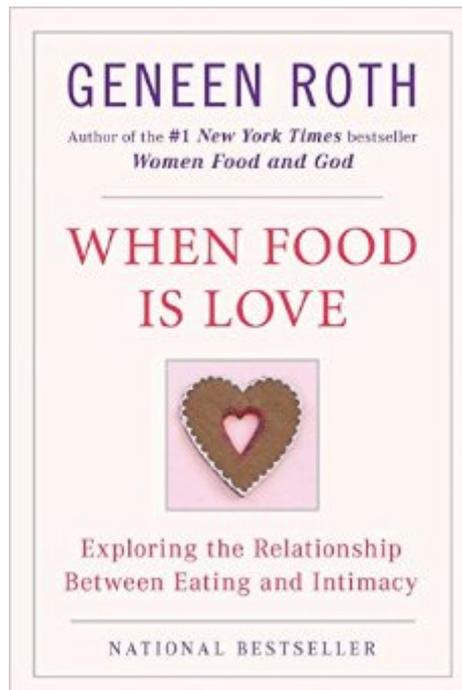


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# When Food Is Love: Exploring The Relationship Between Eating And Intimacy



## Synopsis

“A life-changing book.” Oprah  
In this moving and intimate book, Geneen Roth, bestselling author of *Feeding the Hungry Heart* and *Breaking Free from Compulsive Eating*, shows how dieting and emotional eating often become a substitute for intimacy. Drawing on her own painful personal experiences, as well as the candid stories of those she has helped in her seminars, Roth examines the crucial issues that surround emotional eating: need for control, dependency on melodrama, desire for what is forbidden, and the belief that one wrong move can mean catastrophe. She shows why many people overeat in an attempt to satisfy their emotional hunger, and why weight loss frequently just uncovers a new set of problems. But her welcome message is that change is possible. This book will help readers break destructive, self-perpetuating patterns and learn to satisfy all the hungers—physical and emotional—that make us human.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

I first bought a copy of *WHEN FOOD IS LOVE* as a Valentine's Day present for myself in 1996. I was 200 pounds overweight at the time and *WHEN FOOD IS LOVE* became my only non-food source of comfort, nurturance, love. I read my beloved copy from beginning to end and then started, again, at the beginning. I read *WHEN FOOD IS LOVE* probably 10 or more times that winter. Geneen's words became my mantra of sorts. Because of Geneen's remarkably profound insight and her willingness to share the parts of herself that she least wanted to and because of my sheer desperation, I began grasping the principles that she set forth in *WHEN FOOD IS LOVE* and subsequently, I lost 140 pounds. I suddenly, almost magically, found myself able to do things that I

had not been able to do in my whole adult life: cross my legs, walk around the block without feeling like my legs or my heart would collapse, fit with ease into the seats at the movies. As an avid reader, people frequently ask me which book is my favorite. I often mention John Irving's *A PRAYER FOR OWEN MEANY* or Jane Hamilton's *A MAP OF THE WORLD* or Harper Lee's *TO KILL A MOCKINGBIRD*. It simply seems too melodramatic to say that my favorite book of all-time, the book that saved my life, the book that brought me back to me is Geneen Roth's *WHEN FOOD IS LOVE*. So usually I don't. Instead I continue to cling to, to pore over my cherished copy - with the curled up cover, the tear-stained pages - with the absolute knowledge that Geneen's words have impacted me, touched me like no other book, with the absolute knowledge that I am a being who is worthy of compassion, grace.

Roth doesn't just tell you to diet and exercise--in fact, she tells you not to! As she tells the story of her own struggles to get past her abusive childhood, and to become able to trust and enjoy her relationship with her boyfriend (who later becomes her husband), she shows us how we use food to make ourselves feel better, and why we become so dependent on it. She talks about how hard it is to enjoy the good things without trying to sabotage them, which is something I did without realizing I did it. (My wonderful boyfriend is really glad I read this book!) Though our stories are very different, I saw myself in many of her actions. I never realized that my problems with food, my series of troubled relationships, and events from my childhood (and adulthood) were so connected. This book doesn't just help you lose weight, it helps you change your habits, heal your past and accept good things in your life. I especially recommend it for everyone who sneaks to the fridge every time you feel depressed, overwhelmed or hurt.

Before I read 'When Food Is Love' 5 years ago, I never could have imagined how it would effect my life - entirely for the better. After 10 years of battling compulsive overeating, weight problems and self-hatred, I finally found something that not only helped me overcome these issues, but also explained, so very clearly, why I had had these problems for nearly half my life. And why most other women do as well. Once you fully understand the problem you can make significant changes. I did, and I've never been happier. My only regret is that I didn't have this book to read years ago. I would have enjoyed high school and college so much more!

I hate giving any book less than a 5 star rating, but I must be honest, this book was not what I needed. I am not saying that it is not for you! It is mainly an autobiographical account of the author's

difficult childhood and trouble with intimacy due to growing up with an abusive mother. There is a little bit here and there about compulsive eating, but mainly with the philosophy that there is no other reason a person compulsively over eats than having had something very traumatic happen to them at the time they began compulsively overeating or having a bad childhood. Her philosophy is that it is very important to review all the old stuff, and talk about it and relive it and explore it and analyze it. I know this is a popular mode of thinking, but having grown up in an abusive home myself, and spending years in therapy I realized that enough was enough already. It happened. Life can go on. You don't have to be a mess forever because of it. Or stay stuck in old wounds. I did find her vulnerability and openness touching, and if these are the philosophies you hold, then this may be the book for you. It just wasn't for me.

I think Geneen could have stopped after the first four chapters. After that, the correlation between emotions and eating became increasingly obscured. Perhaps it was because I read "Breaking Free" and "Why Weight" first and those two books are the indisputable champs of that topic. Perhaps it was because Ward and June Cleaver raised the five of us. Or perhaps I just had a newer outlook toward food at the time this book arrived from . Whatever the reason, I do believe I am objective when I say, "if you can only buy two Roth books, buy the others first." PS...an update on progress from the first two books...they are everything they promised, now four weeks later and 11 pounds lighter. Trust me...they are worth the price of admission!

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