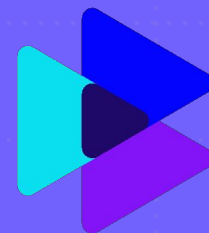


Transforming Rather Than Dieting

Terri Lance, PhD



the Fasting Method

Looking back at what has not worked...



- Diet culture
 - Collection of beliefs and strategies that have been damaging at best
 - Focuses on “thinness” as the ultimate goal
 - Equates “thinness” to being healthy
 - Often categorizes food as “good” or “bad”
 - Emphasizes excessive exercise as one of the most important keys to success
 - Easily promotes negative self-assessment and self-talk
 - Promotes judging ourselves and others based on body size
 - Has been shown not to work long term without significant consequences, yet is still embedded in so much messaging from which many of us struggle to release ourselves
- Calories In/Calories Out (CICO)

Why it can be difficult to break free from diet culture...

- The messaging and impact have transcended generations and cultures
- The teachings and idealization of its tenants have been internalized by so many of us, even when we cognitively know of the fallacies
 - How many “diets” have you tried?
 - What messaging did you receive from your family, care-givers, media, peers, and societal norms about your body size?
 - How old were you when you remember questioning if your body was too big?
 - When were you first put on a diet, taken to a weight loss program, sent to “fat camp”, prescribed weight loss medications?

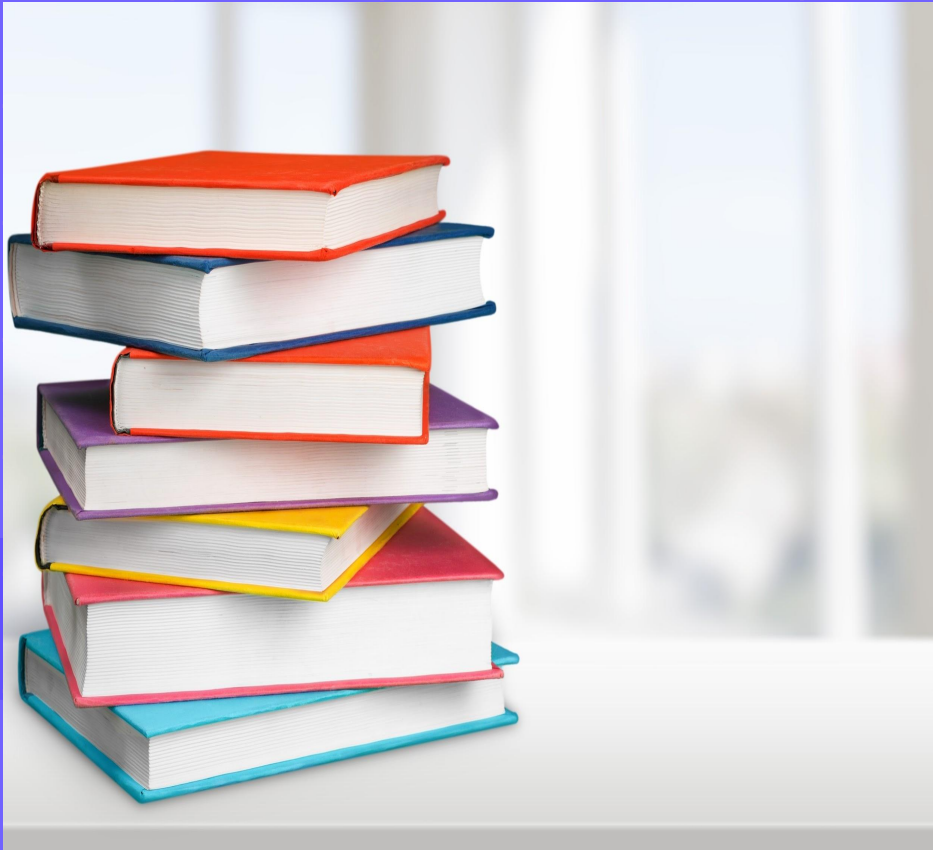


How to change this ingrained mentality ...

- Do you believe people can change?
- Are you here to achieve more than a quick fix, but instead a transformation of how you think, feel, behave, see yourself and others?
- What old patterns of thoughts, feelings, and behaviors related to diet culture are you wanting to release?
- Are you willing to explore your potential (growth mindset) vs reliving your past experiences and defeats (fixed mindset)?



Social Cognitive Theory as a way to see change as possible ...



- In the field of psychology there is longstanding debate and much theorizing about whether and how people change
 - Some see our development and personality as being pretty set and unchangeable
 - Not how I have observed people to function
- Social cognitive theory proposes that individual behavior and personality can be quite dynamic (changeable)
- If this is true, what shifts can you imagine making to help you change and grow rather than remaining static?
 - Can you expand your cognitive knowledge base?
 - Can you interact with others who encourage your pursuit of change/growth?

Why personal growth can be challenging...



- As attractive as personal growth may seem, there are often obstacles that make it more complicated than what we might prefer
 - Fear of change
 - Fear of failure
 - Fear of success
 - Lack of motivation to do the work
 - Lack of a self-efficacy (belief in your ability to succeed) or self-esteem (belief in your own value or worth)
 - Social/societal pressure or expectations
- Because personal growth can be a difficult process, please remember to have self-compassion as you bump into challenges and perceived roadblocks
 - Self-compassion is extending compassion to yourself the way you do others in times of perceived failure, inadequacy, or general suffering
- Allow yourself time and patience to grow and change

Evolution not revolution...

- One of my mentors in grad school frequently referred to this approach—emphasizing that we are more likely to evolve over time and experiences rather than suddenly force change to happen
- Personal growth is a journey, not a destination and rarely is it a single event
- Can you envision the health and weight journey you are now undertaking as a path of evolution?



Transformation as a physical, emotional, and mental process...



- A dictionary definition of transformation
 - “A dramatic change in form or appearance”
 - You may have seen or heard of such transformations here at TFM
- Another way to describe personal transformation
 - The shift within a person that brings them into alignment with their higher potential
 - This is what I mean when I refer to the true process of change that so many people experience as they navigate their health and weight loss journey—they transform!
 - My observation has been that those who engage in the latter are far more likely to successfully maintain the former

Do's and don'ts of leaving your past dieting self behind...

- Do focus on positive messages about your body and health, not based on size
- Don't criticize or moralize your or other people's food choices
- Do nourish your body nutritionally, emotionally, spiritually
- Don't speak negatively about your body
- Do surround yourself with social support
- Don't reward diet mentality
- Do prioritize healthy movement

