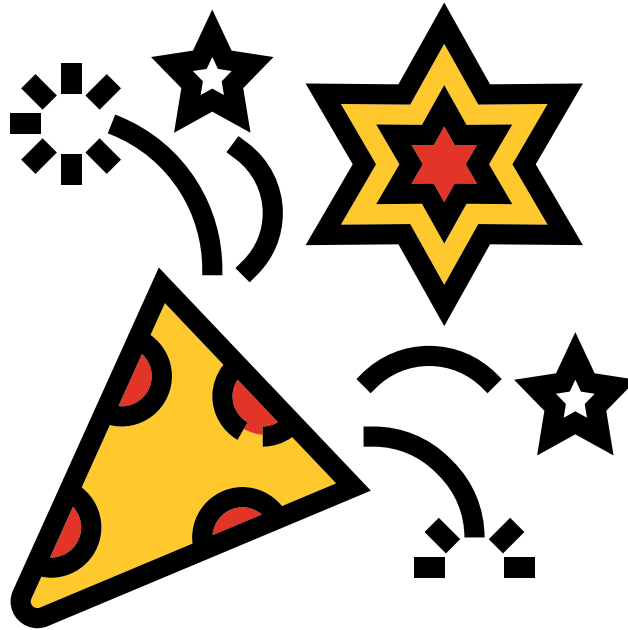
03

What have you become more aware of?

**You Did It!**

# THANK YOU!

This lesson was not easy to navigate and required a lot of introspection.  
But you have been up to the challenge. Congratulations!



## Want more information?

If you want to quickstart your emotional eating recovery journey but you don't know how or where to start, you can learn more about my approach on my website: [www.nevereatyouremotionsagain.com](http://www.nevereatyouremotionsagain.com)

[LEARN MORE](#)

let's connect



Never Eat Your Emotions Again

# HAPPY CLIENT

*The Never Eat Your Emotions Again Program has been a great way to kickstart my emotional eating recovery journey both with personal, close assistance, but also on my own terms and in my own time. I feel like I have the best of both worlds: individual, targeted help, and freedom.*

**BLAIR N.**

