

Dear Food

Written by Dr Jolanta Burke

Dear Food,

You are the source of my energy, fun, and my life. I cannot live without you. However, I'm writing to you because I've been overwhelmed by our relationship lately. You've always been my source of comfort and joy, but recently, things have become more complicated. I love you so much, but I also fear you. It's like I can't control myself around you, which scares me.

I'm only 12 years old, and I already feel this pressure to be thin and not eat anything "bad" like sweets or fatty foods. But the truth is, I can't resist them. I overeat, and then I feel guilty and ashamed afterwards. It's like a vicious cycle that I can't seem to break.

I'm scared of getting fat, but I'm also scared of not being able to enjoy you the way I used to. It's like I'm trapped between wanting to indulge in all your deliciousness and wanting to push you away to avoid gaining weight.

I don't want anyone to know that I'm struggling with this. I'm afraid they'll judge me or think less of me. So, I put on a brave face and pretend like everything is fine, even though it's not.

But you know what, Food? I'm tired of feeling this way. I want us to have a better relationship. I want to enjoy you without feeling guilty or afraid. I want to savour every bite without worrying about the consequences.

I know that changing my habits won't happen overnight, but I'm committed to trying. I want to see you as my friend, not my enemy. I want to nourish my body in a healthy and balanced way without worrying of getting fat.

I've come to understand that all foods have something good to offer, and it's okay to enjoy them in moderation. For example, fat is good as long as I don't eat too much of it. Sugar is good, as long as I have just one or two sweets, not the whole bag at one time. That's why I've decided to make some changes.

I'm going to focus on incorporating more probiotics and prebiotics into my diet, like yoghurt, kefir, bananas, and onions. I'll consciously try to eat more fruits and vegetables every day, knowing that even one extra apple can make a difference. And I'll prioritise drinking plenty of water while reducing my intake of soft drinks.

I will learn how to cook food and put all food groups on one plate together. This will give me more appreciation for what you do.

I know it's going to take time and effort to change, but I'm willing to try.

I've realised that all foods have something good to offer, and enjoying them in moderation is okay. I don't have to restrict myself or label certain foods as "bad." Each Food serves a purpose, and when we eat a variety of foods, we benefit in so many ways.

So here's to a fresh start: Food. Let's work together and build a positive relationship based on trust, balance, and enjoyment. I believe we can do it, one meal at a time.

With hope and determination,

Your friend, Saoise



The European Commission's support for the production of this publication does not constitute an endorsement of the contents, which reflect the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.