


Lovin' the Skin You're In



The Juicy
Woman's
Guide to
Making
Peace With
Food and
Friends
With Your
Body

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FOREWORD – by Beverly Nadler, CHT

When I first met Andrea at a class I was teaching in New York City, I knew she stood out -- though I didn't know exactly why at the time. Some years later, when I received an email from her, I realized what I had perceived in this dynamic young woman that set her apart -- she had a very curious mind and an exceptional ability to express herself.

When we began to work together, I discovered that Andrea takes in information like a sponge, that she immediately uses what she learns, and that she loves to share what she knows with others. She is a natural student *and* teacher. A rare combination!

If you're interested in improving your body image, self-image, self-esteem and/or your self-confidence, you're reading the right book. This book is as practical as it is fascinating and interesting. You will learn *what* to do and *how* to do it, in order to accomplish *your* goals.

Andrea is one of the few people who truly understand what "The Energy Model" (as described in my book, "Vibrational Harmony") is about. She knows that everything, *everything* – on the physical, mental, emotional and spiritual plane – is energy. She also knows that the laws of energy are *also* the Universal Laws that govern every aspect of our lives. Andrea *applies* this knowledge and understanding to her life. And she will show you how to apply it to *yours*.

If you're familiar with "The Secret," you've heard of The Law of Attraction. That's only one of the laws of energy, and it is really the Law of Vibration in operation. However, "The Secret" – as valuable as it has been in introducing the public to the concept that "everything is energy" -- does not describe *how* the Law of Vibration really works, nor does it explain the other Universal laws, which include the Laws of Polarity, Rhythm, Cause and Effect and Relativity. That's why so many people are not getting the results they expected from reading the book or watching the DVD.

The Energy Model explains that energy can never be created or destroyed, it can only be changed. And *that* is the "key" to transforming your life! You, like everything else in the Universe, are energy – your body is energy, your mind is energy, your beliefs, thoughts and feelings are all energy. You will learn how the energy of your mind and the energy of your body impact upon each other.

When Andrea first learned the energy-psychology techniques she has included in this fascinating book, she was startled to discover how well the techniques work. She soon became masterful in her application – not only to her body image, but to her entire life. She will show you how to use the powerful energy of your mind so that you too will be able to affect the energy in many areas of your life.

Did you know that your subconscious mind is like a computer, filled with "programs?" That these programs are the instructions for your life, just as the programs in your PC are the instructions for your electronic computer? Did you know that with energy-psychology

techniques you can literally “tap out” negative thoughts, feelings and subconscious programs that stop you from getting what you want? Did you know that there are other effective tools that can help you “reprogram” your subconscious mind? Most people don’t.

And the sad truth about many people who know some of the techniques is that they don’t use them! Stay with Andrea, for she will motivate and inspire you use what she shares. This exceptional book is the result of major changes in her life – changes she has made by using exactly what she is sharing with you.

Everything in this book comes from Andrea’s heart and personal experience!

Enjoy the journey she will take you on!

Love,

Beverly Nadler

Speaker, trainer, author of “Vibrational Harmony” and “Loving the Game of Life.”

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Introduction

“Life doesn’t begin 20 pounds from now.”

- Jessica Weiner, best-selling author and speaker

Every woman I have ever known who struggles with being overweight wishes deep down in her heart that she could love and accept her body and stop talking the language of fat. No matter what her age or size, she hopes that one day she will be able to stop arguing with her thighs, stomach, breasts, or whatever particular wobbly bits on her she despises most.

Your Thoughts Are Making You Fat!

First and foremost this is not a diet book. It is intended to give you tools to help heal your broken relationship with food and your body at the root of its source, your thoughts. If you’re an emotional eater struggling with excess weight; food has had the upper hand for a long time. Research now shows that no diet will ever fix that. If you’re uncomfortable with who you are and how you look, it’s not the fat on your body that needs to be addressed, it’s the fat in your head. Your thoughts are making you fat!

As a professional coach, body image/self esteem expert, former dieter and a curvy plus size gal myself, I’ve studied dieting for many years and learned that people are not limited by their bodies, only their minds. In the words of one of my mentors, Jack Canfield, best known as the co-author of the Chicken Soup for the Soul series and teacher in “The Secret,” “it doesn’t matter what you say to me, what’s important is what I tell myself after you finish speaking.” What stories are you telling yourself? What things have you been saying to your body? What feelings do you get every time you look in the mirror?

Albert Einstein, noted Nobel prize winner and famous physicist is considered by many to be the most believable scientific authority in the world. His theory of relativity rocked the scientific community by proving that everything including our bodies and our thoughts is made up entirely of energy. We’re living in a great big universal pot filled with an energetic life force that we all share in common. These subatomic particles of constantly moving bits of energy make up the world we know.

Movies like “The Secret,” and “What the Bleep Do We Know!,” has brought the ancient teachings of Hermetic philosophers to the forefront; your thoughts create your reality. The law of attraction has gone main stream. It is now common and accepted knowledge that thoughts are things, or at least represent the potential to become them. They are constantly moving and vibrating seeking out thoughts and things of similar vibration. Everything is vibration! What are you vibrating? What are you attracting into your life by the thoughts you think?

So you say you hate your thighs, your jiggle belly, flabby butt, those bat wing arms? What woman doesn’t have an area of her body that she hates? I used to be obsessed with hating my thighs too. Then one day after speaking with a friend and colleague of mine who had survived cancer twice, I understood that our thoughts have the power to heal or

make us sick. I began reading more about the mind body connection, craving knowledge desperate to find answers. I wondered, if people can heal themselves of cancer, why can't they transform a negative relationship with food? I found out that all it takes is a change of heart, a new way of thinking and feeling about your body and how you relate to food.

As Beverly Nadler, my dear mentor and former coach mentioned earlier in the Foreword, like a computer software program, we have an internal operating system called the subconscious mind. It's the warehouse that stores all of your life experiences, beliefs and interpretations about who you are and the world in which we live.

It keeps you under its thumb, stuck living and acting out endless loops of helpless, hopeless, useless behavior until you learn how to update, upgrade, and reprogram it. The nasty stories you tell yourself about your body are like bed time stories that instruct your brain to keep you focused on creating situations, people and things that prove your stories true. If you're slamming yourself and living in a victim world, you'll remain stuck until you change your subconscious programming.

EFT: Emotional Freedom at Your Fingertips

As a woman who survived a background filled with sexual and verbal abuse, keeping secrets and eating to stuff my feelings and frustration became a way of life for me. I have spent much of my life consumed with feeling helpless, blaming, hating and mistrusting, always believing that something was wrong with me and that I wasn't good enough. I was living a victim's existence.

On Saturday, April 17, 2004 my life changed. In a heart pounding crisis, reliving painful memories from my past, I was introduced to a technique called Emotional Freedom Technique or EFT that successfully neutralized haunts and hurts from my past in minutes.

EFT is one of several different types of energy psychology tools that I'll share here with you. That moment changed my entire perception of everything that I linked pain and pleasure to in my life.

For the first time ever, I felt emotionally free of the burden of my past. I knew in my heart that I had to do whatever it would take to share this discovery with other women. But because I still had a core identity of being a victim were still many negative fearful patterns and beliefs that needed to be addressed.

Over the next year, with the continued assistance and dedication of my beloved coach, Beverly Nadler, EFT did for me what 18 years of therapy failed to achieve. I was no longer comfortable doing, being or having the life of a victim. From that point on, I resolved to spread this kind of hope and healing to other women and dedicate myself to sharing this and other energy psychology tools.

As a student of Anthony Robbins, I know that it is our decisions that shape our destiny." I've literally walked through fire to learn this You can change what you link pain and pleasure to and that will change your life. I've done it and I know it's possible and this is what I want to share with other women. Life is a choice. You don't have to be unhappy. Pain will always be around, but suffering is a choice.

I am not a therapist, nor am I a psychologist, social worker or counselor. I am a professionally trained and certified Master Practitioner of Neuro Linguistic Programming. NLP is basically an entire arm of psychology devoted to teaching people

Comment [AA1]: Karen, this is the first mention that I make of EFT. Should I go on to explain that it is an Energy Psychology tool here or wait and explain it further later? Let me know what you think?

Comment [AA2]: Karen, I did the Firewalk at Tony's seminar, but this doesn't phrase it adequately. What do you think?

that they have choices. We don't have to be stuck in a box and live out our lives under the thumb of our subconscious programming. Under siege of stress, we often fall into knee jerk responses to our subconscious patterns keeping us locked in fear and self doubt.

Every memory and experience you've ever had, gets stored in your subconscious mind. This is where your self image resides. Science has shown that we have over 50,000 thoughts a day. You may or may not be aware of this nitter natter chatter in your head. Yet it accounts for the negative self talk or inner critic that governs everything you do and every thought you think.

If you are overweight, unhappy with your body, eating in response to your emotions, struggling with a fat or ugly self image, then the story that you continually tell yourself has become a source of pain in your life. Law of Attraction teaches that what you focus on, you attract. If you're focusing on how much you hate your fat thighs, droopy breasts, and flabby arms, you will continuously recreate those circumstances in your life. Unable to logically explain why, you'll find yourself in patterns supporting that truth.

Diets by their very nature support a negative self image, pushing you to believe that something is wrong with you and guiding you to disconnect and distrust your body's internal wisdom. The same way that your body precisely regulates the function of every organ and cell, it knows what's best for you. To tune into that wisdom, you must go within.

Let me make it clear that this is not a diet book. I don't prescribe to tell you that my way is best or that I know exactly what you should do. I'm still on my own path to recovery. Two and a half years ago I made the decision to take steps to end my growing weight and food obsession. I decided to say goodbye to dieting.

Similar to the cancer survivors who were taught to use visualization techniques by Dr. O. Carl Simonton and his wife, Stephanie Matthews Simonton, I will teach you to envision yourself a naturally slender woman from the inside out.

I'll teach you a strategy that I learned from one of my most beloved mentors, Connirae Andreas. In addition to being one of the original co-developers of NLP, and a brilliant psychologist, she is also the creator of The Naturally Slender Eating Strategy. By following her method, you'll begin to cultivate new habits of self love and empowerment to transform your damaged relationship with food.

Your journey begins with a spoonful of self acceptance. By learning to welcome and fully accept the good, bad and the ugly, flab, wrinkles, bumps and all, everything becomes possible. Resistance melts away.

In the words of one of my most beloved role models, Jessica Weiner, best selling author and speaker, "life doesn't begin 20 pounds from now." If you're an emotional eater or a woman who feels disconnected from your body, you may have been parceling out bits and pieces of yourself and unknowingly giving them away to others.

By nature of our culture, women have traditionally been conditioned to take on the role of the lover, the nurturer, the fixer upper. If you are a people pleaser like I was, you may struggle with boundaries and have a heck of a hard time saying the word, "No" As a consequence of that, you may notice that there's not much of you left at the end of the day.

Food has probably become your emotional refuge. Don't blame yourself. You're only doing what your body has done before that has made you feel safe. There's no shame in that. However if you're no longer willing to allow food to hold dominion over you, it may be time for a change.

The resounding cry of the diet organizations is that you're overweight because you have no self control or discipline. That's a bold faced lie. Being overweight simply means that you're carrying a burden of pain. Studies show that diets don't work for up to 98% of all people because they don't address the emotions that drive you to eat. I will.

I'll teach you strategies and tools so that nobody can ever again hold your self esteem hostage. The simple truth is you don't have a problem with food. You have a problem with trust. I'm going to teach you how to tune into your inner wisdom so that your body can begin the process of recovery and healing itself, lifting you up out from under weight and food obsession.

Despite what the media flings at you, you are not your thighs, frizzy hair, double chin, jiggly tummy, warts or your droopy breasts. You are so much more than a set of parts. You are a unique and wonderful woman who has unconsciously given food more power than it deserves. In order to take back that control and strip food of its hold on you, you have to be willing to face it and break through your fears. As Richard Simmons says, food is not the enemy, your hunger is."

Many of the concepts that I'll teach you in this book are pretty unique and not often found in books discussing body image or weight loss. If you've grown up in a diet culture, they may go against the grain of everything that you've learned.

The challenge is that you can only love yourself, make friends with food and accept your body if you're willing to stop playing the role of victim. Are you?

If you are, then follow me and I'll show you how to bust loose from the poor little me-ain't I helpless game, reclaim your life and love the skin you're in now, today. Turn the page and let's get started.

Lovin the Skin You're In _Getting Reacquainted with Your Body_11_10_08

Most women who hate their bodies, and obsess about their weight also struggle with eating issues. In Doreen Virtue's book, "Losing Your Pounds of Pain: Breaking the Link between Abuse, Stress and Overeating, she says that, "every extra pound you carry on your body equals a pound of emotional pain you're carrying in your heart."

Whatever the pain is that burdens you and drives your urge to eat, stems from feeling unsafe and discontent in some area of your life. One of my mentors, Cathy Vartuli says that, people who don't feel safe, dislike, distrust and disrespect their bodies. Do you sometimes feel like your body is your worst enemy?

Rick Wilkes is an EFT expert and coach who says that, "when we become dissociated from our bodies, we can either become focused on our past or worry about our future, avoiding the right here, right now. The things that disconnect us include traumas and other ways that we stop listening to our body for good reasons."

I encourage you to take the view that your body is intelligent and it's working on your behalf. It's not going to deceive you or send you off on a wild goose chase. Its messages will guide you to discover how to create harmony in your relationship with food and your life.

Since the movie, "The Secret" was released in 2006 and Oprah's shows about the film were televised in February 2007, it rocked the world by boosting the level of public awareness and generating an ongoing phenomenon that continues to awaken masses of people to the fact that everything is energy and the Law of Attraction is real. This basic universal principle handed down through the ages once considered to be too mystical and woo woo to discuss in public venues has now gone mainstream and taken the world by storm. We'll discuss The Law of Attraction and the other universal laws in the next chapter.

The critical thing to keep in mind is that your body responds to every thought you think and whatever you truly believe about it. If you've been using food to shut

down the messages of your body, you can reconnect back into your body's wisdom, safely and gently using simple exercises that I'll share with you throughout this book, some of which I've adapted and learned from both Rick and Cathy.

Field Work

Buy or use a notebook, or consider creating a new folder on your computer that you will dedicate specifically to completing the exercises throughout this book. Each time that you do an exercise, which I'll refer to as a Try It! as a wink and nod to my beloved days as a Girl Scout leader, write down the name and description of each Try It!. Then following that, and Try It!. To sweeten the honey pot and make it easier for you to connect with your body more often, I'll give you little mindful meditations designed to increase your awareness and help you to make friends with your body. I call these, "Self Image Makeover Morsels." Copy each of these into your notebook along with the Try Its! in the book.

Consider that in order to get something out of this process, you must first put something in. By deciding to read this book, you are making an investment in your happiness. By actually doing the Try Its!, you are doubling your rate of return.

Make sure to keep everything in a safe spot. That way you can easily find the exercises in one place and refer back to them again.

Try It: Who's In Control Here?

Make a list of all the parts of your body that you don't like, feel critical of and embarrassed by. Then next to each body part, write what you would like to say to it.

For example, you may write down, "butt". Next to "butt", write something like "I hate you, you disgusting, fat, flabby butt. I wish that I could take a butcher's knife and slice you up. I'd cut off a few chops and roasts and still be able to feed a family of four with plenty left over to fill my jeans. Write what you really feel.

Weird huh? Well I want you to start connecting with how you honestly feel about your body. Angry? I bet. Despite what you've been told, anger is good. Let's deal with anger because it's pretty easily accessible to most people. We can all get angry, can't we?

As a movie buff mom, I'll share many of my favorite films with you from all different genres. In a scene from the movie, "Batman Begins", the character Ra'as Al Gul played by Liam Neeson warns Bruce Wayne, played by Christian Bale

(Batman) that he must learn to deal constructively with his anger over the death of his parents or it will toxify his thoughts like poison running through his veins. Al Gul says, “your anger gives you great power, but if you let it, it will destroy you.”

I’m going to encourage you to get in touch with your anger and any other negative or overwhelming emotions you may have. This is because those blocked and unexpressed emotions are keeping you stuck in patterns of self abuse and destruction.

How Negative Energy Affects Your Body

When a pressure-filled, upsetting or traumatic event occurs, or is remembered, your body produces stress laden chemicals. Under siege of stress, adrenaline, cortisol and other damaging anxiety-related hormones pour into every cell in your body. These nasty buggers are the building blocks of a neurochemical “lock” that bolts the feeling of the upsetting event, memory or situation into your body’s tissues, attaching itself like velcro to your cells.

This is when you notice physical discomforts like cravings, a knot of tension in your neck, or that painful twinge in your back, a sour stomach, or a pulsing, stabbing pain across your forehead. These knots and twinges always have a mental/emotional component and we best know them as tension and anxiety, By any other name, it’s called STRESS!

We usually just ignore these signals when they crop up, and do our best to charge right through the inconvenience. Pretty soon, however the pain, desire, irritation or ache becomes more pronounced, increasing in intensity, until we are pushed to the point of taking a pill or finding another quick fix to remedy the pain. Now beside medical intervention, there is another alternative. Energy medicine.

Energy Therapy: How to Move The Blocks and Obstacles Keeping You Stuck

Einstein did us a wonderful service by proving that all things, including the thoughts we think are made up of matter, and that atoms are the building blocks of all matter. Everything shares one common element, in that all things broken down to their simplest form are simply a collection of atoms, moving and vibrating particles of energy.

Your body acts like a magnet in that it is a low level electro magnetically charged system, which naturally produces its own energy in the form of a weak electro magnetic current. From this, a subtle energy field known as an aura extends beyond the body to create a halo-like effect emanating from the body.

Known to the ancient Chinese as Qi (pronounced “chee”) this describes the name given to all vital life energy. According to Eastern medicine, when the flow of this energy is blocked, or imbalanced, it can trigger physical illness.

This Qi travels along certain specific channels throughout the body known as meridians. The energy in these meridians can be tapped into or modified, moved by touching certain pressure or power points on the skin's surface. Many ancient cultures have used these energy power points to heal and reduce stress.

Today modern science has been making quantum leaps uncovering new healing therapies making use of this groundbreaking information. These "energy wellness" tools also known as energy psychology medicine, are extremely effective in not only uplifting our spirits, raising our vibration, but also healing people of physical pain, bodily dysfunction, emotional upsets, and the crippling negative beliefs that disempower us and tend to keep us stuck in life, preventing us from succeeding at achieving our intended goals.

I've been incredibly blessed to have been introduced to the power of these energy medicine or energy therapy techniques and use them often personally and in my coaching. When I had my first encounter with them, it created such an enormous momentum of positive change in my life that still continues 5 years later.

Let me explain how it works. It's so important to keep in mind that everything, everything, everything is broken down into energy, in its simplest form, atoms, quantum bits of energy, moving, pulsing, vibrating, living breathing energy; your purse, your desk, your house, your ears, your breasts, your thoughts, your thighs, everything! That said, we can use techniques to change the energy in your body and that changes the way you feel.

Being overweight and unhappy with your body, your energy is depleted and depressed because your body is in constant communication with your subconscious mind, it responds to what you think about it. This master control switch, your subconscious mind is your humble servant and fulfills your every expectation. If you have low expectations, that's what you get. You can say that you want to lose weight and try your best to do it as most of us do, but because deep down you don't believe that you deserve to be thin or are capable of having the body you desire, you just won't get it, because your thoughts are not conducive to creating the conditions that make it possible for you to have a thin body. You need to do some tweaking and change the focus of your energy.

Basically you can't be thin, if you're acting fat.

There are 2 main types of energy therapy methods, meridian based and intentional. Emotional Freedom Technique and Tapas Acupressure Technique are both examples of meridian based energy wellness tools. They have their roots in the ancient science of Acupuncture.

In Acupuncture, a certified practitioner inserts

needles into certain specific areas on these meridian power points of the body in order to reduce stress and guide the body to heal holistically.

You can move and modify your body's energy four different ways:

Tapping - by gently tapping on the endpoints of these channels of energy, as is done in Emotional Freedom Technique, or it's predecessor, Thought Field Therapy.

Warming – By placing the hands over the body, as in Reiki

Holding – by placing the hands directly on the body as in Tapas Acupressure Technique.

Intention - by simply thinking about moving the energy. When you redirect your thoughts you affect your body.

Modern science has proven that there is an energy field inside of us as well as outside our bodies. This has been well documented in modern science. Dr. Roger Callahan is a clinical psychologist in California who created a technique called Thought Field Therapy based on combining his knowledge of acupuncture with traditional talk therapy methods.

In his book, *Tapping the Healer Within: Using Thought Field Therapy to Instantly Conquer Your Fears, Anxieties, and Emotional Distress*, he shares the many scientific examples of proof given showing evidence of this energy field.

In studies spanning two decades, Dr. Bjorn Nordenstrom, a Swedish scientist, radiologist and former president of the Nobel prize nominating committee, documented the existence of these electrical circuits in the body.

He was intrigued by a halo effect that he noticed given off by malignant lung tumor X-rays he had taken. Seeking an explanation for this phenomenon, he tracked and identified a separate circulatory energy system in the body, which he felt was just as significant to physical well-being as the blood circulatory system. He believed that disruptions in the human energy system may play a role in the development of diseases as serious as cancer. On the heels of that discovery, he began to treat patients with terminal cancer diagnoses with applications of electrical currents. His work showed promising results.

In 1995, Pierre de Vernejoul proved concrete existence that the meridian network does exist.” After injecting non harmful radioactive chemicals into the arms and legs of volunteers at the sites of specific accupoints, he was able to track the movement of the chemicals through gamma-camera imaging which showed lines of travel identical to the Chinese meridians of old.

The bottom line: the meridian system is an actual, clearly defined network-the same one the Chinese have been using for millennia. Thus the energy system used in Thought Field therapy and all the other energy therapies is genuine, and not a bunch of hooey.

The good news is I'll teach you how to channel this energy so that you can unblock the flow and get it moving again, freeing yourself from its destructive powers.

Your anger and other negative emotions have been eating away at you in the form of overeating, negative self talk and keeping you hidden from shining your light. It can't be ignored or suppressed any longer. In order for you to get back your life and learn how to love your body, you must acknowledge your anger. Anger is a strong emotion that is actually like a mardi gras mask disguising other emotions behind its deceitful façade.

By focusing on how you really feel, and learning how to acknowledge and then release the pain associated with it, you'll free up the stuck energy in your body and connect to your innate ability to nurture your needs without resorting to overeating.

I want you to be honest about what's on your mind, and be true to your feelings. No sugar coating and no Pollyanna stuff. If you want to curse and swear in your book, then that's what you must do. Express your real feelings. I know those are often pretty ugly, but you certainly don't want to walk around trying to fool yourself into thinking stuff that's not true. Here's why.

The Mind/Body Connection

Science in the field of mind/body medicine has proven that our minds and bodies are interconnected and in constant communication with each other. Throughout this book you'll read many stories and scientific studies showing how our minds and bodies are connected which will enable you to see the mind/body connection at work.

If you're overweight and struggle with negative thoughts about your body, discount your needs and eat to soothe your pain, then your body is trying its best to handle the surge of stress chemicals flooding it, by creating a degree of emotional discomfort.

This physical discomfort I mentioned earlier or emotional pain is a warning sign that your body is out of alignment with its natural ability to balance and heal itself. That's when you feel bad, angry, sad, resentful and any other emotion that causes you to feel unsettled. If you're suppressing your needs and pretending that everything is honky dory, when it's clearly not, the pain will only get stronger.

You've probably heard the messages urging you to pay attention, yet unaware of what they really mean, perhaps you've been ignoring them for years, hoping that they might go away. But they don't. As one of my mentors, John Felitto says, emotional discomfort first comes in a whisper, then a scream, then a shove on the shoulder and ultimately a frying pan.

Just like a tiger with a thorn in its paw, something is hurting you and causing you to eat compulsively and think about food when your body is not actually physically hungry. Something is causing you to resent the body you have and wish you could change it. Your feelings of unhappiness are telling you that something is wrong and off balance.

The media plays a huge part in why we feel and act the way that we do. It bombards us daily with messages screaming evidence of our flaws and imperfections. It does this to get you to feel inferior enough to believe that buying their product will change your life.

Perhaps you've been criticized by people, for being overweight, too thin, being pigeon toed or knock kneed since you were a child. Maybe you were shy, a slow learner, hyperactive, or a bookworm who wore glasses. We all have different stories that we tell ourselves and others.

It's possible that a well meaning or not so well intentioned parent, guardian, teacher, acquaintance or friend focused on your flaws, pointed out the fact that you were far from perfect, making you feel consistently inadequate. It hurt, smacking you between the eyes with the force of a truck. You probably still hear their droning voices in the back of your mind from time to time.

It's this type of Negative Nancy, nitter natter chatter that makes up your negative self talk. It's pretty common to find yourself repeating their criticisms in an attempt to motivate yourself to change. I'll just bet that their hurtful words have stuck to you like glue. This has become a part of who you are, and become an important aspect of your story.

As a result of that, you've probably been stuffing down your food to avoid feeling the emotional discomfort that exists in your life. But running to the quick fix, grabbing some pills, pouring a drink or giving in to a midnight binge only helps to numb you for a little bit. It doesn't work over the long haul and eventually it makes you feel worse than before.

Can't I Just Think Positive Thoughts?

For years people thought that the answer was positive thinking, but that's akin to putting perfume on a pile of poop. Eventually it begins to smell and you fall back on your old stinking thinking. That's because without changing the underlying emotions of how you feel, the emotional discomfort will remain. The signals indicating that something is off kilter will only get more intense.

It's not enough to try to think positive, you have to actually change the way that you feel about yourself and your life in order to generate positive thoughts. Your body knows when you're trying to sell it a bill of goods. If you're saying things like, "I love my body, I'm beautiful and life is perfect, and that's really not true, and you focus on your flabby stomach, drooping breasts, sagging libido, and miserable relationships, then your body will know you're lying when you say that everything is peachy keen and it'll just scream at you a bit more loudly.

In a story later on in the book, you'll read about my friend and colleague, Dee. Her bout with cancer was the final straw that led her to change her life from the inside out.

By observing Dee's example I felt encouraged to develop a new awareness and sensitivity towards my body and listen to its wisdom. She inspired me to dig deeper and ask the question, "if a person can heal themselves of cancer, why can't they lose weight without dieting?" Her story of how she beat cancer, not once but twice compelled me to learn more about the mind/body connection. My curiosity led me to discover how this mind/body connection can be leveraged to transform the negative relationship that I had developed with food and my body.

Getting Well Again: Discovering Your Will to Live

I was fascinated and wanted to know why some people live and others die when they hear that they have cancer. I studied the groundbreaking work that was done in the 70's by Dr. O. Carl Simonton. He was an oncologist from Texas, who taught people how to heal themselves of cancer from the inside out.

In his book, "Getting Well Again" Dr. Simonton noticed two distinctly different personality types among his patients. When he asked the group of survivors to account for their good health, they would frequently give answers such as, "I can't die until my son graduates college or "They need me too much at work", or "I won't die until I've solved that problem with my daughter." The common thread running through these replies was the belief that they exerted some influence over the course of their disease. The other important element was that they had an eye toward the future. Something was keeping them looking ahead anticipating the best possible outcome, a healthy life.

He concluded that it was the patient's will to live that made the difference between life and death. It was that belief and desire that they deserved to live, that gave them the strength to channel their painful emotions and transform them to manifest wellness.

Are you Listening to Your Body?

How about you? What do you really believe about your body? How do you really see yourself? Do you think that you can ever lose weight without dieting or overexercising? Do you think that you deserve to be happier than you are? Maybe not. Maybe you feel like your lot in life is as good as it's going to get.

Many of us grew up with people who told us how we should feel, either verbally or by example. Maybe you've learned that you shouldn't complain, not to be so angry, be nice, be grateful for what you have and just shut up and be happy. But something inside of you rattles your cage reminding you that you're not happy.

Most people are taught to flee from those emotions, avoid them like the plague and do whatever it takes to drown them out. This accounts for why there is such a problem with substance abuse. We learn to rely on crutches to help us feel better, falling into the trap, thinking of our bodies as our enemies, because they remind us of feeling bad.

Exercise 2: Who's Watching Over Your Body?

Write down several examples of times when you recently pushed your body beyond its limits, burnt the candle at both ends and just plain overdid it.

Here's a few examples: 1) You have a deadline to finish a project. It's getting late, your body's tired. You ignore the warning of feeling sleepy. You grab another cup of coffee and deny your exhaustion, demanding your body to work harder until the project is done.

You overeat to the point of feeling overstuffed and uncomfortable. Ignoring the signs of the pain in your stomach and the sensations of nausea, you continue to eat because you like the taste of the food. Now write 1 or 2 examples of times when you overloaded your body.

Your body's natural state is one of feeling good, inside and out. That means that you may think that you want a double chocolate covered sundae with hot fudge sauce, bananas, nuts and whipped cream, but it may overtax your system and upset your stomach. However that's for you to discover if that holds true for you.

As you practice the mindful eating techniques shown throughout the book and the Self Image Makeover Morsels, you'll find that your food preferences will change as you learn to give yourself permission to eat what you want.

Your Subconscious Mind: Your Humble Servant

There's a part of you called your subconscious mind that holds an image of how you see yourself in your mind's eye. The picture you have of yourself, your self-image, controls your every thought, decision and action. It functions like a humble servant, giving you exactly what you believe you deserve. Your self-image also controls how dedicated, disciplined, focused, loyal, happy, peaceful and inspired you are.

This all comes from the discoveries of Dr. Maxwell Maltz from his book, "Psycho Cybernetics: How to Use the Power of Self Image Psychology for Success. Dr. Maltz was a plastic surgeon in the 60's who noticed that some of his clients still continued to see themselves in a distorted way even despite his successful surgeries. Some people's self images completely changed for the better and others remained the same. Curiously, he sought to find the core of why this occurred. His findings led him to write many books on the power of changing one's self image. To date, I haven't found anything more powerful or specific than what his books offer.

How Visualization Is Working for Me

Since researching more of his findings, I decided to test out many of his exercises in the book and began to follow his exercises and daily visualize myself and set an intention to see myself as a thinner person, doing things that I was uncomfortable or afraid of doing. That led me to begin to do those things that I visualized and to take those small leaps of faith in myself. As a result, what was happening internally was I began to expand my internal representation of how I saw myself. Then things in my world actually started changing for me.

I was beginning to collect new evidence proving that I wasn't the fat slob who I had envisioned myself to be. I was seeing myself differently for the first time in many, many months or perhaps years. Things were clicking.

From learning how to listen to my body and eat in accordance with my hunger, I was getting more and more discriminating, from my daily use of visualization, which you'll read about more in the section entitled, "Intention: Leveraging the Power of Visualization. I was setting down new pathways in my brain, pushing me to see myself differently and to create an inner desire to match those visions by taking small incremental actions that would make my visions real.

I continue to use the Emotional Freedom Technique and other energy wellness tools and strategies that help me to cope with my stress and overcome the fear of seeing myself in those new ways, to feel safer, to be more expressive with people, to say what is on my mind and to begin to set clear and definitive boundaries that food used to do for me. I have taken time to look at parts of my life and notice where I had used food to cover up my inadequacies, lack of awareness and skills.

I worked to acquire the skills that I didn't have. I read books which taught me how to be more assertive, more confident, expressive, decisive, organized, and all the other issues that food had prevented me from addressing in my life.

Matt Furey, an apprentice to the late Dr. Maxwell Maltz, says, "Everything in life is a mental picture." This is not just a theory as modern scientific evidence proves it to be true on a cellular level. The very cells of your brain and body are programmed for success - or for failure. The good news is that either way, you can make a leap - perhaps even a quantum leap, for the better, by changing the way you see yourself."

Miracles can occur when you combine the power of visualization, law of attraction and EFT. Don't believe me. See for yourself.

As a result of doing this daily visualization and using EFT to continuously move me to the next level of confidence, I've made quantum leaps in my career, marriage, abundance, health, relationships, and every other area of my life.

I'm doing things I never thought I could do. In April 2009, I'll be teaching a Self Esteem program that I've created for kids called, "It's Great to Be Me." I'll be presenting it to my local elementary school, the entire 4, 5 and 6th grade.

I recently was interviewed for an article in the magazine First for Women because I wanted to share how my sex life with my husband has transformed after I began to make peace with food. As part of doing the article, I did my first photo shoot in Manhattan.

I used EFT to get over my fear of speaking on radio, writing articles, books and creating my own unique content. As a result of having dealt with those fears, I decided that it is time to seek out television media as a way of spreading the word about EFT and body acceptance. No sooner had I decided this and I was asked to participate in a feature film documentary about EFT sharing my teaching style.

I can tell you honestly, this is something that I would never have done without the support of changing the way that I see myself internally. I've been doing that in my life and I can't wait to show you how you can do the same in yours.

In the chapter entitled, "The Power of Beliefs," we'll discuss more about the impact your self image has on your life, but for all intents and purposes, know that each of us has a part of ourselves that tends to sabotage our goals and desires.

In order to achieve what you want, this part has to feel safe. In other words, in order for your goals to be achieved, they must be in line with your self image. If you have goals that you've been trying to reach for years without luck, it's because in some way they represent a threat to your life and this causes feelings of inner conflict where you do and you don't want the things you say you want. The goal of wanting to lose weight often represents danger or a threat to your self image, especially if deep down you don't believe that it's possible or deserved.

Finding Inner Harmony

For the most part, being happy, feeling wonderful, healthy and abundant is your body's natural state. Anything less than that creates some degree of emotional discomfort. It will feel as though you are swimming against the current.

When we were infants, we most likely had a strong sense of listening to our body. As we've gotten older and been influenced by others, and become caught up in today's

technologically advanced society, we have lost much of our ability to tap into that inner awareness.

If you've been hating your body, you're not speaking its language, because all it wants to do is love you. I'll help you by being your translator and offer to be your guide so that you and your body can become friends again.

Your body is infinitely intelligent and knows how to care for you perfectly. With the same degree of precision and perfection, it functions without any interference on your part. It knows exactly what to do without you having to direct it. It knows when to empty your bladder, digest your food, repair and destroy cells, heal illness, or pump blood to your left toe that may have gotten stubbed if you accidentally walked into your dresser.

Regardless of how you feel about body, it's always been there for you to guide you and protect you from harm. As an emotional eater, you may have learned the skill of how to dissociate from your emotional pain by using food to numb you. This is only because you haven't learned how to feel secure from within and trust your body. I'll teach you how to reassociate and reconnect safely with your body so that you can build or rebuild trust and begin to appreciate yourself now.

Although the title of this book is "Lovin' the Skin You're In," please understand that this is a process that unfolds naturally and builds upon each previous step. As in any new relationship, you go through a series of phases before you feel comfortable enough to let go of your defenses, trust and allow yourself to love someone. The same will hold true as you reacquaint yourself with your body. Each phase of this relationship building has its foundation in increasing your awareness. You'll be encouraged to move at your own pace.

Your Body Knows Best

In Deepak Chopra's book, "Ageless Body, Timeless Mind", he says that, "intelligence is present everywhere in our bodies. Our inner intelligence is far superior to any we could try to substitute from the outside." This book will guide you to heal your relationship with food and your body by tapping into that source of intelligence and love.

Some people call this energetic force the super conscious mind, higher self, inner coach, universal intelligence, God, Buddah, Jehovah, the holy spirit. By whatever name you choose, this wisdom and source of unconditional love is yours for the asking and it will guide you to take practical steps to treat yourself lovingly, gentle your body and discover wells of self compassion and peace waiting for you.

For the sake of clarity, keep in mind that your subconscious and superconscious mind both have different functions. Your subconscious mind is limited by what you believe and your programming, thus it makes up your self image. Your superconscious is unlimited and is your connection with universal abundance or what is also known as God, Love, cosmic consciousness, etc, or any of the other names listed above.

Your Body Has a Memory

The pain that triggers your urge to eat, and obsess about food, comes from a time in your past when you felt emotionally overwhelmed in some way. You may have a sense of when specifically you turned to food to feel safe, validated or loved, or maybe you have no idea. Nonetheless, the pain of that event has been reinforced and played out in your body each time something happens to remind you of it again. As I mentioned earlier, it sticks like velcro to every cell of your body and every time you are reminded of it, your body clenches in a lock down and stress hormones pour into your system, making you feel awful. This is when you'll reach for food even if you're not hungry, to avoid the pain of this surge of anxiety ridden emotion. You may not even be aware of the triggers, but they are most likely responsible for your overeating.

Why I Wrote this Book

I've been moved to write this book and share my experience with you because I am deeply passionate about teaching you what I've learned on my own journey as I've taken steps to heal my own hungry heart from within. By teaching you what I've discovered about the importance of dealing with stress, making peace with food and friends with my body, I hope to save you from the years of suffering that I endured.

As a woman who is a sexual abuse survivor, I used to think that I could never escape the pain in my past. When I least expected it, something would pop up that would remind me of a painful event, memory or bad feeling. It was like living with a shadow overhead. My story became my identity. I couldn't get past it. It prevented me from rising above my circumstances. Although I had many reasons to be happy, I failed to notice those blessings. I was too busy trying to ward off my misery. I was always living in fear, expecting the worst, perpetually waiting for the other shoe to drop.

After 18 years of picking apart, analyzing and rehashing various aspects of my story in therapy, I decided to give up, try to let go of being a victim and just move on, but my inability to forgive those who hurt and abused me, caused me great misery. I ate to fill those cavernous spaces in my heart. My story of being abused followed me wherever I went.

I tried to ignore how I felt, but parts of me still hurt so much. Food became my calm in the storm, but from early childhood, I was taught to distrust, and hate my body, so for years I did everything I could to try to change it. I thought the answer was to lose weight.

In 2001, nearly twenty years after I first started with Weight Watchers, I got to my goal weight. For nearly 6 years, I fought tooth and nail to maintain my hard earned weight loss. My body looked good, but my life was spinning out of control and totally miserable. There were parts of my past that kept haunting me. I kept telling myself the same story. It made me miserable.

In 2004, nearly five years ago someone had used Emotional Freedom Technique, EFT on me that proved to me beyond a shadow of a doubt that new beginnings were possible. As I mentioned before, EFT is a simple hands on technique that is based on tapping on natural comfort spots on the body to create a sense of balance and well being. In my case, my unwillingness to let go of the pain of my past kept me hurting because in my story I kept painting myself as a victim.

EFT helped me to realize that to a large extent I was creating much of my own pain by staying a victim. I blamed my abusers for everything that went wrong in my life. After several minutes of tapping parts of my hand, head and arms, I felt an enormous wave of energy release that ended the suffering that was associated with it. Thanks to this precious gift of emotional freedom, I don't have any emotional charge on those once painful memories. I continue to use the process often on an as needed basis.

Today as I continue to take leaps in my life, I like to think of EFT as courage in a bottle. I'll explain more about this throughout the book. For now, just keep in mind that pain is inevitable, but suffering is optional. If you're suffering and you're eating to cover up the pain, you'll find great relief in learning how to use this technique and the many others that I share to give you the emotional freedom you seek.

If you are holding anger in your heart toward someone who hurt you or abused you at one time, it's important to know that you are not hurting them. By holding onto the hurt, and refusing to forgive, you are hurting yourself most of all. It's like taking poison and waiting for your abuser to die. Your anger is like poison in your veins.

Since your body is an electro magnetically charged organism, every thought you think creates chemicals in your brain instantly that either strengthens or weakens you. Your body in its infinite wisdom, connected to a higher source of intelligence, knows what is best for you and by giving you subtle messages, it tries to communicate information to you.

This information is what you believe deep down in your subconscious mind. Most people are not aware of their deeper beliefs and this accounts for why we try and fail so many times in making life changes, like dieting, relationships, career, and other things that represent the degree to which you value yourself.

Any change that you make in life, in order for it to be successful, and permanent must be consistent with your self image. If your subconscious mind is not on board with it, you'll encounter mad amounts of resistance and falsely think that something is wrong with you. It's not. It's just a well oiled survival mechanism that needs a bit updating. I'm going to teach you how to activate and communicate with that part of you so that you'll be able to save yourself the heartache and find out straight off the bat what you really want.

You may say you want to get thinner, but the idea of being vulnerable to men's sexual advances or feeling ungrounded without having your weight to throw around may scare

the pants off of you. This triggers your internal survival mechanism and pushes it into high gear. It's job is to keep you safe and secure in old comfort zone patterns.

In the absence of having any other way of dealing with stress besides using food as your security blanket, your body will continually push you to eat when you're not hungry. If you're aware beforehand of subconscious resistance, you can address it and deal with the source behind the stress fueling the friction. By using stress relief techniques, you can release the negative charge on the memories and emotions keeping your resistance in place, melt it like hot butter, leaving you free to move forward.

Muscle testing is done a number of ways. It's working with your body's energy system to tap into it's infinite wisdom to get an answer to "yes" and "No" questions you may have. It's like having a polygraph at your fingertips. You can use it anytime, anywhere to guide you to find answers that are right for you.

You can do muscle testing either by yourself or if you're uncertain or unwilling to trust your own body's responses at first, you can start with the next Try It which is called Muscle Testing For two. This is done with the help of another person. Let's begin with Muscle Testing for One.

Try It: Muscle Testing for One

For the sake of clarity, this can be done with either hand. I'll give instructions to begin with your right hand. On your right hand, put the fingertips of your thumb and index finger together forming a circle. This is the universal sign for OK. Now with your left hand, you'll end doing the same. The two circles will become connected. Here's how: Place your left thumb inside of the circle that you created on your right hand. Now touch your left index finger to your left thumb. Both of these circles should be interconnected and look like two links in a chain, or a figure 8 or the infinity symbol.

To test it, and find out how your body is going to respond when you give it a universal truth, which will be your indication for a "Yes" response, start with testing with your own name. Say, "My name is and say your name."

Now place some tension at the center of your interlocked fingers. If your response is a "Yes", your fingers will remain firm and connected. If your response is a "No" your fingers will separate.

Now test this using another name, other than yours. Say, "My name is and say someone else's name."

Now you can test this using any other questions. Start with where you live. Say, "I live in and state where you live."

Next test another place where you don't live and notice what happens with your fingers. After putting some tension on the center of the circle, your fingers should easily slip apart indicating a "No" response.

You can do this process when you want to go beyond your conscious mind and find out what your body says about the situation. It's a way of filtering out the conscious mind and getting to the truth.

It's important to keep your questions specific and direct your focus towards what you want to know. Let's say you have a business meeting to attend, and find that you're putting it off and avoiding making the commitment. Use this technique and ask your body to give you guidance to find out what to do next. For example: Is it in my highest good to do business with this person? Let's say you get a strong "Yes" which means that your fingers form a hard lock.

Next you ask a series of questions that may look like this,

"Is it in this person's highest good to do business with me?"
"Do I have resistance around meeting this person?"
In spite of not wanting to do this, am I willing to do it?
"Do I have a fear of conflict?"
"Am I unprepared for this meeting?"
"Do I feel that I need more time?"

You get the idea. Keep asking more questions to drill down and get to the source of that resistance. By doing this, you turn inaction into action by getting clear and finding out what you need. AS you get clearer and feel more certain about listening to the messages of your body, you will just be able to tap into your intuition and ask these questions and get the responses you need.

Try It: Muscle Testing For Two

Typically when a person says that they hate someone or something and they really feel that way, their energy drains from their body and gets depleted. It's not uncommon to notice that you have no strength to resist your partner's hand pushing down on yours and your arm will drop like a wet noodle. When you say that you love someone and that is true, your arm will test strong and you will easily be able to resist your partner's pressure.

Comment [AA3]: Andrea, insert specific instructions for this Try It

Your Body As Protector

At one time, food may have represented a safe haven, a floating log to grab onto in a tumultuous sea of fear and hurt. It may have served you for years as a satisfying way to silence the pain of the emotional storms that you've endured. However if you've purchased this book, you've recognized that now that log is starting to pull you under the current and you've become afraid that it has taken control of you. It's come to the point

where your inability to make peace with food and your body is creating additional pain in your life.

By reconnecting with your body, you will be able to access the higher intelligence innate in each of us.

Whether you've lived your life struggling with trauma with a capital "T" as in some form of sexual or physical abuse, or trauma with a lower case "t" as in a parent who never made you feel like a priority, was neglectful or always criticized you, you may be eating to void out the effects of having a sense of being unsafe. This is probably why your relationship with food is causing you pain. Do you feel unsafe or disconnected from your body?

Your Body Gives You All The Answers You Need

In the next exercise, I'll ask you to consider how safe you feel and to think about the statement that I mentioned at the beginning of this book. I'll ask you to check in with your heart and see if that statement feels true for you. We know from Heartmath, the science founded by Doc Childre in 1991, that since our hearts are part of our body, they are an electromagnetically charged organ and those charges carry impulses to our brain and throughout our body, communicating and offering us vast stores of information that often may go unnoticed or disregarded.

Whenever something feels right or is true for you, you can feel it first in your heart. Some people call this intuition or inner guidance. To my way of thinking, it's all a way of accessing your soul's higher intelligence that is noted above and given names such as God, universal wisdom, superconscious mind, Buddah, etc. No matter what you call it, I'll be teaching you how to tap into more of that internal communication and wisdom for yourself on a consistent basis.

Exercise 3 – Finding your truth

Place one of your hands over your heart and read the quote in the next paragraph aloud slowly several times.

“every extra pound you carry on your body equals a pound of emotional pain you're carrying in your heart.”

Keeping your hand on your heart, take some time to think about the words and what they mean to you. Notice what images or memories come to mind when you read it. What words or thoughts do you hear when you think about it? What feelings rise up in your body, when you read those words? Now with that new information in hand, keep your hand over your heart, and ask yourself, Does this feel true to me?

Where Do You Carry Your Armor?

Think about where your fat is on your body. Is it all over, on your face, neck, across your arms, back, chest, legs evenly distributed making you seem like a large woman or, is it concentrated in one area, maybe on your thighs making you a pear shape or does it manifest in your stomach and abdomen area where the rolls of fat cover your genitals? Where is your excess weight?

Where do you carry your armor? Yes. Let's think for a moment of your extra fat as being like a suit of armor. What has it kept out for you? If Dr. Virtue's statement felt true for you, what would the emotional pain be that you carry on your body and in your heart?

If your body could talk, what would it say? If your thighs could ask for something, what would it be? What would your arms want to tell you? What message does your stomach have to share? Sounds stupid, I know, but your body has been trying to tell you something every time that you stuffed food into your mouth when you knew that you weren't hungry. Isn't it time that you listened and really got to become friends with your "before" body so that you can enjoy a happily ever "after" body?

Let me get you started having a conversation with your new friend, your body.

In the next exercise, I want you to get to know your body and begin to have a dialog with your body, sharing your thoughts and feelings about it. There's no judgment. This is just a starting point so that you can see over time how your feelings and level of compassion will change. In order that you might join a larger community of women also having this very important conversation with their bodies, I'd like to share this with you.

Join BlogHer's, "Letter to My Body" Campaign

BlogHer, the fast growing blogging community for women on the internet has begun a new initiative. Suzanne Reisman started a campaign called, "Letter to My Body." encouraging women to write letters to their bodies and begin a much needed, long awaited conversation with their bodies.

As a woman who has spent much of my life trying to avoid, run away from and hate my body, this has been a powerful experience for me to participate in this sharing. Even though I've done a great deal of work this year to learn how to love my body and spread the message to empower other women to feel the same way about themselves, this is a

ground breaking opportunity for any woman. Please sit down today and write a letter to your body. There is such healing and beauty that awaits you.

Here's my letter to my body. I hope it will inspire you to write one to yours. Don't be surprised if your letter to your body is filled with anger and hatred. As I said, there's no judgment. It's just a way for you to begin a much needed, long awaited conversation with a part of you that you may have long ago unknowingly disowned or discounted. I invite you to read my letter and also go online and read the other letters of countless women who have also participated in this process. To read more examples of other real women having conversations with their bodies, go to <http://www.blogher.com/lettertomybody>

Here's the rather long, unabridged version of the letter that I wrote to my body:

Dear Body,

I haven't really gotten the chance to tell you over my life how much I really love you. I know that I've been so harsh and unfair to you, riddled you with decades of guilt and hated you for far too long. Maybe it was all those years of feeling so disconnected from you, allowing myself to feel inferior simply by virtue of my pants size, feeling down to my core that it was all your fault that I had an aching, emptiness inside of me, fearing that you were the reason that I didn't allow myself to feel safe loving or being loved.

I thought if I could just make you small enough, everything would be okay. I spent years waiting for perfection, reasoning that would be when my life would begin, all the years spent hating you, seething inside because I was sweating and uncomfortable hiding in pants when everyone around me wore shorts and bathing suits. I regret all those missed opportunities to play and frolic in the water, all those years of hiding away working when everyone else was playing. Working and eating, that became your sentence. It kept me a busy gal, and a very unfulfilled woman.

I suppose that you and I never really had much of a chance since I discarded you so early on as a child. I learned from painful life lessons that if I had a beautiful body then I could not protect myself and feel safe. Now I know that I was wrong. I just didn't have the wisdom or the love inside of me to save myself. I burdened you with my shame. I was taught to hate you. I was told to shun you if you were too big, go for the burn, push harder, get tougher. I was led to believe that I needed to fight you.

Please forgive me. I'm so sorry that I turned off my feelings and spent years trying to push you into a box, a darkened closet or a life of misery. I'm so sorry that I kept you shut away and avoided so many opportunities to be in the company of wonderful people, new experiences and the presence of joy. I'm so sorry that I held you back from being loved and appreciated. I never realized how much harm all those messages I bought into about you was doing us both. I truly believed that the problem was you. I thought by making you smaller, I would get back the power that had been stolen from me. I was so angry that you wouldn't bend and yield to my will.

Body, it was you who I was fearing. I thought that you had all the power and it was your fault that I had no sense of self around men. I thought that you were all that I had to offer and I resented that.

I hated you and blamed you for my feelings of powerlessness. I felt so small and stupid all the time, despite all the years hungering for more learning, more growth, more wisdom.

I never realized how much of my power I gave away because I spent so much of my precious energy hating you. Now I know that I ate and did things to gain weight because deep down I was trying to pad and protect the soft and still scared parts of me and prevent you from getting all that frightening attention that I feared so much.

I'm so sorry. Please understand that I needed to make you big so that I could stop feeling so damned small. I was afraid that I didn't stack up, that I didn't have the qualifications that I needed to feel powerful around so many intimidating, cold, calculating and shallow men.

Perhaps it was all those years of being told that I had no damned common sense and that I was a failure as a business woman, too naïve, too sweet and too stupid, nothing more than a pretty face. I needed to have you to throw my weight around and feel good about myself. I'm so sorry that I glutted you full with bad food and shoveled down mouthfuls even though you cried and sometimes got sick. I was trying to punish you and kill off those scared parts of me, hoping that it would all go away.

Now I realize that was all false thinking on my part. No matter what torture I put you through, I hope that it's not too late to make amends. I've had some really groundbreaking Ahas this past year and I realize that I've wasted too many decades living in the past, blaming you for things that were not your fault, avoiding responsibility and just plain hating you. I've wasted so much of our precious time together.

Now I know that I am enough, I have enough and big or small, it is what is inside of me that counts, not the outside. I am Andrea, inside and outside. Now as I continue to connect with you more deeply, it is easier for me to see that I was continuing to live in the past, fearing the present and avoiding the future.

I bless the day, August 2, 2006 that I decided to stop dieting because it was never so clear to me that I truly did have all the answers inside of me. That was what I needed to finally know that I could trust myself and that all the lies that I'd been told were untrue.

It's taken me years of dieting to finally understand that the path to loving you was not found through restriction, but through love. I was so mixed up for such a long time. I thought that I could never love you or live my life until you were what I felt was perfect. Yet with a twist of irony, God and the Universe saw fit to help me find your beauty where I least expected it, in the folds of my imperfection, I discovered your perfection.

I thought that all the years that I spent dieting, I was doing it for you, to make you healthy and beautiful. I never realized that you didn't need to be made to feel that way. You were already beautiful. It was me, who wasn't able to see that.

Now I do. It cost me dearly but it was worth it. I had to lose so much of my security to regain my sense of self. Now I am back ready to truly love you and serve you. I want to be your friend.

It's taken me 45 years, but I really get it. I now understand that you deserve to be loved in the same unconditional way that my Nana loved me or I love my family. It doesn't matter anymore what you weigh, how you look, if you're having a bad hair day or nothing fits you in the closet. I now really know that you don't deserve the pain that I've inflicted on you. You deserve to be praised. You've been the most loyal, loving dearest friend anyone could ever have. It was you who gave me the strength to bear my children, love my husband and create a wonderful new life. Through all the abuse, you stuck with me.

Now every day when I awake, I feel so blessed to have you with me. The first thing I do each morning is smile and say, "Thank you for this beautiful day. I love you."

Now I'm enjoying reconnecting with you, especially your legs. You're strong and muscular. I love holding you, all of you, feeling you as you are right now, running my hands along you feeling the soft warmth of the dimpled flesh on your surface. I love your tummy. I love holding you at night and feeling your warmth inside of me.

I always wondered why my husband, Angel loves to touch and hold you. Now I know. You feel so soft and warm. You are love.

Dear, sweet body, I can't even imagine putting you through the same torture that I used to, the years of jumping on and off the scale, looking, hoping, waiting for a smaller number to appear, the years of grabbing you with my fist and clutching a roll of fat and screaming that I wish you were dead and gone, comparing your size to every woman I ever met. I regret injuring you and putting you through all the pain that I did. I'm so sorry. I hope now that it's not too late and we can become friends.

I want to thank you so much and express my heartfelt gratitude and love for you. I now realize that you were never my enemy as I thought. You were always trying to be my friend, trying to let me know when something didn't feel right, trying to send me messages to know what to do next and I missed so much because I was too busy battling with you and thinking that you were the enemy because you weren't perfect. It was my black and white thinking that pushed me to hate you.

Please forgive me for discarding you and letting you go, pushing copious amounts of food down your throat in an effort to control parts of my life where I had no control. I'm so sorry I've hurt you.

I want to make amends to you now. I've realized that you and I were brought together for a reason and now I see what that reason is. We chose one another to both learn how to be compassionate and to love one another. I'm sorry for all the hurt I caused you. Please forgive me for hating you. Thank you for remaining loyal to me and I love you, precious body. I truly love you.

Juicy Woman Self Image Makeover Morsel #1 – Mindful Shower

While taking a shower, pause for a moment and notice how the water feels on your body. Note how the experience changes as you adjust the temperature, flow, spray, and water pressure. Observe how the soap feels in your hands and how the bubbles change colors . How does each experience feel to you? What areas of your body are more sensitive than others, back, abdomen, arms, legs, etc. Which parts feel more tense, relaxed or tired? Now adjust the water so that it is hotter. How does that change the experience? Adjust the water to be cooler and notice how that changes your experience.

Your weight problem is not your fault

I'd stake my life on the belief that much of what you've been told about yourself and your relationship to food has been based on insensitive or ignorant people telling you lies that they themselves also believed to be true. Like me, you've probably been told that you can't be trusted around food, that your weight problem is your fault and it shows that you have no discipline, self control or willpower. None of that is true and it will be your experiences throughout this journey that will bear that out for you.

I know that you've been duped into thinking that other people have the answers for you, or that the right diet will make everything okay, and end your misery, but that's not so. The answers are in you and as Gandhi says, "you must be the change you wish to see."

I'll help you to reconnect with that part of you that already knows that. Before you do that, it's important to acknowledge your story as it is and to pay attention to what's already been preoccupying your thoughts.

What's Your Story?

Each of us has our own story in life, which we tell ourselves over and over again. In my case, you now know that it was my encounter with sexual abuse that became my story. I kept on telling myself that I was a victim and by doing that, I gave energy to my belief that I was a victim. By constantly thinking of myself as a victim and associating to that belief, I attracted many more situations that put me in the role of being a victim.

I chalked it up to having bad luck, being scarred, never being able to heal. I didn't realize that in order to heal myself of the pain from my past, I had to change the way that I told my story. This was the gift that I was given the moment that someone showed me the path of Emotional Freedom Technique.

It enabled me to finally change my story and stop seeing myself as the victim. For the first time I was able to recognize that those experiences in my life have made me a better person. Although they were not happy lessons, they were deeply enriching to my personal growth.

It was my first experience with EFT that pushed me to recognize how important it was to stop thinking of myself as a victim, and begin to focus on the fact that I was now a survivor.

My experience with EFT was an example of what is known as a 'one minute wonder' in EFTspeak. That means that my intense issue and pain around my experience of being sexually abused was completely neutralized and released in just a few minutes. As I said before, in just minutes, EFT was able to do for me what 18 years of therapy failed to do.

Once I became free of my subconscious resistance, the energy that came from being able to release that baggage, became a huge source of momentum that pushed me in the direction of teaching others about this new, amazing healing technique. It took me in a completely different direction, leading me way beyond my comfort zones.

By continuing forward and making the decision to learn more about EFT and to hire a coach to deal with other unresolved hurts and haunts from my past, has enabled me to reclaim my life, to give myself the gift of self love, to forgive those

Exercise: Telling your story

In this exercise, you will write down an account of your story as you remember it. It may include a sentence or two about each of the following aspects of your story:

- how you were raised
- what experiences you endured
- what limiting belief is holding you back
- who hurt you or made you feel fat, ugly, unworthy
- your experiences with dieting
- what conclusions you drew from that experience
- what has prevented you from losing weight
- what you've been told about yourself and your relationship to food
- what emotional baggage from your past is burdening your present

By getting clear and knowing what you've been telling yourself, you will have a basis from which to proceed. The story that you've been repeating and telling yourself and others about you, is only a measure of what you have believed about your life. Although those things may be true, they are in the past. You may have endured a horrible experience as a child and because of that, a part of you is still stuck in that experience and living through that child's eyes. That experience has held a part of you prisoner and kept you reacting as though you are still that young child. That part of you that endured that pain, has never gotten a chance to move beyond it because that experience has kept you in a sort of a time warp, causing you to see yourself as that young child. Now write down your story that you've been living with that caused you to either disconnect from your body, feel unsafe, unworthy or unable to feel control around food.

who hurt me, to use my story to empower others, and ultimately to guide you to understand why you must also reframe your story so that you will also be free to revel in more joy and freedom. It's time to move on. Wouldn't you agree? Before you do that, you have to first focus on where you are in this moment. Remember think in terms of energy. What messages are your sending out to your body? The state of your body will bear out what you've been thinking and believing about yourself deep down.

Move the following paragraph to before exercise:

By continuing forward and making the decision to learn more about EFT and to hire a coach to deal with other unresolved hurts and haunts from my past, it enabled me to reclaim my life, to give myself the gift of self love, to forgive those who hurt me, to use my story to empower others, and ultimately to guide you to understand why you must also reframe your story so that you will also be free to revel in more joy and freedom. It's time to move on. Wouldn't you agree? Before you do that, you have to first focus on where you are in this moment.

Move following paragraph to after exercise:

Comment [AA4]: Karen, I don't know why, but this repeated and if I delete it, it only moves on me. Can you take it out?

It is only your emotional connection to your story and your unresolved feelings about it that keeps you living in that past, fearing the future and unable to be fully present in the here and now. These are the pounds of pain that you may carry on your thighs, in your stomach, on your arms, back, butt, face, hands, feet and neck. These are the pounds of pain that are keeping you stuck, living and most of all thinking as a fat woman.

It's your story and your feelings about that story that has been preventing you from being happier, feeling safer, getting thinner and becoming more successful. It's your emotional knee jerk reaction to your story that keeps you feeling out of control around food, obsessed with fear, unable to feel accepting of your body. It has been the cause and source of all your pain and suffering.

Losing weight is not the answer

Your story has probably led you to believe that happiness lies just outside of your grasp and that in order to be happy, you have to change your body or get thinner, make more money, get married, divorced, have children or some other version of wanting what you don't already have.

I used to think the same thing and that made losing weight and keeping it off seem like the impossible dream. I've since learned that I had to change my goal and make being happy and accepting my body my primary goal. I've learned that the joy that I'd been seeking, the happiness I expected to find once I lost weight, wasn't necessarily there at the end of the rainbow.

I thought that life would be perfect when I got down to my goal weight. It didn't work that way. I still had big trust issues that prevented me from feeling safe receiving love, stating my needs, setting boundaries, asking for what I needed, feeling worthy, being independent, confident, speaking out, and so many other things that I thought would magically resolve themselves once I lost weight. Life didn't settle into the image of perfection that I expected.

Instead after I lost the weight, it was a daily struggle of trying to keep it off, living in constant fear of gaining the weight back and not fitting into the clothes that I love, of not being able to relax around food without a pile of guilt and shame heaped on top of every extra morsel that I ate over my allotted food that day.

If you've been among those who were lucky enough to have lost weight on a diet, you probably recognize the struggle that I describe. Maybe you'd even believe that you traded one obsession for another. I know for a fact that I traded my weight loss obsession with a new obsession to maintain my weight loss.

Nothing really changed. I still was thinking about food all the time, calculating calories, or points or fat grams in my head with every mouthful that I took. Every step that I took in the name of exercise, was done with the intention of either wanting to lose weight or a desperate attempt to offset the food that I intended to eat later.

Throughout this book, I'll share a great deal of information with you. I won't ask you to believe any of it. I want you to put it to the test and find out if it works for you. Don't accept anything that I tell you without first testing it for yourself.

My Nana who was my father's mother, used to always say, "The proof is in the pudding." Take a taste and see what you find.

"Who's That Fat Ugly Woman in the Mirror?"

As I mentioned in the introduction, the ideas that I share here may seem off the wall and crazy because if you're a woman who has struggled with years of dieting and deprivation as I have, you've been taught that your excess weight makes you unlovable, unattractive and just downright ugly.

It's not your body that makes you ugly, it's your thoughts. It's how you see yourself when you look in the mirror or focus on your body that causes you so much pain and upset. Research shows that four out of five women are unhappy with some aspect of their physical appearance.

This is called Body dysmorphia. It's having a skewed or unrealistic image of your body and feeling overly sensitive and obsessed wanting to change it. Famous television shows like What Not to Wear and How to Look Good Naked, all play on shifting a negative internal self image to a positive one by using the optical illusion of dressing in figure flattering cuts, colors and styles, suited to each individual's body type, creating a custom fit well tailored neat looking appearance.

Any gal knows with the right hair, clothes and makeup, we instantly feel better about ourselves. Since this is an instant vibrational lift, our spirits soar, as we beam and glow with happiness, seeing this new improved version of ourselves. In truth, nothing physical has changed, only our skewed perception of our bodies has been rewired in our brain.

In this book, I've had the great good fortune to interview several wonderful women, curvy women, fabulous ladies with real bodies of different shapes and sizes, who for various reasons have learned to love their bodies exactly as they are. They have learned to look beyond their flabby thighs, droopy breasts, rounded tummies, and scarred and aging bodies, only to realize how truly beautiful they are.

Following this epiphany, their lives transformed. Please know that I'm not advocating that you nominate yourself for a makeover on any of these shows. I am however offering you many kernels of wisdom that these women have gathered from their unique experiences that you can use right now to love yourself more today. Can you say you love your body or are you at least making friends with it?

No doubt like each of them, you've also looked in the mirror at your reflection, saying that you hate your body, or some variation on that theme. In fact, how many times today have you looked at your reflection in the mirror and scowled cursing at your body?

I'm sure you've seen those diet commercials where a beautiful slender woman is talking about her weight loss and she has a life sized photo of herself "before" she started her diet. In the photo, she looks sad and miserable. Then at some point, she looks at her "before" photo with such disgust and disdain and pushes it away, out of sight, showing that she has no feeling or connection to that picture.

When in fact, it was that "before" woman who got her to the place where she could actually enjoy her "after" life. It was the "before" woman who dragged her butt out of bed every day to go to the gym or go walking when she didn't want to, it was the before woman who had to say "NO" to the cookies and the ice cream and any other food that she wanted when she really wanted it. It was the "before" woman who did all the work and then the "After" woman has the nerve to shun her and dismiss her like she is a piece of dirt. There's a good chance that that's what you've been doing to yourself, shunning yourself, today as you are, waiting for that "after" you to make your appearance.

The Importance of Accepting the "Before" You to Make Way for the "After"

Although you've probably made a pact with yourself that you'll never accept yourself as you are, I'm going to encourage you to question the value of that decision. I'll teach you how to apply Emotional Freedom Technique and other cool tools so that self acceptance, feeling good and accepting your body will become a no-brainer for you.

Can you imagine how much resistance gets broken down when you just learn to accept how you look and where you are? It makes being happy and living possible right now. As Kelly Park, Heather Magee, Shannon Flores and Grae Drake found after being on Bravo's hot reality show, "How to Look Good Naked", you don't have to wait to look perfect to choose to be happy.

I've learned that when you remove the pressure of hating yourself, that's when you begin to feel safe around food, and okay with your body. Food then loses its emotional tug over you. That's when you'll find yourself shrinking and getting

thinner as you enjoy the foods you love every day. Can you imagine anything being so wonderful? You get to spend time and live your life doing what you love instead of obsessing about weight and calories.

Think about it. In all your experience of losing weight, haven't you always thought about the time during which you were in the process of dieting, as temporary and something that you just had to grin and bear until one day when you were finally thinner and then the real you could come out and play? I used to think that the time that I spent "losing weight" and being in the process was just like living in a vacuum. It didn't really count because I reasoned, that I was waiting until I reached my goal weight. I was living my life in a holding pattern.

I wouldn't buy new clothes, because I didn't want to waste my money. I wouldn't go dancing because I didn't want people to see me shaking my fat. I wouldn't want to make love with my husband because I wanted to have that beautiful thin stomach and strong tight, toned legs,... so I waited. I was in a perpetual state of waiting. Thanks to EFT, all those years of living my life ruled by my fears are a thing of the past.

EFT (Courage in a Bottle) Paves the Path to Self Acceptance

Don't get me wrong. I still have to take care of myself consistently, by pulling the new weeds that pop up in my inner garden. Today I use EFT to tame those nasty thoughts and limiting beliefs so that I have the courage to do all the things that I never thought I could. I'll teach you how to do the same so that you can stop wasting time waiting for perfect and get down to the business of living.

I have a solution for you to get thinner without dieting that will seem really off the wall. It's going to require a leap of faith from you because in order to follow through, you're going to have to learn how to do a lot of things differently. For one thing, you've got to break the cycle of resistance and stop wanting to lose weight. In the next chapter, we'll discuss the rules of the game and I'll teach you how to play the body image/self esteem game and win!