

# Beyond Willpower: Breaking Free from the Binge Restrict Cycle

Hi! It's Kat here. I am so grateful to have you here.

My journey with over eating and Binge Eating Disorder was a full 20 year stint... and a lot of my clients experienced decades of binge restrict cycles too. You know.. that feeling of having to 'start again on Monday' or the thoughts of 'if only I had more will power.' Sigh. I know, it's tiresome.

Good news is, this mini-course explores the science behind overeating behaviours, revealing why willpower alone isn't the answer to breaking free from binge-restrict cycles. Over 5 sections, you'll discover the psychological mechanisms driving these patterns and learn evidence-based strategies to develop a healthier relationship with food.

These 5 concepts are what I teach in depth to my clients to successfully create balance and FOOD FREEDOM!

Let's get stuck in!



*You know... not only was I 50 pounds HEAVIER before I knew all this stuff... (peep the pic below) but there was 3 years of my life that I wouldn't let people take photos of me.*

*Learning these concepts has helped me grow as a person too. What you can gain from learning these 5 concepts isn't just balance. It's confidence, self love and growth too.*

*Kat xx*



# Understanding Overeating and Binge Eating

Overeating and binge eating exist on a spectrum of eating behaviours, but they're distinctly different in important ways. Overeating typically refers to consuming more food than your body physiologically needs—perhaps having an extra helping at dinner or finishing a packet of biscuits whilst watching telly. It's usually occasional and situational, often triggered by environmental cues (like the presence of delicious food), social situations, or mild emotional distress.

Binge eating, however, represents a more intense pattern characterised by consuming objectively large amounts of food in a discrete period (usually under two hours), typically rapidly and often to the point of uncomfortable fullness. The critical distinguishing feature is the profound sense of loss of control during these episodes—a feeling that one cannot stop eating or control what or how much is being consumed. These episodes are followed by significant distress, shame, and self-criticism.

Binge Eating Disorder (BED) is a clinically recognised mental health condition in which these binge episodes occur regularly (at least once a week for three months) and cause marked psychological distress. It's the most common eating disorder, affecting people of all genders, ages, and body sizes, yet it often goes undiagnosed due to shame and misconceptions.

What's crucial to understand is that neither overeating nor binge eating are moral failings or simply matters of insufficient willpower. These behaviours stem from complex interactions between biological factors (like hormonal imbalances and brain chemistry), psychological aspects (such as stress, depression, or trauma), and social influences (including diet culture and food availability). Many individuals caught in these patterns also experience a restrict-binge cycle: periods of rigid dietary restriction that eventually trigger powerful biological and psychological compensatory mechanisms, leading to binge episodes.

Understanding that these patterns are driven by factors largely outside conscious control is the first step toward a more effective, compassionate approach to recovery. The good news is that with the right understanding and tools, these patterns can be changed—not through force of will, but through addressing the underlying mechanisms that drive them.

The 5 concepts I run through here, are the 5 things that helped me, and have helped all my clients - overcome either over eating, or binge eating. Each one has hundreds of individual tools and techniques that you can trial and implement - but understanding the basics is what's going to help teach you that the cycle CAN stop!



# The Five Key Concepts in Breaking the Cycle

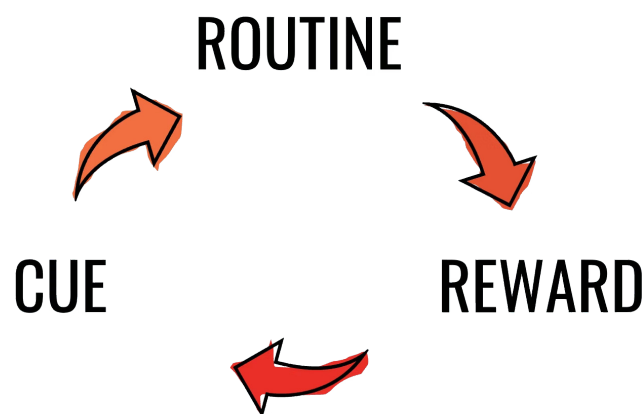
## The Science Behind Eating Behaviours

Research consistently shows that sustainable change comes not from stricter control, but from understanding and working with our brain's natural mechanisms. These five concepts form the foundation of a more effective approach to ending binge-restrict cycles.



### Habit Loops

Eating behaviours are often driven by powerful habit loops consisting of three components: a cue (trigger), routine (behaviour), and reward (satisfaction). These loops become so automatic that they operate beneath conscious awareness. For instance, a stressful work email (cue) might trigger a trip to the biscuit tin (routine), which provides temporary relief (reward). Over time, the brain learns this association and automatically repeats it when the same cue appears.



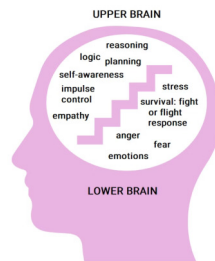
This explains why simply "trying harder" rarely works—these loops bypass the decision-making parts of your brain. Breaking free requires identifying your specific triggers and systematically introducing new routines that provide similar rewards. For example, if you habitually reach for crisps when watching television, you might experiment with a different activity for your hands, like knitting, that provides the same satisfaction of mindless movement.

A powerful habit loop intervention is the "pattern interrupt"—a deliberate action that breaks the automatic sequence between cue and routine. When you feel the urge to stress-eat after a difficult conversation, try a 60-second pattern interrupt: stand up, stretch, take five deep breaths, or drink a glass of water. This brief pause creates space between trigger and response, allowing your upper brain to regain control. One client found that simply changing locations—moving from her desk to the garden for two minutes when food cravings hit—reduced her afternoon snacking by 70% within a week.



## The Upper/Lower Brain

Our brain architecture includes an evolutionarily older "lower brain" (including the limbic system) that processes emotions, cravings, and automatic responses, and a newer "upper brain" (prefrontal cortex) responsible for planning, decision-making, and impulse control. When we're stressed, tired, or emotionally overwhelmed, the lower brain tends to dominate, leading to impulsive eating decisions that may not align with our longer-term goals.



An illustrative example is planning a balanced dinner but finding yourself automatically opening a chocolate bar at 4 pm when your energy dips. Understanding this dynamic helps explain why willpower—a function of the upper brain—inevitably fails when we're under pressure. Recovery involves learning to recognise when the lower brain is in control and developing strategies to re-engage the upper brain, such as delaying responses to urges or using specific grounding techniques.

One particularly effective intervention is the practice of "labelling"—simply naming the emotion or urge as it arises. When you feel a strong desire to binge, saying to yourself "This is my lower brain responding to stress" or "I'm noticing anxiety right now" activates the upper brain and reduces the intensity of the feeling. Neuroscience research shows that this simple act of labelling emotions reduces amygdala activity (the brain's alarm system) and increases prefrontal cortex engagement. This technique creates distance between you and the overwhelming feeling, allowing you to respond thoughtfully rather than react automatically. Many clients find that consistently labelling cravings ("That's just my lower brain wanting quick comfort") dramatically reduces their power over time.

## 19

## Mindfulness

Mindfulness—the practice of non-judgmental awareness of present-moment experiences—serves as a powerful intervention in the automatic cycle of overeating. By creating space between triggers and responses, mindfulness allows us to observe our urges without immediately acting on them. This practice helps distinguish between true physical hunger and emotional eating triggers.

A practical application might involve pausing before eating to check in with your body's hunger signals, or noticing the urge to eat when bored without automatically following it. Studies show that mindfulness-based approaches significantly reduce binge eating episodes by increasing awareness of hunger/fullness cues and decreasing reactivity to emotional triggers. Even a brief mindful check-in—taking three deep breaths before eating—can begin to shift entrenched patterns.



## Mindfulness

Another powerful mindfulness technique is putting your knife and fork down between each bite. This simple practice interrupts the automatic hand-to-mouth movement that often leads to mindless overeating. By placing your utensils on the plate after taking a bite, chewing thoroughly, and only picking them up again after swallowing, you create natural pauses throughout the meal. These moments of awareness allow you to notice flavours more fully, recognise developing fullness, and make conscious choices about continuing to eat. Clients report that this technique alone can reduce meal portions by 20-30% while actually increasing satisfaction and enjoyment of the food.



## Environment

Our eating behaviours are profoundly influenced by our surroundings, often more than by our conscious intentions. The visibility and accessibility of food, portion sizes, plate dimensions, and even lighting can significantly impact how much we consume without awareness. Research demonstrates that we're more likely to eat food that's visible and easily accessible, regardless of hunger levels.

Consider how keeping biscuits on the countertop versus in a high cupboard changes consumption patterns, or how dining in front of the television increases food intake by distracting from satiety signals. Strategic environmental modifications—like storing tempting foods out of sight, using smaller plates, or creating dedicated eating spaces free from screens—can naturally reduce overeating with minimal reliance on willpower.



## Language

The words we use to talk to ourselves about eating behaviours profoundly influence our relationship with food and capacity for change. Critical self-talk (e.g., "I have no self-control" or "I'm disgusting for eating that") activates the brain's threat response, ironically making impulsive eating more likely as a stress-relief mechanism. This creates a self-perpetuating cycle of shame and further bingeing.

Transforming this internal dialogue to one of curiosity and self-compassion ("I notice I'm craving sweets when I'm tired—what's happening here?") reduces shame and activates the parts of the brain associated with learning and change. Research shows that self-compassion—treating ourselves with the kindness we'd offer a good friend—is more effective for sustainable behaviour change than harsh self-criticism, which tends to undermine motivation and well-being over time.

These five concepts don't operate in isolation but form an interconnected framework for understanding and addressing overeating behaviours. By working with these principles rather than against them, lasting change becomes possible—not through brute-force willpower, but through a deeper understanding of how our minds and bodies naturally function in relation to food.

## How it works

After understanding that overeating isn't about willpower, the next step is applying these insights with expert guidance. My comprehensive 24 week Therapy programme is exclusive to those who are ready to break free from binge restrict cycles once and for all. From Binge to Balance is a 16 week intensive course, whilst getting 24 weeks of 1:1 personalised, weekly, therapy with me.

My 8 module course provides a systematic, science-backed approach to transforming your relationship with food. Unlike typical diets or "control based" programmes that ultimately fail, this approach addresses the root causes of overeating through practical strategies based on neuroscience, psychology, and compassion focused techniques.

### Personalised 1:1 Coaching

Work directly with me weekly, over 24 weeks. You will apply the concepts of the course content to your unique situation. These aren't generic solutions. I will tailor strategies to you, designed on your specific triggers, habits, and challenges. Our regular sessions provide accountability, troubleshooting, and adjustments as you progress through the programme.

### Comprehensive Learning Path

The 8 module course is broken over 16 weeks and systematically addresses each aspect of the binge-restrict cycle. From understanding your personal triggers to restructuring your environment, developing mindfulness practices, and cultivating self-compassion. Each module builds on the previous one, creating sustainable change. We work together for a total of 24 weeks.

### Beyond Willpower Approach

Experience the freedom that comes from working with your brain rather than against it. You'll learn practical tools for riding out urges, interrupting habit loops, engaging your upper brain in critical moments, and creating an environment that naturally supports balanced eating. Once the 16 week course is complete, we work together for another 8 (24 in total) to ensure you are comfortable that your new habits are built in!

## 1 Identify Your Personal Patterns

Discover your unique triggers, habit loops, and patterns that drive overeating through structured assessment and guided self-reflection.

## 2 Develop Practical Strategies

Learn concrete techniques for interrupting automatic behaviours, managing urges, and creating new neural pathways that support balanced eating.

## 3 Create Sustainable Change

Integrate your insights and strategies into daily life with ongoing support, ensuring the changes you make last well beyond the programme's conclusion.

## 4 Find Freedom and Peace

Experience the profound relief that comes with breaking free from food obsession and developing a natural, intuitive relationship with eating.

# Work with me

*"I have been in and out of binge diets for most of my life and Kat helped me develop stability in my eating habits that resulted in losing weight and maintaining a healthy lifestyle. A part from being knowledgeable about behavioral science and nutrition Kat is a deeply empathetic person that rejoices in her clients success. Kat transformed my relationship to food, which resulted in a boost of confidence, body positivity, and lasting health benefits. Go work with Kat!" — Client, Rob*

## Limited Availability

To ensure the highest quality of personalised attention, I limit the amount of people I work with. If you are interested in coaching, my 16 week course (includes 24 weeks of coaching) provides the ideal balance between education and intensive 1:1 coaching. You also get included in my community group, where fellow clients are on similar journeys.

If you're ready to move beyond the myth of willpower and address the real drivers of overeating with evidence based, compassionate strategies, working with me will provide both structured guidance and education, as well as personalised, 1:1 weekly support and interventions that you need for lasting transformation.



### Contact Today

Please connect with me ASAP to see if I have availability for you to join or to reserve



### Complete Assessment

Receive your personalised programme roadmap



### Begin Coaching

Start your 16 week course, and 24 week Therapy journey to freedom from binge restrict cycles!

Don't let another few months pass struggling with the same patterns. Want to learn more? Watch [THIS](#) video and then [contact me](#) to let me know you are interested.

