



Accurate Clinic

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www.AccurateClinic.com

What is "Emotional Eating?"

Eating because of unpleasant emotions or to increase already pleasant emotions

The following are examples of emotional eating behaviors:

Depression

1. When I am feeling "down" or "blue" a little snack will lift my mood.
2. When I'm depressed I have more desire to eat.
3. If someone disappoints me I want to eat something.

Anxiety/stress

4. When I am pressured or working under a deadline I have the urge to snack.
5. I eat more when I am stressed than when I am calm.
6. If I am worried or afraid of something I tend to eat.

Anger

7. Sometimes when people irritate me I want to get something to eat.
8. I have had something to eat "just to teach him/her a lesson".
9. When I get angry, eating will make me feel better.

Boredom

10. I look forward to eating something when I'm bored.
11. I eat more than usual when there is nothing to do.
12. If time is passing slowly, I look forward to having a snack.

Loneliness

13. Being alone increases my appetite.
14. I am less likely to eat when other people are around as I am when I'm by myself.
15. Eating makes me feel better when I am lonely.

Happiness

16. I celebrate with food when I'm in a good mood.
17. If I'm feeling really good, I don't worry about my diet.
18. When I'm happy, having a favorite snack makes me feel even better.

Where does emotional eating come from?

Childhood eating behaviors Family Relationships

- Taste preference before birth or shortly after
- Perfectionism with parents
- Food used as comfort or reward
- Preoccupation from parents re: their own weight/diets
- Food – control for kids
- Parenting styles (Authoritative vs Authoritarian)

Relationship Issues Adverse Sexual Experiences/History of Trauma

- Marital stress and weight gain
- Low self esteem and body dissatisfaction
- Avoiding sexual temptations
- Avoiding sexual situations all together

Social and Cultural components

- Cravings can be a result of learned experiences (i.e. chocolate) and cultural experiences (fried chicken).



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How do you manage emotional eating?

Pause for personal reflection:

- Are you having a meal or a snack?
- Are you hungry?
- Are you upset about something that happened recently? (A conversation, song, circumstance, thoughts in general)
- What circumstances are going on that may be triggering you to eat?

***Emotional eating is more likely to happen in the afternoon and evening and more likely when you're alone.**

Identifying & coping with emotions:

- **Depression:** physical activity
- **Anxiety:** breathing, relaxation, distraction, stretching, yoga
- **Anger:** breathing, relaxation, stretching, cleaning, assertiveness training
- **Boredom:** productive activities vs leisure
- **Loneliness:** e-mail, calling a friend, etc
 - Learning to develop relationships with other people, not food
 - Increased social interaction
 - Improving/nurturing of current relationships

Find alternative comforts, take care of yourself (simple pleasures count!):

Planting a garden Going to church Singing in a choir
Reading Riding a bike Taking a bath
Listening to music Aromatherapy/candles Meditate
Taking a walk watch the clouds Get a massage Call a friend
Volunteering Sit outside Watch a movie
Watch a sunrise Play with a pet Get a new hairstyle
Attend a play/concert Have a good laugh Deep breathing
Journaling Do a puzzle Sew, Crochet, Knit

Tricks your mind will play (Watch out!):

Permission-giving thoughts:

- "I had a hard day I deserve to celebrate"
- "I'm not going to be able to do this. I could never keep the weight off in the past."
- "I can't turn the food down, it's here. I'll huty his/her feelings"
- "I really shouldn't have this but..."

Self-sabotaging thoughts:

It's alright if I eat this...

- It's just one piece, it's not the whole thing.
- I'll just eat it this once.



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- It can't be that fattening.
- I'll eat less later.
- It'll go to waste if I don't eat it.
- I'll disappoint someone if I don't have this.
- It was free.
- It's a special occasion. I'm treating myself.
- I'm craving it and I'll end up just eating it later; I might as well eat it now. I don't care.

Sabotaging your spouse:

- Comparing his/her body weight to other /men/women
- Negative comments about other men/women who are overweight
- Complaining about expenses of health clubs, healthy foods, other weight-loss efforts
- Offering to go grocery shopping and buying wrong foods
- Demanding that unhealthy, fattening meals be prepared
- Complaining when he/she goes to exercise or group meetings
- Pressuring him/her to lose weight
- Partnering in breaking your diet (don't tempt, don't succumb)