



Conquer Cravings with Self-Love to Feel Better and Live Bigger



Food Coping Strategies

I know how it feels to feel hopeless because I was there once too...

You want to solve your struggles with food, but you are confronted with challenges at every turn:

- Stressful days making you crave sugar and comfort
- Busy life exhaustion that needs a pick-me-up
- Foods designed to keep you buying (and eating!) more
- End-of-day battles of willpower when your mental restraint is used up
- Hungry and only enough time to grab what's nearby

Our lives shouldn't be about what eat. Obsessing about food and weight keeps us trapped and small. We deserve more!

By going to the root of the problem using self-love and self-care (not dieting!), we can stop feeling controlled by food, feel better, and start living the vibrant juicy lives we deserve!



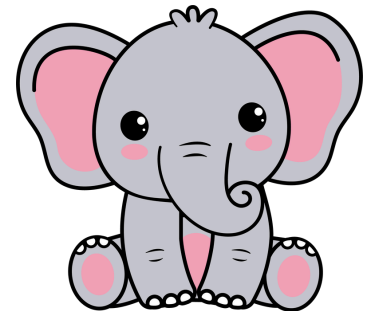
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WHY WE COPE

Food struggles are often about coping. The words “emotional eating” mean just that — emotions make us want to eat. We eat to numb our feelings when we are overwhelmed. This is often because we are scared our emotions will be too big or uncomfortable.

The trouble with using food for comfort is that the uncomfortable feelings do not actually go away. When I tell you not to think of an elephant, you immediately think of an elephant. Feelings work the same way. When you try to suppress them, the intensity of the feelings grows stronger. We may have to keep eating (or pursue other addictive behaviors) until it has gotten excessive and out of control. It may take more and more of the behavior to make the feeling go away. And if we do succeed at numbing our feelings, we also inadvertently numb ourselves to positive feelings.



Feelings are actually carrying wisdom to which we should listen (not avoid!). Emotions are meant to be our guides. Instead of trying to suppress your emotions, use them as indicators of your desires. Feelings of joy and pleasure are showing you your desires. Uncomfortable feelings are showing you something that needs to be processed or changed.

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FOOD COPING JOURNAL

Stress and mood are often triggers for emotional eating. Research has shown that writing about feelings improves our ability to cope. Instead of avoiding the discomfort, start to build your strength and confidence by exploring your feelings to see if they are manageable:



Energized
Amazed
Confident
Powerful
Excited



Grateful
Hopeful
Calm/ Peaceful
Optimistic
Intrigued



Apathetic
Concerned
Curious
Insecure
Listless



Worried
Agitated
Apprehensive
Defensive
Disappointed



Horried
Neglected
Betrayed
Fearful
Lonely

HOW AM I FEELING?

WHAT DO I NEED?



STRENGTHENING HABITS

Once we get more comfortable with feelings, we can begin to explore our reasons for eating. Pausing to check yourself before you eat is one of the most important habits you can develop. When your desire for food strikes, pause and assess why. *Hungry? Ungrounded? Bored? Sad? Stressed?*

What was the trigger? If not hunger, is there another action that be satisfying?

Trigger	Alternate action
Hunger	Enjoy healthy food until satisfied
Uncomfortable feeling	Try journaling, meditation, or just sit with the emotions and allow yourself to feel
Boredom	Try moving your body, talking with a friend, or find something to do
Stressed	Try deep breathing, movement, sitting in nature, washing your face or showering
Tired	Try taking a short nap, deep breathing, or meditation
Ungrounded	Try movement with light force (i.e. jumping), nature, or drinking water with sea salt
Social pressure	Try focusing on connections, or sipping a special beverage
Craving comfort	Try a warm bath, self-massage, or connecting with a friend
Craving chocolate	Try savoring a small snack mindfully, journaling, or taking more minerals



DEVELOP A COPING TOOLBOX

We develop our coping strategies in childhood, with the views and capacity of children. While some strategies are helpful, others can be maladaptive. As the stress in our life increases, we lean harder. This can lead to problems if we are using strategies like overeating, alcohol or cannabis, shopping, or staying busy. By becoming aware of what's underneath our coping, we can shift our habits.

When you feel the urge to eat:

- **Ask yourself why and what you need?** Journal on the feelings underneath; Are you actually hungry? Stressed? Ungrounded? Wanting comfort? Tired? If you can't find it, ask yourself questions while you write until you figure it out. Don't forget you are allowed to eat if you are truly hungry!
- **Do you need a mood boost?** Get out in nature, de-clutter something small, move your body, or think of something you are grateful for. The boost of dopamine will help ground and shift you out of feeling bad.
- **When is the last time you exercised?** If not today, get some movement. Movement boosts mood and energy, improves mental clarity and sleep, and relieves stress. If you don't have time, put on a song and dance for 5 minutes!
- **Are you trapped in a bad habit?** Step into your new identity and make an action plan for how you will handle your triggers differently this time. Don't get discouraged if it doesn't work. Keep trying actions to find the right one!
- **Eat with mindfulness:** When we slow down and focus on the food we are eating, we enjoy it more. Think about how it came to be, notice how it looks, and savor how it tastes and feels.

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The more you practice, the more likely you are to catch yourself going forward. You don't even have to change, but you will now be making a conscious choice. Each time you want to eat because of feelings, you have the chance to grow stronger. The more often you exercise this muscle, the more it will become habit. When checking feelings becomes a habit, eating becomes a choice instead of a compulsion.

When you catch yourself slipping up, this doesn't mean to give up or that your new habit doesn't work. When you drive through one red light, you do not say red lights must be meaningless now so I will just keep driving through them. You shake it off and get back to it. Ask yourself what's going on? Then get back on track. If a new habit doesn't take hold right away, keep going. If its not working, try an alternative and see if that works better.

Juniper Devecis MS, RD, CCN has been a passionate outside-the-box nutritionist for decades specializing in dietary supplements and lifestyle change. Unlike nutritionists that focus on food or therapy that addresses feelings, Juniper combines expertise in biochemistry, energy work, self-reflective belief work, and her own personal experience of self-transformation to provide action-based tools to help people transform their lives from "surviving" to thriving. Her unique approach focuses on joy and self-love, cutting-edge nutrition, mindset, and more. She offers workshops and personal consults to help feel better and conquer cravings. For more information visit www.VibrantJuicyLife.com.

