

DR KATIE RICHARD

This is my weight management story

Although slim as a youngster, I gained a great deal of weight in my early teens following a break up with my first boyfriend. I remember when my binge eating was so out of control: I ate an entire loaf of bread plus a family sized chocolate in an afternoon! My weight ballooned; my self-esteem was shot, my body image shattered. Back then Binge Eating Disorder was unheard of and the idea of therapy was never spoken of. By the time I was 15 I was already dieting: I went on the Hollywood Diet which was a fruit-based low calorie diet. I did lose weight, achieving 49 kg but regained all the weight I had lost as soon as the 30 days were over. From then on, I went on more diets and became more and more depressed as I constantly struggled with intense cravings and engaged in daily binge eating. At one stage I weighed 80 kg.

When I was 19, I sought the help of a hypnotherapist to lose weight and gain control of my eating. Choosing hypnosis was a clear option for me as clearly the medical professional didn't have a solution. I trusted hypnosis would do the trick as I had been experimenting with hypnosis since the age of 12. Unfortunately, hypnotherapy did not help me with my weight. Yet, I was so intrigued with it. I therefore completed a course in hypnotherapy in the UK and became a hypnotherapist by the time I was 20. With so much practice with it as a teenager, I was able to do a few tricks with it. As a hypnotherapist, I had a breakthrough: I helped a patient eliminate tumors with the use of hypnosis!

Consequently, I had a great deal of confidence in hypnosis. Having been urged to get a formal education, I studied psychology and managed to find a supportive supervisor in my graduate studies. I did my entire doctoral project on hypnosis with the support of my supervisor at the Naval Medical Centre in San Diego in 2001. But after I graduated, I also did a course in Emotional Self-Management (ESM) and EMDR (Eye Movement Desensitization Reprocessing) and found extraordinary results with these methods too. When I graduated with a Doctorate in Psychology in 2001, I was using hypnosis, ESM and EMDR although my formal training at university had prepared me to use Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT). I hardly ever used CBT because I found the other treatments were not only more efficient but also more effective. It was amazing to see accelerated results with ESM added to hypnosis.

ESM in combination with hypnosis was a very special healing combination

Even armed with all the training of psychological methods, I was unable to overcome my own “food addiction.” You may be able to relate to the struggle I had, battling through diet after diet, herbal treatments, homeopathy, appetite suppressants (phentermine and phendimetrazine), Tony Robbins tapes and workshops (including the Fire Walk). Even with all the articles I read on nutrition, I couldn't work out how to lose weight. Desperate to have a body that looked “acceptable”, I even had liposuction three times! Liposuction, of course, did not cure my binge eating, so it made no difference at all! My whole world revolved around finding that ONE thing that would make me stop overeating and finally get to a weight with which I was content.

When my clients told me they were 'eating a whole block of chocolate driving home from the grocery store' I knew exactly what that felt like. Although I never had a drug, alcohol or cigarette addiction, I felt just like an addict when it came to food, especially chocolate. I kept thinking: there has to be an easier way ... and why can I not practice what I preach? I do not want to be told what to

eat. I ought to know it intuitively. At my heaviest I weighed 80 kg (at 5'3"/160 cm). It was driving me crazy. If you are like me, you want a magic wand!

When I used EMDR – a trauma treatment – to alleviate a patient's Binge Eating Disorder (BED), my peers advised me to get the word out that this works. I was reluctant as I was not keen on returning to university. But I was so thrilled about the results, it was really the only way to do it. Thus, I enrolled at the University of Sydney as a post-graduate research student and commenced the formal research to prove that EMDR could be used to treat BED and target weight loss - something that had never been done before. The study I conducted starting in 2013 proved what I had seen in my practice with my patients since 2009. It proved that EMDR worked in less time (what conventional treatment did in 22 sessions, was seen in 10 sessions). In addition, it also achieved statistically significant weight loss (which conventional psychological treatment fails to do). Whereas this study was only preliminary, as it was applied to only 16 participants, it provided me with proof that I needed to train other practitioners to use this technique.

I presented preliminary results of my EMDR research at the Eating Disorder and Obesity Conference in 2015

As impressive as the results of my research were, I still found that it didn't work for everyone and when it did, the results weren't as fantastic as I wanted. I wanted to get fabulous results, not just great results. I then studied the scientific literature and found the answer just as I was applying what I was reading. What I knew then – as my own weight reduced from 64kg to 56kg was that EMDR was the best psychological method but I also needed the to use hypnosis to program my mind to eat right. Exercise was never a problem for me (although it was for most of my patients), but I found there were a few things I needed to tweak – to achieve rock hard abs and feel spectacular. When working with patients who struggled with binge eating, body image problems and weight problems, I then confirmed that I had developed a winning formula. This is how *Weight Off Your Mind* came about:

Weight Off Your Mind is the result of my blood, sweat and tears of years of study, my success with hypnosis, my insights into what works in therapy (regardless of type) in my 19 years of clinical experience (of which 15 was post-doctoral), my breakthrough research with EMDR, my achievement of my own success with weight and eating and my constant perusal of articles on weight loss/maintenance and binge eating

Given the fact that as a young child I wanted to become a circus performer, it's actually the case now that I'm offering something out of the ordinary. I did, in fact, perform as a clown once as a youngster and now as an adult I'm waving that magic wand with which I hope to astound people. If you're like most people, you are desperate and feel like you need a magic wand to stop the agony of binge eating and that pesky weight problem! Writing this book using subliminal messages was a very exciting process too!

I've conquered my own eating disorder and weight problem after being told lies by the multi-million dollar weight loss industry that all that's needed is just the right diet. I've been disappointed by liposuction, appetite suppressants and not the right type of hypnosis. Fueled by my own frustration with failure combined with the desire to help others achieve weight management success, I'm proud to present *Weight Off Your Mind* so that you too can apply the methods to achieve success.

Dr Katie Richard