



Empty

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I don't know what came first, the people I loved making negative comments about my weight, or my actual body weight because when I look back at pictures of myself as a youngster, it is clear to me that I wasn't fat. Sure, I was a tall kid who may have been a little chubby but those comments about my weight hurt and made me feel not good enough.

“ I wish I could go back in time to give myself a hug. ”

One thing I am certain about is the gnawing, empty feeling that attached itself to me not too long after the weight comments began. This empty feeling would never leave me but would fade every time I ate food that I liked. So, I ate and I ate and I ate.

My favorite after-school activity was to rush home and quickly pull the wonder bread out of the cupboard, grab the kraft cheese slices and cooked ham from the fridge. Every day I would prepare myself two ham and cheese sandwiches before parking my butt on the kitchen floor to watch the steamy sex scenes featured on *The Young & Restless*.

I had found something that made me feel both full and empty at the same time and that worked for a while. By middle school, food was no longer my first priority as I shifted my attention to alcohol and cigarettes. I babysat to pay for cigarettes to ensure I had enough for my peers to bum off me.

Cigarettes turned to drinking and drinking turned into drugs. All this because I couldn't handle people not liking me. Before I knew it, I was a high school dropout addicted to cigarettes, alcohol and cocaine. Sometimes I just wish I could go back in time to give myself a hug and warn of the bad things to come should I continue on this path.