

Julie: Say goodbye to the food police and hello to peace. Welcome to the Love Food podcast, hosted by dietitian and food behavior expert, Julie Duffy Dillon. This authentically engineered series is in the form of a love letter, welcoming you to reconnect with food. Now pour a cup of coffee or a margarita and let's begin.

Julie: Hi and welcome to episode 267 of the Love Food podcast. I'm Julie Duffy Dillon, registered dietitian and partner on your food peace journey. I'm so glad you're here. Thank you for connecting today. We know that the food peace journey can be bumpy for everyone, but the bumps, the mountains, the twists and turns can be more complicated based on your lived experiences. Something that we talk a lot about in the Love Food podcast is when someone is dieting and doesn't have permission to eat enough food, how that can make things feel really complicated really fast. It can promote that feeling of feeling out of control. Uh, sometimes people would consider themselves addicted to food when this happens. And yet, there is a topic that isn't talked a lot about in the food peace kind of conversation. Certainly not enough on this podcast, and not enough in intuitive eating and eating recovery, uh sort of recovery circles rather, is food insecurity. Because besides diet culture, when someone doesn't have enough food because they don't have access to enough food, from whether it's like income inequality or just not access to enough safe food or consistent access to food, that will do something else to our relationship with food. So, we are going to dive deep into this topic, and this episode that you're going to hear now is actually a rebroadcast of an interview that I did with Lori Short-Zamudio. And we have a letter from someone who's experiencing food insecurity and that has complicated the relationship with food. And I hope you get a lot of new ways to move forward on your own journey from listening to this episode. And even if you don't experience food insecurity because of um, lack of income or financial hardship in some way, or any other reason to have food insecurity, I think it's also worth a listen because as you'll hear, we all have a part in making this different for those who are experiencing lack of access to food. So, before we get to foods letter and hear from our guest, a quick word from our sponsor.

Julie (ad break): Do you have PCOS, and you are ready to divorce that dumpster fire also known as PCOS diets? Check out my free PCOS roadmap. I include ways to start off rejecting diets while living with PCOS. I get down to some tools that I find that have helped so many people over the years, including really naming who's to blame, and how do you actually interact with these cravings? Are they useful? Should you ignore them? What should you do with them? This is what I explore in the road map and so much more. If you are interested, go to [juliedillonrd.com/freebies](http://juliedillonrd.com/freebies) and you'll get right to it. Again, my free PCOS roadmap is at [juliedillonrd.com/freebies](http://juliedillonrd.com/freebies).

Julie: All right enough of all that. Let's get to this episode's letter.

Julie (as letter writer): Dear food, You and I have the pretty typical binge, flash, emotional eating, disordered relationship that is talked about often in the health at every size and intuitive eating world. With the help of resources, I am slowly working on improving our relationship. There are still things I loathe about you, part of which we'll get to in a second. But I have optimism and hope for our future together. Today, I want to ask you about some of your relatives which never get talked about, especially in resources and books outside of actually working with a nutritionist. Generally, when looking at intuitive eating, I'm encouraged to think about your

siblings, body positivity and intuitive movement, also known as exercise. But you have some other relatives that I really want to talk about too. I want to ask you about your siblings, money and housing. I know you are only food, but you can't deny that you are related to money and housing, no matter how many times I hear the protests that you and I can have a good relationship on any budget, and that it doesn't matter how small the kitchen counter is: I can still cook on it. I've worked so hard recently to get to a really good place with you, really trying to listen to and honor my body and hunger, and not place judgment on you, food. Today, I had eaten a homemade packed lunch until comfortably satisfied. And as the day went on, I began thinking, not unhappily, about what I would have for dinner. I felt like I wanted to treat myself. I didn't have to go to work tomorrow. I had been stressed and working hard all week, and I wanted to eat something that would put a smile on my face. My thoughts turned to the burger restaurant in my neighborhood. It was exactly what I wanted. I hadn't been there in weeks. The staff are friendly and welcoming, and it's actually a nice way to wrap up a day. I started looking forward to going, and working on thinking about eating you neutrally and with joy, food. I heard Julie's voice in my mind saying "dieting or restriction of any kind always leads to a binge of some sort later on." And I didn't want to restrict or stop myself from going or feeling bad about going in anyway, so I went. And it felt great until I got the bill. I had to go into debt on an already precarious credit card, food, to eat you. I had perfectly good groceries sitting at home I could have eaten, but that's not what I wanted, and I deserved to have a treat. I felt just as deep of guilt, food, of spending money I couldn't afford on you, as I have in the past about consuming the calories of you to begin with. How do I separate the guilt of spending money on you from the guilt of consuming you? Can I? Should I? What's the difference? I feel so triggered with a sense of shame and guilt that it's almost like I'm back at square one with my eating disorder, but its shame and guilt at the money you are so closely related to, food. But to not have honored that craving would have been restricted in a different way. There seems to be no way to choose a satisfying solution to my problem. How do I not connect my extremely restricted, minuscule, and unpredictable financial situation and housing and kitchen access with restriction and out of control eating? I can't be the only one who is struggling with this. Some unclear statistic of the connection of poverty and obesity keep floating in my head, and I just don't know what to do or think or feel about it at all. I need help. I mentioned that there were still things I loathe about you, food, and one of them is that you demand to be interacted with every single day. It always costs money. Even if my bank account can't seem to handle even the most basic of you sometimes. I know I can't blame you for costing money. But can you at least tell me you're sorry for your mean relatives, and maybe how to separate my feelings for you from the rest of your family that hardly gets talked about? What happens when it's not the toxic diet culture telling you to eat a lot less, but the very dollars and cents in your bank account? Sincerely, hungry bank account with no space to cook.

Julie: Hey there, letter writer. You know what? You are so very right. We are not talking about this. It's not like we all have equal access to things like food, and we also don't have equal access to housing, education, healthcare, so many things. And you're right. We need to talk about how that intersects with the intuitive eating experience. Like, how do you heal your relationship with food, and you know, live within the means that you have? And as I say that, the first thing I think of is that this is not, this is not an individual experience. The solution is not for you, letter writer, to fix it. And you know, I think about bootstraps and how they're broken, right? And I think it's collectively on all of us to fix it. But with that all being said, what are you supposed to do in the

meantime? You know, what does your food peace journey look like? And I am so grateful for your letter, because I know there's a listener right now, it may be you, who can totally relate. Maybe not at this point in your life, but maybe in the past, or maybe sometime in the future. I know so many people have wondered how to incorporate this part uh, into their food peace journey. So I am excited to connect with a guest. Her name is Lori Short-Zamudio. She's a dietitian out of Toronto I got to meet about a year ago at a body image conference that was hosted by Fiona Sutherland and Marcy Evans. And I was excited to meet her in person and um, she's gonna help us out. We're gonna go ahead and give her a call.

Lori: Hello?

Julie: Hey Lori, it's Julie Duffy Dillon. How you doing?

Lori: I'm good, thanks. How are you?

Julie: I'm doing great. I'm glad that we have a chance to chat. And um, did you get a chance to read over this letter?

Lori: I did. It's a good one.

Julie: Yeah, it's a tough one. Huh?

Lori: It is, yeah, I think I've read it six times.

Julie: Oh my goodness. Well, it's a lot and I think- I'm really grateful that this person wrote in, because we aren't talking about it enough. And it's a really big deal.

Lori: Yes. Um, and I loved the analogy of the siblings. Um, I just thought that was so brilliant because yeah, there- money and housing are such an important part of eating, and a part that we don't talk about, um, when we say yes, you need to go eat what makes you happy, what you feel nourishing, feels nourishes you or you feel satisfied with, but then we don't necessarily have the conversation of what if you can't afford that? Um, and it's the systemic um, issue with um, food availability and food scarcity and um, just so many things all rolled up in one letter.

Julie: Yeah, yeah, yeah. You know, we talk about how dieting is like food scarcity, like our body doesn't know the difference between restriction, starvation, dieting, whatever you wanna call it. It doesn't know like that it is an intentional thing, or if it's because we're stranded on some deserted island, you know, our primal kind of systems are like, hey, um, it's time to eat, you know? And so yeah, like how this is gonna- it complicates it and, um you know, when you're reading through it, what was your general impression about what this person is experiencing?

Lori: So I had two almost conflicting thoughts, to be completely honest with you. Um, my first thought was uh, we really need to work more on accessible food. Um, and I think that's something, again, it's a social justice issue that really, we do make it difficult. Like, it is difficult for people. My other thought was, there was still a little bit of diet mentality where she talks about having to um, she deserved to have the food, and yes, I one hundred percent agree

everyone deserves, but it was still that, that kind of thought of a treat, um, like it's um, it's a treat, I need to go get this because I've done z y and z this week. That still just felt a little like diet mentality, but then on the other hand, I also thought, you know, everyone deserves a burger when they want a burger, and why do we make it so that the burger that we enjoy has to make us feel like we're going in depth for it? So, I had those two kind of conflicting thoughts, and I almost feel like the letter writer is having those conflicting feelings as well.

Julie: Yeah, no wonder this person is feeling stuck. You know, if it's like this dichotomy at the same time, how that would be, first of all, very exhausting, and um you know, I got the same kind of vibe in that part too about how the deserving kind of had a charge to it when I was reading it. And I- I know for me when I read that part, I felt conflicted because I was like, oh there seems to be like a part that's connected to emotional eating in a sense, but then I'm like, well, but I also think emotional eating is really normal. So, um, and also, I feel like part of the conversation oftentimes with people living in poverty is like, you know, they need to really just only buy what they need, and- and but- but yet people, any person needs pleasure, you know?

Lori: Exactly.

Julie: You know, it doesn't mean that like, that's a part of being alive and um, so yeah, like, F that, like the burger is like, yeah like, so I felt really conflicted reading it as well. So um, I gave you a really juicy letter.

Lori: You did! And I have to say um, a hamburger is one of my favorite food. And so, when I read this I was like, well of course you want to have a burger after a long week from a place that you really love and makes you feel satisfied and happy. Um, you know, like that- that really resonated with me I think because of the food as well, but also um, if you're working really hard, like, and it sounds like, letter- the letter writer, you know, I've worked really hard this week, I just want to do something that'll put a smile on my face. I've been very stressed. Like you know, they just want to joy. Like um, and this burger, I think, maybe it also could be what the burger symbolizes. Um, the letter writer wrote about how the staff are friendly and welcoming and it's a really nice way to wrap it up the day. So, I'm also wondering if the letter writer was seeking um, that social um, emotional support in that way, and if it was even related to the burger itself or the environment.

Julie: Yeah. Yeah, they- the pleasure was coming from different places. It wasn't just the burger. Yeah.

Lori: And it sounds like um, they mentioned about a small kitchen. Um, maybe if they were- they didn't want to go home and make a meal um, alone. Uh, and so, like there's just so many things kind of wrapped up in this one question um, that I wasn't 100% sure which part of the question to tackle. Um, but I do think when we look at um, intuitive eating, which I would like to say, the letter writer, it sounds like they've done a ton of work. Um, and been really working on you know, being more intuitive with their movement and their eating and all that kind of stuff. Um, so I think that we really do need to give letter writer a whole whack of credit for that. Um, but then also, it's true, we don't talk about the money part. And so, what could be some ideas that um, we can help separate. I guess that, for the letter writer, because they, I think the line was "I

want to have a good relationship on any budget.” And I think that that can be hard because of, we still really want the burger like, the way that symbolizes here that- with all that that entails. Um, it's still in that capitalist society of, well this is the one, right? Like if you rank the burgers on a scale of cost or whatever, right? Like the higher end burger is the one you should be striving and achieving for, um, in that society. And I think that that gets really, really tricky when living within a budget of well, I am good enough to have that burger. Um, and yes, you are. Um, it's our capitalist society that makes it unattainable um, for some, which is not cool, and I realize that's not the best way of framing that. But um, it just, it makes me so angry I lack words um, that people can't just go get the food that makes them feel best because we have to put a dollar, and I do feel food can become very elitist. Um, we- we like halo food um, and so if you know kale, I don't know, is that still the hot food right now?

Julie: [Laughs] I never liked it, so I don't know.

Lori: I don't know, I really can't wrap my head around it and smoothies, but that's just me personally. Um, and, but it's so expensive. Yet we read about how it, you know, do this and make us feel this way and all these wonderful things, but we're alienating half the population by it being unaffordable. Um, and I think that that it really brings it back down to I'm doing my best to take care of myself, and I want something that brings me joy, and it's outside of my um financial constraints right now, what am I supposed to do? Um, and I think it's very simplistic to say, well, why don't you make a burger at home? But I don't think you get the same things, like, I don't know about you, Julie, but I know when someone else makes me a sandwich, it tastes way better than I want to make it myself.

Julie: Oh yeah. Well, she mentioned too, the staff like, the experience of, you know, being out at this place that just felt so in warm and welcoming. It's not just the, it's not just a burger.

Lori: And it's- so that whole environment and um, like I don't want to say you should save up for treats like that because really, you need to save up for your living and all that kind of thing. But I wonder if there's like an environment she can create where uh, I'm sorry. I said she, I'm not sure what gender the letter writer is, um and so, where the letter writer can create, um, you know, maybe a after work Friday night we all come together and, you know, have a meeting in a park, or something that can bring joy, and maybe, yes, we can, it can be around food, or maybe not, but maybe searching for that kind of support as well can be helpful in finding people that make the letter writer feel good as well. Um, because I know there's a lot of work being done around um, food insecurity um, around- in my country in Canada as well as in yours in the States. Um, but I don't think we're close to anything, to be honest.

Julie: Yeah I mean, when you said a lot of work, I'm like, I think you just mean Canada, because I don't think we're doing a lot of work in the US. I mean, there are people doing work in that, but I feel like there's- especially people who have the most power, there's not enough.

Lori: They're not doing work.

Julie: No, they're not doing work. And I feel like the understanding is it's on the individual, and that's what I was getting from this letter too, that this person thought that like, I just need to fix it

for me, which part of it's like, well, I mean um, what this person controls is only what they can control, but I really think that this is also like a bigger issue and there's- there's someone listening who's not struggling with food insecurity who I think also could help this letter writer, and not necessarily like go and buy the burger, but like just from a bigger perspective, remembering that access to enough food and healthcare, like those are the things that really affect our health more than if we eat kale or avocados or burgers, you know, right?

Lori: Totally. And I think the letter writer even makes a point of this of saying near the end about um, yes, "some unclear statistic of the connection of poverty and obesity keep floating in my head." I don't like the o-word, so I just- just so everyone knows, I read that. Um, um, but you know, the food scarcity is- your body doesn't know if you're in the middle of a famine or you're dieting, right? And so your body goes, oh, we have no food available today, so I'm going to do all the same things that I would do if we were restricting our intake. Um, and so I think people do go through that um, restrictive cycle and then their bodies adjust that way, and I think that that can affect our bodies and affect our hunger cues. And if you've lived in food restriction um, long enough, whether self imposed or through poverty, it really affects how you eat at any point in your life. I know- I know there's a research on children that have lived in poverty and with food restriction, and then the relationship with food as they became young adults and adults. And I think that it's really hard to tease out that feeling because like, even that statement that the letter writer made, I feel like there's um, some can- like, I don't know what the word is, concern about "is my bank account going to affect my body in this way?" like a little bit. Um, and so I think there's lots of thoughts in there.

Julie: Yes, so the letter writer is alluding to that how um, having not enough money is affecting their health. Is that what you're saying? Yeah.

Lori: Yeah, it does. And umm I know both our countries are going through election talk right now, and I don't think this has been talked about enough. We're- we actually, our election is on Monday for our Prime Minister, and food insecurity has not gotten enough conversation. Um, in my opinion, from any of the major parties. We have, we don't have a two party system, we have multiples. Um, and so-

Julie: Well, that's good.

Lori: I think so, but I also, yeah, yeah, there's pros and cons, I guess. Um, but it hasn't been part of anybody's major platform here, and I do find American politics someone interesting to follow, and I don't feel that it's been a major thing when like, I think you're going through democratic convention stuff right now. Um, and it's just something that this letter writer, it makes it clear this is a conversation we need to be having more. We need to be having it with our clients, we need to be having on a grander scale. We need to be talking about it in podcasts, and when we write articles, because this is where people are living. Um, the financial divide is getting bigger. The top one percent are getting further away. They're- I've read things about the, you know, decrease in like, whatever we call middle class, and I think this is a conversation that people are really going to need to start having, is "how do I feed myself from a place of love and compassion and joy when I'm priced out of the foods that bringing that?"

Julie: Yeah. Yeah. You know, I have a lot of thoughts about what you said too, because I'm thinking about, maybe not the politics in like government, but then the politics in research and like in the US we have the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, and lots of different researchers who study food insecurity as it relates to weight. Like this letter writer, you know, said um, poverty or food insecurity and the O-Word. And- and sure, there's lots and lots of research um, having- showing a relationship. And what the interventions seem to focus then on is how to decrease weight for people who are lower income or have food insecurity instead of um, how can we increase people's access to food um, instead of focusing on weight, it's like, let me decrease their access to food more. [Laughs] You know, like, that's sounds so funny coming out my mouth. Like, how come they don't see that, but uh, and how that really is a problem.

Lori: It makes no sense.

Julie: Yeah, it makes no sense. And so, what I think for you and me, Lori, and anybody else who is a practitioner, using a non diet approach is, this letter writer is like basically putting this really big like, white flag in our face, like hey, hey um, focus on this for a little while. Like, we need to- we need to change how we do things. And I um, I know Evelyn Tribole and Elyse Resch are rewriting- are updating, really, the intuitive eating book, it'll be out I think in the next year or so. And they're including different topics like social justice and so maybe they're going to address food insecurity in there. And the thing that I hope the letter writer takes away from our conversation too is that they're not doing it wrong, you know, because we don't have like, as the people who are like supposed to be quote unquote experts on this, like we don't, like Lori and I are like, yeah, we're- we don't know, you know? And so, if- you're not doing it wrong, because um, it's- there's not anything doing wrong and intuitive eating unless you're like, selling it as a diet, that- then you're doing it wrong.

Lori: Then you're doing it wrong. Yeah, fully.

Julie: But yeah, but it's- it's about healing. And so however um, the healing looks, it's gonna look messy and have nuance and that doesn't- I don't, I wish there was a way we could pluck out the shame that comes from this process, you know, I mean all of the shame, and especially as it relates to like, how they're doing their food peace journey, because like they're not- there's not like all these tools, you know, for people with this experience and um, it's not her problem. It's not, or this, I misgendered too, so this letter writers problem, it is like all of ours. So um, so let's get to work, Lori. You know, we're gonna start doing some work here, and use our power of the pen or in the voting box and um, make sure that we continue to do that and um, kind of a call to action to anyone listening too to- to like, let's help each other so we can help the letter writer. And Lori, we have something, a part of the show, it's called the food peace syllabus. And if you're new to the Love Food podcast, the food peace syllabus is a collection of resources that we've collected over the years that help the food peace journey. And you can get the most updated version at [juliedillonrd.com](http://juliedillonrd.com). And Lori, would you like to add anything to it?

Lori: Um, well first I'd like to say that I love the food peace syllabus. Um, I have gotten resources there myself. So, I think it's a great resource to have.

Julie: Thanks!

Lori: Um, no, I think it's wonderful. Um, I would like to add um, I do a podcast with a colleague of mine, Kori Kostka, um, you've been a guest on it. It's called the Nourished Circle podcast. Um, you can get it on iTunes, Pod Bean, um, apparently it's on Spotify. I just can't figure out how to get it off that. Uh, to be honest with you. [Laughs] And we talk to other HAES, um, informed professionals or non diet dietitians um, just about their practice and their life and um, um, and anything they kind of want to talk about. I just um, part of our mission I guess is to get as many voices out as possible. Um, so I'd like to add that. Um, I also, I blog, although not as much as I'd like to. Um, it's just random things that pop in my head, and if you scroll all the way back you can see the evolution of my mind on these things, which um, it's very embarrassing for me at moments, but I think can sometimes help people realize that we're ever learning and unlearning and evolving. Um, and that's at unapologeticallymerd.com, which yes, I tried to find the longest unspellable word possible. Um, but those are two things that um, I would like to add.

Julie: Awesome, thank you so much. I'll put those in the show notes, and the unapologetic- un-yeah, I can't say it, unapologeticallymerd.com, is that the best way for people to find you if they want to know more about your work, or just to find out more about you?

Lori: Yes, totally. Um, you can go to that website. Um, I'm also on Instagram @lorishortzamudiord. See, I have long names. Um, and uh, I sometimes write my own content. Sometimes I like to just share um, what other people are doing, and yeah I'm on Twitter @lulu\_zamudio. And that's, that's me.

Julie: All right, well, I will put all those in the show notes. And I thank you so much for your time, and your expertise, your compassion. And it sounds like we have a lot of work to do.

Lori: I think we do. So, let's go do it.

Julie: Let's go do it. Take care.

Lori: Awesome, thanks. Bye, have a great day.

Julie: So there you have it. Letter writer, I hope the conversation that I had with Lori Short-Zamudio was helpful to you. I hope it gives you some next steps. I know this is one that is not finished. We have so much work to do, and by "we," I don't mean you. I mean, Lori, myself, and all of us living alongside you on this Earth that needs to help you have more access to meet your needs. So, thank you Lori for your insight, your compassion. Be sure to check out Lori on the Nourished Circle podcast. And if you enjoyed this episode of the Love Food podcast, I would love it if you left a rating, a review, subscribed, or shared an episode. Doing any of those acts of kindness really helps the show grow.

Julie (ad): Before we get to food's letter, this episode of a Love Food podcast was brought to you by my free PCOS road map. Get to it at [juliedillonrd.com/freebies](http://juliedillonrd.com/freebies).

Julie: All right, like I said, food has written back, but until next time, take care.

Julie (as food): Dear hungry bank account with no space to cook, you've been left out of the food peace conversation for too long. The experts have not given you access to intuitive eating and unconditional permission to eat, and we see you are putting all the pressure on yourself to fix it. This burden is not yours to carry. We must do better to provide access to food, housing, to safety. As you move along your food peace journey, connect that a community needs to dismantle this. You're not doing intuitive eating incorrectly. Honor the many ways food provides the human need for pleasure. As our community works to increase access, experiment with the different ways to copy that pleasure within your financial window. When that window is sealed shut, and deprivation predicts a binge, we hope you can remind yourself, this is you surviving. This is your strength. We are so sorry to have hurt you. Love, food.

Julie: Thank you for listening. I am Julie Duffy Dillon, and this is the Love Food podcast. Do you want access to more food peace? Jump on over to my website and join my email list there. I share exclusive content that I don't share anywhere else. Get access to these tips and strategies by going to [juliedillonrd.com/signup](http://juliedillonrd.com/signup). And I look forward to seeing you here next week for another episode of the Love Food podcast. Take care.