

Food and body image hot topics at summer workshop

Summary: CEDRIC Centre founder, Michelle Morand announces an upcoming workshop for anyone who feels they use food to cope with stress, teaching important techniques and strategies for finding freedom and peace of mind.

Victoria, BC, June 23, 2009 – Food. It can be a source of sustenance or solace. Yet in today's fast-paced world, many turn to food for emotional reasons. Stress levels are much higher than in past generations. Pair that with the endless availability of fast foods, and North America's obsession with weight and you have a recipe for a host of health problems.

“There is so much emphasis right now on body image and diet but no one really stops to ‘hear’ what people struggling with these issues have to say,” says Michelle Morand, founder of [CEDRIC Centre for counselling, inc.](#), a Victoria, BC-based counselling centre aimed at supporting people worldwide to heal from their use of food as a coping strategy.

“We're not just talking about people who overeat on occasion when something stressful happens in their lives – we're referring to people who engage in behaviours that can have a damaging effect on their lives – people whose every thought revolves around body image and food intake,” she says.

Celebrities like Kirstie Alley and Oprah Winfrey struggle with weight and body image, despite having every possible health and financial resource available to them, confirming that the issues aren't simply a matter of lack of willpower or genetics. There's something else going on.

“Those who use food to cope have no doubt experienced some form of trauma which triggered the development of and dependence on a series of coping strategies such as food use, alcoholism, shopping, gambling, drug and sexual addiction,” says Morand. Food dependence is not what she would call an ‘eating disorder’. “That socially-sanctioned term puts far too negative a tone on the issue, sending people the same messages of shame that helped start the cycle in the first place.”

Morand says it's not the severity of the trauma or stressor that dictates whether or in what way a person will manifest symptoms, the key factor is the meaning or significance which a person attaches to the stressful situation. “They began using food to deal with stress early on in life and need help to understand why, then change that response.”

So what's the answer? The CEDRIC Centre's answer is education, awareness, and a willingness to start the process of self-exploration. That's what Morand's [summer workshop](#) is all about. “The Centre's workshops have an amazingly profound and transformative quality about them,” Morand says. Participants will spend three days peeling away the layers of resistance and the mindset that has kept them stuck and walk away with everything they need to start and maintain the road to recovery.

“A person’s health and quality of life suffers greatly when they use food as a well-intentioned but unhealthy coping strategy,” adds Morand. “Our goal is to help them become free from focusing on food once and for all. And we don’t do that by reliving traumas or introducing yet another diet, we do it by giving the necessary information and proven tools to create lasting change.”

The CEDRIC Centre’s summer workshop is being held July 24-26. In advance of the event, a no-cost Q&A telecall will be held June 30 from 5-6pm PDT (8-9pm EST). Visit: <http://www.cedriccentre.com/upcoming-events/> for more information, and to register for the call and the workshop. An early bird price is in available until July 5.

About CEDRIC Centre for counselling, inc.

At the CEDRIC Centre for counselling, inc. we believe food is not the problem. Using food is just a coping strategy; regardless of whether you overeat, under eat, or binge and purge. Until you identify and heal the underlying concerns from your past, your present and/or your future that are triggering you to use food to cope you will continue to depend on it to be your safe haven.

CEDRIC Centre founder Michelle Morand is a recovered compulsive eater and counsellor with over 15 years of experience in the field of recovery from eating disorders such as compulsive eating, anorexia, bulimia, and binge eating disorder, as well as causal factors such as depression, anxiety and trauma.

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