

# Leyla Weighs In: In pursuit of instant gratification



Do you desire pleasure or fulfillment without delay or deferment? Maybe you operate on the *Pleasure Principle*—the force that compels us to gratify our urges, wants and needs now rather than later, because to deny them causes varying degrees of tension and anxiety.

Or maybe you believe that delayed gratification is virtuous? No doubt, most of us have been force-fed this countless times as children. And if you're on a diet, particularly for weight loss, you likely spoon-feed yourself this belief so as not to feel deprived.

We can change our tendencies toward instant gratification if we alert ourselves to what is directly behind it:

*Desire.*

My inner Yogi reminds me that it is the *desire* to have or to feel anything other than what we are feeling that causes discomfort (tension, anxiety, feelings of deprivation). For example, it's the desire to feel less hot or cold, to be somewhere else other than where we are, that is the source of our discomfort.

So what do we do with desire? It's part of the human condition, after all.

We can be mindful of it, meditate about it; be witness to it and watch it float by (all you Yogis are nodding in agreement—I can feel it!). You can eat that ice cream, pastry or bread, or you can breathe deeply and pass it by. Deliberate presence of mind can help us in this endeavor. It's one of the many benefits of yoga and meditation: We can be present *and* chilled out.

We can reframe the context of desire and point it toward a goal. A weight loss goal or health parameter goal, such as an improvement in biochemistries to reduce risk factors for the chronic diseases present in our family histories. Then we can mindfully move toward those goals.

And while we won't reach those goals "instantly," within a reasonable timeframe (read: *desirable*), we can.

Now that can be gratifying all around!

Namaste!

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