

## **“Watch Out! Mom's Hungry!” by Lisa Marie Lindenschmidt**

Hunger was never acceptable. For me, hunger was always equated with lack of, with less than, with fear, with need, with urgency. Hunger meant some part of me was being denied. If I had even a hint of a hunger pang, I dropped everything I was doing, saying, and thinking, and ran to the fridge... or the nearest restaurant... or the nearest convenience store. I could not stand to feel that for more than a few minutes. I could feel panic rising in my chest, my jaws start to clench. I would begin to get angry – at everything and everyone that stood in my way of food. It became a running joke with my family and friends that “whenever Lisa Marie's hungry, watch out!”

How did this behavior come about? Is this the kind of body relationship that I want to teach my kid? That I want to foster within myself? Why did I encourage this pattern? Why did my friends' accept it and even joke about it?

I am a recovering food addict. I know this now. I came to this understanding while working through Angela Stokes' book, *Raw Emotions*. Upon introspection I realized that I obsessed over food. At first I rationalized it; I mean, I'm a chef! It makes sense. But as I looked deeper, I found I was using this obsession as a front: there were other things buried beneath and this rationalization was an excuse to not delve deeper.

I've been transitioning to a raw diet since February 2008. In April I decided to bump up my raw percentage to about 90-95%. Since April, I've lost 35 pounds, going from 232 to 197. I expected the weight loss and wasn't really attached to it one way or another. I've been accepting of my size for most of my life... or so I thought. Looking back, I see now that I didn't immediately go 100% raw because, quite frankly, I don't think I could have handled it emotionally.

Angela Stokes calls weight loss “releasing.” Initially, I rolled my eyes at this word choice because it seemed like such a minor point semantically. But as the weeks have passed and the weight has dropped (been released), I'm finding that the word is more than apt – and even necessary. Toxins are stored in fat. As fat is released, so are the toxins. Everyone experiences this toxic “flood” differently. Some people get headaches, others are lethargic. Dealing with the emotional toxins, however, are unique to the person who stored them initially.

I have found that some days I am an emotional wreck. I cry and rage and feel unbelievably vulnerable. The next day I will feel light and confident and centered. And this seems to yo-yo as I continue on this journey. Some days I feel like I can't take another emotion coming to the fore, another old wound coming up and rearing its ugly head... and I want to reach for food, for something chocolate, for something warm and reassuring. I want my grammy's roast beef, some cheesy pizza, a submarine sandwich – anything to dull these newly-resurfaced emotions.

And then the moment passes. My husband (who should be sainted) has listened to me rant and watched me fold under my own old weight. He's talked me down from the ceiling and kept my hands out of the proverbial cookie jar. Well... it's not really him that's doing this. It's me. I'm the one who has ultimately had to believe in another version of myself, this smaller-bodied, more

open-hearted woman.

I think it's getting easier. The more raw foods I ingest, the more toxins are released. And the amount of raw foods I eat a day is in direct proportion to the amount of fear and anger and doubt and insecurity I can handle for a day. And I'm OK with this. I have to be. I'm all I've got.

So, now when I'm hungry, the questions are different. Instead of asking myself where to eat and what to eat, I stop and listen. What am I feeling? Am I craving a certain thing? And, if so, is there an emotion tied to the craving? And I sit on it, sometimes 10 minutes, sometimes 2 hours. When I let myself experience this old pattern, it's not as loud and ends up sounding more like a wounded child than a raging maniac.

And I guess this has become my new hunger: me.

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