

9 Mindset

Mistakes that feed the binge cycle





Welcome!

I bet you're so fed up with emotional eating, bingeing and feeling out of control with food, that you just want to finally find something, that works. Not just for a week, but for good.

I hear you. Having struggled with binge eating, my relationship with food and my body for over a decade, I found the exact mix of ingredients that are necessary to overcome disordered eating (and keep it that way).

I am a Registered Nutritional Therapy Practitioner BANT CNHC, specializing in supporting people with eating problems, disordered eating and a difficult relationship with food. This covers a range of issues, from diagnosed eating disorders to emotional eating, binge eating, yo-yo dieting and weight concerns.

And I can't wait to support you too! *Milda*

Here's what you need to know before you can truly stop binge eating and emotional eating...

You've tried it all from the newest trendiest diets and cleanses to self-help books to talk therapy, yet you still can't crack the code to stopping bingeing, emotional eating and overeating for good. Even if you've been really "good" for a while, it still keeps creeping back and you feel completely out of control around food once again.

You may even get stuck in a binge cycle- a vicious pattern that includes overeating or binging followed by guilt and shame. This then leads to more restrictive eating or dieting, which then leads to more overeating or binging.

Sounds familiar?



Emotional eating and bingeing can be a challenge to overcome, especially if the binge cycle feels all-consuming. But what if I told you that there are certain mindset traps that many people fall into which make it even harder to break the binge eating cycle?

So let's explore 9 of the most common mindset mistakes that can feed into binge eating cycles I see in my private practice, and how you can avoid them.

#1 “If I skip breakfast, I will lose weight”



Many people I work with have a belief that if they skip breakfast or eat very little for breakfast, they are "saving calories" for later and they are "allowed" to eat more later. They may also think that they will automatically start to lose weight.

This belief can be left after dieting and diet-thinking where calories are the focus. This follows another redundant belief of "eat less, exercise more" for weight loss. As common sense as it sounds to eat less for weight loss, the body is extremely clever and adjusts to changes in the environment.

Not only skipping breakfast can lead to blood sugar imbalances, which lead to cravings, binge eating and overeating, but **it can also contribute towards slowing down the metabolism, leading to further weight gain in the long run.**

It's super important to start your day with a nutritious breakfast, so you can avoid unwanted cravings, emotional eating and overeating later in the day.

#2 “I’ve blown it now, but I will start again tomorrow”

This is a common belief that can come up after eating more than you had planned to, or after eating something you deem as "bad" or "unhealthy". It's easy to fall into the all-or-nothing mindset with food, thinking that if you eat one unhealthy meal, then the rest of the day, week, month (or even year!) is ruined.

The problem with this belief is that it can lead to further overeating, **as you feel like you have "blown it" anyway, so you might as well keep eating. It can also trigger the “last supper” binge eating episode**, as you feel like you need to eat everything in sight before starting again tomorrow. What could have been a biscuit or two too many turns into a pack of biscuits plus this and that and a ton of regret and shame that follows.



Instead of beating yourself up after eating something "unhealthy", or overeating, forgive yourself in the moment, remind yourself that you are learning and keep going. This is likely going to defuse the binge and the further all-or-nothing mindset. Remember, that you are not defined by one meal or one day of eating.

#3 “I can’t have fats, they will make me fat!”

You may be avoiding fats as you may have a belief that fats will make you fat. If you've ever been a regular in a slimming or diet club, you may likely be afraid of fats due to their high-calorie content. **But there's a good reason that fats are high in calories!**

Majority of people I see in my clinic notice a massive reduction in cravings and overeating the moment we increase the beneficial fat content, because fats are an essential part of the diet and they help to satiate hunger, help with the absorption of certain vitamins and minerals, and they are needed for a healthy brain and nervous system. **If fats are missing, the body keeps sending hunger signals and cravings.**

Additionally, fats take a long time to be digested and if you're avoiding fats, you are then getting hungry quicker, which increases snacking and grazing. And that means **constantly elevated insulin levels that further imbalance blood sugar, leading to more sugar cravings and possible weight gain.**

Aim to include beneficial fats, such as nuts and seeds, oily fish, such as salmon and mackerel, avocados, olive oil and cheese to help increase satiety, reduce cravings and promote better energy.



#4 “I had a binge, so I shouldn’t eat dinner”

This is a really common belief that can trigger the binge-restrict cycle. So, you've had a binge and eaten more than you planned or felt comfortable with. You feel guilty, ashamed and disgusted with yourself and think the answer is to punish yourself by skipping the next meal or restricting your calories for the day/week.

Whether you do this consciously or subconsciously, the problem with restricting calories and nutrients and skipping meals is **that it can trigger further binges, as you are likely going to be even more hungry the next time you eat.** Additionally, your blood sugar levels become unbalanced and it can create more of the same (why can't I go ONE day without a binge?).



Instead of restricting or skipping meals, aim to eat regularly, every 3-4 hours to help regulate blood sugar levels and hunger hormones. If you do have a binge, don't punish yourself, but instead try and figure out what emotions or situations triggered it. This way you can start to address the root cause, rather than using restriction as a way to cope.

#5 “I’ll skip the carbs”



Many people avoid carbs, as they believe that carbs will make them gain weight and that carbs are "bad". Sadly carbs have a bad rap, even though they are an essential part of the diet and are needed for primary energy, brain function and to fuel exercise. Many quick-result, fad diets suggest cutting carbs out completely and the new rise of keto diet popularity also hasn't helped.

If you've been avoiding carbs, you may be more likely to overeat or binge on them when you do have them, as your body is likely craving them. Additionally, by cutting out an entire food group, you are likely to become deficient in certain vitamins, minerals and fibre, which can further trigger cravings and overeating.

Aim to include carbs that feel less scary to start with and increase them over time. Start with adding sweet potatoes, oats, whole grain bread, quinoa, beans and lentils to help regulate blood sugar levels and hunger hormones.

#6 “I have no time to eat”

You might be juggling work, family and social life and your own health and wellbeing might get put on the back burner. You may believe that you don't have time to eat or do a gazillion other things while eating. It may feel like it's not a big deal, but if you're eating while watching TV/ scrolling/ checking your emails, you're not really focusing on your meal and that can be problematic.

Firstly, your brain needs time to register that you're eating and how much you're eating and when you're full. **It takes around 20 minutes for the brain to receive these signals, so if you're not focusing on your meal, you may end up overeating before your brain has had a chance to catch up.** Additionally, if you're used to eating quickly or on the go, it can start to feel like a chore to sit down and eat slowly and mindfully. However, this is an important part of the process and can help you tune into your hunger cues and how much you're really eating.



If you find it hard to make time to eat, specifically block time out in your diary just for that, even if it's just 10-15 minutes to sit down and eat without distractions. Turn off the TV, put away your phone and just focus on your food. Treat it as an important meeting with yourself and don't let it get pushed by the endless thing-to-do list.

#7 “Food should be fuel ONLY”

There’s a common belief that food should be seen as fuel ONLY and that it is a healthy approach to food. That you should only fuel the body like you would fuel a car and think nothing more of it. However, food is so much more than just fuel and this belief can lead to two issues that can trigger overeating.



The first is when you see food as ONLY fuel, you may try and cut out "unhealthy" or "bad" foods, as you believe that they are not doing anything for your body. However, this can lead to feelings of deprivation and restriction, which can eventually trigger a binge. All food provides our bodies with energy and nutrients and no food is "bad" in itself.

The second issue is when you see food as fuel only, you may forget to enjoy it. Or even worse, something that you SHOULDN'T enjoy and **when you actually enjoy your meals you may feel guilty, ashamed and that you have done something wrong (you really haven't, food also is to be enjoyed!).**

Food is so much more than just fuel: it is social, it is a celebration, it is stopping in the moment and it's many many other things. Instead of thinking of food as ONLY fuel, try and think of it as nourishment for your body and soul. Nourish your body with the nutrients it needs and enjoy the flavours, textures and smells of your food.

#8 “I can only eat when I am really hungry”

This belief often comes from diet culture and the idea that you should only eat when you are really hungry. That you should be able to control your hunger and not let it control you. This can also be mistaken for intuitive eating, where you may think that eating when you are ravenous is actually listening to your body's signals. Likely, it was time to respond to the body's signals when it was gently nudging, not screaming for food.

I'm sure you've experienced the feeling of being really "hangry" and unable to feel satisfied, no matter what you eat. **Waiting until you are really hungry can often lead to overeating, as your body is trying to "make up" for the missed meals.** It can also lead to making food choices you may regret later, as you are more likely to crave quick foods, that may not have as much balance and may trigger the blood sugar dysregulation rollercoaster.

If you're experiencing binge eating and emotional eating, instead of waiting until you are really hungry to eat (and can't focus on much else), **try and eat every 3-4 hours to keep your hunger levels in check.** This doesn't mean you have to eat a full meal, perhaps a substantial snack or light meal instead will do.



#9 “I just need to lose weight first and then I’ll stop bingeing”

The diet industry is a multi-billion dollar industry for a reason: it perpetuates the belief that we can fix our problems by going on another diet or losing weight. However, if that were true, the second and third and fourth diets wouldn't be necessary, because the first one would have worked, right?

You may even feel so discouraged with weight gain from bingeing and emotional eating, that you want to fix the problem YESTERDAY. It’s a common belief that “I just need to lose this weight first, then I can address bingeing”. Some bad news is that research and my clinical practice show that **chances to lose weight and maintain it long-term are zero if you have an active binge eating pattern.**

Instead of trying to fix the problem with another diet, try and look at the underlying issues that are causing you to overeat and get solid professional support if you’re getting stuck. **What is triggering your binges? Where is your diet/ routines/ life out of balance?**

Address these underlying issues and work on finding more beneficial ways to cope as your priority and weight loss and body rebalancing tend to follow.



Need help with the next steps in overcoming binge eating, emotional eating and food obsession?



Book the **Food Peace Roadmap Session** with Milda and understand where EXACTLY you are getting stuck with your food habits and how to move forward

[GIVE ME THE ROADMAP](#)

