

the other person's needs as well. The only effective way to do this is to ask. "Joan, I know we made plans to go to the movies tonight, but I am beat. Would it be just as fun for you to go tomorrow night?" It is important to only do things that bring us joy. It is just as important to value everyone's needs equally. The minute we value our needs more than others', we erect walls in our relationships.

Be aware of times when you value your own needs more than other people's today, and choose a different approach that values them equally.



OCTOBER 28

*Make today something you'll
want to remember tomorrow.*

—Amity Buxton

Loving Your Body

Are you frustrated with your physical appearance, weight, or choice of foods? Rather than expend energy beating up on yourself about these things, consider looking at the needs you meet by looking and behaving this way. Remember, every action is an attempt to meet a need. If you are eating more than your body requires, what need do you think you are trying to meet? For me, overeating meets my need for predictability because it is a behavior I have had for my entire life, and relief because the focus on food keeps me from experiencing my feelings to their fullest

extent. There is a part of me that thinks that overeating also meets my needs for ease and protection, but I know deep down that this is an illusion. My need for ease is met when I buy high-calorie fast foods because I spend little time preparing meals. On the other hand, it is not met when my body has to work harder to function or when I shop for clothes. Similarly, my need for protection is not met when my health is in danger. Other needs that are not met when I overeat are self-respect, love for my body, health, fun, intimacy, hope, and many others.

If you would like to change your eating habits, consider focusing on your needs. The next time you are tempted to order a burger and fries instead of a salad, consider what needs you are trying to meet with the burger and fries. Then ask yourself whether there is a healthier strategy you can use to meet that need. If you need relief, consider other ways to achieve it. Call a friend to talk about a troubling issue, take a long bath, go to the gym to work out, or take a nap. Once you trust that you have a new strategy to meet your need for relief, then consider whether you are willing to order the salad. It takes time to change a lifelong habit. Rarely does it happen overnight. If you have been struggling with your weight for a long time, one of the most loving things you can do is connect with yourself. Notice your feelings and empathize with the needs you are trying to meet, and give yourself the luxury of time.

Be aware today of the needs you are trying
to meet with your eating patterns.

