**When Food Is Comfort**

**Nurture Yourself Mindfully, Rewire Your Brain and**

**End Emotional Eating**

We all enjoy eating and, on occasion, eat when we’re not hungry or overeat just because the food is incredibly tasty or because it enhances our personal or social experiences. Enjoying food beyond simple sustenance is a normal part of life. It becomes problematic, however, when we use food in this way so often that we become overweight or our health is at risk.

In ***When Food Is Comfort***(New World Library, March 20, 2018), author Julie M. Simon explains that when we eat in the absence of physical hunger cues, routinely choose unhealthy comfort foods, or eat beyond full, something is out of balance. She says that these tendencies suggest that we are missing important self-care skills generally learned in childhood.

Recent advances in brain science have uncovered the crucial role that our early social and emotional environment plays in the development of eating challenges. When we do not receive consistent and sufficient emotional nurturance during our early years, we are at greater risk of seeking it from external sources, such as food. Despite logical arguments, we have difficulty modifying our behavior because we are under the influence of an emotionally dominant part of the brain.

“I was definitely an emotional eater. I had difficulty regulating my emotions, and I could get stuck for long periods in painful emotional states like anxiety, anger, sadness, hurt, shame, loneliness and hopelessness,” writes Simon. “Food altered my brain chemistry, helping to numb the pain of unpleasant emotions, self-doubt, and other negative thoughts. It also helped relieve stress. And because food is pleasurable and exciting, it was a good distraction. It temporarily filled up the inner emptiness and restlessness I regularly felt, a sort of spiritual hunger.”

In ***When Food Is Comfort***, Simon offers seven powerful mindfulness skills that constitute a practice she calls *inner nurturing,* designed to rewire the brain and end overindulging once and for all. Rather than feeling enslaved to their favorite foods, readers will experience, first hand, that their true source of comfort lies within.

“My goal in this book is to show you how to nurture yourself by building and strengthening your Inner Nurturer voice and related skill set,” writes Simon. “You’ll learn to soothe and comfort yourself, calm your stress-response apparatus, and grow and strengthen the regulatory circuits of your brain. You’ll learn to meet your needs without turning to food or other unhealthy substances or habits. As a bonus, you’ll enhance your resilience and sense of well-being.”

Please consider sharing a review, mention, or excerpt of this inspiring book with your audience. **Julie M. Simon is available for interviews and speaking engagements and would be happy to write articles or guest blogs on themes discussed in the book.** Please contact Kim Corbin, senior publicist, at 415-884-2100 x18 or [kim@newworldlibrary.com](mailto:kim@newworldlibrary.com) if you’d like to schedule a time to speak with her.

**About the Author**

Julie M. Simon, MA, MBA, LMFT is a psychotherapist and life coach, and the bestselling author of *The Emotional Eater’s Repair Manual—A Practical Mind/Body/Spirit Guide for Putting an End to Overeating and Dieting* and *When Food is Comfort: Nurture Yourself Mindfully, Rewire Your Brain and End Emotional Eating*. For the past 27+ years, Julie has been helping overeaters and imbalanced eaters heal their relationships with themselves, their bodies and food, stop dieting, lose excess weight and keep it off. Julie has been a featured expert on numerous TV shows, radio shows, and podcasts.

Julie is an inspirational speaker and she loves to light up the stage at events, wake people up about their phenomenal mind, body and spirit signals and help them learn to nurture themselves mindfully without turning to food. She has presented seminars and workshops on overcoming overeating, and on associated mental-health topics, to both lay and professional audiences, such as the UCLA Staff and Faculty, the Santa Monica College Continuing Education and Community Services, the Santa Monica Public Libraries, the Los Angeles Dietetic Association, the Learning Annex and the Whole Foods Markets.

Julie is the founder and director of the popular Twelve-Week Emotional Eating Recovery Program, an alternative to dieting that addresses the true causes of overeating and weight gain: emotional and spiritual hunger and body imbalance. She offers this program multiple times per year, in both a live and tele-coaching format.

Julie is also a certified personal trainer with twenty-five+ years of experience designing personalized exercise and nutrition programs for various populations.

Julie formerly served for many years on the board of the Los Angeles Chapter of the California Association of Marriage and Family Therapists in different capacities. She lives and practices in Los Angeles.

For more information and inspiration, visit Julie’s lively website, featuring regular blog articles and resources, at [www.overeatingrecovery.com](http://www.overeatingrecovery.com).

**Praise for *When Food Is Comfort***

“So many people are struggling with emotional eating. *When Food Is Comfort* is a fascinating and eminently practical guide to making sense of what is going on and fixing it at the most

fundamental level.”

Neal D Barnard, MD

President, Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine, Washington DC

Author of *Breaking the Food Seduction*

*“When Food Is Comfort* is an excellent guide toward self-awareness, understanding, attunement, love, and ultimate loving self-control.  It is also extraordinarily comprehensive and well written. One of the best ways to conquer a problem is to follow the lead of someone who has successfully overcome that very same issue.  Julie Simon tells us how she won the battle against unwanted overeating and how she has helped countless others to do the same during her long and productive career. If you thoroughly read, incorporate, and follow Julie’s comprehensive, uplifting, and meticulous guidance it will be equal to the benefit of years of therapy. You will find step by step details of how to enjoy improved relationships with yourself and others. You will learn how to find comfort from more productive rewarding avenues than food. You will change your relationship to food, using it for health and well-being rather than using it to try to fill unmet emotional needs. And especially important, for the purposes of this book, you will enjoy a healthier, slimmer, YOU.”

Priscilla Slagle MD

Private Practice of Nutritional Medicine and Psychiatry

Author of *The Way Up from Down*.

‘Solutions are desperately needed to deal with the overeating that is contributing to the rise in obesity and the consequences that fill my cardiology practice. Julie Simon offers a 7-step mindfulness practice that is an answer to emotional eating. I am going to share these steps with my patients immediately. *When Food is Comfort* is exactly what we need to heal during these challenging times.” ‘

Joel Kahn, MD, FACC

Author of *The Plant Based Solution*

“As one whose recovery from binge eating dates back over 30 years, I am reluctant to recommend any work on the subject, as nearly all seem to lack a genuine understanding of the disorder and of the emotional eater as whole human being. Julie Simon is the rare exception. Gently and astutely, she guides the reader from a place of confusion and entrapment to clarity and freedom. With solid science and a caring heart, Simon breaks through in this book to a place where few have ventured: a place of healing, restoration, and liberation.”

Victoria Moran Author of *Fit from Within*

“Julie Simon has done it again. *When Food Is Comfort* is a fantastic resource with a refreshingly new perspective. Written in a supportive and encouraging voice with moving personal and case stories, this practical, easy-to-follow book offers innovative strategies for anyone seeking freedom from unhealthy eating habits. I highly recommend it!”

Hyla Cass, MD

Author of *8 Weeks to Vibrant Health*

“How often do you eat when you’re not really hungry, or eat too much, or choose to eat comfort foods you know aren’t good for you? If you do these things more than you’d like, then this book is definitely for you. It will help you to recognize the signs of emotional eating, so you can instantly tell the difference between emotional hunger and actual physiological hunger. And it will help you to nurture yourself so that every part of you — including your body, your emotions, your thoughts and your relationships — are truly and wonderfully well fed.”

John Robbins

Multiple New York Times Best Selling Author, and President, Food Revolution Network

“As a wellness activist, I’ve observed first-hand how challenging overcoming emotional eating can be. Despite our best intentions, many of us find ourselves regularly snacking mindlessly and overeating at meals. Clearly, emotional eating is a symptom of deeper issues. Well written and comprehensive, *When Food Is Comfort* helps us understand the role early nurturance plays in both the etiology and continuation of eating challenges. Julie’s simple, yet powerful plan, developed in her highly successful 12 Week Program, gets at the root causes of the problem. She gives readers all the tools they need to address the disconnection fueling their eating. If you, or anyone you care about, are struggling with emotional eating, this book is a must read.”

Kathy Freston New York Times Bestselling Author of Quantum Wellness and The Lean.

"If or when emotional eating is a challenge, Julie Simon's book, *When Food Is Comfort* will enlighten and empower you with effective methods for healing deep emotional wounds through self-nurturing. With an authentic ring of empathetic authority, Julie Simon provides powerful, practical tools to help liberate ourselves from the tyranny of our tongues. Indeed, those who control their appetite possess a great power and *When Food Is Comfort* can help you and your loved ones to attain and maintain this empowerment. Highly recommended!"

Michael Klaper, MD Author of *Vegan Nutrition: Pure and Simple*

**Suggested Interview Questions**

1) Were you once an emotional eater? Tell us about how you came to do this work and what inspired you to write this book.

2) How do you know if you’re an emotional eater? Doesn’t everyone eat emotionally?

3) In the book, you suggest that there are many factors that contribute to our overeating or eating in an imbalanced way. Could you share some of these factors?

4) You talk about “mastering the skill of self-regulation.” Could you explain what self-regulation means?

5) In Part 1 of the book, you talk about how chronic stressful interactions or neglect early in life can “wire” our brain and nervous system for high arousal, making it more difficult for us to soothe and comfort ourselves. Is it really possible to rewire our brains?

6) In Part 2 of the book, you present a mindfulness practice you’ve designed called inner nurturing that can help the reader connect to themselves in a nurturing way and rewire their brain. Can you tell us more about his practice?

7) Why is it so important to develop a supportive voice within? What does this have to do with rewiring the brain?

8) Some emotional eaters have had difficulty attracting nurturing people into their lives. In Part 3 of the book, you cover the top six sabotaging interpersonal behavior patterns that emotional eaters engage in and six empowering strategies for transforming these patterns. Can you share a few with us?

9) In Part 3 of the book, you show us how to nurture our relationships. Could you share the Four Habits of highly empathic people that we must learn to practice?

10) Is it truly possible to learn to nurture ourselves, rewire our brains, and stop emotional eating once and for all? How long does it take?

11) Where can emotional eaters or professionals who work with emotional eaters learn more about these skills, principles and practices?

12) If you could offer just one piece of encouragement or advice to an emotional eater, what would it be?