

Emotional Eating

Welcome back. My name is April, and today we are going to be talking about emotional eating. Many times when we eat we are not actually eating due to physical hunger. When you think about it, a lot of things in our life involve food. If you can think about any important occasion in your life, what is it if it doesn't have food? When you are little and you get a shot when you are at the doctor's office what do you get if you are good when you get the shot? Usually, it was a sucker or an ice cream cone. We are taught when we are young that to make us feel better we should eat food and temporarily it might make you feel better. There are a lot of foods out there that are comfort foods. The other thing with emotional eating that you can think about is boredom eating. A lot of times, boredom eating will occur when you have gotten home for the day and you have had supper and are relaxing in front of the television and it is a commercial break and so you walk out to the kitchen and you are just kind of looking for something. You are not physically hungry because usually you just had supper pretty recently. That is called boredom eating and a lot of times this emotional eating is very normal. When it becomes a problem is when it is your only way to deal with emotion and when you are doing it a lot it is causing a lot of excess calories in your diet so today we are just going to talk about some different ways that you can deal with emotional eating. Also there is stress eating so a lot of times when we are stressed out we might eat. What I would like to do now is go to some tips from the Veterans for what they do to deal with stress eating.

The stress used to make me eat it did but I think now anymore I try to find something to do. I should go up and I will try to clean the house a little bit just to do something. If I want to eat there are no more cookies and cakes around. Like I say, I cut up some celery and some carrots put them in cold water in the refrigerator. If you want to snack it is so quick and easy but have it prepared ahead of time to reach in and grab a couple pieces and a drink of water. I have to keep moving and if I do get depressed for my program it is exercise. I don't really get the endorphin rush or the feeling good until I get past that first 30 minutes because it pushes you into that endorphin rush so to speak and once I get there, there is no shutting it off you know and that is when you start to get to feeling good and you are working on the mental attitude the stress is gone, all of a sudden the day is brighter and it is a chemical reaction in your body. I don't know the scientific explanation but I know the feeling and it is exercise that brings me out of it.

For more tips go to the *MOVE!* web site and look at the handout on how to help your body handle stress. The next thing that I want to talk about is boredom eating. That is one where a lot of the clients who come into my office say that that is a big deal with them you know it is the evenings when we tend to eat a lot of those extra calories that we are not planning to so I would like to go back to the Veterans and talk about some different ways that they use to deal with boredom eating since this is such a big issue.

The most problem I have is the evenings after supper you know watching a little TV the ball game is over with and all of a sudden you are thinking I need a snack or something. That is kind of the crunch time for me and I have to get up and move around. In fact once in a while I even go up and like brush my teeth. It is mainly just trying to get your mind off going to the refrigerator and anything that has activity and it doesn't have to be all exercise and it can be

reading a book because you are concentrating on the words anything that you can do that gets your mind away that your mind is concentrating on something else. I have done that and there are times where a couple hours will zip by and you don't even notice it. There are plenty of things to keep a guy busy and as long as you stay busy it does keep you away from the refrigerator and I think you want to do that you want to keep your activities out of the kitchen. Go to the cupboard or go to the refrigerator and open it and I will just stop and say no I am not going to do this. I decided a long time ago that I am not going to do this and close it back up and walk away you know this is an old habit that we need to break. We don't have anything in now. We don't bring ice cream in the house unless the grandkids are there. We don't bring potato chips or Cheetos are not there. If I want a snack there is an apple, an orange, a carrot, or banana.

So, the next thing I want to talk about is special occasion eating. This can often get in the way. A lot of people say that they gain weight over the holidays and so many people actually plan to overeat for special occasions. They actually don't eat breakfast on Thanksgiving morning so that they plan to eat a lot later so we are actually planning to overeat. You want to think about special occasions and actually planning to eat in moderation still enjoying yourself but making sure that you plan for these events so that you don't end up overeating. Now let's go back to the Veterans and look at some of their tips for planning for special occasions.

I still eat a lot of food at these occasions. I do a lot better job as far as eating the right things. Do smaller portions of everything. You know my plate is still full but I feel like it is healthier foods than what I was before I went in the *MOVE!* program. Actually if memory serves me correctly I think I actually lost about three pounds over Thanksgiving and I had some similar success over Christmas. Again, it is mind over matter. Just because the food is on the table does not mean you have to stuff yourself with it just be sensible about it.

For more information look at the handout on the *MOVE* web site on special occasion eating. So in summary to deal with emotional eating you want to make sure that you are eating a diet high in fruits and vegetables, that you are getting lots of physical activity and this is going to help you deal with stress as well. Make sure you are drinking lots of fluid and getting enough sleep. If you are doing all these things you are going to help your body deal with all these different emotions. Now, the assignment for this week is to keep your food record just like normal. Write down everything that you eat and drink but what I want you to do is I want you to think about some different times when you might have some emotional eating and I want you to actually plan for these events. Write it down, have a written plan, and try to eat throughout the week as you come across these events and see if it helps you out. I want to congratulate you on completing another week towards making your healthy lifestyle changes and I hope to see you next week.