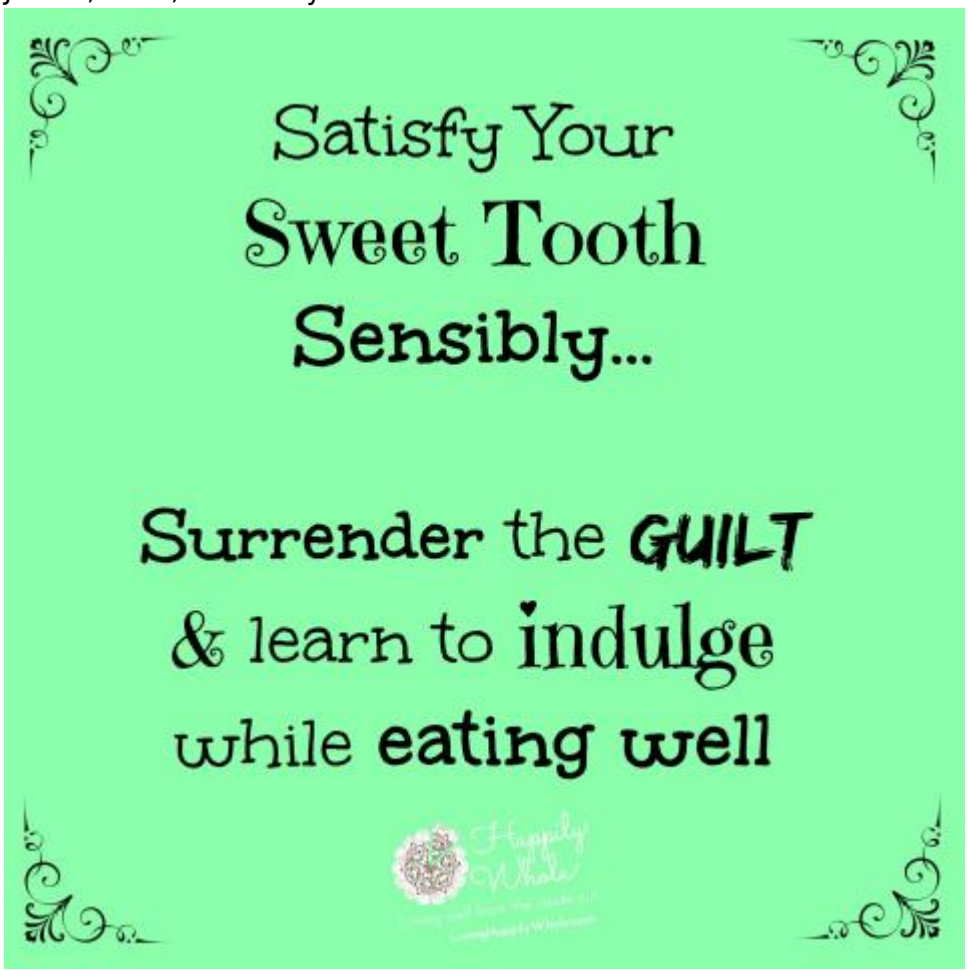
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Mini-Indulgences Make for Long-Term Success

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Mini-indulgences in moderation. That's my personal motto. Think....

- Dark chocolate (72% or higher with a very short list of ingredients…my guidelines are **HERE in THIS POST** [1])
- Red wine (organic and sulfite free if you can find it)
- **Grain free cookies** [2] or other desserts made with low amounts of honey, pure maple syrup or coconut sugar. Here is my **latest cookie concoction** [3] and it is good!
- Desserts that actually contain super foods!…you only need a little to satisfy your sweet tooth. Here's an awesome recipe: **Sweet Potato, Avocado Brownies** [4]
- Coffee, a cup a day and preferably organic and fair-trade
- An almond butter stuffed date dipped in chocolate (OH, YES!…**here's the recipe** [5]), or sometimes simply a raw date does the trick.

All of us need a treat sometimes. I mean, at least I do! Even those of us taking the 30 Day Challenge [6] are human! There are birthdays, picnics, random celebrations and even just a desire to indulge in the pantry all alone or in the evening when everyone else is asleep (uh…did I say that?!).

And here's the thing: **YOU CAN INDULGE without any guilt,** especially if you take time to prepare your mind and in your kitchen. I often keep a couple things frozen and serve my mini-indulgences to my Bible study ladies, my yoga classes, the women in the church office and even the neighborhood kids. On a rare occasion, the results are less than enthusiastic. But, most often, the surprisingly healthy recipes receive rave reviews.

And, moms, here's something to think about: Feel good about serving your kids a superfood containing dessert. Because either way, they want treats, right? So, we can either hold-out completely and create cookie monsters who learn to hoard and over-indulge when opportunity arises*. Or we can satisfy their sweet sensations while teaching them to do so sensibly*. Pick your mothering pleasure!

Then, for yourself: **What level of sweet-moderation feels comfortable with for YOU?** Do you fare better when you aren't so stringent and allow yourself a cup of coffee with cream, some dark chocolate, a glass of red wine or even a small portion of cake? Or are you the quit-cold-turkey type?

Know yourself, your needs and your own food philosophy. For me, I love food far too much to stop eating all sweets. Which is why you see me working so hard on recipes offering a **sinless sweet treat** **[7].**

As I tell my yoga clients, **"Your class is on YOUR mat. There's no benefit in looking like anyone else or performing at someone else's level."** In the same way, YOU define YOUR clean eating plan and you reap the rewards according to what you choose. If choosing a mild level of moderation sets you up for long-term success, start planning for that. For those of you taking the 30 Day Challenge, it's time you think about your long term eating needs. While you may finish the 30 days strong, your lifetime is a lot longer!

Essentially, I want you to recognize this 30 day challenge is just a beginning, a starting point to get you on track, clean out your body and identify your food strongholds. **By cleansing and committing yourself to make a change in your health from a faith perspective, you're laying a foundation. But, you'll need set yourself up for success so that when the 30 days is over, you feel fabulous and you are ready to continue realistically.**

So, with one week left, let's start getting REAL. Strategize. Prepare your mind as much as you nourish your body to prevent the downward spiral of defeat over one simple sweet-treat. Sure, a challenge is GOOD! But, now it's time to know your needs and prepare for how you'll continue long-term. And as always, start from a place of **sweet surrender** [8]! Re-read **THIS POST** **[8]** if you need a refresher.

Chime in…I’d love to hear how you plan to continue!



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