

PLEASURE PRINCIPLES Transcript

Principle One, Lesson Three

Care

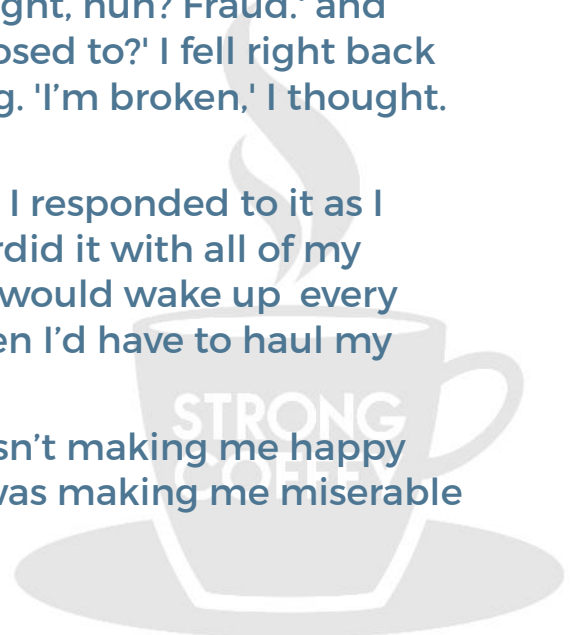
Hi, welcome back.

I was 300 lbs by the time I was 18 years old. It would be years before I knew that **shame was my problem, not my weight, and not my body**. Not knowing what I didn't know, I had gastric bypass surgery in 2003. Less than a year later I was thin.

Now, shame is fueled by criticism. Less criticism = less shame. For a few months after I had the surgery, the attention I got from myself and from the people around me who were all saying "Wow you look great! You look great!" - That kept shame at bay. But just like anything else, the novelty of being thin wore off. People got used to my new body, so the compliments stopped. And again I started focusing in on my flaws. The Beast woke back up and all of sudden it was saying stuff like 'Surgery to lose weight, huh? Fraud.' and 'Why doesn't your body look like it's supposed to?' I fell right back into new versions of the same old thinking. 'I'm broken,' I thought. 'Nothing I do will ever be good enough.'

The shame came back strong as ever, and I responded to it as I always had. I ate as much as I could. I overdid it with all of my vices. I withdrew. I attacked myself. And I would wake up every day thinking "Oh, God, not again." And then I'd have to haul my butt out of bed and I do it all over again.

So this one night it hits me: If being thin isn't making me happy and healthy, then being fat wasn't what was making me miserable



and unhealthy. I didn't have the language for **shame**. But that minute I knew what the solution was. I needed to act like my health and happiness were my priority, even if it felt totally insincere to act that way. I needed to figure out how to make taking good care of myself my #1 motivator.

Principle One: Care

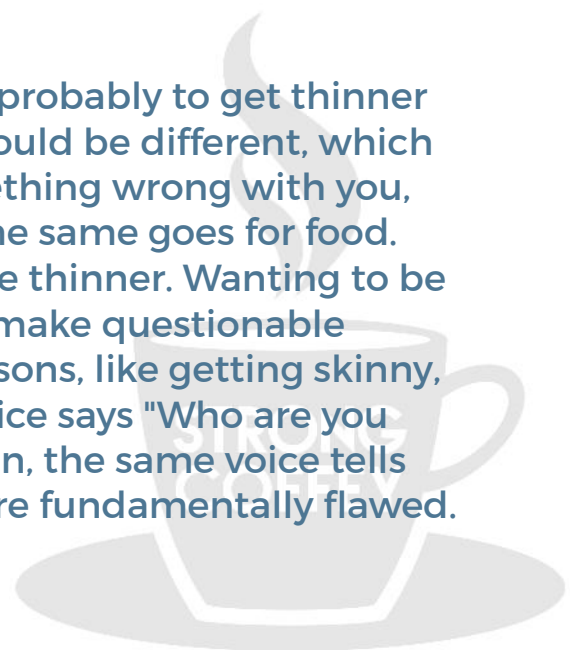
The term "Self-love" makes me extremely uncomfortable - depending on who's saying it and why, "self-love" sounds hokey and insincere to me a lot of the time. But 'Care?' That's a word I can get behind. And Care is the key.

It's by taking good care of yourself that you will come to care more deeply for yourself and your body. This has been my experience and the experience of countless of my clients. The trick is that care begins as action. Care has to be your driving force, and it must take root deep down where shame lives. Taking good care of yourself must be your primary motivation - not losing weight, not maintaining weight loss, not getting hotter, not walking on some runway - just taking good care of yourself and your body. The Principles will help you shift from acting like you're wrong and need to be fixed, to acting like you're cared for and deserve to be treated well.

You're here to learn the principles that'll help you tap into the pleasure in healthier habits. **Principle Number One, the antidote to shame, is care.**

Shame-Based Motives

In the past, when you've exercised, it was probably to get thinner or stronger - because you thought you should be different, which is to say you thought that there was something wrong with you, which is an idea that's based in shame. The same goes for food. You eat differently because you want to be thinner. Wanting to be thinner is a shame-based motive. So you make questionable choices, like dieting, for shame-based reasons, like getting skinny, and you "fail" because first that shame voice says "Who are you kidding? You'll never lose weight" and then, the same voice tells you that reason you failed is because you're fundamentally flawed.



WHAT?! Right.

When actions and decisions are motivated by shame, even seemingly healthy choices can do us more harm than good.

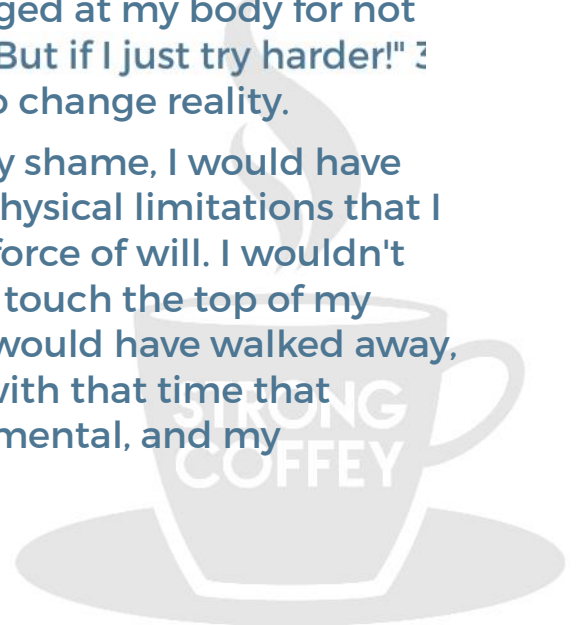
A story from my own experience: I had severe scoliosis when I was a kid, and I had this huge surgery to get rods fused to either side of my spine. I cannot bend my back at all. Nada, nothing. But when I first started working as a personal trainer, some other trainer told me that Bikram yoga was the greatest form of exercise on earth, that I just HAD to do it. Now, Bikram, for anyone that doesn't know, is done in 100 degree room that's kept moist. Yes, moist. It's 90 minutes long, it's 26 really complicated postures, all of them are done twice and they are like absolutely postures. Shame at that point in the game was still very often my default. So, I took this other trainer saying that I had to do Bikram yoga to mean that if I didn't do Bikram yoga, I was a fraud. And I couldn't let that happen. I had to do it to prove - to her, to myself, and to the whole world - that I was a REAL exercise professional. This kind of thinking can happen a lot for shame-based folks like me.

So, this is an x-ray of my spine. Yes that is an actual x-ray of my very actual spine.

And this a Bikram yoga pose, one of the 26 poses. Ask me how long I struggled in that class. How mortified I was that I couldn't do it right, that my body wouldn't do what I was willing it to do.

How long? 3 months. 3 months of pain. 3 months of crippling self-consciousness. 3 months of being so enraged at my body for not literally bending to my will. 3 months of "But if I just try harder!" 3 months of punching a brick wall, trying to change reality.

If I had been motivated by care and not by shame, I would have accepted and respected that I have real physical limitations that I cannot act around or overcome by sheer force of will. I wouldn't have wasted 3 months of my life trying to touch the top of my head to the back of my freaking thighs. I would have walked away, probably giggling, and done something with that time that would've contributed to my physical, my mental, and my emotional well-being.



To take on new behaviors from a caring place is a revolutionary act for people who were given shame. Doing things to take good care of ourselves and not because we want to change or fix something about ourselves and not just to show people that we can is so different from the norm that it can actually feel like a lie. So how exactly do we do it? How do we act from a place of care when our default to live in reaction to shame? And how do we keep doing it even if it feels insincere? Good question.

Just like anything else that doesn't come naturally, we play the PART.

