

# Food & Metaphors



*Light of the Moon Café*



## Food as a Metaphor for Feelings

*“Discovering the deeper meaning of our hunger means learning the language of metaphor. Through the use of metaphor we can begin to see how our most feared or favorite binge foods speak to us and for us. When we are physically hungry and crave a food, there is no metaphor present. However, when we are physically hungry and we deny ourselves food or when we are not physically hungry and we crave a food, we enter the world of metaphor and symbolism.”*

*– Anita Johnston, Ph.D. Author, Eating in the Light of the Moon*

Food Cravings	Questions to ask yourself
<b>Sweet foods</b>	In what way is my life not sweet enough? When do I feel that I am not sweet enough?
<b>Smooth, creamy foods</b>	Where in my life am I wanting things to be smoother, easier? Are things feeling too hard or rough?
<b>Crunchy, salty foods</b>	At whom or at what am I angry or frustrated?
<b>Warm foods</b>	Where in my life am I longing for emotional warmth?
<b>Spicy foods</b>	Do I have enough excitement or stimulation in my life? Am I missing that? Do I need change in some area?
<b>Chocolate</b>	What am I craving sexually? Do I long for romance? In what ways is sensuality absent in my life?

These are some metaphoric cues to get you started. Sometimes the symbolism of the food is connected to memories associated with it and you might be longing for some past experience. Forbidden foods can speak to us metaphorically about things, feelings, or experiences that feel forbidden. Other times the actual names of the foods carry meaning that might be significant to you. The ways and situations in which you might typically eat the food can also be symbolic.



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## Finding Your Metaphors

### Part I

*Picture, in your mind's eye, a food that you have a tendency to binge on or restrict. Imagine it in as much detail as possible – how it looks, tastes, and the ways in which you might eat it or refuse to eat it. Think of as many adjectives as you can to describe it.*

**Complete the following sentences as though you were addressing that food:**

When I look at you I see

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When I look at you I feel

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# Light of the Moon Café

When I look at you I want to

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I love you because

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I hate you because

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The messages I get from you are

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# Light of the Moon Café

You give me

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You remind me of

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To be at peace with you I need to

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# Light of the Moon Café

## Part 2

*Picture, in your mind's eye, a person or a situation for which you have feelings that are similar to what you wrote in Part I in as much detail as you can.*

Complete the following sentences:

When I look at you I see

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When I look at you I feel

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When I look at you I want to

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# Light of the Moon Café

I love you because

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I hate you because

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The messages I get from you are

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You give me

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# Light of the Moon Café

You remind me of

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To be at peace with you I need to

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*Now, place Part 1 side by side with Part II and see if you can find ways in which they are similar. Circle those places. Think about what your “real” hunger might be.*