When I run into friends, colleagues, or students of mine at the grocery store, the conversation often includes “See, I have good foods in my cart” as they point to some fruit, whole wheat bread, or they hold up a container of Greek yogurt.

Nutritional Science and our culture have warped our perceptions into classifying food as “good” or “bad”. This classification has driven our society to either fear the “bad” food, and often times judge others if they are eating it. Or, worship the “good” food regardless of taste and the pleasure factor when it comes to eating (nourishment).

A food is neutral. It cannot be morally good or bad, regardless of the effects it may have on your health.

Consider, for example, a video game. Two people can look at the same video game, with one of them seeing a time waster, a distraction from priorities, an over stimulating device, and that is detrimental to a person's emotional and mental well-being. The other person can look at a video game and see it as a hand-eye coordination device, or as a tool to mentally exercise the brain. The video game itself is neutral, but we attach some moral value to it based on what we perceive its effects to be.

When it comes to food, nutritional needs and desires are different for everyone. Our relationship with food is far more complex than simply classifying it as good or bad.

What happens when you classify a food as “bad”?

If you believe a food is bad, do you also consider your desire for this food to be bad and inadvertently see yourself as bad because you desire the food? You see, the thing we tell ourselves we cannot or should not have is the very thing we begin to obsess about. What if you give in and eat the food? Do you see yourself as a bad person and begin the guilt trip and the punishing acts? This is not a healthy mental pattern.

If you begin to see food as neutral and not forbid certain foods, the cravings for that food are drastically reduced or even eliminated.

QUOTE OF THE MONTH

“Nutrition is not low-fat. It’s not low-calorie. It’s not being hungry and feeling deprived. It’s nourishing your body with REAL, whole foods so that you are consistently satisfied and energized to live life to the fullest. After all, isn’t that what life is all about?”

FOODMATTERS.TV
I LOVE pizza and if I have the opportunity to eat some, I will take it. However, being gluten free, I don't have many of those opportunities. Until now! I have sampled many alternative pizza crusts and this is one of my favorites.

**Pumpkin Pizza Crust**

1. 1½ cups pumpkin mashed (roast or steam until soft, allow to cool then mash)
2. ½ cup almond flour/meal
3. ¼ cup coconut flour
4. ½ cup Plain Pea or Whey Protein
5. 3 tbsp ground flaxseed or flaxmeal
6. 1 egg whisked
7. 1-2 tsp dried oregano or other spices you prefer
8. Salt & pepper to taste

Preheat oven to 400. Use a large oven tray, or 2, and line with parchment paper. Rub a generous amount of olive oil all over it. Combine mashed pumpkin and egg in a large bowl. In another bowl, combine the dry ingredients. Then mix the dry ingredients into the pumpkin/egg mix until you have a smooth “dough”. Let the mix sit for 10-15 minutes to allow the ground flaxseed or meal to swell up a little. Divide the mixture and roll each piece into a ball, then flatten out on your oiled tray/s to form pizza bases as thick as you want. Bake for approximately 20 minutes or until the top starts browning and the edges are crispy. Remove from oven, allow to cool slightly then flip the pizza base over. Top your pizza with whatever you desire and bake an additional 10-15 minutes.

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**Biological Feedback Process**

Our body is always speaking to us and if we chose to listen, we would know what foods make us feel our best and what foods do not. If we classify or conclude in our mind that a particular food is bad we suppress the natural flow of feedback our body is designed to give us. You will never know if this food in fact does get you sick, makes you feel lethargic or if it gives you an energy boost because you have chosen to pre-judge the food.

The same goes for classifying a food as good or a food that society claims to be beneficial to our health. Oftentimes, people eat the particular food out of duty or a false sense of moral obligation. The pleasure effect from mindfully eating is decreased and once again the biological feedback process is weakened. We have turned the volume down on our intuitive process and we are unable to analyze the effects, whether they are negative or positive.

**An Invitation**

Some foods are healthier than others, I do agree with that. But if you stay open and non-judgmental and listen to your body wisdom, you will discover relevant information about your nutritional needs. You will also get the message that eating some Halloween candy isn’t such a bad thing after all. This is not a suggestion to eat recklessly. I am simply saying to take full responsibility for what you eat by eating consciously. Use the many nuggets of intelligence that we are inundated with to experiment on yourself and notice the affects food has on your body. This is the way we can end the labeling war on food and the war that goes on in our mind. As a result, we will have a healthier and stronger psychological relationship with food and on eating.