



# Change Your Emotional Eating

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If you've struggled with losing the same ten pounds for years, it's highly likely that you eat emotionally.

It's easy to attribute emotional eating to being who you are rather than something you do. Most women I know do this – and I used to do it, too.

If you regularly eat past the point of fullness, if you eat in response to a feeling other than hunger (stress, loneliness, boredom), and if it's the act of eating rather than the food itself that's filling you up, you eat emotionally.

The key point of this exercise is to understand that you do this not because you're out of control, are “disgusting,” or have no willpower. You trained yourself to eat emotionally – a long time ago.

To learn how to eat differently, you have to 1) accept that you learned to eat emotionally to deal with pain and 2) understand why you did. As long as you continue to shame yourself for your eating behaviors you won't be able to change them – you have to understand why you eat the way you do.

Take this worksheet (or a journal) somewhere quiet, give yourself plenty of time to answer each question, and most of all, have compassion for yourself.

Once you've completed the exercises, use what you've learned and take action -- today!



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What are the top three words you would use to describe your household growing up (eg, chaotic, supportive)?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Name three adjectives to describe yourself as a child.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

List three words to best describe how you felt growing up.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

What's the first memory you have of using food to self-medicate? What were you eating, and where were you?



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Of the three words you used to describe how you felt as a child, which one is most closely associated with this memory? (For example, did you binge eat chocolate in your bedroom when you felt lonely?)

Now, let's think about your emotional eating behaviors today:

What foods do you use to fill up on? Did you use some of these same foods to feel better growing up?

What time of day do you usually binge?

Where do you go when you do?



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List the triggers that precede a binge-eating episode. Is it stress? Boredom? Anger?

How do you feel while you're bingeing?

How do you feel afterward?

Now that you're aware of how your eating behaviors today developed as a way to manage pain, you can let go of the shame and start taking action to change them. Use the emotional triggers you listed above to come up with a list of ten things you could do to manage those emotions.

They can be mental, emotional, or environmental. For example, if stress is a trigger for you, you could incorporate meditation into your daily routine or you could hire a professional organizer to de-clutter your home (or both!).



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1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

8.

9.

10.

Now pick the top three easiest changes you could make, and take action on the first one today!