

## Episode 121 Transcription

Say goodbye to the food police and hello to peace. Welcome to the Love, Food Podcast, hosted by dietitian and food behavior expert Julie Duffy Dillon. This authentically engineered series is in the form of a love letter welcoming you to reconnect with food. Now pour a cup of coffee, or a margarita, and let's begin.

### *Transition/Music overlay*

Hi and welcome to Episode 121 of the Love, Food podcast. I'm Julie Duffy Dillon, registered dietitian and partner on your food peace journey. I'm so glad you're here. Thank you for connecting today.

How long have you been fighting your body? How long have you been trying to change your body so you can fit in? Or experience less bullying or teasing? Or to get the job you want? Or to find the partner you want? How long have you been dieting? How many times have you been not dieting and *all* the weight came back? Certainly, *you* are definitely not the exception. That is totally the rule. Research has been able to show us now that most people whether they continue a diet plan or not, regain 1/3 to 2/3 of the weight lost within the first year *and* all or at least most of it back at year five. Pretty crappy statistics, right? Because diets don't work yet we keep pushing them and if you're someone who's stuck in the diet rollercoaster, well this is a great episode for you.

I have a letter from someone who's been on and off diets for a really long time and it's complicated by teasing and bullying and also with drinking and alcohol abuse.

We get to hear from confidence and body image coach, Victoria Wellsby out of Canada. She is outstanding and a hoot. I cannot wait for you to hear her words of wisdom. She has a lot of them and she has some great ways for you to move forward. Before we get to this episode's letter, a word from our sponsor:

This episode of the Love, Food podcast is brought to you by my PCOS and Food Peace course. If you have PCOS and you've been on that *same* diet rollercoaster that I was just referring to, well you're definitely not alone and I've worked with hundreds of women now on this twelve-step process that I've put together into a course that anyone can now just take with them. They're all downloadable, digital videos and slides and tons of bonuses that help you to find another way. You don't have to diet anymore to help your PCOS and I can't wait to show you how. If you'd like to see the details about the course, go to [pcosandfoodpeace.com](http://pcosandfoodpeace.com). If you enjoy this episode of the Love, Food podcast, I would love it if you could leave a rating, review, share the episode and subscribe. Doing those acts of kindness really helps more people find the show and helps it grow. And you know, there's one thing that I think we can agree on. *Everyone* deserves to feel at home in their own skin. So, thank you in advance for helping more people find the show. Alright, enough of all of that. Let's get to this episode's letter.

### *Transition*

Dear Food,

I can't stop my "all or nothing" mindset when it comes to food and alcohol. I've had an unhealthy relationship with food and alcohol since I was 14 years old, and now, as I'm nearing my 30th birthday in a few months, I want to finally gain control of my relationship with them.

This toxic relationship began when I was a freshman in high school. After a breakup with my "puppy love," I fell into a deep depression that I consoled with sugary foods and loads of alcohol. I fell into a bad pattern of eating way too much food for my petite body, and I stirred the beginnings of an alcohol problem that I am seemingly still struggling with today.

Because of all of the food and alcohol consumption, I ended up gaining almost X pounds. By the age of 25, I'd had enough. I decided to take control of my situation, and so I began my relationship with X diet and exercise. At first, all was great! By cutting back on alcohol and almost all of X, I lost nearly X pounds in the span of 10 months, and I was becoming well-known throughout my group of friends as an inspirational nutritional queen.

Then, in 2016, I was cyberbullied by a large group of women with whom I used to be friends with in high school, and it threw me back into a depressive episode that I have struggled to come out of. I fell off track, and I turned back to the comforts of food and alcohol.

After having gained back some of the weight I'd lost, last year I decided that it was time to get back to X diet. This time, though, something new popped up - binge eating disorder. There were days I was eating three-quarters of a large pizza and five candy bars for dinner. I can't even describe the shame and humiliation I felt whenever I did this. My mind kept telling me, "You know that eating all of this is bad for you," but I couldn't stop myself. All of the restrictions hit me full force, and I was numb.

The binge eating also seemed to carry over into my alcohol consumption, as well. I had been restricting myself to a couple of glasses of wine a month because I was always concerned with how much weight I would gain from drinking too much. Well, this proved a problem, as the more I seem to restrict myself from my love of wine, the more I tend to drink. I've had numerous blackout episodes this year alone.

I know I have a problem, and so, at the beginning of 2018, I decided to take control and to try to learn how to intuitively eat and drink. I still can't seem to find that good balance, however. I've tried to let go of all of the rules, and I've tried to remind myself that with intuitive eating, there are no "good" or "bad" foods. I've tried to be more in tune with my body and its way of handling my emotions, but it seems like the more I try, the more my brain fights against me. Will I ever feel like I can live normally without always being preoccupied with food and drink? Will I ever be able to have a normal relationship with the things that I've always used to console myself in times of depression?

Sincerely,

The Bingeing Drunk

*Transition*

Hey there letter writer. Thanks for your note. And I have so much hope that one day you can live “normally.” Whatever that is, right? Without being preoccupied. I also appreciate that the world has not recovered from its own eating disorder yet so we are all affected by diet culture until we can get that fucked up kinda thing changed. Until then, I encourage you to connect with as many people as possible who have walked the path before you and support you instead of making you fight your body.

Someone that we’re going to connect with to see if she has some special insight for you—which I know she will—is Victoria Wellsby. She’s a confidence and body love coach out of Canada. Let’s go ahead and give her a call.

### *Transition*

Victoria: Hello!

Julie: Hi Victoria! It’s Julie Duffy Dillon. How are you doing?

V: Well, Julie, I’m so excited to talk to you.

J: I’m excited to talk to you! I uh just watched your Tedx talk and I’ll link to it in the show notes but it was awesome! One of the most amazing ones I’ve seen in a very very very long time, especially the end and so I’m so excited to actually talk to you and find out what kind of insight you have for this letter writer. Did you get a chance to read the letter yet?

V: I did and it’s a—I, I have a lot of opinions about it...

J: Oh good! Oh good. I like that.

V: *laughs*

J: So when you were reading it, what was your, like what was your general impression about what this person’s experiencing?

V: The-the number one thing that stood out to me was the sentence, “I can’t even describe the shame and humiliation I felt.” And I thought that that sentence was really powerful because what I got from the letter was a ton of shame and um ah I-I want to say to the letter writer that you were doing your best. You are doing your best. And um the way that you were coping um from experiencing or being in depression was the best way that you could. And is the best way you can because other things, other outcomes from depression are—there are so many different things that could happen, and you could not be here. Literally, you could not be here. And you are alive. And you chose different ways to cope and that’s fine so um that—that overwhelming piece, I just want to say, you’re fine. You did your best and forgive yourself for these perceived failures on your part. So that was my first impression.

J: Mhmm. Yeah you know, that shame and humiliation is such a big piece of the conversation when it comes to food and body and you know what really pisses me off about it is like we have this tool—dieting—whatever um (*laughs*) that is—doesn’t work. Research has been able to show over and over again without a doubt, like we know it doesn’t work. It’s just a matter of time um really I think researchers are just trying to debate how long does it take for people to gain it all

back. Really there's no doubt that diets don't work but yet when they don't work, a person just takes on more shame. Just puts more on their back. Just add more to like the burden they're carrying and um as much as I hate diets and as you know, I'm a fat positive dietitian and I'm totally against diets and when my clients choose dieting like this person is describing which I've been saying *choosing* dieting, I don't know if it was really like that but finding the way to cope and um how dieting was a part of that...I—that was how they survived and how they coped and gosh I hope they have some other tools that we can help them, you know, figure out that help them and the shame that doesn't belong to them. You know? I wish they could just take it off (*laughs*) just....

V: Yes! Exactly...

J: It doesn't belong to them...

V: It's like you buy a faulty car and then the car doesn't work and you're like, but I tried to drive the car but it isn't working...I'm such a bad car driver...

J: (*laughs*)

V: But it's not you, it's the car. It's a crappy car and it doesn't do what it says on the tin sort of thing. It's the same way with dieting. And so that shame um is yeah exactly like you say. It's not *yours* to hold. It's the crappy product. They should be the ones feeling the shame for selling this, you know, this false uh promise that's never going to materialize...

J: Yeah. The thing about the shame with this—this type of shame is so heavy because it's like systemic. You know, it's like um so much societal kind of oppression that one person's putting on their back you know and it's—it's so um such a burden and um no wonder it's something that contributes to so much depression for so many people and um...I found it interesting too how the person was describing their relationship to alcohol too. I don't know if you had any thoughts about that part of it?

V: Mmhmm. And so um I think a lot of times we bunch food and booze in together like they're two similar things but they're, you know, we both put them in our mouth but you know they're two separate things and um I've had experience with alcoholism. My dad he passed away recently. He was an alcoholic. And um it's—it's a difficult thing. And sometimes we do use uh alcohol to numb ourselves and you know what, sometimes that's okay but if you feel like it's a problem then you should look into um dealing with that. But it's not the same type of thing as with food because you can't be addicted to food whereas you can be addicted to alcohol. Um so it-it's kind of an interesting dynamic because even though they're both things that we put in our mouths, they are actually two different beasts sort of thing.

J: You know, no one's ever said like that to me Victoria. How—and—people always want to combine um alcohol and drugs and food together like they kinda come from the same place, like you said, they all, you're all putting them in your mouth but that doesn't mean they are the same (*laughs*) you know?...

V: Yeah (*laughs*)...

J: ...and um I can't remember this person's name is escaping me now. I'll put it in the show notes. I want to attribute this quote to them. But she always says that uh you can't be addicted to something that you need to stay alive and...

V: Yeeess!

J:...and because, you know, I agree, I don't agree with the uh talk of food being addicting. I'm certainly am not going to argue with someone when they say they feel like a food addict but I don't, I don't agree with it yeah...

V: Yeah, yeah!

J:...um but yeah so moving away from um alcohol will look different from moving um your relationship with food will look differently because you need to still eat um...

V: Yes..

J: ...and um emotional eating even is like a normal part of eating so um yeah that's why I feel like it will look different and maybe they were serving a similar kind of like soothing or coping and moving forward it will look different, you know? So..

V: Exactly, exactly...

J: Yeah..

V: And the um final questions um in the letter: Will I ever live normally without being preoccupied with food and drink and will I have a normal relationship with the things I used to console myself?...Well, the answer to that is food, yes you can have a normal relationship with food but alcohol, maybe not. Maybe yes. Who knows. Because it's a different beast. Um so it-it's yeah two separate things but with food, you *can* have that normal relationship and with alcohol it depends on where you're at at the moment....

J: Mmhmm

V: I know for me with Intuitive Eating, I found that I rarely drink because I've discovered that I actually don't like the taste of alcohol...

J: Mmmm

V: And um that's just the way it went for me but once you really really got it into--into your bones, into your core, that Intuitive Eating is the way to go and something else, in the letter, um uh the letter writer says, "But it seems like the more I try, the more my brain fights in regards to Intuitive Eating and-and it-it sounds like from the letter that um this is a new thing from the beginning of the year so only a few months and she's trying to undo *years* of programming and hell yeah, your brain's going to fight you!! Because it's like, however many years you've been alive, you've had these messages telling you that you're whatever—Greedy, shouldn't be eating that, shouldn't be drinking that blah blah blah—and then all this time, you're trying to say to your brain and your body, "Hey it's cool, I'm going to feed you enough food now" and your brain and body's like "I don't trust you!! You know, you've been you know, thirty plus years of

this—I don't trust you." So, your brain *is* going to fight you *but* it's not *always* going to be the case if you just keep down this path.

J: Mhm. So, what would you recommend for this person for those first few steps like if they're just now exploring Intuitive Eating? And I totally agree that it takes a very—like so much longer than people expect...

V: Yeah...

J: To really move through Intuitive Eating and get to the place where they do have like the foundation of Intuitive Eating to me is Unconditional Permission to Eat. Like, it takes a really long time, like years, to do that (*laughs*)...

V: Yeah

J:...and it's okay, it's totally um I guess, if we're going to throw the word out there: normal. (*laughs*). It's so normal to have that. So, what would you suggest to this person as their like first few steps in this process?

V: I would say *because* this person um has and is dealing with shame, is to take that shame away from being a perfect intuitive eater and to understand and to realize that this shit is going to be hard. It's difficult. It's complicated and to approach it with loving kindness towards yourself. Um and any shame that you're feeling that you're not doing it correctly, and you're thinking about going back to a diet or whatever it is, just to feel that and try and put that shame somewhere else. And give yourself love and kindness and be patient with yourself um because this is really difficult work so that's the number one thing. Um another thing is um something I noticed in the letter and I thought, mmm here's a little bit of fat phobia. Um the letter writer says, "I'm always concerned with how much weight I would gain from drinking too much...." And so, so many of us suffer from internalized fat phobia. Um, as a fat person, I used to *love* hating on other fat people. I used to be like, "Mmm like oh my God, look at them, they're probably like guzzling lard milkshakes all the time." Umm and healing my relationship with *being* fat with the idea of um my body changing potentially; the idea that maybe I could bigger or smaller or whatever and taking that um that stress out of it was really important and so we all have to heal from fat phobia because diet culture basically is—we don't want to be fat—right? And so, the chances are our bodies will change and maybe one day, if the letter writer isn't already fat, maybe one day she will be fat or maybe one day she will be thin or whatever. Who knows right because our bodies are always changing and so um looking into what fat phobia is, and accepting that fat is a totally "normal" way to have a body. Um and some resource that I wanted to encourage the letter writer to look at is I have a free E-course *Extreme Confidence Makeover*, it's a ten day thing and it's hosted by me, a fat person who is also *incredible*. Um and so just consuming things with uh fat people, seeing fat bodies, um getting into um fat positivity, will help, letter writer, from feeling that terrible fear of being fat because it is not the worse thing you can be, you know, as a human being...

J: Exactly..

V: At all!

J: Exactly, yeah I find that the more I um explore my *own* internalized fat phobia and get to see the roots of it, the more I appreciate like the only way we're going to help people heal their relationship with food is to end fat bias and fat phobia. Um, I don't see any other way to do it. And so I have found ways that have helped me with my own, again, my own internalized bias, was really, in a visual sense, you know, being intentional with like making sure my Instagram feed has people of diverse sizes (*laughs*) like it's such a small thing but I feel like I can tell that my wiring in my head is already changing for what's beautiful.

V: Yeess!

J: By doing that one tiny thing. And I think that's so amazing that our brain can be um rewired intentionally the way we want it to be. It-it feels really uncomfortable to admit my own bias in that way but I think that's one of the reasons why I'm noticing it's starting to change is, I'm like okay, sometimes I can be an asshole, and so (*laughs*) you know? But I really appreciate that resource that you um mentioned and we have something on the podcast called the Food Peace Syllabus and if you're new to the Love, Food podcast, the way you can get your own Food Peace Syllabus is by going to [juliedillonrd.com](http://juliedillonrd.com) and it's a list of resources like books and courses and podcasts, anything under the sun that we have found that helps to further cultivate a relationship with food and body that is basically the opposite of fat phobia, right? Like ways to like slay diet culture and to help heal our relationship with food and body so again you can get it at [juliedillonrd.com](http://juliedillonrd.com). I also want to put your Tedx talk on there because I feel like that's a really wonderful way for um someone to see um through your own story um on there and just how you were describing your experience in your body now versus then, in your Tedx talk. I think that's a wonderful way to show like yeah, you can actually experience living in a fatter body *and* not wanting to lose weight. Like, that was such a powerful part of it so I'll put that in there.

V: (*laughs*). Yeah when I said that line, the line being that I don't want to lose weight, so many people were like "What?!? What do you mean? Doesn't *everyone* want to lose weight, always?" And uh yeah so yeah, I would love to see what people think of the ending because it's a surprise...

J: (*laughs*). It's a great ending! When you were saying that it reminded me of Lindy West and like I think the first article that I read that she put out that was about getting married. She said, I'm getting married and fat and I don't want to lose weight. It was a similar kind of statement...

V: Like whhhat? (*laughs*)

J: Yeah. Like, holy shit! You're going to put a dress on in front of everybody and you don't want to be smaller? Um, yeah so I think that those are really important and um I really appreciate you doing that in a sense because it's allowing people to um I guess seeing other people go before them and doing this and saying hey, it's ok, you know, the path is clear (*laughs*). You know, there's some darkness around it but like follow me and I can show you some different ways, I think that's really helpful. And um, is there anything else that you want to add to the Food Peace Syllabus?

V: Umm I have *another* resource which is a free um webinar which is called *How to Unleash Your Inner Confidence Warrior*. Um so it's all about—it's an hour and a half and it's all about making

um—making sure you feel confident in your body, you understand why you don't feel confident in your body, and it's awesome because it's hosted by ME!!

J: (*laughs*). I love it! So, I really appreciate all of this insight. It's been outstanding. And is there a way—or if someone wanted to know more about your work, is there a way for them to get a hold of you?

V: Absolutely, so you can come on over to my website, which is [bampowlife.com](http://bampowlife.com). Or you can follow me on social media. I think I'm on almost everything um Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest um and my handle is @bampowlife so get your stalker on and come and creep me...

J: (*laughs*) Love it! Um so everything that you brought up, the webinar, e-course, and the Tedx talk...I'm going to put all of those in the show notes. They'll be easy for anybody to find and also all of your social media. I'll go ahead and put that on there too. To make it easy peasy!

V: Thank you!

J: Thank you again so much! I really appreciate it and I have a feeling this letter writer will too. So take care!

V: Thanks, Julie! Goodbye!

J: Bye!

Alright, there you have it. Bingeing Drunk, I hope you found the conversation that I just had with Victoria to be helpful. Certainly I know she gave you some pointers to help you move forward and know that we are rooting for you *every* step of the way. And, we also want to take over some of that burden. You've been holding onto it all on your own all these many years. It doesn't belong to you. It belongs to this really shitty, fat phobic kind of way at looking at bodies and I see Food has written back so I need to get going.

This episode of the Love, Food podcast was brought to you by my PCOS and Food Peace course. You can get to all the details at [pcosandfoodpeace.com](http://pcosandfoodpeace.com). If you enjoyed this episode of the Love, Food podcast, I'd love it if could leave a rating, review, share the episode and/or subscribe. Doing any of these acts of kindness really helps the show grow and I appreciate anything you can do to get the word out. Alright, enough of all of that. Let's get to Food's letter. And until next time, take care.

*Transition/Music Overlay*

Dear Bingeing Drunk,

We see how tired you are from this heavy burden. We, Food, wish you understood how this burden does not belong to you. It belongs to oppressive systems: White supremacy and social injustice. Together, let's lift off the shame and humiliation. You've done the best you could all these years. You've been coping and that has kept you alive. Moving forward, practice naming

perfectionism. Scream how hard this is. Know that healing takes time. More time than you estimate. With this grace, we think you will be better than normal. You'll be you and the world needs you.

Love,

Food

Thank you for listening. I am Julie Duffy Dillon and this is the Love, Food podcast. Do you want access to more food peace? Jump on over to my website and join my-mail list. There, I share exclusive content that I don't share anywhere else. Get access to these tips and strategies by going to [juliedillonrd.com/signup](http://juliedillonrd.com/signup), and I look forward to seeing you here next week for another episode of the Love, Food podcast. Take care.