

Shannon Lea
The Autoimmune Foodie
November 16, 2017

Do I “Cheat” On My Diet?

Well, not exactly. Let me explain....

A question I get asked frequently is, “Do I ‘cheat’ on my diet?” Well the answer is, not exactly. Let me explain....

But first, let’s make something very clear: what you eat or don’t eat doesn’t make you a good person - or a bad person. Let’s separate eating from self-worth once and for all: eating clean doesn’t make you better or superior. We are all worthy of love and self-respect. There is no #foodshaming in this post and I ask you to agree to suspend any self-judgement before reading on...

I don’t like words like “diet” or “cheating.” It is imperative to adopt a healthy lifestyle for life. So we need to draw a line in the sand to determine what foods we will simply never consume again for our long-term wellness. I dropped sodas, fast food, gluten/dairy/sugar/soy/legumes, and chemically packed food. That’s my #lineinthesand and I’m never going back.

I have adopted a day-to-day autoimmune protocol for eating based on Wahls-Bulletproof. I focus on eating 6-9 cups of sulfur, color and leafy green veggies plus moderate protein and healthy fats to satiety. I don’t eat grains, fruit, starchy veggies, or nuts on a daily basis. But I do eat fruit, nuts, starch veggies and GF grains sometimes. So if I eat some GF chips and salsa, or the GF/DF #crispytacos I posted day before yesterday, I don’t consider it “cheating.”

I think eating in terms of “being good” and “cheating” are detrimental and leads to guilt, shame, and negativity. So if I want crispy tacos, as long as I’m not crossing my line in the sand, I’m not beating myself up. So where do I draw the line on these foods? It’s simple: How do I feel? Am I meeting my goals? If the answer is, I don’t feel well eating this, or my goals are not being met, I’ve over indulged. But in my opinion, gluten-free/dairy-free pumpkin pie is happening on holidays. Indulging in #pumpkinpie filled with gluten/chemicals/refined sugar/dairy is not happening. Starbucks Pumpkin Spice Latte is not happening.

My final thought is this: eating inflammatory foods means inflammation takes weeks or months to subside. So “cheating” 20% of the time = inflammation 100% of the time.

So be kind to yourself AND be willing to decide: Where will you draw your line in the sand?