

Ed Scow,
owner, ELS Boot Camps for Ladies Only

THE
As Of Yet Untitled
Boot Camp Magazine



How creative!

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Do You 'Eat To Live' or 'Live To Eat?'

You may have already read this article because I wrote it a couple months ago, but I wanted to include it before we get into the “meat and potatoes” of this newsletter.

The rest of the newsletter is about the relationship between your mood and food, but I thought this was a nice intro and “warming up”...

If, like most ladies, you have trouble knowing what to eat, when to eat, if you should eat at night, etc, etc....

...First chill out and relax.

The truth is it's not as difficult as many so-called “experts” will have you believe. It really comes down to making the right decisions most of the time and doing whatever the heck you want a little bit of the time...easier said than done, I know.

I know that you are fed all sorts of gobbledy-gook from a myriad of different sources giving you all sorts of misleading information, half-truths and flat out lies and it probably makes your head spin.

But you know what the honest-to-goodness truth is?

It's just food so there's no need to get yourself all wound up. Just chill out, enjoy life and roll with it...and trust your faithful servant (me) to give you the real deal.

Relaxed?

No? I can't imagine why ☺

We'll work on the relaxed part later, but here's a very simple little tip you can put into action that will help you in determining what to eat – which is by far the most important factor.

Ask yourself this question – ***“After I'm done eating this, how will it make me feel?”***

The reason I started that out with “After I'm done...” is because ***it takes the emotional eating and comfort eating out of the equation.***

When you eat because you're stressed – or whatever your reason is for eating like crap – the actual eating makes you feel good...

...At least for a few minutes and then you feel like crap because you just ate an entire bag of Oreo's or cut people off trying to swing your car into the drive-thru to get Super-Sized.



But when you actually stop yourself before you indulge and ask yourself that simple little question it will let you remember what you've felt like in the past after eating poorly and will bring those emotions to the front of your mind and will at least make you think twice about what you're about to eat. Is that overly simplistic?

Absolutely!

And that's the point!

So just chill out, relax and ask yourself that 1 simple question before you eat your next meal and snacks and you'll be amazed at how easy it is to change your mindset and your habits.

So what do you think? Is that simple enough?

Okay, now let's get into the real meat of this newsletter...

How Does Food Affect Your Mood?

I once worked with a client who had ridiculously bad mood swings. One day she would come in happy as a clam, and the very next she would be down in the dumps. She wasn't on a clinical level with her mood swings, I'm exaggerating a bit, but it was noticeable.

I didn't know how to approach this – I'm not a doctor or any type of therapist (remember that...it's a disclaimer of sorts) – so I just paid attention, listened and offered some advice.

What I came to find out was that her “down in the dumps” days were Mondays and Wednesdays. The remaining days she was in pretty high spirits.

What was different came down to how she ate Sundays and Tuesday night. Those were her “date nights” with her husband or the night she would go out with her girlfriends or friends from work and she didn't eat well and typically drank – this wasn't a hangover either.

After figuring this out, I asked her to change up the way she approached those nights out. She could still cut loose, but had to keep a certain set of rules that would hopefully better her mood the day after.

She was a bit skeptical, but after a couple weeks we both noticed a difference.

I have another client (a current client and you know who you are!) who has a bad habit of eating bowls of cereal late at night after her long days.

She knows she shouldn't be doing this and we've talked about it...repeatedly.

She sees how it affects her weight and size, but there's something still holding her to that nasty little habit.

What is it?

Stress.

Her reaction to stress and being tired after a long day is to reach for simple carbohydrates in the form of cereal and this causes her mood to be “down” the following morning unless she has an artificial pick me up in the form of coffee.

You may not see the correlation, but after having worked with this lovely lady for a long time I can definitely see a difference in her mood when she's not giving in to this habit. I don't have to pull out the bullwhip to get her moving ☺

But what about you?

How do you feel? I mean, how do you *really* feel?

Do you know?

In case you haven't figured it out by now, I'm talking about how food makes you feel. And even more specific than that, how food makes you feel after you eat and what the mood you're in before you eat makes you eat.

Sound confusing?

Okay, how about this...

How do you feel after you eat a high carbohydrate meal like pasta, Chinese or certain breakfast cereals or even high carbohydrate snacks like chips, crackers, cookies or candy?

Do you know how you feel? Have you paid attention?

How do you feel after you eat a high fat meal like fast food burgers, french fries, certain pasta dishes (alfredo) or certain soups (anything "creamy")?

Again, do you know how you feel? Have you ever paid attention?

To take it even further, how do you feel before you give in to certain cravings? Are you stressed, depressed, tired, or famished because you've starved yourself for days on end?

Do those feelings affect whether you eat after your last meal of the day and if you do eat after your last meal, do those feelings affect what you eat?

How do you feel after eating a **GOOD** breakfast?

How do you feel after a healthy, low-calorie meal that's full of nutrition and low on processed junk?

I'll ask the same question again...do you even know how you feel? Have you paid any attention at all to how certain foods, meals and moods affect what you eat, when you eat and how quickly you eat?

I know that's a lot to take in, but my reason for shoving all those questions in is because what you eat has a huge effect on your mood and your mood has a huge effect on what you eat – read that a couple times to let it sink in. ☺

The Brain. Where it all goes down

Before we dive in to the practical stuff, I think we need to discuss the brain a little bit. It's a bit sciency and geeky, but I think I need to cover this a little bit to hammer it home that food and your brain are both best of buddies and worst of enemies.

When talking about the brain, mood and food, what it really boils down to are substances called neurotransmitters.

Neurotransmitters are chemicals,

which basically relay information from cell-to-cell. That's as deep as I'm going with the definition because...well I'll start to use too many words that my spell-check won't recognize and you probably don't care beyond that simple definition anyway. ☺



There are 3 neurotransmitters that have been studied in their relation to food and those are serotonin, dopamine and norepinephrine. I'm not going to go any deeper into those 3 neurotransmitters in terms of deep, scientific definitions or how they're made for the same reason I listed above. All you really need to do is those 3 neurotransmitters play huge roles in your mood and the food you eat, or don't eat, plays a huge role in the production and use of those neurotransmitters.

Serotonin seems to be a biggie in what I've found specifically relating to nutrition and it seems as though women have a bigger issue with production and regulation of this neurotransmitter than men (stable serotonin levels = stable mood). In fact, mood swings during the menstrual cycle are believed to be caused by low levels of serotonin.

Chocolate, for example, causes a spike in both serotonin and endorphins into the



body, which can create both a calming and euphoric feeling and this is probably why you crave this when stressed, depressed or sad – your brain knows what it wants!

Most of these feelings are temporary, but if you allow yourself to get into a bad food/mood cycle, the same problems will keep recurring.

Okay, that's enough of the brain. I tried to keep that really light and non-sleep

inducing, but felt we had to at least touch on it to better understand how food effects your mood and how your mood effects what foods you choose to eat.

But what now?

Now we talk about specifics like what foods cause what emotions and what emotions cause us to crave certain types of food.

For many of us the second part will vary. Meaning that not everyone craves the same foods when stressed. Most do, but not everyone so there will be a little variance. What I'm going to talk about is true for most people that I've talked with and have shown true in the research I've done.

What foods cause what moods? The Good, the Bad and the Ugly

Let's get to the easy one first – Carbohydrates, and more specifically simple carbohydrates.

I'm sure you've heard how your blood sugar causes energy highs and a crash, but what kind of mood does that cause?

A couple different ones actually!

Eating simple carbohydrates causes a spike in serotonin which effects mood. Higher levels of serotonin cause your mood to brighten – it



causes you to be happier and more energetic.

The downside to those simple carbohydrates is that the serotonin spike doesn't last long because your blood sugar levels decrease and that causes you to become fatigued, irritable, depressed, moody, trouble staying focused and even just a wee bit hostile! Ever feel like crushing someone's windpipe for no apparent reason after having a bad meal or snack? Think about it...I'm sure you have – I know I have!

So what should those last few paragraphs show us? Increases in serotonin are good – they increase our mood and feelings of vitality, but all too often the foods that cause the quickest reaction are also the foods that cause the quickest reaction in the opposite direction. To counter that, you need to focus on GOOD carbohydrates – carbs that are also rich in fiber like certain “skinned” fruits like apples, pears, blueberries and all vegetables.

The bad ones are fruit juices, vegetable juices – unless you used a high quality food processor that kept the fiber in – white bread, wheat bread that's not really wheat (which is most), processed carbohydrates (anything found in a box or bag), soda and alcohol.

Want a nice little contradiction?

After reading the “negative” about simple carbohydrates, many will be more inclined to go on a super low-carbohydrate diet and that won't have the desired effects with mood you're looking for because it can (and usually does) have the same effect on your mood that the “crash” gives you.

If you stick with a super low-carbohydrate diet for longer than a week or two, your energy levels will plummet and your mood will plummet right along with it. You will be tired and irritable. You will feel like breaking the neck or anyone who dares cross you and you will feel like going to bed at 8:00.

Not only that, but drastically cutting your carbohydrate intake for a prolonged period of time (more than a week) will cause your brain to stop producing the mood-elevating hormone serotonin. No serotonin = bad mood.

Serotonin also has an appetite suppressing capability, which is why some are hungry very quickly after eating a high protein/low carbohydrate meal.

These super-low carbohydrate meal plans (for longer than a week) can even cause your PMS symptoms to be worse and cause the “winter blues” to be worse and last longer.

Not cool.

Your body, and your mood, **NEEDS** carbohydrates, but like I said earlier, you need to focus on the right kinds of carbohydrates to have the most beneficial effects on your mood possible.

But what about fat? Does fat cause any goofy stuff with your mood?



Yes, but not quite as much as carbohydrates. Carbohydrates, specifically

simple carbohydrates, have the most effect (both positive and negative) on mood-boosting serotonin.

Back to fat...

Too much fat consumed causes feelings of sluggishness – that basically means too much fat consumed makes you want to do nothing but lie down and possibly take a nap.

It zaps you of any energy you may have.

Diets that are higher in saturated fats (like us Americans) have been thought to increase the likelihood of depression.

Want to know something kinda cool?

When researchers were digging into which type of diet is “better” low carb or low fat, they found no real differences after 1 year in terms of weight loss. The low-carbers always tend to lose weight quicker, but it trails off after several months, however the effects on mood are vastly different.

People who stick with a low-carb diet have bad moods.

People who stick with a low-fat diet have better moods.

Here’s a nice little kicker, though.

Remember a few lines up where I said that diets high in saturated fat have been thought to increase the likelihood of depression? On the flip side, diets low in saturated fat, but higher in healthy Omega-3 fatty acids have been thought to decrease symptoms of depression and other bad mood issues like being more impulsive and having an overall negative outlook on life.

Vitamin E has also been thought to be a mood booster, which is found in many foods that are high in Omega-3 fatty acids.

After having read all that, it should come as no surprise the foods which have negative effects on your mood and the foods that have positive effects on your mood because they’re the same foods that have negative impacts on every other aspect of your life – good, high nutrition foods = better mood, whereas processed junkie foods and high fat and high sugar foods = poor mood.

What emotions cause certain cravings and why?

What about certain moods causing you to crave certain foods? It makes sense, right?

If certain foods cause you to have a certain mood...wouldn't it make sense that a certain mood causes you to crave specific types of foods?

I want you to sit back and think about the last time you were really tired and then ate, or drank, something. What did you have?

Was it something rich in protein?

I doubt it.

If you're like most, what you craved was a simple carbohydrate



ate – soda, juice (whether fruit juice or other type of juice), cereal, crackers, chips, cookies, chocolate, etc.

Why? It's really the same reason those same foods cause a spike in serotonin and cause a little uptick in your mood.

You're tired and if you're not going to go to sleep, your brain wants something to pick it up – something to boost its serotonin levels and something to give you a quick boost of energy.

What about the last time you were stressed? What did you crave?

This is where things get a bit different for everybody, but most ladies crave something fatty – high fat chocolate, ice cream, burgers, fries, and other fatty comfort foods.

Stress is a double-whammy in that the mood causes the fatty cravings, but it can also cause you to try and stick to a more strict and ridiculously regimented diet plan and if you fall off that wagon (which WILL happen), you'll start to skip multiple meals in a week (intermittent fasting is fine, but multiple times per week isn't), then crave even more fatty foods because your stress levels and stress hormones will keep increasing causing you to try and go back to that ridiculous diet...

...and the cycle continues until you get to a point where you're desperate – or until you snap out of it and realize that the mood of being stressed causes certain cravings and try to nip that stressor in the bud.

On the flip side, when you are energetic (not an energy spike, but continuously energetic), when your feelings of vitality

and being vibrant are high, what foods do you crave?

Do you still crave those “bad” foods the way you do when you're tired or stressed? If you really think about this, I'm sure the answer will be “No way!”.

Why?

It's a combination of living a blessed and joyful life, eating the right foods and getting the proper amounts of exercise.

Eating the right foods, and limiting the negative foods, causes your mood to soar.

It's all a cycle and I hope I haven't confused you – good foods = good moods and good moods = good foods.

Both moods and foods have a distinct effect on one another and we'll go over just how you can see where you need to focus your attention in a little bit.

Oh and I almost forgot that exercising causes a spike in the mood boosting goodness too! I know we're mostly dealing with food here but exercise plays a huge role in your mood. You may not like exercising, but you probably like the feelings you have after you exercise (unless you're overdoing it). I see it every day in my training studio. Ladies come in tired, grumpy and rundown and leave happy, laughing and joyful (usually ☺).

How does all of this affect your weight and health?

Okay, I just went over a bunch of different foods and their subsequent effects in your mood and the effects certain moods have on the foods you choose, but how do those things affect your weight and health?

The simple answer is the negative moods that cause the negative cravings (and vice versa) cause you to gain weight, wreck your immune system and lead to a whole host of other health issues.

That should come as no surprise. After reading about the foods that cause certain moods and the foods you crave while in a certain mood, those are the same foods that, in excess, cause you to gain weight, cause heart issues, joint issues and digestive issues – nothing good!

So hopefully you see that what you eat (and don't eat) has a tremendous effect on your mood and that your mood has a tremendous effect on the cravings you have.



That's why I talk so much about being healthy and vibrant as well as losing weight, being lean and having an awesome figure – they are one in the same. True lasting weight loss usually means you're a healthier and happier person.

Right?

What now?

Okay, so what are you supposed to do now? I've gone over the brain sciency stuff, I've given you the low-down on what foods you crave when in certain moods and what foods cause you to be in certain moods...

...but what are you supposed to do about it?

How are you supposed to really know how to apply this knowledge to your life?

Should you just wing it?

Should you just assume that you're going to fit perfectly into the descriptions I gave or is it more likely that you're unique?

Maybe when you're tired and stressed you crave Frosted Flakes, or maybe you crave Pixie Sticks, or maybe you crave Ben & Jerry's full fat ice cream, or maybe you just want a Big Gulp full of Mt. Dew.

So how the heck should you figure it out?

The only REAL way is to keep a food journal over the course of a "typical" week in your life.

By typical I mean don't start it the week of craziness – important meetings, deadlines, birthday parties, holiday gatherings, etc. Those are not typical "weeks in the life of" they are anomalies and don't reflect your true life.

You must do it for at least a week. A day or two won't do here if you really want to get to the bottom of things. You also have to write down everything you eat and drink – don't skip snacks or meals and be as close to exact as possible with your portion sizes. I say that last part because sometimes being in a certain mood causes us to eat MORE than we normally would.



We don't necessarily crave anything specifically, we just eat MORE or everything...so don't forget to keep an eye on the portion sizes.

Here are the specifics...

1. Write down how you feel **BEFORE** and **AFTER** you eat or drink something.
 - a. Were you happy or sad?
 - b. Were you stressed, good, or "bleh"?
 - c. Were you tired or full or energy?
 - d. Were you on the run or sitting down?
 - e. Were you with a group of people you don't normally eat with, alone or with family?
 - f. Where were you? Were you at a restaurant, friends' house or your own home?
 - g. All of this information can help you figure things out.

If an emotion/mood or behavior caused you to eat something, **KNOW** that and try to change that behavior/emotion (if possible) or come up with a positive rule/alternative.

What's a positive rule or alternative?

I've told you numerous times how when my day is officially "done" and we get Maren off to bed, that I tend to crave some type of simple carbohydrate. It doesn't

always have to be sweet, but that's what I go for first.

I have a rule, a positive rule, which I have implemented that works very well for me in pineapple. If I get a craving at night, the first thing I do is go to the refrigerator and pull out a bowl of chopped up pineapple. I'll grab a fork and start popping those suckers in my mouth. I usually get ½ or 1 serving of chunked pineapple and that little rule usually kicks my craving.

It's super low in calories, mostly water, but does have some fiber and loads of vitamins.

However, if that doesn't kick my craving I still might have a little something sweet, but even if I do it's drastically reduced compared to what I would have eaten had I not had the pineapple.

See what I mean? That's my positive – my rule – to keep my mood in check and to not let the mood I'm in dictate what I eat.

You don't have to use food as your rule. Maybe you could do a couple sets of push-ups and squats (or whatever quick exercise) to elevate your mood and kick the craving in the bud.

All that's really happening is your brain is telling you something and unless you come up with a positive reaction to what your brain is telling you, you will continue to gain weight and struggle with your mood/emotional/behavior issues.

Okay, now back to the food journal and what you've written down.

If you felt bad before and/or after the snack or meal, think about why that was.

What caused you to feel that way.

If it was after, what foods caused your mood to sour?

If it was before, what emotions (or foods) caused your mood to sour, which then caused you to eat poorly?

If you felt good before and/or after, mark that down and think about why that was. Think about the situations that caused you to feel good. If you felt good after the meal/snack, think about what foods caused you to feel that way.

All that you need to do is write these things down and pay attention. It may be difficult at first, and that's to be expected, but the information you'll learn about yourself will be HUGE! You'll learn so much about YOU that if you use that information will change your life for the better in so many ways.

Let's wrap this puppy up!

I hope you see just how important food is. Not only in your figure and how you look, but also your mood and how you feel. I guarantee you this is known to the ladies who are truly healthy and live enviable lives – ladies who rarely get sick, maintain a nice figure “easily”, are always happy and joyful, who have a strong and lean figure an abundance of energy and a true love for life.

Now it's your turn!

Keep that food journal and find out whom you are and how to keep your mood up, up, up!

Workout Tips!!!

Okay, we're done with all that brain and mood stuff now let's move on to the workout section.

There's no “Workout of the Month” this month, but I wanted to give you something about workouts, so I figured we'd cover a couple common questions I receive that don't get covered often.

The first one I want to cover is “How do I progress?” or “How do I keep improving when things don't seem as tough or effective as they once were?”

Those are both excellent questions and there are a couple ways to go about it.

I try to mix things up quite a bit in the workouts I give to you, but sometimes when doing all the workouts from home, it's easy to get stuck in a rut.

You find something you “enjoy” or that's comfortable and you stick with it.

That's cool to a point. After 3 or 4 weeks of doing the same routine week in and week out, your body gets used to what you're doing and won't work as hard during the workout, which is NOT what you want your body to do. You want your body to be confused and wonder what the heck you're doing and then you want your body to have to work hard repairing the damage you did.

That's one of the big benefits of working out in terms of getting, and maintaining, that lean and sexy figure and getting, and staying, strong.

You have to mix things up and keep changing.

So how do you do that?

1. Change the Resistance Used

The first, and most obvious, is to increase the resistance used.

If the workout calls for dumbbells, use a higher resistance. It doesn't have to, nor should it be, a huge jump in resistance. If you're typically using 12 pounds for a Chest Press or Bent Over Row, increase it to 15 or even 20.

2. Change the Repetitions Done

Or, if you don't want to, or can't, purchase new dumbbells, you can increase the number of repetitions slightly. I say slightly because I don't want you doing 30 repetitions of squats or lunges, etc. That's not the name of the game and that's not the philosophy with which my workouts are built. A good way to do this would be to do 15 if the workout calls for 12 or do 12 if the workout calls for 8 or 10.

3. If Using Tubes, Step Back

If you're using resistance tubes, move up to a thicker tube and/or increase the tension by moving back.

Okay, that's the obvious way...but what if you want to change things up beyond just using more resistance?

4. Change Things Up...

Change the workout.

This can be a complete change by switching to bodyweight only, or switching to a higher focus on a certain part of your body (legs over upper body, for example).

This could also mean mixing up the exercises done in your current workout.

If you like, and are comfortable with, what you've been doing, there's no need to totally scrap it for something new. All you have to do is move a couple exercises around or maybe even completely flip the order so you're doing the last exercise first and the first exercise last.

All you have to remember is that if you have a program you're doing from home, don't do the same routine longer than 4 weeks and generally speaking, if you're "new" to exercise you can go for maybe 6 weeks before changing and the longer you've been exercising, change things up closer to 3 or 4 weeks.

The last question that I'm going to answer is what to do if you aren't yet fit enough to do a certain exercise I ask you to do.

I'm going to leave that question open ended because it's too difficult to answer in a broad sense. It's an individual question and deserves an individual answer so if you have that question, just give me a call or shoot me an email and I'll tell you what to do ☺

I'm not trying to cop out; I just want to know more specifics about YOU before I give you an alternative.

Okay, that's all for the first "month"! It's going to be an incredibly short month because I'll be back again in a couple weeks with the next edition and I promise it will be different, better, and have cooler stuff!

Not that I thought this issue was bad – I don't. This information is invaluable.

It's just that I have a vision for what I want to include in these and how I want it to look and it may take a month or two before I'm able to get that hammered out.

Talk to you soon!

And if you ever have any questions or need extra assistance, don't hesitate to ask.

Ed Scow, aka "The Fit Dad"

Coming next month...

Probiotics – Why you MUST be consuming them on a regular basis

Workout of the Month – Metabolic Blasters to finish 2010 off on a BANG!

Mental Moments – Not the stupid kind of mental moments, rather the power of the mind and how it applies to your figure and health.

What's Up In The Life of Ed and Travels
– Exciting stuff I assure you!