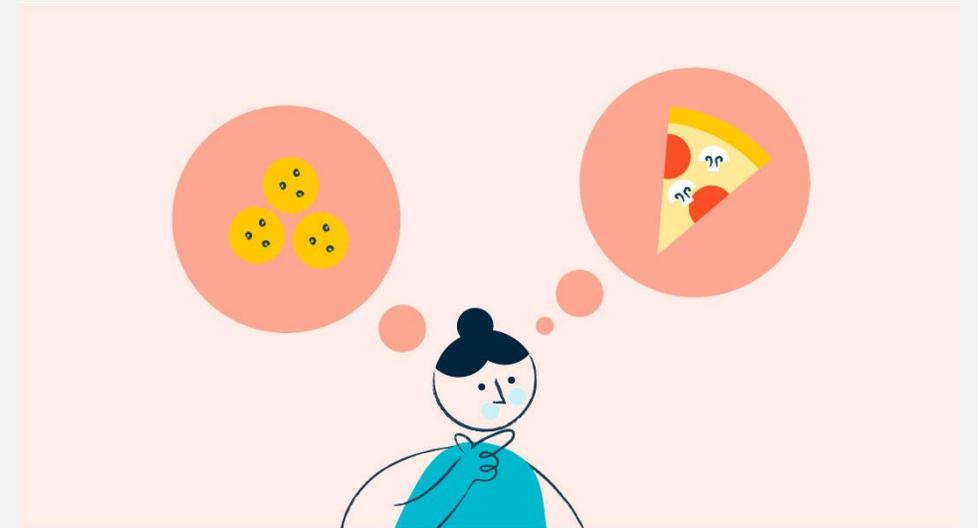


EMOTIONAL EATING

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EMOTIONAL EATING

- Definition:
 - The act of consuming large quantities of foods, normally “comfort” foods, in response to feelings or emotions instead of biological hunger
 - Examples of emotional eating:
 - Eating when feeling a certain emotion (stress, sadness, boredom, depression, etc)
 - Eating when you are not feeling hungry or when you are full
 - Eating to avoid stressful situations
 - As a reward



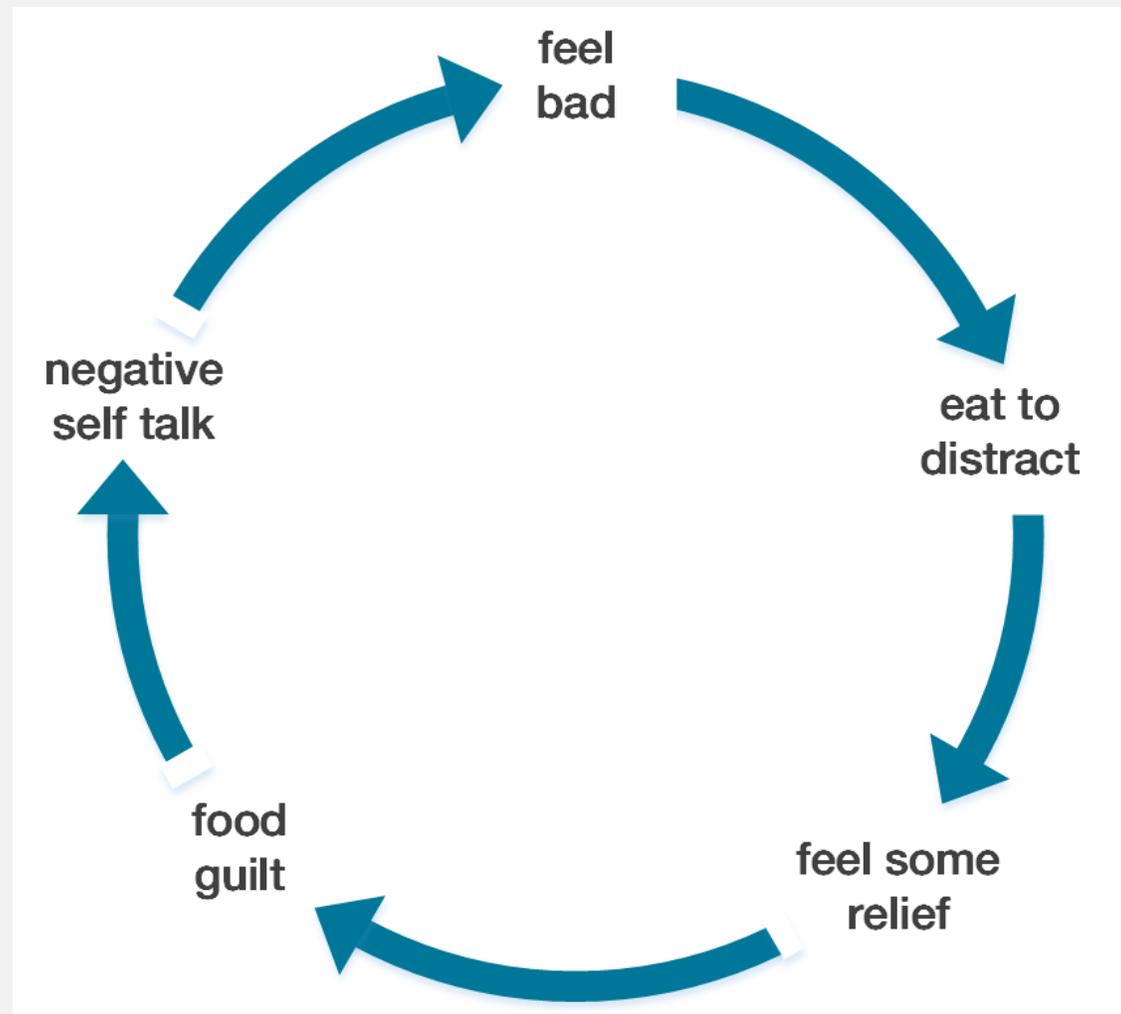
EMOTIONAL EATING

- Misconceptions of emotional eating
 - All emotional eating is bad
 - In difficult or stressful times, this can be your only coping mechanism
 - It's better to cope with these emotions than to not
 - Emotional eating means you don't have enough self-control

EMOTIONAL EATING

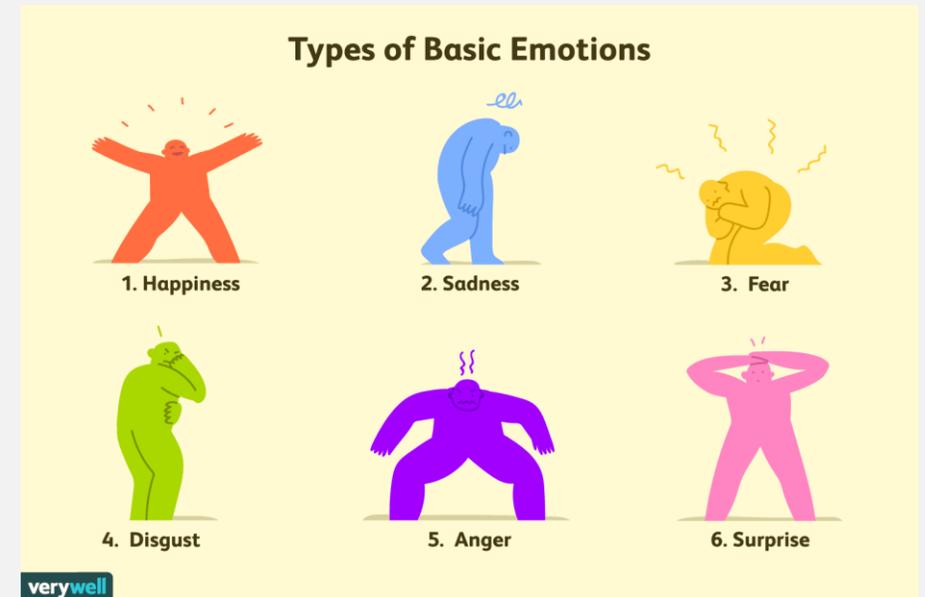
- Emotional eating triggers countless hormone cascades and can physically be seen in brain chemistry
 - Ex: When you eat foods that taste good, your brain releases dopamine
 - Dopamine is a pleasure hormone and acts as a reward mechanism in the brain
 - Ex: during times of stress, cortisol and insulin levels are elevated leading to an increase in hunger – especially for high fat, sugar foods
 - Ex: Tryptophan is the precursor to serotonin, the feel good hormone. In order to make tryptophan, you need carbohydrates help speed up the absorption
- When you experience times of emotional eating, understand you are undergoing a biological mechanism in the body

THE CYCLE OF EMOTIONAL EATING



TIPS FOR EMOTIONAL EATING

- 1. Identify your emotions
 - Name the feeling your are having (angry, frustrated, sad, stressed, etc)
- 2. Accept the feelings
 - Don't try to suppress or fight the emotions – give yourself permission to feel that way
- 3. Express yourself
 - Find someone you trust who you can express the emotions to
- 4. Choose how to soothe yourself



TIPS FOR EMOTIONAL EATING

- Find a different way to cope with every day stressors
 - Meditate
 - Go for a quick walk
 - Call a friend
 - Speak to a therapist
 - Exercise
 - Take a hot bath
 - Self-care
 - If all else fails, set a 5 minutes rule
 - Prior to eating anything, give yourself 5 minutes to evaluate your emotions, surroundings, and whether you are hungry or not



TIPS FOR EMOTIONAL EATING

- Keep healthful snacks on hand
 - During stressful times, its easier to grab what's readily available
 - If you keep less nutrient-dense foods around, those are the ones you will grab during periods of emotional eating
 - Examples:
 - Whole fruit
 - Sliced vegetables
 - String cheese or yogurt

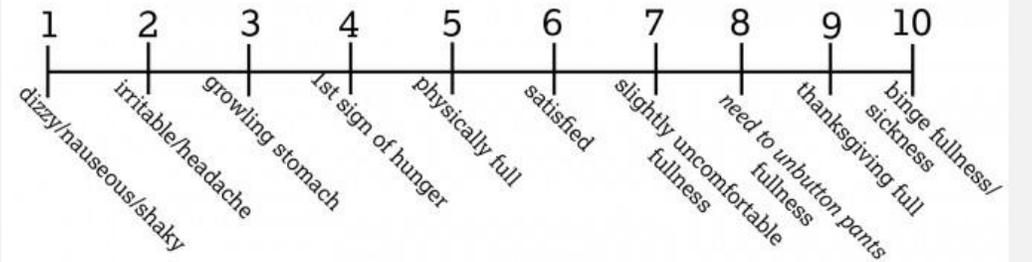
TIPS FOR EMOTIONAL EATING

Keep a food journal or diary

Document your emotions when you are eating

Track your hunger and fullness

HUNGER & FULLNESS SCALE



TIPS FOR EMOTIONAL EATING

- Heal your relationship with food
 - Having a “good” relationship with food removes any guilt, shame, or stress behind the your choice of foods
 - You eliminate any food rules you might have and listen to your body’s hunger cues
 - Allows you to make more rational chooses under times of stress or high emotions
 - You also understand that foods you choose to eat does not define your value as a person



RESOURCES

- **StayWell Coaching Calls:** With telephonic or virtual coaching, you work one-on-one with a trained health coach to achieve your wellbeing goals. Complete at least three calls with a StayWell coach to earn 250 points.
 - Call StayWell to enroll: 1-888-343-9862 or click *Coach* on your portal dashboard to schedule a virtual coach visit.
 - *To earn your points, you must start this program no later than September 30, 2021, and complete it by December 31, 2021.*
- **StayWell February Session: Mindful Eating.** Read the material, test your knowledge and track as prompted to complete the session. Earn 25 points for each session you complete.
- Explore the Resources tab > Nutrition sub tab for more information, recipes and videos.

CONCLUSION

- Emotional eating is moments of consuming large amounts during emotional times
- This reflects a biological response in the body
- Identifying and finding ways to cope with everyday stresses and emotions is one of the best ways to fight emotional eating

QUESTIONS

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