

I'm going to share something with you. Something that I do weekly. I have, what I call an earned meal, on Saturday night. Not a cheat meal, an earned meal. I say it's earned, because I ate clean through the week, got my workouts in, and stayed on track... and I earned it.

Everything in life is about #balance. What's best for me, might not be best for you, and that's where you get to figure it out. I love having a slice of pizza or a burger and fries-- however I only do that once a week and when I am 6 weeks out from a competition, I stop all together.

I also know that when we first start transitioning to living a healthy lifestyle, sometimes when we have a piece of pizza, that can lead to overeating or us feeling bad about ourselves.

Pay attention to your thoughts and what happens when you do indulge a little.

Do you say negative things about yourself?

Do you feel down?

Do you tend to throw the whole weekend away?

Let's be mindful so we can step with care and help redirect our thoughts and our appetites toward a healthy balance.

I think the biggest culprit is we become emotional eaters. Most of our indulgences are spur-of-the-moment and then when we cave, *that's* when we feel guilty. One of the reasons I suggest planning it, because then you know when it's going to happen and you can see it coming.

Here are 5 rules I give myself with earned meals:

1. No guilt. Enjoy it. If you feel guilty, you're missing the point.
2. Plan your earned meals, so they're not spur of the moment.
3. Don't forget about portion control. It should not be an excuse to binge.
4. Limit them to once or twice a week, depending on your goals.
5. Move on. Don't allow it to trigger more bad feelings. If you have a flat tire, you're not going to go and slash the other 3.

What I've found by doing this that it's allowed me to not have any emotional ties to food and I've actually enjoyed it more, instead of just mindless eating. It takes time and it also depends on your relationship to food and how it's been used in your life.

Remember, consistency is key, just like everything else.

You won't get fit by working out once and you won't gain 30 pounds by just one meal.

XO, Erica

Lift, Love, Mom, Repeat.