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EATING RESET™

WORKBOOK

MODULE 2 ▶ WHY

For right now, the most important thing for you to do is start to check in with your body more often and when you feel hungry, try to determine whether you are experiencing physical or non-physical hunger. Over time, I promise that this awareness will help you cut down on how often you eat without physical hunger.

PHYSICAL HUNGER	NON-PHYSICAL HUNGER
The feeling of hunger starts gradually	The feeling of hunger starts suddenly
You have physical symptoms *(i.e. churning of the stomach, a hollow or empty feeling, loss of concentration, irritability, and headache)*	You are unsure whether you have any physical symptoms of hunger
A number of different foods could seem appealing	You are craving specific foods that may be high in fat, sugar, and sodium or foods that are highly processed
You are able to stop eating when your symptoms of hunger go away and you are satisfied	Since you didn't have the feeling of hunger when you started, there is no obvious turn off signal

Will you be able to tell the difference? Try labeling each of the statements below as either a statement of physical or non-physical hunger:

☐ = PHYSICAL ☐ = NON-PHYSICAL

☐ ☐ 1. That ice cold coke I just saw on TV looks appealing.
☐ ☐ 2. I just worked out. I think I'll treat myself to a smoothie.
☐ ☐ 3. It's 3 o'clock at the office and I could use a Snickers bar to get me through the day.
☐ ☐ 4. It's 1:00 p.m. and I've been working on this project all day. I could go for a nice sandwich.
☐ ☐ 5. It's 6:00 p.m. and time for dinner.
☐ ☐ 6. I didn't realize the time but now I feel low on energy and my stomach is growling.
☐ ☐ 7. I haven't eaten in a while am I'm feeling light-headed.
☐ ☐ 8. I'm feeling lonely and depressed and could use a treat.
☐ ☐ 9. I'm at this birthday party and everyone is having a piece of cake, so I think I'll have one too.
☐ ☐ 10. This job is stressing me out. I need to take a break and visit the vending machine.
☐ ☐ 11. I can't really focus, and it's been awhile since I ate last. I think I could use some food.
☐ ☐ 12. I'm grabbing something for the kids to eat. Since I'm already at the refrigerator (or in the pantry), I'll grab a quick snack for myself too.

Answer key: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 8, 9, 10, and 12 are statements that indicate non-physical hunger. 6, 7, and 11 indicate true physical hunger.

YOUR CHALLENGE

Each time you reach for a food, try and identify which category you fall under. You may be surprised to find just how often you want to eat in the absence of true hunger. You can keep track of the number of times you feel this way by recording them in your food journal booklet, like this:

WHAT TIME DID YOU EAT?	WHAT FOOD DID YOU EAT?	PHYSICAL HUNGER/ NON-PHYSICAL HUNGER
9:45am	1 wheat bagel 1 tbsp cream cheese coffee	Physical Hunger
1:30pm	Spinach salad with veggies, 1 oz. walnuts & 2 tbsp dressing	Physical Hunger
5:00pm	3 chocolate chip cookies 1/2 cup skim milk	Non-Physical Hunger

TRY THIS:

Start a food journal. In the journaling booklet I sent you, I show you how to get started, and provide templates for journaling to make it easy! You will get an unbelievable amount of value from tracking your intake.

In video two of the WHY module, I taught you how to gauge your hunger so that you know when it is the ideal time to eat. You have been given two major tools that will help you do this: the STOP method and the hunger scale. I recommend that you refer back to them on a regular basis until you have trained your brain to think along these lines. You will need both of these tools to complete the following exercise, so let's begin by taking a closer look:

THE STOP METHOD

S = Stop what you are doing.

T = Take a deep breath or two which helps you slow down and focus on the present.

O = Observe your body. Where on the hunger scale are you? Are you really physically hungry or are you in the 5+ zone and is there another type of hunger going on? If you are hungry, quantify where on the scale you are.

P = Proceed. Eat if you are truly hungry, but if not, then question whether there is something else that will nourish your body. Again, I will give you tips on this in the videos on non-physical hunger.

Using the acronym STOP every time you are about to put food in your mouth may seem like a lot of work at first to remember. However with time, it will become automatic. It only takes a few seconds to do but can have a very powerful impact on your intake.

THE HUNGER SCALE

Remember, when you begin eating, it is ideal to be at a 3. How can you be sure that what you are feeling puts you at a 3 on the scale and not a 4? Likewise, how should you know if you have crossed the line from a 3 to a 2? You will find the answers to these questions through experimenting. If you feel as though you might be hungry but you are not quite sure, try having something to eat. Once you are finished, pay close attention to your body. Does the food sit heavily in your stomach? If so, you will come to realize that you likely started eating when you were at a 4 or 5 on the hunger scale. If you find that you feel good (physically) after eating, then you probably did the right thing by starting to eat when you were at a 3. With a little practice, pinpointing your 3 will become second nature!

Today, I'm challenging you to use the STOP method to determine where you fall on the hunger scale.

IF YOU FIND YOURSELF OFTEN EATING WHEN YOU ARE JUST AT A 4 OR 5 HUNGER LEVEL:

I want you to try to let yourself get to a 3 hunger level before you eat. If you are unsure where you stand on the Hunger Scale, try waiting 15-20 minutes before checking in again. If this seems too difficult, and you end up eating before you have strong feelings of hunger, ask yourself:

Why do I think that I need to eat? Am I eating simply because it's a meal time?

Your body does not run on the clock's schedule. Be sure to honor its signals of hunger, satisfaction, and fullness in order to reach your set-point (or natural) weight. Maybe you think that eating now will prevent you from becoming hungry at an inconvenient time in the future (i.e. during a meeting or on the drive home from work)? As we will discuss in video 4 of the WHY module-- by creating snack survival kits for your car, office, and briefcase or bag—you can vanquish your fears of what I like to call "food insecurity" so that you never feel pressured to eat in the absence of true physical hunger again.

Do you want food because it's a special occasion? (vacation, holiday, party, etc)

It is okay to have a slice of cake when you want one, so long as you actually have room in your stomach. Make sure that you are not ignoring your internal signals and eating just for the sake of eating. Also, realize that you could just have a bite or two of the cake to enjoy the taste without having to feel overly full from an entire slice.

Do you find it difficult to refuse a food when someone is offering it to you?

In situations like this, it is important to use the STOP method to analyze whether you feel true hunger. If you are eating because you don't want to make someone else feel bad or uncomfortable, try one of the following responses: thank you but I am just not hungry at all right now. Or can you pack up some of the food for me to eat later?

Which thoughts or beliefs are preventing me from staying true to my hunger?

Perhaps you think it is okay to eat without any hunger if you are just going to munch on a low-calorie snack or "healthy" food like vegetables or fruits.

As I have said before, I urge you to get rid of the "healthy" vs "unhealthy" food mentality. The truth is that any food, when consumed in excess, can be fattening. Even if you are reaching for a snack that is lower in calories, fat grams, sugar, or salt when you are not hungry, you are taking in more than what your body is telling you it needs.

ON THE OTHER HAND, IF YOU ARE ALWAYS WAITING UNTIL YOU ARE AT A 1 OR 2 HUNGER LEVEL BEFORE YOU EAT:

Try checking in with your hunger more often throughout the day. By checking in more regularly, you should start to notice those more subtle feelings of physical hunger and of course you should be eating in response to them. If you are struggling with allowing yourself to honor your hunger, ask yourself:

Why is it difficult for me to honor my hunger?

Maybe you are so busy checking e-mails, running errands, or preparing food for others that you forget to check in with your body. Remember that when you neglect your hunger, you end up sitting down to eat when you are already at a 1 or 2 on the hunger scale. At this point, you will be so ravenous that you will likely overeat.

Are any irrational beliefs holding you back?

Do you think that if you eat now, you will be using up all of your calories for later?
Keep in mind that the feeling of hunger is your body's way of telling you that it needs calories now! Saving calories for later will leave you feeling fatigued and disgruntled; and it is likely that you will overeat once you finally allow yourself to have food. In the event that your stomach begins grumbling too close to mealtime (i.e. when dinner is only an hour away), you might want to eat a small snack just to take the edge off. In video 4 of the WHY module, you will learn more about how and when to snack.

Do you think that enduring feelings of hunger will lead to weight loss?

Some of my clients have told me that they try to ignore their hunger, while others tell me they restrict themselves from eating as much food as it would take for them to be comfortably full. This gives them a sense of "accomplishment" in their quest for weight loss...or so they think. They associate the feeling of hunger with weight loss. But truth be told, once they finally break the cycle of restricting, they tend to eat larger portions -- which leads to weight gain in the long run. Not to mention that restricting this way potentially slows their metabolism down, making weight loss even harder to achieve. This is why it is always worth it to honor your physical hunger!

Are you having trouble trusting your body's signals?

Continue to experiment with eating when you think your body is hungry and analyze how you feel afterwards. Does the food sit heavy in your stomach? If so, you will come to realize that you likely started eating when you were at a 4 or 5 on the hunger scale. If you find that you feel good after eating, then you probably did the right thing by starting to eat when you were at a 3. With a little practice, pinpointing your 3 will become second nature!

Hopefully you are beginning to realize that it is very important for you to be satisfied by what you eat. From this point on, I challenge you to start checking in with your fullness level when you eat and rate it on the scale. Remember to pay attention to which meals "hit the spot" and allow you to walk away feeling no more than comfortably full and which meals leave you "wanting more" even when you are already full.

THE HUNGER/FULLNESS SCALE FOR IDENTIFYING FULLNESS

Try to give yourself at least 20 minutes to digest your food before determining your fullness level—remember that's how long it will take your brain to receive the message your stomach and GI tract send when you are comfortably full. As I said before, you never want to be more than just comfortably full after eating. On the fullness scale, that is no higher than a 7.

After rating your fullness, ask yourself:

- Did I eat the foods that I wanted to eat?
- After eating, did I feel satisfied?

I encourage you to keep track of your levels of hunger prior to eating; level of fullness 20 minutes after eating; and the general level of satisfaction you feel. Examples of how to record this information are given in your Food Journal. If you choose to eat foods that are satisfying, and maintain mindfulness of what is going on in your stomach, you will be able to stop eating when you are no more than comfortably full.

Snacking when you are physically hungry in between planned meals is the secret weapon you need to keep from overeating at meal times. Before you take your first bite, it is crucial that you gauge where you want to be on the hunger scale when you are done. It will likely take some experimenting for you to figure out how much food is necessary at any given time to do the trick.

As part of your challenge, I want you to experiment with a wide variety of different snacks and portion sizes. Pay attention to how your body feels when you eat them, and be sure to record it in your workbook. For instructions on how to do this, read the "How Do Different Types of Snack Foods Make You Feel?" section at the end of this exercise.

FIRST, I WANT YOU TO TAKE SOME TIME *RIGHT NOW* (NOT LATER!) TO CREATE SURVIVAL SNACK KITS FOR:

- ✓ Your office
- ✓ Your car
- ✓ Your purse or briefcase

SNACKS COULD BE ANYTHING. HERE IS A QUICK LIST OF EXAMPLES:

- ✓ Nuts
- ✓ Trail mix
- ✓ Cheese & crackers
- ✓ ½ sandwich
- ✓ Cookies
- ✓ Apples dipped in peanut butter
- ✓ Sunflower or pumpkin seeds
- ✓ Triscuits with hummus
- ✓ Edamame
- ✓ Any leftovers you have *(think sandwiches, salads, pizza or pastas from a prior meal)*
- ✓ Fruit and yogurt
- ✓ Chips & guacamole
- ✓ Popcorn
- ✓ Hard boiled eggs
- ✓ Cereal & yogurt
- ✓ Cottage cheese topped with fruit
- ✓ Walnuts & raisins
- ✓ Tuna with crackers
- ✓ Muffin

HOW DO DIFFERENT TYPES OF SNACK FOODS MAKE YOU FEEL?

I encourage you to experiment with a variety of the different snacks listed above as well as any others you can think of. When you eat them, examine how satisfied they make you feel in terms of pleasure, energy, and staying power - which snacks will give you a quick boost of energy but leave you hungry again shortly after and which snacks hold you over for a longer period of time?

Record this information in your food journal (see example below). When you look back at your notes, you will begin to notice what kinds of foods your body prefers:

TIME	HUNGER LEVEL (before eating)	FOOD	FULLNESS LEVEL (after eating)	SATISFACTION	COMMENTS
9:45am	4	wheat bagel with cream cheese & coffee	7	High	This food was very pleasurable to eat. I felt somewhat low energy 30 min. after eating, but I was full for over 3 hours afterward.
1:30pm	3	spinach salad with veggies, walnuts & whole grain bread	7	High	The raspberry vinaigrette was amazing! Very pleasurable & energizing. I felt full for 3.5 hours!
5:00pm	5	chocolate chip cookies	8	Low	Delicious. I felt a spike of energy and then a crash. I was hungry again 45 minutes later.

If you still find yourself snacking for reasons other than hunger, try to identify what it is that's driving you to reach for food. Circle the statements that apply to you:

- ✓ I want a break in my day
- ✓ Snacking is a distraction when I am bored
- ✓ Snacking is a pick-me-up when I am exhausted
- ✓ I think that I should eat snacks in between all of my meals - as diets have told me.

Remember, these are NOT good reasons to snack, but, having a snack on hand for when you are actually physically hungry couldn't be more important!

In video five of the WHY module, you learned all of the different reasons why you may be experiencing non-physical hunger. If you find that you are completely aware of the nature of your hunger and you still have a strong urge to eat, the next module will provide some helpful strategies to combat those feelings. For now, I want to challenge you to continue to check in with your hunger throughout the day and when you are experiencing non-physical hunger, pause and see if you can figure out what the cause is. Remember, there are three major types of non-physical hunger: emotional, habitual and sensory.

ARE YOU EMOTIONALLY HUNGRY?

Ask yourself the following questions and check the answer that fits best with your situation.

Do you turn to food as a way to fill the time when bored? Maybe you find yourself eating a lot when at home on the weekend with no set plans or when you are at work during a lull in your day?

☐ Very Often ☐ Sometimes ☐ Rarely

Do you eat more when you're under stress? Maybe you are cramming for an exam or you have to meet a work deadline or you are trying to fit too many errands into your day and you find yourself constantly reaching for food as a release.

☐ Very Often ☐ Sometimes ☐ Rarely

Do you find yourself overeating whenever you are by yourself at night? You may not even realize that you are feeling down or lonely, but you find comfort in the food.

☐ Very Often ☐ Sometimes ☐ Rarely

Do you reward yourself with food? At the end of a long day, when you finally come home from work or put the kids down do you treat yourself with an indulgent meal or snack?

☐ Very Often ☐ Sometimes ☐ Rarely

Do you eat to bond with other people? Every time you are in a social eating situation, regardless of your hunger, do you eat just to be "part of the group" or to not be singled out as the only one not eating or to not make others who are eating around you feel uncomfortable?

☐ Very Often ☐ Sometimes ☐ Rarely

Do you crave foods that are rich in sugar, fat, and sodium or foods that are highly processed to make you feel good when you are feeling down, exhausted, stressed, or lonely?

☐ Very Often ☐ Sometimes ☐ Rarely

If you could relate to any, or all of these, then you do eat for emotional reasons at times. You are not alone though - everyone does! It's how OFTEN you eat emotionally (and to what degree) that determines whether or not it is a huge inhibitor to your weight loss efforts. In video 6 of the WHY module, you will learn strategies to help you break these habits.

ARE YOU HABITUALLY HUNGRY?

Check all that apply to you.

- ☐ Do you take an afternoon snack break around the same time every day?
- ☐ Are there certain foods you indulge in on a weekly basis as part of your normal routine? For example, do you always have a chocolate bar after lunch or get a burger and fries at happy hour with your co-workers (even when you are not hungry)?
- ☐ Do you immediately go to the kitchen and start snacking on whatever is in the pantry as soon as you get home from work?
- ☐ Do you eat every 3-4 hours on schedule - as past diets have trained you to do?
- ☐ Do you have a daily ritual of eating a certain food? (i.e. every night after dinner you eat dessert in front of the tv).

Sometimes, just the awareness that checking in with your non-physical hunger brings is enough to make you not want to eat. Video 6 of the WHY module will teach you strategies that will help you to break your habits.

DO YOU FEEL SENSORY HUNGER?

In other words, is your hunger stimulated by your senses?

Do you tend to grab food from bowls, jars, and plates in passing?

☐ Very Often ☐ Sometimes ☐ Rarely

Do food commercials on tv cause your mouth to start watering and you to suddenly have the urge to eat?

☐ Very Often ☐ Sometimes ☐ Rarely

When a friend orders dessert when you are out for dinner, are you unable to resist even if you are not at all hungry?

☐ Very Often ☐ Sometimes ☐ Rarely

If you go to a coffee shop with the intention of just ordering a coffee or tea, are you unable to resist the pastries in the display?

☐ Very Often ☐ Sometimes ☐ Rarely

There is nothing wrong with occasionally tasting a few bites of food to satisfy your sensory hunger. However, there is a problem if you often polish off large portions of food in the absence of physical hunger. In video 6 of the WHY module, you will learn strategies to help you break these habits.

You may notice that your food journal has expanded to include all of the items you should think about when you eat. Keeping track of this information will help you to pick up on the messages that your body sends about when, what and how much to eat.

TIME	HUNGER LEVEL (before eating)	REASON FOR EATING (other than hunger)	FOOD	FULLNESS LEVEL (after eating)	SATISFACTION	COMMENTS
9:45am	4	n/a	wheat bagel with cream cheese & coffee	7	High	Feeling full & satisfied, but a little tired
1:30pm	3	n/a	spinach salad with veggies, walnuts & whole grain bread	7	High	Delicious salad; very satisfying
5:00pm	5	I wanted to treat myself after a long day at work	chocolate chip cookies	8	Low	These cookies were a little too crunchy for me. Still good, but not as satisfying as a soft cookie would have been.

WHY video 6 provided strategies to help you turn to food less often when you are not physically hungry. Always remember to check in with yourself by using the STOP acronym. Also, if you utilize the "Reason for Eating (if other than hunger)" section of your food journal to jot down the way you feel before you eat, you may learn that a small number of predictable and recurring triggers are driving you to eat in the absence of hunger. Once you can identify these triggers, you may start thinking of ways to combat them. The next exercise will help you in this process.

EMOTIONAL HUNGER

If you want to beat emotional hunger, start by acknowledging your emotions. Once you have done this, the key is to find effective ways to deal with them. Remember that food never tempers your feelings for long, and it often breeds even more negativity. Therefore, food is not an effective solution. The list I've provided you below and the brainstorming activity you did in the video provide great examples of what actually does work!

HABITUAL HUNGER

The first step to combating habitual hunger is to track it so you can figure out what the trigger is.

- ✓ The time of day
- ✓ Your environment
- ✓ Who you are with

I encourage you to track your triggers in your food journal. Then, figure out what you really need.

- ✓ A break from work
- ✓ Something to fill the time
- ✓ A way to unwind
- ✓ A way to bond or express love to someone
- ✓ Something to distract you while you are sitting in traffic

What do you really need?

SENSORY HUNGER

Do You Feel:

- ✓ Guilty about having a few bites of food when not hungry? Remember, there is nothing wrong with taking a few bites of food to just experience the taste...just remind yourself that you don't have to eat the whole thing if you just want to taste it!
- ✓ Still feel as though some foods are off-limits (leading to bingeing when you give in to eating them)? If you feel this way, then you will likely eat everything in front of you once you start eating because in your head you have already ruined the day by "breaking a rule".

Replace eating with another activity that will meet your need. Here are just some examples of activities you can try. Can you think of additional ones that would work for you? Add them to the list below:

1. Take a walk
2. Call a friend
3. Dance a little dance
4. Find something to laugh about
5. Make a list
6. Write a note
7. Kiss someone
8. Hug someone
9. Take deep breaths
10. Scream!
11. Pick up a book
12. Surf the web
13. Watch your favorite show
14. Look at old photos
15. Give a massage
16. Get a massage
17. Clean out a cluttered space
18. Drink a glass of water
19. Chew some gum
20. Brush your teeth
21. Take a soothing shower or bath
22. Light the fireplace
23. No fireplace? Light some candles
24. Build something
25. Break something
26. Run an errand
27. Ride a bike
28. Reflect
29. Take a nap
30. Stretch
31. Say a prayer
32. Feel proud of your accomplishments
33. Play with a pet
34. Play with children
35. _____
36. _____
37. _____
38. _____
39. _____
40. _____

If I allow myself to eat whenever I am hungry, I will always be eating because I am always hungry! How can I listen to my hunger and not gain weight?

You may feel like you are always hungry if you are used to restricting your calorie intake (and food choices) and not ever allowing yourself to eat enough to actually feel satisfied and comfortably full. However, if you start allowing yourself to eat whatever it is that you want to eat and eat until you are satisfied, you will not have the constant urge to eat. The desire to constantly eat (regardless of physical hunger) often comes from feeling deprived. Once the deprivation is gone, food cravings are greatly reduced.

On the occasions that I eat when I do not have any physical hunger, shouldn't I restrict my intake for the rest of the day to make up for the excess calories that I ate? Isn't this necessary if I want to lose weight?

Absolutely not! You don't want to make food decisions based on whether or not you overate in the past! Rather, you want to focus on how you feel in the present when deciding if, what and how much to eat. Your body will naturally adjust - if you eat a little more than you need at a meal...maybe you won't be as hungry later on in the day or the next day. You need to start trusting that your body will tell you how much it needs to feel satisfied at any given moment. This process is not about eating perfectly. Just because you ate some food when you were not really hungry (or ate a little more than you needed to just feel just comfortably full) doesn't mean you should punish yourself. Rather, you should just continue to focus on your present hunger level as you make eating decisions going forward.

You also have to realize that if you restrict your intake to make up for overeating at a prior meal, you are going to be left unsatisfied and will just be setting yourself up to binge at a future meal! If you don't respond to your body's cues, then you will be more likely to overeat when those signals get too strong.

I often find myself at just a "4" hunger level and I REALLY want to eat. If I allow myself to always eat at a "4" will I still be able to lose weight?

If you want to eat something while at a "4" hunger level, that is fine. However, often people think they are hungry and classify their hunger at a "4", but the truth is that they may just be craving food for a non-physical hunger reason. Food sounds really good and they justify that it is time to eat, though there is not really much stomach hunger present. When you are at a "4" hunger level, it's a good idea to try—if you can—the tactic of waiting 15-20 minutes before eating to ensure that you are actually hungry. If you really are physically hungry, you will just be more sure of it 15-20 minutes later (don't worry, you are not going to go from slightly hungry to starving in a matter of 20 minutes). On the other hand, if the hunger goes away, you will have avoided eating for a non-physical hunger reason.

I work around food and I find myself often experiencing sensory hunger whenever I smell or see food. Is it bad if I eat in all of these situations?

This is a great question. In most cases of sensory hunger, I would say that it is totally fine to enjoy a bite or two of the food just to experience the taste. However, if you find yourself constantly around food and reaching for it left and right just to "sample" it, you will likely be inhibiting your weight loss efforts. You really want to think about HOW you are eating these foods - even just the tastes. If you are working at a restaurant and finding yourself sampling everything that goes by you in the kitchen, you have to ask yourself if you are really getting that much satisfaction from each bite of food that you take. Are you focused on eating each bite very slowly and mindfully? Or are you swallowing the food before you can count to three? Is it really worth it to you to eat the foods in this manner? (You will get plenty of tips on how to eat more mindfully in the HOW module). Instead of just shoveling food in your mouth while standing up or on the go at work, make an effort to only put food in your mouth while sitting down at a table where you can focus all your attention on enjoying the food and/or keep each bite of food in your mouth for a longer period of time so you can really enjoy the taste. You would probably be better off setting aside food that looks especially appealing to eat when you have a break in the day and can sit down to really enjoy it.

What if I am up late working and I experience real physical hunger? Should I eat even though I know I would usually be sleeping?

Of course! If you are physically hungry, you should allow yourself to eat regardless of the time of day. If you were up late working and you had to use the bathroom, would you ever tell yourself you should not go because you would usually be sleeping at this time? Just as you always listen to your body's need to eliminate and go without second guessing it, this is how you should respond when physically hungry. This is not as easy as it sounds though - you have to start trusting your body's signals of hunger and fullness. Just make sure that you are really physically hungry (check in with your body to notice its symptoms of physical hunger - think stomach hunger) rather than just needing a mental break from working or wanting to satisfy some other hunger type of non-physical hunger.

How can I break habitual eating when it involves rituals with other people and having to deal with peer pressure to eat a lot with them?

The best tactic to help you break habitual eating with peers is to just pause before you eat to check in and see if you are physically hungry. This awareness is HUGE! If you are not hungry, an easy response to peers who seem to pressure you to eat with them is simply that you are not hungry. No one can argue with that. Just because you are socializing around a meal, you do NOT have to eat. The main purpose of the gathering is typically to socialize, not to eat. If food was ordered before you realized you were not hungry, you could always take the food to go or just have a few bites and then pack up the rest. You always have the choice over when, what, how much and if you are going to eat!

If certain peers always make you uncomfortable about your intake, you have to remind yourself that you are not helping anyone by eating when you are not hungry. In fact, that peer likely has an unhealthy relationship with food him or herself if he or she is pressuring you to eat. You are better

off engaging in activities with that peer that don't revolve around food. If the eating experience is just about bonding, then you should find other activities that you can bond over that don't involve food. Remember, to break habitual hunger, you need to figure out what the cue is (maybe people you are with or restaurant you are in) and what the reward is from eating and then substitute the eating with another behavior that provides you with the same reward.

How will this transition not require willpower when I will have to resist non-hunger cravings?

Willpower is NOT required on the Eating Reset program. It is never about willpower, it is about pausing to check in, becoming aware of WHY you are eating and realizing that you always have the choice to eat when you are not physically hungry. Overtime, you will realize that you will turn to food less and less for non-physical hunger simply by becoming more aware of your hunger. Just by pausing and checking in to recognize the fact that you are tired or bored makes turning to food a less appealing option since you know that is not going to meet your true need. You will start to take the time to meet your true needs instead of always turning to food as a coping mechanism.

While this transition has nothing to do with willpower, it is important to note that it takes time to change your behaviors. The transition does NOT happen overnight. But then again, you didn't get to your current relationship with food overnight either! With time you realize that food will not really provide you with what you need when you are not physically hungry - food can only solve the problem of physical hunger!

Do I "need" to eat breakfast if I am not hungry when I wake up?

Often people assume that you have to eat breakfast within the first 30 minutes of getting up in order to "get the metabolism going" and be on track with some diet plan. However, if you have absolutely no hunger when you get up, I don't think it is necessary to force yourself to eat right away. With that said, I do recommend you eat something within the first few hours of getting up. If you don't feel like you are hungry within this time frame, you may not be listening closely enough to your body's signals of hunger in the morning. Typically, you will feel more lethargic and have difficulty focusing in the morning if you don't eat anything (remember you are coming off of an overnight fast)—there is not necessarily as much "stomach growling" in the earlier part of the day though. Since you don't always associate these "sluggish" feelings with hunger, you may turn to coffee/espresso for a "pick-me-up" and go on with your day. Silencing your hunger with caffeinated drinks ends up backfiring when you go into lunch absolutely ravenous and end up eating too much! So set up an experiment where one day you have something light within the first few hours of getting up and on another day don't eat before you think you have physical hunger (even if this means waiting 4 or 5+ hours). Check in with yourself every 30 minutes throughout the morning to notice if there is a difference in how you feel on the day that you eat the light breakfast and on the day that you don't eat anything in the morning. This is a great experiment for you to become more in-tune with your body and how food can affect how you feel physically.

So often I find myself staring at the pantry even if I am not hungry. What can I do about that?

This is a very common occurrence and a great example of emotional hunger. I can recall a client of mine, Beth, a stay at home mom. After we started working together, every time Beth would find herself in front of the open pantry, searching for something to snack on, she would pause to check whether or not she was physically hungry and if not, she would think about what it would feel like physically if she ate the food that she was eyeing. For example, one day she was standing in front of the pantry and had a craving for chocolate chip cookies—there was an open package of them sitting right on the shelf at eye level. Before grabbing them, she did a quick check in, realized she was not hungry and then imagined how her body would feel physically if she polished off a few of them. From her past experiences, she could easily bring herself back to that place of feeling full, stomach stretched out, uncomfortable and guilty from overeating when she wasn't hungry. Bringing up these feelings made her realize that the cookies were NOT what she needed at that moment—she didn't want to feel full and guilty from eating them.

She also started to question what these cookies were really doing for her. She realized that she was always reaching for them in the afternoon at the same time every day, when she had a 30 minute lull in her schedule before picking up her kids from school. The snack was a distraction from her feelings of boredom. Rather than head to the pantry, Beth decided she would use the 30 minutes to catch up with friends over the phone or journal or go on a walk -all of these activities were relaxing and a great way to keep Beth busy -which was what she really needed.

She also realized that if she wanted a cookie, she would not get more pleasure from stuffing herself by eating 3-4 cookies while standing up in front of the pantry than she would get from 1 cookie or just a part of 1 if she put it on a napkin and sat down at the table to eat it and truly savor it. Without any physical hunger, she knew that it would not take much to satisfy her if she was just experiencing some sensory hunger.

When I let myself get too hungry, I just fall apart - I am lightheaded and can't focus on what I am doing. How can I prevent feeling these hunger symptoms and still avoid eating preventatively, especially before long engagements?

Whatever your physical hunger symptoms are - growling or an empty feeling in your stomach, or irritability or lightheadedness, you really don't want to just eat to prevent ever feeling any hunger symptoms. Rather, once you do start feeling strong hunger symptoms, you want to be prepared.

If you are going into a long engagement, it is a good idea to have a snack or two on hand in case you start to feel hungry during it. Or if you are having hunger symptoms and have plans to go out for a meal in another hour or so, you still want to have a small snack to take the edge off of your hunger so that you don't go into dinner starving. You should eat something (even just something small) to prevent going into the next meal at a "1" or "2" on the hunger and fullness scale. It is all about setting a mental target of where you want to be when you finish eating so that you can go into the next planned meal with a good level of hunger- not starving and not neutral or full- this will ensure that you can enjoy your planned meals without plowing through them because you were too hungry.

How do I keep from filling up on snacks so that I am still hungry for meals?

To prevent yourself from overeating in between meals, you need to set a "mental target" of how you want to feel after eating before you start eating the snack. Setting a target will help ensure that you don't just quickly shovel in whatever is in front of you. For example, just because you have a small trail mix pack or a bar for a snack doesn't mean that you need to eat the entire thing or finish off a "portion." Maybe you just need half of the bar or a few nuts to satisfy your hunger at that time... remember that you have the choice to eat whatever amount it is that will satisfy you and leave you at your intended hunger/fullness level. More to come on how to eat this way in the HOW videos!

The only way I have ever been able to lose weight in the past is if I am always a little bit hungry. If I allow myself to eat until the point that I am completely satisfied, how will I still be able to lose weight?

Always feeling hungry does not lead to weight loss—it leads to feeling deprived and at some point overeating. If you would simply allow yourself to feel satisfied and reach a level of comfortable fullness, you would not be driven to overeat after a period of feeling deprived. You will also notice that you don't feel the drive to eat "all the time" or every few hours. Rather, it may take you longer to get hungry after eating a meal ---this can be very liberating. Think about it. You won't be focused on food 24 hours/day! You have to realize that getting to a healthy weight is a result of listening to your body and not living in the extreme—restricting or overeating.

When I am eating something that I really enjoy, I find it so hard to stop eating even if I am comfortably full because I like the food so much. It just tastes so good. How can I avoid overeating in these situations?

When clients tell me that they don't want to miss out on the eating experience or amazing food even if they are not hungry, I tell them that they are not really paying attention to the taste of the food because it never tastes as good when you are full as it does when you are hungry. This is a fact. The pleasure you derive from eating when you are not truly hungry is significantly less than if you are hungry! It's just like an old economic concept—the law of diminishing returns. You can get ~90% of the satisfaction from food from the first ~10% that you eat!

While you might miss out on eating a portion of that particular food, you have many options: you can ask to take some of the food home or take just a bite or two of the food just to experience the taste (think sensory hunger). If having just a bite or two of a food when you have no physical hunger is very difficult for you, think about whether or not you still have a diet mindset. Do you think that if you decide to indulge, it will be just this one time, so you will finish everything in sight (think "If I am letting myself have this pizza/fries/dessert—I am going to eat all of it and never eat pizza/fries/dessert again!"). Once you make peace with these foods and give yourself unconditional permission to eat them, you will see that your drive to eat them all NOW—as opposed to eating more of it at some later point in time when you are hungry and will enjoy it much more, will be greatly diminished. The thought of reaching a point where you are uncomfortably full is just not worth it!

The other point to note is that if you are not eating mindfully (again, we will discuss what this means in detail in the next module) you will probably only taste the first few bites of the food before you

start mindlessly shoveling it into your mouth. If this is the case, then when you reconnect with the food after you have finished off 3/4th of it, you may feel full, but not completely satisfied because you didn't really taste much of it - it is as if the eating experience didn't really happen. Once you start eating your food more mindfully you will get much more satisfaction from a much smaller portion of the food and won't be driven to eat as much.

Is it better if I aim to eat three meals and two snacks every day? Or 5-6 small meals each day? Or something else?

I want to make an important point about how you are "supposed to eat" when using the hunger scale. In a perfect world, you would eat when you are hungry and stop when you are satisfied and comfortably full—and would follow whatever eating rhythm this would put you on. Of course life isn't perfect! We have business lunches, kids' birthday parties, family gatherings and the like. No day is exactly like the next, but all days typically have at least 1 if not more meals that are planned for certain times. So you need to do a little advanced planning. Just as I explained in the bringing it all together video, if you are always eating lunch at a certain time with co-workers or dinner with your family, you should be thinking about these "larger" meals at the start of your day. As such, you'll want to have other meals/snacks in the intervening periods when need be. Whether you prefer three "main" meals and then in between snacks as needed or 5-6 smaller meals per day, it doesn't really matter! As long as you keep in touch with your hunger cues and always have a survival kit of snacks on hand for when needed in between meals, you will be successful. Just remember that your hunger levels can change daily—so don't plan on always eating at the same time and the same amount of food every day.

Again, you don't want to just turn to food because it is a certain time of day. You will quickly realize that there are times when a certain amount of food keeps you satisfied for five hours on one day and maybe just for three hours on another day. Some days you will be hungrier than others! When you are really tuned in to your hunger levels, you will learn to stop looking at the clock (or what others are doing) to determine whether you should eat. Rather, your body's signals will be the guide for when, what and how much to eat.

What if I am going to be in back-to-back meetings between lunch and dinner and won't have time to eat? Should I just eat a large meal to tide me over from one meal to the next?

First of all, since you know you will be tied up, make sure to have a satisfying lunch that will leave you feeling comfortably full - though not uncomfortably full or stuffed. Next, you can keep a few snacks on hand (or nearby in your office) that you can eat during a quick break, even if just on a bathroom run, IF hunger hits while you are in your meetings. Remember strategic snacking and the importance of having a survival kit on hand! Just be sure to ask yourself if you are truly hungry when you do have that snack - check in for physical signs of hunger. Lastly, have a game plan for dinner so that if you come out of the last meeting hungry you will have something to eat ready to go.

Eating makes me feel so much better when I feel sad. Even though I know I am emotionally hungry during these times, how do I avoid eating if it makes me feel better?

Turning to food for emotional reasons is very common. But at the end of the day, eating to fill an emotional void is only a temporary solution. As we have discussed, eating when you are sad does not make the root cause of your sadness (or any other feeling) go away. And as soon as you stop eating you will still feel sad, and likely uncomfortably full. Your best bet is to try to find other ways you can deal with your feelings and meet your true needs—either dealing directly with the cause of your feeling or finding a different distraction than food. While it is totally normal to turn to food for emotional reasons at times, if you are constantly using food to soothe yourself, you want to start considering your other options and/or seek out help from a professional.

How do I deal with "social pressure" to eat?

If you get pressure from those around you to eat after you have made it clear that you are not hungry, consider WHY they are pressuring you. Do they have their own issues around food and weight? Does it make them feel better about how much they eat when you are overeating too? If you succumb to eating just to make your eating companion feel better, you are eating for an external reason which has nothing to do with your true hunger and you won't be helping anyone. In fact, you'll just hurt yourself. Some responses you can use when asked "why aren't you eating?" or "how can you pass up on such delicious food?" are:

- ✓ I just ate a big snack (or meal) and I'm just not hungry now.
- ✓ Wow, the food does look amazing. I think I'll pack some up to enjoy when I'm hungry later.
- ✓ It does look fantastic, but I know that I won't enjoy it nearly as much as I would if I was truly hungry.
- ✓ And you can always add to the above: I want to put all my focus and attention on hearing about what is new with you!

Also, to help minimize how often you get into this situation when eating socially, you can aim to not leave the prior meal or snack too full when you know you are going out for a social meal—this is all about "setting your mental target" before you sit down to eat, as we have discussed. For example, if you had an early breakfast at 7:00 a.m. and had lunch plans at noon but got very hungry around 11:00 a.m., you should eat something at 11:00, but aim to only come out of that snack at around a "4" on the hunger scale so that you can be hungry again to enjoy your lunch an hour later.

If I always go out for big dinners and consume a lot of food at them, how would I not gain weight if I don't restrict my intake during the day?

If you listened to your body more during the day and ate whatever amount of food it takes to actually feel satisfied, you will not be as hungry once dinner comes along, you won't shovel the food in your mouth without ever putting your fork or the food down and you will be able to stop eating when you are just comfortably full - not stuffed. The desire to over consume at dinner will greatly diminish if you are not starving once dinner arrives.

Saying we should only eat when physically hungry, isn't that just another rule?

It all depends on how strictly you interpret what I am saying here. Instead of viewing it as a "black and white" rule, look at it as something to strive for and as a more general "guideline" where there are some grey areas. There will definitely be times when you eat a food just because you want to enjoy it or you are so emotionally distraught that food really does feel like the most comforting thing to turn to at that moment. This happens to everyone! The goal here is not to be a "perfect eater"—there is no such thing. Instead of punishing yourself for turning to food in these moments you want to accept them and move on. Just focus on becoming more aware of when and why you turn to food for non-physical hunger. If you find that you are frequently eating for non-physical hunger (more so than for true hunger) you may want to seek out help to develop healthier coping mechanisms.

This program's main goals are to help you create a healthier relationship with food, and change your behaviors around food - it is not about getting you to eat "perfectly". Look at your eating as being more fluid...not always perfectly following rules, but not abusing food and ignoring your body's hunger/fullness signals either. Again, there is no such thing as "perfect eating" or a "perfect diet".

You say I can eat anything for a snack---what about junk food?

If "junk food" (or what I would call "fun food") is what you are craving, and you're experiencing true physical hunger -- then by all means, you should have it! When you beat around the bush in order to avoid a food that you think is "bad," you usually end up taking in more calories in search of the satisfaction that only your craved food can bring you. And while you may think that you will always prefer cookies, candy, or chips for snacking -- as you become more mindful of how different foods make you feel physically once you've eaten them, you will realize that you don't always crave "fun foods," OR that just a few bites of them can do the trick.

Any good tips on how to prevent eating out of habit immediately after I enter my house at the end of a long day?

One tip to prevent this from happening is to change your routine when you walk in the door at the end of the day. If you are used to walking in the front door, dropping your keys and going straight to the kitchen to snack on anything you can get your hands on, you want to change this bad habit. Force yourself to first go to your room when you get home instead of straight to the kitchen. Try changing into more comfortable clothes or listening to one of the Eating Reset meditations—or just take one minute to lie in bed and do nothing! This shift in your routine may be all you need to prevent yourself from mindlessly raiding the pantry as soon as you walk in the door.

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