

# Class 1- Never in Control. Always in Choice.

Hello! Welcome to your *Food Freedom Foundations Course*. I'm Natalie Forsyth and I am here to teach you the proven tools to stop binge eating and start living.

I am so glad you made this important choice for yourself to take a stand and get the support that you need to find freedom from your out-of-control eating.

I am truly honored that you've chosen me as your teacher. My life's mission is to support thousands upon thousands of people to create freedom from their eating struggles and to start living the lives they have actually been so hungry for all along.

This became my sole focus in life, after I experienced the incredible fountain of joy, love, pleasure, and peace that I began to experience once I broke free from the chains of my disordered eating behaviors.

The incredible difference in my own life experience drove me to create these teachings for you. The profound transformations that my students continuously undergo keeps me dedicated to this work. And I am excited to count you in their number.

May I hear of your own stories of profound change soon! So, as I teach you these proven tools, please always remember that I have been there.

I know so well what it is like to be stuck in the throws of out-of-control eating. I remember what it was like to be on that freight train to binge land where it seemed like there was no other option but to spiral out-of-control into that same familiar pattern.

I remember waking up the next morning after a big binge, feeling terrible. My stomach aching and my mind replaying over and over again what a failure I was.

I felt drenched in shame and overwhelmed because I didn't know how to get out. But I knew there must be a way, so I looked for help.

I tried a whole bunch of different things, just like I'm sure you have. Some of them helped a bit; others not at all. Everything really started to change for me when I found

the Science of Behavior Change. I learned the simple and proven tools and I began practicing.

And I'm so grateful to say that I immediately started to feel changes and that within half a year I felt like a totally different person! I broke the incessant cycle of binge, purge, shame. And I found joy in life for the first time in a long time!

To be frank, my mind was blown. I had been looking for the answers for so long. And it ultimately was pretty simple. It was all about practicing the tools over time, with a structure of accountability and community to help me stay focused and dedicated.

It was on a dream trip that I took to Bali. I took it to celebrate the incredibly life-changing and sustained recovery that I was experiencing in my eating patterns. And it was while I was on this trip that my life's work became clear.

I can remember exactly where I was sitting, in this relaxed open air restaurant. It had these purple draping ceiling decorations. I was reflecting on how much I had changed, and ultimately how straightforward the process was.

Now don't get me wrong, it's not that it was easy; it was hard at times; and it was painful at times. It took consistency and practice. But it wasn't rocket science, nor was it some esoteric magic. The way I achieved my freedom was very practical.

It was all about implementing the proven tools and experiencing the incremental shifts.

It was at that moment, in that lovely cafe in Bali that it hit me like a bolt of lightning that I would dedicate my life to helping people to find the freedom that I had created for myself. I knew at that moment that this would be my life's work, and I have been dedicated ever since to do so.

I already had a degree in Psychology, but I went on and got further education and training as a Certified Intuitive Eating Counselor with the founder of the *Intuitive Eating* model, Evelyn Tribole. I became an International Certified Coach after training at the Coaches Training Institute. And I attended the professional program in Eating and Weight Disorders at UC Berkeley Extension. Not to mention the library of books, and the hundreds of hours of podcasts that I have used to self-educate on all things eating struggles, behavior change, mindfulness and life fulfillment.

I crafted the curriculum that you are going to learn from, from the most well respected and researched treatment modalities and models. You're following in the footsteps of so many students whom I've taught before you.

Having led so many people through this process, I am confident that if you practice the tools, you *will* watch your life change for the better.

**And BONUS!** You now also have a whole community of people who get it who are here to cheer you on!

Sound like a plan? Alright! So here we go. Now you get to learn the proven tools and change your life, one action and one thought at a time.

It might not be rocket science, but it is neuroscience. These tools will actually create new pathways in your neurology, one action at a time.

The next 7 classes in this course are going to teach you the tools that you must have to lay the groundwork for this change in your life. These are the essential first tools that you must practice and implement.

If you are in the longer course, you will learn many many more tools. But I promise this, if you do not practice the tools in this course **first**, the rest won't make anywhere near as much sense. Nor can I be confident that it will be effective in creating the behavior change you seek.

It is like learning a new language. You must learn the basic building blocks of the vocabulary and grammar, before you can learn how to conjugate verbs in the past participle tense. Do I have any language nerds out there? That one was for you.

Before we jump into the first tool, I want to make sure we are all on the same page about the basics; so in the rest of this class, we are going to look at the most common reason that most people binge.

You have probably heard me teach this before, if you participated in my free class, but please be sure to listen all the way through. If I know one thing about how we learn, it is through repetition.

I will purposefully repeat specific concepts throughout our classes together. I am so confident that each time you hear about the same concept, you will gain a deeper and more thorough understanding. So, trust me, I am doing it on purpose!

Alright, so let's get to it. Dieting is the gateway drug to binge eating. So many people who are struggling with out of control eating issues feel like they need to restrict what they are able to eat, because otherwise, they will go off the deep end and eat everything in the store.

People get stuck in extremes. They are dieting by restricting the food they are eating and doing "great" at it. I say "great" in quotes.

Then they have a bad day, they get stressed and they end up bingeing on all the food they weren't supposed to eat on their diet. And they yoyo back and forth between the two extremes.

Or maybe they don't let themselves ever eat cookies, not even one, because once they have one, they have no other choice but to eat the whole box.

I know that I was stuck in this swing in the course of one day. I would restrict in the morning, sticking to my idea of a healthy diet, until my willpower broke and I would swing the other way and I would binge on all the chips and chocolate I could get my hands on.

Restricting what you eat, leads you to eat in a way that feels out-of-control. What happens when you pull a pendulum up to one side and you let it go?

It will swing forcefully and consistently over to the other side. This is exactly what happens when you restrict your eating. Whether you are using a strict diet and meal plan for how you are eating, according to your conception of a healthy lifestyle, if you're eating in this way where you're purposefully restricting yourself from certain things using your willpower, ultimately, that willpower will break. And the restriction will swing radically over to binge.

The more intensely you restrict, the more intensely the pendulum will swing to feeling totally out-of-control and crazy. So if you are really struggling with out-of-control eating, we need to look not only at those out-of-control moments, but we also really need to look at the times and places where you are trying to control your eating. Because it is all part of the same cycle.

Throughout this Foundations course, as well as in the longer course, you're going to learn the tools to actually help you in the moments when you feel inclined to binge.

What I hope you take away from this class is the fact that we need to take a bigger view of how you are thinking about food and how you are eating, not only when it feels out-of-control, but also in the times when you feel like you're in control and really succeeding at it.

Ultimately, if you are in control, because you are using your willpower, the pendulum will always swing. Something in life will always happen.

The reality is that we are never in control, but we are always in choice. It's a totally natural human inclination to try to control what isn't working in your life.

If we can just control, then we'll be okay. But the truth of the matter is that we actually don't really have any control over what happens in life.

Life is going to happen. The hard things. The beautiful things. And we don't have control. But what we do have is our ability to choose.

What we can learn is how to choose to respond to what happens in this wild and crazy life. We are never in control but we are always in choice.

So, whether you're controlling your eating because it seems like one of the few things in life you can control, or you are a total perfectionist that must get everything right, controlling everything around you, I want to support you to shift your mentality from trying to control everything in your life, to, instead, cultivating your capacity to be in choice about how you respond to life.

Don't worry. I'm going to teach you tools how to do it. But that is our goal. So let's do a little physical exercise together to illustrate this a bit more.

Start by gripping your fists together. Make a really tight fist, to the point that it hurts. Now take care of your body. Don't do anything that is going to actually hurt yourself, but to the point that it is uncomfortable. Then pull your arms into your chest. And. Tighten. Everything. Oh gosh! It's uncomfortable, right? This doesn't feel good! Are you really doing it? Do it! Ugh!

This is what it is to try and control everything in life. It's not going to work. And then unfold your hands and unfold your arms. Take a deep breath and release all of that tension. This is what it feels like to choose. If you would rather feel like this in your relationship with how you choose what you eat, then keep learning with me. That's what we're going to do.

When we are using control, we are using willpower. What we need to do is to cultivate the capacity to make an empowered choice. In the longer course, I teach all about the three components that make up empowered choice.

In this foundations course, you are going to learn the first place to start. The way we cultivate our capacity to choose is by practicing different awareness skills. If you aren't aware, you will keep automatically thinking or doing what you have always done.

In order to choose, you need to be aware of your thoughts, your body and your actions. In order to grow your ability to be aware, I am teaching you three really important tools in this course.

You will learn how to take a Sensation Snapshot in Class 4. This is a powerful and simple way to increase your awareness. And let me tell you, practicing the sensation snapshot is going to be essential in your journey to food freedom. It's really the most essential tool; you must do it.

In Class 5 you are going to learn how to use your Hunger, Satisfaction, and Fullness levels to teach you how to start using your awareness of these body signals to help you choose what, how much and when to eat.

And then, in Class 6, you are going to learn the most powerful tool that I know to work through an emotional moment without eating. It is all about choosing to focus your mind on the physical sensations of your body, instead of getting on the hamster wheel of your thoughts.

That hamster wheel always makes your emotions worse. Each of these three tools will teach you the skills that you need to increase your awareness, which will help you to be able to make empowered choices about your eating.

This awareness is going to be the key to what helps you to get off the pendulum swing between the extremes, and instead to be able to stand strong and clear in your own empowered choice.

And trust me when I say, this is an amazing feeling! I can't wait for you all to experience it.

But before you start the awareness tools, you need to start at class 2, where I will teach you about what you need to do to build a strong foundation underneath you.

It is the essential first step. So go ahead. Start the next class. And I will teach you about the proven way to build that strong foundation, then you can go on to the other classes from there.

I recommend that you watch each of the next seven classes all at once, and then over the course of the next week, go back and each day rewatch one of the classes.

We learn through repetition, accountability and practice. I can't wait to help you to learn these powerful tools. Alright, I will see you in the next video!

## Class 2- Build a Strong Foundation

Hello there! I'm Natalie Forsythe, here to teach you the proven tools to stop binge eating and start living.

Welcome to your first class. I am going to teach you a really solid tool that is going to be essential in your journey to finding freedom from binge eating. To frame this tool, I'm going to start off by sharing a little story with you.

My dad is a general contractor and he builds really beautiful spaces. And as a child I grew up riding around on his truck and hanging out on job sites while he did his work.

As a teenager, I worked for the company and hauled around pieces of plywood and helped lay the boards to pour foundations.

As an adult, I actually decided to tear down the shed in my backyard and build myself an office from the ground up. I certainly had help, my dad and brother came out and helped me to erect the structure but I did a lot of the work myself.

When I think back on that time when I had the creative inspiration to take on such a big project as building a tiny house, my heart wells with gratitude.

I am certain that if I was still stuck in the throws of my eating disorder, that there is zero chance that I would've had the energy, the motivation, the focus, or the commitment to complete such a project or even to start one.

It turned out to be a gorgeous little structure with two walls of windows, stained glass windows, and a redwood ceiling. It is the physical space where I created this powerful curriculum and have taught so many students from.

And it's where I'm standing right now! No doubt, you will hear birds in these recordings sometimes, because they are right out there! They keep me company all the time.

Hopefully they will make you smile when you hear them. They definitely make me grateful every day. What a soundscape for my work!

One thing that I learned, growing up on job sites, and then in the process of building this beautiful space is the importance of a strong foundation. Where do you start when you build a house? You start at the foundation.

The same is true on this journey. You have to build a strong foundation in order to change your eating behaviors. A house's foundation is made of concrete and steel. A human's foundation is made up of core needs.

The way I teach it, you have four distinct areas of core needs: Physical, Emotional, Intellectual, and Spiritual core needs.

In this class, we are going to focus on the physical core needs. My guess is that because you are a human living in the 21st century, you are living a very busy and stressful life.

I am sure you have a task list so long every day that it is really easy to put your core physical needs at the bottom of the list, which means they don't even get done most of the time. Am I right?

My guess is that you also prioritize taking care of everyone and everything else first: your kids, your job, your partner, your parents, your house, heck even your neighbors, before you take care of yourself.

It's a common human behavior, but I actually think that it is stinking thinking, as my mom likes to say. Here's what I think about that. You have to put your own oxygen mask on first.

That's what they always say whenever you fly, right? You have to put on your own oxygen mask before you help others with theirs, for your safety and for theirs.

If your physical core needs aren't being met, you won't begin to be able to support the people in your life, or do your job, much the less stop binge eating.

Your physical core needs are your oxygen mask. If you try to build a house on quicksand, it is going to sink and fall over. (Not to mix my metaphors; I do that alot. Get ready for it!)

I want you to take a moment right now and think about times when you were super stressed out and exhausted. Are those the times that you usually ended up eating in a way that felt out of control?

I dare say that I already know the answer. Without a strong foundation, you will fail. Now fail isn't a word I use very often, because it is part of that all-or-nothing thinking that I am teaching you to move away from. But I think it is appropriate in this moment.

Without a strong foundation, your house will keep falling down. Once you build a strong foundation, you can build a strong house.

Alright, so what actually are those core physical needs? Sleep. Hydration. Consistent eating. Movement. Physical Touch. Rest. Hygiene. I'd say these are the top 7, though of course there are more.

Take a moment right now and consider your sleep. Are you getting enough of it? Do you have good sleep hygiene? That's a term that means getting ready for bed earlier than you want to go to bed, turning off technology an hour before you go to sleep, things like that.

Hydration. Are you drinking water? Or do you completely forget all day long? Are you drinking things that end up dehydrating you -- like coffee or soda -- without accommodating for them with extra water? Remember you are made up of a majority of water!

Consistent eating. Now this is likely a difficult one for you as it is for many of my students.

A lot of folks who binge at night, wake up the next day feeling bloated and ashamed; and they won't eat till 2 o'clock in the afternoon to try to accommodate for the night before. But, what that actually does is sets your body up physiologically to binge.

It's important to eat consistently throughout the day to keep this natural response of your body from triggering binge behavior. So if you currently go a long time without eating and then have big bursts of eating, then it's probably time to build the consistency of eating into your life.

Now to be clear, this isn't about creating a rigid meal plan or structure. Those are a setup of diet mentality for most people. (We'll talk more about that later.) What is important is simply ensuring that you do eat consistently throughout the day without long stretches of non-eating.

The goal, in general, is to eat when you feel hunger. But the reality is that some folks have completely shut off those signals over time and don't feel them, even though their body really does need energy. So, a good framework is to eat, make sure when you're awake that you eat somewhere between every three and six hours.

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We will be talking a lot about your hunger sensation as you go on in this training, as it is a really important physical sensation to be aware of. So there's more to come on that!

Movement. Are you listening to your body and moving it? Now this isn't exercise for penance or punishment. The goal here is to support you to shift your perspective. You are not trying to move your body in order to lose weight. You're moving your body in order to feel strong and to have energy.

I want to clarify that on this journey, with me, you are focusing on joyful movement. What feels good? Do that!

Then there's physical touch. Perhaps this is hugs from your children or partner or friends. If you don't have many people in your life that you physically touch, then how can you physically touch yourself?

Everybody needs touch. Maybe you can rub yourself with a favorite lotion in a purposeful and aware way or perhaps you can go get a massage.

Rest. This is separate even from sleep. Do you give yourself the time to just lie down on the couch and close your eyes and listen to a favorite song and really relax?

Or are you always doing something to stimulate your mind like scanning Facebook or watching TV? Not that a good movie or show can't be a time of rest. But most of the time people are also scrolling Instagram or playing a game.

Are you constantly filling your time with all kinds of little busy actions? Busyness is one of the ways we humans avoid feeling what is really happening and really experiencing life.

Hygiene. How are you currently showing up to your hygiene? Do you consistently shower? Do you consistently brush your teeth? Do you go get pedicures, if that's something that you enjoy? Do you take care of your hair before you leave the house?

I want you to take today's worksheet and go through it and determine where it is that you are already showing up in meeting your core needs and where you aren't.

No matter what you discover as you fill it out, the first thing that I want to support you to do is to drop any judgment you might have towards yourself about how you are currently meeting your core needs.

Please do not feel bad if you aren't. You probably aren't; most people aren't. It's why you're here. You're here to get a framework for how to stop binge eating and start living the life you've actually been so hungry for all along.

Guaranteed the more judgment you pile upon yourself, the harder this journey is going to be. We're going to talk a lot more about judgement later. I teach a ton of tools during the longer course to help deal with that self-judging voice.

But for now, if you notice yourself getting stuck in guilt that you're not taking good enough care of yourself, I want to support you to just tell yourself, "I'm on the journey." And then redirect your thoughts and actions onto actually meeting one of those core needs. Go get a glass of water and give yourself a break. You deserve it.

In the next class, I'm going to teach you the most effective way to actually start meeting your core needs. You're going to develop an action plan for building your foundation. And this way of building is the proven format to actually create consistent new habits over time. I can't wait to share it with you.

Before I close up this class, I have one more important thing to talk to you about. I bet that there is a voice in your head that says, "Oh, once I'm skinny then I'll take care of myself. Once I get down to that size, then I'll be worthy of taking care of."

I want to support you to throw out those toxic beliefs put into you by the insidious diet culture. It isn't true. I really want you to hear the fact that you are worthy of taking care of, ***right now***.

I know that each and every human with a heart pulsing in their chest is worthy of living. And worthy of care. I know that you are worthy of living a fulfilling life of peace, joy, freedom, and love.

It's time for you to start taking care of yourself. *Today*. You are worth it. *Right now*. You are brilliant for reaching out and getting support through this course. Because you can't do this alone, and you do not have to.

So go ahead and meet me over in the next class, once you fill out your worksheet, so you can learn more about how you can put your core needs into action. I'll see you there!

## Class 3- Tiny Actions Add Up

Hello again! I'm Natalie Forsythe, here to teach you the proven tools to stop bingeing and start living.

I am super excited to share with you this powerful framework for how behavior change actually works.

Warning: this may not be how you think it works, or how you want it to work, but trust me, this next tool is formed around what the evidence shows is the most effective in instilling new habits and behaviors.

Alrighty! Let's dive in. My guess is that you have this ideal vision of your life. One where food isn't the focus of your life. Where you work out for two hours a day for fun. You cook all your own meals. You have your house perfectly clean. You always drink your three water bottles a day. You have plenty of time and inspiration for creative projects. You excel at every task at work. And you are always there for everyone who needs you everytime. Right?

Maybe your vision differs a bit from what I've described, but I am sure you have one of your own. I think it is also safe to bet that you have tried to create that big life for yourself, first thing Monday morning. A million times.

You say to yourself, "This week, I'm going to get it right. I am going to do it all." Red alert. RED ALERT: This is diet mentality thinking! And with that big vision Monday morning, you all know what happens.

You do it for like two and a half days. And then something inevitably happens. And you swing from your perfect ideal life over to out of control land for the next four and a half days, feeling ashamed and feeling like a failure until it's Monday again and you muster up enough strength to try again. And then on and on and on you go. Right?

I've taught this subject enough to know that you are likely out there nodding your head with a half smile and a half frown right now. It's so familiar. It's a really common idea that the way you make behavior change is by doing it all and getting it all right.

This common misconception is that you create behavioral changes by having just the right plan and completing it perfectly. Sticking to it. And changing your life forever.

Here is the truth my friends: that is diet culture talking. And it is keeping you stuck on the pendulum swing between the two extremes.

Between dieting and bingeing. Between perfection and failure. Between black and white. Between all or nothing.

When you try to change everything all at once that's the pendulum swinging between the extremes. You have been lied to by diet culture. You have been told that there is a quick fix and that you can make huge overarching changes all at once.

And that if you can't, it is your fault and that you are a failure and that you have no willpower. The truth is that this is not the way that behavior change really works.

You know how it works? It's all about creating small incremental shifts over time. The way you actually create change is one Tiny Action at a time.

One of my favorite metaphors for this is the metaphor of a boat setting sail from America going to Europe. If the boat changes its trajectory by just one degree, the boat will end up in Africa. With a one degree shift right in front of you, you can end up with an entirely different life over time.

So instead of trying to get yourself through a laundry list of all the things you think you should do (Oh that word should; we'll talk about that later.) all the things you think you should do every day, I want you to start to reframe your thoughts that the way you are actually going to create the life of your dreams is by doing just one tiny action at a time.

Just a couple of days ago, I went on a walk with an old student named Daniella. And she said I could share this story with you. She has been out of the course for over a year. It blew my mind to hear from her what has happened in the last year since she finished the course.

When she started she was binge eating a few times a week. She was in an office job that didn't fuel her spirit. She felt disconnected in her relationship with her body.

During the program, she really found the powerful transformative effects of tiny actions and says that she now evangelizes to anyone who will listen that tiny actions are the most powerful ways to create what you want in life.

She said that not only has she used it in her food and body relationship but now she also uses it in all of these other areas of her life. These days, she is listening to her hunger and eating to strengthen her body, instead of using food to cope with stressful emotions.

But even more amazingly, she now has dedicated herself to one of her hearts deepest passions which is acting. She took the big leap and she is soaring.

She quit her day job. She has been part of multiple small films in the last few months. She has a new job at a film studio and she has an agent and does modeling contracts.

She is dedicated to being an actor without dieting and without conforming to the thin body ideal, and without taking the roles of the stereotypical fat friend who is always on the diet.

As she told me on our walk #allbodiesallroles. Oh YEAH! She's going to be the fat chick in the lead role as the love interest. I'm so into it! And she says that she's planning to move to LA in about a year and a half so that she can really dedicate herself to this dream of becoming an actor.

And that this timeline itself is formed by tiny actions. She wants to go forward methodically and to continue to build the life that she wants -- one tiny action at a time!

And even that timeline of the year and a half is informed by her understanding that the way that you actually create successful changes in life is to focus on one tiny action at a time.

Daniela's first tiny actions were drinking water and flossing. Look at what she has built from those tiny actions! You can build your dreams one tiny action at a time!

So, what is a Tiny Action, you may be asking. A tiny action only takes 30 seconds to two minutes. So it's not a big time commitment. It also doesn't require much motivation.

My very first tiny action, when I was starting on my own journey of recovery, and I was sitting in your seat-- remember, I had been struggling with bingeing since I was three and purging for a decade.

My first tiny action was to roll out my yoga mat and stand on it. It wasn't even to do a single stretch. The action was literally just rolling out the yoga mat and standing on it.

Now of course once I actually did that I was likely to go ahead and do a forward bend, and, you know what? That has led me to a nearly decade long morning yoga practice.

And that yoga practice has been so important in my journey. It has given me confidence and strength, self-compassion and self-worth.

I am so grateful to stand before you today and to look back on all that change I have created in my life. All from rolling out my mat and standing on it.

So right now, I want you to take the list of your core needs from the last class. I want you to decide what the areas of core needs are that if you give just a little bit more attention, will give you the most bang for your buck, as I like to say.

From there I want you to think about what is one tiny action for those two categories, maybe you decide that it's hydration and movement.

And so your tiny actions are drinking one glass of water when you first wake up in the morning and putting on your walking shoes when you get home from work.

You notice I didn't say drink 4 quarts of water a day nor did I say go on a mile long walk through the neighborhood. Think Tiny Action.

In the next class I am going to teach you, hands down, the most powerful, most simple and most important foundational tool that I will teach you in this whole program. I can't wait to teach you the tool that has helped change so many lives.

I'll see you there!

## Class 4- Focus on Sensation

Hello again! I'm Natalie Forsythe, here to teach you the proven tools to stop bingeing and start living.

In the last couple of classes you have explored what it takes to build a strong foundation by meeting your core physical needs.

From that foundation you get to start building. The tool that I'm going to teach you in this class is truly one of the most essential and transformative that I know.

That's the joy of this Foundations course. Every single one of the short teachings is essential to this journey. So if you want to be able to stop a binge before it starts, you need to start with this tool.

If you are like most of my students, and for that matter most humans, you live your life in your head. Your thoughts are your experience of living. People often relate to feeling like a balloon head where they're drifting several feet above their bodies, quite disconnected. Can you relate to that?

As James Joyce so aptly put it, "Mr. Duffy lived a short distance from his body." (I love that quote!) The problem with living like Mr Duffy - a short distance from your body - is that when you just live in your thoughts and you're not connected to your body, then you are largely cut off from what's really happening in the world around you.

The way you actually experience the world around you is with your five senses, right? The reality is that your thoughts are made up; my thoughts are made up. They aren't what's really happening in the world.

They are simply what your mind is constructing in that moment. What's great about this is that you can learn to change your thoughts. This is one of the most important things that you are going to focus on if you are participating in the longer course.

Most folks are living in a place where they have a lot of automatic negative thoughts that are running the show in their thought patterns, and for that matter in their behavior.

Whether you have the mean girl in you who is constantly judging everyone, or the negative Nelly who has something terrible to say about every single idea that you ever have, the reality is that unless you have learned to purposefully cultivate your thoughts, you likely live on a hamster wheel of negative thinking. Round and round it goes.

This negative hamster wheel leads people into a place where they feel really poorly about themselves, their situation and their capacity to make change. The way through this is by learning how to integrate your thoughts with your body and your emotions, to live your life from an integrated place where your balloon head sits squarely on your shoulders, and where you are able to make choices that take into account all parts of you.

It's from this place that you will learn to make Empowered Choices about your eating. No doubt that integration between thoughts, body and emotions is a process. One that takes a lot of practice.

Luckily, I have broken that practice down into a truly manageable process and this tool is so straightforward you're going to get it. The first step is to start to cultivate your capacity for mindfulness. Before we go deeper into what mindfulness really is I want to talk about mindlessness.

That mindless moment when you're already elbow deep into the chip bag before you realized you were eating. It is as if you are at the mercy of an automatic chain of events that starts without you having any awareness of it. Does that sound familiar? I'm sure that it does.

This kind of mindless numb out bingeing is a super common pattern that I help people to change. Or, maybe you are painfully aware that you're bingeing. But once you have that initial urge to eat, it's like a freight train straight to binge land.

Once you have the urge to go get the chips you have no other choice but to act on that urge. It's like you are a captive of your own automatic thoughts. So, the goal here is to become aware of that moment of urge and to separate your urge from your action.

The thought to eat the chips is distinct from the act of eating the chips itself; it might not feel like it, but it is, and with practice you can separate that urge from that action.

By cultivating mindfulness you will become more aware of that initial urge thought. Your awareness of that thought is the first step in stopping the binge before it starts.

Alrighty. Let's talk mindfulness. I am sure you have heard the term mindfulness. I'm sure you have heard Oprah talk about it, read articles in the New York Times or seen your favorite blogger apply it to their topic.

It is quite a buzzword. And for good reason. It's my humble opinion that mindfulness practice can help us thought-centric humans in basically every aspect of our life.

And it isn't just my opinion. There are countless studies that show the efficacy of mindfulness for alleviating all kinds of struggles, including, but definitely not limited to, disordered eating behaviors.

A systematic review of eight different studies that was published in the journal *Eating Disorders* by Wanden-Berge et al in 2011, it showed evidence supporting the effectiveness of mindfulness to treat eating disorders.

Anecdotally, I am certain that my mindfulness practice is the most important tool in my toolbox that has supported me in my own recovery. So, for you, this might be the first time you are really hearing about mindfulness or maybe you've even engaged in some mindfulness practices.

Maybe you've tried it and felt like it just wasn't for you. Maybe you felt like you couldn't do it and you just stopped trying. Super common. Or maybe you have been practicing mindfulness and felt the benefits personally.

Wherever you are with mindfulness is perfect. No matter where you are, we're going to start there.

The joy of this tool that I'm going to teach you is it is the most basic way to be mindful and it only takes two seconds. Literally.

Most likely, you have a conception that mindfulness equals a seated meditation practice. Where you're sitting on a pillow in a dark room with a straight spine for an hour and breathing without having any thoughts.

A seated meditation practice is certainly one way to cultivate mindfulness and presence. But it definitely is not the only way. And in fact, I believe for creating behavior change like you are here to do, it's actually much more effective to learn presence in the beginning in a different way.

Take a quick sip of water. Core needs right?

Alright. Are you ready? Right now, use your mind as a tool to focus on the physical sensation of your breath. Tune your mind into what your breath feels like as it is moving in and out of your body.

The goal here is to pick one specific sensation and focus all of your mental attention on it. My go-to favorite is my rib cage expanding upwards and outwards as I breathe in and shrinking inwards and down as I exhale.

Some others that you can explore: the feeling right around your nostrils or mouth, where the air is rushing in and rushing out, where you can feel the wind rushing in and out of your body with every breath.

Another place you can pay attention is inside the back of your throat. When you inhale, perhaps you can feel that the air is cooler, and then when you exhale through your throat you can feel the warmer air going the other direction.

If you can't sense any of those physical sensations, no worries. Wherever you are is just right. So if you can't feel your breath in any of those ways I said, then what you can do is to focus your mind on the physical sensation of your hand as you make a fist with your inhale and open it with your exhale. Pay attention to the physical sensations of your fist opening and closing.

The goal is that for one simple single breath you focus all of the mental energy and attention that you can onto really experiencing that singular sensation in the moment.

While you might think that the sensation of your breath is always the same with every breath, the reality is that every single one is actually unique. And for sure, each and every breath is actually happening in this present moment of your life.

Unlike your thoughts that are made up, you are really breathing. And by choosing to focus your mind on the physical sensation of your breath for that one moment, you are coming into that place of mind-body integration that I was talking about earlier.

Let's do it together right now. For this next breath, focus your mind on the sensation of your breath moving through your body. Awesome! You just did it.

For that one moment you hit the pause button on the hamster wheel of your automatic thoughts. By practicing this tool you will be able to extend the amount of time that you can put on that pause button. This is where we are headed.

This awareness is going to be essential in separating that urge to binge from the action of actually bingeing. Taking a sensation snapshot (that's what I call thiol) gives you a moment of respite from the hamster wheel of your thoughts.

Over time your awareness will last more than just a couple seconds and you'll be able to hit the pause button on your negative thoughts long enough to use a different tool instead of bingeing. For now the only goal is to begin to practice focusing your mind on physical sensation.

Pema Chodrin, who is an incredible mindfulness teacher (who I studied with a lot and I am so grateful to) teaches a very similar technique to beginner mindfulness students. She's a world renowned mindfulness teacher and Buddhist nun.

She teaches that the one moment of focus many times throughout the day can be more effective in increasing awareness during the course of life, than a seated meditation practice, especially in the beginning of learning what it is to cultivate mindfulness.

What I'm going to ask you to do is to take at least 20 of these sensation snapshot breaths throughout your day at random times. All I'm asking is one mindful breath 20 different times throughout your day.

At the max this is going to take two minutes of your day, so this is certainly a tiny action. I am confident that as you bring this practice in, you will find yourself to be more aware of your thought patterns and more aware of your actions.

So my guess is that you are wondering how to remember to take 20 of those breaths a day. Totally understandable. There is an app for that! There's a number of apps actually.

If you have an iPhone, I really like one called Lotus Bud but there's also one called Mindfulness Bell. If you have an Android, there's one called MindBell and another one called Mindfulness Bell. (We will link them in the notes here.) As soon as you finish watching this class I want you to go and download your app.

What this app does for you is that it will ring a bell at random times throughout the day. Ding! Make sure you know how your app works, because some of them you need to set it every day; some of them you don't.

If it isn't ringing, it isn't going to help! So, each time you hear that bell, no matter what else is going on, for the next breath use your mind to focus on the sensation of your breath.

You hear the bell go off and you tune your mind to focus on the physical sensation of your breath moving through your body. I really can't talk enough about the importance of this tool.

I want you to create the change that you seek, and to do so, you absolutely must practice these sensation snapshot breaths. This is your foundation for mindfulness.

It makes me think of an old student, who told me at the end of the longer course that, hands down, it was these breaths that got her from a place where she was bingeing all weekend long to not bingeing for six months. For real!

If you don't do it, you will still gain insights from the rest of the training, and I am sure you will see some results. But I am absolutely certain that you will not create as much change as you will if you bring this practice into your daily life.

Get your bell set, when you hear it go off, take that next breath to focus on the specific sensation of your breath moving through your body. Practice hitting that pause button. Focus on sensation.

Wahoo! Alrighty! So, what I want to support you to do is to make a plan right now when, in your day, you are going to do each of your two Core Need tiny actions that you established in the last couple of classes. I also want you to go to the app store and get your bell downloaded. There will be links below for the different apps.

My goal for you is to complete your two truly Tiny actions and take your twenty sensation snapshot breaths throughout each day.

Here is the deal. You might not do it every day. But you don't have to wait for Monday to start again. (Diet mentality!) It can be mid-afternoon when you remember the bell and turn it on. If you didn't do your tiny actions yesterday. You can still do them today.

You are not a failure for not completing your actions perfectly. The goal is to do it everyday, and if you don't, come back to your commitment at the very next time that you can.

Ok! The next tool finally has something to do with eating! I bet many of you were wondering when I was actually going to start talking about food. Now that you have your foundations of Tiny Actions and Sensation Snapshots, we can move on to the eating part! See you there!

## Class 5- Listen to Your Body

Hello again! I'm Natalie Forsythe here to teach you the proven tools to stop bingeing and start living.

I'm excited to talk to you today about a constant question I get. What, how much and when should I eat? And trust me, this is not going to be a diet or a meal plan.

Most people take most of their cues from external resources: like the scale, calories and fat grams, magazine articles about nutrition and what a "hot body" is supposed to look like.

It is so common for people to base so many of their food choices and body choices off of all of those external cues.

Where the scale has so much power and can make you feel one way or another depending upon what number shows up.

Or how seeing a magazine model can trigger feelings of self hatred.

Or the way that people use calorie counting as a way to determine how much food they should eat.

Do you do any of these things? What I find is that for every single one of those external cues happening outside of their bodies, those end up being detrimental to people's journeys to finding peace in their relationship with food. They end up feeling really hopeless. And out of control. And often bingeing.

Do you do any of these things? What I find is that every single one of those external cues ends up being detrimental to people's journeys and they end up feeling really hopeless and out of control.

The reality is, as I like to say all the time: We are never in control, but we are always in choice. We can't control what happens in the world around us. But we can choose how to respond to it.

We can't control our food because that control will backfire and swing over to out of control, but we can learn to choose what, when, and how much we eat. The solution is to cultivate an ever-greater relationship with your body and with what it's telling you.

The reality is that your body is brilliant. Just think about all the different things that your body is doing right now without you even having to even consider it.

If you want to feel like you are genuinely choosing what, when, and how much to eat, then it is time to get in touch with the greatest resource that you have: your own body.

I have some dear friends who are nutritionists whom I respect mightily for their expertise and professionalism. To be clear, I think that they are a really important resource to support people to eat in a way that is in alignment with their bodies and their particular allergies and medical conditions.

And that said, there is a lot of mixed information out there in the world of nutrition. If you go down the rabbit hole of half researched blog posts on nutrition you will find all kinds of different "one and only answers".

I mean, one day you read a study that says fat is the worst thing in the world, and then the next day you read another study that says all you should eat is fat.

Of course, I'm exaggerating a bit, but the reality is that there is so much conflicting information out there, and some of it is even backed up by some modicum of scientific research. So what are we to believe?

The conclusion that I have come to is that every body is different and that the only way to come to peace with your body and your eating is for you to really listen to your body and to give it what it is asking for.

I am going to give you a powerful tool to do just that in a moment. You are going to learn how to be informed by your own body and your own self experience and not by what a label tells you or a blog post tells you.

This next tool comes from the *Intuitive Eating* model developed by Evelyn Tribole and Elyse Resch. If you haven't read the book *Intuitive Eating*, I want you to go buy it or go get it at the library right now. I will link it below.

It is also on Audible as an audiobook, as well as in print. Side note: be sure to get the most recent edition. It has a great chapter on raising intuitive eaters, so help out your kids; this is so helpful to parents and guardians in this journey.

I started learning about intuitive eating during my own recovery, and found it to be immensely helpful on a personal level, integral to my success. I have incorporated the model into my teachings because the research has shown it to be one of the most effective ways to help people to create a peaceful food and body relationship.

It is an incredibly powerful framework and toolbox. At this point, it is acknowledged by the professionals of the eating disorder treatment community as a key component of successful treatment.

I have studied with Evelyn Tribole in her Certified Intuitive Eating Counselor training and learned even more about the validity of the model from a practitioner perspective and I stand behind it wholeheartedly.

Okay, are you ready for this foundational tool from the *Intuitive Eating* model that I have been over here talking up so much? The tool is to help you learn for yourself what, how much, and when to eat. And that is to start to track your Hunger, Satisfaction, and Fullness levels.

If you are used to tracking fat carbs and protein, I am going to say switch it out to Hunger, Satisfaction, and Fullness.

Let's ditch that diet mentality. So if you are currently doing diet influenced tracking of your eating, like tracking your macros, I want to support you to step away from that.

It really just perpetuates the pendulum swing between restriction and bingeing. In order to find choice, you are going to cultivate your capacity to be aware of your body's signals. This is called interoceptive awareness.

This is your ability to perceive physical sensations that arrive from within the body. Some examples of physical sensations that you use interoceptive awareness to experience are your heartbeat or a full bladder.

Just like your heart beat or your full bladder, your hunger and fullness signals are natural and normal bodily sensations. Unfortunately, living a life of yo-yo dieting and bingeing, causes many people to shut down to the sensations of Hunger and Fullness.

People on a diet feel guilty for feeling hungry. Or ashamed when they get overly full during a binge. People push away the feelings of hunger and try to make it just a little bit longer without eating. I want to affirm a new relationship to these sensations.

They are a normal part of a living breathing human. And, if you choose to listen to them, they can help inform your eating. As Evelyn likes to point out, with a bit of humor, there is no judgment or guilt involved with needing to pee or doing it.

You are already an intuitive pee-er. How about you become an intuitive eater, too?! It's all just a part of your natural body processes. Let's remove the judgment from these body signals and instead use them as the beacons to help guide your intuitive eating journey.

Your goal is to perceive your hunger and fullness and to honor these sensations in a timely manner. Your interoceptive awareness is a direct experience of what is really happening in your body.

It is kind of like what I taught you in the last class, the way that we experience what is really happening in the present moment is by focusing on physical sensation. The way to understand when and how much to eat is by focusing on the physical sensations of hunger and fullness. That is what is real.

When people are confused about their eating, it is coming from thoughts, rules and beliefs. People who have spent a lifetime as chronic dieters, are really used to engaging the left side of their brain when making food choices.

This is the side of the brain that is very linear and rule based. The part of your brain that has access to your interoceptive awareness is primarily your right brain. The general goal is that you eat soon after you notice the first signs of hunger.

The hunger is your body's way of telling you that it needs energy. Nothing more and nothing less. Remember, we are big fancy animals and we need food to survive.

Let's give some gratitude to your hunger sensation or who knows, our species might not have made it! Take a moment right now and consider how in touch you are with your hunger signals.

Some folks really barely ever feel hungry and it is almost only in the most extreme hunger that they are aware of it, such as with a really bad low-blood sugar headache. If this is you, then the journey is going to be to start to hunt out progressive earlier and earlier signs of hunger.

On the contrary, if you are the kind of person that never feels hungry, because you are constantly grazing, the goal is going to give yourself the opportunity to get hungry before you choose to eat.

So you can see, this is the guide for when to eat. Your body will tell you when it needs more energy. Some people have a strong fear of hunger due to past life experiences. If this is you, then I really want to support you to get some help from a therapist to work through that lingering trauma response.

Wherever you are with hunger, I support you to start to bring more and more of your awareness onto your sensations of hunger. If you currently never really feel hungry, I am sure that the more focus you bring to trying to feel the sensation, the more you will cultivate your ability to feel it.

Once you start eating, the next sensation to start to pay attention to is Satisfaction. It is so important to be satisfied by what you are eating. Satisfaction is key.

If you aren't feeling satisfied by what you are eating now, then most likely you will seek out that satisfaction later in an eating episode that feels out of control.

In the longer course, we talk a lot about the importance of seeking satisfaction and fulfillment in all parts of your life - including food - so get ready for that. For now, choose to eat food that you enjoy.

So using satisfaction to choose what you're eating helps you understand what it is that you truly want and not what diet culture dictates that you should eat or what you believe you should have. **You're eating in reaction to the restriction you've been engaging in.**

The more you focus on satisfaction the more you will find yourself noticing genuine body cravings. While you're eating, it's all about being mindful of the tastes, the textures, the flavors, and to really treasure them.

Start to notice as you eat that there is the point at which the flavors are less intense and less enjoyable. This is a natural process. You can use this experience of the decreased experience of satisfaction as one signal to help you understand when it's time to stop eating.

Another interesting part of satisfaction is the recognition that it's also about how you feel when you're done eating. The food is probably not very satisfying if you end up with a terrible stomach ache every time after you eat it.

It's also probably not very satisfying if you end up feeling really tired every time after you eat a specific food. Allow your past experiences of eating to inform your future choices when it comes to what will be satisfying.

The other sensation that's going to support you to stop eating is fullness. This is your body's natural mechanism to say that your body has had enough food in it at the moment to go through the process of digestion.

I know a lot of people who binge are very used to pushing past the sensation of fullness. There's an aspect of being overly full that I want to acknowledge that does feel good, in its own way. It can feel comfortable, comforting.

And I acknowledge that overly full feeling does have its attributes. But, ultimately, eating past fullness isn't honoring your body signals. And choosing to use fullness in that way is a form of using food to cope with your emotions.

A big part of my goal is to help you learn all kinds of other ways to cope and be with your emotions without using food. So, the goal is to start to notice the more subtle early sensations of fullness and to start experimenting using that earlier sign of fullness as the sign to stop eating.

I can't nor do I want to go very deeply into the essential concept of full permission eating during this Foundations course. It's too complex of a conversation and adopted without the proper education it can end up backfiring for people.

That said, Full Permission is an essential concept in the *Intuitive Eating* framework and in the longer course I teach you all about it and help you to step into it at the right time.

A basic summary is that whatever food you restrict you will end up bingeing on; so in order to stop bingeing you have to stop restricting, which means you need to step into full permission where all food is on the table to choose from.

One of the most amazing things about full permission that I do want to acknowledge right now, in light of fullness, is that if there is no food that you can't eat, then going along with that you can also eat as much and as often as your body wants.

If you have a bag of chips you can have some now and some later because you know that later you'll still be able to eat them. How often have you eaten something way past a point of fullness because there's some voice in your head that's telling you that you are bad for eating it and that you aren't allowed to eat more tomorrow, so you eat past a point of comfortable fullness now, just to get it over with?

It is that classic Last Supper mentality of going on a big binge before going on a diet. Right? It's super common. So instead of engaging with that Last Supper mentality, choose to honor your fullness level; and know that tomorrow or the next day or three weeks from now, or even ten minutes from now, you can go back and have more of that thing.

It is not off-limits. It is a huge part of what helps people honor their fullness levels. A word of warning that I want to give you at this point, is around the fact that sometimes people turn this into the Hunger, Satisfaction and Fullness diet. And I want to warn you against that.

This is a framework. They are guidelines. These are not hard and fast rules. To try to make this be a hard and fast rule set, where you're only allowed to eat when hungry and you must stop when full and you must be satisfied, it becomes a form of restriction, which is only going to pull the pendulum.

Use this as a framework and guideline to help you learn more about what your body really wants and needs in an eating experience. The way that I want you to implement this is to use the worksheet provided below to track your hunger, satisfaction, and fullness levels.

I want your goal to be to track one time of eating throughout the day. I don't want you to do this every single time you eat. It becomes a bit too extreme, and a bit too similar to the tracking of every calorie you eat. Right?

I want you to use this as an opportunity for increasing your interoceptive awareness capacities. So before you start eating, put yourself on a scale from 1 to 10 of how hungry you are in that moment.

Once you're done, acknowledge how satisfying the meal was and how full you are now. There is no judgment in any of these numbers.

If you eat when you're not hungry that's okay. If you eat when you're super hungry that's okay. If you eat past fullness that's okay. If you are still hungry when you stop eating that's okay too.

This is truly a judgment free model. Judgment happens in your minds. What we are trying to get you in touch with is what is actually happening in your body and then from there learning how to start honoring those body signals to help you choose when, what and how much to eat.

I'm really excited for you to start to tune into these sensations. The more you do, the more life-changing they will be.

In the next class I'm going to teach you, hands down, the most powerful tool that I know to deal with the moment of emotion without eating. Honestly it's the most powerful tool that I know at all. I really can't wait to share it with you. I'll see you over there.

## Class 6- Emotions Only Last 90 Seconds

Hello, Natalie Forsythe here to teach you the proven tools to stop bingeing and start living.

I'm going to start you off today with one of my most favorite quotes from any author that I've ever found. Are you ready for it?

It was written by Haruki Murakami, though it is often actually attributed to the Buddha because it sums up Buddhist philosophy incredibly well. "Pain is inevitable. Suffering is optional."

I definitely want you to write that one down because it is central to the teachings in this Foundations Course and moving forward I believe that it is a key concept to understand and ultimately practice in your journey to finding emotional freedom and peace in your relationship with food.

The reality is that painful moments of life are always going to happen. It is inevitable. Pain is inevitable. The people you love are going to get sick. Your bosses are going to yell at you for something.

Those initial moments of pain are inevitable. They're going to happen no matter how much you try to control life. So what you do have a choice around is what you do in your thought patterns and your actions after that initial point of pain.

What you have choice around is how you respond to the pain that life serves you. Now it is incredibly common for the human mind to get on the hamster wheel and to play that pain over and over and over again.

And you know what it does? It makes you more and more and more upset about it. The playing over and over in your mind of the thoughts about that initial point of pain, **that** is when you create suffering.

It's when you extend that initial moment of pain into the future with your thought patterns and actions. Believe it or not, you can experience a moment of pain -- fully experience it -- and then move on from it.

Believe it or not, you can have that emotional experience and then choose to not keep reliving it in your thoughts. It's easier said than done and it takes practice. (Like pretty much everything I teach!)

But that sensation snapshot that I taught you a couple of classes ago is the first step to being able to do this, so make sure you keep practicing it. Get that mindfulness bell going off! If you are in the longer course, overtime you will learn many more tools to not attach your thoughts to an emotion.

But don't you worry, you don't actually have to wait. You're going to learn one of those tools right now. The most powerful of all of them in fact.

So just in case you are confused about why I'm talking about this cycle of perpetuating pain into suffering with your thought patterns, I am going to connect the dots.

Very often people who binge eat do so in moments of emotional duress. Is that you? That incessant negative voice in the head playing on the hamster wheel gets to be too much and you just want to escape so you head straight for your favorite binge food and numb out, suppress your emotion, and disappear into distracted eating.

Something happens which sets off a strong emotional reaction and you go into that place where you feel so out of control and you wake up elbow deep in the chip bag.

I remember those incredibly painful emotional eating moments from my past so well. What I have learned is that the best way to deal with it is to be present with your emotions in the moment, to fully experience them, and then not dwell on them after the moment passes.

I actually have a pretty remarkable story about when I used this tool a couple of years ago. I was on my family's land outside of Nashville TN, with my parents.

The first thing that I want to tell you is that I have an amazing mother. She is brilliant; she's dedicated and the most loving earth momma of all time. I love her so much and I am so grateful to her and for her. Truly!

That said, like all close relationships, we have our things. Our whole life together, we have been learning and growing in all things food and body image.

We both have had our own struggles, and we both have learned and changed so much over my lifetime. That said, sometimes the old remnants of judgment from the younger years still rear their ugly head. This was one of those moments.

So I was trying on clothes trying to decide what to wear to the wedding that I was in town for, and my mom looked at me in a particular dress and she said, "I don't know Natalie, I think your butt looks like it's in a sausage casing."

Now, on so many levels this was incredibly triggering. My first inclination was to scream F you in her face. I am so grateful to say that is not what I did.

What I did was I raised my eyebrows in amazement and I turned around because I didn't want to scream at her. I walked into the bathroom and I looked in the mirror.

I felt the anger bubbling up through my neck; it was hot. I took some deep breaths and then it felt like tension in my shoulders. And I took some more deep breaths and I noticed that my cheeks were really hot. I took some more deep breaths, and then the

anger started to shift. And then my body felt more normal. I looked in the mirror and I smiled at myself with so much gratitude.

I was feeling grateful because this was one of those magical moments of emotional freedom that I have found on my own recovery journey. I have practiced being present with my emotions and letting them move through me enough times that I genuinely wasn't angry with my mom any more.

I felt the anger in the moment. And then I was done with it. I walked back into the room not more than ninety seconds later and shared with my mom what I had just done and even had a laugh about it with her.

I had transmuted that incredible amount of anger into gratitude. I was able to let it be, move through and be done with it in 90 seconds flat. WOOT!

I told her that it really wasn't okay with me for her to make comments like that about my body, but because I wasn't currently angry, I was able to communicate that boundary in a way that she easily understood and respected.

She acknowledged that she understood that need of mine, and she apologized for the painful comment. Then, we were done with it and we went on and had a good day.

In the past that would have been something that would have blown me out of the water. I would have been a wreck about it. No question it would have triggered me into binge behavior.

The tool I used is called the 90 Second Rule. This is the most powerful tool that I have ever used to deal with my emotions without eating. This tool came from the research and experience of a woman named Jill Bolte Taylor.

Jill Bolte Taylor is a Harvard trained neuroscientist. You may have heard about her because she has a great and widely shared TED talk. I'll link it below. I would totally recommend you watch it.

So she is a neuroscientist and she had a stroke. You can only imagine being a neuroscientist and having a stroke. You would have a particular perspective on the whole process that any lay person wouldn't even begin to have.

Her stroke affected the left hemisphere of her brain. If you aren't too familiar with neuroscience and how brains work, the left side is the more rational, numerical, logical

side of your brain. The right side of your brain is the creative, emotional, and interesting present side of the brain.

And so her left side was pretty well knocked out due to the stroke. Over time she did recover a good amount of those faculties. But while she was in the recovery process, she was living pretty much totally in the right brain, which you might remember from the last video is the place of interoceptive awareness. That awareness of body signals?

While she was living in the right brain, she was very much present in the moment and experiencing her body. This part of the brain doesn't really hold past or future experiences hardly at all. So she was living a very present experience of life.

When she would have emotions, she would have a very visceral experience of the emotions. She would feel the emotion in her body and then before she knew it she wouldn't be feeling the emotion anymore.

She had moved onto the next present moment experience. She wasn't going back and creating more suffering for herself by attaching thoughts and stories to that initial emotion.

As the neuroscientist, she wanted to become really clear of what was happening here, because this was definitely a different way of experiencing her emotions from before the stroke.

From a neurological perspective, when you have a strong emotion, there is a surge of chemicals from your brain that passes into your bloodstream. That is the "feeling" of an emotion that you experience.

Once released, these chemicals get processed through your body in about 90 seconds. So if you are experiencing the emotion after about 90 seconds, it is because you're extending the experience with your thoughts.

You're creating new thoughts that actually stimulate the release of those neurological chemicals back into your bloodstream, and you keep feeling the emotion. Your thoughts can retrigger the pain of an emotion.

So, if you are experiencing the emotion after about 90 seconds, it is because you are extending the experience with your thoughts. You are creating new thoughts that actually stimulate the release of those neurological chemicals and you keep feeling the emotion. Your thoughts can retrigger the pain of an emotion.

So the goal is to not think those thoughts. The key here is to stop your mind from attaching thoughts and stories to your emotions.

No doubt, this takes practice to refine, but I am about to teach you a way to do this that students before you have had immediate success with.

It makes me think of a student who told me that the very next morning after she learned this tool, she got in a fight with her husband. She managed to practice this 90 second rule, and she was amazed at how well it worked immediately.

She was able to go down to the kitchen, quickly talk through the conflict without a lot of mucky emotion before they went to work, and be done with it. She didn't spend the day bingeing which she said that she would have in this situation before.

For the record she had done zero mindfulness practice at this point. She was at the same point in the learning journey with me as you are right now.

It reaffirms that the science and my personal experience show, your emotions are so strongly linked to the actual physiological release of these neurological chemicals that it dictates your emotion. I know when I first heard the concept that emotions only last 90 seconds that I was in disbelief and I said, "But I have felt angry for weeks on end."

But the reason that I was continuing to feel anger was because I was repeating the story over and over in my mind and, therefore, extending my experience of the emotion.

The reality is that your mind is always going to think. That is its brilliance and its detriment. So, the way that I have refined this powerful teaching of Jill Bolte Taylor into the tool that I am teaching you now, is by recognizing that you have to give your mind a job to do for the 90 seconds while your body is processing those chemicals.

During that 90 seconds, those chemicals make you more likely to lash out. And it's really easy to get on the hamster wheel during that initial 90 seconds.

It's significantly easier to not keep recreating the story. It's much easier to not keep retriggering the emotion with your thought after that initial 90 seconds. So what do you do for that 90 seconds?

You have to give your mind a job to do. You have to occupy your mind so that it doesn't get onto the hamster wheel.

The Sensation Snapshots tool that you are practicing is really going to help you here. Remember, the Sensation Snapshot requires you to focus your mind on the physical sensations of your breath for one breath.

In the 90 Second Rule, you are going to use your mind to focus on the physical sensations of the emotion in your body. Maybe you already know what I am talking about when I say the physical sensations of the emotion in your body.

You are familiar with your throat feeling like it has a rock in it when you are upset for example or maybe you have no idea about what an emotion feels like in your body.

No worries if this is you. I am certain you can cultivate this capacity. So what you do when you're using that 90 Second Rule is that you focus your mind on the physical sensations of the emotion moving through your body.

In the beginning, I want you to remove yourself from the situation. Going to the bathroom is always a great thing to do. It is almost always socially acceptable to excuse yourself to the restroom. You will begin by naming the sensations out loud.

You say, "I feel my shoulders are really tight. I feel my throat is aching. I feel butterflies in my stomach. My fingers are in a fist." You notice all of those physical sensations of the emotion and you actually name them out loud.

The trick is to keep your mind occupied with this labeling of sensation for the 90 seconds. I would suggest that you try to identify three distinct sensations of the emotion. And then you keep cycling through of those three physical sensations noticing how they change.

They might get more intense before they lessen but if you can really occupy your mental space with the experience of the physical sensation, they **will shift** within 90 seconds.

Perhaps you are out there watching right now, saying, "But I don't want to feel. My emotions are so uncomfortable. That is why I eat, so I don't have to feel." I get it. I totally hear you.

But the question that I want to pose to you is: which is actually more uncomfortable? Ninety seconds of feeling the physical sensations of an emotion? Or the next three days bingeing your way into a numbed out haze so you don't have to feel your emotions?

To me it's an obvious answer. And my guess is, that since you signed up for this class, and you are ready to learn a new way, (even if it is scary or uncomfortable) it's understandable to be afraid to feel your emotions. Because, perhaps there were many times in the past where you let yourself feel, that it felt like you dove into a deep well of sadness and you were drowning in it.

But here's the deal. Part of why that was happening is because when you were in that well of sadness, you kept thinking about the pain and you kept recreating it with your mind and with your thought patterns.

And then, it was so uncomfortable, so you would do something to suppress the discomfort. The unfortunate reality is that every time you suppress your emotions, it's gonna come out the side somewhere, either in an emotional outburst, or quite likely in binge eating.

It's so freeing to give yourself permission to feel your emotions in the present moment and then to be done with them. Truly powerful. Your emotions only last 90 seconds: Talk about freedom!

So, as you go through the course of the week, the first step is to have the awareness that you are having an emotional experience. Then excuse yourself and go to the bathroom and start naming out loud the physical sensations of the emotion.

It works really well to identify two or three different sensations, and to check in with each one, see how it feels, then go to the next, and the next. And to cycle through them, giving all of your mental attention to how it feels, and how that feeling is changing each time you cycle back to it.

Do this for about 90 seconds, or until you feel the sensations in your body dissipate and then once you're done, do something really nice and comforting for yourself, like taking a bath, or going on a walk in the sunshine, or lighting a candle and lying down on the couch; something that feels good, and is helping you meet a core need.

If you try to use the 90 Second Rule, let us know how it went. If it works really well, then awesome! Let us know how dumbfounded you are by how powerful this tool is. I know I am.

We really do want to hear about it. If it didn't work at all for you, we also want to hear about that, because we want to help you to refine this tool so that you can learn how to make it work for you. Which I know that you can. This is a matter of brain science!

In the next class we're going to talk about the most simple and profound way to shift your thoughts from negativity to positivity. It's been shown in many studies to have incredibly positive effects all around. I look forward to seeing you over there.

## Class 7- Choose Your Thoughts

Hello again! I'm Natalie Forsythe, here to teach you the proven tools to stop bingeing and start living.

We've talked a lot in this Foundations Course about thought patterns. Thought patterns are where your actions stem from. If you can learn to change your thoughts, you can learn to change your actions.

So in this class we're going to talk about one of the most simple ways to change your thoughts. At any given moment you can use this tool to shift away from negative thinking and towards a more positive, supportive thought pattern. Are you ready for it?

Choose to have a grateful thought. It is, by definition, impossible to be thinking about something that you're grateful for and to be having a negative thought at the same time.

A grateful thought is an inherently uplifting thought. It can create that pause, and shift you into a slightly more positive place. Plenty of studies show that it improves both your physical and psychological health.

There is a study in 2012 that showed that people who focus on gratitude had fewer aches and pains and reported feeling healthier than people who didn't have gratitude practices.

It's shown to increase happiness and reduce depression. And most important for your purposes, it helps to reduce a number of toxic emotions ranging from envy, resentment, frustration, regret. By creating a practice of gratitude in your life, you can gain those positive long term effects.

I want to highlight again, that in the short term, it is a powerful thought modification tool. You can't be in a negative thought pattern while thinking a gratitude thought.

As one of my very first students likes to say, Tatum says, "Gratitude is a brain hack!" Have you had a gratitude practice before? I am sure you have heard Oprah talk about it; she's a big fan. Or you've seen memes online talking about the power of gratitude. It's all over the place because it really is legit.

Perhaps you already have a gratitude practice and you know its powerful effects. If so, great! Maybe you have tried to do it, but it feels boring and stale and you can't quite make it work for you. I get that. How many times can you say, "I am grateful for my family" before it loses depth of meaning?

Not that many. If this is a struggle with you and gratitude, just writing the same thing over and over again that you are grateful for, then I want to suggest that you really think about the unique aspects of that particular day that you can be grateful for.

Instead of saying, "I'm grateful for my boyfriend." Try, "I'm grateful for my boyfriend for the amazing cup of coffee that he brought me today without me even asking." Instead of, "I am grateful for shelter." Think, "I am grateful for my soft blankets and feeling cozy inside while it's cold out."

What is something unique, something directly inspired by what you are currently experiencing? I have found that it is easier to grasp onto and to experience an uplift from these specific and unique gratitudes.

Or, maybe you have never experimented with a gratitude practice. No worries! It's a great time to start. I know that you have a lot to be grateful for, even if it doesn't necessarily feel like it.

I want to acknowledge that when you're in a really dark place, and maybe you've been stuck in a lot of binge behavior and pain for a number of days that gratitude might be the furthest thing from your mind.

How could you possibly be grateful for anything when life is like this? I hear you. I get it. And what I want you to hear is that you could use gratitude to help you climb out of that really dark place.

You just have to get creative with yourself. As you've learned before, any behavior change always starts with a tiny action. Gratitude is the most simple and powerful tiny

action you can take to shift yourself from negative thinking to a more positive experience.

Choose your thoughts!

If you are in the longer course you'll see when we get to your journal, that on your daily pages there's a space for you to fill out your daily gratitude. It's that important. I've given a whole section of the journal to do it.

But you don't need to wait for the Journal in order to start your gratitude practice. Grab any old piece of paper or a journal that you have lying around and start the tiny action. Each day try to write down three unique things about that day or the day before that you're grateful for.

By going through this daily practice, it will start to shift the mental landscape you are living inside of. You will begin to perceive your life differently.

Also remember that at any given point in time, if you have the awareness that you're stuck in negative thinking, you can take one moment and just in your thought patterns think a grateful thought and see how that shifts your experience in the moment.

Alright friends, this class is short and sweet because gratitude is the same way. It's a quick way to change your thoughts and help you feel a bit of uplift at any moment.

Flex that muscle of gratitude!

In the next and final class of this little course, I am going to share with you an important understanding that you must have in order to stay committed to this journey, to learn how to stop binge eating, and to live the life you have actually been so hungry for all along.

I can't wait to share it with you. It is life changing. Alright friends, see you over there.

## Class 8- Commitment Without Perfection

Hey there, Natalie Forsythe here to teach you the proven tools to stop bingeing and start living.

Over the many years of supporting people struggling with binge eating, and having been a binger myself, one of the most common stumbling blocks of my students is: the belief that they must complete all of the actions they have set out for themselves; that they must do it perfectly in order to succeed with the commitment that they have made; and the belief that you must be perfect in order to be committed.

All the time I hear from people who feel like they can't trust themselves around food and their choices, because they have broken so many promises to themselves in the past.

People are so afraid to commit to anything because they have "failed" at their commitment to themselves so many times before. Here is the truth that I really need you to hear.

The perspective that you can only succeed at commitment if you are perfect, that perspective comes straight from diet mentality. You must eat exactly according to your macro numbers; you must work out precisely the way the plan dictates.

But the reality is that life never goes according to plan. Life happens. All the crazy moments of life are always going to happen. Even just the small things, like getting sick or having to work late.

These inevitable parts of life regularly derail you from your committed actions. But that doesn't mean that you are a failure, which is what the pendulum swing of diet mentality tells you. It just means that life happens.

If you frame your commitment as a success only if you are perfect in your actions, then you are doomed to failure. Every time! You have to get off the pendulum swing of that all or nothing thinking.

What I want you to actually be committed to is the journey. It is time to stop feeling like a failure, and to start to acknowledge that, inevitably, you will have slips and bumps and curves along the road of your life. But you are still moving forward each day along the path. That perspective changes everything.

When you acknowledge that part of being committed **is** failing, that is when the magic starts to happen! Then you can start to learn from that failure, actually make failure

valuable. Keep coming straight back to your commitment and learning even more about yourself from the bumps in the road.

It's about picking yourself up and continuing forward no matter what happens. It is about letting go of the idea that a failure means you have fallen off the wagon, or that you are back to square one.

That is all BS “all or nothing” diet mentality thinking. And it is actually setting you up psychologically to swing erratically over to the other side where you feel crazy and out of control and like a failure.

I want you to shift that idea that it's like two steps forward and then you fail and now you're like 47 steps back and you have to start all over again. That's not the deal here. This is a journey. This is a process. You are learning right now.

Instead of being committed to perfection, I want you to stay committed to the path of learning. Over time. People understandably want the quick fix to their struggles. I am sure you do want the magic wand that is going to just change who they are and how they behave in an instant.

But I am not going to perpetuate this hope that it can all change over night. That hope is a set up for disappointment. Think about how long you have been struggling with your eating, and body stuff.

I know for me, I can remember being 3 years old and spooning brown sugar in the cabinet. It has been a lifelong journey. And my guess is that, in your own way, you've had some kind of lifelong struggle that you're facing here too. It takes a little while to change those lifelong behaviors.

It really is my deepest honor and pleasure to lead people along that journey. And lucky for you, I have been at it for a long time, and I have held the hand of many a student before you who have seen their binge eating change drastically and ultimately to drop away, with the support of further teaching, daily accountability and community support.

BJ Fogg, who is a Stanford professor and has been studying behavior change for 20 years, teaches that behavior changes in three distinct ways: epiphanies, changing your environment, or through small consistent actions over time.

I surely hope that you have some epiphanies along this journey. I certainly have, and they have helped. It's awesome; it's the closest thing we have to the magic wand. But you can't count on them, and there is no recipe to create them.

Changing your environment isn't realistic for most people, and, if done without awareness, can simply be a method of escape; and the same old behaviors will just haunt you in a new place.

The most consistent way that you can change your behaviors is to keep showing up one tiny action at a time. That is why Tiny Actions are the essential ingredient to creating behavior change in this program.

One of the biggest stumbling blocks with Tiny Actions is believing you must do them perfectly. You won't. And that is okay. But what you can do is to keep showing up.

Throughout the short course I have taught some of the most powerful foundational tools that you need on this journey to finding peace in your relationship with food. You have the opportunity to take these tools, practice them, and to change your life.

One of the most important lessons that I want you to take away from this Foundations Course is that commitment doesn't equal perfection. It is very easy, when you've been stuck in diet mentality for a long time, to take these new tools and tiny actions and turn them into a diet.

"Where you have to do it just right and if you don't you're a failure and you might as well give up 'til Monday." That is what I want to support you to avoid.

Perhaps you will do your tiny actions for three days in a row then something will happen and you won't do it the following day. It doesn't mean you failed at your commitment. It just means life happens.

When life happens, simply ask yourself, "What is the next tiny action that I can do from here, to support myself in my journey of commitment?" What is that next step you can do to support yourself to make that next choice that is in alignment with your commitment?

When life happens, simply ask yourself, what is the next tiny action that you can do from here, to support yourself in your commitment to the journey of finding freedom from binge eating.

You can live the life you have actually been so hungry for all along. It just takes continuing to show up each moment and making that very next choice that is in alignment with your commitment.

If you're in the longer course, you're about to get a whole lot more support and accountability and community interaction to keep taking those steps.

Until then, or if you aren't in a larger group, what I want you to do is to have the intention that each day you make sure that you have your mindfulness bell going off, and that you take those 20 Sensation Snapshot breaths every day. This is absolutely essential. If you do only one action, do this one.

Then add on your 2 core need Tiny Actions that you identified in the first videos.

Then write down what you are grateful for each day in a gratitude practice.

And finally, track one meal a day according to Hunger, Satisfaction, and Fullness.

Five tiny actions.

But remember this isn't about perfect completion; it's about continuing to show up.

It's time to drop the judgment that says you are good for doing what you committed to and bad for not doing what you committed to, and to start to actually notice the positive effects when you show up for your tiny actions, and what happens and how you feel when you don't -- without judgement.

I'm super grateful to have you as part of this community and I can't wait to keep supporting you to stay committed along your life with this fantastic journey of Food Freedom!

I hope you have a great day and that you find your own commitment without perfection.